

# Silver Streak

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Senior Services of Alexandria

Winter 2005

## *Senior Falls Frequently Result in Fatalities*

### **--Prevention is key**

It is not uncommon to see a senior stepping tentatively across an uneven surface, or tightly clutching a railing in descending or climbing stairs – and with good reason! Here are some of the facts listed in a recent publication of the Elder Law News, which characterizes falls as the greatest threat to seniors.

*Seventy percent of accidental deaths in people over 75 years of age result from falls.*

*Seventy-nine billion dollars in medical costs is spent each*

*year on accidents attributable to falls.*

*Forty percent of all nursing home admissions are attributable to repeat falls at home.*

*One out of every three seniors who live independently in their homes will experience a major fall each year.*

*Survivors of falls may experience debilitating fractures of the hip, wrists or spine.*

The fear of falling, itself, can cause “lack of confidence, imposed isolation and immobility.” **What can seniors do to protect themselves not**

**only from falling but from the fear of it?**

Both the falls and the fear can be lessened by following the tips issued in an AARP pamphlet entitled “**Home-Safe-Home**” which is available to Alexandrians by calling the Agency of Aging and Adult Services, 703-838-0900. While the Alexandria Fire Department can no longer make individual home safety inspections, it will send a spokesman to small groups to advise seniors on safety. Call 703-838-4600, ext. 222.

## ***Get Going with DOT!***

“Can you help me? I’m not able to drive anymore. I use a walker and a wheelchair. I’ve got doctor’s appointments and no one to take me!” These are the words heard frequently from callers to Senior Services of Alexandria.

Alexandria’s disabled call Ms. Lakeshia Lewis at the City’s Department of Transportation when they need help.

When someone is disabled, whether it is a temporary disability or a permanent one, a call to the DOT office is the first step in finding transportation help in Alexandria and Ms. Lewis is the person who offers that help. Trips to grocery stores, doctor’s appointments, hair salons, libraries and more are included in the City of Alexandria’s DOT program...also known as “the DOT.”

Disabled persons must complete a form from the DOT office and have their doctor complete a form

to confirm the need for transportation assistance. Once both of these forms are completed and approved, Ms. Lewis sends that person a DOT-ID card and the person may call Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) to make a reservation to go anywhere in Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax County. The service is available seven days per week and reservations must be made at least one day in advance. The City funds the entire cost of the fare except for a passenger co-pay of \$2 or \$2.50 per trip, depending on the destination.

SSA reservationists are also seniors and disabled persons, which gives them special insight into callers needs. Their patience, understanding and friendliness with callers make the interaction of scheduling a positive experience. The reservationists also oversee the daily trips to make sure passengers are picked up and returned in

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## **SAVE THE DATE!!**

**SENIOR SERVICES  
of ALEXANDRIA**

**Spring Gala**

**“Honoring the Best”**

**March 31, 2006**

**2006 Senior Extraordinaire:**

**Ethel S. Underwood  
Col., USAF, (Ret.)**

**Radisson Hotel  
Old Town Alexandria**

**In Memory of**

**Caroline Hodgin & Phyllis Bogle**

by Mary Ann Ormes

**Caroline Hodgin**

by Mrs. Dorothy H. Davies

**Ed Sanders**

by Dr. George Pera

**Marscia Bohannon**

by Dawson & Associates, Inc.

