
SENIORS NEWSLETTER

Staten Island Inter-Agency Council for Aging, Inc.

**** A Coalition of Agencies Serving Staten Island's Elderly ****

c/o Sea View Hospital
Administrative Building, Room 123
460 Brielle Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10314
(718) 667-3162

Funded by the Office of the Staten Island Borough President &
The New York City Department for the Aging

Funding provided by:

**City Councilman James S. Oddo;
State Senator Andrew J. Lanza**

Carol Dunn, Executive Director

February 2011

The Editors:

February Celebrations

2nd - Groundhog Day ; 7th - SuperBowl Sunday ;
6th - Valentine 's; 21th - Presidents' Day, &
Engineers' Week ; 22nd Washington's Birthday.

February:

If apples were pears

And peaches were plums

And the rose had a different name.

If tigers were bears

And fingers were thumbs

I'd love you just the same.

- Valentine's Day Songs and Poems

BULLETIN BOARD

FLU vaccination information :

Free Flu Shots - at Sea View Hospital -
Robitzek Bldg. 460 Brielle Avenue SI
10314 , --- Beginning Oct. 12th -- Tuesday
and Wednesday, 9 am to 5pm and the
person must call for an appointment ; main
number is 718 317 3000 and then 0 for
operator.

- **IAC General Membership Meeting/Seminar -- Thur., Feb. 17th 2011;** Senior Housing update, at Community Bd. 2/Louis Caravone Bldg., 460 Brielle Ave., 10314. For additional information : call — (718)667-3162.

Date to remember:

10th Annual Housing Forum 55+ , pre-registration required - April 19th .

- **Volunteer Opportunity - Meals on Wheels of Staten Island, Inc.** is a non-profit agency whose mission is to provide two nutritious meals each day to the

homebound elderly. As the demand for meals continues to grow, so does our need for volunteer drivers. If you are available for approximately two hours, one day a week, you can volunteer to deliver meals to elderly neighbors in your community, or volunteer in our office. Please contact Roseann Holt, Volunteer Coordinator at 718.727.4435 for further information.

- Help Save William H. Pouch Boy Scout Camp on Staten Island

The Greater New York Council, Boy Scouts of America announced, that they are seeking a conservation easement for the property, but may be forced, in the very near future, to place Pouch Camp up for sale for development. A website has been setup so that concerned Scouts and residents of Staten Island and New York City, could get informed and get involved in saving Pouch Camp.
<http://www.savepouch.com/index.html>

RSVP/SERVE - Looking For Your Help -

The Retired and Volunteer Program needs Seniors -55 years & older to volunteer out in the community.

Some opportunities include: Meals on Wheels; Docent in a Museum; Soup Kitchen or Food Pantry; Tutoring children; S.I. hospitals and nursing homes always need clerical help; friendly visitor to talk to patients; etc..

For information contact RSVP/SERVE at 718-494-3222 .

Tax Season Is Upon Us

We have a few tips for you in hopes of making this inevitable situation a little less taxing.

The most important tax tip isRelax. There is plenty of help available whether you - need help preparing your own tax return; need a trained volunteer tax assistor to prepare a return for you; need guidance to free software ; or just a source for information on income tax concerns.

The IRS sponsors TCE (Tax Counseling for the Elderly) & VITA (Volunteer Tax Assistance) Programs. These volunteers will be available at sites throughout the borough from February 1 to April 18th - see the site location list at the end of this newsletter. Also, preparation assistance, information and forms are available at the IRS office located on the 4th Fl. of Borough Hall, Stuyvesant Place, St. George; open Mon., Wed., Fri., (9am-5pm).

Since 1998, the IRS has been encouraging taxpayers to e-file (electronically) and they have made the process both user-friendly and free (income limits , age, etc. may apply.) . If you are at ease on a computer and have internet access, that's all you need to use the www.irs.gov website and use the link to **Free File**. This will lead you to the IRS Free File Services which is an approved list of tax-filing service companies , the Free File Alliance, with such names as Turbo Tax and H&R Block , TaxAct . Only if you use the IRS Free File link are you assured of getting the tax filing service without charge. Some Alliance members also offer free State return e-filing.

This year the AARP Tax-Aide volunteers will be available for E-Filing only at the West Brighton Library (Castleton Ave. & N.Burger Ave.. E-filing benefits both the IRS and the taxpayer. Paper returns have to be re-typed into the IRS computer increasing the risk of entry and calculation errors slowing the processing of returns and refunds.

