



The Springfield Star

A publication of the City of Springfield
Department of Elder Affairs



Mayor Domenic J. Sarno

Good Life Center 1600 E. Columbus Ave. Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 787-6785 ~ www.springfieldcityhall/elderaffairs

January/February 2012

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Albert Rivers
Employment Specialist
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SHINE Program Director
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Adult Outreach Liaison
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S.O.A.P.
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Fitness Director
Moraima Mendoza
Riverview Center Director
Kerri Jahn
Greenleaf Center Director
Mary Troy
Hungry Hill Center Director
Madeline Cofield
Mason Square Center Director
Alex Martin
Mayflower Center Director
Laurel Rancitelli
Pine Point Center Director
Pastor Morris
Greater New Life Christian Ctr.
Maddie Allen
Forest Park Manor
Ed Lubanski
Computer Learning Center
Carl Perrot & Joe Paxiao
Smoke Detector Program
James Parker
Van Driver



Peggy Sheldon
Fitness Director



Albert Rivers
Employment Specialist



James Parker
Elder Affairs Van Driver

Madeline Cofield
Mason Square Senior Center Director



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Winchester Square Vice President

Council on Aging

787-6785

Fax: 750-2694

Golden Age Club

787-6486

Senior AIDES

Employment Program

787-6126

S.H.I.N.E.

750-2893

Computer Learning Center

750-2090

Outreach Program/ S.O.A.P.

750-2896/ 886-5260

Smoke Detector Program

311

COA Board Members

J. Willard Cofield Jr.

Olga Ellis

Donald Evans

Ruth Loving

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Willinette Williams

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Department of Elder Affairs ~ Mission Statement

*The Department of Elder Affairs
is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for senior citizens in the
City of Springfield.*

Director’s Corner



Janet Rodriguez Denney
Director of Elder Affairs
City of Springfield, Mass

Happy New Year !

I hope all of you have had a healthy and happy holiday season. It was such a pleasure to visit all of you during your holiday celebrations! The food, ,music and great company made for an extra special holiday season.

With the New Year comes resolutions! The Department of Elder Affairs looks forward to helping you keep them in the upcoming year. Our fitness center and senior centers have many physical fitness programs along with nutritional meals and let’s not forget good friends and laughter~ all the ingredients to living a healthy and happy life!

I look forward to hearing your laughter at the Centers and Golden Age meetings in the coming year!

Jan



SOCIAL SECURITY COLUMN

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM DON FRANCISCO

Volunteer Spokesperson for Social Security

I have good news to share with the millions of Americans who prefer to conduct business in Spanish. You can now apply online for Social Security retirement and Medicare benefits totally in Spanish. Go to www.segurosocial.gov and you will be able to take advantage of other online services offered in [our](#) language.

For years, Social Security has been at the forefront of providing online services for Americans, offering a wealth of information in Spanish.

I want to tell you about the expanded suite of services offered in our language and why you should visit www.segurosocial.gov.

Let's say that you are ready to apply for Social Security retirement benefits. What would you think if I told you that you could do it online in only 15 minutes. Once you complete the online application and "sign" it with the click of a key, your application is complete. In most cases there are no documents to submit or additional paperwork to fill out. It's the easiest way to do this transaction, and now it's available in Spanish.

You can also go to www.segurosocial.gov to apply for Medicare. That also is easy and you can complete the application online in about 10 minutes.

If you are already receiving Medicare and are having trouble with the high cost of drugs that have been prescribed, you might qualify for *Extra Help* from Social Security. The *Extra Help* can save you as much as \$4,000 each year. You can learn all about it and you can do the application online for this *Extra Help* at www.segurosocial.gov too.

If you are not ready to retire but want to get an immediate, personalized estimate of your Social Security benefit, try the *Retirement Estimator*. Using the actual wages posted in your Social Security record, the *Estimator* gives you a good picture of what to expect in retirement.

You can type in different situations and put in different amounts of wages to get the estimates that can help you plan your life.

There are many things you can do at www.segurosocial.gov. There is a lot of information in this site, and you can conduct a lot of Social Security business online from the convenience and comfort of your home or office computer. Most importantly, you can conduct it in our language. Need help getting started on the computer? Ask your children or grandchildren to help you.

