



The Aging Network Newsletter is a publication of the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs & Services
FALL 2007

Network

Andrew J. Spano, Westchester County Executive

Mae Carpenter, Commissioner, Dept. of Senior Programs & Services

From the Commissioner



Larger Workforce Urgently Needed to Care for Seniors

Finding the thousands of workers we need right now to care for the rapidly growing number of senior citizens is one of the biggest challenges the aging network faces.

But this challenge demands more than just recruiting.

It also requires us to provide new hires with adequate training, positive workplace conditions and decent wages to retain them because the already dire crisis will only worsen in coming years.

And, of course, as we move forward we need to put in place sound policies, programs, legislation and resources to support and grow our initiatives.

DSPS took a major step to confront this crisis when we founded the New York Southern Area Aging Network (NY-SAAN), which held its first conference in late May at Fordham University's Lincoln Center campus in Manhattan.

NY-SAAN is a regional consortium of seven counties in lower New York State plus New York City. Its membership also includes long-term care facilities, non-profit and community based organizations and educational institutions.

The theme for the first conference was "Preparing for the Elderboom: Strategies for Success through Workforce Development and Advocacy." It drew 250 participants, who filled every seat in the amphitheater where we met.

The New York City Department for the Aging joined with Westchester's Department of Senior Programs and Services to bring NY-SAAN to life and to make the conference happen. It is imperative all providers work beyond the boundaries of their individual areas to address this very serious problem.

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The scope of the crisis is too big for any single agency to solve on its own.

The numbers speak for themselves.

The U.S. Census estimates that more than 2.2 million people 60 years of age and older live in the southern New York region and account for just over two-thirds of the senior population in the state.

The New York State Office for the Aging has projected that 25 percent of the working population will be at retirement age by 2010. Think about it – 2010 is less than three years away. Last year the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute projected that New York City alone will need 30,000 more home- and community-based direct-care workers by 2012. That's less than five years away.

The conference's morning program was a panel discussion with experts in the field. After lunch, participants split up to take part in 10 afternoon workshops on topics ranging from caregiver issues to disparities in health care for minorities, elder abuse and long-term care.

Our keynote speaker, Robyn Stone, PhD., executive director of the Institute for the Future of Aging Services, stressed the need for a "stable, committed workforce."

"The opportunity is in our sector," she said, "but we're not attracting the talent."

Dr. Stone also said that wages are very important, but there is lots to do to improve working conditions and training programs. She said she has found that today some training programs are poorly used and "orientation is often useless. It goes in one ear and out the other."

Dr. Stone said good sources for potential workers are immigrants and the many middle-aged people in their 50s who were laid off from their jobs but are too young to retire.

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Larger Workforce Urgently Needed to Care for Seniors

She also talked about the importance of having constant contact with high schools, community colleges and technical schools as other sources for employees.

Dr. Stone said the need is for far more than only direct-care workers. She said the aging network must also attract talent for its professional and administrative ranks as well.

Panelist Michael Burgess, director of the state Office for the Aging, said the aging network must change the image of jobs in the aging sector as well as develop a realistic image about older people.

He said that at one time, the elderly were portrayed as infantile and dependent. But more recently, the image is exaggerated on the other side and aging people are seen as wealthy, retired baby boomers who spend lots of time traveling to Florida.

Burgess also said that as NY-SAAN and related efforts move forward it is imperative to constantly have "civic engagement" from everyone in bringing groups together to create change.

More NY-SAAN programs are planned to build on our momentum on workforce development and other vital issues affecting the elderly.

For example, NY-SAAN developed a Workforce Census Study to establish a baseline profile on the

Aging Network workforce. This study will determine the number of paid workers and volunteers at more than 1,200 agencies and organizations throughout the southern region of the state.

Our next conference will be a 2 1/2 day event in September, 2008 in New York City. We have been asked to extend participation to the entire Northeast with a national sponsor.

