

5th Annual "Afternoon At The Improv"

Biggest and Best Ever

"Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been"
- Mark Twain

Our SmileMakers' Guild fundraiser, the 5th annual Afternoon at the Improv, was a huge success. Over 200 guests joined us in September for an afternoon of laughs and prizes while comedienne kept us in stitches. Over 35 beautiful gift baskets from various donors were won by opportunity ticket holders and silent auction bidders.



Sandy King, Cindy Stieger - Chair & Jane Hansen

We appreciate all our sponsors this year. **Attentive Home Care**, which serves all of Southern California, was our presenting sponsor. Other sponsors included **Bill & Sandy Gresher, ResCare HomeCare, Michael Bader, SALUS HomeCare, Anthem Blue Cross, Shankle Clinic, Heritage Pointe, Sunrise Assisted Living Tustin, The MERIT Companies, Assisting Hands Home Care, Morse Insurance Services, Silverado Senior Living, Care 1st, and Horizon Support Services, Inc.**



Frances Dilorinzo
Comedienne

Due to the reality of today's economy, the requests for gifts from the SmileMakers are expected to be larger than ever before, so we extend a heartfelt thank you to the attendees, donors, and sponsors of the event, which netted over \$14,000, a record for the SmileMakers. Your support will help the SmileMakers brighten many holidays this year!

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SmileMakers "Angel Tree" Project

Brightens the Holidays for more than 2,000 this year

Imagine the loneliness of spending the holidays without the comfort of home or family. There are over 2,000 frail, older and disabled adults living in Orange County without anyone special with whom to celebrate the holidays. The SmileMakers Guild of the Council on Aging—Orange County gear up for their annual Holiday Project to help bring a smile to the faces of some of these vulnerable yet valuable members of our community.



(Back) Cathy Johnston - Chair, Cindy Stieger
Joan Curtin, Theresa Brunella
(Front) Jane Hansen, Helen Lynn & Sue Day

Since 1997 the SmileMakers Guild has solicited and distributed items of personal comfort to seniors and disabled adults throughout Orange County. These individuals have no one to remember them during the holiday season and most would not receive any gifts or recognition. The response to the project has been overwhelming. Last year, with the help of individuals and corporate partners, the SmileMakers delivered more than 2,000 holiday gifts.



Santa Claus & Vivian Klimowicz

Two quotes from past recipients really capture the spirit of the project:

"Thank you so much for the nice jacket and white cap for Christmas. Other than the gift of my son's phone call, it was the only gift I received, but it was worth many gifts at my age." -- Ruth P.

"I wish we could have caught all the happy facial expressions of our residents when they received your gifts. They were ecstatic and have expressed that they had a very wonderful Christmas! Most of them have no families at all. Thank you so much for making it a special season for each one of them." -- New Horizons' Staff

This year, the SmileMakers held a two-week Wrap Session from November 30 through December 12. Anyone interested in SmileMakers should call Patricia Moran-Johnson, Director of Volunteer Development, at 714-479-0107, Ext. 216.

Laurie Mirman Rogers

Friend of the Council and "Gift of Dignity" Life Preserver Donor



Laurie Mirman Rogers

There are two major passions in Laurie Mirman Rogers' life these days – the caring and humane treatment of animals, and caregiving support for people who are seriously ill and alone. Laurie's passion for animals goes back to her childhood, including fond memories of her love and caring for a favorite basset hound. As an adult Laurie found herself providing caring support for her beloved husband James Samuel "Jim" Rogers, as he battled multiple myeloma (bone cancer). Laurie immersed herself in the support and care he was receiving at the skilled nursing home where he spent the last six months of his life.

Laurie and Jim were introduced many years ago by a friend who knew she was looking for an excellent CPA for her successful meeting and facilities planning business for nonprofit associations – "Site Services, *In a Class by Themselves*." Their relationship blossomed into a deeply committed marriage partnership, with Laurie describing Jim as the "most wonderful person she has ever known."

Jim's many gifts to the people in their lives, as Laurie recalls with great admiration, came from his very generous heart, as he always reached out his hand to help those in need. He had a very strong inner core, was a humble man and yet she said you could feel his presence when he walked into the room.

Laurie was happily surprised one day, when Jim provided her with the opportunity to select her pick of a purebred basset hound litter - they came home with her new devoted companion, now nine years old, Boris. With Jim's passing four years ago, Boris has become the important link to all that Laurie treasures from her many joyful, fulfilling years with Jim.



