

The Senior Advocate

Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia • THE CENTER FOR AGING Fall/Winter 2010

Regional Aging in Place Conference to be Held in Norfolk

October 29 is the date for the fourth annual "Aging in Place: Creating Livable Communities" conference hosted by the city of Norfolk, Norfolk Department of Human Services and Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott, 235 E. Main St.

Two very important "Aging in Place" topics — transportation and housing — will be discussed by national, state and local guest panelists and in workshops. Thelma Drake, director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and former 2nd District U.S. representative, will give the keynote address.



Don't miss this major event for seniors, caregivers and professionals from throughout the region.

The \$25 conference fee includes continental breakfast and lunch. Parking for the day is \$6 at the 230 E. Main St. garage across the street from the Marriott. For information and registration, please call Senior Services at 461-9481 or visit www.ssseva.org.

Inside:

*~Meet our new board members
~Important Medicare dates*

Advocacy 101 Course – Empowers Those Who Want to Help Seniors

Advocates for senior citizens are... not quite legion. But they're growing in number and becoming more effective, thanks to the free advocacy courses being offered by Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia.

The first course – Advocacy 101 – was held in separate sessions June 29 and July 1 in Norfolk and drew 19 and 16 citizens respectively, including new board member Mike Aschkenas. The class grew out of a board of directors' initiative to expand advocacy efforts by making them year-round and strengthen them by including public participation.

The course taught the basics of advocating on governmental issues that are important to senior citizens and their families and included printed materials from Senior Services.

Christine Warfel, a board member who chairs the Advocacy Committee, welcomed course participants by describing her initial nervousness about visiting General Assembly members in 2009. "But it really turned out to be a lot of fun, not intimidating at all," she said. "They really want to hear from us."

Warfel said she was excited that area residents want to join with Senior Services as advocates. "You folks here are about to become the ultimate transformers," she said.

CEO John Skirven, who taught the course, said participants could sign up to accompany board members on advocacy visits to state senators and delegates who represent South Hampton Roads. Each citizen-advocate would be specifically matched by district to the legislator who represents him or her in the General Assembly.

Skirven explained that the federal Older American Act, Section 1321.61, empowers agencies on aging to advocate on behalf of older adults as long as activities do not include campaigning for specific political candidates.

During the class, Skirven showed participants how to find the names of their legislators and learn more about them, including their General Assembly committee assignments.

Other topics that were covered included: why advocate, the legislative process, communicating with legislators and "The 11 Commandments of Advocacy," such as picking battles carefully and taking time to thank the legislators.



Continued on page 2

From the CEO



Gov. Bob McDonnell and Secretary of Health and Human Resources Dr. Bill Hazel are considering options to better align aging and disability services in

Virginia. As a first step, Jim Rothrock, current commissioner at the Department of Rehabilitative Services, has been appointed as interim director of the Virginia Department for the Aging.

This issue of the Senior Advocate tells the story of how our board of directors, staff and community partners are joining together to bring about positive changes for seniors and people with disabilities here in South Hampton Roads. We are especially excited about playing a leadership role in the Aging in Place conference and our board's advocacy initiative that is putting a face on issues that affect our constituents.

In closing, please be sure you exercise the most important bond you have to democracy on Nov. 2, 2010: VOTE.

Sincerely,

John N. Skirven,
Chief Executive Officer

Tune in to the 2nd District Congressional Candidates Forum on WHRO TV 15

Please visit www.ssseva.org for air date and time.

Advocacy 101 Course *Continued from front*

Linwood Kay of Norfolk and Pamela Chesson of Chesapeake were among the enthused participants in Advocacy 101.

"I knew the principles, but what I didn't know were some of the details about how to get through to our representatives and about how a bill is passed," said Kay, an 83-year-old retiree from the former Smith and Welton department stores. "I was very pleased and surprised. We should know more about these things, about how to talk with our legislators, how to get them to respond and how to get important information to them."

Kay, who volunteers to help senior citizens through his Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church in Norfolk, said the class was "very worthwhile."

Chesson agreed, saying "we need as much information as we can get to help seniors. They seem to be a population that is pretty under-served."

"One of the best lessons," she said, "was learning how to go online and find information about our elected officials... And there were a lot of really good tips, such as staying focused on the subject and having everything pre-thought-out before meeting with your legislators."

Chesson, 50, volunteers in the Seniors Ministry at her Mount Lebanon Missionary Church, known as "The Mount," in the Great Bridge area of Chesapeake.

Senior Services will offer a follow-up Advocacy 102 class this fall that will be open to anyone. The course is free and Advocacy 101 is not a prerequisite, Skirven said.

