

South Austin AARP Chapter 2426

Website: www.southaustinaarp.org

December, 2016

Wednesday

December 21, 2016, 1:00 p.m.

Holiday Feast

December is our big pot luck feast. Bring a salad, casserole, or dessert to share. Coffee & water will be furnished. Remember to bring serving spoons. We will begin eating immediately after opening remarks. Consider donating a door prize for our drawing at the end of each meeting. Be prepared to share food and laughter with our wonderful members. This is the first year for many of our new members. Let's really sparkle with holiday spirit. Entertainment and conversation will occur after a short business meeting.

City adopts age-friendly plan

The Austin City Council has adopted the Age-Friendly Austin Plan, which will establish concrete policies and strategies to address the needs of older adults.

The purpose-driven plan is collaborative with coordinating public sector and nonprofit services, established businesses and technology entrepreneurs, as well as the arts, culture and education communities.

The mayor's Task Force on Aging, convened by Mayor Lee Leffingwell in 2012, recommended that Austin pursue designation as an age-friendly community under the AARP and World Health Organization affiliated programs, and led to the formation of both AustinUp, a nonprofit organization working to raise the profile of the older population and issues of aging, and the city of Austin's Commission on Seniors.— AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Sunshine Committee

Doris Thorne 512-382-9130

Please call Doris and give her the names of members who are ill, in the hospital or have had a death in the family.



FAITH IN ACTION Drive a Senior

Drive A Senior Christmas Gift Bags

Remember to bring your filled gift bags for Drive A Senior. They will be collected and delivered to the clients. Thanks for your help in this worthwhile project. If you have questions, contact Al Prewitt, [512 2879847](tel:5122879847), alprew507@sbcglobal.net Suggested items for gift bags: Pocket calendar, Oatmeal packs, Hand or body lotion, Hand towel, Sock Slipper socks, Applesauce packs, Kleenex. Sugar free cough drops; Tea bags Small mirror or combs Handkerchiefs, Notepads/pens, \$10.00 gift cards from HEB



Chapter 2426 2017 Officers and Board Members

Barbara Kaiser, Barbara Fetonte , Al Prewitt, Pete Skalnik, Ed Gonzales, Elaine Benton, Mary Ragland



Our November program was presented by Ashley Pace and Chase Norris of Austin Recycles

Legislative Action

Stop a tax hike on seniors!

Fred Griesbach
AARP Campaigns

The oldest and sickest Americans are facing a tax hike on January 1, unless Congress takes action. We're living in uncertain times and unless Congress takes action, millions of our country's oldest and sickest citizens will face a tax hike.

On January 1, if Congress does not act, Americans age 65+ will see an increase in the income threshold over which they can deduct medical expenses from their taxes. That means less money in the pockets of seniors who are already struggling with high health care costs.

Thankfully, it's not too late to stop it. The Senate is considering a bipartisan bill which would protect older Americans from this tax increase. You can help us make sure they protect Seniors Tell your Senator to co-sponsor the Seniors Tax Hike Prevention Act today.

Each year, between eight and 10 million taxpayers utilize the medical expense deduction, which allows Americans with high health care costs to deduct expenses when filing taxes. That means real savings for seniors who spend their money on prescription drugs, hearing aids, long term care insurance policies, and other health care costs.

Over half of all taxpayers who take advantage of this rule are over 65 years old, and nearly three quarters of all those taking the deduction have incomes below \$75,000. We should not force those already burdened by high health costs to pay even more for the care they need.

That's why we're asking Congress – in the short time remaining this year – to at least delay this tax increase by two years, providing real middle class tax relief to those with high health care costs.

