

The Senior Connection

NEWS and EVENTS from the
Howard County Office on Aging

Department of Citizen Services

Volume 5, No. 12 • December 2015

Share the Spirit of Giving this Holiday Season

The spirit of giving is alive and well in Howard County this holiday season! Over the years, the Office on Aging and those we serve throughout the community have been grateful recipients of this support, in ways large and small. With our ever-increasing older adult population, the needs are greater than ever. So if you and your family, business or community group are looking for ways to give back this year, we have some great suggestions for you!

PROJECT HOLIDAY needs your help to make the holidays brighter for many older adults in Howard County who don't have families in the area. The "Wish List" items for men and women include: socks, body wash, gloves/scarves, sweaters, nightgowns/pajamas, puzzle books, stamps or stationery. Our staff and volunteers will wrap and personally deliver these items to residents in nursing homes or assisted living facilities and others in the community, just in time for the holidays. Drop off your donations by Friday, December 4 at any Howard County 50+ Center or the Office on Aging, 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive in Columbia. Monetary donations or gift cards are also welcomed to help us purchase additional items we may not receive through donations. For more information, contact Nicole Baptiste-Patterson at 410-313-6423 (voice/relay) or npatterson@howardcountymd.gov.

To make a difference year-round, consider making a donation to the **VIVIAN L. REID COMMUNITY FUND**. This emergency assistance fund was started by Vivian Reid, the Office on Aging's first administrator, as a way for the community to show their support for Howard County's older adults and adults with disabilities who need a little extra help. The Fund helps pay for essential needs not covered by Medicare or Medical Assistance, like personal care items, dentures and eyeglasses, as well as eviction and utility turnoff prevention.

Imagine having to choose between buying the medications you need or paying your rent to keep a roof over your head. In 2014, 371 individuals received assistance from the Vivian Reid Fund for a total of \$44,560. During the first four months of this year, 184 individuals received help through the fund for a total of \$21,900, an increase of 35 percent over 2014. Every donation, large or small, helps the Office on Aging to meet these increasing needs. Tax-deductible contributions, made payable to the Director of Finance, may be mailed to The Vivian Reid Fund, c/o The Howard County Office on Aging, 6751 Columbia Gateway Drive, Suite 200, Columbia, MD 21046.

Of course, not everyone can afford to purchase gifts or donate money. But most have something just as valuable to offer – their time and talents. The Office on Aging has always recognized the extraordinary value our **VOLUNTEERS** offer; without their support, our ability to host large community events like the 50+EXPO and WomenFest, or offer assistance through SHIP, or sponsor popular programs like Paws4Comfort and Cycle2Health, would be seriously limited. The best part is, our volunteers say they get as much back in satisfaction and enjoyment as they give!

A Message from

Starr P. Sowers

Administrator, Office on Aging



It is hard to believe the holiday season is already upon us! While you are shopping for holiday gifts for your family and friends, please consider adding a few extra items to your list for Project Holiday. Each year, Project Holiday helps to make the holidays brighter for older adults in Howard County who don't have families in the area. Our staff and volunteers wrap and personally deliver these items to residents in nursing homes or assisted living facilities and others in our community, just in time for the holidays. The article at left, *Share the Spirit of Giving*, provides more information on Project Holiday and other ways to show your support for those less fortunate in Howard County this holiday season and beyond.

As 2015 comes to a close and we look forward to the new year, I want to encourage you to take some time to read the "*Creating An Age-Friendly Community*" report, Howard County's 20-year plan to identify programs, facilities and services to meet the needs of our increasing older adult population over the next two decades. The master plan report (which can be viewed and downloaded online at www.howardcountymd.gov/agingmasterplan) is the culmination of a year-long effort that engaged more than 1,600 community members from the public, private and non-profit sectors, as well as the faith community. But the discussion is far from over; in fact, it's just beginning!

In 2016, we plan to meet with community members — from small groups like book clubs to larger organizations like Rotary Clubs — to talk about key elements of the report, and gain valuable feedback. The Office on Aging would like to hear from you as well. Contact us at 410-313-6410 or email aging@howardcountymd.gov, or call Maryland Access Point (MAP) at 410-313-5980 (voice/relay).

Happy Holidays!

If you are interested in volunteering, please take a moment to register on **HOWARD COUNTY'S NEW VOLUNTEER WEBSITE**, www.hocovolunteer.org. The website lists all current volunteer opportunities within the Office on Aging, as well as others throughout the County. For more information on the variety of volunteer positions available within the Howard County Office on Aging, contact Darlene Vaselaros via email at dvaselaros@howardcountymd.gov or 410-313-5951 (voice/relay).

COGS Celebrates Success with 2015 Annual Fundraiser to Benefit Vivian Reid Community Fund



The Coalition of Geriatric Services (COGS) Casino Night was a resounding success again this year, raising \$10,000 for the Office on Aging's Vivian L. Reid Community Fund. Pictured above, the current COGS Board members at the 2015 Casino Night, which was held September 11 at The Great Room at Historic Savage Mill. Thank you to everyone who helped make the evening possible, including COGS members, sponsors, attendees and volunteers.