Visit www.segurosocial.gov today. It's so easy!

Millie's Educate the Consumer Column

Mayor's Office of Consumer Information - *Working in Cooperation with the MA Attorney General's Office*

The 2012 Consumer Pledge will improve your consumer knowledge, making you a savvy and well-informed consumer. Remember that making a poor consumer decision or falling victim of a scam could cost you hundreds or thousands of dollars. Make this pledge your New Year's resolution!

2012 CONSUMER PLEDGE

I will read and understand everything on a contract *before* signing it and I will get oral promises in writing.



Before hiring a home improvement contractor, I will verify that he is licensed and registered, and inquire on his complaint history with the Attorney General's Office and the Better Business Bureau.

I will not give out my Social Security number, credit or bank account number or any other personal information to anyone I do not know, unless I initiate the contact and am familiar and comfortable with the business.

When receiving a "gift certificate or gift card" I will use it as soon as possible in case the merchant closes. I will share this tip with others as well.

When taking my vehicle in for repairs, I will first ask for a written estimate and sign an authorization allowing a specific dollar amount of repairs before they have to call me to obtain authorization for a higher price.

I will buy (or borrow) a paper shredder and destroy unnecessary personal information to prevent identity theft.

I will install "firewall, anti-spyware and anti-virus software" on my computer to avoid hackers from entering my computer or monitoring my internet activities.

I will use common sense when an offer or solicitation does not seem right and will remain proactive in protecting my identity, personal information and hard-earned savings. I pledge to immediately speak to a family member, close friend or a Senior Aide about a situation for advice and support.

I will call (888) 567-8688 to stop receiving unsolicited pre-approved credit card offers. By opting-out I reduce my risk of identity theft. I will also request a free copy of my credit reports by calling Annual Credit Report at (877) 322-8228.



Finally, when I have a consumer question or need to learn of my consumer rights, I pledge to call the Mayor's Office of Consumer Information at 787-6437; email: moci@springfieldcityhall.com.

Courtesy of Milagros S. Johnson, Director, Mayor's Office of Consumer Information

Department of Elder Affairs' SOAP Program Senior Outreach Help Line**

Assisted Living info, Caregiver Support, Companion Care, Dental, Employment, Food and Fuel Assistance, Grandparents as parents, Hearing, Housing, Medical Equipment, Transportation, hearing aids and much more. Call 413-750-2896 or 413-886-5260.

****SOAP provides information and referral services ~ Funding provided by Greater Springfield Senior Services**

Can I still change my Medicare Plan?

The 2011 Medicare Open Enrollment period ended on December 7, but there are still a few changes you can make, if you qualify.

For those with a **Medicare Advantage Plan**:

Between January 1 and February 14, you can leave your plan and switch to Original Medicare, but you cannot switch to another Medicare Advantage Plan. Your Original Medicare coverage will begin the first day of the following month. If you drop your Medicare Advantage plan during this period, you will be able to join a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to add drug coverage. Your prescription drug coverage will begin the first day of the month after your enrollment. You may also add a Medigap at this time. And new this year, you could also switch to Health New England at any time during 2012 because HNE received a 5 Star Rating from Medicare.

For those with **Prescription Advantage** or getting “**Extra Help**” paying for prescription drugs:

You can change your plan anytime during the year. Those with Prescription Advantage can do this only once each year. Those with “Extra Help” can change every month.

Trained SHINE (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders) volunteers can help you! They offer free, confidential counseling on all aspects of health insurance to anyone on Medicare. Call your senior center and ask for a SHINE appointment. You can also call 413-750-2893. Once you get the SHINE answering machine, leave your name and number. A volunteer will call you back, as soon as possible.



STATE FOOD ASSISTANCE UPDATE from SNAP



As out-of-pocket health care costs rise, there is a way to maximize the monthly value of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Formerly known as “food stamps,” the SNAP Program is an important program to help low income seniors, persons with disabilities and other low income persons buy food. The purpose of the SNAP Program is to raise the nutritional level of households whose limited income contributes to hunger and malnutrition.