**Morris Freidson**

by Shirley Freidson

**Mary Patricia Hayes**

by Richard Hayes

**Ira L. Bracey**

by Lillie M. Finklea

**Simeon Friedberg**

by Louis & Carole Pollner

**Mary Elizabeth (Mollie) Patrick Newbould**

by E. J. Newbould

**Thomas Helde**

by Joan P. Helde

**Karen Duncker**

by Sara & Bob Templeman

**Phyllis Bogle**

by Judy Drewry

**Evelyn Strouth Lee**

by Mary Ann Ormes, Marie B. Crank, Carol Siegel,

Phyllis Triplett Bickham, Anita Saybe Ehlers,

H. Douglas & Meredith S. Wade,

Mr. & Mrs. Charles C. Dawson, Sr., Ms. Judy Dawson,

Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Leighton,

Mr. & Mrs. Charles C. Dawson, Jr. and Hal Leighton

**In Honor of**

**Irene McGough**

by Barbara Rowan

**Sara E. Burton**

by Mattie L. Burton

**Sandy Calhoun**

by Anna J. McDermott

**Thomas & Margaret Keenan**

by Davin & Patricia Charlton

**Richard T. Walker**

by Paul S. Frommer

**Alfred Duncker**

by Ann & Ron Greenleese

**June Hoye**

by Mary Robinson

**Rose Berler**

by Sandra B. Calhoun

**From the Executive Director...  
To our Seniors**

There's a lot of important information floating around the internet...and in the newspapers...and being discussed on the news these days. And much of the information relates to seniors and medical matters.

Because accessing up-to-date information is important, using your radio, TV and newspapers regularly to stay abreast of things can be very helpful.

WAMU 88.5 FM is an excellent source of news which is often broadcast before it hits the newspapers (and The Diane Rehm Show at 10 am provides excellent commentary on a wide variety of subjects).

Going to the local library and letting them help you learn how to check out the news 'online' is a way to acquire computer skills and internet skills. It can also be a healthy social activity! Try it!

Reading the local Alexandria newspapers and either the Washington Post or Washington Times regularly will keep you up to date on the latest in medical matters and also what Congress is proposing relative to seniors' issues (and you can find these newspapers at the library as well). Writing to your local legislators, U.S. Senators and representatives is a great way to voice your opinions. If you need to get their contact information, you can find it online or by calling us. 703-836-4414 ext. 2

Stay informed. It's good for your mind, good for your health and good for your security. Happy New Year!!

Eileen

**DOT, Continued from page 1**

a timely manner. The City chose SSA to provide the reservations service for disabled callers because it believes that the advocacy and oversight provided by SSA improves the quality of the service.

The DOT has provided over 57,000 trips over the past year. With the cost of fuel at an all time high, and taxi fare increases, Alexandria's disabled are indeed fortunate to pay fares that continue to be very affordable.

If you, or someone you know, needs transportation help, call the City's Department of Transportation at 703-838-3800

**Unforgettable gifts**

I / We are enclosing a gift for \$ .....

This gift is from:

Name .....

Address .....

State / Zip .....

Phone number .....

In Honor of / In Memory of (Circle one)

Name .....

Person to notify regarding donation

Name .....

Address .....

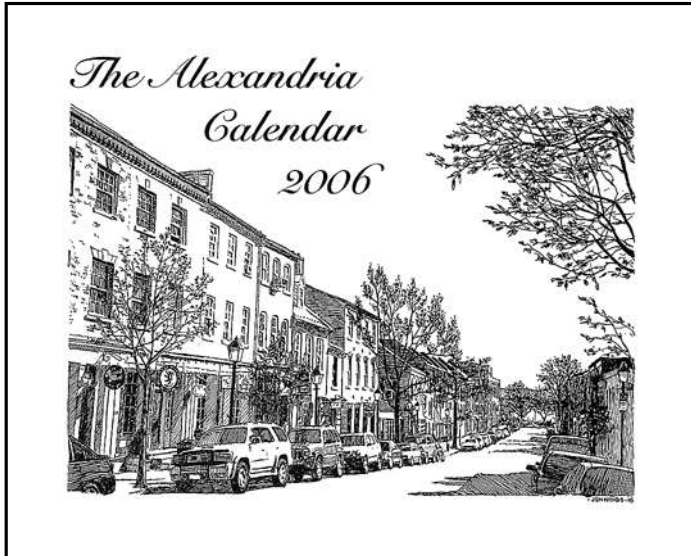
State / Zip .....

