

Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

JOURNAL

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ILP ...helping people to live independently in their homes....

Housing Options for Older Adults

According to the German philosopher and poet Goethe, “He who lives must be prepared for changes.” We all know that is true, and the longer we live the more changes we will witness and experience.

Remaining independent and continuing to live on our own can be a major challenge.

- We may find ourselves experiencing a financial strain.
- We can be without the ability or funds to properly maintain our homes—the paint is peeling, the roof leaks, the air conditioner doesn’t work right?
- For the first time in many, many years, we may find ourselves living alone.
- Health and mobility challenges may be making remaining in our homes more difficult.

What to do next can be a troublesome decision. Like the old Jimmy Durante song, “Did you have a feeling that you wanted to

go? ...Did you have a feeling that you wanted to stay?” Here are some things to consider:

- Is it difficult to pay the mortgage or pay the rent? Are property taxes and insurance too expensive?
- Am I able to maintain the house and the yard?
- Do I feel lonely living alone?
- Do I fully use the space in my home, or are some rooms never used?
- Is climbing the stairs hard?
- Do friends still live in the neighborhood?
- Do I feel safe in the neighborhood?
- When I am unable to continue to drive,

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**“Start by doing what's necessary;
then do what's possible; and
suddenly you are doing the impossible.”**

- St. Francis of Assisi

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DISCLAIMER:

Articles prepared by or presented in *Meeting the Challenges* are for general information purposes only.

The information is not intended to be medical advice. If you suspect that you have a physical, medical or psychological problem, you should always seek care from a qualified professional.

Before taking any action that may impact you personally, consult with your own physician, attorney, investment counselor, or other professional advisor.

Meeting the Challenges

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will transportation be available?

Following are some ideas of things to consider to meet today's challenges.

Financial Solutions

1. Perhaps "downsizing" is the option for you? Can you sell your current home and rent or purchase something more affordable or suitable?
 - Maybe renting is the better option now?
 - Public housing from governmental local public housing authorities might be an option. Check with your city or government information and referral services to find out what senior housing is available.
2. If we own our home and have equity built up, a reverse mortgage might make it possible to draw funds from your equity to help pay current expenses. A "reverse" mortgage is a loan against your home that you do not have to pay back for as long as you live there. With a reverse mortgage, you can turn the value of your home into cash without having to move or to repay a loan each month. Unlike other loans, because you do not have to make repayments to the loan

each month, a minimum amount of income is not required to qualify for a reverse mortgage. However, getting this type of loan is a major financial decision. NOTE: The only reverse mortgage insured by the U.S. Federal Government is called a Home Equity Conversion Mortgage or HECM, and is only available through an FHA approved lender. If you think this might be an option, the first thing to do is to talk with an FHA approved reverse mortgage counselor. Telephone counseling is available from the National Council on Aging at 1-800-510-0301.

3. Another option might be to sell things of some value that are no longer needed. Be careful if you decide to sell belongings—only deal with reputable dealers (check them out with your Chamber of Commerce, city licensing and other agencies), ask someone you trust to help you, and never let anyone in your house who you do not know.
4. Whether you own your home or are renting, you might consider house sharing? Maybe you can move your possessions into part of the home and rent part

of it to someone else to help pay the expenses? If you decide this might be an option, be business like—check references, get a first month, last month and security deposit, and keep your finances totally separate from those of your “housemate”.

5. If a home is in need of repairs, check with city, county and state agencies to see if a home repair program is funded and operating in your area.

In-Home Help

1. If income distressed, government services may be able to help provide in-home assistance to help with cooking, cleaning and other daily living activities.
2. In some areas, low-cost non-profit or faith-based services might be available.
3. Commercial services are available in most areas for those who can afford to pay for the help that is needed.
4. An individual can hire their own caregiver. This can be less expensive than going through a commercial agency, but should not be undertaken in a haphazard way. Writing a job description

for the worker is an essential first step. Remember you will be fully responsible for everything: Screening, hiring, writing the contract, setting work hours, monitoring job performance, firing, wages and you will be responsible for all of your employee’s taxes. There are insurance implications also, so check with your insurance professional.

NOTE: Your Area Agency on Aging can help with information about home care services and agencies. In Riverside County, call the Office on Aging HelpLink Call Center at 1-800-510-2020.

