

NATI NEWSWIRE

SENIOR SAFETY ISSUES

Senior citizen patrol helps enforce law

By David Wiemers—reporter

RANCHO SANTA FE — For the past six years, the California Highway Patrol has sought to increase its level of service and enforcement in Rancho Santa Fe. The Senior Volunteer and Explorers programs have stepped up to the plate to help achieve these goals.

Both programs consist of volunteers who donate time and even provide their own uniforms to help serve as a visual enforcement deterrent, issue warnings and assist in traffic control along with other services. To show support and help fund these programs, on July 17 the Association donated \$3,000 to the Senior Volunteer Program and \$1,000 to the Explorers program.

The Senior Volunteer Program, or SVP, is headquartered at the Rancho Santa Fe Patrol's office in the fire station on El Fuego and is actively supervised by the Oceanside California Highway Patrol. The program consists primarily of retired individuals who want to serve their community by periodically directing morning and afternoon school traffic during drop-off and pick-up hours; issuing warnings to parking violators in the village; reporting traffic, circulation and speeding problems to the California Highway Patrol; helping deal with abandoned vehicles; and serving as a contact point and conduit for citizen complaints and concerns.

The SVP is part of the California Highway Patrol's overall commitment to increase enforcement in the Covenant. In addition to the 20 hours of weekly overtime enforcement contracted by the Association, a full-time sworn California Highway Patrol officer, Sam Shockley, patrols the Covenant and enforces speed limits and other Vehicle Code regulations with the assistance of SVP volunteers. Sometimes motorcycle officers assigned to the I-5 corridor divert enforcement to the Covenant when freeways are clogged and enforcement is unnecessary and unproductive. SVP volunteers help during these times as well. Ed Rodriguez, a resident of the Ranch since 1997, has served as a SVP volunteer for many years. "I really enjoy helping out," Rodriguez said.

The Explorer Program is an internship program that gives young people considering a career in law enforcement the opportunity to learn through on-the-job training. Usually 15 to 21 years old, these young

people gain insight as to what is needed to be a law enforcement officer and are helpful when events, such as the recent Fourth of July parade, take place. "We have more parades than New York City," Chief Officer Matt Wellhouser said. "I added 25 uniforms to help with the Fourth of July parade. They were very valuable."

Chris Ramos has been with the Explorer program for the past two years. "This program has provided me an opportunity to explore law enforcement," he said. "We learn a lot of things in the Explorer program. We participate in the ride-alongs. We help around the office, and learn how to write reports and help with the radio."

"We appreciate what you do for us," Board Director Bill Beckman said, speaking on behalf of the Association board. "The least we can do is help you with a little financial support."

Association President Lois Jones presented checks and certificates of thanks to Ed Rodriguez, representing the SVP, and to Chris Ramos, representing the Explorers program. Both donations are part of the yearly budget. She thanked both groups for their efforts and the services they provided.

2008 Triad National Conference

Please join us for the 2008 Triad National Conference. We are including Registration information for the long-awaited 2008 National Triad Conference, being co-hosted by Virginia Triad.

Please email Terri Hicks at terrih@sheriffs.org or seniors@oag.state.va.us with any questions you might have.

National Triad Conference Registration Form

http://www.vaag.com/CONSUMER/TRIAD/TRIAD_Conferences.html

We are anticipating over 500 attendees from all across the country at the conference! Be sure to register and make lodging reservations early!

We look forward to seeing you in Williamsburg!

NYPD SEEKING MAN SUSPECTED OF ATTACKS ON ELDERLY

NEW YORK - A man caught on video choking an 85-year-old woman in a building elevator and stealing her money and cane is believed to be responsible for a string of assaults on older victims in Brooklyn, police said Tuesday.

The footage from the latest attack Thursday evening in the [Crown Heights](#) neighborhood shows the suspect entering the building behind Lillian France, who walks slowly with a cane.

The two board the elevator together; he pounces on her from behind as she is about to get off at the fifth floor, choking her until she flails her arms and passes out. He lets go and she slides to the floor, then he grabs her bag and cane and takes off down the hall.

The thief made off with \$900 that France had just withdrawn from the bank, police said. France, who was hospitalized Tuesday with high blood pressure, had gone to the building to visit a relative and may have been followed from the bank, police said.

Authorities said the attack was one of a dozen since the end of June in the Crown Heights, [Flatbush](#) and [Kensington](#) sections of Brooklyn. All but one of the victims were female and they ranged in age from mid-50s to 80s, Commissioner [Raymond Kelly](#) said Tuesday.

In five of the attacks, the victims were choked until they passed out, and then robbed; in two of the cases, the assailant arrived on a bike. Police said the attacks occurred in hallways as well as elevators.

The suspect in the elevator footage is tall and wears a visor and a T-shirt with the number 38 on it. He appears to be wearing headphones during the attack. Kelly asked anyone with information to call the city's tips hot line.

Consumer Action Handbook

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(202) 501-1794
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RLTV Poll: Many Seniors Unaware of DTV Transition

Retirement Living TV: Almost one in four seniors not aware of DTV transition.

