Senior Services
Promoting the well-being of older adults

First Quarter Narrative Report

Economic insecurity is a growing problem among older adults, and too often invisible. *One Away* is an innovative, national video advocacy campaign that gives voice to vulnerable older adults who are struggling to make ends meet in today's economy. The campaign captures real stories of seniors on video - and calls for legislative and policy changes to make it easier for them to get the services and support they need to live with independence and dignity. The National Council on Aging is working with local advocacy partners around the country to build support for this campaign. Senior Services is a leading partner in the campaign and has recently focused on transportation issues facing elders. Bettye, a Volunteer Transportation client who lives in Federal Way, is featured in the first *One Away* video. The video illuminates Bettye's struggles to continue living independently and how Volunteer Transportation has helped her do just that. You can watch Bettye's story at www.OneAway.org and on Senior Services' YouTube channel at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sK6erNp5VAg.

The Governor's proposed 2011-2013 budget includes cuts to essential services that enable people with special needs to access transportation services fundamental to daily living. The proposed cuts will put these transportation options, and the people who rely on them, at risk. This has both social and financial implications for our community. Limiting or cutting transportation-related programs for our special need populations has dire long-term budget implications for the State. Of most concern to our program is the Governor's proposed cuts to the **Senior Citizens Services Act** – This Act helps local Area Agencies on Aging provide meal assistance, transportation, in-home services and counseling to older adults in Washington. Aging and Disability Services, the King County Area Agency on Aging, is the primary funder of Volunteer Transportation and also helps support our nutrition vans. We participated in Senior Lobby Day in Olympia, braving the snow on February 24th to share our message of concern with state legislators. In addition, Senior Services held a press conference with our community partners to spread public awareness about the severe impact elimination of SCSA funds will have on our agency. I have attached handout we distributed in Olympia.

On behalf of the King County Mobility Coalition, we secured a $20,000 grant from the National Center on Senior Transportation to develop culturally and ethnically appropriate transportation resource information for refugee and immigrant elders in King County. We were one of 4 projects selected out of 138 applicants. Senior Services is the lead agency for the grant, and I attended a grantee meeting in Washington DC to meet with NCST staff and discuss project details and contracting requirements. The project will reach out to newly arrived refugee and immigrant elders and their families through 10 community conversations to assess existing knowledge and use of transportation options and solicit ideas for increasing access; engage stakeholders and elders in a transportation summit to develop outreach strategies and an action plan; and create an ethnic senior advisory council. As a result, transportation providers and planners will be more likely work with and engage ethnic seniors in addressing language, ethnic and cultural barriers

that impact transportation access. The project focuses specifically on Russian, Ukrainian, Burmese, Bhutanese, Ethiopian, Eritrean and Iraqi elders.

During the first quarter, Senior Services' Transportation Program also accomplished the following:

- Sent press releases to community newspapers throughout King County.
- Enlisted the help of our volunteer drivers in recruitment efforts, resulting in recruitment ads in the Porsche and Miata Club newsletter, internal board at the Sheraton Hotel, Newport Short Yacht Club newsletter, harpist newsletter, UW Retirement Association E-Digest and the KOMO TV website.
- Mary Nam, KOMO TV anchor and volunteer driver, also features us on her Facebook page.
- Attended meeting on the SR-520 Toll Rate Proposal to determine the impacts the toll will have on our volunteer drivers and clients. Aging and Disability Services contract requirements prevent us from charging for service, and consequently we cannot pass the toll on to our clients. We also believe we cannot ask volunteer drivers to assume the cost, so this means that Senior Services will have to absorb these additional costs at a time when funding is already at risk.
- Attended monthly meetings of the Puget Sound Regional Council Special Needs Transportation Committee, King County Mobility Coalition and the North King County Mobility Coalition. Chaired the Targeted Outreach Committee of the KC Mobility Coalition.
- Participated in Seattle Transit Master Plan Advisory Group meetings.
- Participated in the City of Renton Meet & Greet
- Participated in the Bellevue Health Fair with over 3,000 people in attendance
- Participated in the Chinese Information and Service Center Resource Fair
- Presented at the South King County Transportation Forum held at the Kent Family Center. Kent TV21 posted a video of the event on their website and will be airing it on their television channel. Also presented at the North King County Transportation Forum held at the Northshore Senior Center in Bothell.
- Worked with King County Metro to develop a module for Rideshare Online which will assist organizations in connecting volunteers to people needing rides, with a special focus on seniors. This module will be available in Washington, Idaho and Oregon so there are a great number of senior centers, churches, etc. that could potentially benefit from an easy to use volunteer matching tool.
- Held a Coffee, Cookies and Conversation meeting at the Central Area Senior Center for volunteer drivers serving seniors living in that area.
- Made presentations at:
  Northwest/Ballard Senior Center
  Senior Center of West Seattle
  Arrowhead Gardens
  North Haven Retirement Community
  North Hill Community Club (in Des Moines)

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Des Moines Masonic Lodge
Legacy House
Missionary Tabernacle Church (Central Area, Seattle)
Cedar Park Apartments, Seattle
Cedar River Terrace Apartments, Renton