



# The Community Connection For Older Adults

From the Aging Services Council of Central Texas

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Welcome to the Community Connection. This newsletter is brought to you by the Aging Services Council and is meant to give you the latest news and information of interest to our older adult population. The Community Connection is distributed by volunteers of the Neighborhood Ambassador Program, one of the many projects of the Aging Services Council. Neighborhood Ambassadors disseminate the newsletter through contacts that they already have in place, such as neighborhood associations, civic organizations, churches, etc. To learn more about the Neighborhood Ambassador Program, Aging Services Council of Central Texas or this newsletter, email: [della.sprager@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:della.sprager@co.travis.tx.us) or call 512-854-5874.

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## SECTION 1 HOT TOPIC OF THE MONTH

**TEXERCISE:** *It has been said that if any single pill carried the wide range of benefits that physical exercise does it would be considered a miracle drug.*

Physical activity and proper nutrition improves health at any age. In addition to burning calories and toning your body, physical activity can lower the risk of developing conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, and obesity. Even people with a chronic disease report that regular physical activity reduces fatigue and pain, and helps manage daily symptoms. Activity can improve balance and strength, and slow the decline of bone mineral density that leads to osteoporosis. As a result, physically active people require fewer hospital stays and physician visits, and use less medication than people who are inactive. Physical activity and nutrition can also improve mental health and enhance sleep, as well as lower the risk of depression and anxiety. Of people over age 50, 98% know that exercise is important to staying healthy, so why are we all not more physically active?

**TEXERCISE**, a program of the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), educates and involves individuals and communities to adopt healthy lifestyle practices throughout their lifespan. **TEXERCISE** creates awareness and engagement in fitness and nutrition through a variety of methods including the **TEXERCISE** handbook and DVD. Both provide healthy living techniques, nutrition information as well as detailed explanations of exercises designed to build balance, strength, endurance and flexibility.

**TEXERCISE** also promotes community events that bring individuals of all ages, families, and neighborhoods

together to add support to the process of adopting positive lifestyle changes. Through the **TEXERCISE** program communities are provided with tools and resources to implement fitness programs tailored to meet the local needs. A cornerstone resource is the *Fit for the Health of It*, a 12-week program that provides community settings with educational, motivational and recognition resources to inspire participation in a timed fitness program.

Some may believe that when you reach a certain age, there is not much you can do about your physical and mental condition. What a mistake! Everyday there are more and more examples of people who are dispelling the myths and stereotypes of what is possible for older adults and people with disabilities. It is never too late to make changes that will have a positive impact on your health or, indeed, all aspects of your life. Learn more about **TEXERCISE** on the website [www.Texercise.com](http://www.Texercise.com) or toll free 1-800-889-8595.

## **SECTION 2 AGENCY SPOTLIGHT**

### **Local Exercise Programs- Find them at Your Community Guide**

Examples of local groups catering to the exercise needs of seniors include area YMCA's, Hospital sponsored programs like the "Senior Circle" program of Cedar Park Regional Medical Center, and City Recreational Centers. How can you help yourself commit to the healthy habit of exercise? Most experts recommend: 1) get a buddy, 2) start walking, and 3) find something that is FUN for you! One local website that tracks fitness programs available to Central Texas Seniors is [www.yourcommunityguide.org](http://www.yourcommunityguide.org). Visit their "Fitness Matters" section under Seniors to find locations of programs close to you. Additionally, information about senior programs in and around Austin/Travis County can be found at the following:

**Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area** website at [www.aaacap.org](http://www.aaacap.org)

**Austin Parks and Recreation Department** at 512-478-7695 or <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/seniors.htm>

## **SECTION 3 ISSUES IN AGING**

### **Take the "Age Well Live Well" Challenge!**

The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) has developed the statewide "**Age Well Live Well**" initiative to encourage individuals and communities to plan for and address three key areas of aging: health and wellness, volunteerism and resource awareness. **Age Well Live Well** educates and supports local communities to provide:

- Awareness of aging issues and distribution of resources and programs
- Opportunities for individuals and groups to volunteer and engage in the community
- Activities that address the health of area residents, employees and the community

Through health and wellness programs, volunteer opportunities and collaborative partnerships, DADS Volunteer and Community Engagement (VCE) office assists with the development of community projects, enhances existing programs and services, and shares valuable information with the public about the services and supports that are available to older Texans and their families. For more information on the "**Age Well Live Well**" initiative, as well as DADS programs and services, please contact DADS Volunteer and Community Engagement office at 1-800-889-8595 or visit:

[www.volunteeratdads.org](http://www.volunteeratdads.org)

[www.texercise.com](http://www.texercise.com)

[www.silverliningatdads.org](http://www.silverliningatdads.org)

## SECTION 4 RESOURCE UPDATE & SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

### 2-1-1 Texas-Connecting People and Services

Anywhere in Texas, anyone can call 2-1-1 for free information and referrals to health and human service agencies, nonprofit and faith-based organizations, disaster relief resources, and volunteer opportunities. For services specific to our Central Texas region visit [www.centraltexas211.org](http://www.centraltexas211.org) or call 2-1-1.