When Holiday Shopping, Be Sure to Check All Refund and Warranty Policies First!

It's always smart to comparison shop before making a purchase. However, in addition to comparing prices, be sure to compare the refund policies and warranties offered before making your purchase. Howard County's Office of Consumer Affairs suggests keeping the following tips in mind while shopping for the holidays.

Refunds

- The Maryland Refund Rule states that merchants may establish their own refund policy, but must disclose that policy to consumers in writing.
- Refund policies may offer full or partial refunds, store credit, or state that no refunds are available.
- Refund policies can be disclosed on a sign posted the store, on the product or on the sales form.
- If no refund policy is disclosed, the store must provide refunds on returned goods. If you don't see it posted, ask about their policy before making your purchase. Signs must be clearly visible but can easily be overlooked while you are shopping.
- Remember to look for the seller's return policy when shopping online. Who pays the shipping cost if you return a purchase?

Warranties

- If the goods you buy are defective, the seller must repair or replace the goods or refund the purchase price. In Maryland, all goods come with an "implied warranty" that they are in working condition and will be fit for their intended purpose, for a reasonable amount of time.

- Goods may also come with an "express warranty" that covers some or all of the parts and/or labor for a set period of time. Make sure you understand the terms of the warranty and determine whether it is offered by the merchant or manufacturer. Check to see if other stores offer a better warranty for the same goods.
- If the merchant offers to sell you an "extended warranty," get details on what the coverage includes and think about how likely it is that the item will break during the coverage period. Such warranties are often not worth the price, and only serve as moneymakers for the merchant.

For more information, contact the Office of Consumer Affairs at 410-313-6420 (voice/relay) or www.howardcountymd.gov/consumer.



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

Kim Higdon Henry, Senior Connection Editor
kahenry@howardcountymd.gov

Advertising contained in the Beacon is not endorsed by the Howard County Office on Aging or by the publisher.



Help us Celebrate the Spirit of the Holidays!

Paws4Comfort will be hosting its annual Lorien Holiday Party and is in need of donations for its residents. We are asking for donations of adult-sized socks, small stuffed or bean-filled animal toys, books, crossword or word-search puzzle books, trinkets, perfume, scarves, and small lap blankets. Gifts may be dropped off at Bain 50+ Center in the "LORIEN" box no later than December 15. Thank you!

Howard County
**Paws4
Comfort**
Touching Hearts... One Visit at a Time

Last 2015 Evaluation Date: Wednesday, December 2

PET EVALUATIONS
First Wednesday of Each Month

Bain 50+ Center
5470 Ruth Keeton Way
Columbia 21044



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

How to Be a GREAT Grandparent!

Parenting has changed in so many ways since today's grandparents were just parents, so don't miss this program!

Wednesday, December 9 • 6:30 - 8:00 pm
Ellicott City 50+ Center, 9411 Frederick Road, Ellicott City 21042

FREE, but space is limited and pre-registration is required!

- Research-based practices to balance with your own tried & true skills
- Great resources to support your children in their new role as parents
- Ways to safeguard your home for infants & toddlers
- Your role as a grandparent vs. a parent

REGISTER AT: www.howardcountymd.gov/familyinstitute
OR PHONE: 410-313-1440 (VOICE/RELAY)

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!



Holiday Luncheon

Choose Your Entree of Salmon, Turkey or Pasta includes salad, chef's vegetable, rolls/butter, dessert, coffee/tea and gratuity \$23/person (limited partial scholarships are available)

Register by November 20

Thursday, December 3 • 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Turf Valley

2700 Turf Valley Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042

For registration and information, contact Karen Hull
410-313-7466 (VOICE/RELAY) • khull@howardcountymd.gov

2015

PROJECT

Holiday

We are collecting donation for low-income seniors who reside in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and in the community.

Our **WISH LIST** includes items for adult men and women, such as blankets/throws, stamps/stationery, puzzle books, scarves, pajamas, toiletries, etc. Monetary donations are also accepted.

Please drop off your donations by December 4 at any **Howard County 50+ Center** or the

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Nicole Baptiste-Patterson 410-313-6423 (VOICE/RELAY)
or via email to npatterson@howardcountymd.gov



Medicare Open Enrollment Events

October 15 through December 7, 2015

By Appointment Only. Call 410-313-7392.

Bain 50+ Center

Thursday, December 3 • 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 5 • 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Ellicott City 50+ Center

Friday, December 4 • 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

North Laurel 50+ Center

Tuesday, December 1 • 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.



KNOW YOUR OPTIONS.
Contact us for help.

410-313-7392 (VOICE/RELAY) • www.howardcountyyaging.org/SHIP

December 2015 Calendar of Events

Don't miss the exciting programs and services at one of the dynamic Howard County Office on Aging 50+ Centers near you!



Bain 50+ Center

Friday, December 4 • 1:00 p.m. — BAIN HOLIDAY CONCERT: ENJOYING THE ARTS

Enjoy a holiday concert by Dorothea Craft, a classically-trained musician, and Atholton High School's Classical Musicians. FREE; refreshments provided. Details: 410-313-7213.