The other TCE/VITA volunteers will be available at the sites listed on page 4.

Another helpful place to visit on the internet is the www.aarp.gov website. The AARP Tax-Aide program has a lot of information and answers to frequently asked questions.

The Learning Center

At this time of year, people may be thinking of options for getting away from the winter blues but find themselves hampered due to inclement weather and lack of transportation.

The computer with internet access is a great convenience for communicating with family and

friends especially for those who are in any way confined or limited in traveling. These days people are often directed to the Internet to get information on every facet of our daily lives ; for instance - filing tax returns or getting forms; checking on your bank balances (for direct deposited pension or SSA); applications for various government benefits - Heat/utility , STAR real estate tax, Housing applications, rebate information, etc., etc., etc..

One can even browse the book shelves of the Public Library and reserve your selections for pick up at your convenience. The NYPL also has a selection of E-Books which can be downloaded to your computer, read at your leisure and , best of all, you don't have to worry about returning the book and /or paying late fees.

For those who are not at ease with a computer and/or the internet, there are programs on the Island for learning how to use the computer and accessing the internet , such as the New York Public Library and another, especially focused on teaching seniors - **SeniorNet**.

SeniorNet-SI courses are for beginners as well as more advanced students and all courses are taught by senior volunteers.

Classes start every three months. In Person registration is held at the Bernikow Jewish Community Center at 1466 Manor Road.

Classes meet for 2 to 3 hours once a week and schedule ranges from 9:00am thru 5:00pm. The computer Internet course is held at least once or twice a year. For more information, call the Bernikow Jewish Community Center at 718-475-5200, ext.1182 or Email Info@seniornetsi.org

Health and Safety

1. RESTORE – Emergency Home Repair Program for Elderly Home Owners (60 + years old) - If you have a condition in your home that poses a threat to life, health or safety of building inhabitants, then you may be eligible for a government program that allows up to \$5,000 in emergency repairs by qualified and licensed contractors. Income eligibility applies.

2. ACCESS TO HOME - a NYS funded Program designed to make the homes & apartments of

low and moderate income residents with disabilities more accessible. Modifications may range from - Wheelchair Ramps & Lifts - Handrails - Grab bars - to Kitchen/Bath modifications, etc..

For more information, call Richmond Senior Services (718) 816-1811.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR COLD WEATHER (From the Department for the Aging)

Apply for the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) by calling 311 .

- If you are vulnerable (homebound, aged, frail, sick, etc) contact your utility company and inform them of your situation.
- Do not compromise your health by forgoing taking your medications in order to pay fuel bills.
- If you are a tenant without heat call 311 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).
- Do not use agas stove, electric range or charcoal grill to heat your home.
- Be careful if you are using a portable heater, Keep it away from all combustible materials such as : furniture, bedding, clothing, pets, and people.
- Put on several layers of clothing for warmth.
- Attend a senior center during the day to stay warm and to reduce home heating costs.
- If you are freezing and have no heat or place to go - call 911.
- If you make a complaint to a city agency - write down the Complaint number given to you.

- The End -

-Happy Valentines Day-

VITA/TCE
Income Tax Assistance Sites
Beginning February 1st thru April 18th

BRING THESE ITEMS TO THE SITE:

* Photo I.D. & Soc. Sec. Cards for Taxpayers ;

SS cards for all dependents,

* Copy of last years tax return

* W-2's , Wage & Earning statements; 1099 Statements for Social Security , Pension, Interest, dividend, capital gains, other income, etc.

VITA/TCE
(No E-File)

OAKWOOD HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CHURCH
FALCON & GUYON AVENUE , 10306

Handicap Accessible;

Tue. , - 11:30A- 2:30P

TODT HILL, WESTERLEIGH LIBRARY
2550 VICTORY BLVD , 10314

Handicap Accessible

Mon., 12:00N - 3:00P(except Feb 14)

DONGAN HILLS PUBLIC LIBRARY
1617 RICHMOND RD , 10304

Handicap Accessible

Mon., 12:00P-4:00P, Thu.11:00-4:00P

RICHMONDTOWN LIBRARY
200 CLARKE AVE
Mon., 12:00N - 3:00P

AARP TAXAIDE
(E-File ONLY)

WEST BRIGHTON LIBRARY
976 CASTLETON AVE.
Tue & Wed., 12:30P - 4:00P