

AGING NETWORK CONNECTION



OUR MISSION

To improve quality of life for all older Idahoans, vulnerable adults, and their families through education, advocacy, accountability and service; to provide opportunity for all to live independent, meaningful and dignified lives within communities of their choice.

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TAXPAYERS TO GET RUDE SURPRISE

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Millions of Americans enjoying their small windfall from President Barack Obama's "Making Work Pay" tax credit are in for an unpleasant surprise next spring. The government is going to want some of that money back.

The tax credit is supposed to provide up to \$400 to individuals and \$800 to married couples as part of the massive economic recovery package enacted in February. Most workers started receiving the credit through small increases in their paychecks in the past months.

But new tax withholding tables issued by the IRS could cause millions of taxpayers to get hundreds of dollars more than they are entitled to under the credit, money that will have to be repaid at tax time.

At-risk taxpayers include a broad swath of the public: married couples in which both spouses work; workers with more than one job; retirees who have federal income taxes withheld from their pension payments; and Social Security recipients with jobs that provide taxable income. The Internal Revenue Service acknowledges problems with the withholding tables but has done little to warn average taxpayers.

For many, the new tax tables will simply mean smaller-than-expected tax refunds next year, IRS spokesman Terry Lemons said. But taxpayers who calculate their withholding so they get only small refunds could face an unwelcome tax bill next April, said Jackie Perlman, an analyst with the Tax Institute at H&R Block. "They are going to get a surprise," she said.

Perlman's advice: check your federal withholding to make sure sufficient taxes are being taken out of your pay. If you are married and both spouses work, you might consider having taxes withheld at the higher rate for single filers. If you have multiple jobs, you might consider having extra taxes withheld by one of your employers. You can make that request with a Form W-4. The IRS has a calculator on its Web site to help taxpayers figure withholding. So do many private tax preparers.

The credit pays workers 6.2 percent of their earned income, up to a maximum of \$400 for individuals and \$800 for married couples who file jointly. Individuals making more than \$95,000 and couples making more than \$190,000 are ineligible. The tax credit was designed to help boost the economy by getting more money to consumers in their regular paychecks. Employers were required to start using the new withholding tables by April 1.

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FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR'S DESK



Kim Wherry Toryanski

On April 29th I had the wonderful opportunity to speak at the 1st Annual Elder Refugee Auxiliary Training held in Boise and sponsored by the SW Idaho Area Agency on Aging. The title for the conference was Embracing Cultures: Best Practice Methods to Serve Your Clients. The conference was intended to educate and equip local agencies and individuals with more resources and skills to more effectively provide services to elderly refugees.

Elderly minority groups are becoming an increasingly prevalent part of our community. For instance, approximately 46,000 refugees 65 and older were admitted to the United States between 2001 and 2007. For older refugees, there are issues which make them particularly vulnerable to poverty, abuse, neglect or exploitation, such as: chronic health and emotional problems stemming from the conditions of refugee flight, family loss and separation, an inability to advocate for themselves because of cultural, language or educational barriers, limited access to appropriate health and social service agencies, and limited incomes due to work histories. It's important to expand our collective understanding of services currently offered by public and private entities in Idaho. Improving coordination will help us to achieve more effective and culturally appropriate services, resulting in greater individual empowerment.

We were honored to have the International Rescue Committee Executive Director, Leslye Moore, define "refugee" and describe the resettlement process. According to the United Nations, a refugee is a person:

"owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."

Leslye shared about specific refugee populations that currently reside or are being resettled in Boise and the process for our newest neighbors to be given entrance into Idaho.

BSU Nursing Department Assistant Professor Mikal Black specializes in cultural and international nursing issues. She discussed the findings of her research regarding ways to increase cultural competence among nurses, described the implications of diverse cultural beliefs, and explained how to improve the quality of service care through different culturally competent approaches and models. Miroslav Barac, a certified interpreter's trainer, explained how to effectively work with interpreters.

During lunch we were treated to a question and answer panel made up of refugees, including interpreter Dadiri Nuro, senior Hassan Mberwa (country of origin: Somalia), senior Bekhtli Mamakhova (Turkish ethnicity/ country of origin: Georgia), and interpreter Alexander Bazariski. They were introduced by panel moderator, Ketti Boyce, Refugee Specialist with the SW Idaho Area Agency on Aging.

The afternoon sessions were intended for area agency contractors to learn tangible ways to adapt to serving elderly minorities through presentations by me for the Idaho Commission on Aging and Lori Brelia for the SW Area Agency on Aging. ICOA serves as the lead advocate and principle coordinating agency within state government and the community concerning the needs of older Idahoans and the Area Agency on Aging provides the direct services to the elderly. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement works closely with the aging networks in each state to ensure that there is a coordinated response to link older refugees to Older Americans Act programs and services. The goal for all is to enable older people to remain as independent as long as possible in their communities.



