

ELDER RIGHTS COUNCIL
09SEP2008

Attending:

Kerry DeFoe
Laura Rogne
Norma Ferguson
Jeff Taylor
Dick Sumner
Detective Sgt. Kevin Osborne, Pickens County Sheriff's Office

Kerry welcomed all and facilitated introductions.

Det. Sgt. Osborne provided a presentation on safety issues for older adults.

- Baby Boomers face many challenges in the changing world from 1950-2000.
- They have a huge impact on our nation, provide a huge tax base
- Growing up in the 1950's, the world was a safer place
- Now we need to re-educate seniors about current problems: fraud is prevalent now, home safety is important, internet fraud is a new threat.
- Seniors need to start changing their habits
- International banking has opened up the U.S. to internet fraud
- We are often unaware of what scammers are looking for and often divulge information unknowingly
- ID theft is the #1 problem today; just in Pickens County 10 per week are reported and no more than one a month is solved
- It is hard to prove causation in ID theft cases because links are weak
- Neighborhood watches are important safety measures
- Drug use becomes a problem for seniors when family members live with them
- Guns in the home become a liability in many cases
- Moral breakdown is a societal problem – everyone needs to be aware and responsible for what they're doing and see things as they really are
- "Tough love" is sometimes necessary for family issues, especially with drugs
- Education is the only way to help people recognize and prevent crime
- Banking and checking accounts remain a large problem; stealing checks or account information is very simple, i.e., someone comes into your home for a legitimate repair/maintenance job and steals the last check in your checkbook
- Seniors are vulnerable to assaults with out in the community
- A crook can tell by looking at you whether you are a "victim"
- Seniors are safer in groups and during the day

- Every time you get into your car you need to look in the back seat
- Use a keychain light
- When someone invaded your personal space, warn them verbally and then use whatever means necessary if they don't comply
- When credit cards are stolen they are used immediately in several places, because they are very quickly of no use to thieves
- At gas stations, you need to hit the "clear" button (or any time you use a credit card) in order to prevent ID or account theft
- Don't let someone walk away with your credit card to process a charge
- It is recommended that you get a secure credit card (it has your photo on it)
- You are now allowed to put a 50-word rebuttal in your credit report if you have an unwarranted or questionable negative entry

Kerry distributed a presentation on Medicare's Home Care Benefit and answered questions

Meeting dates and locations were determined for on year out. The dates/locations are:

29 October 2008, Dalton, GLSP offices

28 January 2009, Cartersville, Beavers Senior Center

29 April 2009, Rome, RDC office

29 July 2009, Ellijay, United Community Bank