



The ADRC E-Newsletter may also be viewed as a PDF at www.PierceADRC.org “News & Events.”

NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

Aging and LTC Providers Network

First Thursday of each month, 8 – 9 a.m.
Lighthouse Senior Center, 5016 E. “A” Street, Tacoma
Contact [Bob Riler](#), ADR, 798-7384
Jan 7 – Virtual Dementia Tour – Ben Solomon, Right at Home

Health Care Providers Council of Pierce County

Second Thursday of each month, 7:45 – 9 a.m.
Narrows Glen, 8201 Sixth Ave, Tacoma
(Breakfast \$6; Coffee \$2)
Contact Melissa Martin at (253) 752-6870
Jan 14 – Safe Travels for Seniors
Feb 11 - Networking

East County Providers Network

Third Tuesday of each month, 8 a.m.
Location varies monthly.
Contact Laura Fehrenbacher, Stafford Suites, (253) 862-1818 or lauraf@staffordcare.com

SASH Coffee and Networking for Pierce County

Ports of Call Restaurant
First Wednesday of each month, 8:30 – 10 a.m.
Jan 6 – La Quinta Inn Tacoma, 1425 E. 27th St.
Contact Rebecca Bomann at Rebecca@sashservices.com or (206) 501-4375

South End (King County) Coalition

Third Wednesday of each month at 7:45 – 9:30 a.m.
Jan 20 – TBA
Schedule of meeting locations and times at www.secoalition.com

Aging Smart – Gig Harbor

Third Thursday of each month at 9 – 10 a.m.
Harbor Place - Dining Room, 1016 29th St NW, Gig Harbor
Call (253) 509-2340 or [e-mail](#) for Aging Smart info or relocations

LOCAL SERVICES

Memory Care Café Opens in Tacoma

A Memory Café (Alzheimer’s Café) is a regular gathering of individuals with memory loss along with their care-partners, friends and/or family. Memory Cafés provide those with dementia and their care partners a safe and supportive environment in which to socialize without feeling the stigma that our society often assigns to this devastating disease. Enjoy a light meal, entertainment and conversation. Pierce County’s first café is held on the 4th Wednesday of each month starting Jan 27. The Tacoma café is at Elmer’s Restaurant, 7427 S. Hosmer from 3 to 4:30 p.m. For more information contact Lutheran Community Services NW Caregiver Services at (253) 722-5691 or lmccone@lcsnw.org.

Telephone Reassurance Offers Peace of Mind

Some seniors and people with disabilities live alone and are at risk of isolation. One of the most effective means of reducing isolation, victimization and health concerns is daily contact through a telephone reassurance call. The Pierce County program offers a brief, daily telephone call from Aging & Disability Resource Center staff at a pre-arranged time each day. We verify their well-being, share crime prevention tips and other useful information. Service is offered at no cost. If the subscriber does not answer the phone, a procedure of safety checks is followed before emergency response system (911) is activated. Sign up or learn more by calling the ADRC at (253) 798-4600 or (800) 562-0332.

Zoo Walk

The Zoo Walk offers individuals experiencing mild memory loss and opportunity for regular exercise and a space to build relationships. There is no charge for zoo and aquarium entry. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register contact Lutheran Community Services Northwest Memory Loss Coordinator at (253) 529-3868.

The Emily Project: Neighbor Helping Neighbor

When an ice storm struck Puget Sound last winter, knocking out power for several days, Emily and Michael Rogers found themselves in the same boat as their neighbors, except for one notable difference: They use motorized wheelchairs. Without power, they faced being stranded. A contact with a neighbor changed all that. [Read how the Emily Project was born.](#)

Prepare for Winter Weather – Pierce Transit

Plan ahead for winter weather and necessary route changes for Pierce Transit buses. Now all routes will be affected. [It's best to check online.](#) If you must call dial (253) 581-8000, but know that customer service representatives will be very busy during the bad weather so there could be a long wait on hold. SHUTTLE riders should also call (253) 581-8000. [Download the Pierce Transit Snow Brochure.](#) Note: Dress warm. Bus schedules may be impacted by weather, road conditions and traffic.