### 2011 Medicare: Changes for Premiums & Deductibles

For **Medicare Part A**, which pays for inpatient hospital, skilled nursing facility, and some home health care, the deductible paid by the beneficiary when admitted as a hospital inpatient will be \$1,132 in 2011, an increase of \$32 from the 2010 deductible. The Part A deductible is the beneficiary's cost for up to 60 days of Medicare-covered inpatient hospital care in a benefit period. Those who enroll in Medicare Advantage plans may have different cost-sharing arrangements.

The monthly premium paid by beneficiaries enrolled in **Medicare Part B** covers a portion of the cost of physicians' services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services, durable medical equipment, and other items. The standard Medicare Part B monthly premium will be \$115.40 in 2011, a \$4.90 increase over the 2010 premium. However, the majority of Medicare beneficiaries will continue to pay the same \$96.40 premium amount they have paid since 2008. The Part B premium a beneficiary pays each month is based on his or her annual income. If the modified gross income is greater than \$85,000, the beneficiary is responsible for a larger portion of the estimated total cost of Part B benefit coverage.

Enrollees in **Medicare Part D** prescription drug plans pay premiums that vary from plan to plan depending on each plan's efficiency and scope of benefits. Beginning in 2011, Part D enrollees whose incomes exceed the same thresholds that apply to higher income Part B enrollees (greater than \$85,000) to pay a monthly adjustment amount. These enrollees will pay the regular plan premium to their Part D plan and will pay the income-related adjustment to Medicare. For more information go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)



### Texas Lifespan Respite Care Program

The **Texas Lifespan Respite Care Program** is a new program launched by the Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area on January 1, 2011. The program provides respite support for informal caregivers of individuals of any age with chronic health condition(s) and/or disability and ineligible to receive respite and support services through other programs and is designed to target rural areas and smaller communities within the following counties: Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Llano, Travis, & Williamson. **This is a volunteer-driven program** and we are always looking for individuals who are interested in making a difference. If you would like more information about the services or about volunteering, please contact **Timothy St. Peter** at 512-916-6179 or toll free at 1-888-622-9111.

### The Texas Silver Haired Legislature Elections- Become a representative of the Capital Region; Candidate Filing deadline is February 28, 2011.

The Texas Silver Haired Legislature (TSHL) was established in 1985 with the goals to motivate, engage and educate older Texans in the legislative process; to inform and educate older Texans to become viable political voices and forces; to offer the avenue for older Texans to serve as a resource to public and private sectors on

aging issues and concerns; to develop a non-partisan forum for discussion, debate and prioritization of issues facing aging Texans; and educate and train the Texas Silver Haired Legislators to advocate for passage of resolutions on aging issues to the Texas Legislature. The Texas Silver-Haired Legislature is a nonpartisan and a nonprofit organization and is composed of 116 representatives elected by older Texans 60 years and older to serve two-year terms.

TSHL members must be 60 years of age or older, a registered voter in the Capital region (includes Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Llano, Travis and Williamson counties), and elected by registered older adult voters who are also age 60 or older. Members are committed to serve a two-year term that is self-financed. **The next TSHL election will take place on May 24, 2011. The deadline for candidates to file for election is February 28, 2011.** For more information about TSHL visit their website [www.txshl.org](http://www.txshl.org). For information on candidacy filing procedures, contact Joan Conrad at 512-916-6180 prior to the February 28<sup>th</sup> filing deadline.

### **Income Tax Time Approaching**

Even with unearned income, older adults may need to file a tax return. **Community Tax Centers** offer free income tax preparation to low-income individuals and families at 11 locations in and around Austin, Texas. Call 2-1-1 for information about locations and hours.

Also, the Community Resource Center in Marble Falls is partnering with AARP Tax Aide once again to provide free income tax preparations and e-filing for low & middle income and elderly. AARP volunteers are trained in cooperation with the IRS to answer tax questions and prepare forms. They will be at the CRC on the following dates and times: Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m (January 29 to April 9, 2011) and Tuesdays, 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m (February 1 to April 5, 2011). For information contact Karen Baptiste at 830-693-0700.

### **Changes in Payment of Federal Benefits-Move to Electronic Payments**

- People who apply for federal benefits on or after May 1, 2011, will need to choose an electronic payment option.
- Those who have been receiving benefits prior to this date and who do not already receive electronic payment will be required to switch by March 1, 2013.

An important date in the move to all-electronic federal benefit payments is coming soon. People who apply for federal benefits on or after May 1, 2011, will need to choose an electronic payment option – **direct deposit** to a bank or credit union account or to a **Direct Express**<sup>®</sup> Debit MasterCard<sup>®</sup> card. This applies to people who get Social Security, VA, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Railroad Retirement Board, Department of Labor (Black Lung) and Office of Personnel Management benefit checks. For detailed information visit [www.godirect.org](http://www.godirect.org) or call 1-800-333-1795.

