

HC THE 50+ Connection

NEWS and EVENTS from the
Howard County Office on Aging and Independence

Department of Community Resources and Services

Volume 6, No. 12 • December 2016

Taking the Lead in Emergency Preparedness

Early in the recovery process following the Ellicott City flooding, a group of 20 to 30 West End residents began meeting for informal suppers once a week to discuss the impact of the devastation and lend support to one another. The events were simple backyard affairs, with food donated by area restaurants. They invited others in the county to join them, including Daniel Kershner, manager of Emergency Preparedness for Howard County's Department of Community Resources and Services. "Gayle, the event organizer, reached out to me and I was happy to accept the invitation," said Kershner. At first, folks were hesitant to lend him their trust. "Everyone had lost so much that they needed to be sure I was someone who was willing to be there for the long term," he explained.

Kershner has continued to attend the gatherings, and is more than willing to listen and take what residents have to say back to Howard County officials. "Once I earned their trust, residents opened up about their concerns which I shared with county departments. Their firsthand accounts are helping us to see how all the pieces of the recovery fit together, thanks to a continuous flow of information."

Building strong connections with community leaders throughout Howard County is key to creating a more resilient community. Kershner's goal is to identify and reach out to others like Gayle, who are known and trusted by their neighbors. "Establishing relationships within communities prior to an emergency helps us better understand their unique needs based on residents' ages, disabilities or cultural differences."

Just as demographics vary countywide, so do the vulnerabilities. As an example, while flooding is a foremost concern of Ellicott City residents, those who live in the western county want to be prepared for severe storms and high winds. In both instances, insurance — what is and is not covered — is a prime concern. Information is everything, and getting it to people in a manner that is convenient and accessible is key. While social media is an effective tool to reach large numbers of people, door-to-door contact and town hall meetings have been invaluable to keep Ellicott City residents informed during recovery.

Whether emergency preparedness planning meetings take place in someone's backyard or living room, in a village center

or church, or in an assisted living or long-term-care facility, Kershner wants to establish working relationships with residents to help create a more prepared and resilient Howard County. He is currently looking for individuals who are interested in assuming a leadership role for their neighborhood, faith-based or community organization. For more information, contact him at 410-313-0416 or dkershner@howardcountymd.gov.

A Message from

Steven A. Bullock

Director, Howard County Department of
Community Resources and Services



As the new Director of the Department of Community Resources and Services, I am proud to be a steward of the Howard County taxpayer.

My passion is to be able to help people change their lives for the better, to educate them to be resilient and able to take care of their families in good times and in bad. My approach to emergency planning and community preparedness is centered on two important philosophies: For You, By You (FUBU); and Nothing About You Without You (NAYWU). That is why engaging the community in emergency planning is key. I want to harness the energy of individuals whether they are eight or 80 and empower them to sustain themselves in the event of an emergency.

I recognize government has limited capacity, and that's why I firmly believe in bringing community members into the planning process as early and often as possible. In an emergency, there are three things everyone needs: accurate information about the current hazards; where to evacuate to if necessary; and a good pair of shoes to get there. This may sound like an oversimplification, but I cannot stress enough the importance of giving everyone access to the information they need to ensure their personal safety and that of their families.

I was incredibly impressed by the community's response to the devastation following the Ellicott City floods, so I already know how wonderful and resourceful the people in Howard County are. Imagine if we can tap into this resiliency and willingness to help others and provide training for other emergencies. Building on this foundation, my goal is to create a communications network, which brings folks together geographically across the county and across cultures within our communities. Creating culturally-specific communications which are appropriate and accommodating is a vital element of any successful emergency plan. In the accompanying article, you will find several ways you can get personally involved in Howard County's emergency planning process. I hope you will join us!

For information on closings and cancellations, call the **Inclement Weather/Program Status** at **410-313-7777** (VOICE/RELAY); or visit us online at www.howardcountymd.gov/aging, or [www.Facebook.com/HoCoCommunity](https://www.facebook.com/HoCoCommunity).

