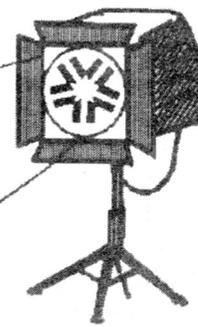


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVII, ISSUE 1

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

January 2012



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Dr. John M. Thompson

Happy New Year!

As we embark on a new year, I would like to focus on a familiar topic — awareness. The D.C. Office on Aging is committed to fostering an ongoing dialogue with the District's seniors, caregivers and our colleagues who serve you to increase our level of awareness of the issues that are important to seniors so that we might better serve you.

In the process, we will keep you informed of our progress and will continue to keep you abreast of the latest information and local developments in our senior service network to engender knowledge and to keep you healthy and safe. As the old saying goes, "Knowledge is power," and we will continue to take an active role in ensuring that you are empowered in your everyday lives.

Last month, I had a chance to attend many holiday parties hosted by our community-based partnering organizations. It warms my heart to see how our colleagues are truly serving the District's seniors, persons with disabilities and family caregivers.

I also had an opportunity to facilitate the roundtable discussion with the executive director at our Senior Wellness Centers located in Wards 4, 5, 7 and 8. (I look forward to conducting the same style meeting at the Ward 1 Senior Wellness Center this month.)

As I expressed to the seniors at these roundtable discussions, the purpose of these meetings is to hear directly from you on what improvements are needed at the centers and within the Office on Aging, and what we are doing well so that we can adopt such practices across the District.

The takeaways from these meetings have been tremendous, as my staff truly understands that my objective for our agency is to be transparent, accountable and to follow through in a timely manner on all concerns identified by the roundtable participants. We will produce the meeting notes and deliver on action items from each of our visits. I look forward to continuing these meetings on a quarterly basis so that our agency does not miss the mark in meeting seniors' needs and addressing their concerns.

Beyond the roundtable meetings, the Commissioners, D.C. Office on Aging Staff, and I visited a couple of congregate meal sites to investigate complaints regarding the quality of the food. In order to address this issue, we held an open forum where we invited the food vendors to hear the concerns directly from the seniors.

The vendors are reviewing all concerns and recommendations from the seniors. All stakeholders will convene for a follow-up meeting in 30 days to assess the progress of the food quality. We anticipate that the necessary changes will be made to the food well before that time.

I would be remiss if I did not thank my staff and Commissioners Arguelles, Thorne, Swanda, Campbell and Foy for accompanying me on the numerous visits. I look forward to our other commissioners participating in these very important and engaging meetings.

On another topic, you may recall on the evening news in December that an 85-year-old woman was carjacked in front of her home in Northeast D.C. one morning while she was scraping ice from her car windshield and warming up her vehicle.

See **DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**, page 39



Laura Griffin, 99 was recently honored by the "Seniors Do Exercise Program" at Fort Lincoln. She is the oldest member, and missed her birthday celebration in June because of an illness. She was awarded the Presidential Champion Award from President Barack Obama and birthday greetings from Mayor Vincent C. Gray. She is pictured here with Dr. John Thompson, executive director D.C. Office on Aging, and Bob King, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for the area.

Annual Mayor's Senior Holiday Celebration

More than 3,300 seniors attended the 14th Annual Mayor's Senior Holiday Celebration at the D.C. Armory. The event was presented by the D.C. Office on Aging and Family Matters of Greater Washington with support from AARP.

ATDI Inspirational Choir and Moroccan Ensemble perform Stevie Wonder's "I Wish" as part of the Annual Mayor's Holiday Celebration. The group uses various forms of art, including music and drama, as part of its therapy for persons with mental, physical and intellectual disabilities at its day treatment program for adults.



Mayor Vincent C. Gray is pictured with Councilmember Yvette Alexander, Ward 7. Mayor Gray, introduced as the fifth member of the musical group the , addressed the crowd, wishing everyone happy holidays. Councilmember Vincent C. Orange also attended the event between Council sessions.



D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Community Calendar

January events

3rd+

Iona's fitness classes start up again beginning the first week of January. Arts classes begin the third week of January. Fitness classes include anti-aging bone-strengthening, yoga, beginning and advanced tai chi, qi gong, and classes on strength, balance and posture. Arts classes include memoir writing, laughter yoga and handmade books. Classes generally run for six to eight sessions, and cost \$10 per session. For a complete calendar with dates and times of classes, all held at Iona at 4125 Albemarle St., N.W., visit www.iona.org or call 202-895-9448 and select option 4.