Prepare for Winter Weather – Sound Transit

Sound transit advises caution during winter weather. [Visit the Sound Transit Winter Travel webpage.](#)

- Know before you go: Review your options ahead of time. Check [bus and train schedules](#) or use the [Trip Planner](#).
- Sign up for alerts: Find out about cancellations for your route by [signing up for text messages or email alerts](#).
- Have a backup plan.

If you need help call customer service toll-free at 888-889-6368.

Congratulations to BethAnn Garteiz

PC2 (Pierce County Coalition for Developmental Disabilities) Executive Director BethAnn Garteiz has been awarded the 2015 Tacoma Area Professional Disability Advocate of the Year Award. This award is presented by the City of Tacoma Commission on Disabilities. Congratulations, BethAnn!

Your Contacts for the 2016 Legislative Session

The Pierce County Coalition for Developmental Disabilities has produced a [handy rundown of all the legislators](#) representing Pierce County. It includes the mailing addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses for senators and representatives. This helpful one-pager is especially handy if you are participating in a legislative advocacy day. Thanks you, PC2!

State Revenue Growth Not Keeping Pace With Costs

Washington's projected Near General Fund revenue collections for the current two-year state budget have increased a modest \$101 million, according to estimates released by the Washington State

Economic and Revenue Forecast Council. Since the Legislature approved the 2015–17 budget in June, the state’s Near General Fund revenue forecast has increased by \$245 million due to economic changes. During that time, however, state costs to maintain current services and other mandatory costs for the current biennium have grown by nearly \$700 million. [Read more online.](#)

Arc of WA Posts 2016 Legislative Notebook for DD Advocates

The Arc of Washington Legislative Notebook contains one-page information sheets on a variety of issues that will likely be proposed as legislation in the 2016 Legislative Session. There are charts with data and statistics regarding the issues as well as recent reports, both state and national, that are helpful to understanding the issues. [The Notebook is now posted online.](#)

We’re Number 10!

States’ health care systems improved more than they declined, and access to care expanded across the nation. Washington State ranks #10 overall. View the Commonwealth Fund’s [interactive](#) tool to view and compare results for all the states. And read the companion [issue brief](#) detailing state-by-state trends in access to health care: The Changing Landscape of Health Care Coverage and Access: Comparing States’ Progress in the ACA’s First Year.

Point Defiance~Ruston Senior Center Needs New Stove

The Point Defiance~Ruston Senior Center, in partnership with Catholic Community Services and Franke Tobey Jones, serves over 700 local seniors each month, providing as part of its program nutritious weekday lunches and Saturday lunches, as well as breakfasts twice annually and theme dinners six times a year. The kitchen stove needs to be replaced. The Center is raising \$4,936 to buy a new stove. The Senior Center is a home-away-from-home for 2,550 seniors in North and West Tacoma. [Make a tax deductible gift for the Senior Center online.](#) Call the center at (253) 756-0601.

LIHEAP Funds Available

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) assists low income households (at or below 125% of federal poverty level) in meeting their immediate home energy needs. The program is designed to help these families keep their heat on, especially those households that are most vulnerable, such as the elderly, the disabled, and households with young children. Call (855) 798-4328 to make an appointment. If utilities have been completely disconnected call (253) 798-3590 and leave a message. If you live inside the city limits of Tacoma please call MDC at (253) 572-5557. [More information online.](#)

Senior Utility Assistance

Are you over 55? Do you not qualify for other utility assistance programs because you are told your income is too much monthly? Sound Outreach has WARM fund utility assistance available. Seniors between 125% - 225% of the Federal Poverty Level can apply. Call for eligibility determination and to apply Monday through Friday, 9am – 5pm at (253) 593-2111.

Download Movies, TV Shows, Magazines, Music, E-books and Audiobooks for Free

Pierce County Library customers can download popular movies and television shows, music and magazines as well as e-books and audiobooks—all for free with a [Pierce County Library card](#). No waiting lists or late fees for [music albums, movies and television shows](#) to download to a computer or mobile device for later viewing within three days. Listen to music albums for seven days and audiobooks for 21 days. Download up to 30 [e-books and audiobooks](#) at a time for 21 days. Enjoy free current and back issues of [popular magazines](#) on a computer or mobile device with no limits on the number of magazines, no waiting lists and no lending periods. More than 200 titles available.

MetroParks Posts Upcoming Trips and Tours

MetroParks Tacoma has posted the upcoming day and overnight trips on their FAB (Fifty and Better) website. [View upcoming day trips](#). [View upcoming overnight trips](#).