It mattered greatly when we planned the first NY-SAAN conference at Fordham that we bring in the nationally recognized experts in the aging field and charge a modest registration fee. High travel and registration costs prevent professionals at many smaller agencies from attending the big conferences across the country, where they could hear first-hand from the top leaders in the field.

NY-SAAN plans to continue this approach in our future programs.

Mae Carpenter

Commissioner

Westchester County

Department of Senior Programs
and Services

Help Grandparents Provide Back-To-School Supplies

Grandparents who are raising grandchildren are looking ahead to September when they will need to find a way to pay for back-to-school clothes and other supplies. You can help ease their minds.

For a donation of \$20 or more, the Grandparents Coalition will provide a student being raised by a grandparent with new notebooks, pens and other basic tools of learning.

There are 4,739 grandparents in Westchester County who have sole responsibility for raising grandchildren, and many receive little or no subsidies to help meet those expenses. Often they left retirement and returned to

work to provide for them. Some hold two jobs.

Please send your tax-deductible contribution to the Westchester Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services, 9 S. First Ave., 10th floor, Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10550-3414, Attention: Corina De León, Program Administrator, Grandparents Coalition.

If you wish to give in honor of your child or grandchild or to acknowledge a birthday, anniversary or the memory of someone special to you, we will acknowledge your generosity.

Network In The News

Livable Communities Connection Initiative expands

DSPS has taken big steps to bring its Livable Communities: A Vision for all Ages initiative to every municipality in Westchester through the creation of nine regional centers to enhance the quality of life for seniors, the disabled and their families.

The purpose of the livable communities movement is to develop cities and towns that permit people to age in their homes and neighborhoods with independence, dignity and civic involvement.

Studies have shown that 85 percent of seniors say their choice is to “age in place” rather than move to another city or state or into a nursing home. It is imperative to act now because of the rapidly aging population.

Westchester is in the vanguard of livable community projects in the United States, and its initiative has received national acclaim. This new outreach - known as the Livable Communities Connection - will be operational this fall.

Hallmarks of livable communities are affordable housing, roads designed for safe driving, accessible transportation, well designed sidewalks and well run community centers.

In Westchester, each of the regional Livable Communities Connection centers will have area coordinators who will develop edu-

cational programs on a wide range of topics.

Each of the nine coordinators -- working with a task force -- will inform the public of existing services and advocate for new ones to fill any gaps that exist, perhaps for a handyman to do minor repairs and for volunteers to drive seniors to shop or to doctor's appointments.

In addition, they will help plan programs that interest seniors -- perhaps one on good nutrition or older driver safety or they may follow up on requests to start a book club. The Livable Communities Connection facilitates faster and easier access to these types of programs and services.

Another element involves advocacy skill training to bring about change, and it will start when people become more knowledgeable about the livable communities issues. One skill that residents of all ages will learn is how to write concise and effective letters to their elected officials to advocate for change.

DSPS is issuing a request to ask interested service providers to come forward to make proposals about the initiative and to identify possible coordinators for the nine regions.

The Livable Communities initiative was launched in Westchester by County Executive Andy Spano in June 2006. Since then, DSPS has met with County business and religious leaders to gain their support.

Spano said the regional “Connection” will bring even more positive benefits to the county.

“This stepped-up effort to get the word out will help spread the Livable Communities idea throughout Westchester about programs and services we already offer and point out other areas we might want to develop,” Spano said. “We must be proactive to have a society that supports older adults . . . We want to make Westchester an even better place to live.”

DSPS Commissioner Mae Carpenter said the Livable Communities Connection is a long-term effort that will unfold over several years.

“It’s a major community initiative that must be organized block by block, community by community,” Carpenter said. “It’s a neighborhood empowerment program where people can be proactive.

“Seniors must start to speak out at neighborhood associations, planning board meetings,” Carpenter said. “They can’t leave it up to the formal structure. They have to get involved.”

