

Feb./March 2009

# Leon County Senior Gazette

■ The bi-monthly publication of the  
Leon County Senior Outreach Program



■ Sponsored by the Tallahassee Senior Foundation



## Spring into Home Improvement

Longer days and warmer weather means spring and spring-cleaning. As you are tidying your home, it's a great time to think about home improvements. For older adults, simple changes can make your residence more senior friendly.

In an economy like this, you may think home improvements would be frivolous. However, according to Terry Ward, a local consultant who specializes in accessibility and assistive technology services, it is important to make safety changes to your home before an accident occurs.

Ward recommends carefully examining the entrances and exits to your house, as well as the bathrooms. These areas, he said, are where most injuries happen for people of all ages.

The National Association of Home Builders' website allows you to search for Certified Aging In-Place Specialists. These remodelers are specially trained to assist with home modifications that will allow you to remain in your home "safely, independently, and comfortably." They consider your medical condition, and can make your home more accessible if you have mobility impairments.

If in doubt, seek professional assistance. Even something as simple as installing a grab bar may be more complicated than it seems. The Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology ([faast.org](http://faast.org)) offers low-interest loans for individuals with ADA recognized conditions needing home modifications.

Consider the following free or low-cost steps towards a healthy home this spring:

- Use a rubber suction mat or non-skid strips in your shower.
- Replace glass or porcelain bathroom accessories with non-breakable plastic ones.
- Make sure you have a phone and a light within reach of your bed.
- Set your water heater to 120 degrees to avoid scalding or burns.
- Rearrange your closets so you having hanging space at different heights, lowering hanging rods if necessary.
- Consider raised flowerbeds or planters that hook over your porch rails. These are easier on your back.
- Make sure your porch light is bright enough for adequate illumination and security.

Continued on page two.

## Leon County Senior Gazette

Susan P. Davis, *Editor*

Rosetta Stone Land, *Asst. Ed.*

Rachel Nickens, *Feature  
Writer*

Kathryn Donoghue, *Layout*

Susan P. Davis, *Coordinator,*  
Martha Coppins, *Asst. Coord.,*  
*Leon County Senior Outreach*  
Mary Carroll, *Board President,*  
*Tallahassee Senior  
Foundation*

Leon County Senior Outreach  
1400 North Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
891-4065  
[www.leoncountyfl.gov](http://www.leoncountyfl.gov)

### **Leon County Senior Outreach Citizens Advisory Council**

Gloria Barber  
Zilpah Boyd  
Sam Bruce  
Marie Cowart  
David Hall  
Jana McConnaughay  
Tom Napier  
Pleas Strickland  
Donna Wells  
Bennie Woodlief

The Leon County Senior  
Outreach Program is funded  
by a grant from the Leon  
County Commission to the  
Tallahassee Senior  
Foundation.

- Eliminate tripping hazards like scatter rugs and exposed extension cords.
- Make sure the interior of your home is well lit. Put an automatic night light in every room.

Minor repairs that may require professional help:

- Consider replacing your showerhead with a height adjustable hand-held showerhead. If showering is difficult, consider a bench or fold-down seat.
- Install simple grab bars next to the toilet and in the shower or tub. Make sure they are at the right height for you.
- Install handrails on both sides of all steps, as well as non-skid tape on any steps that are not carpeted.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. For the hearing impaired, use alarms with strobe lights.
- Replace doorknobs and sink faucets with lever-style handles that are easy to turn.
- Consider a bench near doors for resting or setting down packages. ■ ~ *Written by Rachel Nickens.*

Search for a Certified Aging In-Place Specialist from the  
**National Association of Home Builders** (<http://www.nahb.org>)  
More information is available at the  
**National Aging in Place Council** (<http://www.naipc.org>)



### **Strawberry Tarts**



1 qt. fresh strawberries, (sm. to med.)	6 baked tart shells
Dash of salt	3/4 c. sugar
2 tsp. fresh lemon juice	1/4 tsp. vanilla
1 c. water	1 1/2 tbsp. cornstarch

Wash and hull berries. Mix sugar, cornstarch and salt in a small saucepan. Stir in water. Cook, stirring constantly 6 to 8 minutes or until mixture is clear and thickened. Remove from heat and add lemon juice and vanilla. Cool slightly.

Arrange whole strawberries, stem end down in tart shells. Spoon glaze over the top. Refrigerate to set glaze. Top with whipped cream or sour cream, if desired. Makes 6 servings. Delicious!



## Ask the Senior Resource Coordinator



### Dear Gazette,

April is rapidly approaching, and that means it is time to pay federal income taxes. I often have questions about filing my income tax return. Are there any free services to help me figure out my taxes?

### Dear Reader,

You are in luck! AARP sponsors a program called Tax-Aide, where trained and certified volunteers help low and middle-income taxpayers prepare and file their income tax returns, free of charge. According to Max Caskie, head of training for this district, as long as your return is fairly simple without rental properties or complicated investments, Tax-Aide can help.