Be Included on Community Living Connections

DSHS has rolled out a new statewide directory of service providers and resources pertaining to aging and disability services. Not-for-profit, government and for-profit organizations who meet the guidelines for inclusion can have the aging and disability services they provide for older adults, adults and children listed on CLC. There is no fee for organizations to have their services listed on the web site. Learn about [Information/Exclusion criteria](#) or the [Organization Inclusion Request Form](#).

Sheriff's Community Academy openings

The Pierce County Sheriff's Department is looking for interested citizens to attend its winter Community Academy program. The University Place academy begins Jan. 13, 2016 and will meet each Wednesday evening from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. for 10 weeks. The South Hill academy begins Feb. 23, 2016 and will meet each Tuesday evening from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. for 10 weeks. Participants learn first-hand about law enforcement in Pierce County and to meet the Sheriff and other department members. The course seeks to familiarize the public with all aspects of the Sheriff's Department and provides insight into the practices of law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Pre-registration is required and applications are accepted on a first come first served basis until the class is filled. [Register online](#) or [print](#) and mail in the application. For more information [click here](#) to visit the Sheriff's Community Academy webpage.

Volunteer to Help Families with their Taxes

Receive training in tax preparation and help lift hard-working families out of poverty. [Volunteer](#) with VITA! Individuals who give time to participate in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program work with families in preparing their tax documents through Associated Ministries.

Music Therapy at Ted Brown Music - Tacoma

Neurologic Music Therapy uses music within a therapeutic relationship to address a variety of rehabilitation, development and adaptive needs for people with Parkinson's. Board certified music therapist Megumi Azekawa, MM, MT-BC will conduct exercises focused on movement coordination, speech, expression skills and much more. No musical background is necessary! \$15 per class. Participants can pay in class each week, or purchase an "8 Class Pass" online and get one class free. The 8 Class Pass is good for all 2016 Music Therapy classes. Classes held Wednesdays from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Series begin in January, April and September. For more information and registration, visit <https://nwpf.org/participate/events/music-therapy-2016/>.

Lawyer on the Web

[Washington Web Lawyer](#) is a website where low-income people who have a civil legal problem in Washington State can get free legal advice from volunteer attorneys by creating an account and logging in to post their legal questions. Eligible users can post a legal question to a private online messaging system. The questions are answered by volunteer attorneys. Only the website administrator and the volunteer attorney answering a Washington Web Lawyer client's question can see the user's name. All information posted is held in strict confidence. Remember, seniors (age 60 and over) can also call CLEAR*Sr at 1-888-387-7111.

Last of the Institutions Continues

This is a series produced by Susannah Frame of King 5News.

Part 5: "[Washington 'Risking a Lawsuit' by Segregating Disabled.](#)"

Part 6: “[Myth that Most Severely Disabled Can’t Thrive Outside Institutions.](#)”

Power of Attorney Clinic-in-a-Box

The Power of Attorney Clinic-in-a-Box is a set of resources to help volunteer lawyer programs and other providers establish and maintain an ongoing advance directive clinic in their communities. During these Power of Attorney Clinics, community members will have the opportunity to complete their Powers of Attorney and Health Care Directives documents with the help of volunteer attorneys and staff. Materials are Washington-specific and provided by the Northwest Justice Project. [Learn more online.](#)

Add This to Challenges of Old Age: Keeping Your Teeth

Many seniors either resist or can't afford regular dental care, putting them at high risk of gum disease, tooth loss and other serious health complications. ([Read the story from Kaiser Health News.](#) Note: the ADRC will be offering a special workshop about dental care for seniors on February 17-18-19. See the event calendar below for more information or [click here for event flyer.](#)

Tai Ji Quan Resource

Washington State Department of Health is pleased to announce a new partnership and website with [Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance – Washington.](#) A new website will host all Washington TJQMBB training sites, instructors and classes. Please bookmark this site and stay tuned for new developments. <http://taijiquan-mbb-wa.org/index.html>. For questions please contact Mihaela Dimitriu at taijiquan.mbb@gmail.com.

Home Ownership Program Provides Down Payment Assistance

Applications are now being accepted for PC2's Home Ownership Program. The program provides \$39,600 in down payment assistance. To qualify you or your dependent must have a developmental disability, you must not have owned a home in 3 years and you must meet income qualification based on household size. Contact Diane Larson at (253) 564-0707 or diane@pc2online.org.

