



Hillsborough County
Florida

Senior LIFESTYLE

A Publication by Hillsborough County Department of Aging Services

SPRING 2010

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From the Director, Mr. Bart Banks

Aging Services strives to continue providing quality care and support services to all of our clients, in spite of budgetary challenges that are impacting local government. As a result of these reductions in revenue, we will be undertaking a variety of approaches in an effort to realize cost savings, such as printing this quarterly newsletter in black and white rather than color. We are committed to sharing information of relevance with our clients via the Senior Lifestyle newsletter and hope you enjoy this latest edition.

Bart Banks

BOCC Meetings

Public comment is welcomed at regular meetings of the Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners, including budget hearings. Regular meetings of the Board of County Commissioners are open to the public and are usually held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, beginning at 9 a.m.

Speakers generally are limited to three minutes.

The Commissioners' offices and board room are located on the 2nd floor of County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd. in downtown Tampa.

The dates and times for the following Budget Public Hearings have been confirmed:

- Thursday, July 15, 2010, 6 pm, 2nd floor Board Room
- Wednesday, Sept. 15, 2010, 6 pm, 2nd floor Board Room
- Thursday, Sept. 23, 2010, 6 pm, 2nd floor Board Room

If you are unable to attend these meetings, you can still communicate your opinions to your elected officials by contacting the County Commission:

Via Mail:

Hillsborough County Commissioners
P.O. Box 1110
Tampa, FL 33601
Via Telephone: (813) 272-5660
TTY: (813) 301-7173

Utilities Discounts for Seniors

Hillsborough County offers a senior citizen discount of 25% off the Solid Waste Disposal Assessment to homeowners over age 65 in unincorporated parts of Hillsborough. For more information or to request an application, call the Solid Waste Management Department at (813) 272-5680.

www.hillsboroughcounty.org/solidwaste/senior.cfm

The City of Tampa offers a residential discount for customers who are 65 years or older on their monthly refuse bill. Seniors must complete an application, which is available on the city's website or by calling (813) 348-1111. The application must be notarized and proof of age is required. Refuse set out is limited to one can on each collection day of the week.

www.tampagov.net/dept_Solid_Waste/programs_and_services/Residential_Services/elderly_discounts.asp

Free home improvements are available to senior citizens 60 years and older on low, fixed incomes whose homes are in need of energy-related improvements. This program is a joint service offered by Tampa Electric and The Centre for Women. Contact Tampa Electric for more information at (813) 223-0800 or TDD (813) 228-4613.

www.tampaelectric.com/

“Hello, Grandmother? This is your grandson. I’m in trouble and need your help.”

As alarming as this situation may initially seem to a parent or grandparent, the recipient of such a call needs to stop and think before acting. Why? This upsetting call or e-mail may just be another one of the newest tactics used by scammers to con you and steal your money.

Referred to as the Family-in-Need Scam, it all starts with a telephone call or e-mail claiming that a family member or close friend is in trouble. Scammers claim to need immediate financial assistance in order to get them out of trouble. Scammers direct you not to tell anyone, claiming the situation is embarrassing and humiliating. The purpose of this is to keep you from contacting family members and other friends who may be able to protect you from the scam. Scammers also instruct you to send the money in such a way that they do not have to show any identification or verification to receive the funds, claiming this will more quickly resolve the situation. The purpose of this is to allow the scammers to cash the money order without anyone questioning their actions or checking their identity.

It is important to always remain cautious and think before you act. If you find yourself faced with this situation, the best safeguard is to immediately hang up the phone and call a relative, close friend, or other trusted individual to independently confirm the facts and the circumstances for yourself. Additionally, if the situation is false, contact local law enforcement to report the situation. After all, if a family member or close friend is really in trouble, the family member will appreciate you confirming and verifying the situation to ensure the family member receives help.

The foregoing consumer alert is provided by the Elder Consumer Protection Program at Stetson University College of Law’s Center for Excellence in Elder Law

To obtain additional information, visit the Elder Consumer Protection Program’s website at www.law.stetson.edu/elderconsumers.

To inquire about available materials and services, or schedule a community education or professional development presentation, contact Slade V. Dukes via e-mail at elderconsumers@law.stetson.edu or by telephone at (727) 562-7888.

Aging in place can be done with style and grace

(ARA) - Aging in place - updating one’s home to accommodate changing needs and abilities as one ages - doesn’t have to mean sacrificing a home’s style and decor. From attractive lighting designed to work well for aging eyes to barrier-free shower stalls that compete in beauty and practicality with what you might find in a luxury community for those 55 and older, plenty of home modifications now make it possible to age in place gracefully and stylishly.

Kitchens and baths are commonly the most challenging rooms in the house for people, like many seniors, with mobility issues. Updating these rooms can go a long way toward helping you stay in and enjoy your own home for as long as possible.

When renovating your bathroom, focus on the important elements, including low-level entryways, accessible grab bars, easy grip faucets and showers with safety screens. Other elements include safer, slip-resistant flooring; brighter, more flexible lighting; and safe access to the shower or bathtub.

Walk in showers

Stepping in and out of a tub or shower is one of the riskiest times for people with mobility challenges. Appropriately placed grab bars - now available in designer colors and textures - can help improve safety in these high-risk areas. The walk-in showers are a good option for wheelchair users or in rooms where a full-size tub is not practical.