Send your gift to

**Senior Services, 121 North St. Asaph Street,  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314**

*For more information, please call 703-836-4414 Ext. 0  
or visit [www.seniorservicesalex.org](http://www.seniorservicesalex.org)*

## *The Alexandria Calendar 2006* *Still Available at SSA Offices*



Produced annually since 1980 as a fundraiser by Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA), The Alexandria Calendar has traditionally displayed expertly crafted drawings by noted pen-and-ink-artists, primarily depicting Old Town Streets and local sites. Always stressing the historic beauty of the area, the cover of the 2006 Calendar displays also the busy life of lower King Street today, with its shops and cafes, as it makes its way to the Potomac.

A reception in the Vola Lawson Lobby at City

Hall preceded presentation of the Calendar to City Council members, and at that time outgoing SSA Board President William P. Harris and long-time staffer for the DOT Service and recent retiree, Mary Louise Simpson, were honored for their service to SSA.



*William P. Harris, Mary Louise Simpson & Mayor Euille*



*Tom Jennings, artist*

Sale and sponsorship of The Alexandria Calendar contribute to the continued ability of this charitable nonprofit to provide the many services so needed by our growing senior population. The 2006 edition has been drawn again by artists Tom Jennings and Deron DeCesare whose fine work last year was a major factor in that issue being sold out completely. Calendars at \$10 each may still be obtained at SSA offices, 121 North St. Asaph Street. For information, call 703-836-4414, ext. 0 or Judy Drewry at 703 370-1948.

### *A Senior's Appreciation*

"As I leave my residence of 31 years in Old Town, I wanted to take this opportunity to let you know how much Senior Services of Alexandria has helped me over the years -- when I was looking for help as I down-sized

my home and then when I had knee surgeries I always called SSA, just around the corner from me, and received great suggestions and referrals of other senior citizens who could assist me with these endeavors. I be-

lieve it was mutually beneficial -- to me, and in a marginal way, to them. Thank you, and all the best in your future endeavors. Please keep up the good work!"  
*(Signed, Mrs. Lele, Old Town, Alexandria.)*

### *Medicare Drug Plans-- How to Avoid Scams*

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) are aware of prescription drug plan scams and have referred some suspected cases to local law enforcement. The administrator for CMS has offered the following tips to seniors to avoid fraud:

- A** Do not allow anyone seeking to enroll you in a plan to come to your home uninvited.
- B** Do not ever provide your personal information when a telephone caller contacts you to market a drug plan.
- C** Supply your personal information only to a person representing a Medicare-Approved product or plan.

If you have questions about prescription drug benefit plans, you can call 1 800 MEDICARE visit their website at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) OR contact the Alexandria Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) at 703-838-0920 for specifics about prescription drug plans offered to Virginia's seniors.

## Senior Services Contact Information

DOT: .....703-836-5222  
Senior Taxi: .....703-836-4414, ext 1  
Employment Counseling  
and In-Home Care: .....703-894-0311  
Meals on Wheels: .....703-836-4414, ext 4  
Money Management for  
Alexandria Seniors: .....703-836-4414, ext 7  
Money Management Services for  
Arlington Seniors: .....703 528-0162, ext 207  
Executive Director: .....703-836-4414, ext 2  
Administration: .....703-836-4414, ext 0  
"The Alexandria Calendar"  
Judy Drewry .....703-370-1948



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## Attention Seniors!

Looking for a job?  
Senior Services of Alexandria can help!  
We specialize in Seniors 55 and over  
703-894-0311



121 North St. Asaph Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Address Service Requested

# Silver Streak

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ALEXANDRIA, VA  
PERMIT NO. 253

### Our Mission:

*As Senior Services of Alexandria, our mission is to provide accessible, comprehensive and affordable services to seniors within the City of Alexandria and adjacent areas, and to promote the independence and self-sufficiency which enable seniors to age with dignity in their own community.*

Please designate Senior Services in the United Way and Combined Federal Campaign. Agency #8311



CFC #8311



The Silver Streak is a quarterly publication of Senior Services of Alexandria.  
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