Laurie and Boris

When Laurie lost her dear husband, she found solace with a grief counseling group at Hoag hospital. She eventually became connected with the Council on Aging through a close friend of the Agency.

Laurie has become knowledgeable about the Council's Ombudsman, Friendly Visitor programs, and more. On attending the annual fundraising luncheon

event two years ago, she became a Life Preserver pledge donor. She has met with Council representatives on several occasions about her passion for support for those who are seriously ill and alone.

This year at the Council's "Celebrate Successful Aging" 5th annual luncheon event, Laurie was a Table Captain, hosting two tables of guests. She was moved by the personal Council client stories presented and decided to become a "Gift of Dignity" Life Preserver pledge donor. Laurie invites others to consider joining with her by making their own donations or pledges of support to the Council's vital programs and services.

CEO's Message

The Gift of Giving

My mother unwrapped some of her old Christmas ornaments recently and uncovered some that were handmade by me during my Girl Scout years. Seeing them had me reminiscing back to my childhood days as a Scout, and thinking about a favorite Girl Scout activity of making "potlatches" or SWAPS as they are called today.



Cheryl Meronk
CEO & President

The practice of swapping these small handmade remembrances probably originated from the Native American potlatch festivals. The word "potlatch" comes from the Chinook language and means "to give away," or "a gift." A potlatch festival's main purpose was the redistribution of wealth, and the achievement of status or prestige by such gift-giving.

Here at the Council on Aging, we don't need to hold a potlatch festival to find opportunities to give – they are all around us. I hope the holidays will give you a good reason to give to the programs that support our older adult community. The gift of a weekly visitor for a lonely senior, or an hour of an insurance counselor's time to help obtain a needed prescription medication can be priceless gifts.

Both the Native Americans and the Girl Scouts understand that there is much to be gained from giving through their "potlatches." **As you celebrate the holidays this year, I hope you will consider giving a potlatch of your own, and share the "gift of giving" in honor of an older adult in your life.**

Chairman's Message



Mike Stieger
Chairman of the Board

"To promote independence, health and dignity of older adults through compassion, education and advocacy." This is the mission of the Council on Aging. We can all be thankful that the Council has been an asset and resource for the past 35 years to seniors in OC. The outlook for future demand and needs is daunting, especially in light of reduced government funding at all levels. In 2 years

the first wave of boomers will reach Medicare age and the forecast is that in 10 years 1 in 3 will provide care for their elderly parent over 65. To insure the Council is there for us, our families, friends and neighbors in our OC community requires our support. To deliver on our mission requires volunteers, staff to support them, and resources for rent, utilities, phone, PC's, and more.

Another level of support is required to meet the demand - You can help by:

- Introducing loved ones to the Council by inviting them to a monthly Just Imagine Tour;
- Volunteering for the Council's vital programs;
- Providing financial support to the Council;
- Attending our annual fundraising luncheon May 7, 2010.

Together we will insure the Council is there to support and assist seniors in the OC!

HICAP Medicare Presentations For the Vietnamese Community

During the Annual Enrollment Period from 11/15 to 12/31, HICAP conducts Medicare Presentations for Vietnamese Medicare Beneficiaries so they can understand changes in Part D for 2010, and find a plan which meets their medical needs. **Tyree Ngo**, a HICAP counselor and Vietnamese Outreach Specialist, conducted a total of 5 Community Education Events in November, with one supported by the Generational Communication Campaign Grant. HICAP partnered with **Social Services Administration-SSA, the Department of Social Services, CalOptima and Western University Pharmacy Students** at Hope Community Center in Santa Ana assisting 67 Vietnamese clients. Tyree also has a weekly Medicare column on Viet



Tyree Ngo

Herald, a Vietnamese Daily Newspaper, and she hosts a weekly Medicare Radio Talk Show on VNCR, a Vietnamese Radio Program on 106.3 FM. **Call Tyree at 714-479-0107, ext. 277.**



COAOC and the Fight Against Financial Elder Abuse

A caretaker was arrested recently on suspicion of stealing more than \$260,000 from a 92 year old woman she had been hired to care for, Orange County Sheriff's officials tell us. The "caregiver" used the money to open up bank accounts and send money to her family in Mexico. The perpetrator has pled guilty and is awaiting sentencing of a possible five year jail sentence.

