

Northwest Georgia Area Agency on Aging  
Elder Rights Meeting – Branch 1  
March 11, 2008  
Minutes

Those in attendance according to sign-in sheet were:

Janet Gayler – AAA

Lisa Burnett – Gilmer County Senior Ctr.

Susan Greene – Kessler Clinic/Healthy Feet

Carol Lockett – AAA

Laura Rogne – North Georgia Community Action

Pastor T Reamsnyder – McCaysville UMC

Jeff Taylor – GLSP/LTCO

Dick Sumner – ResponseLink of N GA

Janet Gayler did welcome and introductions.

Carol Lockett provided information on IRS Economic Stimulus Rebate scams. Some con artists are pretending to offer people assistance with getting their refunds direct deposited. As a reminder, the rebates will not be issued earlier than May, and they will be automatically direct deposited if your tax refund was direct deposited. Some agencies (AARP, etc...) are offering assistance to seniors who do not file a return on an annual basis but want to get their refunds. Other agencies/individuals are charging up to \$20 for this service, which only takes about 3 minutes. Remind seniors that they should not have to pay to get their rebate checks. Also, beware of e-mail scams which appear to be from the IRS offering to direct deposit rebate checks. Some of these scam e-mails will actually briefly redirect users to the IRS website, and they also use the actual IRS logos on their scam sites. **DO NOT PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THESE SCAM ARTISTS. THE IRS WILL NOT CONTACT YOU BY E-MAIL.**

Susan Greene briefly reminded the group of the recent Hit Man scams. In this scam, people are being told that a hit man has been hired to kill them, but the con artist agrees to protect them in exchange for personal information and/or money. In some cases, the victims are being warned that they are being watched, etc... **THIS IS A SCAM** to obtain money or personal information. Contact law enforcement if you receive this type of warning.

Susan and Carol both reminded the group that e-mail phishing scams can look very real. Many times, these e-mails appear to be from banks regarding your online account or other changes to your account, and they threaten to close access to your account unless you update information. Again, your bank already has your routing and account numbers, plus your social security number. They will not ask for this type of information by e-mail. If you suspect that such an e-mail is legitimate, call your bank to provide the updated information. Do not provide it by e-mail links to the internet!

Pickens County has established an Inter-Agency Council. Gina Pendley is the main contact person, and can issue e-vites to future meetings. Dick Sumner may have additional contact information, but none was provided during the meeting.

A discussion was held about services and resources for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. At this time, the services seem to be very limited. If you know of services in your area, please send a list to Karen Nelson at [ktinsley@cvrdc.org](mailto:ktinsley@cvrdc.org). Mercy Senior Care subcontracts with the AAA to provide support groups for Kinship Care (any relative raising children). Currently, they are providing support groups in Floyd and Chattooga counties only. However, they provide telephone support and guidance to all Kinship caregivers. You can contact Julia Kimple or Claire Mangraviti for more information at 706-291-0100.

Resource guides were provided for specific areas, and a need for resource guides for all areas was discussed. As a reminder, Janet mentioned that the AAA keeps up the ESP database, which is a comprehensive resource database covering the entire state of Georgia. There are nearly 3000 resources listed in ESP for the 15-county NWGA region. If you know of resources in your community, please pass the information along to Donna Baldwin ([dbaldwin@cvrdc.org](mailto:dbaldwin@cvrdc.org)), AAA Resource Specialist. Also, as a reminder, Public Service Announcements at local radio/TV stations are a good way to get the word out about resources in your community.

Janet Gayler provided an update on the Elder Rights Newsletter project. A template was shown, and everyone agreed that it looked good. Karen Nelson will continue to work on this project, but she needs suggestions for topics, articles, etc... Please send them to her at [ktinsley@cvrdc.org](mailto:ktinsley@cvrdc.org).

Carol Lockett reminded the group that letters to the editors of magazines and/or newspapers are a great avenue for advocacy for Elder Rights issues.

Susan Greene spoke briefly about illiteracy among the elderly and reminded the group to consider this when designing brochures and other materials.

Janet Gayler provided an update on the Case Management program. It is going very well, focusing primarily on Floyd and Chattooga counties. Four other regions have contacted Janet about duplicating her model.

Jeff Taylor provided a brief update on the Mental Health Ombudsmen program. They're still advocating for this position. It is a CO-AGE advocacy issue. For more information, go to the Georgia Council of Community Ombudsmen's website at [www.gacoco.org](http://www.gacoco.org).

The DVD, Mr. Nobody was presented for the group. This DVD covers a client's right to self-determination.

**NEXT MEETINGS:** All meetings of the Branch 1 Group are held at United Community Bank, Community Room, Ellijay, GA from 1:00 – 3:00 PM.

June 10, 2008

September 9, 2008

December 9, 2008