Home Modifications

Some common and relatively inexpensive home modifications include:

1. Improved lighting can help when low vision is becoming a problem.
2. Entry ramps can be installed if stairs are becoming difficult to climb.
3. Interior ramps to accommodate for split level stairs can make moving through a house easier.
4. Lever-style door handles can replace round knobs
5. Grab bars for the shower, tub or toilet area are a simple but important modification to prevent people from

slipping and falling.

6. Move furniture to create clear walking pathways
7. Eliminate loose rugs and mats that might cause falls.

If home modifications involve contractor renovation and reconstruction, it could be better to consider relocation instead. Some low cost modification loans might be available and some free modification services might be available in your area for eligible older people.

Other Options

Think about moving in with another person or relative and sharing their home and expenses.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides free and low cost counseling services for people who would like advice about buying, renting, or are in danger of default or foreclosure. Call HUD's interactive voice system at 1-800-569-4287 or search on the Internet for a HUD sponsored counseling agency in your area by going to: www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hcc/hcs.cfm

[SOURCES: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; USC.edu – Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, AgeWorks; ADRC-Technical Assistance Exchange brief on *Home Modifications to Promote Independence*; www.caregiverslibrary.org]

Do You Qualify for Less Costly Prescriptions?

Changes to the Medicare rules for the Low-Income Subsidy (LIS) program make it easier for more people to qualify for lower prescription drug costs.

Everyone who has Medicare coverage qualifies for Medicare Part D drug coverage. To qualify for inclusion in the LIS program:

1. Resources cannot be more than \$12,510 for an individual or \$25,010 for a married couple living together. They include such things as bank accounts, stocks, and bonds and [Your house and car are not counted as resources,

and, as of January, insurance policies are no longer counted as a resource.]

2. Your annual income cannot be more than \$16,245 for an individual or \$21,855 for a married couple living together. [Also, as of January, any help received regularly from someone else to pay your household expenses—food, mortgage, rent, heating fuel or gas, electricity, water, and property taxes, will not be counted as income.]

The program is called “Extra Help”. To apply, call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778). You can apply over the phone

or request an “Application for Extra Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs (SSA-1020)”.

You can also apply at your local Social Security office or on-line at www.socialsecurity.gov.

After you apply, Social Security will review your application and send you a letter to let you know if you qualify for the Extra Help.

Once you qualify, you can choose a Medicare prescription drug plan. If you do not select a plan, the *Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services* (CMS) will do it for you.

[SOURCE: socialsecurity.gov]

Maintaining Intestinal Balance

A very common complaint of older adults is recurring constipation. This condition is not a direct result of the aging process.

Some incidence may be related to the medications a person is taking, including antacids (containing aluminum or calcium), antidepressants, antihistamines, diuretics, and psychotropics, among others.

In some cases there are physiological causes involving the intestinal lining or intestinal muscles.

Constipation can also be caused by diseases, such as Diabetes, hypo and hyper thyroid disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, irritable bowel disease, and others. Depression and anxiety can also be causes.

The majority of causes, however, are life style related. Here are things that can help:

- Drink more water
- Add more fiber to the diet
- Over-the-counter fiber laxatives can be taken
- Bulk laxatives that contain psyllium can be used
- Increased physical activity can also lower the risk of constipation.

If the condition persists, consult a medical professional.

[SOURCES: American Academy of Family Physicians, AAAFP.org;]

How to Protect Your Driving Privilege

A question some discuss is whether driving a motor vehicle a right or a privilege? Many mistakenly believe that driving is a right. The government position is that, whereas the U.S. Constitution guarantees the “right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”, no right to drive is given.

Whether we agree or not that driving is a privilege, the assertion that it is not a right is included in vehicle codes as law. The privilege to drive on public roads and highways is licensed by the states and a license can be issued, or may not be issued, dependent on the eligibility of the licensee to receive a license. It is the same as the logic behind granting a business license or an alcoholic beverage license.

The driving license requires passing tests and demonstrating competence before a person is eligible to be privileged to drive. The concern that guides the licensing of drivers is to help protect public safety. Also, if a person’s ability to drive a vehicle safely is judged to be impaired by state officials, a person’s driving privilege can be restricted, suspended or cancelled.

According to the Harvard Medical School *Family*

Health Guide, “As people grow older, their vision, hearing, reflexes, strength, flexibility, and coordination tend to deteriorate. These physical changes can undermine driving skills....”

Seniordrivers.org, a website of the Automobile Association of America (AAA) Foundation for Traffic Safety, provides resources for several purposes:

- Measuring Your Driving Skills (Assessment)
- Education and Training (Keep Driving Safely!)
- Planning for Continued Mobility (Post Driving).

