

The Senior Advocate

Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia • THE CENTER FOR AGING

Fall 2008

New Affiliate Sites for The Center for Aging

The new Center for Aging Affiliates program expands Senior Services' ongoing effort to support other organizations, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the lives of seniors, adults with disabilities, and their families. By establishing affiliate sites, The Center for Aging provides access to information about wellness programs, community long-term care services, volunteer services and opportunities and other resources in the very neighborhoods of the people who need these services the most. Here are eight of the thirteen Affiliate sites that will open during the next few months:

Virginia Beach

- Philippine Cultural Center

Norfolk

- Advent Episcopal Church
- Calvary Revival Church
- First Baptist Church
- First Church of God
- Miles Memorial United Methodist Church
- Ocean View Presbyterian Church
- The Salvation Army

To learn more about The Center for Aging Affiliates program, call Program Developer Cathy Spriggs at (757) 222-4506.

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Senior Services Receives Top Award at 2008 Successful Aging Forum

Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia is proud to be recognized as the 2008 Outstanding Senior Organization, chosen from among several nominees by the Board of Directors at the Bon Secours 2008 Successful Aging Forum.



John Skirven (center) accepts the 2008 Outstanding Senior Organization Award from Attorney General Bob McDonnell and Bon Secours' Sister Bernard Magill.



2008 Senior Hero Ruby Holland Walden with Naomi Judd.

Photographs courtesy Bon Secours

And, we're equally proud that one of our own volunteers, Ruby Holland Walden, was honored with the 2008 Senior Hero Award. Ruby is not only a Retired and Senior Volunteer Program volunteer, but also a tireless advocate for the disenfranchised in all arenas in her hometown of Suffolk. One of her greatest achievements was bringing the first Headstart program to Suffolk through The STOP Organization.

The Center for Aging Welcomes Mary Levy

Mary Daniels Levy is the new director of The Center for Aging. Mary has served as a program evaluator for Senior Services since 2006. Her extensive and varied background includes executive positions in York County, Pennsylvania, where she was the executive director of the York County Area Agency on Aging, executive director of York County Children and Youth Services and director of the Independent Living Program for The Elm Street Spring Residence. Mary holds a bachelor of social work degree from Temple University and a master's degree in administration from Antioch University.



Her knowledge and experience are tremendous assets to Senior Services and The Center for Aging. Welcome Mary!

From the CEO



I want to take this space to urge you to do three things.

First, VOTE. Regardless of whom you choose you will be

taking part in changing the leadership of our country peacefully. We don't have coups, we don't have juntas, and we don't have monarchs. WE VOTE.

Second, PARTICIPATE in legislative advocacy. As older Americans, as Older Virginians and Virginians with disabilities and as caregivers, YOU know what you need government to do and what it should not do. PAY ATTENTION to what local, state and federal lawmakers say and do. LISTEN to what others are saying about what they think you need. Form your own opinions.

Third, TALK TO YOUR LEGISLATORS. YOUR VOICES are stronger than lobbyists and advocates. You elect them to represent you. They want to hear from you. They also need your ideas.

One in eight Americans today is a senior. One in six Americans today has a disability. These are powerful numbers. But make no mistake. Everyone is different and people have their own views which are shaped by their total life experience, not just their age or condition.

So VOTE, PARTICIPATE and TALK TO YOUR LEGISLATORS.

Sincerely,

John N. Skirven,
Chief Executive Officer

Dear Hampton Roads Legislators and Aging Task Forces Members

Senior Services, the area agency on aging for our region, has the responsibility to advocate for the needs of the elderly. We find it regrettable that the majority of jurisdictions in Hampton Roads reject the legislative platform presented by the Greater Hampton Roads Coalition on Aging.

The Franklin-Southampton Task Force on Aging, the Suffolk Task Force on Aging and the Peninsula Task Force on Aging have rejected this platform. Thus, the "Greater Hampton Roads Task Force on Aging" represents a minority view of only four jurisdictions.

The platform ignores the most urgent needs of seniors in our region and is based on a flawed understanding of federal and state law.

AARP does not support the "Priority Issues" of the platform. In fact, the President of AARP withdrew as Master of Ceremonies for the event based on his understanding of the platform. The Alzheimer's Association, the Hampton/Newport News Community Services Board, the Norfolk Commission on People with Disabilities, the Peninsula Agency on Aging and Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia all oppose the platform.

