

The Senior Connection

NEWS and EVENTS from the
Howard County Office on Aging

Department of Citizen Services

Volume 5, No. 5 • May 2015

A Message from

Lois Mikkila

Director, Howard County
Department of Citizen Services



May is Older Americans Month – a wonderful time to recognize the many contributions made by older adults. This year we're also celebrating major anniversaries of two pieces of federal legislation that have played key roles in enhancing the lives of older Americans.

This year is the 80th anniversary of Social Security, which was created in 1935 as part of the New Deal. The first one-time, lump-sum payment was made to a man named Ernest Ackerman, who received a payment in January 1937 for 17 cents! This was a one-time, lump-sum payout — the only type of benefit paid at that time. From that rather inauspicious start, Social Security has certainly grown! From 1937 through 2009, the Social Security program has paid out \$11.3 trillion. (Visit www.ssa.gov/history for a lot more interesting information.)

Fifty years ago this July, Congress passed the Older Americans Act (OAA) out of concern about the lack of support services for older adults. Since its passage, it has provided funding for a wide range of critical services that help older adults remain healthy and independent. In fact, many of the Office on Aging's programs are made possible through the funding we receive through the OAA. You'll find more information about them in this issue.

In honor of OAA's 50th anniversary, this year's Older Americans Month theme – Get into the Act – focuses on how older adults are taking charge of their health, getting engaged in their communities, and making a positive impact in the lives of others.

In Howard County, older adults are actively involved in all aspects of our community. We play key roles in organizations, on boards and commissions, and in faith groups. We understand that staying active helps us as much as it helps others. It's never too late for you to "get into the act." Start today!

Celebrate and

GET INTO THE ACT.
OLDER AMERICANS MONTH
MAY 2015

Older adults are a vital – and growing – part of our society. Since 1963, communities across the country, including Howard County, have shown their gratitude by celebrating Older Americans Month each May. The theme of this year's celebration, "Get into the Act," focuses on how older adults are taking charge of their health, getting engaged in their communities, and making a positive impact on the lives of others.

This year's theme also reflects on the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act, which was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in July 1965. Since that time, the Act has provided a nationwide aging services network and funding that helps older adults live with dignity in the communities of their choice for as long as possible. These services include senior centers, congregate meals, caregiver support, community-based assistance, preventive health services, elder abuse prevention, and much more.

Throughout this issue you will find articles to help you learn more about how the Office on Aging helps residents "Get into the Act." Office on Aging staff provide vital information and resources year-round in Howard County, but Older Americans Month offers our Department a unique opportunity to highlight the wide range of home- and community-based services older adults can access to live independently in their communities.

By promoting inclusivity as well as health and wellness activities, we hope more older adults than ever before will find new and innovative ways to "get into the act" to benefit from these programs.

To find out more, visit <http://acl.gov/olderamericansmonth> or call Maryland Access Point at 410-313-5980 (voice/relay).



The Senior Connection is published monthly by the Howard County Department of Citizen Services and the Office on Aging.

This publication is available in alternate formats upon request.

To join our subscriber list, email seniorconnection@howardcountymd.gov

Howard County Office on Aging, 6751 Columbia Gateway Dr., Columbia, MD 21046

410-313-6410 (VOICE/RELAY) • www.howardcountyaging.org

Find us on www.Facebook.com/HoCoCitizen

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Maryland Access Point Helps Identify Resources

By Peggy Hoffman, Division Manager, Aging and Disability Resource Center

The Older Americans Act (OAA) funds critical services to help keep older adults healthy and independent—services like caregiver support, transportation, health promotion, benefits enrollment and more. Maryland Access Point of Howard County (MAP), the information and resource assistance service of the Office on Aging, addresses these issues and coordinates services for older adults and individuals 18 years and older with disabilities. MAP can help you navigate and understand public and private resource systems; our information specialists will assess your needs, provide resource information, and help you get connected to available resources.

In Howard County, MAP is a “gateway” to Office on Aging programs and information with its “no wrong door approach.” It also connects residents to resources such as the Caregiver Support Program, State Health Insurance Assistance (SHIP) Program for Medicare counseling, in-home assistance options, health and wellness offerings, senior centers and social day program options, transportation options, long-term futures planning, and much more.