FIRST VOLUNTEER OMBUDSMAN ALL TEAM MEETING NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO

By Barbara Jean Glodowski, OSB



Twenty-three of the thirty-one member Ombudsman volunteer team met each other for the first time on April 1st. Our practice is to give monthly in-services to each team located in their separate counties. They hadn't met the entire team.

The All Team afternoon was launched by a "people find." Each member received a grid listing former or current professions of each member of the team. They were to find the person who matched the profession. In a half-hour each was able to fill in the grid. After lunch, the team members from each county were introduced. Their service spanned from the members completing their first year's service to the new three who started their service the day before.

The monthly in-service was a Sensitivity Training to help the members experience what some of the residents in the facilities feel. The "visually impaired" had their glasses lined in Saran Wrap while others had cotton in their ears to experience "hearing impaired". Others experienced simulated, Parkinson's gait, stroke victim, and arthritis. One group carried a full glass of warm yellow water around. They had to brainstorm Resident's Rights and write with their non-dominant hand. After the ten minute activity was over, I reminded that those who carried the full glass of water that the nurse had finally answered their bell to go to the bathroom.

We debriefed the whole experience as well as reviewed Resident's Rights. The members agreed that they had a better empathy for the residents. "It's so humbling because this is reality inside the home," Rob Groom, of Grangeville, said.

OLDER WORKERS: AN ADVANTAGE IN THE WORKPLACE

No matter how old you are, there is always a label attached to your age -- especially in the workplace. Younger workers are often viewed as inexperienced, incompetent and sometimes even entitled. Middle-age workers can either seem restless in their careers or too comfortable. But perhaps baby boomers get the most grief, as they are often considered old-fashioned, inflexible and retirement-focused.

"Perceptions about older workers often dominate the hiring process," says Jean Erickson Walker, Ed.D, author of "The Age Advantage: Making the Most of Your Midlife Career Transition." "Today's 60 is yesterday's 40. People aren't checking out Sun City. They are healthy, energetic and competitive, and determined to remain productive well into their 70s. They aren't going anywhere near that rocking chair on the front porch if they can help it."

Rather than give in to age discrimination and the social stigmas attached to age, Walker says older workers should embrace their maturity and start selling their experience for what it is: an advantage.

"Older workers save companies time and money. Their experience and expertise means they avoid blocks and go right for the opportunities," she says. "They identify options quickly, have the interpersonal skills to bring people together to get the job done, and bring time-proven strategies to do it quicker, cheaper and better."

Additionally, Walker notes that a few of the apprehensions employers may have about older workers are arguable:

Health concerns. Employers worry that older folks may ultimately cost more as their health deteriorates. Walker says that people older than 50 tend to take fewer sick days than younger people, and that it "takes a gurney to get them off the job."

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Technologically inept. "The concern about people at midlife being technically [incompetent] is an old saw that holds very little merit," Walker says. "Although they didn't grow up with computers on their desks, they've been using them for over 20 years now. There is very little they don't know about common usage."

Younger bosses. Bosses do get younger every day, but Walker says that the relationship between someone with experience and someone who is ready to experiment and take risks can be outstanding. "Once they get over the initial adjustment, they often develop a relationship based solidly on mutual respect and each learns from the other," she says. "The key is a leadership philosophy based on collaboration rather than top-down authority."

<http://msn.careerbuilder.com/custom/msn/careeradvice/viewarticle.aspx?articleid=1836>

FIELD SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR!

Raul Enriquez, Case Management Supervisor, recently was nominated as the SAGE Community Resources Employee of the Quarter and now he has been selected as BSU Field Supervisor of the Year.

Mr. Enriquez was honored at the May 15, 2009 graduation ceremony for his achievement.

Mr. Enriquez was selected as the SAGE Employee of the Quarter for his time, effort and willingness to assume responsibility for the transition of the Information and Assistance program into the Garden City office. The Information and Assistance program is the smallest section of the Area III Agency on Aging, but it is designed to be the entry point of all the programs. As the entry point of the aging network, the position is critical to making sure consumers and providers obtain the accurate information in order to access resources and gain assistance.

Mr. Enriquez deserves a big round of applause. They are lucky to have him as an employee of the organization.

MCCONNEL EARNS 20 YEAR CERTIFICATE

Sandy McConnel, a Technical Records Specialist I for the Idaho Commission on Aging, received congratulations for twenty years of state service from administrator Kim Toryanski in a staff meeting May 12th.