Tuesday, December 8 • 10:00 a.m. to noon — EAT, DRINK & KARAOKE MOCKTAIL PARTY

Pro-Karaoke DJ will help you unleash your inner rock star! Join us for singing, dancing and just plain fun! FREE, but you must RSVP to attend. Register: 410-313-7213.

Tuesday, December 15 • 11:00 a.m. — HOLIDAY PARTY

Join us for the Bain Center's Gospel Choir & The Violin Cello Duet of Hanukkah Music in celebration of this festive season with friends, food and fun. FREE; sign up by December 8 to enjoy a special meal (lunch donation requested). Call: 410-313-7213.

East Columbia 50+ Center

Tuesdays in December • 10:00 a.m. — COME COLOR WITH US

Color between the lines or don't. Just join us for this relaxing hour of expert level coloring, tea and talk. FREE. Register: 410-313-7680.

Tuesday, December 8 and 22 • 3:30 p.m. — iPad TUTORIALS

Get connected through technology! The Columbia Association's Youth and Teen Center students will show you how to use your iPads, phones or any electronic device you have. FREE. Register: 410-313-7680.

Monday, December 21 • 7 to 8:30 p.m. — CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Sponsored by SeniorsTogether, this facilitated group meets the third Monday of every month to focus on four caregiver concerns: practical resources; social networking; emotional support; and leisure time. FREE. Register: 410-313-7466.

Elkridge 50+ Center

Wednesday, December 9 • 10:00 a.m. to noon — TEA AND COOKIE SWAP

Join us for a good old-fashioned Social Tea and Holiday Cookie Exchange. FREE; refreshments served. Reservations: 410-313-4930.

Monday, December 14 • 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. — GIFT EXCHANGE HOLIDAY BINGO

Join our friends from Howard County Recreation and Parks for a gift exchange Bingo. Bring a new, unwrapped gift worth \$5 or more. Call 410-313-4930 for reservations by December 11.

Friday, December 18 • 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. — HOLIDAY LUNCH AND GIFT EXCHANGE

Enjoy a catered lunch and join in our holiday gift exchange (you never know what you will go home with) but we always have a wonderful meal and plenty of fun! For details and reservations: 410-313-4930.

Ellicott City 50+ Center

Wednesday, December 2 • 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. — HOLIDAY CRAFT BOUTIQUE

Shop our holiday craft boutique for special one of a kind gifts for your loved ones and friends. Come by to eat, drink and shop; proceeds benefit the Ellicott City 50+ Council. \$1 admission; details: 410-313-1400.

Sunday, December 6 • 2:00 p.m. — SHOW TIME SINGERS CONCERT

The Show Time Singers present a cappella and accompanied musical selections of Broadway tunes and popular standards. FREE; supported by grants from the Howard County Arts Council and Howard County Government. Pick up tickets at the front desk.

Tuesday, December 8 • 10:30 a.m. — HANUKKAH PROGRAM

Felicia Stein will present the symbolism, traditions and fun of Hanukkah; learn about the stories of the Maccabees and the lighting of the Menorah. FREE. Register: 410-313-1400.

Glenwood 50+ Center

Wednesday, December 9 • 11 a.m. — LYRIC OPERA HOUSE PRESENTS: HOLIDAY SPIRIT

Join a Lyric Opera House singer and pianist as they present holiday favorites. The cheerful and bright tradition includes a sing along. FREE. Information: 410-313-5440.

Monday, December 14 • 1 p.m. — GIFTS FROM THE KITCHEN

Join Glenwood 50+ Center staff as they showcase their favorite holiday gifts from the kitchen. Learn to make easy, festive holiday treats and how to package them beautifully. \$7/person; register: 410-313-5440.

Friday, December 11 • 10:30 a.m. — HOLIDAY SWAGS

Relax to the sounds of the season, enjoy spiced cider and create a beautiful swag. We provide all the greens, bows and ribbons you need to create a beautiful holiday decoration! \$5/person; register: 410-313-5440.

North Laurel 50+ Center

Wednesday, December 2 • 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. — GRAND NIGHT FOR SINGING

Come tap your toes to the show tunes, ballads and songs from "South Pacific," the "Sound of Music," "Oklahoma" and other memorable musicals. FREE. Call to reserve tickets: 410-313-0380.

Friday, December 4 • 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. — HOLIDAY PLANT SALE

Browse a selection of poinsettias and holiday wreaths and complete your holiday shopping with handmade gifts for sale by the North Laurel Senior Council. Information: 410-313-0380.

Friday, December 11 • 10 to 11 a.m. — EPONYMOUS EPICUREAN DELIGHTS

Find out why Queen Charlotte, the Duke of Wellington, Yorkshire, England and Arnold Palmer have recipes named after them, and explore other dishes named for people or places. \$3/person. 410-313-0380.

FOR A FULL LISTING OF EVENTS at the 50+ Centers: www.howardcountyaging.org/50pluscenters

To request accommodations to participate, call Maryland Access Point at 410-313-5980 (VOICE/RELAY) one week in advance.