To let your senator know you want him to act. Go to our website <http://www.southaustinaarp.org/> Click on Home and in the article click on **Ask your Senator to co-sponsor the Seniors Tax Hike Prevention Act!**
Or call
 Senator John Coryn (202) 224-2934
 Senator Ted Cruz (202) 224-5922

Travel *Mario Macaluso*

Announcement

The President and the Board of Chapter 2426 have approved the following trip guidelines starting in 2017:

1. Trips will be open to members first.
2. Non-members will be placed on a waiting list.
3. Trips' destination and details will be announced orally, on the Website, and
 In the Newsletter a month before the sign-up date.

Rules for signing up

- 1) Sign up for trips will take place at the monthly meeting for members, and also for non-members who will be placed on waiting list.
- 2) Priority will be given to members who sign up in person at the first sign-up date and to members, who are absent, but mail their checks within a week from the first sign-up. (No checks are accepted before the first sign-up date.)
- 3) Trip will be open to non-members a week after the sign-up date at which time members forfeit their priority status and their names will be added to the non-member list.
- 5) The above guidelines will assure fairness to all members and also provide information in sufficient time for trip coordinator to charter a bus, buy tickets, and make reservations.

Mario Macaluso mmdm1967@aol.com
 Tel. 512-432-5255

Community Service

Pat Thomas

A big thank you to all our members who graciously give many hours of service to the community. In March of 2016 we collected pantry and toiletry items for Mobile Loaves & Fishes. Each holiday season we fill Christmas bags for Drive A Senior and we collect pantry items for Southside food pantries. Roll and Stroll activities are not only fun but also environmentally wise. Let me share with you some stories on how a small act of kindness grows into a big benefit for many. Recently member Joyce Evans offered to donate lovely Whole Foods grocery bags to go along with our collection of food items for the pantry. I picked up 30 bags from her and on my way home stopped at Sprouts to buy milk for myself. At the Checkout I bragged about the donation of bags from Whole Foods. Sprouts said we can do that too! They gave me 50 paper bags. While in line the customer in back of me heard my story and said she would like to contribute also. She purchased/donated 10 shopping bags. Then I stopped at Randalls and they gave me more bags. These much needed bags will be delivered to Southside pantries along with our food donations. It all starts with one good deed or one kind word. On our recent Roll and Stroll we visited a couple of charitable thrift stores. "Next to New" is a large shop operated by St. David's Episcopal Church. We had fun shopping but took too long at the checkout lane. We missed our planned bus home. We rested our feet at Hat Creek Burger joint until the next bus came along.. It was after 4:00 when we got on the bus and it was 90% full with tired solemn commuters. We had to scatter around to separate seats on the crowded bus. As we traveled South it was standing room only and our prime time adventurous seniors began engaging strangers in friendly conversation. Smiles and laughter soon began to flow throughout the bus. (We had a variety of bus riders including purple spiked hair and backpack hipsters) By the time we got to our stop in South Austin our packed bus was filled with a harmonious joyful spirit. We high fived everyone on the way off the bus. Thank you dear members for your willingness to venture out of your comfort zone and explore the depths of Austin. More adventure awaits you.

LET'S ROLL AND STROLL INTO 2017. Let Pat Thomas know what neighborhoods, restaurants, and shops you want to explore in 2017. pthomas1@austin.rr.com

Resource Recovery - Austin Recycles Additional information

RECYCLE & REUSE DROP-OFF CENTER 2514 Business Center Dr 78744 At the Recycle & Reuse Drop-Off Center, you can drop off many items to be recycled, reused or safely discarded. You can also pick up free items to reuse yourself.

Most Recycle & Reuse Drop-Off Center services are free to Austin residents, but some services have a fee. (pick up free mulch for the garden, good paint for the home and more.)

<http://www.austintexas.gov/department/austin-resource-recovery>

Tires - There is a fee to drop off tires

Cell phones - According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, fewer than 20 percent of cell phone are recycled. Most people don't know where to recycle them. The Wireless Foundation refurbishes old phones to give to domestic violence survivors.

www.gowirelessgogreen.org

Egg crates - Bring them to our next AARP meeting for use by church food pantries.

