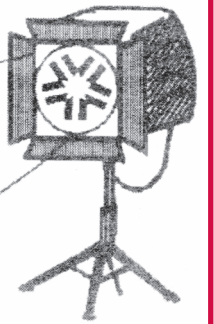


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

# Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE 2

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

February 2017



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Laura Newland  
Executive Director, D.C. Office on Aging

Happy February!

I hope you will join me in celebrating Black History Month. I feel so fortunate to live in a city where Black history is acknowledged and celebrated every day, and I don't need to wait for February to learn about the many contributions of African Americans to this city. I'm reminded every time I'm out in the community about how many of you have contributed to, and shaped, the story of Washington, D.C. And how you continue to do so every day.

Our Community Events Calendar this month includes several Black history celebrations taking place throughout the city, and I also encourage you to engage with your neighbors and the younger members of your community.

Share your experiences. Talk about how hard you've worked to build this city, and how hard you're working now to keep this city a place where you want to continue to live. You may not realize how interested people are in hearing your story until you make that connection.

We know how important intergenerational connections are in building community, and I'm excited for some of the programs we have been working on at the Office on Aging.

For Valentine's Day, we'll be sending something extra special with our home-delivered meals to seniors throughout the city. Students from eight DC Public Schools volunteered to make handmade Valentine's Day cards for homebound seniors as part of our Cupid's Kids initiative. I hope this gesture of kindness will lift spirits, but will also serve as a teachable moment for our youngest residents that they have a responsibility in creating, and contributing to, their community.

Our goal this year was to send homemade Valentine's Day cards to 2,600 recipients of DCOA's home-delivered meals program. Thanks to the overwhelming response from DCPS students, teachers and administrators, we far surpassed this goal and will be sending Valentine's cards to more than 4,000 seniors!

Seniors attending Adult Day Health Centers and those who receive case management support in their homes will also be receiving notes and cards created by the youngest members of our community.

When Mayor Muriel Bowser talks about the foundations of a strong commu-

nity, she reminds us that "the success of our city rises and falls on the people of Washington, D.C." Through the Cupid's Kids initiative, DCPS students are exemplifying Mayor Bowser's vision of our shared values bringing us together for a greater cause.

I am so proud of our DCPS students and grateful for their teachers and administrators for reinforcing D.C. values and teaching the youngest members of our city how they can make a difference in the community — one individual at a time.

If you had a chance to join me at one of my town halls last month, you heard me talk about the risk of social isolation among seniors living in D.C. More than half of seniors in the District live alone, according to our 2016 Senior Needs Assessment. Many seniors living alone are at higher risk of social isolation. And we know there are a number of negative health outcomes tied to isolation — including depression, heart disease, weakened immune system, and dementia.

The good news is that social isolation is not inevitable, nor is it irreversible. We all have a duty, as members of this community, to reach out to others who may be silently suffering alone, just as our DCPS students have done.

At DCOA, we are working hard to make sure we can reach our most vulnerable and isolated populations, but we need your help. Next month, we will be building on our Ambassador program to provide more opportunities for you to volunteer in the community and with our office. We will be offering quarterly Ambassador training sessions covering a variety of issues around aging to better equip you with the information and support you need to make a difference in your neighborhoods.

I encourage you to visit [www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov) or call us at 202-724-5626 to learn more about how you can work with us to help combat social isolation. If you feel you may be suffering from isolation, please reach out to us as well. We can help.

Remember that the winter months are a peak time for prolonged isolation and a sense of loneliness for many, particularly the frail elderly who are unable to leave their homes. Take some extra time out of your day to call your relative, visit a friend, and invite someone over for dinner!

## Know the Signs of a Heart Attack

"I had gas, and I spent about an hour drinking ginger ale trying to belch. Then my tooth started hurting."

That's how it started for 71-year-old Elynore Herron in September 2015. "My son said, 'Let's go to the emergency room.' I didn't want to go, but I got in the car and leaned back in the seat. When we got there, I told the staff what was going on, and they immediately yelled, 'EKG!'"