On the next page you will find a copy of the AAA Foundation’s 15 questions from the “**Driver 55 Plus: Check Your Own Performance**” booklet, which can be accessed at the seniordrivers.org website.

Go to page 6 and answer the questions. Then come back here to score and discuss your answers.....

What was your score? _____

Here is what the scores mean:

- If your score is between 0 and 15—You are aware of what is important to safe driving and are practicing what you know.
- If your score is between 16 and 34—You are engaging in

some practices that need improvement to ensure safety.

- 35 and over—You are engaging in too many unsafe driving practices.

Your answers and score give some indication of how well you are doing. A complete evaluation of your driving ability would require the answers to many more questions along with medical, physical and licensing examinations.

The seniordrivers.org website has many resources to test and help improve driving skills. For example, DriveSharp is an “online program that is clinically proven to help drivers see more, react faster, and cut crash risk by up to 50 percent.”

To continue to enjoy the driving privilege as long as possible, we all need to constantly review our physical and mental status, and our driving skills, and make necessary adjustments to improve our on-the-road safety.

[SOURCES: dmv.ca.gov; harvard.health.edu; seniordrivers.org]

"It is glorious to be free."

- ILP Friend, after regaining her driving privilege

Drivers 55 Plus: Self-Rating Form

INSTRUCTIONS: For each of the following 15 questions, check the symbol (✓) of the one answer that most applies to you.

	Always or Almost Always	Some- times	Never or Almost Never
1. I signal and check to the rear when I change lanes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I wear a seat belt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I try to stay informed on changes in driving and highway regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Intersections bother me because there is so much to watch from all directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I find it difficult to decide when to join traffic on a busy interstate highway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I think I am slower than I used to be in reacting to dangerous driving situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. When I am really upset, I show it in my driving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. My thoughts wander when I am driving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Traffic situations make me angry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I get regular eye checks to keep my vision at its sharpest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I check with my doctor or pharmacist about the effects of my medications on driving ability. (If you do not take any medication, skip this question.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I try to stay abreast of current information on health practices and habits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. My children, other family members or friends are concerned about my driving ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Note new headings →	None	One or Two
14. How many traffic tickets, warnings, or "discussions" with officers have you had in the past two years?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. How many accidents have you had during the past two years?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Count the number of check marks in the squares = _____ X 5 = _____ ; Number of check marks in the triangles _____ X 3 = _____ ; Add the square and triangle scores = your score: _____

Braille Institute....(760)321-1111 Department of Rehabilitation (Riverside)....(951)782-6650

Using Public Transportation

by Ivet Woolridge, TRIP Service Program Manager

Most people who have driven their whole life do not give public transportation much thought, but with the rise of gasoline prices and the concern to take care of the environment, carpooling has been very popular and public transit has become an attractive alternative.

Even though public transportation has existed for many years, for many of us using it is intimidating. Many times the media portrays public transportation as inconvenient or unsafe. Safety and security are priorities for transit agencies, and their drivers are trained professionals. Drivers have direct radio access to their headquarters in case of any emergency. Some buses have cameras installed to help monitor the entire bus and keep passengers safe.

Public transportation is an essential service for many communities and an important and easy way to get around and be independent.

In order to begin using public transportation, we need general information to understand it and feel confident that we can ride successfully. Most transit agencies provide services that will help beginners with information

and guidance. Start off by taking a quick ride on the bus and see how it's actually better to sit down and relax, than to drive and have to pay attention to the road.

Nowadays, owning a vehicle is becoming very expensive. The average labor cost in auto shops is about \$79 per hour, not including parts. Gas prices vary, but are in the \$3.00 range, plus vehicle insurance and registration. A monthly bus pass can cost about \$50.00, but special rates are available for seniors, persons with disabilities and students.

Not only does public transit help you save money, but you can exercise at the same time. Plan to ride an entire bus route with a friend and identify destinations of interest. You might be surprised of all the places you can stop by without transferring buses. By riding the bus, you can exercise, help the environment, spend time with friends, save money, and be independent.

Using the public transportation options available in communities is becoming very important because everyone is trying to cut costs to keep up with daily expenses, people are concerned about

the environment, and many people lose their cars and/or driving privileges everyday.

Having to depend on someone to give you a ride is very inconvenient and you have to schedule your trips according to your driver's schedule. You can plan your outings according to your schedule and stop wherever you need to without feeling like a burden to anyone.