Health

HEALTH UPDATE

Gail Glick

Finding the right doctor will help you have a better chance of staying healthy and independent. It is important for your doctor to have experience in dealing with older adults unique health issues. An important part of the patient doctor relationship is he/she accepts you as an equal partner in your health care. When you find a doctor you should meet with them first. Remember you are interviewing them and be aware of anything that might suggest a lack of regard for your needs. Is this person sympathetic to quality of life issues that you need him/her to be. An example may be do they adjust medications to account for the fact that an older adult often metabolizes drugs less efficiently than younger people and may be taking other drugs. Other things to look for are how busy is this doctor and if you needed to speak to him/her could you do so, how convenient is it to get to, and how friendly is the staff. Having access to a doctor who is sensitive to your needs and up to date with geriatric medicine is a big factor in whether you get good treatment. So, do your homework first – it will pay off.

An Update On October Meeting Brenda V. Lambert, MHSM

There are several ways for members to participate in The Medication Screening program provided by the Area Agency on Aging.

The medication screening forms can be completed by the consumer and there are two ways to access the required forms.

(1) Members can visit the website at <http://www.capcog.org/in-the-news/aaacap-accepts-medication-screenings-by-mail> and print off either the English or Spanish version. The completed form can either be mailed or faxed in to the Area Agency on Aging.

(2) For copies of the forms call the Area Agency on Aging, 512-916-6062.

2016 Officers And Committee Chairs

Officers

President: Pete Skalnik 214-704-9562
 Vice President: Elaine Benton 512- 799-2224
 Secretary: Ed Gonzales 512-444-3335
 Assistant Secretary: Marilyn Totten 512-280-8030
 Treasurer: Barbara Fetonte 512-282-1944
 Assistant Treasurer: Caryn Gulas 512-897-8106
 Board of Directors (in addition to officers):
 Mary Ragland -512-280-8661 Barbara Kaiser- 282-0960 Al Prewitt 512 -287-9847

Committee Chairs

Community Svc: Pat Thomas 512- 441-1485
 Greeters: Marilyn Totten-512-280-8030
 Health: Barbara Kaiser -512-282-0960
 Gail Glick 512-547-4153
 Hospitality: Al Prewitt -512-287-9847
 Legislative: Lilac and Tom Bauer 512-743-6364
 Membership: Margaret Hughes 512-956-3297
 Newsletter Editor And Web Manager:
 Diane McGowan-512-892-4416
 Newsletter Distribution: Ray Vaughn 512-292-0982
 Program: Hollis Sheppard 512-636-2186
 Phone Committee Chair
 Elaine Benton 512- 799-2224
 Sunshine: Doris Thorne 512- 382-9130
 Travel Mario Macaluo 512-432-5255

December Celebrations

Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Betty Fickel | 2 Mary Ragland |
| 3 Ray Vaughn | |
| 4 Diane McGowan | 4 Ana-Maria Dwiggins |
| 7 Harriet Gonzales | 9 Pamela Jordan |
| 11 Pat Zwerneman | 13 Kyoko Frazer |
| 15 Maddie Blaylock | 18 Margaret Huges |
| 19 Dortha Bittle | 23 Charles Houston |
| 25 Marlene Rogers | 27 Jane Cable |
| 29 Barbara Molloy | 29 Will Rogers |
| 31 Helena Hedrick | |

Treasurer's Report Caryn Gulas

Check Book Bal \$2826.55
 Travel Money \$1327.17
 Chapter Balance \$1499.38
 Savings Acct \$25.00

Please pay your 2017 Dues at the December meeting. We will be collecting dues through February 2017. Your dues must be paid so that you will receive the chapter newsletter. You can mail your dues to:
 Caryn Gulas
 1504 Canoe Brook Dr
 Austin, TX 78746

Volunteer Hours Ed Gonzales

November: **650** hours
 Year to Date: **5,428**
 Total for the Year 2015: **6,451** hours
Please bring your volunteer forms to the meeting!!