For information about when and where Advocacy 102 will be held and the registration deadline, please contact Cathy Spriggs at (757) 222-4506 or visit website www.ssseva.org

“
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—Linwood Kay, class participant
”

‘Seniors Want to Know’ Hotline

Did you ever want your congressman to answer *your* question? Here's your chance. Senior Services has set up the "Seniors Want to Know" hotline, where you can raise your concerns to the region's political leaders by

responding to the following questions:

- What is the one question you would like to ask our region's candidates for Congress in the November 2010 election?
- What should the Virginia General Assembly do for seniors in the 2011 legislative session?

You can record your questions along with your name, address and phone number by calling **(757) 222-4525**.



Please be civil and concise. Senior Services will post selected questions on website ssseva.org and forward to the legislators. They need to know what we are thinking.

Senior Services Elects Two New Board Members

Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia is proud to announce the two newest members elected to its board of directors, Mike Aschkenas of Virginia Beach and L. Ashley Brooks of Chesapeake.

Aschkenas is a retired program analyst who worked for the Department of the Navy and is a partner in Renee's Racket, an antiques and collectibles business. He is a member of the Virginia Beach Mayor's Commission on Aging, vice chairman of Virginia Beach Project Lifesaver and plays competitive tennis at the Virginia Beach Tennis and Country Club. He holds a bachelor of science in economics from Old Dominion University.

Brooks is an associate attorney with Huff, Poole & Mahoney P.C., serving as counsel for trusts and estates and elder law in the firm's Chesapeake office. She received her juris doctor from Regent University School of Law and her bachelor of science in government from Liberty University.



Mike Aschkenas



L. Ashley Brooks

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.



You Can Make a Difference

Senior Services is grateful for the grants, contributions and in-kind support from federal, state and local government, individuals, foundations, corporations, United Way of South Hampton Roads and Franklin-Southampton Area United Way.



These resources are critical for existing programs and services and to build new community-based partnerships to better serve seniors, adults with disabilities and their families. Opportunities include:

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

An added benefit for individuals who contribute \$500 or more and for businesses \$1,000 or more is eligibility for Virginia tax credits worth 40 percent of the gift. This July, Senior Services was awarded \$10,000 in tax credits from the Virginia Department of Social Services Neighborhood Assistance Program. The credits are available to eligible donors before June 30, 2011. That could mean over \$25,000 in needed funds for services and programs.

Call Director of Development Mary Howell: (757) 963-9220.

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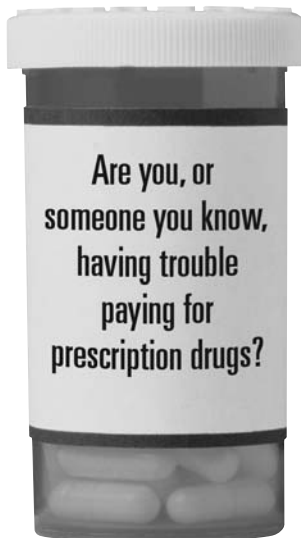
Special Cut and Save Section

First Boomers Turn 65 in 2011

Are you a “Baby Boomer” and enrolling in a Medicare Part D plan for the first time this year?

Senior Services’ medication education staff can help. Also, they can assist you if you are currently enrolled and want a different plan or if you think you may be eligible for the Part D Low-Income Subsidy/“Extra Help” benefit.

This year’s open enrollment period for Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage is November 15 through December 31. Informational presentations will be made throughout South Hampton Roads in October, November and December, 2010. Visit us at www.ssseva.org for dates and locations.



Important Medicare Dates

- October – Prepare and Compare
- November 15 – Enrollment Begins
- December 31 – Enrollment Ends
- January 1 – Coverage Begins

For assistance with Medicare Enrollment, Review or Medicare Part D “Extra Help,” call Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia.

If you live in Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth or Virginia Beach call:

Jim Hutchinson, (757) 461-9481 or Rhoda Stillman, (757) 222-4512

If you live in Franklin, Isle of Wight County, Southampton County or Suffolk call:

Western Tidewater MedCare Access Specialist Brenda Lawrence, (757) 328-4217



Seniors Benefit from Generosity of Local Target Employees

In June, teams of employees at the Target Import Warehouse in Suffolk and the Chesapeake Square Mall and First Colonial (Virginia Beach) stores packed 10,320 emergency breakfast meals in 860 Target bags over four days.

Hundreds of senior citizens throughout South Hampton Roads received shelf-stable breakfast foods to have on hand during hurricane season and for use in other emergencies.

