



# The Community Connection For Older Adults

*From the Aging Services Council of Central Texas*

FIRST EDITION

SUMMER 2010

Welcome to the first edition of 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.

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## SECTION 1 HOT TOPIC OF THE MONTH



When Older Americans Month was established in 1963, only 17 million living Americans had reached their 65th birthdays. About a third of older Americans lived in poverty and there were few programs to meet their needs. Interest in older Americans and their concerns was growing, however. In April of 1963, President John F. Kennedy's meeting with the National Council of Senior Citizens served as a prelude to designating May as "Senior Citizens Month." Thanks to President Jimmy Carter's 1980 designation, what was once called Senior Citizens Month, is now called "Older Americans Month," and has become a tradition.

Historically, Older Americans Month has been a time to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country, in particular those who defended our country. Every President since JFK has issued a formal proclamation during or before the month of May asking that the entire nation pays tribute in some way to older persons in their communities. Older Americans Month is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs and other such activities. This year's theme "*Age Strong! Live Long!*" recognizes the diversity and vitality of today's older Americans who span three generations.

## SECTION 2 AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

### Travis County RSVP: Your Invitation To Serve

Travis County RSVP helps meet a wide range of community needs by recruiting and placing adults 55 and older in volunteer positions at local nonprofit and public agencies. We're a matchmaker between seniors who have skills to offer and the organizations that need their help. Last year 1,023 RSVP Volunteers contributed 246,807 hours of volunteer service at 143 Austin-area nonprofit organizations and public agencies. This represents a savings to Travis County taxpayers of \$3,793,424!



During 2009, Travis County RSVP placed volunteers at 143 sites including hospitals, nursing homes, schools, libraries, day care centers, disaster recovery agencies, economic development agencies, senior centers, homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, museums, cultural arts centers and more. The ways in which RSVP volunteers serve include tutoring, tax preparation, immunization awareness, natural disaster relief, home repairs and weatherization, health education, crime prevention, caregiver services, nutrition programs, docent services, and delivering home-delivered meals.

Joining RSVP is absolutely free. Members are expected to volunteer at least once per year and report their volunteer hours each month. Many benefits are available to members, including limited mileage reimbursement and secondary insurance coverage while you're performing your volunteer activities.

Call **512-854-RSVP** (512-854-7787) to find out how you can participate. Or visit our website at [RSVPAustin.org](http://RSVPAustin.org). RSVP: Your Invitation To Serve!

## SECTION 3 ISSUES IN AGING

### Community Assessment Toolkit Available

The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), through Aging Texas Well (ATW), has a wide array of information, tools and resources to help people and their communities begin the process of aging well. DADS is committed to providing the right information and encouraging the action that will make aging well a reality for all Texans and their communities. The purpose of the ATW initiative is to identify and discuss aging policy issues, guide state government readiness and promote increased community preparedness for an aging Texas.

As the baby boomers reach retirement, local governments will face even greater challenges in creating physical and social environments that support their needs. ATW encourages communities to identify features that define an aging-friendly community, to assess their communities' aging friendliness, and to undertake planning and action steps to build an aging- friendly community. If successful, Texas communities, both rural and urban, will

have a better understanding of what it means to become “aging-friendly” and the most effective ways to remain that way.

For more information and to access the toolkit, visit the Aging Texas Well website at: <http://www.agingtexaswell.org/communityassessment/index.html>

## SECTION 4 RESOURCE UPDATE

May is Elder Abuse Prevention Month. The intent is to urge community members to be aware of elder abuse and to become educated about ways to prevent the mistreatment of vulnerable adults.

Adult Protective Services (APS) investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly or adults with disabilities.

When maltreatment is confirmed, APS provides or arranges services in an attempt to alleviate the problem. APS is dedicated to ensuring the health and safety of vulnerable adults in Texas.

Many people who are elderly or have disabilities live alone or are dependent on others for their care. Isolation is a factor that places vulnerable adults at risk for abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Make it your mission to remember the elderly and adults with disabilities in your community.

As the public becomes more aware of vulnerable adults and their needs, APS will continue to see an increase in the number of reports. More than half of all cases reported to APS involve neglect. Most involve self-neglect. Through illness or diminished mental capacity, vulnerable adults may no longer be able to provide adequately for their own health and safety. They may live in unsanitary conditions, without heat or running water, or may need assistance with meals and other daily activities. They may also require medical care.