Sandy started her state employment with the Central District Health Department as a secretary, or what would now be an Administrative Assistant II position. She left after a year when there was a change of administration. She went to work for the State Department of Education, working for the administrator of the gender equity grant for schools. Sandy said, "We promoted sports for girls, plus promoted an increased focus on math and science education for girls."

During her time with the State Department of Education, Sandy started back to school to complete her college education. She returned as a junior, attending Boise State University and took one or two credits at a time. "They were always changing the requirements and it felt like chasing a moving target," she said. When Sandy finally graduated in 2000, she had 300 credit hours and a degree in Communication.

Following graduation, she tried her hand at newspaper work for a year, where she was an ad designer, doing some photography and writing some human interest stories.

Sandy bridged her state employment then when she was employed by the Idaho Commission on Aging, under Administrator Lois Bauer. She has been with the commission for over seven years. Of this time before the deaths of her parents, Sandy said she was spending all of her energy on family and didn't have the energy for other things.

Sandy loves the work she does with the Title V Program as a part of her job. This is an Older

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Worker Program administered by the Department of Labor in which adults 55 years of age or older are put to work at minimum wage for the experience and training to prepare them for regular employment. "It's the best program," said Sandy. "It lifts people up, and I feel I am serving others like myself."

SOUTH FREMONT SENIOR CENTER

By Karolyn Hodge, Site Manager

The South Fremont Senior Center was created in 1972 with the support of our community. Everyone pulled together to raise the funds we needed to open. The City of Saint Anthony helped out by giving us a room within the City building to meet in. The County also donated dollars to help with the remodeling and putting in a kitchen so we could fix meals on site. In 2002 the City of Saint Anthony bought the old forest building in town and moved over to it after doing extensive remodeling. After they settled in they had plenty of room in the building to create a space for us to move into. With the City's help a Community Block Grant was written. The grant was used to remodel a space of 3,148 square feet for a beautiful new center. We moved into the new space on December 15, 2003.

Our center services a large rural area of Southern Fremont County, which consists of Saint Anthony, Chester, Egin, Parker and Wilford. We also service some areas of Teton and Newdale.

We serve Congregate and Home Delivered hot meals Monday through Thursday and frozen meals to seniors who are homebound who need meals to get them through the weekend. We also provide transportation to and from the center, for shopping, doctor appointments, etc. Our transportation program was cut last November due to cuts by the state, but with the continuing support of our county, they were able to keep funding the program.

We have a wonderful caring staff of five who just love their seniors and watch over them like mother hens. We have the best volunteers, who are everything to the center. They make our

center a beautiful place. We call them our "Everyday Angels". We just couldn't get everything done without their help. They are truly the backbone of our center.

The center provides lots of activities for seniors. They play pinochle and bingo and on Wednesdays we bring in entertainment, which always draws a big crowd. We also invite the assisted living center residents over so they can also get out and enjoy the activities and friendships. We celebrate all the holidays with something special for everyone. We have a place where they can put puzzles together, a pool table, and a computer for use. We have Fit and Fall Proof Exercise classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays after lunch. We also invite occasional guest speakers to talk about senior issues on health, scams, Medicare, insurance, etc. AARP comes to the center every year at tax time to help with tax preparation. We do trips throughout the year to get our seniors out to see the sites. They love just taking a ride around the countryside, seeing the wildlife and having a picnic or going swimming at the local hot springs.



Oak Creek Band at Volunteer Dinner

We have recently been getting phone calls from other senior centers and assisted living centers in our area to do some competitive bowling tournaments using the Wii gaming system. This is becoming a very popular sport within the senior centers and assisted living centers and everyone wants to get together and have some fun with this. So our goal is to try and get one of these systems for our center and get our seniors involved so we can do some competing.

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Last year in October a wonderful person came into our center and offered his services to build a website and maintain it for us free of charge. Will Rhea, who locally runs a computer business in Saint Anthony worked many hours to do this and we now have a beautiful web site. We are very proud of it and we get lots of hits everyday. Our website address is www.sfseniors.info Go in and check it out because we think it's great!

Our dream is to be here for generations to come so we can keep helping seniors enjoy a greater quality of life through the services that we provide to support their independence, which helps them stay in their homes longer and out of nursing homes.



FARMERS MARKETS...WHO BENEFITS?

Spring is here and that means it's time for us to start thinking ahead to warmer temperatures, longer days, and getting outside. Many local growers are already in full swing planting, watering, and even harvesting fresh fruits and vegetables. Throughout Idaho, many farmers participate in local markets which supply our communities with fresh, nutritious, locally grown food. From the small mom-and-pop stands to the large markets, the selections are usually extensive and are a perfect place to find foods that even the pickiest eater will enjoy.