A case in point where seniors might join forces would be to have a traffic light installed at a dangerous intersection in their community. Once that light is there, it will be easier for them to cross a busy street to go to the supermarket. Or someone else might say ‘I’m in a wheelchair and I got stuck in a pothole. How can we fix that so that I can continue to live

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here?”

Or perhaps they could try to make library hours more convenient. That could be the result of a phone call from someone who says “the library is closed on Sundays, and that’s the only day I can use it.”

Or, they could encourage a town to make its street signs larger and easier to read.

If residents of a region say they want more affordable housing, the coordinator might suggest they attend a planning board meeting in their town.

Or the coordinator might say, “There’s a hearing on that issue in Albany next month. Let’s go.”

Their responsibilities also require them to coordinate their work with the aging network. Here, they might develop programs on topics such as consumer issues, older driver education, caregivers and elder abuse prevention with various coalitions, houses of worship, public libraries, municipalities and other service providers.

The Livable Communities Connection, however, will not be offering “direct” services, such as case management and home-care services. That’s because many of the County’s existing organizations and agencies already provide them.

But it will complement ongoing parts of the initiative, such as asset-mapping.

Asset-mapping involves taking a comprehensive “inventory” of

what assets municipalities already have, such as recreation centers, parks, land use and vacant buildings. From this inventory, it will become evident what else is needed to develop livable communities.

So far asset-mapping has been completed on 15 jurisdictions in Westchester by students at Iona College in New Rochelle. They received their training through a college course on “Community-Based Research-Formal Asset-Mapping for Livable Communities.”

Asset-mapping will continue this fall until it has been completed for every one of the 43 municipalities in the county.

Additional asset-mapping will occur this fall when DSPPS partners with AARP to hold community “visioning” sessions to generate conversation about what type communities people want to live in as they age.

“Bringing everything together is an enormous challenge,” Carpenter said, “But the need for such change is essential, and I am confident that we will succeed.”

Legislative Update

Bills on older workers, Alzheimer’s patients become state law

Two bills to help mature people remain in the workforce and other bills to benefit Alzheimer’s patients and their families were among a number of measures affecting seniors that became State law this

spring.

Passage of the Mature Worker Task Force bill makes New York one of the first states to start building the infrastructure to enable older Americans to continue to work beyond the traditional retirement age, according to a national advocacy movement for older workers.

“New York is taking a great step toward responding to a critical workforce problem,” former U.S. Sen. Harris Wofford said in an April press release. Wofford is an adviser to Experience Wave, which promotes public policies that make it easier for older adults to remain engaged in work and civic life.

“We’re delighted that the Assembly, Senate and Governor agree on the importance of this issue,” Wofford said.

The 19-member Mature Worker Task Force in the State Office for the Aging identifies and addresses legal provisions that may limit opportunities for mature workers. The Task Force also identifies best practices in the private sector to hire, retain and retrain mature workers and serves as an information clearinghouse.

Another bill added two people to the Workforce Investment Board to represent the interests of mature workers and the special challenges they face.

In another area, a new law created the Alzheimer’s Coordinating Council, which will review services for patients with Alzheimer’s disease and other

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dementias and prepare reports to recommend state policy. The Council will also review services initiated and coordinated by public and private agencies to meet the needs of people with dementia and their families.

Still another bill requires the Alzheimer's Coordinating Council to review the best practices of providers concerning early identification of at-risk individuals as well as on referral practices and the range of services available.

The Golden Harvest Awards Luncheon

Three to be honored at Golden Harvest Luncheon

A pioneer in creating equal opportunities for minorities and women, a tireless attorney and leader in the effort to stop elder abuse and the renowned Weill-Cornell Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry will be honored at the 16th annual Golden Harvest Awards Luncheon on Oct. 9.

The gala event will take place at the County Center in White Plains at 11:30 a.m.

The Westchester Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services sponsors the luncheon and presents the awards to recognize outstanding and lasting contributions to Westchester seniors.



