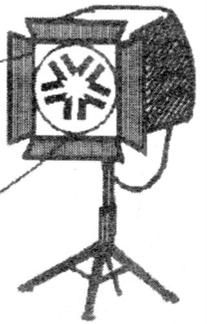


## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

# Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVI, ISSUE 7

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

July 2011



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Dr. John M. Thompson

Summer is here, and I hope that the month of July will be kinder to District's seniors than alluded to in Stevie Wonder's 1980 album titled *Hotter than July*. The District experienced record breaking conditions before the first day of summer this year and, unfortunately, many were caught off guard by the heat wave. We have included some hot weather tips in this issue of "Spotlight" to ensure that everyone has the necessary information and resources to keep cool this summer.

### Power outages during extreme conditions leave seniors in need

On May 31, PEPCO experienced power outages for nearly three days around North Capitol St., N.W., affecting Sibley Towers, Tyler House, Carmel Plaza and Golden Rule Apartments. The D.C. Office on Aging staff, in concert with Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Health and the D.C. Housing Authority, were the first responders in ensuring that all residents were given the option to visit a cooling center.

Additionally, the D.C. Office on Aging, with the assistance of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Engagement, knocked on every senior's door in the four apartment buildings

to ensure that they had sufficient water supply for hydration and had food, as the prolonged power outage led to spoilage of refrigerated items. I am pleased with the response of our office and sister agencies and glad that we were there for those in need.

### Challenges to learn from and pick up the pieces

As many of you are aware, our food contractor for more than 25 years informed us that it would no longer be able to prepare and deliver meals to the nearly 3,000 daily homebound and meal site clients and more than 500 weekend clients. This call was not expected and gave us only a few days to work with the Office of Contracting and Procurement to ensure that our clients, including our most vulnerable homebound clients, received meals with limited or no disruption. Currently, we have temporary vendors in place until we can execute permanent contracts.

As I reflect on this ordeal, the old adage, "Don't put all of your eggs in one basket," applies so eloquently here. Nutrition Inc. provided meals to each ward of the city under the contract with the government and when the business failed, we were forced to find an immediate solution.

To prevent a similar situation in

See **DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**, page 27

## Ms. Senior D.C. 2011 Chosen

Elegantly dressed in gowns as light as champagne and peach and as dark as midnight blue, 10 women graced the stage with their escorts as they awaited announcement of the winner of this year's Ms. Senior D.C. Pageant. Local broadcaster and producer Jerry Phillips announced Ms. Senior D.C. 2011 as Emma P. Ward.

Ward dazzled the crowd during the talent presentation by dancing to the song "Billie Jean" by Michael Jackson. As she flung her hat across the stage, wearing one glitter glove and a sequined jacket and shirt, she danced with energy, her face set with a determined look.

Ward was also awarded Best Salesperson and Best Evening Gown for her ad and ticket sales and the complementary peach gown she wore. The retired teacher and U.S. Department of Agriculture employee is active in her community tutoring children in reading and math, as well as taking them on field trips.

First runner-up Thomasena C. Allen was awarded Best Talent for playing an excerpt from "Fire Dance" by Manuel De Falla. The classical pianist played this piece from the ballet "Love the Magician." Second Runner up was Julie D. Anderson, who performed the classical piece "Aufschwung," which means "soaring" or "up-swing" by Robert Schumann. Diann Ellerbe, who sang Dionne Warwick's "Alfie," was voted Ms. Congeniality by her fellow contestants.

Ward will represent her peers in the upcoming Ms. Senior America Pageant in Atlantic City, N.J., in October. She will compete against women from across the country in the pageant that celebrates the age of elegance and the inner beauty and community service of the mature woman.

The Ms. Senior D.C. Pageant is presented by the D.C. Senior America Cameo Club, Family Matters of Greater Washington and the D.C. Office on Aging.