GRAND AVENUE

BY STEVE I



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Proclamation

On December 1st a group of 14 seniors rode the bus # to city hall to receive an official proclamation and recognition for our Roll and Stroll program.

The City of Austin is pleased to recognize the people, programs and events that make Austin unique by issuing proclamations and other recognitions. District 5 (south Austin) council woman Ann Kitchen nominated our Roll & Stroll Community Service program for a proclamation award declaring December 1st as Roll & Stroll day. The official proclamation signed by mayor Steve Adler reads as follows: Be it known that AARP #2426 created a community service educational program to encourage seniors to utilize public transportation for fun and convenience called Roll & Stroll; and Whereas, Roll and Stroll is an economical and engaging way to explore the beauty of Austin’s parks, its restaurants, shops and cultural venues without the stress of driving and parking; Roll and Stroll enables seniors to learn about various fare options, bus routes and being a safe pedestrian, promoting continued independence and Whereas friendships are formed among fellow riders, strengthening community among seniors and residents of all ages, Now Therefore, Steve Adler, Mayor of the City of Austin, proclaims December 1, 2016 as Austin Roll and Stroll Day. The group boarded the bus at the corner of South Lamar and Ben White, traveling North towards downtown, exiting the bus to enjoy dinner at Pollo Tropical, strolling along Lamar to view the twinkling Austin skyline before continuing on the bus to city hall. The group was welcomed at city hall and enjoyed viewing the beautiful Christmas tree in the lobby. After the official presentation by Ann Kitchen the group continued their stroll by walking along 2nd street to view 3 blocks of twinkling tree lights, shops and restaurants. A brief stop

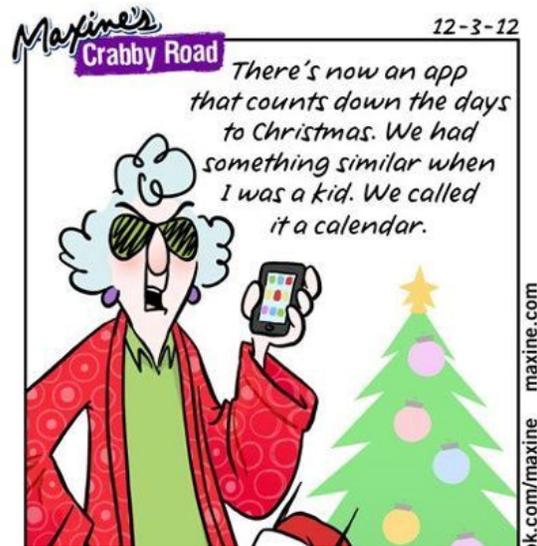
was made for gelato before boarding the bus returning to our starting location.



Chapter 2426 members ride the bus for December Roll and Stroll



Pat Thomas and Pete Skalnik at the November meeting. Pat presented items and the members had to decide if they could be recycled.



CIVIC AND/OR COMMUNITY SERVICE BY SOUTH AUSTIN AARP CHAPTER 2426 VOLUNTEERS

PLEASE BRING THIS INFORMATION TO THE CHAPTER MEETING

AND TURN IN TO : ED GONZALES

Name_____Address_____Phone_____

Category	Hours	Category	Hours
AARP Annual Day of Service		Fundraising for Community Service	
AARP Driver Safety Program		Health & Wellness	
AARP Tax Aide		Long-term Care/Nursing Home Support	
Hunger		Independent Living/ In Home Care Giving/Home Repairs	
Advocacy/Legislation/Information/Referral Services		Independent Living: Transportation Services	
Education/Scholarships or other		All Other Volunteer Areas	
Subtotal		Subtotal	
Total Volunteer Hours			

From: South Austin AARP Chapter 2426

[Http://www.southaustinaarp.org](http://www.southaustinaarp.org)

Diane McGowan , Editor

4511 Langtry Lane

Austin, TX 78749