Virginia faces a true choice. Address the growing need for a collaborative, long-term care policy and real investment in home and community-based long-term care services; or ignore it, and face the 70% growth of the aging and disabled populations over the next 10 years without a real plan.

Waiting lists for Meals on Wheels, home care and transit are here today. They grow daily. One in six of us have a disability. The number of people in need will increase.

We support:

1. Funding for core services, including transportation, meals and in-home care that must meet the growing needs of seniors and people with disabilities.
2. Clear legislation that enables Virginia's No Wrong Door system to be implemented across the Commonwealth.
3. One full-time Ombudsman for every 2,000 people living in long-term care facilities.

Thank you for understanding our position and considering our concern for the seniors and those with disabilities in our region.

Sincerely,

John N. Skirven, Chief Executive Officer

Our Mission: *Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia is the regional organization in South Hampton Roads that supports and enriches the lives of older Virginians and their families through advocacy, education, information, products and comprehensive services.*

Board of Directors: *Herbert W. DeGroft, President, William A. Murden, 1st Vice President, Willar M. Baum, 2nd Vice President, David A. Price, Sr., Treasurer, Maurice Biggs, Jr., Secretary, Shernita Bethea, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, Weeatha Carey, Margie Connor, Planning Advisory Council, Sarah L. Elam, Mary J. Eley, Dwight L. Farmer, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, Lakita S. Frazier, Glenny Harrington, Cynthia Moore Lewis, Kathryn C. Manlove, Volunteer Advisory Council, Delceno C. Miles, John N. Skirven, Ex-Officio*

Regional Snapshot: Characteristics of Seniors and People with Disabilities in South Hampton

Since 2000, South Hampton Roads has been the fastest growing region for seniors in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The trend will only continue as most seniors plan to “age in place”. Simply put, the majority of seniors now living here plan to stay here. This Snapshot, developed by the Hampton Roads Regional Lifelong Planning Partnership, examines the current state of affairs from recent studies of seniors and people with disabilities living in South Hampton Roads.

Growing Fast, Growing Older

Based upon census data, the number of seniors and people with disabilities residing in this region will grow from 160,000 in 2008 to 257,000 in 2020.

	2000	2010	2020
Chesapeake	24,666	29,226	36,514
Franklin	1,929	2,876	4,202
Isle of Wight	5,079	8,923	15,725
Norfolk	32,026	35,223	41,770
Portsmouth	17,615	22,460	27,227
Southampton	3,412	5,728	8,253
Suffolk	9,827	15,624	23,805
Virginia Beach	48,815	74,662	100,014
Total:	143,369	194,722	257,510

Critical Concerns

In a 2007 survey conducted by Senior Services, participants rated the top five needs they would like the Agency to address. The Hampton Roads Disability Services Board also conducted a needs analysis in 2006.

Top five moderate and major problems for senior citizens in South Hampton Roads

1. Not being able to pay for prescription medications	66.7%
2. Not being able to pay for housing costs	59.2%
Not being able to find affordable housing	58.4%
3. Unable to get transportation on weekends	55.3%
Unable to get transportation to help	52.1%
Unable to get transportation to medical appts.	49.0%
Unable to get transportation to shopping	47.9%
4. Not knowing where to look for help	52.5%
5. Too much bureaucracy	52.4%

2006 South Hampton Roads Disability Services Board Needs Assessment

1. Access to medical/therapeutic services	61.6%
2. Expanded medical and shopping transportation	57.8%
3. Independent living assistance	56.4%
4. Help with affordable housing	50.9%
5. Personal assistance	48.2%

Housing

Seventy-five percent of seniors own their own home. Twenty percent of renters over 60 spend at least thirty cents of every dollar on rent and utilities. Thus, seniors who have limited financial resources must seek affordable rental options, namely: Section 8 and government subsidized housing. Additionally, frail seniors and people with disabilities need accessible residential units. The chart below reflects the limited supply of affordable residential units for seniors and people with disabilities.

	Senior	Accessible	Total
Chesapeake	277	135	412
Franklin	143	6	149
Isle of Wight	0	4	4
Norfolk	1,051	256	1,307
Portsmouth	265	227	482
Southampton	0	0	0
Suffolk	55	143	198
Virginia Beach	447	193	640
Total:	2,238	964	3,192

Based upon this data, and the fact that 25% of seniors are not homeowners, our region has the capacity to supply housing for 10% of the target population in 2000, 8% in 2010, and 5% in 2020.

