

GIVE THE GIFT OF VISION: DONATE YOUR OLD EYEGLASSES

Do you have an old pair of eyeglasses lying around the house or tucked away in a drawer? Give someone the gift of vision by donating your old eyeglasses.



Purchasing eyeglasses can be very expensive, especially without vision insurance. Many people, including the elderly, need eyeglasses but cannot afford to buy a new pair. For some seniors, an updated glasses prescription can improve driver safety, reduce the risk of injury due to falls, allow reading of a letter for a loved one, or distinguish bus route numbers on the way to the grocery store. Your old eyeglasses can make this possible.

After being donated, adjusted, and fitted with prescription lenses for an elderly neighbor, they are as good as new! Please help a senior live happily, safely and independently in the community, by donating your used eyeglasses to the Hart Senior Center, 915 27th Street, or call 264-5462.

SPRING TIPS TO HELP YOUR ELDERLY NEIGHBORS



- ✓ Work with your neighbors to start a transportation program for neighborhood seniors (Contact 566-1594 for more information)
- ✓ Invite an elderly neighbor to join you and your family/friends on a picnic or backyard BBQ
- ✓ Introduce yourself to an older neighbor and share your phone number as a resource in case of an emergency.
- ✓ Help an elderly neighbor with Spring Cleaning, and include neighbors in the project. Ideas include cleaning rain gutters, replacing porch light bulbs, removing weeds and unwanted plants, etc. (Contact 566-1594 for more information)
- Learn more about the SAIF Program and how you can help your elderly neighbors protect themselves against fraud.
- ✓ Donate your used eyeglasses for someone in need. Contact (916) 264-5462 for more info.
- ✓ Help an older neighbor plant spring flowers or garden vegetables.

SUTTER PACE PROGRAM

Sutter SeniorCare is helping many Sacramento seniors remain living at home through the **PACE (All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) Program**, and they are sure making a difference.

For some seniors, falling frequently, becoming forgetful, making excessive visits to the doctor's office or Emergency Room, finding difficulty with daily tasks such as bathing, cooking, or housekeeping, can be major obstacles to living safely and independently at home. The PACE Program, staffed by Board-Certified and professional staff, through multiple services, helps older adults maintain community connections and prevent nursing home placement as long as is possible.

First, a one-stop Adult Day Health Center provides a range of medical services, including blood pressure monitoring, laboratory tests, x-rays, dental, vision, hearing, occupational and speech therapy, in a full-time clinic staffed by a doctor specialized in older adult medicine. Also, PACE provides transportation to and from the Adult Day Health Center, associated medical specialist appointments, and even to shopping and social outings. Finally, Home Care Aides provide personal care and help with chores, while Home Health nurses are available as needed or in case of an emergency.

To qualify for the Sutter SeniorCare PACE Program, applicants must be 55 years or older, and able to live safely at home with provided assistance. For more information, call (916) 446-3100 or visit www.suttermedicalcenter.org or www.natlpaceassn.org.



Caring Neighborhoods Program

South Natomas Community Center
2921 Truxel Road
Sacramento, CA 95833
(916) 566-1594
tgray@cityofsacramento.org

www.caringneighborhoods.org

"Make **your** neighborhood a **better** place to live!"



CARING NEIGHBORHOOD CORNER

Gloria Harmon is an extraordinary neighbor from **Campus Commons Caring Neighbors (CCCN)**, a dynamite group in East Sacramento. Her dedication to helping others continues to touch the lives of neighborhood seniors.

For seniors who no longer drive, accessing transportation is a vital key to living independently, yet obstacles oftentimes leave few other options. Campus Commons is no exception, as nearly half of all neighbors are seniors. Bus stops are on two major streets and a mile away from most neighbors' homes, causing frail seniors to avoid using public transit. Taxicabs are a common option, although quite costly for regular use by those on limited incomes.

Stepping up to the challenge, Gloria started a Caring Neighborhood with her neighbors to help with senior transportation needs.

Seniors were teamed up with at least two Caring Neighbors who provide rides as needed including doctor's appointments, church, the pharmacy, shopping, and much more. One neighbor even used her van to make regular grocery store trips for neighborhood seniors. The program is a big hit and helps older neighbors live remain connected to the community.