If you or someone you know is struggling with any of these issues please make a report to the abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400.

## SECTION 5 MEETING AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

### **May 14, 2010**

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

6<sup>th</sup> Annual Attendant Benefit Fair  
1640-B East 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Suite 200  
Austin, TX 78702

Event dedicated to providing recognition and resources to caregivers and attendants throughout Austin. Presented by Helping the Aging, Needy and Disabled, Inc.

### **June 1, 2010 (1st Tuesday of each month)**

10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

ALZ 101: An Introduction to Alzheimer’s Disease  
Georgetown Public Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room, 402 W. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Georgetown, TX  
Presentation targets community and family members seeking information about Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia. Topics include 10 Warning Signs, disease progression, prevention, plus things to know and do when facing the disease. To register for the class, call 800-367-2132 or 512-241-0420.

This presentation is repeated at the following times and locations each month:

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday**

6:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

Alzheimer’s Assn. Office, 3429 Executive Center Dr., #100, Austin, TX.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday**

Noon – 1:15 p.m.

Old Community Fish Hatchery Bldg., 204 CM Allen Parkway, San Marcos, TX

Presented by the Alzheimer’s Association, Capital of Texas Chapter

**June 2010**

10:00 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.

2010 Healthy Aging Fairs

Activities including bingo, presentations on products to enhance independent living, navigating Medicare, nutrition, and fitness. Lunch will be served and door prizes awarded. All those interested in healthy aging are welcome. Contact Randy Wilhem at 512-476-6325 or send email to [rwilhelm@mealsonwheelsandmore.org](mailto:rwilhelm@mealsonwheelsandmore.org) for more information. Presented by Meals on Wheels and More.

**June 2 – Jonestown Sr. Center**, 18649 Hwy. 1431, Ste. 6A, Jonestown, TX**June 9 – Oak Hill Sr. Center**, 8656 W. Hwy. 71, Austin, TX**June 16 – Manor Sr. Center**, 600 W. Carrie, Manor, TX**June 23 – Del Valle Sr. Center**, 3515 FM 973, Del Valle, TX**June 30 – Pflugerville Sr. Center**, 15822 Foorhill Farms Loop, Pflugerville, TX**July 10, 2010**

10:00 a.m. - noon.

Latest Medical Treatments for Alzheimer's Disease

Dining Room of the AGE Building, 3710 Cedar Street, Austin, TX. Seminar is FREE but pre-registration is required by contacting Bruce Kravitz at [bkravitz@ageofaustin.org](mailto:bkravitz@ageofaustin.org) or calling 512-451-4611. Presented by Austin Groups for the Elderly.

**August 2010**

Facing the Challenge Caregiver Education Series

Intended to educate family caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. All classes will be held at the Alzheimer's Assn. Office, 3429 Executive Center Dr., #100, Austin, TX. To register for the class, call 800-367-2132 or 512-241-0420.

**August 10**

6:00 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

Part I: Introduction to Alzheimer's and related dementia

**August 17**

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Part II: Behaviors and Communication

**August 24**

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Part III: Activities of Daily Living

**August 31**

4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Part IV: Care for the Caregiver

Presented by the Alzheimer's Association, Capital of Texas Chapter

**September 18, 2010**

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Striking A Balance Caregiver Conference

Norris Conference Center, 2525 West Anderson Lane, Suite 365, Austin, TX 78757

At the corner of Anderson Lane and Burnet Road at the Northcross Center. Event dedicated to providing information, resources and support to informal caregivers. For more information call 512-916-6062 or 512-451-4611. Presented by the Area Agency on Aging of the Capital Area and Austin Groups for the Elderly.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Watch for more information about how you can participate in this exciting new program in the Fall Edition of The Community Connection for Older Adults!

To learn more about the Neighborhood Ambassador Program, Aging Services Council of Central Texas or this newsletter, email: [ambassador@capcog.org](mailto:ambassador@capcog.org), or call 512-916-6053.

*Information in this newsletter does not constitute endorsement by the Aging Services Council of Central Texas of any service or product.*