The retired D.C. Public Schools assistant principal was suffering a heart attack.

"It is frightening because I didn't know what was happening," she said. "The symptoms for women are so different, and it was really the jaw — not the tooth. I had not a clue that I was having a heart attack."

Herron had not been a heavy smoker, and had completely stopped smoking six months prior to the attack. She was taking medication for high blood pressure and cholesterol, but was physically active and eating healthy most of the time.

Heart disease is known as a silent killer for women, as many of the symptoms go unnoticed or could be mistaken for other ailments. The American Heart Association's Go Red for Women campaign works to make sure women know they are at risk so they can take action to protect their health.

The American Heart Association provides the following information to help bring awareness:

### Heart Attack Warning Signs

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most of them start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Here are some of the signs that can mean a heart attack is happening.

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few



**Elynore Herron is a survivor. She survived a heart attack in September, had a knee replacement in March, and still competed in the Ms. Senior D.C. Pageant in June. She recovered from both health conditions and placed third runner-up in the annual contest. Herron also continues to be an advocate, sharing her story with other women.**

minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath. This may occur with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs. These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting, and back or jaw pain.

### Stroke Warning Signs

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, or trouble speaking or understanding

See **HEART ATTACK**, page 31





## D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

# Community Calendar

## February events

### 6th • 1 to 2:30 p.m.

The D.C. Senior Resource Group presents a lecture with Meg LaPorte titled "What's Hot in Senior Care: Disrupting the Status Quo." It will be held at Metropolitan Memorial Church, 3401 Nebraska Ave. NW. To RSVP, go to [www.dcsrg.com/events/feb-meg-la-porte-55](http://www.dcsrg.com/events/feb-meg-la-porte-55) or call 1-800-394-9990.

### 9th • 6:30 p.m.

"Pop Quiz: Black History Month" will be presented by the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, 8th and F Streets NW. Test your knowledge of African American icons, heroes and visionaries in honor of Black History Month. For more info on this free event, call 202-633-8300.

### 7th • 2 to 3:30 p.m.

Using email and surfing the Internet opens up so many possibilities — connection to friends and family, convenience of shopping and banking online, and a world of information at your fingertips. But our online lives may also bring exposure to scams. Learning how fraudsters operate and what they are looking for will help you navigate online as safely as possible. The free class is presented by Pam Holland, founder of Tech Moxie, and will be held at Iona, 4125 Albemarle St. NW. See [www.iona.org](http://www.iona.org), call 202-895-9420 or email [community@iona.org](mailto:community@iona.org) to register or learn more.

### 10th • 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Howard University College of Dentistry Student Council Health Fair offers free dental cleanings for the entire family, as well as blood pressure, glucose, kidney and cholesterol screenings. The program is sponsored by the D.C. Office on Aging and a network of government, private and nonprofit organizations. The College of Dentistry is located at 600 W St. NW. Contact Romella Rogers at 240-499-6010 to learn more.

### 10th • 11 a.m. to 1p.m.

Learn more about the life of film animator, writer and comic book artist, Floyd Norman, the first African American animator to work with Walt Disney Studios in the early 1960s. Norman contributed his talents to Disney animated film classics *One Hundred and One Dalmatians*, *The Sword in the Stone*, and *The Jungle Book*. The event will be held at the Anacostia Community Museum, 1901 Fort Pl. SE. Call 202-633-4844 to register for this program.

### 13th • 10 a.m.

The Washington Seniors Wellness Center, 3001 Alabama Ave. SE, is celebrating Black History Month by hosting several events/presentations, including "Black Georgetown Remembered" by C.R. Gibbs. Call 202-581-9355 for more information.

### 13th • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging, in collaboration with Model Cities Senior Wellness Center and the American Kidney Fund, will hold a community health fair at the wellness center, 1901 Evarts St. NE. For more information, call Stacie Mack at 202-635-1900.