In addition, Gloria has spearheaded other activities. Caring Neighbors help with tasks such as changing porch light bulbs and furnace filters, taking garbage cans to the curb, and more. Also, the group sponsors a driver refresher course, 55 Alive, through AARP, helping older drivers remain safely on the road. A popular feature of CCCN, 55 Alive always has a full class and others on the waiting list. Recently, CCCN and Caring Neighborhoods hosted a Spring Cleaning project for older neighbors.

From its inception, Gloria has faithfully coordinated CCCN activities and ultimately made a difference in the lives of senior neighbors. Expressing appreciation, one senior neighbor recently remarked to a friend, "The Campus Commons Caring Neighbors saved my life."

THANK YOU, GLORIA and Campus Commons Caring Neighbors for making a difference! Keep up the good work!

The Caring Neighbor

A Newsletter from the Caring Neighborhoods Program
City of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation

Spring 2005

STOP SENIOR FRAUD!

Did you know that over 200,000 older adults lose their retirement or life savings, nearly \$10 billion, to scams and fraud every year? The **SAIF (Seniors Against Investment Fraud) Program**, through the California Department of Corporations, is doing their part to put scam artists out of business through a FREE volunteer training and education program for older adults.

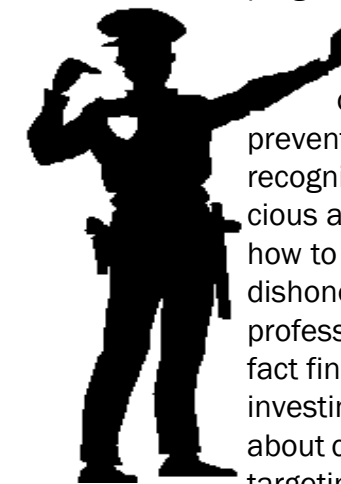
SAIF educates older Californians of the dangers of fraud and how to prevent becoming a victim by recognizing and avoiding suspicious activity. Training includes how to identify "red flags" by dishonest solicitors, confirming professional licensing, encouraging fact finding on products before investing, and informing seniors about current scams specifically targeting older adults. By connect-

ing seniors to resources for investing information and verification of individuals and businesses, SAIF hopes to equip older adults with the tools to avoid fraud and costly rip-offs.

Also, SAIF encourages seniors to practice the 4 Cs: CALL SAIF first, CONSIDER all options, COMPARE products, and CONSULT with trusted others, before purchasing or investing in any type of product, including retirement/estate planning, living trusts, securities, Medi-Cal eligibility programs, and much more.

For more information, or to schedule a seminar in your neighborhood, contact 1 866 ASK-CORP (275-2677), or visit www.corp.ca.gov.

Do you know of a special caring neighbor who deserves to be recognized? We would love to hear about your efforts! Please contact Tracey Gray at 566-1594 or tgray@cityofsacramento.org and let us know how you are making a difference in your neighborhood!



GOOD SAMARITANS

Jeff DeGroot and Caring Neighbors from the **Sylvan Oaks Christian Church** in Citrus Heights, went beyond making a difference to help an older couple in their neighborhood.

Jeff and a group of outstanding volunteers wished to use their professional skills and expertise to help an elderly neighbor with major home repair work. The group would cover all expenses, donating materials equipment, and professional labor necessary for the project. We were referred to **Mrs. R.**, a very special senior neighbor who needed her house painted, by Mercy Housing, a non-profit organization that helps low-income neighbors with home repair.

When Jeff met Mrs. R., he knew she was a perfect fit for the project. As the sole caregiver for her husband who had suffered several strokes in recent years, financial circumstances prevented Mrs. R. from painting her long-time home. When Jeff told her that his group would not only paint her house but cover all costs, she gave him a big hug and started to cry.

The group made immediate preparations, purchasing painting materials and power washing the house and moss-covered patio. Volunteers met at Mrs. R.'s home early on a Saturday morning, where she prepared a delicious, hearty breakfast to start to the day. Volunteers worked diligently and with pride as their workmanship transcended the desire of each volunteer to help Mr. and Mrs. R. remain living independently in their longtime home.

GREAT JOB Jeff, and Sylvan Oaks Christian Church volunteers! Thank You for making a difference in the lives of these special neighbors.



