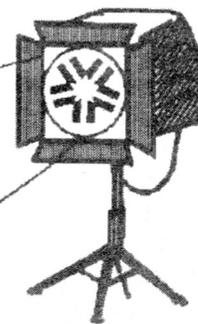


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVI, ISSUE 1

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

January 2011



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Dr. Clarence Brown

Happy New Year! I hope that everyone has had a great holiday season and enjoyed time with family, friends and those that you love. As we begin the new year, I look forward to working with Mayor Vincent C. Gray to ensure that the level of programs and services for District residents age 60 and older and their caregivers continue as needed.

Our new Mayor has an awesome task, to work with a \$188 million deficit while meeting the needs of all residents of the District of Columbia. Our agency has been fortunate because we have demonstrated budget savings and additional available funds through hard work by my staff and myself in securing grant funding and changing the way we operate. Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that the more than 100,000 senior residents are able to age in place independently as they live out their golden years.

With the arrival of 2011, as with most years, many of us make resolutions and are optimistic about plans of beginning healthier lives that include increased activity, better eating habits, and beginning a routine that includes regular exercise. Our facilities and senior programs include programming to provide that for most seniors.

From chair exercise for those that have limited mobility and aerobic exercise and strength training for the more able-bodied senior, a full range of programming is available in many of our programs throughout the city.

For those that have to fool themselves into movement, try line dancing, which is offered at most of our senior programs. Dancing is actually a great weight-bearing exercise that can do wonders for even the couch potato when done on a regular basis.

It is our hope that among the programs that will be available, our newest wellness center, the Ward One Senior Wellness Center, will be fully operational in the upcoming days. Call our Information and Assistance Unit at 202-724-5626 to help you meet your health and wellness needs this year.

January is National Glaucoma Awareness Month. See important information about glaucoma in this issue to make sure you are more aware of your eye health. As always, visit your doctor regularly and take any prescribed medicine as directed.

As we begin 2011, best wishes for a healthy and safe new year for everyone. Best of luck on any resolutions you may have made and keeping them all year long.

Holiday Celebration



Ward 5 Councilmember Harry Thomas, Jr. greets Ward 5 Commissioner on Aging Harriet Brockington and Dr. Clarence Brown at the Annual Senior Holiday Celebration held at the DC Armory. Councilmembers Yvette Alexander and Muriel Bowser also attended the event and greeted the more than 3,000 seniors that were in attendance.

Senior Vaccination Day



Senior Vaccination Day in D.C. was held at Model Cities Senior Wellness Center to stress the importance of flu vaccines for persons 65 and older. Dr. Brown was joined by Dr. David Berwick, administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and Lester Austin, with public affairs at the Social Security Administration.

Dr. Berwick answered questions from those in attendance. He said that the flu usually breaks out begin-

ning in January and that it was not too late to get vaccinated if you have not already done so. Dr. Berwick also urged everyone to encourage their family members, friends and neighbors to get vaccinated. This year, the influenza vaccine also includes H1N1.

The event included entertainment from the MC Steppers and a song by Ms. Senior D.C. Sheila Poole. Exhibitors were also on hand to provide information and services.

The Gift of Fitness!



Dr. Brown recently visited the wellness centers and other programs in the Office on Aging Senior Service Network including (pictured) Emmaus Services for the Aging Asian and Pacific Islander Senior Center, where he presented them with the Wii game system and the Wii Fit Plus program. Across the nation, senior centers have benefitted from the Wii gaming system and its promotion of physical activity and healthy competition. Dr. Brown also made presentations to the Washington Seniors Wellness Center, Model Cities Senior Wellness Center, and the Hattie Holmes Senior Wellness Center.



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

VINCENT C. GRAY, MAYOR

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Community Calendar

January events

3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st • 10:30 a.m.

Seabury Ward 5 Aging Services will host a diabetes seminar series every Monday in January. The seminars will be held at Lincoln I, 2855 Bladensburg Rd., N.E. For more information, contact Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

7th, 14th, 21st, 28th • 1 to 3 p.m.

Washington Concert Opera and IONA Senior Services present a new six-week lecture series on Fridays from Jan. 7 through Feb. 11 that will feature the many operas that are rarely performed by major opera companies, including works by such famous composers as Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Strauss. Guest lecturer John Cahill will present six of these rarely performed gems, as well as information on the composers who wrote them, through audio and video media. The cost for the six-week series is \$60. Light refreshments will be served. The series will be held at IONA, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. For more information, call 202-895-9448.