Mobility training programs are available to help people make that first step in getting familiar with public transit. *Paratransit Inc* in Sacramento and *RideConnection* in Portland Oregon have been very successful in training seniors and persons with disabilities to use bus and light rail systems.

In Riverside County, Blindness Support Services offers mobility training for seniors and vision impaired individuals. For more information on travel training, contact them at (951) 341-9244.

For bus information you can contact Riverside Transit Agency at 1-800-800-7821; SunLine Transit at 1-800-347-8628; or Palo Verde Valley Transit at 1-760-922-4900.

April is Census 2010 Month—BE SURE TO BE COUNTED

Census survey forms are now arriving in mail boxes. It is important that everyone completes a census survey and gets counted! There is NO downside. The information is only used to produce statistics.

Your answers and personal information are protected by law from being shared with any other agency or organization. It will not be given to Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid (Medical), INS, law enforcement, cities, counties – it will not be given to anyone! The penalty for unlawful disclosure by a census

employee, or anyone else, is a fine of up to \$250,000 or imprisonment of up to 5 years, or both.

The count of all residents in each community means that more services can be provided, including things like:

- Hospitals
- Job training centers
- Schools
- Senior centers
- New roads and other public works projects
- Emergency services.

When you fill out the census form, you're making a statement about what services your community needs.

One survey will be mailed to each address, every-

where in the United States. There are only 10 questions this year:

1. How many people were living in your house on April 1st?
2. Were there additional people living with you on April 1st? (asked since the 1889 census to make sure everyone is counted)
3. Is the house, apartment or mobile home owned, rented or do you live there for free? (this information is use for housing programs and services planning)
4. What is your telephone number? (only used if there is missing or unclear information on your census survey)
5. The names of the people living in your home? (remember, Federal law protects the confidentiality of all personal information, including names)
6. What is each person's sex? (used to make sure that appropriate services are planned)
7. What is each person's age and date of birth? (used to forecast the level of services needed in the future)
8. Is each person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin? (used to insure



The **TRIP** program can help you get where you need to go.
Call us through HelpLink @ 1-800-510-2020

Call TRIP at 1-800-510-2020 to apply for TRIP Escort-Driver Volunteer assistance

that provisions of the Voting Rights Act and Civil Rights Act are protecting all people)

- 9. What is the race of each person? (same reason as number 8 – to insure that provision of the Voting Rights Act and Civil Rights Act are protecting all people)
- 10. Do any of the people in the home sometimes live somewhere else? (used to avoid double-counting of individuals).

The census is completed every ten years. The last census was in 2,000. The next will be in 2020.

If you do not receive a form, call the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance center at 1-866-872-6868. (If you prefer a Spanish-speaking operator, then dial 1-866-928-2010.) The lines will be open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. (your local time) seven days a week from February 25, 2010 through July 30, 2010. For the hearing-impaired, TDD 1-866-783-2010 (during the times noted above).

If you do not have a permanent address, you should be counted where you live and sleep most of the time—whether you are living with relatives because of a natural disaster or fore-

closure, or are a college student living away from home, or a soldier living on a military base.

People who do not have a home and are experiencing some form of displacement or lack of permanent address, provisions have been made to count them at places such as homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and other community locations.

Forms will be available in six languages: English, Spanish, Chinese (simplified), Korean, Russian and Vietnamese. English/Spanish bilingual forms will be mailed to areas with large numbers of Spanish-only households. By April 1st toll free numbers will be set-up to call and request forms in the appropriate language. All forms will also be available in various community locations by April 1st.

We are all required by law to complete a census survey “to the best of our ability”.

[SOURCE: 2010.Census.gov]

“The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person, who is with us our entire life, is ourselves.”
- George Carlin

What to look for when opening a checking account...

Checking accounts are a safe way to manage our money and pay bills. The benefits include:

- 1. Access to our money through an ATM (automated teller machine) just about any time we want it.
- 2. Making a debit purchase at a store (the money comes out of the account immediately).
- 3. The ability to pay bills without having to purchase a money order or carry cash around.
- 4. To have check cashing privileges at the bank.

Managing an account requires that we keep track of *money in and money out* and never “overdraw” the account.

When opening an account, most try to get an account with minimal associated fees. Things to consider:

- 1. Will direct deposit of my Social Security check make the account free? -free checks? -no monthly service charge?
- 2. If not free, what are the charges?

Fees vary between banks. Credit unions often have lower fees. Shop around for the best deal.

Vitamin D — Is It A Miracle Discovery?