Vendors for Annual Caregiver Conference

The annual “Giving Care, Taking Care” caregiver conference is scheduled for June 6, 2016 and will draw over 400 participants. The event includes a Resource Exhibitor Fair for providers to introduce businesses and services to a broad consumer base. Conference activities have been planned to permit maximum opportunities for interaction between exhibitors and participants. For more information and an application form contact John Mikel at (253) 798-2823 or jmikel@co.pierce.wa.us.

Two Sides of the Same Coin: Aging and Disability

The Northwest ADA Center hosts this 2-part webinar. Many of the Boomers have or will soon have age-related impairments but don't see themselves as *disabled*. Yet their need for accommodations is real and in many cases, they would be considered to have a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Part I (Jan 19): Accommodating Older Employees Who Would Never Admit to Having a Disability. Part II (Jan 26): Serving Older Customers Who Don't See Themselves as Disabled. Participants have the option of obtaining 1.5 CRC credits per session attended, or Letters of Attendance. For questions about registration or course content: [Miranda Levy](#) or (425) 774-2303.

SCAM OF THE MONTH

Tech Support Scams Flourish

In a recent twist, scam artists are using the phone to try to break into your computer. They call, claiming to be computer techs associated with well-known companies like Microsoft. They say that

they've detected viruses or other malware on your computer to trick you into giving them remote access or paying for software you don't need. These scammers take advantage of your reasonable concerns about viruses and other threats. They know that computer users have heard time and again that it's important to install security software. Sometimes they even coerce you into "giving them control of your computer." Don't bite. The purpose behind their elaborate scheme isn't to protect your computer; it's to make money. It's best to never trust one of these "tech support" callers. [Read more about the scam](#). (Source: FTC)

RECOMMENDED READS FOR THE 50+

Rightsize . . . Right Now!

The author outlines an 8-week plan to de-clutter, organize, pack, and relocate without stress. Contents: Make a plan; Take the first steps; Tell the world and take another step; Rub-a-dub-dub, lots of folks in this tub; The end of paper piles; Family ties; Children's rooms; Hidden pockets of unmade decisions and final plans for the big day. Call Number: 648.9 LEEDS. (Pierce County Library System)

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Jan 5 – Learn About Options Counseling

Want to be a Part of the Pilot for the National Options Counseling Curriculum? Come to this webinar and learn how. The webinar will inform the participant of the national curriculum hybrid on person centered counseling approaches for individuals with disabilities and older adults. The hybrid will consist of six online courses and a one day in person training. Come learn the content of each course. Held 9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Registration: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3608380929668769281>

Jan 11 – Washington State Legislature Session Opening Day

Session scheduled to conclude March 10.

Jan 12 – Hoarding: The Hidden Problem – Exposed

Hoarding has become fodder for TV reality shows that often distort the problem as much as the solution. There are many kinds of hoarding, often hidden from view by family and friends. Hoarders are from all education backgrounds, economic situations and professions. But they all have certain key commonalities. This free workshop will help identify hoarding behaviors, provide an understanding of the disorder and a look at the solutions and resources available in Pierce County. It helps to know. Free information-only workshop. [Event flyer](#). A collaborative presentation of the Pierce County Aging & Disability Resource Center, Clutter Cutters and the King-Pierce Hoarding Task Force. No RSVP required. Held 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the University Place Library, 3609 Market Place W., University Place. (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Jan 13 – Hoarding: The Hidden Problem – Exposed

(See Jan 12 for event description) Held 12:10-12:50 p.m. at the County City Building, 7th floor Rainier Conference Room, 930 Tacoma Avenue in Tacoma. [Event flyer](#). (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Jan 13 – Oh My Gosh – Now What? (Part 1 of 6)

There's no diagnosis like an Alzheimer's or Dementia diagnosis. More and more families are facing the long road of caring for a loved one with dementia. There is a lot of uncertainty before the diagnosis and in the early stages after the diagnosis. Take a look at the questions and the answers in this 6-part series for families and individuals beginning the journey. [Event flyer](#). Part 1 – "What is

Dementia? What are the warning signs?" Held 1 to 2 p.m. at the Active Retirement & Senior Club, 8502 Skansie Avenue in Gig Harbor. Free; No RSVP required.