Assistance in Leon County is available at:

- Tallahassee Senior Center, 1400 N. Monroe Street
- Leroy Collins Leon County Public Library, 200 W. Park Avenue
- First Presbyterian Church, 110 N. Adams Street

Appointments are required at the Tallahassee Senior Center site and can be made by calling **891-4030**. At the other sites, assistance is first-come, first-served. Hours are 10 am - 1:30 pm, Monday-Saturday at the library, and 11 am - 3 pm, Monday-Saturday at First Presbyterian. All you need to do is bring your important documents and identification.

If you live outside of Leon County, you can find other Tax-Aide sites by calling **1-888-AARP-NOW** or checking <http://www.aarp.org/money/taxaide/taxcounseling/>.

If you want to prepare your own taxes, but have questions, online tax assistance is available at <http://www.aarp.org/money/taxaide/taxcounseling/>.

#### Bring the following documents:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of last year's tax return</li> <li>• All 1099 forms (1099-INT, 1099-DIV, 1099-misc., etc.) showing interest and/or dividends, as well as documentation showing original purchase price of your sold assets</li> <li>• If you received a pension or annuity, bring your 1099R</li> <li>• Child care provider information (name, employer ID, SSN)</li> <li>• Social Security numbers for all dependents</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• W-2 forms from all employers</li> <li>• If you were paid Social Security benefits, bring your SSA-1099</li> <li>• All forms indicating federal income tax paid</li> <li>• If applicable, unemployment compensation statements</li> <li>• If itemizing deductions, bring all receipts or canceled checks for items such as medical expenses, taxes paid, mortgage interest paid, and charitable contributions</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

*Direct your questions about senior resources to the  
Senior Resource Coordinator  
at 891-4043 or [seniorinformation@talgov.com](mailto:seniorinformation@talgov.com)*



*Miccosukee Senior Day  
Holiday Party  
December 4, 2008*

## DRIVING SAFELY THROUGH THE YEARS

Many adults rely on driving their vehicle to get from place to place. However, as one ages, certain physiological changes may make driving more dangerous. Since no one wants to give up their independence, there are multiple programs to help older adults remain safe drivers through the years.

"Beginning around age 55, we begin a gradual decrease in our ability to process information, remember, and make judgments in traffic situations," said Gail Holley, Safe Mobility for Life Program and Research Manager at the Florida Department of Transportation. "Visual decline makes it harder for older adults to read signs, and older eyes need longer recovery times from bright headlights at night," she said. "In addition, certain medications may slow reaction times," Holley added.



"Staying healthy, exercising, and being aware of the natural age-related changes will help older adults remain safe drivers," said Holley.

The Safe Mobility for Life Program website, [www.safeandmobileseniors.org](http://www.safeandmobileseniors.org), provides information to seniors and their

families about transportation safety and mobility information.

Another resource for older adults is CarFit, a national program created by the American Society on Aging in collaboration with the American Automobile Association, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapist Association. According to Gena Varn, Participant Coordinator at the Tallahassee Senior Center, CarFit takes about 15-20 minutes and helps determine how well a driver and car work together.

Trained volunteers work through a 12-point checklist and the driver leaves with recommended car adjustments and adaptations, a list of resources in their area and greater peace of mind. Varn said seniors are sometimes leery of the CarFit program because they think they will lose their driving privileges. However, once they attend, they are happy to have attended a free program that helps them drive longer.

In February, the CarFit program will be coming to all Leon County Senior Days. Show up with your car and leave as a more informed driver.

\*\*\*\*\*

### CarFit in Your Community

All events are from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

- Miccosukee Community Center, Thursday, Feb. 5
- Woodville Community Center, Thursday, Feb. 12
- Ft. Braden Community Center, Tuesday, Feb. 17
- Chaires-Capitola Community Center, Tuesday, Feb. 24

## **Leon County Senior Outreach**

February-March, 2009

Calendar of Events

Call 891-4065 or 891-4033 for More Information

### **Bradfordville**

Historic Bradfordville Schoolhouse, 3439 Bannerman Road

**NEW - Brain, Body and Balance:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 9-10:00 am

**Drawing and Beyond: Morning Class:** Wednesdays, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm, **Afternoon Class:**

Wednesdays, 1:30 - 4:30 pm, \$8 per class for seniors 55 or older, \$10 for under 55 (this does not include supplies). No pre-registration. Join any time. Supply list will be given during your first class. For all ability levels, including beginners.