Civil rights pioneer Dr. **Dorothy J. Orr**, a former New York State commissioner of Human Rights, will receive the

Humanitarian Award for Lifetime Achievements for her years of work to promote the rights of women and minorities.

She was also the first black woman to be a vice president in the insurance industry when she served as vice president of corporate social responsibility for the Equitable Life Assurance Society from 1975 to 1985. At Equitable, she developed strategies to address the needs of women and minorities, which remain models for other corporations to follow.

In her long career Dr. Orr was also commissioner of higher education for the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.



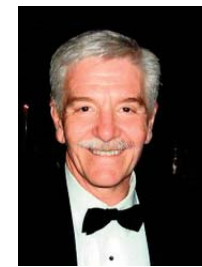
Attorney **Joy Solomon** will receive the Jim Curran Leadership Award, which is named in honor of the founding presi-

dent of the Public/Private Partnership.

Solomon is director and managing attorney of the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Center for Elder Abuse Prevention at the Hebrew Home in Riverdale. The

center is the only long-term care-based shelter dedicated to elderly victims of emotional, physical and financial abuse.

Solomon is also director of elder abuse services at the Pace Women's Justice Center, a not-for-profit legal advocacy and training center.



The **Weill-Cornell Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry** will receive the Corporate Award, and it will be accepted by Dr.

George S. Alexopoulos, the institute's founder and director.

At Weill Medical College of Cornell University, Dr.

Alexopoulos is professor of psychiatry, professor of the Graduate School of Medical Sciences and co-director of the Aging Center for Research and Clinical Care. He founded and continues to serve as director of the Weill-Cornell Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry as well as director of the Advanced Center for Interventions and Services Research in Geriatric Mood Disorders.

In addition, he is a professor of psychiatry and co-director of the Aging Center for Research and Clinical Care and director of the Advanced Center for Interventions and Services Research in Geriatric Mood Disorders.

Attorney Steven Schurkman, the Partnership chairperson and a

Network Elder Abuse



Attorney Steven Schurkman, the Partnership chairperson and a partner with Keane & Beane in White Plains, praised the honorees.

“The Golden Harvest Awards Luncheon is a terrific event which gives the Partnership a public platform to recognize those special individuals and corporations that have helped to make Westchester a place where our residents can remain as they age.”

“Dorothy Orr, Joy Solomon and The Weill-Cornell Institute of Geriatric Psychiatry are extraordinary leaders,” Schurkman said. “I look forward to seeing them be publicly recognized for their successes on behalf of our senior community.”

Westchester County Executive Andy Spano is honorary luncheon chairman.

The Partnership announced the launch of its Web site at a kick-off breakfast this month, and its address will be www.westchesterpartnership.org.

The site was originally formatted by students at Pace University in Pleasantville, and is now being further developed through the DSPS staff.

Partnership members include government agencies, businesses, colleges and universities, service organizations and volunteers. Its goal is to develop resources and programs to enable seniors to age with independence and dignity in their own homes and to remain

active community members.

Since its founding in 1991, the Partnership has raised more than \$3 million to underwrite and expand programs for the County’s Department of Senior Programs and Services.

Just a few of those many and varied programs are Safe Centers for seniors, the advocacy group VOCAL (Voices of Community Action and Leadership), the Livable Communities initiative, the “Generations” newspaper, support for grandparents raising grandchildren, Services Outstationed to Seniors and the Westchester Alliance of Academic Institutions for Aging Related Studies and Workforce Development.

Golden Harvest

Ads in directory reach seniors

One of the best ways for business to market to the senior population in Westchester is through an advertisement in the annual Senior Services Directory for Westchester Public and Private Resources, which targets more than 2,000 seniors and the people who serve them.

The Directory – now in its eighth year – will be distributed at the annual Golden Harvest Awards Luncheon Oct. 9 and at Partnership events and senior centers. They will also be available to local businesses for their employees.