Vitamin D was just in the news again.

Maybe you saw the segment on ABC News? They reported that a scientist at State University of New York in Albany has had some success shrinking breast cancer cells with vitamin D.

Dr. JoEllen Welsh treated human cancer cells with “a potent form of vitamin D” and about half of the cells shriveled up and died within a few days. Dr. Welsh is a researcher who has been studying the use of vitamin D on the possible prevention and treatment of breast cancer for many years.

Vitamin D has been the focus of many studies related to a variety of health issues, including diabetes prevention. An article in the *British Journal of Nutrition* reports that scientists at New Zealand's Massey University found that increased levels of vitamin D moved study subjects away from “insulin resistance syn-

drome” and the risk that they would develop diabetes. Naturalnews.com reports that the Massey University finding supports earlier work that was reported in the *Diabetic Medicine* journal.

Dr. Marc Sorenson, in his book “Solar Power for Optimal Health”, makes the claim that low vitamin D levels might be linked to both type-1 and type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, psoriasis, eczema, gum disease, and osteoporosis.

Mayo Clinic health information corroborates the importance of vitamin D sufficiency saying that “research suggests vitamin D may provide protection from osteoporosis, hypertension (high blood pressure), cancer, and several autoimmune diseases.” There is scientific evidence that increased levels of vitamin D can lessen the muscle weakness that a person might be experiencing.

Those at particular risk of having low levels of vita-

min D are identified as the elderly, obese individuals, those with cystic fibrosis, pancreatitis, Crohn's disease, and other conditions that affect proper nutrient absorption.

Food sources of vitamin D include dairy products, eggs and fish. According to the National Institutes of Health, “Ten to 15 minutes of sunshine 3 times weekly is enough to produce the body's requirement of vitamin D.”

Too much vitamin D can be toxic and damage the heart and lungs, cause the formation of kidney stones and impair kidney function, result in weight loss, fatigue, headaches, ringing in the ears, unsteadiness, nausea and vomiting. Too much vitamin D can also *cause* muscle weakness.

Consult your physician before taking supplemental doses of vitamin D and follow their orders.

[SOURCES: ABC News; naturalnews.com; National Institutes of Health; Mayo Clinic]

The Potential Health Benefits of Hot Chilies



The “Chili Family” includes everything from sweet bells to fiery hot habaneros. Turns out the Capsaicin component, that results in the chili's heat, has been linked to a number of medicinal benefits. The potential health benefits range from anti-cancer to anti-diabetes, and as a pain reliever for everything from arthritis to migraines. [SOURCE: rsc.org (the British Royal Society of Chemistry)]

Veterans Benefits and Services

Many veterans may not be aware of the benefits and services that they qualify for.

Some Federal veterans benefits include:

1. Health Care—VA operates the nation's largest integrated health care system with more than 1,400 sites of care, including hospitals and community clinics. Any person who served in the active military and was discharged "under conditions less than dishonorable" may qualify. To apply complete a VA Form 10-10EZ, which may be obtained at any VA health care facility or regional benefits office, or online at www.va.gov.
2. Service-Connected Disability Compensation—A monetary benefit may be paid to veterans who are disabled by an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated during active military service. The benefits are not subject to federal or state income tax. To apply, complete a VA Form 21-526. A DD214 or equivalent discharge record, dependency records and medical evidence are also required.

3. Disability Pension—Low income veterans, 65+, who are "permanently and totally disabled" may be eligible for monetary support. To apply, also complete VA Form 21-526.

4. Home Loan Guaranty—Usual service and discharge rules apply. VA guaranties are issued to help protect lenders and enable veterans to build, buy, repair, alter, improve or refinance a home that they live in or will live in. Credit and income requirements apply. To obtain a Certificate of Eligibility (COE), complete VA Form 26-1880.

5. Burial and Memorial Benefits—Burial in a VA national cemetery is available for eligible veterans, their spouses and dependents at no cost to the family and includes the gravesite, grave-liner, opening and closing of the grave, and a headstone or marker. Contact your VA Regional Office at 1-800-827-1000 to determine eligibility for this service.

6. Veterans Business Development—The U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Veterans Business Development can provide

assistance for starting and operating a small business. A Veterans Business Development Officer is stationed at every SBA District Office. Or call 1-800-827-5722 for more information.

7. Increased Social Security Payments—Veterans who served in the military from 1978 through 2001 are credited with an additional \$100 in earnings for each \$300 in active duty basic pay, up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year. Take your DD214 to your Social Security Office and ask for this benefit—You must ask for this benefit to receive it.