MAP’s highly trained information specialists have many years of combined experience in the fields of aging, social work, and health care. Two of our staff are bilingual in Korean; interpretation services are available for other languages as well. MAP serves people by telephone, on home visits, at senior centers, by e-mail, through education and outreach sessions or a combination of the above.

To better illustrate how MAP works, here is a story about a Howard County resident who worked with MAP (some details have been altered to protect her identity).

Ms. K. is a 62-year-old woman who was living in a 2-bedroom apartment with her husband. While she had a small income of her own from disability, she relied on her husband for the remainder their living expenses. As her primary caregiver, he helped with the shopping, meal preparation and household chores.

When her husband died unexpectedly, Ms. K. was left without his financial and personal support and had no savings to fall back on. Desperate for help, a neighbor suggested she contact Maryland Access Point. A short-term care manager visited Ms. K. at home to assess her situation, and determined from Ms. K. that she had significant physical issues including being legally blind, diabetic, having high blood pressure and weakness in her leg from a stroke.

Since Ms. K. had no family in the area to turn to for help, the care manager reached out to the appropriate community agencies on her behalf. Together they created a comprehensive Options Counseling Action Plan, which included applying for public assistance benefits, arranging transportation to and from medical appointments and coordinating Meals on Wheels service. MAP’s care manager also worked with Ms. K’s apartment management to help her move into a more affordable 1-bedroom unit and mobilized volunteers to help her move. Today, Ms. K. is living independently in her apartment with limited in-home assistance.

Contact MAP at 410-313-5980 (voice/relay), Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or email map@howardcountymd.gov.



MARYLAND ACCESS POINT

AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

YOUR GATEWAY TO Information • Assistance • Resources

- Caregiver Resources and Support
- Medicare Education and Assistance
- Housing & Transportation Options
- Home Modification & Repair
- Senior Centers
- Health and Wellness Programs
- Guardianship/Ombudsman
- Short and Long Term Planning
- Reverse Mortgage Counseling
- Aging in Place Consultation
- Social Day Programs
- Volunteer Opportunities

Plan for Today. Plan for Tomorrow.



Howard County
MARYLAND ACCESS POINT

YOUR LINK TO HEALTH & SUPPORT SERVICES

410.313.5980 VOICE/RELAY
844.627.5464 TOLL FREE

map@howardcountymd.gov
www.marylandaccesspoint.info

If you need this information in an alternate format, call 410.313.5980.

Howard County Paws4Comfort

This program fosters special bonds between pets, their owners and the County residents they visit.

If you are interested in volunteering, or wish to attend a free evaluation for your pet, contact:

Ingrid Gleysteen

410-313-7461

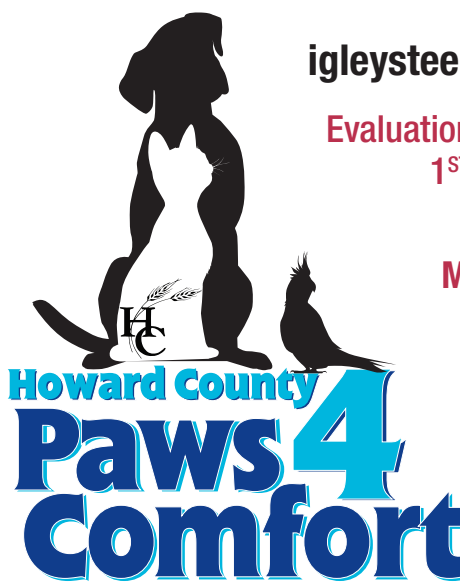
igleysteen@howardcountymd.gov

**Evaluations are held at the Bain Center
1ST WEDNESDAY of every month**

Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.

May 6 ▲ June 3 ▲ July 1

**The Bain Center
5470 Ruth Keeton Way
Columbia, MD 21044**



Keeping Howard County Healthy and Well

By Starr Sowers, Division Manager, Health & Wellness

The Older Americans Act of 1965 defined the need for programs to prevent or delay chronic conditions and promote health among older adults. Through the Older Americans Act and other legislation, the Administration on Aging (AOA) now supports a variety of programs to help older adults remain as healthy and independent as possible in their homes and communities. Managed by the Office of Nutrition and Health Promotion Programs (ONHPP), these programs include congregate and home delivered meals and nutrition education; behavioral health information; chronic disease and diabetes self-management education programs; disease prevention, health promotion, and falls prevention programs and more.