Proceeds from the ads benefit the Westchester Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services, which underwrites many DSPS programs.

Advertising is \$175 for a business-card size ad, \$300 for a half-page and \$600 for a full page.

For more information call (914) 747-0519 or email cappaconnection@earthlink.net. The deadline for placing an advertisement is Sept. 14.

County Focuses Attention on Elder Abuse

“Face it” campaign launched



Westchester County launched a community education campaign to focus renewed attention on elder

abuse this spring to let residents know it can help deal with this growing but often hidden crisis.

“Elder abuse is an outrage,” said County Executive Andy Spano. “We must do all we can to stop this mistreatment of our senior citizens and assist families in resolving the conditions that lead to such situations. The county is ready to do whatever it takes.”

“Face It” flyers in English and Spanish are the keystone of the campaign from the DSPS and its Elder Abuse Coalition. Each flyer



has the words “Face It” in large letters above the face of a senior citizen and DSPS’ elder abuse help line: (914) 813-6436.

They have been mailed to Westchester organizations, houses of worship, government agencies and businesses, such as hair salons and pharmacies, among other places. The mailing included a letter from DSPS Commissioner Mae Carpenter where she called elder abuse “an insidious problem,” and asked the recipients to post the flyers in their various locations to heighten public awareness of the issue.

“Face-It” posters in English and Spanish will be placed in Bee-Line buses. Other parts of the campaign are public service announcements for radio and newspapers.

No place is immune to elder abuse. It occurs throughout the United States and around the world. Westchester’s campaign coincided with the second annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15, which is sponsored by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse.

Elder abuse can happen in many ways. In one family, an elderly man may have early-stage Alzheimer’s so an adult son may use his father’s credit cards without his knowledge to buy personal items for himself.

In another, there could be a daughter who is overwhelmed with caring for her invalid mother.

One day she loses control and slaps her, causing bruises.

In still another situation, some family members resent that a frail aunt had to move in with them. They may express their anger through neglect, perhaps by “forgetting” to give her medications or leaving her alone for hours at a time.

Carpenter said the county has many resources to stop elder abuse such as Safe Centers at three locations to give families a place to talk with counselors to resolve bad situations before they get worse. The Safe Centers offer services through a partnership with ElderServe, the Hebrew Home for the Aged at Riverdale, the Pace Women’s Justice Center and the Westchester Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services.

Victims of elder abuse also have access to a temporary shelter at the Hebrew Home.

But Carpenter said that despite these efforts, elder abuse continues to rise. Estimates say just one in five cases is reported.

“That’s because people are often too ashamed or embarrassed to realize it is even happening let alone talk about it, and that’s why we’re stepping up our efforts,” she said.

Phipps Co-Chaired International Conference

Colette Phipps, research analyst, was one of three co-chairs of Generations United’s 14th annual international conference in Washington, D.C. the week of July 23.

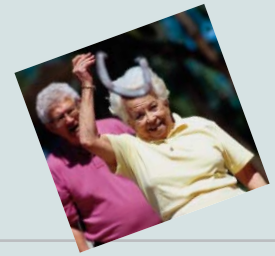
The conference was for professionals in the emerging intergenerational field, which promotes programs that bring children and young people together with seniors to help them all better understand each other’s perspectives.

During one session, the more than 300 participants visited the Easter Seals/Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Intergenerational Center in Silver Spring, Md., where children and adults with disabilities live together under one roof.

In addition, the participants visited the Capitol to hear presentations from members of Congress and advocacy experts on intergenerational legislation.

Generations United represents more than 100 organizations nationwide, that in turn, represent more than 70 million Americans.

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Leadership Graduates

Two DSPS staff members graduated this year from the New Ventures in Leadership program, whose mission is to bring people of color into the aging field in decision-making positions.

Dozene Guishard, DSPS planning and development coordinator, and Colette Phipps, research analyst, were recognized at the spring conference of the American Society on Aging, which sponsors the NVL program.