## **SECTION 5 MEETINGS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

**January 25, 2011 – 9 a.m.-12:00 p.m.: Respite Care Stakeholder Forum in Waco.** *Texas Respite Network.*

Learn more about respite services for caregivers caring for individuals of all ages, disabilities and health conditions. Share stories, ideas, and resources experts and providers. Heart of Texas Area Agency on Aging (1514 S. New Road, Waco, TX 76711). RSVP to [trcc@txregionalcouncil.org](mailto:trcc@txregionalcouncil.org) or call (512) 478-4715.

**January 26, 2011- 11 a.m.: The Tell Tale Signs of Caregiver Stress.** *Presented by Capital Area Caregiver*

*Teleconnection.* Telephone learning session. For more information, go to [www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org) or call (866) 390-6491.

**January 29, 2011- 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Practical Tips for Alzheimer's Caregivers.** *Presented by AGE.*

AGE Building Dining Room, 3710 Cedar Street, Austin, TX 78705. Respite Care Available.

Please RSVP for this free seminar to Bruce Kravitz by calling 451-4611 ext 236 or [bkraivitz@ageofaustin.org](mailto:bkraivitz@ageofaustin.org)

**February 1, 2011- 1 p.m.: Legal Services for Seniors.** *Presented by Family Eldercare.*

Lifetime Connections Without Walls Phone Presentation. Call 512-628-1685 to register.

**February 4, 2011- 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.: Selecting, Interviewing, Screening, Hiring and Managing a Caregiver.**

*Presented by the Alzheimer's Association.* Chapter office (3429 Executive Center Drive, #100, Austin, TX

78731). Brown Bag Session (bring lunch or grab a light snack here). Speaker: Edwin Young (Director of Right at Home - Austin (West)). Call (512) 241-0420 or email [TXPrograms@TXAlz.org](mailto:TXPrograms@TXAlz.org) to reserve your spot.

**February 8, 2011- 4 p.m.: Living Guilt Free.** *Presented by Capital Area Caregiver Teleconnection.* Telephone learning session. For more information, go to [www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org) or call (866) 390-6491.

**February 8, 15, 22 and March 2, 2011 - Facing the Challenge Caregiver Education Series.** *Presented by the Alzheimer's Association.* Chapter office (3429 Executive Center Drive, #100, Austin, TX 78731). This four part series teaches family caregivers how to be caregivers. No charge, class size is limited. Call (800) 367-2132 for topics, times.

**February 17, 2011- 7 p.m.: How Do I Spell Relief: A Caregiver's Guide to Stress Management.** *Presented by Capital Area Caregiver Teleconnection.*

Telephone learning session. For more information, go to

[www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org) or call (866) 390-6491.

**February 23, 2011 11 a.m.: For Better or For Worse: The Challenges of Caring for a Husband or Wife.** *Presented by Capital Area Caregiver Teleconnection.* Telephone learning session.

For more information, go to [www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org) or call (866) 390-6491.

**March 11, 2011-11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. : Lunch N Learn: Home Safety.** *Presented by the Alzheimer's Association.*

In Taylor Enjoy complementary lunch and learn about ways to ensure your home is safe for your loved one with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. Call (800) 367-2132 for location and registration.

**March 12, 2011- 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Respite Care Options for Caregivers.** *Presented by AGE.*

AGE Building Dining Room, 3710 Cedar Street, Austin, TX 78705. Respite Care Available.

Please RSVP for this free seminar to Bruce Kravitz by calling 451-4611 ext 236 or [bkraivitz@ageofaustin.org](mailto:bkraivitz@ageofaustin.org)

**March 22, 2011- 1 p.m.: Identity Theft, Fraud and Scams.** *Presented by Family Eldercare.*

Lifetime Connections Without Walls Phone Presentation. Call 512-628-1685 to register.

**Recurring. ALZ 101: Introduction to Alzheimer's.** *Presented by the Alzheimer's Association.*

Class intended for families with a recently diagnosed loved one and the general public. Contact (512) 241-0420 or [TXPrograms@TXAlz.org](mailto:TXPrograms@TXAlz.org) to register. Three standing classes are offered:

**Austin:** 2nd Tuesday at the Chapter Office at 6 pm; **San Marcos:** 3rd Wednesday at the Community Fish Hatchery Bldg. at 11:00 am; **Round Rock:** 4th Wednesday at the Baca Senior Center at 10 am

### **Special Event: Senior Day at the Capitol**



February 8, 2011 will be Senior Day at the Texas Capitol. It is an opportunity to celebrate the contributions older adults have made and will continue to make to the state of Texas. The event will begin with a rally on the front steps of the Texas Capitol at 10:30 a.m. Attendees can take this opportunity to visit with their elected officials on issues about which they are concerned, with particular emphasis on programs and services for older adults. For information to help plan your day at the Capitol, visit [www.txsc.org](http://www.txsc.org) or contact David Thomason at 512-467-2242.