16th

Honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and participate in the MLK National Day of Service on Jan. 16. Serve DC will partner with We Feed Our People, a District-based nonprofit that is dedicated to improving the lives of at-risk and in-need members of the community. Visit the MLK Day of Service projects page on www.serve.dc.gov to find a way to help in your neighborhood. Contact

Carly.Skidmore@dc.gov or call 202-724-2229 for more information.

17th • 11 a.m.

Seabury Resources for Aging will hold a glaucoma awareness program at Ft. Lincoln I, 2855 Bladensburg Rd., N.E. For more information, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

19th and 26th • 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

The Gallery at Iona presents the works of three accomplished senior artists: artist in residence George Smith-Shomari, printmaker and painter, and special guest artists Varda Avnisan and Jill Tanenbaum, glass artists. The gallery exhibition of all three artists' works opens on Thursday, Jan. 19. The gallery's hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be a free Lunch & Learn to meet Avnisan and Tanenbaum on Jan. 19, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Bring your own lunch. A free Lunch & Learn with Smith-Shomari, will be on Thursday, Jan. 26, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. Make a reservation by calling 202-895-9407.

27th

Seabury Resources for Aging participants will deliver handmade items to a homeless shelter in Ward 5. For details, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

February event

15th • 9 a.m. to noon

Train to become an ambassador for the D.C. Office on Aging. Let your family, friends, neighbors or others know how the Office on Aging can assist them through the many programs, services and resources that are available. Training will be held at the DCOA office, 500 K St., N.E. Call 202-724-5622 for more information.

Ongoing

Seabury Ward 5 Aging Services emergency food pantry offers free food to Ward 5 residents age 60 and older on a case-by-case basis. The food is distributed from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. Call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

The District is Seeking Centenarians

The D.C. Office on Aging is looking for persons age 100 and older to honor at a special luncheon for centenarians later this year. If you know of someone who should be included, call the Office

on Aging at 202-724-5626 to make sure they are registered. Please provide us their name, birth date and contact information so that we may invite them to the event.

Director's message

From page 38

Although this senior is doing really well and her car was returned to her by the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), I would like to remind you to be vigilant neighbors. I encourage you to call MPD when you see unfamiliar faces or suspicious activities in your neighborhood. It only takes a minute to call 911, which could prevent a life-altering event from happening to you or your neighbors.

Lastly, but certainly not least, we are making great strides with establishing new senior villages. We plan to release a survey tool by mid-February to assess the needs of our low- to moderate-income seniors residing east of the river. The survey tool will also solicit volunteer participation from businesses and individuals interested in donating their time in assisting our seniors. We look forward to your participation in this survey process!

I pray that each one of you has a very prosperous 2012!

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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The D.C. Office on Aging does not discriminate against anyone based on actual or perceived: race,

color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, source of income, and place of residence or business.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subjected to disciplinary action.

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

Preparing for Winter Emergencies

Now is the time to prepare for possible winter emergencies. Once you learn of a cold or winter weather alert, such as a winter storm warning, listen to the broadcast media about the weather conditions.

Seniors are urged to follow certain protective measures, including: staying in warm places, wearing several layers of dry clothing, wearing a windproof outer layer, rescheduling appointments if possible, and storing canned goods and prescription medicines in case you cannot get out to a store.

See www.72hours.dc.gov for information on preparing for emergencies and save these phone numbers:

IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

• Emergency Assistance 911

In a life-threatening situation, call 911 for Police, Fire and ambulance services. There is a charge for DC ambulance transportation to healthcare facilities. Medicare Part A recipients can be reimbursed.

• Hypothermia/Shelter Hotline (202) 399-7093 or (800) 535-7252

The hotline offers assistance to persons in need of overnight shelter, and support for those living in the streets. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

• DC Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (202) 442-9557

If the heat system is not working in your rental apartment building, notify the property management. If you do not receive a response, you can call the Housing Inspections Office for assistance during business hours. On weekends and after hours, call the Office of Emergency Management at (202) 727-6161.

• DC Call Center (202) 311

To report public streets that need snow and ice clearing and removal. Also, the main number for DC residents to report a problem or violation, offer feedback to the Mayor, or obtain government information.

• Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (202) 727-6161

This office can give you information about shelters, where to get blankets, heaters and oil, and whom to contact for other assistance. Also for non-medical emergency assistance and service information on holidays, weekends and after hours. Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

• D.C. Office on Aging (202) 724-5626

The Information and Assistance Office can link seniors with needed services and provide general information on keeping warm. The Office is open Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

• D.C. Energy Office Hotline (202) 673-6750