According to the National Council on Aging, nearly 92% of older adults have at least one chronic condition and 77% have at least two (i.e. arthritis, high blood pressure and diabetes). The Office on Aging's Health and Wellness Division was established to focus on people with chronic conditions, and help improve their functional health by expanding health and wellness opportunities. This Division provides Howard County's older adults with the tools necessary to live a vibrant life at any age. Together with our community partners, we offer a wide variety of programs to help maintain an optimal level of physical and emotional health and slow the rate of functional decline as you age.

The Division coordinates large scale community events like the 50+EXPO and WomenFest; offers mental health and peer support through the SeniorsTogether program; and works with volunteers to launch programs like the popular Cycle2Health.

With the aging of the Baby Boomers, the focus of the Health & Wellness Division is shifting to meet the needs of a more active older adult population. As the County's Aging Master Plan survey has indicated, there is a strong need to focus attention on programs for those in underserved communities as well, including the homebound, those with low literacy skills and/or limited English proficiency, and the increasing Hispanic population.

To find out more about Health and Wellness programs in Howard County, visit www.howardcountyaging.org or call 410-313-5980.

Plan now to attend these wellness events presented by the SeniorsTogether program!



Bereavement Group

Wednesdays, starting May 20, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Glenwood 50+ Center, 2400 Route 97, Cooksville, MD 21723

Are you mourning the loss of a loved one? Join a support group to explore life beyond grief. This program is recommended for those bereaved more than two months but less than two years.

Nominal fee applies; call 410-313-7466 to pre-register.

Live Well, Age Well

Tuesday, May 26, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Bain Center, 5470 Ruth Keeton Way, Columbia, MD 21044

Watch three thought-provoking vignettes on living well in every way as you age. Audience interaction is highly encouraged. Free; light refreshments served. To register, call 410-313-7213.

A Moment to Honor

Monday, June 1, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Bain Center, 5470 Ruth Keeton Way, Columbia, MD 21044

Honor the significant people in your life who are no longer with us.

The event features a guest speaker plus time for quiet reflection to music, individual sharing and a group activity.

Free and open to all; light refreshments served.

RSVP to Elaine Widom, 410-313-7353.



www.howardcountyaging.org/seniorstogether

To request a sign language interpreter or other accommodations to participate, call 410-313-7466 one week in advance.

Cycle2Health

HOWARD COUNTY



**Please Join Us for the 2015
CYCLING SEASON KICK-OFF!**

**Thursday, May 14, 2015 • 10 a.m.
East Columbia 50+ Center**

In the parking lot at 6600 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

Jennifer Lee, Program Coordinator

410-313-5940 (VOICE/RELAY) • jlee@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountyaging.org/cycle2health



This is a recreational program for the benefit of exercise and to explore the natural beauty and sights of Howard County. A \$10 annual fee is required and will be collected at registration and applied to the spring through fall riding season. Rides vary in length and difficulty.

VAC Protects Elders

By Ofelia Ross Ott, Division Manager,
Home and Community Based Services

Every person has the right to live a life free from abuse, exploitation and neglect. While most are able to protect themselves from these types of victimization, there are many who cannot — especially adults who are vulnerable due to a disability, their age, or an impairment or illness.

In 2005, the Howard County Vulnerable Adults Committee (VAC) was created to address neglect, abuse, and exploitation issues, as well as increase protection efforts for those who are limited in their ability to take care of themselves. The committee brings together agencies throughout Howard County, including the Police Department, Office on Aging, Adult Protective Services, State's Attorney's Office, Grassroots, Family and Children Services, and Office of Law, as well as additional non-profits to review ongoing cases involving vulnerable adults. The Committee provides a 360 degree look at each situation to ensure that services from all resources are provided in order to increase long-term success.

Each of these member organizations has made a commitment to provide strategic leadership, oversee effective inter-agency collaboration, share best practices in policy and procedures, and provide training in the community and to professionals serving vulnerable adults. As part of this effort, the Vulnerable Adults Committee will host the 2nd annual "Protecting Vulnerable Adults: Elder Abuse Awareness Conference," on June 12 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Sheraton in Columbia. The conference is designed for professionals and advocates serving older adults. For more information or to register, visit www.howardcountyyaging.org/eldersafety.

The VAC is chaired by Lt. Jennifer Reidy of the Howard County Police Department. For more information, call 410-313-2207 (voice/relay) or email VAC@howardcountymd.gov.