But what about the victim? She has received about \$50,000 of her money back, but the rest is gone. The victim is physically frail, but mentally quite sound. She built a relationship of trust with this caregiver after more than a year together, only to have that trust destroyed along with her finances and now her future is uncertain.

This is **financial elder abuse, the rampant, insidious crime of the millennium**. Even if you have never been the victim of a fraud or scam artist, chances are you know someone who has. Fraud and scam victims can be anyone - you, a relative, a neighbor, a friend. There is no average profile, but deputy district attorney **Marc Labreche** stated at a recent Financial Abuse Special-



Julie R. Schoen, Esq.
Corporate Legal Counsel
Director, Department of
Elder Abuse Prevention

ist Team (FAST) meeting that the most prominent victim of late is the retired, white, educated man who feels they are infallible. Do you know anyone who meets the following description: self-reliant, decision-maker; above-average financial knowledge; educated; experienced a recent health or financial setback; open to new ideas or sales pitches?

The **Financial Industry Regulatory Agency (FINRA)** states that the trick is figuring out when "good" becomes "too good," because fraudsters make their living by promoting or offering deals that seem both good and true, but more than likely will be gone when you need them.

Every day the COAOC FAST works in collaboration with the Ombudsman Department and Adult Protective Services to report cases of fraud and financial elder abuse to the authorities. We strategize with the consultants to discern the next steps to take, what if anything can be done and how to protect the victim from any further abuse. The biggest piece of our mission is to provide education to any and all who will listen - seniors, professionals, family members, and law enforcement. Many of the cases are heartbreaking and involve family members who want things fixed but are not willing to press charges. ... *cont on page 4*

More and more the economy is turning decent people into desperate people who are willing to impoverish someone they know for their own financial gain. Forewarned is forearmed and we intend to educate and protect as many as possible.

Here are some recommendations on how you can protect yourself and your loved ones. Most of these are obvious but often forgotten steps. Register for the "Do Not Call" registry yearly to cut down on telemarketers. Keep in touch with family members who are alone, isolated and perhaps susceptible to being befriended. Keep communication open. Stay with known and reputable companies, check out their reputations on-line, look for complaints, license infractions, and solvency. Get references and check them out. Use bonded, licensed caregiving agencies. Probably of greatest importance is to take your time and check things out. A truly good deal won't disappear if you "don't act now" in fact, it should be around for a long, long time.

"Your Health, Your Medicare Community Event"

November 5th - A Success!

Council on Aging Orange County held a very successful and exciting Information Community Event for all Orange County Medicare Beneficiaries on Nov. 5th 2009. Council **CEO Cheryl Meronk**, welcomed the guests. Our keynote speaker was **Senator Joe Dunn**, who provided clarification of healthcare reform concerns and Medicare to the appreciative attendees. HICAP's own **Julie Schoen** provided critical updates on Changes to Medicare for 2010 and **Frank Van Nostrand** went over Social Security issues. More than 300 community members attended the event at the Phoenix Club in Anaheim and were able to visit with the 50+ exhibitors providing health insurance and aging services information.



Bill Darke & Cheryl Meronk



Senator Joe Dunn



Julie Schoen, Esq. & Frank Van Nostrand



Veronica Gomez & Jacque Lauder

"Your Health, Your Medicare" was a dynamic and successful event because of Council on Aging Orange County's **amazing team of staff and volunteers!** Event director **Jacque Lauder** and Coordinator **Bill Darke** organized the



Patricia Moran-Johnson & Tricia Homrighausen

event. Staff team members collaborated with COA volunteers to ensure a successful outcome that benefitted our Orange County community. Thanks to all who worked so hard to provide quality on this new annual event!

Council on Aging Orange County

Professional Education Opportunities

As a friend of Council on Aging Orange County, you may be aware of the significant challenges the Agency is facing in this current economy. Budget reductions along with increasing community needs have required that the leadership staff and Board of Directors face the current demand with a new outlook. Council on Aging Orange County has taken a practical and proactive approach by identifying what we may do to generate revenue that will support the mission of the agency.



Huong Dang
Associate

Jacqueline Lauder
Director

Council on Aging Orange County has always been a provider of continuing education units for the professional community. The Council offers these opportunities intermittently when presenters are available. The new COA Education Department, **Jacqueline Lauder**, Director, and **Huong Dang**, Associate, are committed to providing these opportunities to the professional community in an on-going and continuous basis with value added on-site classes and community information events such as the Nov. 5th "Your Health, Your Medicare Community Event" for over 300 guests at the Phoenix Club in Anaheim. This first successful revenue generating event has now become a popular model. The Council is looking forward to providing the community with more of these opportunities and establishing ourselves as the lead agency for education and information.