Jan 13 – Hoarding: The Hidden Problem – Exposed

(See Jan 12 for event description) Held 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Graham Branch Library, 9202 224th St. E., Graham. [Event flyer](#). (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Jan 15 – Hoarding: The Hidden Problem – Exposed

(See Jan 12 for event description) Held 12:10-12:50 p.m. at the Pierce County Annex main meeting room, 2401 S. 35th St, Tacoma. [Event flyer](#). (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Jan 16 – Learn about Medicare

Medicare is complex. Always has been, probably always will be. Knowing the ins and outs can be important to making the most of your Medicare benefits – especially if you are new to Medicare or soon to be enrolled. Join SHIBA (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) for a 2½ hour class to learn everything you need to know about Medicare. Held 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Graham Library, 9202 224th Street E. in Graham. RSVP at (253) 596-0918 or walk-in.

Jan 18 – NAMI Lobby Day

Join NAMI Washington at the state capitol. NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) members and supporters are the most effective people to educate legislators about mental illness and the need to change our current "mental illness" system to a "mental health" system. Held 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Special legislative luncheon reception at noon. [More information and registration online](#).

Jan 20 – Hoarding: The Hidden Problem – Exposed

(See Jan 12 for event description) Held 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Sumner Branch Library, 1116 Fryar Avenue in Sumner. [Event flyer](#). (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Jan 20 – Disabilities Legislative Reception

The Community of People with Disabilities of Washington State will host its annual reception from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Columbia Room of the Legislative Building at the State Capitol. All are welcome. More info contact dbmcharger@frontier.com.

Jan 23 – Hoarding: The Hidden Problem – Exposed

(See Jan 12 for event description) Held 9:30-10:30 a.m. at the Soundview Building, 3602 Pacific Avenue S., Tacoma. [Event flyer](#). (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Jan 23 – Learn about Medicare

(See Jan 16 for event description.) Held 1 – 3:30 p.m. at the Lakewood Library, 6300 Wildaire Rd., SW in Lakewood. RSVP at (253) 596-0918 or walk-in.

Jan 27 – Oh My Gosh – Now What? (Part 2 of 6)

(See Jan 13 for series description) [Event flyer](#). Part 2 – “How does the disease progress? What should I expect?” Held 1 to 2 p.m. at the Active Retirement & Senior Club, 8502 Skansie Avenue in Gig Harbor. Free; No RSVP required.

Feb 5 – National Wear Red Day

The American Heart Association highlights heart disease among women at www.goredforwomen.org.

Feb 10 – Oh My Gosh – Now What? (Part 3 of 6)

(See Jan 13 for series description) [Event flyer](#). Part 3 – “How do I start the conversation? How do I cope with the shock?” Held 1 to 2 p.m. at the Active Retirement & Senior Club, 8502 Skansie Avenue in Gig Harbor. Free; No RSVP required.

Feb 12 – Alzheimer’s Advocacy Day

Participants will meet with members and staff of the Washington State Legislature to show support for the needs and rights of individuals affected by Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. We also have a wonderful opportunity to be involved in the official launch of the Alzheimer’s State Plan that morning. [Visit online for more information](#) on Advocacy Day.

Feb 13 – Learn about Medicare

Medicare is complex. Always has been, probably always will be. Knowing the ins and outs can be important to making the most of your Medicare benefits – especially if you are new to Medicare or soon to be enrolled. Join SHIBA (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) for a 2½ hour class to learn everything you need to know about Medicare. Held at 1:00 p.m. at the Fife Library, 6622 20th Street East. RSVP at (253) 596-0918 or walk-in.

Feb 17 – Caring for Your Teeth After 50

After age 50, even if you brush and floss regularly, you may face certain issues when it comes to your oral health. Dental problems can be caused by medications, dentures, diet or other issues. And oral health is now linked to other chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and dementia. So what can you do? Held 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Sound View Building, Suite 200, 3602 Pacific Avenue in Tacoma. Free; No RSVP required. [Event flyer](#). (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Feb 17 – Early Stage Memory Loss Seminar

This seminar provides education specific to those experiencing mild memory loss and related changes. Sponsored by the Alzheimer’s Association, WA State Chapter. Program provides education and supportive discussion on topics such as medical causes and treatments, planning next steps for the future and strategies for coping and communication. Held from 1 to 4 p.m. in Lakewood. For information, location and registration contact (206) 529-3868 or kpainter@alz.org.