Home Warranties... Is the Protection Right for You?



When buying a home, many people are offered a home warranty as an incentive. Home warranty companies also pitch their products to owners of older homes as an added protection. It is important to remember that not all home warranties are alike, and some may not include the extent of coverage one would expect.

A home warranty is not the same thing as an insurance policy; it is more like a service contract that covers in home repairs for *specific items under specific conditions*.

- **REVIEW THE WARRANTY** carefully to see what it covers, and, more importantly, what it excludes. Most include the mechanical systems in the home — heating and air conditioning, plumbing, and electrical systems. Some also cover appliances.
- **REVIEW THE COSTS** associated with the warranty. In addition to the cost of the warranty itself, the plan may require a fee for each repair visit. Also, the warranty may not pay for the entire cost of the repair. Some require you to pay a deductible; some cap the amount that will be paid for the repair; others may require you to pay additional out-of-pocket expenses.
- **BEWARE OF EXCLUSIONS.** Many warranties require that systems be maintained a certain way before claims will be honored. For example, if you have an issue with your air conditioner, but the filters haven't been changed as required by the manufacturer, the warranty company may decline to pay for the repair.
- **BEFORE DECIDING** if a home warranty is right for you, assess your needs. Think about the age of the systems or appliances covered and how much it will cost to repair or replace them. How do those costs compare to the price of the warranty and additional fees you'll need to contribute? A warranty may save you money but only if you need a major repair that is covered under its terms.

To report scams or get information on this and other consumer issues, or obtain a copy of this factsheet in an alternative format, contact the Howard County Office of Consumer Protection at consumer@howardcountymd.gov or 410-313-6420 (voice/relay).



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This publication is available in alternate formats upon request. To join our subscriber list, email kahenry@howardcountymd.gov

6751 Columbia Gateway Dr., Suite 200, Columbia, MD 21046
410-313-6410 (VOICE/RELAY) • www.howardcountymd.gov/aging

Find us on www.Facebook.com/HoCoCommunity

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SAVE THE DATE!



KNOW BEFORE YOU OWE!

Student Loan Forum and Resource Fair

Join us for a panel presentation of local, state and federal experts who will answer questions about the student loan process, provide vital resource materials and offer one-on-one guidance.

Wednesday, January 18, 2017 • 7:00 PM

Howard Community College

10901 Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia, MD 21044

Additional information, registration and webinar options for this FREE event will be posted in December at www.howardcountymd.gov/studentloanforum



A PARTNERSHIP PRESENTATION COURTESY OF



If you need this information in an alternate format, or need accommodations to attend, call 410-313-6420 (voice/relay) or email consumer@howardcountymd.gov by January 4.

Medicare Open Enrollment

October 15 through December 7, 2016

— BY APPOINTMENT ONLY —
Call 410-313-7392

Regular SHIP schedule,
plus these additional locations/hours:

Bain 50+ Center

5470 Ruth Keeton Way, Columbia 21044

Thursday, December 1 • 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 3 • 9:00 a.m. – noon

Ellicott City 50+ Center

9401 Frederick Road, Ellicott City 21042

Friday, December 2 • 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

North Laurel 50+ Center

9411 Whiskey Bottom Road, Laurel 20723

Wednesday, December 7 • 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.



**KNOW YOUR OPTIONS.
Contact us for help.**

www.howardcountymd.gov/SHIP

Howard County's 2017 Children on Board

CHILD CARE & PRESCHOOL INFORMATION FAIR

FREE ADMISSION!

Sunday, January 29, 2017 • 1-4 p.m.

Ten Oaks Ballroom 5000 Signal Bell Lane, Clarksville, MD 21029



Please bring a non-perishable item for the Howard County Food Bank

www.howardcountymd.gov/children

410-313-1940 (VOICE/RELAY)
children@howardcountymd.gov

Join Us
for Some
Holiday Fun!