### 15th • 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging, in collaboration with the Hayes Senior Wellness Center, will sponsor a program titled "Grid Alternatives: Presentation & Information on Solar Panels." The wellness center is located at 500 K St. NE. To learn more, contact Sherrell Briscoe at 202-727-0357.

### 17 and 18th • 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Frederick Douglass National Historic Site, 1411 W St. SE, will host tours of the historic home in honor of Frederick Douglass' 199th birthday. There will be music, presentations, programs on the history of Anacostia, children's activities, and discussion about the books he wrote, the books he read, and how reading and writing can change the world. Call 202-426-5961 for more information.

### 22nd • 10 a.m.

Washington Seniors Wellness Center, 3001 Alabama Ave. SE, is celebrating Black History Month by hosting several events and presentations, including "Let Freedom Ring" with the Choraleers. Call 202-581-9355 for more information.

### 22nd • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging, in collaboration with Hattie Holmes Senior Wellness Center and the American Kidney Fund, will hold a community health fair at the wellness center, 324 Kennedy St. NW. For more information, call Teresa Moore at 202-291-6170.

### 23rd • 10:30 a.m.

Celebrate Black History Month at Model Cities in a program "Remember the African American Doctors of World War I." Model Cities is located at 1901 Evarts St. NE. For more information on this event, call Monica Carroll at 202-635-1900.

### 23rd • 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging, in collaboration with the Hayes Senior Wellness Center, will sponsor a presentation and information on elder abuse and exploitation by U.S. Attorney Douglas Klein. The wellness center is located at 500 K St. NE. To learn more, contact Sherrell Briscoe at 202-727-0357.

### 28th • 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The D.C. Office on Aging, in collaboration with the Grand Oaks Assisted Living senior apartments, will present an assisted living resource fair. Grand Oaks is located at 5901 MacArthur Blvd. NW. RSVP by calling the concierge desk at 202-349-3400.

## Heart attack

From page 30

- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness or loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

### Dial 9-1-1 Fast

Heart attack and stroke are life-or-

death emergencies — every second counts. If you suspect you or someone you are with has any of the symptoms of heart attack or stroke, immediately call 9-1-1 or your emergency response number so an ambulance can be sent.

Don't delay — get help right away!

For a stroke, also note the time when the first symptom(s) appeared. If given within 3 to 4.5 hours of the start of symptoms, a clot-busting drug may improve the chances of getting better faster.

## Seeking Centenarians

The D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) is seeking District residents who are 100 years of age or older to honor during our 31st Annual Salute to Centenarians being held in April.

If you know of residents who will have celebrated their centennial

birthday by April 30, 2017, please call Darlene Nowlin at (202) 724-5622 or email [darlene.nowlin@dc.gov](mailto:darlene.nowlin@dc.gov).

When registering centenarians, please provide the name, date of birth and contact information for each individual.

## Search for Ms. Senior D.C. 2017

Are you a D.C. resident age 60 or older who is actively involved in your community? Are you interested in representing your peers as Ms. Senior D.C. 2017? If so, consider becoming a contestant in the next Ms. Senior D.C. Pageant! We are searching for the elegant lady who will represent the District of Columbia as Ms.



Senior D.C. 2017. Contestants are judged on a personal interview, their philosophy

of life, their talent and evening gown presentations. The winner will represent the District of Columbia and compete in the Ms. Senior America Pageant. For more information on how to sign up, please call DCOA

at 202-724-5622, email [darlene.nowlin@dc.gov](mailto:darlene.nowlin@dc.gov),

or visit [www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov) to complete an application.

## SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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500 K St. N.E.,  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
202-724-5622  
[www.dcoa.dc.gov](http://www.dcoa.dc.gov)

**Executive Director**  
Laura Newland

**Editor**  
Darlene Nowlin

**Photographer**  
Selma Dillard

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**The Office on Aging is in partnership with the District of Columbia Recycling Program.**