Feb 18 – Caring for Your Teeth After 50

(See Feb 17 for event description) Held 12:10 to 12:50 p.m. at the County City Building, Rainier Conference Room 7th Floor, 930 S. Tacoma Avenue in Tacoma. [Event flyer](#). (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Feb 19 – Caring for Your Teeth After 50

(See Feb 17 for event description) Held 12:10 to 12:50 p.m. at the Pierce County Annex Main Meeting Room, 2401 S. 35th Street in Tacoma. [Event flyer](#). (In case of inclement weather call (253) 798-8787 for possible postponement.)

Feb 24 – Oh My Gosh – Now What? (Part 4 of 6)

(See Jan 13 for series description) [Event flyer](#). Part 4 – “What are the typical behaviors? How do I manage them?” Held 1 to 2 p.m. at the Active Retirement & Senior Club, 8502 Skansie Avenue in Gig Harbor. Free; No RSVP required.

Feb 25 – Senior Lobby Day

[Save the date](#). Annual opportunity to raise the level of awareness about senior issues in Olympia.

Mar 9 – Oh My Gosh – Now What? (Part 5 of 6)

(See Jan 13 for series description) [Event flyer](#). Part 5 – “How do I pay for care? What are the legal things I should do?” Held 1 to 2 p.m. at the Active Retirement & Senior Club, 8502 Skansie Avenue in Gig Harbor. Free; No RSVP required.

Mar 23 – Oh My Gosh – Now What? (Part 6 of 6)

(See Jan 13 for series description) [Event flyer](#). Part 6 – “Where can I turn for help? What are the resources I can rely on?” Held 1 to 2 p.m. at the Active Retirement & Senior Club, 8502 Skansie Avenue in Gig Harbor. Free; No RSVP required.

Mar 29 – Washington Statewide Transition Conference

Save the date. Held at the Edward Hansen Conference Center at Xfinity Arena in Everett, WA. Registration will open in January, 2016.

Apr 15 – Discovery 2016 – Alzheimer’s Regional Conference

Keynote by Dr. Gary Small – “Brain Aging and Cognitive Decline: What Clinicians and Caregivers Need to Know.” Breakout sessions on research, communication, fall prevention, improving memory, LGBTQ challenges, Lewy Body dementia, sundowning and more. Held 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. at the Washington State Convention Center in Seattle. Registration opens Jan 5 at www.alzwa.org.

Q&A of the Month

Question: As the temperature drops I’m finding it harder to heat me place. Is there any help?

Answer: Pierce County has an Energy Assistance Program that can pay heating bills directly to utility companies for eligible applicants. Payments are based on eligible household’s fuel usage for the past 12 months and income. All applicants receive education on energy conservation, utility payment plans and budgeting. Resources are limited. To see if you’re eligible, please call the automated appointment line at 1 (855) 798-HEAT (4328). The county also has a home weatherization program. The weatherization team examines single and multi-unit dwellings and mobile homes for existing heat loss conditions. You can [apply online](#). The county contracts with private sector contractors to install energy conservation measures to conserve energy, educate occupants about saving energy and maximizing efficient, safe operations of their heating system and preserve affordable housing in Pierce County.

NATIONALLY

2016 Older Americans Month Theme and Logo Announced

May is Older American’s Month (OAM). The 2016 theme is [Blaze a Trail](#), meant to raise awareness about issues facing older adults, and highlight the way older Americans are advocating for themselves, their peers, and their communities. The Administration for Community Living has created an [OAM logo](#) that reflects the tone of the month, and ACL’s vision – people celebrating and helping one another to thrive. (Source: ACL)

Higher Drug Prices Led to Higher Medicare Spending in 2014

Significantly higher drug prices contributed to higher Medicare spending in 2014, [The Wall Street Journal reported](#). At least five drugs covered under Medicare Part D had increases of 100% or more

from 2013 to 2014. One of the most egregious examples is the pain reliever Vimovo. Its price increased more than 500 percent after it was sold by AstraZeneca to another company. The Wall Street Journal based its reporting on a [new online database](#) released by the Center for Medicare Services (CMS). (Source: WSJ)