Jacque and Huong are currently working on curriculum development that will provide the Council's professional partners with the critical resources that will ensure their professional growth. The Council is registered with the state to provide **Continuing Education Unit's** to Nurses, Marriage and Family Therapists, Social Workers, Residential Care Facility Administrators and CPA's. If you require CEU's or would like to teach a CEU class, please contact us at 714-479-0107, ext. 229, about these opportunities. This is a considerable challenge but an exciting opportunity. With your continued support and participation, the Council on Aging Orange County will be able to meet the challenge!

Boy Scouts Troop 719 of San Clemente Holiday Project for the Council



Submitted by Hunter Mathews
Boy Scout, Troop 719

With the help of Council staff Carolina Gutierrez and Patricia Moran-Johnson, Troop 719 of San Clemente designed Christmas cards for the elderly in Orange County. The Scouts used a lot of paper, markers, and in each card wrote a personal message. Over 30 people participated in the project, including Boy Scouts and their leaders. We made around 100 cards for the holiday season for the elderly to enjoy. All the participants were happy to contribute to making the cards. The night was organized by Hunter Mathews, who holds a life rank. It was a really special night for the participants and we look forward to doing it again next year!

Volunteer Corner



Patricia Moran-Johnson
Director of Volunteer
Development

Dear Friends,

I want to first extend a warm Holiday Season greeting to each of you and especially to our dedicated 320 Council on Aging “Family of Volunteers”. The staff at the Council sincerely appreciates all you do for the Council on Aging and for those we serve. We are privileged to be working with a team of such gifted, committed and kind individuals. You truly make a difference in Orange County!

As we thank our current volunteers, we also want to reach out to any of our Advocate readers and their friends who may find they have some of their precious time to volunteer here with us. We need volunteers in the following areas:

- Friendly Visitors who might have an hour per week to visit a homebound lonely senior.
- Medicare and Health Insurance Specialists to counsel those challenged with the workings of Medicare and other health insurance issues.
- Advocates who work on behalf of residents living in Assisted Living or Nursing Homes.
- Supporters of our holiday project. This project gathers gifts for older adults/disabled who otherwise would not receive a gift during the holiday season.

If you answered “yes” to any of the above opportunities please give me a call! I look forward to speaking with you and hearing about your talents that you are willing to share with us. Please call 714-479-0107 extension 216.

In closing, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our new Council on Aging volunteers and again thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers. We are so lucky to have you in our Council on Aging Family!

Volunteer Profile

Peter Christie - “HICAP Volunteer Extrordinaire”

It was in the ‘90’s, when Marilyn Lozis, Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) Manager, spoke to a group of retired McDonald-Douglas (Boeing) retirees. Peter Christie was in the audience. He had worked as a Manager of Operations and retired in 1985. At that time, the Personnel Department just told retirees that they will have Medicare and Social Security – everyone thought it was lumped together.

After listening to this very humble and not too pushy lady with a dry sense of humor (Marilyn Lozis); he was impressed enough to pursue the HICAP volunteer opportunity. Peter did a lot of analyzing and carefully regarded the HICAP Program. He knew that if he did choose to volunteer he would go full force, so after careful consideration, Peter thought to himself “Marilyn Lozis and Julie Schoen – they set the bar. If these ladies are part of this outfit; then I want to be part of it too.”



Peter Christie and Julie Schoen

Norman P. Murray Community Center in Mission Viejo, Florence Sylvester Senior Center in Laguna Hills and San Clemente Community Center in San Clemente are booked solid with HICAP clients because of Peter Christie. He has a following in South County and wherever he goes, he has such a significant impact on the lives of the people he serves. He has been a HICAP Counselor for ten years and doesn’t have any intention of slowing down.

Peter has never looked back. As he reflects, “I’ve helped some (many hundreds) people through this confusing Medicare and I review with them their health insurance options meticulously. After their HICAP counseling session with me, they look me in the eye and say, “thanks, Mr. Christie”. That’s my payback.

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Life Preservers - Major Pledge Donors

Gift of Dignity - \$25,000

Robin and Linda Boyd	Bill and Sandy Gresher
Mike and Pam McGovern	Laurie Mirman Rogers
Daryl and Deborah YeeLitt	

Gift of Hope - \$5,000 to \$24,999

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\$10,000 "Legacy Society" Anonymous Donation to the Council on Aging!