Judith Richburg, a DSPS program administrator, was accepted into NVL for the current year.

Guishard and Phipps were two of 29 graduates who were selected for their class from a nationwide pool of applicants. More than 300 professionals have graduated from the program since it began in 1993.

NVL requires participants to complete a special project in the field of aging, and their work must be supervised by both a local and a national mentor.

DSPS Commissioner Mae Carpenter said it is an honor to be an NVL graduate.

"We are so proud of them and their dedication to preparing to serve an increasingly diverse elderly population," she said.

NACO Awards

DSPS has received two 2007 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties.

One award was for the Millennium Aging Project, which involved interviews with more than 3,000 seniors and caregivers over a six-year period about issues and needs that affect their quality of life.

The second award was for programs from the Westchester Alliance of Academic Institutions for Aging Related Studies and Workforce Development - a consortium of colleges and universities, government agencies and community based organizations that work together to develop ways to integrate aging issues into the curricula. The long-range goal of these efforts is to interest young people in careers in the aging field.

"These well deserved awards are for positive and innovative programs that enhance the quality of life for Westchester seniors," County Executive Andy Spano said. "The information they provide is helping us to better serve seniors right now, and we are also using them as building blocks to develop initiatives for the future.

DSPS Commissioner Mae Carpenter said it is gratifying the department's projects are receiving national recognition.

"It gives us more momentum than we already have to move for-

ward to make important changes to help Westchester's older population."

Free Medicare Information

A free program on the basics of Medicare will take place on Sept. 18 from 10 a.m. to noon in the eighth-floor conference room at the County Office Building, 9 S. First Ave., Mount Vernon.

The talk will include information about Medicare parts A, B, C and D as well as how to use EPIC for even greater savings.

Medigap insurance, cost-sharing and preventive benefits will also be discussed. The speaker will be Eric Hausman, Medicare Outreach and Education, National Government Services.

For more details or to register, call DSPS' Medicare Information Line at (914) 813-6100. Additional information about Medicare is available on the department's Web site at www.westchestergov.com/aging.

Volunteers Needed

The Medicare Rights Center is looking for volunteers from Westchester County to lead two of its programs, which DSPS helps to fund.

Volunteers for the Health Advocacy Workshops will teach participants how to be advocates for themselves and their families in



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for themselves and their families in the increasingly complex health care system. Among the topics they will discuss are “How to Talk to Your Doctor” and “How to Navigate a Hospital Stay.”

Volunteers in the Seniors Out Speaking on Medicare (SOS Medicare) program will give presentations on Medicare benefits, rights and options and provide free, one-on-one counseling.

Volunteers must live in the County, be at least 50 years old, computer literate, be able to communicate well and have excellent interpersonal skills. Some knowledge of the health-care system is a plus, and health-care professionals, in particular, are encouraged to volunteer.

Participants must attend four, half-day training sessions, and the next start the week of Sept. 24 in White Plains. Registration is mandatory by calling 1-800-480-2060, Ext. 6231 or 212-204-6231.

Nominations Welcome for Hall of Fame

Applications to nominate candidates to the 25th Anniversary Annual Senior Hall of Fame are being mailed to local senior centers, social service agencies and not-for-profit agencies.

The Hall of Fame awards are presented to individuals throughout the County for outstanding contributions in human services, humanitarianism or philanthropy

or for outstanding leadership in initiating, improving or expanding services or programs.

Nominees must be at 60 years old, live in Westchester, have made significant contributions to any segment of society in the County and their achievements must have enduring value.

The Judging Committee for the Hall of Fame recognition often receives more than 100 nominations, and selects 40 from that pool. Send a compelling biography to help the committee fully appreciate your nominee. Because we receive so many nominations and only a special few are chosen, please do not tell your candidate what you have done. The Hall of Fame honor should come as a happy surprise.