Flooring

That tile floor that you adored in your 40s can be a slip hazard when you reach your 70s. In fact, any hard bathroom floor surface, such as linoleum, vinyl or tile can put you at increased risk of slipping and falling. Carpeting might be a better option, one that is slip resistant and warmer and softer on the feet. Many manufacturers now offer materials that are attractive and able to repel moisture.

Lighting

Aging eyes not only need more light to see, they need better quality light, especially at night. Avoid dim lighting; older eyes need several times more light than younger eyes to see well, experts say. Increase the amount of light in your bathroom and consider using naturally brighter bulbs like compact fluorescent bulbs, which are also energy-efficient.

Courtesy of ARAcontent

Tips for Healthy Snacking

Fruits make a good choice for snacks because they are naturally free of fat, sodium and cholesterol. Dried fruits like apricots and prunes are concentrated sources of nutrients and fiber. Eating ½ of a grapefruit provides 100% of the vitamin C you need for the day. To keep your body healthy, eat two or more servings of fruit each day.

Our bodies need protein to keep our immune systems healthy. By eating fish every week, you may reduce your risk of heart disease. A can of tuna fish can make a quick and easy snack that is high in protein. Canned sardines are a low cost source of high quality protein and calcium. To reduce the cost of eating protein, use plant sources like kidney beans and lentils.

You need two or more servings of dairy products each day. Milk, yogurt and cheese contain calcium, which helps prevent your bones from getting brittle. To fight osteoporosis, do weight-bearing exercises, like walking. One cup of milk contains about 25% of the calcium you need for the day. An ounce and a half of cheese has about the same amount of calcium as 8-ounces of milk.

You should eat six or more servings of grains daily. Grains are foods like bread, rice, cereal, pasta and tortillas. Whole grain crackers make a great snack with cheese or peanut butter. Pretzels are a low-fat snack. And remember to drink plenty of water to keep your body in good working order.

Courtesy of University of Florida Extension, IFAS

Help with Medicare Costs

With health care costs on the rise, Extra Help and Medicare Savings Programs offer help where it is needed most...in the wallet!

More than 90,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Florida may be eligible for Extra Help. For those who qualify, this program will help pay prescription drug costs for beneficiaries enrolled in a Medicare Part D plan. This can include drug plan premiums, deductibles and co-pays. Extra Help may save you up to \$3,900 per year!

Many people may also be eligible for help paying their Medicare Part B premiums.

Can you use some Extra Help? To find out if you qualify and to get help with the application, call the Elder Helpline at 1-800-963-5337.

Free Tax Help

Who's Eligible

If your household income is \$49,000 or less and you file an income tax return, you are eligible for free tax preparation.

Where To Go

Hillsborough County 2010 Tax Preparation sites hours of operation vary by site. Call to confirm dates and times that free tax help will be available. For more information about free income tax preparation locations in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties, call 2-1-1.



Older Americans Month 2010 ~ **Age Strong! Live Long!**

May is Older Americans Month—a tradition dating back to 1963 to honor the legacies and ongoing contributions of older Americans and support them as they enter the next stage in life. Hillsborough County Department of Aging Services is joining communities nationwide in celebrating this month with special activities and events.

This year's Older Americans Month theme—Age Strong! Live Long!—recognizes the diversity and vitality of today's older Americans who span three generations. They have lived through wars and hard times, as well as periods of unprecedented prosperity. They pioneered new technologies in medicine, communications and industry, while spearheading a cultural revolution that won equal rights for minorities, women and disabled Americans.

These remarkable achievements demonstrate the strength and character of older Americans, and underscore the debt of gratitude we owe to the generations that have given our society so much. But the contributions of older Americans are not only in the past. Older Americans are living longer and are more active than ever before. And with the aging of the baby boomer generation—the largest in our nation's history—America's senior population is expected to number 71.5 million by 2030.

While keeping the growing population of older Americans healthy and active will increase the demand for senior services, what is remarkable is the extent to which older Americans themselves are supporting each other. The annual commemoration of Older Americans Month is our opportunity to recognize the contributions of older citizens and join them in providing services and support that empower the elderly. Americans of all ages and backgrounds can volunteer with programs that improve health literacy, increase access to quality health services, offer food and nutrition services, provide financial and housing counseling, sponsor social activities and community engagement, and more. Contact the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) at (813) 276-2936 to find out what you can do to strengthen services for older Americans, this month and all year round.

(Calendar of Events on page 4)



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Florida

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Bart Banks, Director

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AgeStrong!LiveLong!

Age Strong! Live Long! Calendar of Events

May 7, 2010

Seniors' Day in the Park
MacFarlane Park
1700 N. MacDill Ave.
Tampa, FL 33607

May 20, 2010

Annual Elderly Affairs Day
Oak at Riverview Senior Center
101 E. Kirby St.
Tampa, FL 33604

May 21, 2010

Seniors' Prom
Brandon Recreation Center
502 E. Sadie St.
Brandon, FL 33510

May 26, 2010

National Senior Health
and Fitness Day
Special Activities at All Senior Centers