Access to Services

The key to accessing available resources is knowing they exist and knowing where and how to get in touch with them. This information includes but is not limited to long-term care services, benefits, providers and long-term care insurance options. Lack of information about where to turn has been identified as a chronic need in the region. Studies conducted by The Planning Council in 1995 and Senior Services in 2007 reported that lack of information about available services for elderly and their caregivers ranked among the top five needs. A 2003 study by the State Bureau of Insurance found that only 3% of all Virginians age 18 and older had long-term care insurance coverage.

South Hampton Roads has multiple health and human service providers that individually publish newsletters, produce and distribute educational materials, mount media campaigns and conduct public relations efforts to inform the public about the availability of services. No single point of entry existed for people to access long-term care resources until 2007, when Senior Services was designated as the regional site for the Statewide No Wrong Door initiative. This initiative provides long-term support resources

through Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC). ADRCs serve as the primary entry point to publicly funded long-term care services in their communities. The statewide schedule anticipates that this region will be operational within the next 12 to 24 months, thus alleviating many of the barriers to accessing long-term care resources in the future.

Workforce

Numerous factors affect the adequacy and quality of the healthcare workforce in the Commonwealth including demographics, changes in technology, rate of the uninsured, and the deteriorating health status of the citizens of Virginia. In order to provide access to quality care, it is imperative that there be a healthcare workforce that is not only currently strong and of high quality, but which also has a pipeline of individuals ready to take on responsibilities as the current workforce begins retiring.



Statewide studies predict that by 2020 there will be a shortage of approximately 1,500 physicians, 22,600 nurses and a dramatic shortage of direct support professionals (“DSPs”, i.e.: certified nurse aides, orderlies, attendants, home health aides, personal care aides, home care aides, personal care attendants, psychiatric aids, direct care workers, direct services associates, paraprofessionals, medication aides and community health workers.) As our frail and elderly population continues to grow, the demand for DSPs will outpace the supply.

Helping people prevent nursing home placement very frequently requires the services of DSPs who are supervised by RNs and guided by physicians with solid geriatric knowledge. Factors contributing to this shortage include the perception of DSPs as “service industry” employees with an unattractive compensation package containing little or no benefits, the absence of educational and training programs which encourage and promote students to consider a DSP career and finally, an aging workforce that is shrinking in numbers due to retirement.

In addition, there is an acute shortage of social workers trained in medical and geriatric care coordination techniques. Case management practice is rapidly expanding the use of Web-based technology to assess, monitor and communicate the status of clients to care-plan teams. However, local provider agencies continue to rely on outdated technology and manual procedures that not only impede collaboration but which also create duplication of effort and undue burden on the client.

A recent Hampton Roads Planning District Commission study reports that regional employers may soon begin to experience labor shortages and persistent underemployment. These shortages could result in slower economic growth, an increase in inflation and increased difficulty in raising the standard of living.

Transportation

One in five seniors do not drive, and the lack of transportation for older Virginians makes the routine but necessary tasks of getting to the grocery store or pharmacy a day-to-day hardship. Lack of transportation may also prevent some health care workers from reaching the homes of those seniors eligible for in-home long-term care services. Consequently, insufficient transportation services could have detrimental effects on the health and well-being of many seniors in Southeastern Virginia.

Living in a community becomes extremely challenging for seniors without accessible transportation. An assessment by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation indicated that nearly two-thirds of the elderly population live in rural and suburban areas where specialized transit services are limited, even nonexistent, and where traditional transit services are not well-suited. In the more rural areas of Franklin, Isle of Wight County and Southampton County some seniors are susceptible to exploitation by members of their communities who may overcharge them for rides. Even in those areas where public transportation exists, service routes do not extend into all parts of the locality, leaving some seniors without access to public transportation.



Hampton Roads Planning District Commission studies clearly indicate that transportation is a major concern for seniors and people with disabilities. Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) is the major source of transportation for nondriving residents, and several private agencies provide transit services for seniors and people with disabilities. However, HRT is currently the only service with a weekend schedule, and those are the days when nearly six out of ten seniors reported not having transportation. This increases their risk of isolation from faith communities, neighborhood and family members. HRT routes primarily service the metropolitan area consisting of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach.

To learn more about the Regional Snapshot and the Regional Lifelong Planning Partnership, call Long-Term Care Capacity Planner William Wade at (757) 222-4516 and visit the Lifelong Planning Partnership section on Senior Services' Web site www.ssseva.org.

The One-Question Interview

Tell us about the senior who has influenced your life the most.