Get Into the Act at Senior Centers

By Barbara Scher, Senior Center Division Manager and
Terri Hansen, Senior Center Plus Division Manager

Recognized by the Older Americans Act (OAA) as focal points in the community, senior centers have become one of the most widely used services among America's older adults. Nationwide, nearly 11,000 senior centers serve over 1 million older adults every day.

In Howard County, seven senior (or 50+) centers and three senior center plus sites connect older adults to a wide variety of resources, information and services that help them stay healthy and independent, including recreation; lifelong learning; nutrition counseling and congregate meals; volunteerism and more. Enrichment opportunities abound — participants can express themselves through the arts, discuss today's political issues, and exercise their minds and bodies.

Senior centers create an atmosphere that affirms the dignity and self-worth of older adults, while supporting their desire to maintain their independence in the community. The OAA's Congregate Meal Program and Nutrition Services help to reduce hunger and food insecurity among older adults while promoting socialization and independent living.

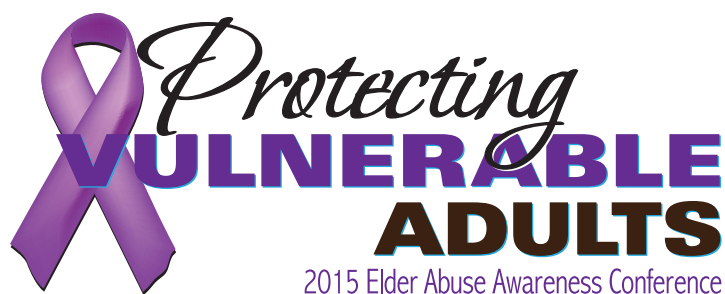
Senior Center Plus

Senior Center Plus sites provide structured therapeutic activities for older persons who, due to a physical and/or cognitive disability, are unable to manage the traditional senior center setting independently. The three Plus sites, located in Ellicott City, Glenwood and North Laurel, support the independence of older persons with functional disabilities, and provide respite to their family caregivers. With a 1:8 staff to participant ratio, the four hour, fee-for-service program is better able to meet individual needs and abilities.

Kindred Spirits Social Club

The Office on Aging offers the Kindred Spirits Social Club as a place for people diagnosed with an early stage memory disorder to interact with others walking the same journey. Developed in cooperation with the Alzheimer's Association of Greater Maryland, the Club provides socialization, companionship, support, and activities in a safe and nurturing environment. This four hour, fee-for-service program is offered at the Glenwood 50+ Center on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. For more information, call 410-313-5440 (voice/relay).

Register Now for the 2nd Annual PVA Conference!



PRESENTED BY THE
Howard County Department of Citizen Services Office on Aging, the Howard County Mental Health Authority and the Howard County Police Department

Advocates • Fiduciaries • First Responders • Medical Professionals

FREE Admission • Limited Seating

Friday, June 12, 2015 • 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Sheraton Columbia, 10207 Wincopin Circle, Columbia, MD 21044

REGISTER ONLINE AT

<https://eventbrite.com/event/16163129355/>

For more information, contact Ofelia Ross Ott
410-313-6052 • oross@howardcountymd.gov

If you need an interpreter, or other accommodations to attend, contact Maryland Access Point (MAP) at map@howardcountymd.gov or 410-313-5980 at least one week in advance.

www.howardcountyyaging.org/eldersafety

HOWARD COUNTY SENIOR CENTERS

Bain Center	5470 Ruth Keeton Way, Columbia	410-313-7213
East Columbia 50+ Center	6600 Cradlerock Way, Columbia.....	410-313-7680
Elkridge Senior Center.....	6540 Washington Blvd., Elkridge.....	410-313-5192
Ellicott City Senior Center	9401 Frederick Rd., Ellicott City	410-313-1400
Glenwood 50+ Center	2400 Route 97, Cooksville	410-313-5440
Longwood Senior Center	6150 Foreland Garth, Columbia.....	410-313-7217
North Laurel 50+ Center	9411 Whiskey Bottom Rd., Laurel	410-313-0380

SENIOR CENTER PLUS SITES

Ellicott City Senior Center Plus	410-313-1425
Glenwood Senior Center Plus	410-313-5442
North Laurel Senior Center Plus.....	410-313-7218



www.howardcountyyaging.org/seniorcenters