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RI ARA

Affiliated with the Rhode Island AFL-CIO
"Fighting for the future of our members,
NOW, more than ever!!!!"



Publication 2015 / Issue 28
Published in house by the
RI ARA

July 13, 2015 E-Newsletter

Senate Reauthorizes Older Americans Act

The U.S. Senate passed S.192, the Older Americans Act (OAA) Reauthorization Act of 2015, on Thursday. The OAA provides essential services for nearly 12 million seniors such as nutrition programs, job training, caregiver support, transportation and protection from abuse and financial exploitation. The Senate passed the bill the same week that the nation celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the OAA; President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Older Americans Act into law in July 1965.

"The Alliance applauds yesterday's bipartisan action in the U.S. Senate reauthorizing the Older Americans Act," said **Ruben Burks**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "The bill was supported by nearly 100 national organizations representing tens of millions of Americans, including the Alliance, the National Council on Aging, and Meals on Wheels America. Now we need the House of Representatives to do the same."

Alliance Celebrates "Medicare Turns 50" and Social Security's 80th Anniversary with More than 70 Events!



Alliance members are organizing events across the country to make this next month and a half the largest celebration of Medicare and Social Security in history. More than 40 of the events celebrate Medicare's 50th birthday on July 30th, and the remainder will mark Social Security's 80th birthday on August 14th. Find an event in your community [here](#).



August 14th the RI ARA will hold their celebrations see next page for the details.

McConnell: We Can't Afford To Fund Highways Unless We Cut Benefits For Seniors And The Disabled

One of the most embarrassing failures of Congress over the last few years has been their complete inability to fund the federal highway system- or any other significant part of our country's infrastructure. For years, the government has passed a series of short-term funding measures for the highway trust fund in order to pay for the upkeep of the interstates and highways that run through the country. Last month, two brilliant foolish, **anti-government Republicans** proposed a bill that would completely defund the interstate highway system and hand power over to the states; but, Mitch McConnell thinks he has a better idea: fund highways by taking money away from federal employees' retirement funds, homeowners, the elderly and disabled Americans on Social Security Disability.



Senator Majority Leader Mitch McConnell promised America that he would introduce a long-term funding bill for the Highway Trust Fund this month, but his plans to fund it leave much to be desired. McConnell's bill would raise about \$80 billion and fund projects for up to four years, but almost half of that would be raised on the backs of federal employees. The Majority Leader's proposal would raise \$30 billion by cutting the return investment rate on a retirement investment plan that many of our government's employees invest in.... [Read More](#)

Alliance Letter to Senate: Don't Pay for Highways with Social Security Funds

The Alliance sent a letter today to all members of the U.S. Senate opposing the use of Social Security benefits as a way to pay for the highway funding bill. The letter stresses that the use of Social Security funds robs seniors and disabled beneficiaries of their promised earned benefits to pay for unrelated programs.... [Read the letter](#)

From Social Security Fairness:

Received this email from my senator Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) who is the sponsor of S. 1651. Am posting it for your convenience in contacting Brown. Remember congress is taking another long break, and 2015 will soon be coming to an end. If there is no action on this bill, then we start all over in 2016. I think it's crucial to keep contacting the sponsor and cosponsors if we expect anything. Thanks, LW

Dear Mrs. Weber: Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding the pension offset and windfall elimination provisions of the Social Security Act. In June 2015, I introduced legislation to repeal these provisions.

Under the windfall elimination provision (WEP), retirees receiving benefits from a public pension fund may be subject to a reduction in their Social Security benefits. The government pension offset (GPO) similarly reduces your Social Security payments to below 100% of earned benefits if you are a retired government worker and you qualify for a spousal benefit. The GPO reduces or eliminates a spousal benefit if the surviving spouse is eligible for a pension from a local, state, or federal government job that was not covered by Social Security.

I believe these provisions are patently unfair to individuals who earn their Social Security benefits and receive a pension. Employees who work hard and follow the rules should not be penalized with lower benefits because of earned pension income.

That's why I'm proud to introduce the Social Security Fairness Act. This bipartisan bill would repeal both the WEP and the GPO, which in December 2014 combined to chip away at Social Security benefits for over 2 million Americans.

I appreciate you sharing your concerns about this issue. Please know that I will continue to fight to repeal these provisions. Should the Senate consider legislation on this issue, I will be sure to keep your views in mind.

Sincerely,

Sherrod Brown, United States Senator

Both Senator Reed & Whitehouse were original Co-signers on S. 1651



Save the Date, August 14, 2015
The RI ARA will Celebrate two great events,
Social Security's 80th Birthday
The Social Security Act was signed into law
on August 14, 1935 by President Roosevelt

Medicare & Medicaid's 50th Birthday
The Medicare & Medicaid programs were
signed into law on July 30, 1965
By President Lyndon B. Johnson

At the Johnston Senior Center
1291 Hartford Avenue
Johnston, RI 02919
11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Come help us celebrate these historic events with
Members of the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation
RI Department of Elderly Affairs Director

Charles Fogarty
Social Security Administration
Metropolitan Public Affairs Specialist
Catherine LeBlanc
Johnston RI Mayor
Joseph Polisena

We will serve Coffee & Birthday Cake
50 free Birthday event t-shirts
Door Prizes: 10 / \$10 CVS Gift Cards



People age at wildly different rates, study finds

By Jason Kashdan, CBS NEWS



Did your lab partner look 10 years younger than you at your last high school reunion? She may be taking better care of her body, a new study suggests.

The study, published in the [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#), examined the pace at which people age, and according to its authors, may have cleared the way for more effective [anti-aging therapies](#).

