

THE SERVICE NETWORK

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Statewide Respite	2
Senior Farmers' Market	2
Senior Art Show	2
ASK Schedule	3
Beware of Scams	3
SNAP	4
Senior Café	4
Farmers' Market	4



May is Older Americans' Month!
 Connect, Create, Contribute



Ageing Takes the Hill!

By Natalie Zarrillo, Assistant Executive Director, Division on Aging

Behind the many services that are funded county, state and nationwide for the older adults in our communities (such as home delivered meals, home care, transportation, and legal services to name a few), there are countless individuals, groups and organizations advocating to the legislators in Washington, D.C. And, your Union County Division on Aging is one of those advocates...there to ensure these vital services remain funded and available to meet our community needs.



In March, Frances Benson, Executive Director of the Division on Aging and I headed to our nation's capital to attend an annual briefing on federal policy and priority changes, and to meet with key Union County district legislators on Capitol Hill. Why D.C.? Because that is where our funding comes from....the Older American's Act! This act was first signed into law in 1965 to address one of our country's most vulnerable populations and to ensure that community services sustain the health, dignity and independence of older adults. That vision and mission are just as important today as it was 54 years ago. Therefore, preserving this act and all of its funded programs that we rely on is our greatest priority.

With each new Congress comes a new set of priorities. And as lawmakers begin to develop their priority proposals, it's important those very proposals reflect the needs of the communities they represent back home. On our last day in D.C., Frances and I headed to the Hill and met with legislative staff members to discuss the needs of older adults and caregivers of Union County, and urged reauthorization of the Older American's Act. In addition, and with equal importance, we offered to be their aging expert -- and they accepted with great enthusiasm! After all, our vantage point back in Union County is different than theirs, given our direct work with community members and providers, connecting individuals and families to the support services they need. We listen to you and hear your stories and understand. And when you are in need, we fight for you, even when those needs seem to grow and become more complicated. Whether we head to the Hill or simply call our legislators, the Union County Division on Aging will always be in your corner, with a voice loud enough for all to hear.



advocacy | action | answers on aging



The Service Network

Prepared by Donna Farrell
 908-527-4858

Edited by Fran Benson
 Executive Director
 Division on Aging
 &
 Disability Resource
 Connection

CAREGIVERS... Spring is here! Do you need a vacation? Are you planning a summer getaway?

The Statewide Respite Care Program may be the answer!

For those caring for a loved one, the demands can be physically and emotionally overwhelming. Many caregivers are also working and raising children. So when either planned or unexpected events arise, quickly coordinating outside services to make sure your spouse or parent is safe and cared for at home can become very stressful. The Statewide Respite Care program offers **Inpatient Respite** which provides short-term, temporary placement for up to three weeks that does not have to be taken consecutively. Applying and planning for **Inpatient Respite** is a great way to ensure your loved one is adequately cared for while you are away, giving you that much needed peace of mind. Planning ahead also ensures that the dates you are requesting can be met by the facility.

The Statewide Respite Care Program has income/asset guidelines which are as follows: a single care recipient's monthly income cannot exceed \$2,313.00 and a married couple's income can be no more than \$4,626.00. Assets for a single person cannot exceed \$40,000.00/\$60,000.00 for a married couple and does *not* include the home as an asset. Only the income and assets of the individual receiving the care will be discussed and counted.

If you would like more information about this program, or to apply, please call the Division on Aging at 908-527-4872 or 1 888-280-8226.



Union County 2019 Senior Farmers' Market



This summer, the State of New Jersey will once again be distributing Senior Farmers' Market vouchers to eligible seniors aged 60+.

Each eligible person will receive five (5) checks worth \$5.00 for a total of \$25.00. Annual income for a single person cannot exceed **\$23,107** and combined income for a married couple cannot exceed **\$31,284**.

Proof of annual income is required in the form of an income tax return; Social Security statement; yearly pension statement; Medicaid card; SSI; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program EBT card. Seniors **MUST** be a resident of Union County.

Please note that when obtaining vouchers for another person, a proxy must have identification, income verification for the person they are obtaining vouchers for, and the proxy must have an original signature.

The distribution schedule will be announced in the Service Network, on the County of Union website at www.ucnj.org, and in the Senior News, as well as in local newspapers.

To obtain an application, proxy forms, distribution list, and income guidelines call the Union County Division on Aging at 908 527 4870 or toll free at 888 280 8226.

Union County Senior Citizen Art Show

Calling all senior artists! Here are the important dates to remember for participation in the Union County Senior Citizen Art Show:

- May 15 – Deadline to register
- May 22 – Art Drop-off
- May 23 – Judging & hanging of art
- May 28-July 8 – Exhibit on view
- June 5 – Awards Reception
- July 9 – Art Pickup

- Reception:
- Liberty Hall Atrium
- 1085 Morris Avenue
- Union, 07083
- 5:30 pm—7:00 pm

Aging Services Kiosk May Schedule

Division on Aging staff will be available at **Aging Services Kiosks (ASK)** on the following dates in May:

Monday, May 6

Elizabeth Library—LaCorte
418 Palmer Street
Elizabeth, 07202
10:00—12:00

Wednesday, May 8

Cranford Public Library
224 Walnut Avenue
Cranford, 07016
10:00—12:00

Thursday, May 9

Rahway Senior Center
1306 Esterbrook Avenue
Rahway, 07065
10:00—12:00 **bi-lingual site**

Thursday, May 16

Garwood Public Library
411 Third Avenue
Garwood, 07027
10:00—12:00

Friday, May 17

Mountainside Public Library
Constitution Plaza
Mountainside, 07092
10:00—12:00

Monday, May 20

Clark Public Library
303 Westfield Avenue
Clark, 07066
10:00—12:00

Thursday, May 20

Summit Public Library
75 Maple Street
Summit, 07901
10:30—12:30

Tuesday, May 28

Union Public Library
1980 Morris Avenue
Union, 07083
11:30—1:30



Division on Aging staff are available on these dates to meet with the public regarding any questions they may have about programs and services for seniors and/or their caregivers. Call the Division on Aging for more information at 908 527 4870 or toll free at 1 888 280 8226. For information in Spanish call 908 527 4863.



Beware of People Pretending to be from Social Security & Other Scams

Identify theft and fraud are a part of our current reality. The Social Security Administration uses high levels of security to protect identity from being stolen. A new phone scam tricks people into thinking Social Security called them, and then pressures them into giving out personal information. Social Security never does this, and people should never give their personal information to someone over the phone if they do not know who they are.



Here are a few facts & tips from the Social Security Administration:

- Social Security representatives will never (ever) call and threaten with loss of benefits or deactivation of a Social Security number.
- Caller ID may show the Social Security real phone number (1 800 772 1213) but that may not be the real Social Security Administration calling. Computers make it easy to show any number on caller ID.
- Never give Social Security numbers to anyone who contacts you. Don't confirm the last 4 digits; don't give a bank account or credit card number to anyone who makes contact and asks you for this information.
- Remember that anyone requesting you wire money, pay with a gift card, or send cash is a scammer. Always. No matter who they say they are.

Report suspected Social Security Phone Scams online to the Office of the Inspector General at **oig.ssa.gov** or call the Social Security Administration at **1 800 772 1213**.

An oldie but goodie is the 'grandparent scam', where a scammer calls and identifies themselves as the targets grand-child, who states they are in trouble, in jail, has been robbed, or had an auto accident. If a call like this is received, its best to immediately call the person or someone close to that person to see if they are indeed in trouble.

Be careful what's posted on social media or Instagram; scammers can gather a wealth of information about people just by surfing social media.

A report from Consumer Sentinel Network, a part of the Federal Trade Commission, indicates that 2018 saw a disturbing increase in this type of scam, and it was particularly hard on people over the age of 70.

The report says that the median amount of money people reported losing to these scammers was \$9,000.00. Added up, consumers lost a grand total of \$41 million!

By educating yourself and knowing how to identify and report various schemes, you can stay several steps ahead of scam artists.



New Jersey Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

New Jersey SNAP, formerly known as Food Stamps, is New Jersey’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that can help low-income families and senior citizens buy the groceries they need to eat healthy.

Gross Monthly Income

Figures Valid October 2018—September 2019

Household Size	Maximum Allowable Income
1	\$1,872.
2	\$2,538.
3	\$3,204.
4	\$3,870.
5	\$4,536.
6	\$5,202.
7	\$5,868.
8	\$6,534.
Each additional family member add	\$ 666.

To pre-screen for NJ SNAP go to www.nj.gov/humanservices/dfd/programs/njsnap. This is an easy way to find eligibility. With the online application, less time is spent in the office for the interview. If a person is unable to get to the county Division of Social Services due to illness or disability, an authorized representative may be sent on behalf of the applicant or a telephone interview may be arranged.

Applications can be sent by fax or mailed to:

Division on Social Services	Division of Social Services
342 Westminster Avenue	200 W. Second Street
Elizabeth, 07207	Plainfield, 07060
908 965 2700 (wait for prompts)	908 791 7000 (wait for prompts)

After the application is received, the Division of Social Services will call to schedule an interview to confirm applicant information. A checklist of required documents can be viewed on the website or by calling the NJ SNAP Hotline at 1 800 687 9512.

Less than half of all seniors who qualify for SNAP are enrolled in the program, making low-income seniors especially vulnerable to hunger. The Union County Division on Aging is working to increase enrollment of qualified seniors into the benefit.

The Division on Aging also sponsors the Senior Café, twenty-four (24) congregate nutrition sites located throughout Union County where seniors age 60+ can have a delicious meal for a suggested voluntary donation of \$1.75. In addition to tasty meals, educational and social programs add to your Senior Café Experience!

As stated on page 2 of this publication, the Division on Aging will once again administer the **Senior Farmers’ Market** beginning in July. Call the Division on Aging at 908 527 4870, toll free at 1 888 280 8226 for an application. The schedule will also be published on the Union County website www.ucnj.org, in the Senior News, and in local newspapers.



THE UNION COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS

Bette Jane Kowalski, Chair		Alexander Mirabella, Vice Chairman	
Angel G. Estrada	Angela R. Garretson	Sergio Granados	Christopher Hudak
Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded	Andrea Staten	Rebecca Williams	