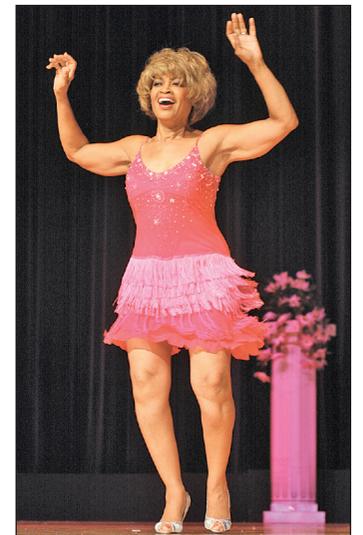
Ms. Senior D.C. contestants included Earnestine Wiggins, Mary Franklin-Knight, Ms. Congeniality Diann Ellerbe, Second Runner-up Julie D. Anderson, Barbara A Brown, Ms. Senior DC Emma P. Ward, Alease S. Smith, Patricia Ferguson-Smith, Janie M. Connor and First Runner-up Thomasena C. Allen.



Jacqueline C. Arguelles, Chairperson, D.C. Commission on Aging; Dr. Kimberly Moore, Ms. Senior America; Dr. John M. Thompson, executive director, D.C. Office on Aging; Ms. Senior D.C. Emma P. Ward; and Tonya Jackson Smallwood, CEO, Family Matters of Greater Washington, pose after the crowning.



Sheila Poole, Ms. Senior D.C. 2010, is escorted by Major Bandy as she does her farewell walk.



Ms. Senior America Kimberly Moore performs Tina Turner's "Proud Mary" at the pageant.



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

VINCENT C. GRAY, MAYOR

## D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

# Community Calendar

## July 15th • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Join in the festivities at the Barney Neighborhood House and the Mason's Summer Senior Festival at Colony House Nutrition Site, 930 Farragut St., N.W. For more information, call James Thompson at 202-939-9031.

## July 19th • 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Have fun and get fit with Iona's laughter yoga, part of its lunch and learn program. Bring your lunch and eat while chatting about yoga. Lunch will be followed by a half hour of safe and easy breathing, stretching and laughter exercises that cultivate child-like play-

fulness, all led by Liz Nichols, expert story teller and yoga instructor. Register by contacting Patricia Dubroof at 202-895-9407 or by e-mail at [events@iona.org](mailto:events@iona.org). Iona is located at 4125 Albemarle St., N.W.

## July 26th • 5 to 8 p.m.

Attend a book signing with the authors of *Fourth Sunday: The Journey of a Book Club*, in which six women share their journey toward friendship by way of a real-life book club. These remarkable women will share not only their love of books but their life experience as well. Learn more on their website, [www.bwread.com](http://www.bwread.com). RSVP

to Patricia Dubroof at 202-895-9407 or by e-mail at [events@iona.org](mailto:events@iona.org). Iona is located at 4125 Albemarle St., N.W.

## August 22nd to 26th

Get away from it all at Senior Fun Camp at Camp Riverview in Scotland, Md. Activities include dance and exercise, arts and crafts, fishing, games and entertainment. Participants will also learn how to prepare healthy meals, how to check their own blood pressure and how to manage their diabetes. For more information, call 202-664-7153 or e-mail Jennifer.Hamilton@dc.gov.

## Important numbers for heat emergencies

Once a heat advisory or alert has been given, seniors are urged to listen to the broadcast media about the weather conditions. Seniors are urged to follow certain protective measures including: staying indoors or in cool places, wearing light clothing, reducing strenuous activities, rescheduling appointments if possible, taking a cold or lukewarm bath or shower, and drinking plenty of non-alcoholic liquids. In addition, seniors should keep the air conditioner and/or fan on, even if it is at a low level.

The following are helpful community resources to be utilized during a heat alert or advisory:

### IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

#### • Emergency Assistance 911

In a life-threatening situation, contact 911 for police, fire and ambulance services. There is a charge for D.C. ambulance transportation to healthcare facilities. Medicare Part A recipients can be reimbursed.