No additional Social Security taxes are withheld from pay for these extra credits.

8. State Veterans Homes—The predominant service offered is nursing home care. State veterans homes have an application process that can take a number of weeks or months. Many state homes have waiting lists. No facilities are entirely free to any veteran with an income. The veteran must pay his or her share of the cost. Eligibility varies from state to state. This is not a Federal benefit.

[SOURCES: va.gov; longtermcarelink.net]

ASSISTED TRANSPORTATION

You may qualify for special **TRIP** assistance to help you secure a volunteer escort-driver.

Call 1-800-510-2020 and tell the HelpLink Services Specialist that you need help with transportation.

You will be asked a few questions and, if appropriate, will be referred to **TRIP**. Once referred, you will be required to complete an application, and if you are determined to be eligible for **TRIP** assistance, you will receive monthly cash mileage reimbursements for your volunteer.

The volunteer escort-driver **TRIP** program is supported by Measure A tax funds through the Riverside County Transportation Commission, Older Americans Act funds through the Riverside County Office on Aging, New Freedom funds through SunLine Transit Agency and local funds from the City of Blythe.

Charitable Contributions from Individuals and Businesses Are Welcome!!



HAPPY 17th BIRTHDAY to TRIP

YES - the **TRIP** program celebrates its 17th birthday this year! Many readers are **TRIP** passengers or volunteers, but many probably have no idea what “**TRIP**” is.

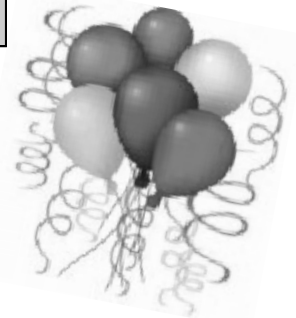
It is a volunteer driver program that started in 1993, serves all of Riverside County and was intended to help “transportation disadvantaged” seniors and other people with mobility issues get needed transportation to medical and quality of life destinations.

Applicants for **TRIP** service are primarily referred by social workers, health and social service providers, and other transportation service providers. All applicants go through the Office on Aging HelpLink Call Center, where they are referred to a full range of needed assistance services as appropriate. Only people who do not have any usable transportation to get them to doctors’ appointments, grocery stores or other places they need to go are eligible.

As of June 30, 2009, **TRIP** volunteer drivers had provided a total of 12.2 million miles of assisted travel and more than one million free escorted trips for 5,740 passengers. Last year, **TRIP** provided over 100,000 trips at no charge for 583 seniors and people with disabilities across Riverside County. **TRIP** has proven to be a very successful volunteer program model – last year it was rated as “the nation’s best volunteer driver model” by The Beverly Foundation.

TRIP starts with the unique premise that it is better to *empower* people than to *help* people. County residents enrolled in the **TRIP** program generally are advanced in age and frail, or have more than one chronic illness, or have severe mobility limiting disabilities, or live in an area that is not served by public transportation, or have more than one of these challenges.

Application for eligibility for program service includes a telephone interview and a physician’s verification of health status. Eligibility is determined on a case-by-case basis and mileage allowances and allowed travel purposes vary according to the individual needs of the passenger.



TRIP works this way:

- It pays a mileage reimbursement for volunteers who assist program passengers with needed transportation
- It provides the opportunity (and coaches) passengers to enable them to select their own volunteer driver
- It allows passengers and their volunteers to arrange and schedule rides whenever convenient for both.

The advantages of TRIP service for passengers are:

- Advance scheduling of travel is not necessary
- Curbside waiting is eliminated
- Missed rides are not a worry
- Passengers ride for free
- Comfortable travel is provided in private vehicles
- Multiple stops are possible on each trip, making travel less arduous and demanding
- Any level of personal service can be provided, dependent on the needs and preferences of passengers and the willingness of their volunteers
- Travel destinations can cross, city, county, and in the Palo Verde Valley travel can even be provided across the state line into Arizona
- Because the passenger and volunteer are a team that works out the details of

transportation together, TRIP provides an opportunity for enhanced companionship.

The benefits of being a volunteer in the TRIP program include:

- Not being “on call”
- No set hours – everything is arranged with the passenger as mutually agreed by the passenger and their volunteers
- The volunteer driver, in essence, “works” for a friend who they have known or who they get to know well
- The service gives the volunteer the chance to help someone who really appreciates them
- In addition to the satisfaction of doing good works, the mileage reimbursements that TRIP pays help to offset volunteer driver vehicle expenses.