Under the SNAP rules, households that include seniors or persons with disabilities are eligible for the Excess Medical Deduction. The Excess Medical Deduction consists of monthly medical expenses that is <\$35 and is incurred by any household member who is elderly (age 60 or older) or disabled. The Excess Medical Deduction is used to reduce the net income for SNAP purposes. By reducing the amount of net income that is counted when calculating the level of SNAP benefits, the deduction allows households to have higher incomes and still qualify for SNAP! In addition, it helps a household to receive higher SNAP benefits!

Allowable excess medical expenses can include insurance and Medicare premiums and deductibles; co-payments for prescription medicines or health services; over-the-counter drugs and incontinence supplies, hearing aids and batteries, eye glasses, dentures and dental care; personal care attendant costs; travel to medical appts or pharmacy, vet bills and food for service animals; acupuncture, chiropractic and alternative therapies or herbal remedies recommended by a licensed practitioner, and more.

**TJ O'Connor
Furry Friends**

Tobi is a seven year old, neutered male, American Eskimo/Chihuahua mixed dog. He is a calm boy who loves leisurely walks on leash, belly rubs and, as you may be able to tell by his photo, lots of treats!



Tied to a mailbox on a busy Springfield street, Tobi, along with another dog, was brought to safety by a TJO animal control officer.

He has been neutered, micro-chipped, vaccinated and all he wants for now is a forever home of his very own!

We would reduce the adoption fee by nearly 50% for a senior. The adoption fee is normally \$175 but for a senior who mentions The Springfield Star, it would be \$90. All dogs and cats go home already spayed, micro-chipped, blood test for either heartworm (dogs) or leukemia (cats) and all vaccinations that are due at the time. Dogs are also licensed for Springfield residents included in the adoption fee.

A study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society demonstrated that independently living seniors that have pets tend to have better physical health and mental wellbeing than those that don't.

Adoption Center is at 627 Cottage Street (413) 781-1022

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER!

During the event of a winter storm it's **important** to listen to your local news -Channel 22 & 40 for **delays & cancellations**.

REMEMBER WHEN SPRINGFIELD SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED, THERE ARE **NO** ACTIVITIES AT THE ~DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS, ~GOLDEN AGE CLUBS & ~SENIOR CENTERS

Need Tax Preparation Help!

AARP will once again be preparing **FREE** tax returns beginning the **week of January 31st 2012 thru April 12th, 2012.**

Please be sure to bring last year's tax return, W2, 1099's, social security statements, also a copy of your real estate taxes and water/sewer charges paid in 2011 if you qualify for the Massachusetts "Circuit Breaker".

Call your local centers for appointments

Appointments available on Thursdays at

**Good Life Center
1600 East Columbus Ave
Call ~ 787-6785**

&

Appointments available on Tuesdays & Wednesdays at

**Greenleaf Community Center
1187 ½ Parker Street
Call ~ 750-2873**

Mayflower Center

Director: Alex Martin

Open Mon-Fri 9:00 am-2:00 pm - 1516 Sumner Ave. 782-4536

Lunches provided by Greater Spfld Senior Services Inc. \$1.75 suggested donation

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY

9:00a.m. Easy Does it Exercise 10:00a.m. Line Dancing	9:00 Coffee w/friends 10:00a.m. Sweating to the Spirit, Registration required 11:30a.m. Dominoes Beginners & Advanced Arts & Crafts & learn to sew for beginners Beginning Sign Language	9:00a.m. Easy Does It Exercise 10:00 a.m. Meditation Neighbors Helping Neighbors 1/17 & 2/21 @ 11:15a.m. 11:15a.m. Wii Bowling & Family Feud-register	9:00 a.m. Coffee w/ friends Lunch ~ Dining w/style Appetizers @11:30 a.m. Lunch @ 11:45a.m. (1st & 3rd Thurs)	8:45a.m. Tai Chi 10:00a.m. NEW Diabetic Support Clinic. Info session on 1/20 10:00 a.m. Weight Loss Support Group / Registration required
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Special Wellness Clinic—including “Free Foot Care” (bring your own clippers & towel) Jan. 11th and Feb 8th - 11:00a.m.

Divas & Gents Karaoke: Thursday January 26th & February 23rd at 10:00a.m.

Brown Bag: Friday January 13th and February 10th at 12:00p.m.