According to Becky Hand, a licensed and registered dietician, some benefits of shopping at the farmers markets are:

1. The fruits and vegetables are grown locally and picked when they are perfectly ripened. This enhances the taste, texture, and aroma of the produce.

2. Often, market prices are lower than at a grocery store.
3. Our existing system of food transportation and distribution requires enormous amounts of energy and resources. Before reaching your table, the average food item in the U.S. will travel 1,300 miles. In fact, only about 10% of the fossil fuel energy used in the world's food system is used for production. The other 90% goes into packaging, transportation, and marketing of the food. All this inefficiency creates many environmental problems.
4. Shopping at the farmers market benefits the local farmers, ranchers and orchards, and strengthens your local community.
5. Since the produce is picked at the peak of the season, nutrients will be more abundant.

The United States Department of Agriculture issued a statement saying, "many communities where fresh, nutritious foods are scarce, people can gain easy access to food. Farmers markets help to promote nutrition education, wholesome eating habits, and better food preparation, as well as boosting the community's economy."

Throughout Idaho there are approximately 46 locally operated farmers markets. To see a complete list of farmers markets and a harvest calendar, please visit the Idaho State Department of Agriculture's website at <http://www.agri.idaho.gov> and click on the link for the 2009 Idaho Farmers Market Guide.

Nutrition is the key to good health so remember to visit a farmers market near you and "eat a rainbow of color."

SENIORS HAVE A VOICE IN SHAPING MOBILITY

By John Krause, Idaho Transportation Department

From cradle to golden years, people rely on mobility as a means of satisfying basic needs such as getting to the doctor and making trips to the market. Mobility is about people and movement, having transportation choices beyond reliance on single-occupant vehicles. Mobility options strengthen and connect communities, and provide environ-

mental, economic, and social benefits.

A grass-roots effort exists to empower local communities to manage their own mobility needs and solutions. Seventeen local groups representing all areas of the state have come together to define their own unique mobility needs, and to identify, plan and prioritize solutions that work for their communities.

Communities' plans are developed, integrated and aggregated to represent larger regions, and are managed by six district coordination councils that include Pearl Bouchard, David Knittel, Lori Brelia, Jim Fields, Sister Anthony Marie Greving, and Matt Queen who represent the senior community.

These groups have the means and the authority to make funding decisions. Over the past two months, local stakeholders have recommended an award of over sixteen million dollars of Economic Stimulus and Federal Transit Administration funding for projects such as purchasing vehicles for transportation of seniors in Orofino and funding of transportation services at the Marsing Senior Center.

What is this grass-roots effort called and how can you get involved? It's "IMAP" – an abbreviation for "Idaho's Mobility and Access Pathway". The IMAP structure allows anyone who wants to participate at the local level to be involved. Stakeholders meet with their local groups to define and prioritize their community needs.

So, do you want to influence your community's transportation choices? Contact one of your district representatives mentioned earlier, or call IMAP Program Manager John Krause at 208 334-8292 (email: John.Krause@itd.idaho.gov). John is happy to visit and speak with your senior community about the opportunities to improve mobility.

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS!

Crystal Harper of
Bellevue will be 104 on
June 28th

She still lives at home
and is busy.



Continued from Page 1 **Tax Surprise**

The tables, however, don't take into account several common categories of taxpayers, experts said. Here is how retirees may be affected.

The Social Security Administration is sending out \$250 payments to more than 50 million retirees in May as part of the economic stimulus package. The payments will go to people who receive Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, railroad retirement benefits or veteran's disability benefits.

The payments are meant to provide a boost for people who don't qualify for the tax credit. However, they will go to retirees even if they have earned income and receive the credit. Those retirees will have the \$250 payment deducted from their tax credit -- but not until they file their tax returns next year, long after the money may have been spent.

Retirees who have federal income taxes withheld from pension benefits also are getting an income boost as a result of the new withholding tables. However, pension benefits are not earned income, so they don't qualify for the tax credit. That money will have to be paid back next year when tax returns are filed.

More than 20 million retirees and survivors receive payments from defined benefit pension plans, according to the Employee Benefit Research Institute. However, it is unclear how many have federal taxes withheld from their payments.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees union raised concerns about the effect of the tax credit on pension payments in a letter to Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner in March. Geithner responded that Treasury and IRS understood the concerns and were "exploring ways to mitigate that effect."

Rep. Dave Camp of Michigan, the top Republican on the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee, said Geithner has yet to respond to concerns raised by committee members. "So far we've got the, 'If we don't address this maybe it will go away' approach," Camp said.