So please join us in wishing TRIP a very Happy Birthday and join us in thanking

the thousands of volunteers who have given so much of themselves over the years to give their passengers transportation independence and freedom and to continue to live independently in their own homes and communities!

A special thank you also goes to the Riverside County Transportation Commission and the Riverside County Office on Aging. Together they saw the need for TRIP and have supported the service from the very beginning.

Today SunLine Transit Agency is a TRIP partner that is bringing this needed service to their area residents.

The City of Blythe, with the Palo Verde Valley Transit Agency, has long supported services in their community.

As the future unfolds, we hope more cities will join in support of TRIP transportation for their residents.

GREYHOUND BUS SERVICES

BLYTHE—905 W Rice St., 760-922-5401

BANNING—583 W Ramsey, 951-849-9138

INDIO—45-525 Oasis St., 760-347-5888

PALM SPRINGS—Train Station on Train Station Road (ticket purchase from driver), 800-231-2222

PERRIS—412 4th St, 951-657-7813

RIVERSIDE—3911 University Ave., 951-686-2345

TEMECULA—28464 Old Town Front St., Ste B, 951-676-2059

SAN BERNARDINO—596 North G St., 909-884-4796



Vitamina D – Sera un Descubrimiento Milagroso?

Vitamina D fue reportada en las noticias otra vez. Alomejor usted vio el segmento en las noticias de ABC? Reportaron que un científico en la Universidad de Nueva York en Albany ha tenido algo de éxito disminuyendo las células cancerosas del seno con vitamina D.

El Dr. JoEllen Welsh trató las células cancerosas con una “forma potente de vitamina D” y la mitad de las células murieron en unos días. Dr. Welsh es un investigador que ha estado estudiando el uso de vitamina D como posible prevención y tratamiento de cáncer del seno por muchos años.

La Vitamina D ha sido el enfoque de muchos estudios relacionados a varios problemas de salud, incluyendo la prevención del diabetes. Un artículo en el *British Journal of Nutrition* reporta que científicos en la Universidad de Massey en Nueva Zelanda encontraron que niveles altos de vitamina D disminuyeron riesgo de desarrollar diabetes. Natu-

ralnews.com reporta que los resultados de la Universidad de Massey son respaldados por estudios anteriores que fueron reportados en el diario de *Medicina para la Diabetes*.

El Dr. Marc Sorenson, en su libro “Energía Solar para una Salud Óptima”, menciona que bajos niveles de vitamina D pueden ser vinculados a diabetes tipo 1 y 2, enfermedades del corazón, alta presión, psoriasis, eczema, enfermedad de las encías, y osteoporosis.

Mayo Clinic información de salud corrobora la importancia de la vitamina D diciendo que “estudios sugieren que la vitamina D puede proveer protección contra la osteoporosis, hipertensión (alta presión), cáncer, y varias enfermedades autoinmunes.” Existe evidencia científica que los altos niveles de vitamina D pueden reducir la debilidad muscular.

Aquellos identificados con un riesgo a tener bajos niveles de vitamina D son las personas de edad avanzada, individuos obesos, aquellos

con fibrosis quística, pancreatitis, enfermedad de Chrons, y otras condiciones que afectan la absorción de nutrientes adecuados.

Las fuentes alimentarias de vitamina D incluyen pescado, huevos y productos lácteos. Según los Institutos Nacionales de la Salud, “Diez a 15 minutos de luz del sol 3 veces a la semana es suficiente para producir lo que el cuerpo requiere de vitamina D.”

Demasiada vitamina D puede ser tóxica y puede dañar el corazón y los pulmones, la formación de piedras en los riñones y deteriorar la función de los riñones, resultar en pérdida de peso, fatiga, dolores de cabeza, zumbido en los oídos, náusea y vómito. Demasiada vitamina D también puede causar debilidad muscular.

Consulte con su doctor antes de ingerir dosis suplementarias de vitamina D y siga sus órdenes.

[SOURCES: ABC News; naturalnews.com; National Institutes of Health; Mayo Clinic]

Abril es el mes del Censo del 2010

Formularios del Censo están llegando por correo. Es importante que todos completemos el formulario y ser

contados! No hay ningún inconveniente. La información solo es usada para producir estadísticas.