Home of the Technograys: Older adults who embrace technology, email us: mayflowercenter@verizon.net

Riverview Center

Open Mon-Fri 9:00 am-4:00 pm

122 Clyde St., 787-5220

Director: Moraima Mendoza

Hot Lunch Served Daily at 11:15. Pre-Registration Required

Lunch ~ \$1.75 Suggested Donation. Lunches provided through Greater Spfld Senior Services

MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY

9:30-11:00 Dance & Movement 10:00 Walks, Dancing & Stretching 12:30 English Classes 12:30 Bingo & Dominoes	9:30-11:00 Arts & Crafts 12:30 Bingo & Dominoes 1:00-3:00 Sewing	9:00 Foot Care, Glucose & Blood Pressure Clinic 9:30-11:00 Dance & Movement 9:30 Fitness Walk & Strength Class 12:30 Bingo & Dominoes	9:30-11:00 Arts & Crafts 12:30 Bingo & Dominoes 12:30 English Classes 1:00-3:00 Sewing	9:30-11:00 Dance & Movement 12-1:30 Arts & Crafts 12:30 Bingo & Dominoes
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Greater New Life Christian Center

Open Tues & Thurs 11a.m.-3p.m. Contact: Pastor Morris -413-304-2077

1323 Worcester Street, Indian Orchard

TUESDAY

THURSDAY

11:30-1:00 Senior Luncheon 1:00-2:00 Fun & Games 1:00-2:00 Afternoon Prayer 2:00-3:00 Cyber 4 Seniors/Intro to computing	11:00-11:45 Arts & Crafts 12:00-1:00 Fitness Hula Hoop & Aerobics for Seniors 1:00-3:00 Day Spa (manicure, pedicure, facials etc.)
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1st Thursday ~ Senior Bible Class
2nd Thursday ~ Afternoon Movie
S.O.A.P. Springfield Older Adult Program, helping the community of Indian Orchard with information for: fuel assistance, food, transportation and much more (Funding provided by Greater Spfld Senior Services Inc.)

*** Note: Schedule subject to change

Greenleaf

Director: Kerri Boland-Jahn

Open Mon-Fri 9:00 am-3:00 pm ~ 1187 1/2 Parker Street ~ 750-2873

Hot Lunch Served Mon.& Wed. from 12:00-1:00 \$1.75 Suggested Donation. Reservations required

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00 Coffee Hour & Walking Club 9:00a.m Jewelry Making Class 3rd Monday 12:00 GSSSI lunch	9:00 Coffee Hour & Walking Club 10:30 Walk & Strength 12:00 Zumba Gold 1:00-3:00p.m Line Dancing	8:30 1st Wed. of the month Foot Care (by appt.only) 9:00 Coffee Hr & Walking Club 10:00 <i>NEW!</i> Dancercise 12:00 GSSSI lunch	9:00 Coffee Hour & Walking Club 12:00-3:00 Play Pitch Every Thursday \$2.00 (high score & door prizes)	10:30 New instructor for Ballroom Dance lessons Call for start date. 1:00 -3:00p.m. Golden Age Club Mtg

~ *Reminder ~ no jewelry classes in January & February*
 ~ *Blood Pressure 1st Monday of the month ~SHINE Counselor ~ by appointment*
 ~ *Ms Senior Massachusetts Monthly Meetings 2nd Wednesday of the month*
*****AARP Tax Preparation will be Tuesdays and Wednesdays in 2012!! Beginning January 31st! Call now to make your appointment!**

Hungry Hill at Raymond Sullivan Safety Complex

Director: Mary Troy ~ Open Mon-Fri 9:00 am-3:00 pm

1212 Carew Street ~ 733-9411

MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
10:30 Light Aerobics (\$3.00 per month) 1:00 Chair Exercise	10:00 Craft 12:30 Pokeno <u>Lunches</u> <u>Jan 10th & 24th</u> <u>Feb. 14th and 21st</u>	10:30 Video Exercise followed by Strength training Neighborhood Council Mtgs at 7:00pm Call for Dates	10:00 Line Dance 11:15 Zumba Gold (\$2.00 per class or \$5.00 per month)