**Lifelong Learning Series:** Call for updated schedule, 891-4065

**Senior Fitness - Beginners:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30 - 11:15 am

**Senior Fitness - Intermediate:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

**Senior Fitness - Afternoon Class:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 1-2:00 pm

**Social Bridge:** Mondays, 1-4:00 pm

### **Chaires-Capitola**

Dorothy C. Spence Community Center, 4768 Chaires Crossroad

**Chaires-Capitola Senior Day:** Tuesday, February 24 (CarFit, 10am - 1pm) & March 24, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

**Senior Fitness Classes:** Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 9:15 - 10:15 am

**Low Impact Senior Fitness:** Mondays, 10:30-11:30 am & Thursdays, 10:15 - 11:15 am

### **Ft. Braden**

Ft. Braden Community Center, 16387 Blountstown Hwy.

**Ft. Braden Senior Day:** Tuesday, February 17 (CarFit, 10am - 1pm) & March 17, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

**Senior Fitness Classes:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:30 - 11:30 am

### **Miccosukee**

Miccosukee Community Center, 13887 Billingsley Road

**Miccosukee Senior Day:** Thursday, February 5 (CarFit, 10am - 1pm) & March 5, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

**Bus Trip to WalMart:** First Friday of the month, February 6 & March 6, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm

### **Woodville**

Woodville Community Center, 8000 Old Woodville Road

**Woodville Senior Day:** Thursday, February 12 (CarFit, 10am - 1pm) & March 12, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

**Senior Fitness Classes:** Monday and Wednesdays, 8:30 - 9:30 am

**Join the Fun!**

## Can We Count on Your Support?

Please give to the Tallahassee Senior Foundation. Your contribution pays for programs and enhances services. Thanks for being a "key" to active, healthy aging in our community!

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>____ \$25 Senior (age 55 plus)</p> <p>____ \$35 Friend (under age 55)</p> <p>____ \$40 Senior Couple</p> <p>____ \$100 Friends Key Holder</p> <p>____ \$250 Bronze Key Holder</p> | <p>____ \$500 Silver Key Holder</p> <p>____ \$1,000 Gold Key Holder</p> <p>____ \$2,500 Platinum Key Holder</p> <p>____ \$5,000 Diamond Key Holder</p> |
|--|--|

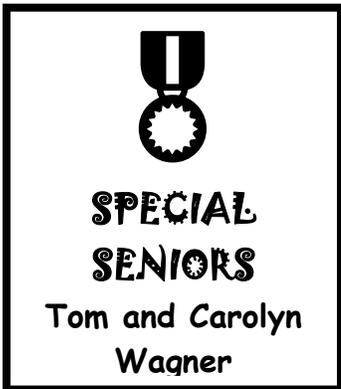
\_\_\_\_ **Please dedicate my contribution directly to the Leon County Senior Outreach Program.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check out to *Tallahassee Senior Foundation* and send it to:

**Leon County Senior Outreach**, 1400 N. Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32303.



With deep roots in the Chaires area, Tom and Carolyn Wagner have a strong history in their community and remain currently involved as well.

Tom attended the old Chaires school. In fact, the new school, park, and community center are on his family's former property. He has seen Chaires change from farm country to a residential area, and said he feels like one of the homesteaders. Whenever he attends events at the community center, he says, "I feel like I'm going home. I've left a lot of footprints on that land."

Carolyn is from Moultrie, GA and was introduced to Tom through a mutual friend. They have been married since 1954. Until

retirement, she was a schoolteacher and he worked for CSX railway.

In addition to participating in Senior Days and fitness classes, both enjoy gardening and visiting friends.



While Chaires offers the rural experience both grew up with, they venture into Tallahassee several times a week, visiting their two children and grandchildren and attending First Baptist Church of Tallahassee.

Both want to stay active as long as possible. Tom "would like to see 100 years of age, God willing," while Carolyn lives by her grandmother's motto; "It's better to wear out than rust out." ■ *by Rachel Nickens*

Leon County Senior Outreach Program  
Tallahassee Senior Foundation  
1400 North Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32303



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Tallahassee, FL  
Permit No. 01111

Return Service Requested

**Welcome** to the bi-monthly  
Leon County Senior Gazette!

Look for this informative  
newsletter every other month.

Don't forget to check the  
calendar page inside to get  
updated information on all Leon  
County Senior Outreach  
activities.

For more information, call  
**891-4065** or **891-4033**, or  
e-mail us at [davissu@talgov.com](mailto:davissu@talgov.com).

### Leon County Senior Outreach Advisory Council

The focus of this group is to promote the well-being of seniors in Leon County and serve as a liaison to the County Commission on senior issues. Meetings are open to the public and citizen input is encouraged.

**LCSO Citizens Advisory Council meets at 1:00 p.m., the third Wednesday of every other month (next meeting is March 18th) at the Tallahassee Senior Center, Conference Room 3-A. Call 891-4065 for more information.**

### **Grandparents as Parents (GaP)**

**Luncheon and Support Group**

**Last Wednesday of every month, February 25 & March 25, 2009**

**11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**Leon County Public Library, 2200 W. Park Avenue**

**Complimentary lunch. Reservations Required!**

**Call 891-4033 or 891-4065.**