Sus respuestas e información personal son protegidas por la ley de ser compartidas con alguna otra agencia

Recursos Para Personas Mayores.....AYUDA CONEXION...1-800-510-2020

u organización. No sera dada al Seguro Social, Medicare o Medicaid (Medical), INS, policia, ciudades, condados-No sera dada a nadie! El castigo por divulgacion ilegal de un trabajador del Censo, o cualquier otra persona, es una multa de hasta \$250,000 o encarcelamiento por hasta 5 años, o los dos.

El conteo de todos los reisdentes de su comunidad significa que mas servicios pueden ser proveidos, incluyendo cosas como:

- Hospitales
- Centros de capacitación laboral
- Escuelas
- Centros para personas mayores
- Nuevas carreteras y otros proyectos de obras publicas
- Servicios de Emergencia.

Cuando usted llena el formulario, usted esta haciendo una declaracion de las necesidades de su cominidad para ayudar a sus residents.

Un formulario va hacer mandado a cada dirección en todos los Estados Unidos. Este año, solamente incluye 10 preguntas:

1. ¿Cuántas personas estan viviendo en su casa en el 1 de Abril?
2. ¿Habia personas adicionales viviendo con usted en el 1 de Abril?
3. ¿La casa, apartamento, o

casa movible es su propiedad, rentada, o vive gratis?

4. ¿Cual es su numero de telefono?
5. Los nombres de las personas que viven con usted
6. ¿Cual es el sexo de cada persona?
7. ¿Cual es la edad de cada persona y su fecha de nacimiento?
8. ¿Cada persona es, Hispano, Latino, o de origen Español?
9. ¿Cual es la raza de cada persona?
- 10.¿Algunas de las personas en su casa aveces viven en otro lado?

Recuerde que todas las respuestas so usadas para planear serivcios y proyectos para todos los residentes de su comunidad. Toda informacion es confidencial.

El Censo es completado cada diez años. El ultimo censo fue en el 2000. El proximo sera en el 2020.

Si usted NO recibe un formulario, llame al Centro de Asistencia de Formularios al 1-866-928-2010. Las lineas estaran abiertas de 8 a.m. a 9 p.m. (su tiempo local) 7 dias a la semana del 25 de Febrero al 30 de Julio del 2010. Para las personas con problemas de audicion, Llame TDD 1-866-783-2010 (durante en tiempo mencionado).

Si usted no tiene una

dirección permanente, usted debe ser contado donde usted duerme o pasa el mayor tiempo. Estas reglas de residencia sirven como guia principal en el censo, si vive con familiares por causa a un desastre natural o reposesion, o es un estudiante en la universidad viviendo fuera de casa, o soldado viviendo en una base militar.

Personas las cuales no tienen una casa y estan pasando por cualquier forma de desalojamiento o la falta de una dirección permanente, provisiones han sido hechas para contarlas en lugares como refugios para indigentes, y otras locaciones en su comunidad.

Formularios seran disponibles en seis idiomas y formularios bilingües, Ingles/ Español, seran enviados a areas con la mayoria de hogares que hablan Español pricipalmente. Empezando el 1 de Abril, numeros de telefono gratuitos seran instalados para llamar y solicitar formularios en el idioma apropiado. Todos los formularios tambien estaran disponibles en varias locaciones en su comunidad empezando el 1 de Abril.

Todos estamos obligados por ley a completar una encuesta del censo "a lo mejor de nuestras habilidades".

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Independent Living Partnership

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Why Are Advance Health Care Directives Often Ignored?

The *Advance Healthcare Directive* is intended to speak for us when we are unable to speak for ourselves due to illness or injury and to provide guidance for family and friends who may be making very hard decisions for us. The problem is that the directive is often lost in a thick file and may not be referred to in a time of health crisis—the doctor is trained to “fix and cure” with an underlying mandate that there should be “no deaths” - what you want may not be considered. In many states, including California, there is a solution. Ask your physician to issue a *Physician Order for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST)* on your behalf - it is a medical order on a brightly colored form that will be placed on top of your file and honored. Get more information at www.polst.org.

- Inside.....*** ▶ Housing Options for Older Adults ▶ Do You Qualify for Less Costly Prescriptions?
▶ Maintaining Intestinal Balance ▶ How to Protect Your Driving Privilege ▶ Using Public Transportation
▶ Census 2010—Be Counted ▶ Vitamin D—Is It A Miracle Discovery? ▶ Veterans Benefits and Services
▶ Happy 17th Birthday to TRIP! ▶ Vitamina D – Sera un Descubrimiento Milagroso?
▶ Abril es el mes del Censo del 2010...& MORE!!!!