Medicare Coverage of Advance Care Planning

Beginning in 2016, Medicare Part B will cover advance care planning—i.e., discussions of beneficiary preferences for end-of-life care. This coverage arises out of recommendations from a wide range of stakeholders and bipartisan members of Congress. [Read the Fact Sheet](#) from the National Council on Aging. (Source: NCOA)

Medicare to Cover Advance Care Planning

Beginning Jan. 1, Medicare Part B will cover advance care planning for all beneficiaries. Learn more about this service in a fact sheet from the Center for Benefits Access. [Download](#) (Source: NCOA)

Penalty for Failing to Get Health Insurance

Uninsured people eligible for health insurance under “Obamacare” face an average \$969 penalty in 2016. The average penalty is an increase of 47% next year for Americans who can afford insurance but choose to remain uncovered, according to a [Kaiser Family Foundation analysis](#). Individuals will pay the penalty when they complete their federal taxes the following spring. (Source: KHN)

Major Insurer Offers Individual Life Insurance Coverage to People with HIV

Prudential Financial Inc., one of the nation’s largest life insurers, [announced](#) that it will offer traditional individual policies to eligible people living with HIV, a condition that for decades has excluded most of them from any but the skimpiest of coverage. It is the first such offering to be publicly announced by a major American insurer, and it signals a growing recognition that HIV/AIDS has evolved from a death sentence into a chronic but manageable disease. (Source: KHN)

Facebook Technology Could Describe Pictures to Blind

[Facebook announced a new artificial intelligence technology](#) that could help describe images to the blind. The development is part of the company’s larger goal of expanding social media access to everyone, even people who can’t see. (Source: Time)

New App Helps Blind See What’s There

A startup in Silicon Valley has realized the camera on the phone could be used by people who are blind, to get help seeing remotely, e.g., the label on a jar in the kitchen cupboard. The company [Be My Eyes](#) has created a novel kind of volunteer opportunity on the Internet. The person who's blind connects to people with sight, points the smartphone camera at things and gets help seeing what they are. [Listen to the story on NPR’s “All Tech Considered.”](#) (Source: NPR)

Who Are America’s Caregivers?

Caring for older relatives is usually a task associated with Baby Boomers, the 50- and 60-somethings who find their aging parents need assistance. But almost a quarter of the adults who take care of older people – on top of their regular jobs and responsibilities – are between the ages of 18 and 34, according to [research by the AARP Policy Institute](#) and the National Alliance for Caregiving. About 40 million Americans considered themselves caregivers in 2013. Those people are typically women, and their median age is 49. The work they do caring for older relatives – usually parents and grandparents – was estimated that same year to be worth about \$470 billion. (Source: AARP)

LifeLock Agrees to Pay \$100 Million for Allegedly Violating FTC Order

Have you ever wondered what happens when a company is charged with violating a settlement order with the FTC? Well, ya got trouble. That's trouble with a capital "T". And for LifeLock, that trouble comes partly in the form of full refunds of up to \$100 million for consumers affected by its alleged order violations. [Read more](#). (Source: FTC)

Aid-In-Dying Laws Only Accentuate Need for Palliative Care

California joined Washington and three other states to allow physicians to prescribe lethal medications to certain patients who ask for it. Now palliative care physicians are trying to come to terms with what it means for them and their terminally ill patients. [Read more](#). (Source: KHN)

State of Grandfamilies: 2015 Report

Almost 65% of children in grandfamilies live in states with only half or less of the key laws and policies designed to support them, states a new report from Generations United. See which 10 states met the organization's criteria for being grandfamily friendly. [Read the report](#). (Source: NCOA)

Looking Toward Medicare 2017

An influential panel highlighted some of the stubborn challenges in managing more than \$300 billion in annual Medicare expenses, seeking to bolster the case for an overhaul of post-hospital care and venturing into a new discussion of a federal discount drug program. [Learn more](#) (Source: Commonwealth Fund)

Medicare Costs Are Rising – Here's Where You Are Most at Risk

Healthcare costs are taking some of the steepest jumps in years. Here are three of the biggest problem areas: drug plan premiums, excessive drug cost increases, and unexpected charges from out-of-network providers. [Read more](#). (Source: Senior Citizens League)

Scans Show Many Injured U.S. Vets May Have Brain 'Scarring'