The most welcome letter received very recently reads as follows : "Please accept the enclosed charitable donation of \$10,000 on behalf of (our clients), who wish to remain anonymous. Please use the donation towards funding charitable projects of the Council on Aging."

We have followed up with the trust management fund staff to express our grateful appreciation to the generous couple who made their family trust fund gift to the Council. We share this special "Legacy Society" story for readers of the Advocate, knowing that these special donors and others like them have a valuable role insuring the long range financial future of the Council on Aging. We take this is an opportunity to express our grateful appreciation to all donors and "friends" of the Council on Aging!



Dan Bent
Director of Development

Please call Dan Bent at 714-479-0107, ext. 223, if we can be of assistance with your estate gift planning.

Just Imagine Tour January - April 2010 Dates

Wednesday 1 Hour Morning Tours		Thursday 1 Hour Evening Tours	
January 20	10:00 AM	January 28	5:00 PM
February 17	10:00 AM	February 25	5:00 PM
March 17	10:00 AM	March 25	5:00 PM
April 21	10:00 AM	April 29	5:00 PM

As our guest, you will learn more about... Our History...

1973 - Established as the first agency in Orange County dedicated to serving the needs of vulnerable older adults.

Our Present...

Five Programs serving older adults and their families

Advertisement: for concerns of financial abuse

Visitors: for those in need of a friend

Medicare Counseling: for help in navigating Medicare and related insurance

Support: for a loved one wanting to remain independent and safe at home

Advocacy: for the deserving residents of long term care facilities, 38 staff members, over 300 volunteers

Our Future...

Education and expansion of our programs in an ongoing and consistent determination to meet the needs of the older adult community in Orange County.

Tour is approximately one hour in length and includes a personal tour of the Council offices.

RSVP to Janet Levy at 714-479-0107 ext. 239
1971 East 4th Street, Suite 200, Santa Ana, CA 92705

“Annual Appeal” - Response

Please send your valued contribution now to ensure the future of the Friendly Visitor program, and all of the vital Council on Aging programs and services - *to make a significant difference in the lives of Orange County’s vulnerable older and disabled adult community*. Your contribution will help to ensure that we are able to respond to each call and request. Our services may some day directly affect the lives of your family members, friends and neighbors.

Yes, Count on me to help Felix and so many other older and disabled adults in need!



Maureen, Felix and Nick

Your gift of:

- \$ 25 Educates one resident on their rights in facilities
- 50 Counsels an additional person on healthcare rights
- 100 Helps to protect the financial assets of loved ones
- 250 Counseling to five lower-income, non-native or low English speakers
- 500 Provides a hearing aid or dentures to a low-income senior
- 1,000 Purchases one laptop computer for field work with in-home client assessments or insurance counseling
- 1,500 Serves 25 clients with case manager support for one month
- 3,000 Provides 150 holiday gifts for seniors without families

\$ _____ Your gift, regardless of size, will help provide a safety net of services for Orange County’s vulnerable older and disabled adult community.

Please make checks payable to: **Council on Aging–Orange County**

Charge to: Visa MasterCard

Account Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Card Holder/Company Name _____ Amount _____

Signature _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Gift in Memory / Honor of _____ Name _____

Please notify _____ Name _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____



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Roadmap to Medicare **Congratulations on your upcoming** **65th Birthday!**

The Council on Aging-Orange County is currently offering monthly meetings to help you prepare for your Medicare journey.

Location

Council on Aging Orange County
1971 East 4th Street, Suite 200
Santa Ana, CA 92705

Upcoming Dates and Times of Meetings:

The LAST Wednesday & Saturday of each month
Wednesdays: 6:30pm to 8:30pm
Saturdays: 10:00am to Noon

Please call to Confirm Dates and RSVP

714-560-0424 or 800-434-0222

A \$20 donation will be appreciated but all are welcome!

The Council on Aging **“Legacy Society”**

Friends of the Council on Aging qualify to become members of the Legacy Society with one or more of the following:

- Making a planned gift of the Council of money, securities, property or other marketable assets;
- Creating a charitable remainder trust or left estate gift to benefit the Council;
- Naming the Council as a beneficiary of a new or existing life insurance policy;
- Naming the Council to receive a bequest in a will or living trust

To become a recognized member of our new Legacy Society, or if you would like more information

Please call

Dan Bent

Director of Development

714-479-0107 Ext.223