Seniors Together
CONNECT • LEARN • GROW

Annual Holiday Luncheon

Entree Selections: Grilled Sirloin, Chicken Saltimbocca or Mediterranean Couscous with Roasted Vegetables includes salad, chef's vegetable, rolls/butter, dessert, coffee/tea and gratuity

Thursday, December 8

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Turf Valley Resort & Conference Center

2700 Turf Valley Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042

\$24/person

Register no later than **December 1**
at Bain or Ellicott City 50+ Centers

FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONTACT **Elaine Widom** TELE 410-313-7466 (VOICE/RELAY)

EMAIL ewidom@howardcountymd.gov

— A limited number of partial scholarships are available —

2016 PROJECT

Holiday

The **Howard County Office on Aging and Independence** is collecting donated items for low-income seniors who reside in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and in the community.

The wish list includes the following items for both adult men and women and include:

- Body Lotion
 - Body Wash
 - Deodorant
 - Hair Conditioner
 - Shampoo
 - Shaving Cream
 - Slipper Socks
 - Socks
 - Toothbrushes
 - Toothpaste
 - Toiletry Gift Sets
 - Throw Blankets
 - Monetary Donations also accepted
- Funds will be used to purchase items we don't receive or of which we have a shortage.

Drop off your donations by **December 12** at any **Howard County 50+ Center** or the

Howard County Office on Aging and Independence
6751 Columbia Gateway Dr., Suite 200, Columbia, MD 21046

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Debby Magin at 410-313-6063 (VOICE/RELAY) • dmagin@howardcountymd.gov

Howard County Office on
Aging and Independence

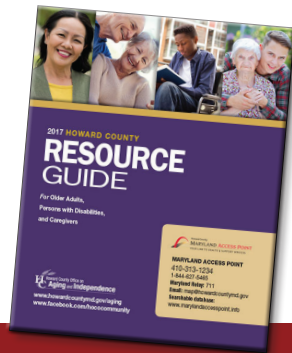
www.howardcountymd.gov/aging

If you need this information in an alternate format, contact Maryland Access Point at 410-313-1234 or map@howardcountymd.gov

Howard County Office on Aging and Independence 2017 Resource Guide

The latest edition is now available at:

- Office on Aging and Independence
6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Columbia 21046
- Howard County 50+ Centers
- Howard County Libraries
- By Mail – Contact MAP at 410-313-1234



To view the guide online, visit

www.custommediaoptions.com/digital/hocoresourceguide2017



Help us Celebrate the Spirit of the Holidays!

Paws4Comfort is accepting new gift donations for the residents of Lorien Nursing Home.

Suggested items include shawls, scarves, puzzle books, calendars, small stuffed animals and jigsaw puzzles.

Gifts may be dropped off at Bain 50+ Center in the "LORIEN" box no later than December 9. Thank you!

**Last 2016 Evaluation
Date is December 1**

PET EVALUATIONS

Bain 50+ Center
5470 Ruth Keeton Way, Columbia 21044

Howard County Office on
Aging and Independence

Ingrid Gleysteen, PROGRAM COORDINATOR
410-313-7461 • igleysteen@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov/paws

Howard County 50+ Centers CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER

SU	MO	TU	WE	TH	FR	SA
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Go to www.howardcountymd.gov/50pluscenters for a complete list of events, programs and services.

Bain 50+ Center

Tuesday, December 6 • 10 a.m. to noon –

Make Your Own Holiday Decorations

Make your season merry and bright with DIY Christmas décor and craft ideas from Linda Ethridge and Tammy Wiggins, Bain 50+ Center director and assistant director, respectively. \$5; includes all materials. Register at front desk.

Tuesday December 13 • 10:30 a.m. –

Holiday Party featuring the Bain 50+ Gospel Choir and the Machaya Klezmer Band

Delight in traditional holiday music with our Gospel Choir and the Machaya Klezmer Band. Machaya is a Yiddish word that means “that which sustains life and brings joy.” Cost: lunch donation. Make your reservation no later than December 6 at 410-313-7213.