- ◇ *Lunch provided through Greater Springfield Senior Services—Reservation one week in advance.*
- ◇ *Craft group meets at 10:00 am each Tuesday. Materials are supplied, just stop in and enjoy the company.*
- ◇ *Health Screenings call for dates*
- ◇ *Foot care by Pedi-care nurses Monday by appointment.*

Forest Park Manor

Open Tues & Thurs 11a.m.-2p.m. Director: Maddie Allen

24 Barney Lane ~ 787-7714

TUESDAY	THURSDAY
11:00 Health & Wellness Speaker 1:00 Exercise w/Kerry 1:00 Chat w/Elaine from Jewish Family Services ***Note: Schedule is subject to change	1st Thurs ~ 11:00 Line Dancing / 1:00 Game Day 2nd Thurs ~ 10:00 Vietnamese Mothers' Group / 1:00 Residents Mtg 3rd Thurs ~ 11:00 Meet your neighbors 4th Thurs ~ Brown Bag <i>SHINE counselor every Thursday</i>

Mason Square

Director: Madeline Cofield

Open Mon-Fri 8:00 am-4:00 pm - 439 Union Street, Emerson Hall 733-3917
Hot Lunch served daily at 11:30 am. Provided by GSSSI \$1.75 Suggested Donation.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00 Coffee & Chat 10:30 Bible Study 1:00 Movie	9:00 Coffee & Chat Sewing & Crafts 12:00 Bingo !!!	9:00 Coffee & Chat 9:00 Manicures by appt 12:30 Blood Pressure 1-2:00 Chair Aerobics SHINE-(last Wed of the month) "Living Longer Better"(3rd Wed)	9:00 Coffee & Chat Sewing & Crafts 12:30 Bridge 3rd Thursday 10:30 am Brown Bag & SNAP Manicures by appt	9:00 Coffee & Chat 12:30 Domino's 1:00 Movie 2nd & 4th Friday

~ Martin Luther King Jr. observation ~ Time & date to be announced. Call for details.

~ Wellness Clinic

~ Registration for "Balance" Eight week session, beginning in February

FEBRUARY ~ Heart Healthy Month

~ **Multicultural Celebration** ~ All month, call for details

~ Valentine Day Tea

~ Department of Elder Affairs ~ WEAR RED Fri. February 24th

Pine Point

Open Mon-Fri 9:00 am-3:00 pm ~ 335 Berkshire Ave, 732-1072

Director: Laurel Rancitelli

Hot Lunch Served Daily @ from 11:45am Provided by GSSSI ~ \$1.75 Suggested Donation

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
10:00 Losers are winners support group! (weight loss) 1:00 Card Playing <i>Manicures once a month ~ Call for appt.</i>	9:00 Chair Exercising 10:00-12:00 Cards 1:00 - 3:00 Bingo Monthly\Chair Massage by appt Pine Pt. Council Mtgs 2nd Tues 7:00p.m.	1:00 Card Playing <u>FOOT CARE</u> Monthly by appoint. 9:00-10:30 -Breakfast Support Group (free Danish & coffee- 4th Wed.)	9:00 - 10:00 Chair Exercising 1:15 Golden Ages Coffee, Pastries & Bingo <u>Visiting Nurse</u> last Thurs /month	10:00 Losers are winners support group! (weight loss) 1:00 Pokeno & drop-in crafts 1:00 Movie (3rd Fri.)

**SHINE representative on-site 1st Wed of each month 10:30a.m.

** Free Wellness Clinic: 4th Wednesday of each month 9:30a.m.-10:30a.m.

February 6, 2012, "Healthy Environment" 5:00p.m. Light supper included. **MUST** register/Limited seating!

Good Life Center

Open Mon-Fri 8:00 am-4:00 pm - 1600 E.Columbus Ave, 787-6785

Available programs/services

Outreach Program It serves as the primary vehicle for providing information and referral services for seniors in the Springfield area.

Golden Age Club Provides Social/Recreational services to eleven branches across the city.

Senior AIDES Employment Program- Provides useful, meaningful community service employment to eligible low-income, disadvantaged mature workers.

S.H.I.N.E The SHINE Program is Massachusetts' State Health Insurance Program that provides free, one-on-one health insurance information, counseling and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries of all ages.

Computer Learning Center Seniors can learn to use email, the internet, and computer programs.