Thank you Target volunteers from the board of directors, staff and seniors.

To learn more about our many volunteer opportunities, please contact Millie Aven at (757) 222-4501 or e-mail her at maven@ssseva.org



The One-Question Interview

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

Louise Bredahl, my next-door neighbor for a dozen years, was born and raised on a farm in Courtland, Va. Maybe because she grew up in harmony with nature, she had better instincts and common sense than most of us.

She knew better than the weatherman, when rain was headed our way. A favorite memory was the sight of her – wide-brimmed hat, flannel shirt, baggy pants – just before rain was due, positioning buckets in the yard to catch the rainwater she’d use for chores and keeping her beloved garden lush.

Louise was recycling long before it was a way of life. For all her thriftiness, she was incredibly generous. Many mornings there’d be a soft knock on our door. It was Louise with a basket of homemade blueberry muffins.

She and her husband, Larry, didn’t eat much but Louise cooked for everyone – neighbors, the needy, the refugee family her church sponsored. She passed on much of what she knew to the five urban-dwellers – a mom, dad and their three little girls – who lived next door. Louise was content to let others



Mary Flachsenhaar

take center-stage. Her skill was sensing a need and quietly filling it. It didn’t take long for our three daughters to learn what Louise’s unspoken life lessons were: *We can all learn from each other. Cherish diversity. Make time for each other.*

From her porch rocking chair, Louise always had time to listen. There isn’t much that can’t be re-used, even an empty yogurt

container. The real treasures are friends and family. And perhaps Louise’s greatest lesson: When it’s your time, go with grace.

Shortly after Louise was diagnosed with cancer, I looked out the window and there she was, putting out the rain buckets, elegant in her frumpy garden clothes. Hope surged through me: There will be more blueberry muffins. I wasn’t ready for a world without Louise. But in the end, it was Louise, as usual, who comforted us.

“My time has come,” she’d say and flash her trademark angelic smile that let you know everything would be all right.

Louise died more than 15 years ago at age 77. Her family spread her ashes over her childhood farm. The good that she did has spread so much farther.

Mary Flachsenhaar is the assistant editor of *Inside Business* magazine.

How to reach us

- Visit our website at www.ssseva.org
- E-mail us at services@ssseva.org
- Contact the office nearest you, listed below

Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach
(757) 461-9481

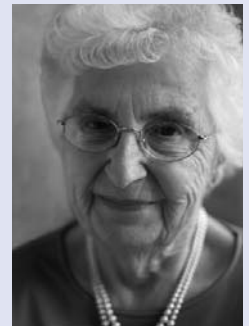
Franklin
(757) 569-8206

Isle of Wight
(757) 357-4050

Southampton
(757) 653-2105

Suffolk
(757) 925-1449

Ombudsman Program
(757) 461-9481 or
1-800-766-8059



Spread the News!

If you know of someone who wants to receive this free newsletter – or you would like to receive it via e-mail – please drop a line to Mary Howell at mhowell@ssseva.org or call (757)963-9220.



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SeniorNavigator.com™
Virginia’s Resource For Health & Aging



Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging.



Connecting You to Community Services

1-800-677-1116



United Way
of South Hampton Roads
Community Partner
Agency #5065

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

Help Yourself to Better Health

If you have diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, heart disease, asthma or any other chronic health condition, Senior Services wants to help. To learn more about the new statewide Chronic Disease Self-Management Program for Older Adults and how to participate in a workshop, call (757) 963-9207.

2010 United Way Campaign

Help seniors in your community by designating Senior Services **#5065** on your United Way



“Combined Charities Campaign” and “Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign” forms or **#47980** on your United Way “Combined Federal Campaign” form.

Caring for the Caregiver

November is National Family Caregivers Month, a good time for caregivers and other family members to acknowledge the important role they play. If you find yourself without the time to take care of your own physical, mental and emotional needs, please take some steps to take care of yourself:

- Give yourself credit, not guilt.
- Ask for help from family or friends so you can take a break.
- Take part in support groups with other caregivers.
- Watch your diet and eat healthy foods.
- Exercise even if you have just a short time to go for a walk.
- Get as much rest as possible.
- Visit your doctor regularly.
- Visit a friend or grandchildren.
- Allow yourself time to go out for dinner, see a movie or go to the library.

Community resources are available. For information visit Senior Services’ website www.ssseva.org, click on **Virginia Easy Access**, then **Community Support** which links to **Caregiver Support** or call (757) 461-9461 and ask for a Senior Services Intake Specialist.