COMMUNITY SERVICE DAY BLITZ

Youth volunteers from **Bayside Church**, in Roseville, teamed up for a Community Service Day Blitz, to help elderly neighbors from **Capital Estates Neighbor Helping Neighbor** project (Caring Neighborhood) in South Sacramento.

Over 45 volunteers in 9 teams spent a Saturday providing yard maintenance for several neighborhood seniors, pulling weeds, trimming bushes, cleaning rain gutters, removing rose bushes, washing windows, sweeping porches, dumping yard waste, planting flowers, and much more. Meanwhile, Caring Neighbors **Jo Fleming** and **Bonnie Deal** prepared and served lunch to the hardworking teens. All who received help were overwhelmed by their kindness and appreciative of their good deeds.

Seniors such as Mr. and Mrs. C. were very grateful for the help, as poor health had made it difficult to keep up with their yard work. Mrs. D., a delightful elderly lady in her 90s was a particular favorite of the youth who arduously tended to her needs, quickly removing old shrubs and foliage. Mrs. H., a thoughtful senior in her 80s, was so appreciative of their service that she made a batch of cookies for volunteers as they worked. And to show his gratitude, Mr. C., an elderly neighbor who lives alone, offered youth volunteers all of the change from his pockets, which they of course refused.

The Bayside Church volunteers helped these elderly neighbors live safely and independently at home, by keeping their yards in compliance with regulations. Their passion for serving others and eagerness to help seniors certainly brought two generations closer together, if only for one day.

THANK YOU Bayside Church, for your kind efforts to make a difference for these special seniors.

AMERICORPS - MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Volunteers from **Americorps*National Civilian Community Corps** (NCCC) teamed up with Caring Neighborhoods in an all-day community service project for a very special elderly neighbor. Their desire to help others, knowledge of various skills, and eagerness to make a difference, will make this spring and summer a much more enjoyable for **Mrs. S.**

Americorps volunteers desired to help an elderly neighbor as an independent service project while fulfilling another City of Sacramento assignment. They performed landscaping and yard improvements to abate weeds and unwanted shrubbery that Mrs. S. could not complete on her own, including shoveling lava rocks surrounding her home, replacing sheeting to cover underlying soil, returning rocks to the yard, arranging decorative rocks and plants, and washing porches and walkways. When short-handed on some equipment, Americorps volunteers improvised without complaint, demonstrating their commitment to service making life a lot easier for this sweet elderly neighbor.

After the project was completed, Mrs. S. tearfully expressed her gratitude, commenting that she did not think that there were any good people left in the world. Thanks to Americorps volunteers, Mrs. S. now knows that Caring Neighbors really do exist.

THANK YOU, Americorps volunteers for serving others and making a difference for this special senior.

*Americorps*NCCC is a national community service program engaging over 50,000 volunteers, 18 to 24 years old, in intensive projects meeting a variety of critical needs in education, environment, public safety, homeland security, and many other areas.*



SENIOR IMPACT PROJECT

The **Society for the Blind** is helping seniors, who have severe vision loss, to remain living safely and independently at home, through the **Senior IMPACT Project**. This spectacular program teaches alternative techniques to daily living skills for seniors, 55 years and older, who are adjusting to loss of vision from conditions such as Glaucoma, Macular Degeneration, Diabetes.



Each month, the Senior IMPACT Project hosts a 6-day immersion training retreat. Participants learn daily living skills, such as cooking, cleaning, home organizing, and practical mobility solutions, including using a cane or guide dog. An introduction to Braille and using computers with voice software are also features of the program. In addition, a counseling session with loved ones develops a greater understanding of the senior's renewed independence and transition into the community.

For seniors whose circumstances do not allow participation in a retreat setting, In-Home training is available. This short-term program focuses on the senior's needs in their home environment.

Finally, quarterly informative seminars for the public provide valuable information on topics such as Diabetes, adjustment to blindness, self-advocacy, employment exploration, and more.

The Senior IMPACT Program is changing the lives of many older adults by equipping them with skills to help them live independently while adjusting to life-changing vision loss. An added bonus, the training provides an opportunity for friendships and bonding, while learning skills in a positive environment, with experienced, blind, role models.

Please share this wonderful program with an older neighbor who has severe vision loss or related condition.

For more information, visit www.societyfortheblind.org, or contact Connie Leblond, (916) 452-8271 x312 or cleblond@societyfortheblind.org.