The senior who most influenced my life would have to be my Grandpa. Paul Sweeney taught me a lot.

In an age when many are living in houses they can't afford I think of him. My Grandfather grew up in the depression and learned the value of a dollar. He paid cash for everything. I once saw him write a check for a car. He thought, 'if you can't afford it you don't need it'.

He was always the life of a party but quiet about personal matters. When I see people airing their dirty laundry on television I wonder how he would react.

I remember when the movie "The Bridges of Madison County" came out. He said, while shaking his head, how horrible it was to portray a woman cheating on her husband. He couldn't understand why anyone would want to flaunt something so morally reprehensible. He was a God fearing man.

The last lesson my Grandpa taught me was 'time waits for no one'. When he got sick I was living hundreds of miles away. I kept putting off a trip home. I guess I thought he would hang on. I wrote him a letter to let him know I was on my way, and that I loved him. It arrived a day too late. My Aunt laid it next to him in the casket. Now I try to live the way he did so that one day we might meet again, and I will finally be able to tell him just how much he influenced me.

Stephanie Harris is a health reporter for WAVY TV 10 and also co-anchors the 5:30 pm newscast and hosts the popular weekly high school student quiz show, "Battle of the Brains" airing on Saturday mornings.



Stephanie Harris

You Can Make a Difference

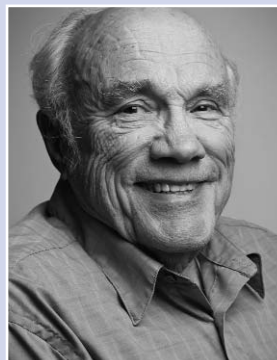
Senior Services gratefully acknowledges the grants, contributions and in-kind support it receives annually from federal, state and local government, individuals, foundations and corporations, United Way of South Hampton Roads and Franklin-Southampton Area United Way.

These resources are necessary for existing programs and services and to build innovative new partnerships to better serve seniors, caregivers and people with disabilities now and in the future.

Opportunities to make a difference include:

- Making an unrestricted contribution
- Designating a gift to a program or project
- Acknowledging a special person or occasion
- Considering a planned gift

If you would like information about these and other ways to support Senior Services, please contact Director of Development Mary Howell at (757) 963-9220 or mhowell@ssseva.org.



Where We Are

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Web: www.ssseva.org

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Southampton

(757) 653-2105 phone
(757) 653-2849 fax

Suffolk

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(757) 925-1448 fax

Spread the News!

We hope you are enjoying your subscription to *The Senior Advocate*. If you know of someone who would like to receive this newsletter – or if you would like to receive it via e-mail – please drop a line to Mary Howell at mhowell@ssseva.org, or call at (757) 963-9220.



Services: Advocacy • Aging Planning • Care Coordination • Financial Assistance & Food Stamps • Home-delivered Meals & Senior Dining • Companion, Homemaker & Personal Care • Insurance, Medicaid, Medicare & Prescription Drug Assistance Long Term Community-based Care • Nursing Home Screening • Ombudsman & Care Concern Investigation • Transit and Wellness Services • Volunteer Opportunities by Seniors and for Seniors



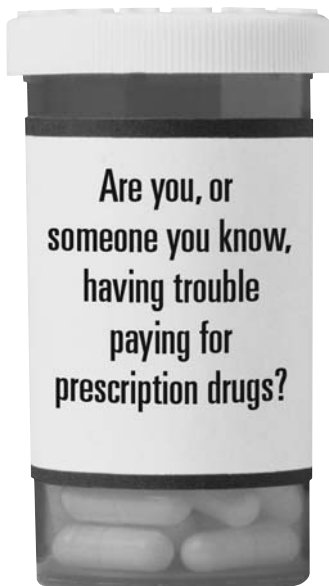
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Just Around the Corner

Medicare Part D Info Presentations



The annual enrollment period for Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage is Nov. 15–Dec. 31, 2008. To assist Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers in selecting or switching 2009 Part D plan, Senior Services will host a series of free Medicare Part D information presentations in October, November and December. Call (757) 461-9481 or check our Web site www.ssseva.org for locations, dates and times.

Volunteers Needed!

Volunteering is a wonderful way for people of all ages to share life experiences, talents and skills. If you have a few hours a week to help in your community please consider these volunteer opportunities:



- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program
- Senior Companion Program
- Boomerang Volunteer Program
- Medication Education Counselor
- Ombudsman Volunteer

For information, call (757) 461-9481 and mention the program in which you are interested.