



The Senior Advocate

Volume 7, Issue 4

Winter 2010

Windows of Opportunity



A "WOO" is an opportunity for you to benefit from a free or low-cost event, class or service. Look for the WOO Window throughout this issue of The Senior Advocate!

Random Thoughts

My mind works like lightning. One brilliant flash and it is gone

My forgetter's getting better but my rememberer is broke...

Age is a very high price to pay for maturity.

Once over the hill, you pick up speed.

Medicare

Open Enrollment ends on December 31, 2010.

Questions?

Seniors Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) has counselors at:

Senior Services:

724-2040

Shepherd's Center W-S:

748-0217

Shepherd's Center

Kernersville 996-6696

Baby It's Cold Outside! Winter Warmth & Safety Tips

Look for ways to cut down on energy use & make your home energy efficient

- Seal air leaks. Weather strip & insulate the attic hatch or door to prevent warm air from leaking out of the house. Use storm windows or stretch window film to keep out drafts.
- Use a programmable thermostat that can automatically adjust the temperature of your home when you are away.
- Prepare you furnace, boiler or heat pump for winter by having them professionally tuned-up in the Fall. Change furnace filters at least every three months.
- When not using your fireplace, close the damper.

The Weatherization Program is designed to assist the elderly, disabled and low-income families reduce their energy bills by making their home more energy efficient. All work is completed at no cost to qualifying applicants. Examples of weatherization measures include: caulking, insulating, sealing air leaks, installing smoke alarms and replacing light bulbs with CFL bulbs. Call RCS for more information at 336-776-6785.

Other organizations that provide volunteer minor home repair services and may be able to help you with weatherization tasks are:

The Shepherd's Center of Winston-Salem ----- 336-748-0217
 The Shepherd's Center of Kernersville ----- 336-996-6696
 The Blessing Network ----- 336-945-1817
 North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry ----- 877-506-2226

Find out about financial energy assistance programs

- The Salvation Army's *Emergency Assistance Program* provides financial assistance to help pay utility bills. Call 336-722-8721 for information.
- Check with your gas, water & electricity suppliers to see if they offer a monthly budget plan, special heating assistance funds, and "no cut off" guidelines to avoid termination of service for older adults, people with disabilities and ill customers who may have difficulty paying their bills.

Ensure your health and safety

- Do not use your stove or oven to heat your home.
- Keep batteries and flashlights available and use them instead of candles.
- Make sure that smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are installed and working properly. Replace batteries every year.
- Make sure space heaters are at least 3 feet away from anything that might catch fire such as curtains, bedding & furniture. Make sure cords are not damaged and do not pose a tripping hazard.
- Have a fire extinguisher ready to use. Fire extinguishers should be inspected annually.
- Insulate water pipes to avoid freezing and bursting. When freezing temperatures are expected leave water taps slightly open so they drip continuously.

Finding Meaning in a Shrinking World

My friend has had a long and busy life. When she retired at 65, she took on several volunteer jobs working for the symphony, the library, an environmental concern, a museum. She went on 24 trips outside the United States — none of them to Europe. She shopped for herself, cooked for herself, managed her own apartment, and went out for walks twice a day. Now, 22 years later, she no longer has the energy to volunteer. She can't walk very far, and she relies on elevators because of her walker. She can no longer manage purchasing and preparing food. She reads newspaper and magazine articles instead of books. Her world is shrinking. I can tell from talking to my friend that it is harder to feel a strong sense that life has meaning when you can no longer do things for yourself and others. She frequently says that there is no point in her being alive.

Tips for Finding Meaning

What gives meaning to life when someone feels they are no longer able to serve others or contribute to life-time passions or a larger purpose?

Here are some ideas:

- Other people find meaning in life by serving you, so your needs enhance their lives.
- Younger people — your children, grandchildren, others who serve you — also learn by watching you. If you accept your shrinking world cheerfully, you may be making it easier for them to do so when their time comes.
- There is a time in life for doing and giving, and another time for receiving. Without someone to receive, nobody can give.
- Think about what would not have been if you had not existed. The existence of those things gives witness to your existence.
- Meaning doesn't have to come from what you do. Meaning can come from the way you are. The time for doing is past. The time for being is now.

Our understanding of meaning tends to be over-focused on accomplishment. There are many ways to experience meaning — by coping with difficulties and through interactions with others. Meaningful experiences remind us of our aliveness in relation to the world. We ask not only “Am I getting what I want? Am I feeling good?” but shift toward asking “Am I taking part in existence?” Each of us is irreplaceable and unique. What really counts for well-being is having something to live for, which requires being open and flexible to the ever-changing meaning of the moment.

—Excerpted from *Positive Psychology News Daily*, Kathryn Britton, 8/12/10

New County Website for Residents 50+

Forsyth County Aging Services Planning Committee has launched its new website aimed at informing our 50+ residents about local services and events. The site features an interactive events calendar, newsletters, and a resource page. It also includes information about the committee and its subcommittees. Check it out at forsythaging.forsyth.cc





If Only Program Grants Wishes for Adults in Need

The “If Only” program was formed to grant wishes to residents of Forsyth County that have disabling and life threatening conditions. People receiving “If Only” wishes have limited financial resources and are unable to make these dreams come true for themselves. Requests can include a day out, brining in family members for a visit or something that will enhance quality of life for the recipient.