Nominations must be received by Sept. 17 at the Department of Senior Programs and Services, 9 S. First Ave., 10th floor, Mount Vernon, N.Y. 10550, Attn: Caryl Weinstein.

The Hall of Fame Luncheon and Awards Ceremony will take place at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown on Dec. 7.

FEMA and ME



When the mid-April Nor'easter slammed into Westchester—and Mamaroneck, in particular—
Laura Bolotsky,
DSPS's director of operations, was asked to go to Mamaroneck's Dis-

aster Recovery Center to work with seniors who needed help. Here are some of her memories of those difficult days.

I haven't been exposed to many natural disasters, living as I have all my life in New York City and southern Westchester.

So the heavy rains the mid-April Nor'easter dumped on our area with the news that boats were helping to evacuate residents from Mamaroneck came as a shock. In my work with the County Department of Senior Programs and Services we have had more opportunities to prepare seniors for blackouts, and other emergencies than to respond to a dramatic flood.

It was in early May that I first came into contact with FEMA and its role in helping the residents of Westchester who were affected.

This was when our office was asked to have a presence at the Disaster Recovery Center in Mamaroneck. I visited the Center on May 10, and was impressed by the number of organizations represented, ready to provide help to all who came to them. Some of the names I remember are the Department of Health, Department of Social Services, Small Business Administration, Housing etc.

My first request from FEMA was to help a senior register with FEMA so that she might receive some assistance. First, I went on the FEMA website and also called

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to register. I then called the woman, spoke with her, assured her that I would stay on the phone to help her register. On the third call, we made the connection, and she was registered.

I was able to help a number of other seniors who lived in Yonkers, New Rochelle, Mamaroneck, Eastchester and Rye by connecting them with local Offices for the Aging and other groups that help seniors in their communities. All the offices kept me informed of how much progress they were making.

Actually, what I learned most was that when you are flooded out and everything in your home is covered with water and mud, not only do you lose your furniture and all your household goods, your car, your precious photos and mementos, but you also lose all the papers that were not in a safe deposit box at your bank or a metal safe in your home. Everything is confusing, and everything takes too long to resolve.

In addition, you don't know what your insurance coverage is because the policy was swept away in the flood. You also don't have your precious phone book, never mind all your photos. You have no clothes and your furniture is gone or so badly damaged that it may cost too much to repair. It's in storage now and how much will it cost to fix and who will cover the cost? Your car -- a classic with very low mileage -- is only worth \$2,500 in the eyes of your

insurance company.

Many seniors had to deal with overwhelming frustration. You found an apartment, and the rent is \$1,600 a month. When you signed the one-year lease the agent took a \$2,000 commission and no one has given you funds to cover that. FEMA is giving you \$1200 toward your monthly rent but only after you pay the bill and send them the receipt. Even though you have flood insurance, you have to fight to get payment for your losses.

Seniors who have stayed at hotels or motels had not gotten money to cover that expense and on and on and on. Some people seem to have gotten large checks from FEMA, but those for the most part were not persons who need our help. We did however have someone who needed us to file an appeal for him, as the initial damage for which he received a FEMA grant was minor compared to all the water damage and mold that had to be cleaned and removed.

But despite all the damage and loss, there were some bright spots. It was wonderful to meet the special staff and volunteers at the Hispanic Resource Center in Mamaroneck who were there from the very beginning trying to manage all the calls and needs not only for Mamaroneck residents but for all callers as well. I was also glad to have the opportunity to meet some wonderful FEMA workers who called me to help

seniors with special needs.

I am personally thankful for the friends I have come to know over the years in the programs that help seniors in Yonkers, New Rochelle, Eastchester, Rye and Mamaroneck, at 211 and all the other places that I called with referrals for help and any comforts they could provide.

But best of all, I have found that people are caring and resilient. Those who endured the flood are very thankful for being spared from worse damages and for being alive and for finding that there are people who care about them and for them.

We'd like your thoughts!