New research finds brain "scarring" in many members of the U.S. military who suffered concussions during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. [Studies indicate](#) that more than half of the military service members have one or more lesions on the brain that can be thought of as scars in their brains. The study involved more than 800 service members with blast-related concussions. More than four out of five reported one or more blast-related incidents, and almost two-thirds said they lost consciousness. (Source: HealthDay News)

Baby Boomers Set Another Trend: More Golden Years In Poorer Health

After the last of the baby boomers become fully eligible for Medicare, the federal health program can expect significantly higher costs in 2030 both because of the high number of beneficiaries and because boomers are expected to be significantly less healthy than previous generations. The typical future Medicare beneficiary who is 65 or older will more likely be obese, disabled and suffering from chronic conditions such as heart disease and high blood pressure than those in 2010. [Read more](#). (Source: KHN)

EEOC Launches Direct Video Access to ASL Speakers

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has launched a new service that enables individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing whose primary language is American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate directly with agency staff about issues of discrimination they may be facing. EEOC information intake representatives who are fluent in ASL will be available to answer questions and guide callers through the process of filing a charge of discrimination using videophones. Deaf and of hard of hearing callers can access the toll free ASL direct video line at 844-234-5122, between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday. (Source: EEOC)

Doctors Might Treat “Age” Rather than “Person”

Doctors tend to make assumptions about age. And that seriously affects how they communicate with seniors, the advice that they give and recommendations they make when it comes to everything from exercise and surgery to sex lives. Ageism in American medicine and society is a matter of life and death, as dangerous as any incorrectly prescribed medication or slipped scalpel. Seniors may be so accustomed to medical concerns being brushed off due to age that they don’t notice anymore. [Here’s how to recognize ageism in health care and how to avoid or correct it.](#) (Source: Just Care)

AARP Releases Latest Rx Price Watch Report

AARP released a report showing an increase in retail prices for popular specialty drugs from 2006 to 2013. In 2013, the price of 115 common specialty drugs increased by 10.6 percent on average-- significantly higher than the general inflation rate of 1.5 percent during the same time. [Read the report.](#) (Source: AARP)

Seniors Who Head Back to School May Reduce Dementia Risk

Going back to school could help older people stave off dementia, [a new study suggests.](#) Taking college courses may boost brain functions, such as memory, decision-making and planning, the researchers said. (Source: Healthfinder.gov)

FBI Reports Rise in Disability-Related Hate Crimes

New federal data indicates that the number of reported hate crimes targeting people with disabilities has ticked up. The 2014 numbers are up slightly compared to the previous year when the FBI recorded 92 offenses targeting people with disabilities. [Read more.](#) (Source: Disability Scoop)

New Money Management Tools

In collaboration with several nonprofits, Bank of America has produced new Better Money Habits® content to help people who are living paycheck to paycheck improve their financial situations. Learn how to build an emergency fund, manage bills, handle overdue debts, and more. [Visit the site](#) | [Get Savvy Seniors financial education toolkits.](#) (Source: NCOA)

PLAN AHEAD – MARCH 2016 IS...

American Red Cross, Brain Injury Awareness, Colorectal Cancer Awareness, Deaf History, Listening Awareness, Caffeine Awareness, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Awareness, Eye Donor, MS Education, Kidney, Social Work, Women’s History and Poison Prevention Month; Letter of Appreciation (1-7), Consumer Protection (6-12), Sleep Awareness (6-12), Brain Awareness (14-20), Health Information Professionals (20-26), Inhalant & Poisons Awareness (20-26) and Root Canal Awareness (27-4/2) Weeks; Re-fired, Not Retired (1), World Compliment (1), Read Across America (2), Ear Care (3), Employee Appreciation (4), Women’s (8), Registered Dietitian (9), Women & girls HIV/AIDS Awareness (10), K-9 Veterans (13), Consumer Rights (15), Brain Injure (16), Quilting (19), Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21), Memory (21), Well-Elderly (21), Diabetes Alert (22), Water (22), Tuberculosis (24), Legal Assistants (26) and Bi-Polar (30) Days.

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This information is provided as a service of the Pierce County Aging & Disability Resource Center and is intended for sharing throughout the county. To receive or discontinue this e-newsletter, please contact Bob Riler at (253) 798-7384 or briler@co.pierce.wa.us.