Wednesday, December 14 • 10:30 a.m. –

HCC Bain 50+ Choir Holiday Concert

Join the HCC chorus as they sing holiday tunes that will be music to your ears. Reservations requested. FREE. Holiday refreshments served.

East Columbia 50+ Center

December 1-23 • Center Hours – **Clutter Free Gift Ideas**

Stop by the center all month to see our display of useful, thoughtful gifts, perfect for the clutter-challenged people in your life.

Wednesday, December 7 • Noon – **A Lyrical Holiday Tea**

Join us for tea with holiday music compliments of the Lyric Opera. Our poinsettia and wreath sale will begin after the tea. \$6; reservations can be made by calling 410-313-7680.

Tuesday, December 13 • 3:30 p.m. – **Technology Tune Up**

Make an appointment with our Genius Bar! Bring in your tablets, phones, laptops or any other device that baffles you; our experts will help and guide you. FREE.

Elkridge 50+ Center

TEMPORARY LOCATION: **5660 Furnace Avenue, Elkridge 21075**

Wednesday, December 14 • 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. –

Holiday Celebration

Celebrate the season with a catered lunch, music, games and gifts for everyone. \$20; register at the center or call 410-313-5192.

Monday, December 19 • 11 a.m. to noon –

Gift Exchange Bingo

Enjoy Bingo with a holiday twist – bring a wrapped gift valued around \$10 and plan to have fun! Holiday treats will be served; lunch is available with reservation. Register: 410-313-5192.

Wednesday, December 21 • 9 to 10:30 a.m. –

Pancake Breakfast

Join us for breakfast, featuring homemade pancakes, eggs, sausage, fruit and danish. Cost: donations accepted. Register: 410-313-5192.

Ellicott City 50+ Center

Tuesday, December 6 • 12:30 p.m. –

Drage Vukceвич, Coin Consultant

Take stock of your coin collection; learn which items are worth keeping, and which to liquidate. Leave your personal collection at home please. FREE; register at 410-313-1400.

Wednesday, December 7 • 11 a.m. –

Howard Community College Chorus Sings

Enjoy holiday music courtesy of the HCC Chorus. Join us to welcome them as they make their debut appearance here at the Center. FREE.

Friday, December 9 • Noon – **Lyric Opera House of Baltimore Presents Holiday Spirit**

This musical program featuring both secular music and traditional Christmas favorites. The ticketed event includes a catered lunch, served at noon; the show starts at 12:30 p.m. \$10; register at 410-313-1400.

Glenwood 50+ Center

Thursday, December 1 • 1 p.m. – **Winter Wooden Boxes**

Create a wooden centerpiece box from pallets; assemble, paint or stain, then fill with your favorite flowers or decorative items. \$15; class size is limited. Pre-register: 410-313-5440.

Friday, December 9 • 1:30 p.m. – **Paint it to Frame it**

Join us for a hands-on holiday workshop. Enjoy music and cider as you paint an adorable snowman on a 10" x 10" canvas to take or gift. No painting experience necessary. \$10; pre-register at 410-313-5440.

Wednesday, December 14 • 11 a.m. –

The Music of Alexander Mitchell

This Berklee College of Music graduate will wow you with his proficiency on the fiddle, mandolin and guitar as well as his amazing singing voice. FREE. For more information, call 410-313-5440.

North Laurel 50+ Center

Friday, December 2 • 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. –

Home for the Holidays with the Lovestory Duo

Ring in the holidays with soul warming songs from powerhouse vocal duo, Lovestory, followed by a festive holiday lunch. \$3 plus lunch donation. Tickets: 410-313-0380.

Friday, December 9 • 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. –

Annual Holiday Bazaar

Visit our one-stop shop for handmade gifts, holiday plants, jewelry, books and sweet treats. FREE. For more information, call: 410-313-0380.

Wednesday, December 14 • 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. –

Holiday with Elvis

Enjoy popular holiday songs and a show-stopping performance by an Elvis tribute artist, followed by a special holiday lunch. \$3 plus lunch donation. Tickets: 410-313-0380.