The program is funded by the generous gift of a former Forsyth County resident, Mr. O. Moser. Wishes that have been granted include a trip to the beach, an electronic keyboard, laptop com-

puter for a homebound elder, minor bathroom modifications, wheelchair batteries. Requests that cannot be granted include: Travel outside of the USA, cruises, automobile/RV rentals, medical treatment, cash, anything with a value over \$2,000.

Applicants must be at least 55 years old and have a disabling and life threatening condition, be aware of the request and able to participate in the activity requested.

Please call 703-3883 for more information, a brochure and/or an application.



Forsyth County Library Outreach: Bringing the Library to Homebound Seniors



The Forsyth County Public Library offers special services to patrons who are homebound, institutionalized, or otherwise unable to visit one of our library buildings. Our Adult Outreach program provides access to library services to thousands of Forsyth County citizens who ordinarily would not be reached.

In addition to offering books, magazines and newspapers, Adult Outreach also provides audiobooks on cassette and compact disc for patrons to enjoy. There are also a variety of books and magazines in large print available for circulation. The department also loans portable cassette players to customers who desire access to our extensive collection of audiobooks.

For more information about Forsyth County Public Library's Adult Outreach program, call (336) 703-2903.

SNAP Program Provides Assistance for Older Adults

During the holidays most of us feel truly hungry only while waiting for a good dinner. But not everyone has a place at the table: Six million Americans 60 and up are suffering from hunger and “food insecurity”—they don’t have a reliable way to get nutritionally adequate food. Hunger’s impact is devastating, increasing illness and depression. It may also be avoidable: Only one-third of the older Americans eligible for the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) get benefits. If you or someone you know doesn’t have enough to eat, find out more about SNAP by contacting the Department of Social Services at 336.703.3800. You can also use the AARP Benefits QuickLINK (www.aarp.org/snap) for more information.



Older People who could receive SNAP benefits are leaving money on the table. . .

Here’s why:

“I don’t want to take a hand out”

You’ve paid taxes to make this program possible!

“I don’t want the stigma of using food stamps”

Benefits come on an easy-to-use debit card

“I don’t know how if I qualify or how to apply”

Call 336.703.3800 or visit www.aarp.org/snap

Senior Power Think Tank

A subcommittee of:

Forsyth County Aging Services
Planning Committee
741 North Highland Avenue
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

Phone: 336-703-3883

E-mail: pooreva@forsyth.cc

Web: forsythaging.forsyth.cc

**Working Together to
Make Forsyth County
Senior Friendly**



Thoughts from the New Older Guy in Town...

I was wondering why there are not more seniors that are out and about enjoying what is available in the Winston-Salem area, touted to be the 6th best retirement city in the nation.

I was wondering why there are not more seniors visiting the city and county public meetings to learn what's happening in our community.

I was wondering why more seniors with time on their hands don't volunteer for programs to share their abilities and have fun meeting other people and enjoying retirement to the fullest.

I was wondering why seniors don't want to make their voice known? What do you want, need, & desire for your leisure time?

I was wondering what could be accomplished by our 62,000 seniors if we worked together as a group to get things done. The new Tea Party got things done.... why not the SENIOR PARTY?

The new guy has only lived in this area for two and a half years, but he loves the area and enjoys being a part of what's happening. HOW ABOUT YOU??

How about being a part of the "Senior Power Think Tank?" We meet for a few hours each month and the only requirement is that you "think" and perhaps share your thoughts and comments. Our meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 10:00 am. Call Vicki at 703.3883 for more information.

—Phil Poore



When you hear the term "senior games" it brings to mind a vision of adults participating in athletic events like Olympians. Fact is, Piedmont Plus Senior Games is much more. Yes there are athletic events such as archery, basketball, billiards, bocce, bowling, croquet, cycling, track & field events, a fun walk, golf tournament, horseshoes, racquetball, swimming and tennis.** Yes, there is some competition. But there is also community, a chance to make friends and socialize, and opportunities to connect year-round.



SilverArts is a program of Senior Games that helps keep people active and healthy by providing a forum for showcasing their creative talents. SilverArts participants receive medals just like the athletic events. Events include: **visual arts** (painting, photography, sculpture, drawing), **literary arts** (essay, poem, short story), **performing arts** (vocal, comedy/drama, dance, instrumental—can be groups or individuals), **heritage arts** (wood carving/turning, basket weaving, crochet, jewelry, knitting, needlework, decorative painting, weaving)**.

The games are hosted by the City of Winston-Salem Recreation & Parks Department and open to residents of Davie, Forsyth, Stokes, Surry & Yadkin Counties age 55 & better. For more information call Robert Little @ 727-2325. For SilverArts information call Elaine Williams, 659-4315.

***this just a sampling of events. More events are listed in the PPSG brochure.*