#### • Hyperthermia/Shelter Hotline 202-399-7093 or 1-800-535-7252

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

### GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

#### • D.C. Consumer and Regulatory Affairs 202-442-9557

If the cooling 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. Call the Office of Emergency Management at 202-727-6161 after office hours and weekends.

#### • D.C. Call Center 311

The main number for D.C. government to report a problem or inquiry about city services.

#### • Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency 202-727-6161

This office can give you information about public cooling centers and whom to contact for other assistance. For non-medical emergency assistance and service information after hours, holidays and weekends. 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 you with general information on keeping cool. It can also identify program

centers that are designated as senior cooling sites. The office is open Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

### UTILITY SERVICES AND REPAIRS

#### • D.C. Energy Office Hotline

202-673-6750

The hotline is available Monday through Friday 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. and offers information and financial assistance with utilities. A limited number of free fans may be available for those who qualify.

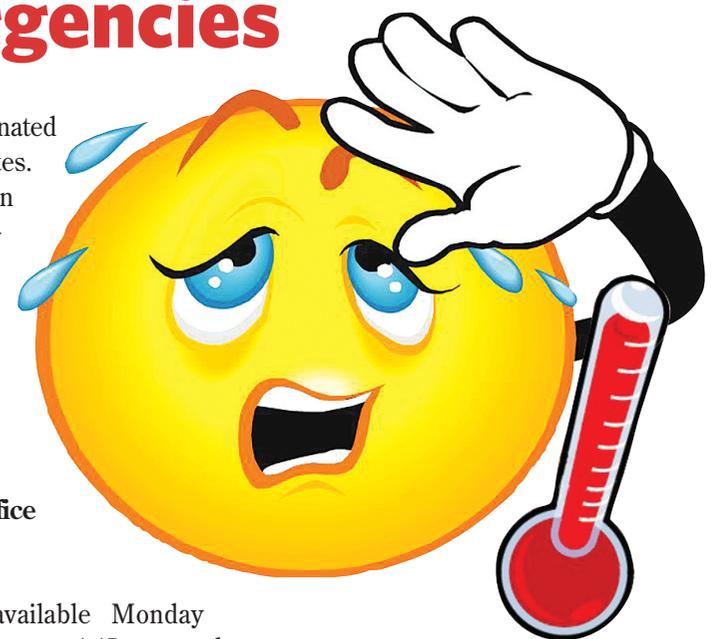
#### • PEPCO 202-833-7500

To report electrical power outage in your residence. Also, let them know if there are persons in your household with health problems.

#### • Washington Gas 703-750-1400

To report gas leakage or outage in your residence. Also, let them know if there are persons in your household with health problems.

#### • D.C. Water 202-612-3400



Call to report any water problems including bursting of pipes (24 hours a day).

#### • Comcast Cable 202-635-5100

To report television cable outage.

### RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

#### • Yellow Pages or 411

If your cooling system or air conditioner goes out inside your private residence, check the Yellow Pages or call directory assistance for listings of heating and cooling contractors. Check to see if they are licensed and bonded.

## SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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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.**

## Director's message

From page 26

the future, the D.C. Office on Aging will spread its risk by contracting with multiple vendors. Furthermore, our office is taking steps to implement an internal quality control mechanism to identify food vendors in a timely manner that are no longer able to meet their contractual obligation to District government.

### Planning for an aging Washington

The demographics of the nation and the city are gradually changing. People are living longer and are having fewer children. What strategies are necessary to address the issues of aging in the community? The District of Colum-

bia Office on Aging will be conducting a citywide comprehensive needs assessment of our senior population.

The outcomes of the needs assessment will be so valuable in numerous ways. First, it will be used to establish the agency's short and long-term strategic plan. Second, it will shape policy concerning the health, social, transportation, employment, training and nutrition needs of seniors. Third, it will shape budgetary and resource allocation decisions.

We plan to identify a contractor that will carry out this needs assessment. Moreover, we look forward to the community's participation so that we can hear from many stakeholders representing all eight wards of the District.

Stay as active as physically possible this summer!