"The important thing about this study, because most studies on aging looked at the elderly, and what this said is in your 20s you need to start to pay attention because you can slow that aging process," CBS News medical contributor Dr. David Agus said Wednesday on "CBS This Morning."

Researchers tracked nearly 1,000 38-year-olds and found the rate at which participants aged varied widely. The subjects' "biological age," ranged from under 30 to more than 60, despite all having the same "chronological age." "(The study) looked at a young, healthy population to see what the differences were overtime for them; as opposed to looking at older people who are already elderly -- some were sick, some were not -- and trying to figure out in retrospect how they had stayed healthy," Lenox Hill Hospital internist Dr. Len Horovitz said Wednesday on "Up to the Minute."

What's amazing about this study is that they then took pictures of the people who were biologically old versus young, and they showed them to undergraduates at Duke and they predicted the age correctly," Agus said. "Biologically, they said these persons were older and these persons were younger."...[Read More](#)

- [Resveratrol does provide anti-aging benefits, study shows](#) • [How to protect your aging brain](#)
- [A historical look at why men died earlier than women](#)

Senior Citizens face deadly threats during summer heat

Advice for older people on staying safe in hot weather; risk of heat-related health problems increases with age

Summer weather can pose special health risks to older adults and people with chronic medical conditions. It is critically important that the elderly, especially those most susceptible to hyperthermia and other heat-related illnesses, know how to safeguard against these threats.

The National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health, offers these tips to help seniors avoid the hazards of hot weather.

Hyperthermia is caused by a failure of the heat-regulating mechanisms of the body. Heat fatigue, heat syncope (sudden dizziness after prolonged exposure to the heat), heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke are forms of hyperthermia.

Older adults are at risk for these conditions, and this risk can increase with the combination of higher temperature, individual lifestyle and general health.

Lifestyle factors can include not drinking enough fluids, living in housing without air conditioning, lack of mobility and access to transportation, overdressing, visiting overcrowded places and not understanding how to respond to hot weather conditions.

Older people, particularly those with chronic medical conditions, should stay indoors in cooler spaces on hot and humid days, especially when an air pollution alert is in effect. People without air conditioners should go to places that do have air conditioning, such as senior centers, shopping malls, movie theaters and libraries.

Cooling centers, which may be set up by local public health agencies, religious groups and social service organizations in many communities, are another option.

Dehydration.

High blood pressure or other health conditions that require changes in diet. For example, people on salt-restricted diets may be at increased risk. However, salt pills should not be used without first consulting a doctor.

Heat stroke is a life-threatening form of hyperthermia. It occurs when the body is overwhelmed by heat and unable to control its temperature. Signs and symptoms of heat stroke include a significant increase in body temperature (generally above 104 degrees Fahrenheit), changes in mental status (like confusion or combativeness), strong rapid pulse, lack of sweating, dry flushed skin, feeling faint, staggering or coma. Seek immediate emergency medical



Do Cell Phones Belong In The Operating Room?

By Shefali Luthra



Next time you're on the operating table and you have one last look around as the anesthesiologist approaches, don't be too sure that that person in scrubs looking at a smartphone is pulling up vital health data. He or she might be texting a friend, or ordering a new carpet.

Cellphone use is not generally restricted in the operating room, but some experts say the time for rules has come. In interviews, many described co-workers' texting friends and relatives from the surgical suite. Some spoke of colleagues who hide a phone in a drawer and check it when they think no one is watching.

"Sometimes it's just stuff like shopping online or checking Facebook," said Dwight Burney, an orthopedic surgeon from Albuquerque. "The problem is that it does lead to distraction." This can result in medical errors or lax safety procedures, such as forgetting to check a patient's identity, he said.

In one 2011 incident, a Texas anesthesiologist was accused of sending text messages and e-mails while monitoring a patient. Her oxygen levels dropped, which the anesthesiologist allegedly didn't notice for close to 20 minutes, and she died in surgery. The woman's family sued the anesthesiologist. The case was settled before going to trial.

Such incidents are why physicians and medical groups including the American College of Surgeons, the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons and doctors who published an April paper for the American Society of Anesthesiologists have been warning about phones in the operating room (O.R.) and calling for clear rules on whether and how they can be used. Many raised red flags about the potential for noise or distraction, while some also pointed to the possible challenge of infection control....Read More

Future Alzheimer's victims may be detected by new affordable, non-invasive test

Researchers hope to identify those with amnesic mild cognitive impairment (aMCI)



Individuals with amnesic mild cognitive impairment (aMCI) are at twice the risk of others in their age group of progressing to Alzheimer's disease and researchers think they are on the trail of an affordable, easy way to do this.



Although no conclusive test exists to predict who will develop Alzheimer's, new research from the Center for BrainHealth at The University of Texas at Dallas is attempting to identify a potential biomarker that could offer a more complete picture of who is most at risk.

In a study published in the latest edition of the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*, researchers identify a specific variation in brain waves of individuals with aMCI.

The findings depict a pattern of delayed neural activity that is directly related to the severity of impairment in cognitive performance on a word finding task and may indicate an early dysfunction of progression to Alzheimer's disease....Read More

The New England ARA state affiliates are actively pursuing these Petitions.

Petition Subject: Observation Status: "Current Hospital Issues in the Medicare Program" Get The Message Out: SIGN THE PETITION!!!!

ADD YOUR NAME

Petition Subject: House Concurrent Resolution 37 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 12 to get power doors installed in Post Offices and other federal buildings.

ADD YOUR NAME

Get The Message Out: SIGN THE PETITION!!!!

Petition Subject: Elimination of the Unfair GPO and WEP Provisions of the Social Security Act to make sure the Congress of the United States enacts legislation, HR.973 & S.1651

ADD YOUR NAME

Get The Message Out: SIGN THE PETITION!!!!