Is this Aging Network Newsletter helpful to you?

Do you have any suggestions about how we could make it better?

Contact Barbara Woller at (914)813-6412 or brw1@westchestergov.com.

Note: This newsletter is intended to promote DSPS services and pro grams and unfortunately can't accommodate any other community news regarding seniors.

Calendar of Events

September

6 Are You Caring for an Elderly Loved One” panel discussion for caregivers on support services, homecare options under the Medicaid Assistance Program and other topics, 6:30 – 8 p.m., *Drum Hill Senior Living Community, 90 Ringgold St., Peekskill*, RSVP to (914)-788-8860, Ext. 15

7 Fall Aging Network Meeting, 9 a.m. - Noon, *County Center, White Plains*

12 Saxon Woods Senior Pool Party, 10 a.m.–3 p.m., *White Plains*

15 Living Healthy Conference for Spanish-speaking seniors and caregivers, sponsored by the Hispanic Coalition, 8:45 a.m-12:30 p.m., *White Plains Hospital Center, White Plains*

18 Learn about Medicare, 10 a.m. - Noon, *Westchester County Office Building, 9 S. First Avenue, Mount Vernon*

19 “Planning Ahead for an Elderly Loved One-What You Need to Know,” panel discussion for caregivers on support services, Alzheimer’s information, advance directives and other topics, 2 -- 4 p.m., *The Woodlands at Ardsley, 1017 Saw Mill River Road, Ardsley*, RSVP to (914) 693-7700

24-30 National Older Worker Week - events throughout the week, including a job fair, Friday, Sept. 28, 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m., *Westchester Community College, Valhalla*

October

9 Golden Harvest Senior Dance and Awards Ceremony, *Westchester County Center, White Plains*

10 Family Caregiver Support Program, free information and opportunity to talk with caregiving experts, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m., *main lobby, Phelps Memorial Hospital Center, 701 N. Broadway, Sleepy Hollow*

12 Senior Law Day, 9 a.m. to Noon, *Westchester County Center, White Plains*

17-19 State Society on Aging of New York, *Marriott, Albany*

25 Westchester Alliance - Aging Career Day – *Pace University, Pleasantville*

30 Annual DSPS Public Hearing, 9 a.m. – Noon, *Westchester County Center, White Plains*

November

13 “Who Is Taking Care of the Caregiver?,” information on services through DSPS, Family Caregiver Support Program, 7 – 8 p.m. *Phelps Memorial Hospital Center, 701 N. Broadway, Sleepy Hollow*

30 RSVP Luncheon, 11: 30 a.m. – 2 p.m., *Crowne Plaza, White Plains*

December

7 Senior Hall of Fame Awards Luncheon, 11:30 – 3 p.m., *Westchester Marriott, Tarrytown*

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Network

DSPS Public Hearing to Present Four-Year Plan

The Department of Senior Programs and Services (DSPS) will present its four-year plan to enhance the lives of seniors in Westchester County and how it expects to allocate its resources to meet those goals at its annual public hearing on Oct. 30.

DSPS Commissioner Mae Carpenter will lead the hearing from 9 a.m. to noon. at the County Center in White Plains.

Individuals, organizations and agencies will be able to comment on the DSPS proposal and present their own ideas on issues ranging from affordable housing to adult day care, in-home care, alternative transportation and new or expanded programming.

Carpenter said the need to address these and related

topics has taken on added urgency in recent years as the population ages.

One in five people in Westchester County is 60 years or older, the Baby Boomers have started to turn 60 and the number of people 85 and older in Westchester jumped 24 percent in the past two decades.

Carpenter said proposals at the hearing will be shared with policy makers, such as the New York State Office for the Aging and with legislators.

Advance registration is not required to speak at the hearing. An abstract of DSPS' four-year plan for 2008 to 2011 will be available in mid-October at its offices on the 10th floor of the County Office Building at 9 S. First Ave. in Mount Vernon.

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