26th • 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Lunch and learn with IONA artist in residence, Liz Wolf. Wolf became a printmaker after a career as an attorney and raising four children. She is a fellow at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and teaches printmaking throughout Northern Virginia and Maryland. Bring your own lunch. The free event will be held at the IONA Education Center, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. For more information, call 202-895-9448.

26th • 5:45 to 7:15 p.m.

The Dwelling Place Senior Center, 2812 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E., is hosting an ongoing support group on the last Wednesday of every month for families caring for loved ones with dementia and/or Alzheimer's disease. The group will meet with social worker Cheridan Young, facilitator, in the Activity Room from 6 to 7:15 p.m. Refreshments will be served at 5:45 p.m. Free parking is available at the St. Francis Xavier Church lot on 29th St. and O St., S.E. Call 202-581-8000, ext.108 to let the staff know you'll be attending.

January dates to be determined

South Washington Collaborative Senior Services will host free computer workshops in January that will teach participants how to access health information through the National Institutes of Health. Call 202-608-1340 for dates and location.

February event

11th • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Seabury Ward 5 Aging Services hosts a Valentine's Day party at the Teamsters Union Hall, 3100 Ames Place, N.E. For more information, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

Ongoing

Fitness instructor Rodney Jordan is back at the Washington Seniors Wellness Center, 3100 Alabama Ave., S.E., offering evening and weekend sessions for seniors who prefer to exercise at those times. These 40-minute sessions are scheduled for Monday and Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. For additional information and class times, call Renee Few at 202-581-9355.

Affordable Care Act at Work for District Residents

Support for Seniors

The new Affordable Care Act strengthens Medicare by reducing fraud, closing the gap in the Medicare prescription drug coverage gap (known as the "donut hole"), and providing new benefits for seniors — such as free preventive care and an annual wellness visit.

Here's how the Affordable Care Act helps seniors in the District of Columbia:

- Closes the Medicare Part D donut hole. Last year, roughly 6,390 Medicare beneficiaries in the District of Columbia hit the donut hole, or gap in Medicare Part D drug coverage. As of the end of August, 803 seniors in the District of

Columbia have already received their \$250 tax-free rebate for hitting the donut hole. The new law continues to provide additional discounts for seniors in Medicare in the years ahead, including a 50 percent discount on brand name drugs next year, and closing the donut hole by 2020.

- Free preventive services for Medicare beneficiaries. All 74,800 Medicare enrollees in the District of Columbia will get preventive services they are eligible for — such as colorectal cancer screenings, mammograms, and an annual wellness visit — without copayments, coinsurance or deductibles as of 2011.

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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

Glaucoma Awareness Month Facts

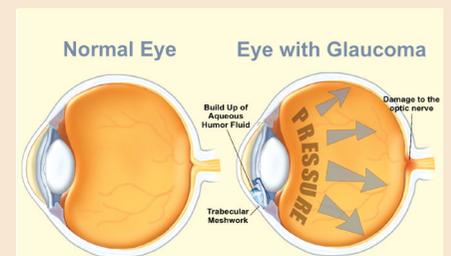
Glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the world, according to the World Health Organization. In the most common form, there are virtually no symptoms. Vision loss begins with peripheral or side vision, so if you have glaucoma, you may not notice anything until significant vision is lost.

Glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness among African-Americans. And among Hispanics in older age groups, the risk of glaucoma is nearly as high as that for African Americans. Also, siblings of persons diagnosed with glaucoma have a significantly increased risk of having glaucoma.

Other high-risk groups include: people over 60, family members of those already diagnosed, diabetics and people who are severely nearsighted. Regular eye exams are especially important for those at higher risk for glaucoma, and may help to prevent unnecessary vision loss.

Vision loss in glaucoma is caused by damage to the optic nerve. This nerve acts like an electric cable with over a million wires. It is responsible for carrying images from the eye to the brain.

The two main types of glaucoma are primary open-angle glaucoma (POAG), and angle-closure glaucoma. These are marked by an increase of intraocular



pressure (IOP), or pressure inside the eye.

When optic nerve damage has occurred despite a normal IOP, this is called normal tension glaucoma. Secondary glaucoma refers to any case in which another disease causes or contributes to increased eye pressure, resulting in optic nerve damage and vision loss.

With open angle glaucoma, the most common form, there are virtually no symptoms. Usually, no pain is associated with increased eye pressure.

Because vision loss begins with peripheral, or side vision, you may compensate for this unconsciously by turning your head to the side, and may not notice anything until significant vision is lost.

There is no cure for glaucoma — yet. However, medication or surgery can slow or prevent further vision loss. The appropriate treatment depends upon the type of glaucoma, among other factors. Early detection is vital to stopping the progress of the disease.