By John Eggerton -- Broadcasting & Cable, 8/7/2008

Almost one in four seniors is not aware of the [digital-TV transition](#), and that number increases to one in three for those with less formal education.

That is according to a poll conducted by Washington, D.C.-based [Retirement Living TV](#).

Seniors disproportionately watch over-the-air TV and have been identified by the Federal Communications Commission, the National Association of Broadcasters and others as one of the target populations that will be most affected by the switch to full-power DTV in February 2009.

RLTV said its research suggested that the transition will affect almost 70 million households, or 23% of the total.

The network found that 31% of seniors without a college education are not aware of the transition and say they haven't heard about it.

"The DTV-transition-education campaigns are working, but more should be done to target the most vulnerable," said Patrick Baldwin, vice president of strategic development for RLTV, in a statement announcing the findings.

The poll was conducted June 4-10 among 800 randomly selected adults. It has a margin of error of plus-or-minus 3.5%.

DTV website:

<http://www.dtv.gov>

Local Triads can order publications or print the ones needed that are on-line.

On behalf of the National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (NCPEA) is accepting requests for funding to assist organizations in developing new, local multidisciplinary elder justice networks. Applications are due [September 22, 2008](#). **The NCEA will award ten, \$10,000 mini-grants.** This project is administered by NCPEA, the NCEA grantee charged with fostering multidisciplinary efforts to prevent and address elder abuse. This is the second year of the NCEA project.

To further support collaborative coalitions at the local level, NCPEA –for the NCEA- will provide on-site training and technical assistance to Area Agencies on Aging, Title VI Grantees, and/or community organizations interested in developing new elder justice coalitions.

The RFP can be viewed and downloaded here:

http://www.ncea.aoa.gov/NCEARoot/Main_Site/About/Initiatives/doc/Elder_Justice_Community_RFP.doc

The deadline for responding to the RFP is [Monday, September 22, 2008, 5:00 PM EST](#). Proposals should be e-mailed to ncepa@verizon.net, or faxed to 202-223-2099.

Questions regarding the RFP should be directed to Pamela Teaster, NCPEA President, at pteaster@uky.edu, or by phone at 859-257-1450, ext. 80196.

More Senior Safety related articles are located at www.nationaltriad.org; e-news section

Mail scam targeting local seniors

BY JENNIFER SALE

JenniferSale@coloradoan.com

Senior citizens are being cautioned to be on alert for an elaborate mail scam that has been appearing in Fort Collins.

When Leslie Adler's neighbor brought her an odd letter, their first tip-off that something was amiss was that the hand-written sticky note inside referred to the neighbor as Judith, although almost everyone calls her Judy.

A few weeks later, Adler received an almost identical letter.

The letters Adler and her neighbor received were in stamped, typewritten envelopes. Inside was an article that appeared to have been torn from a financial newspaper with a hand-written sticky note on it. Adler's sticky note read: "Leslie, thought you'd be interested. - J"

The article, entitled "Investors Frustrated and Disgusted with 3 percent CDs" dramatically and emotionally describes a financially insecure widow who doesn't know what to do and feels that her husband would be ashamed of her.

Adler was especially concerned by the intricacy of the scam, which makes it look legitimate and like it has come from a friend.

"People really need to be aware," Adler said. "This does not look like a normal solicitation."

The article recommends calling a toll-free number for a free brochure on a better option.

Adler alerted Fort Collins police and asked the department to call the number.

The officer told her he was asked for a great deal of personal information, including who his financial adviser was and how much money he had available.

"None of our young neighbors have received this," Adler said. "It's definitely, definitely directed at elderly women."

Adler said she and her friends are concerned about how scammers get their names, addresses and age demographics.

Susan Vance works in crime prevention with the Fort Collins police department and is a senior herself. She said about a year ago, she also received a letter like the ones Adler described.

She said she thinks scammers might get seniors' contact information when AARP and similar groups sell their mailing lists to outside parties, as she began receiving senior scams soon after she registered with AARP.

Vance teaches classes on elder fraud and said the course is the most popular of any that she teaches. She instructs people to never give out personal information if they're not sure with whom they're dealing.

"Any time you receive something that doesn't make sense like that, just throw it away," Vance said. "If it looks too good to be true, it is."

Vance said these scams tend to appear sporadically, but even a single letter can be dangerous.

"It's a problem if one person falls prey to them," she said.

Adler said she is worried for her friends, and especially for those even older, like her mother, who is in her 90s.

"My concern is that there are going to be elderly women who are struggling financially and will make the call," she said. Adler was clearly frightened and incensed that people are going to such meticulous lengths to take advantage of senior citizens.

"It makes me furious. I'm furious because it is a vulnerable group," Adler said. "It really is scary that they're doing this."

SOUTH BAY 'PSYCHIC' ARRESTED FOR 'SWEETHEART SCAMS'

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- A 42-year-old alleged scam artist, suspected of involving at least two elderly Santa Clara residents in "sweetheart scams," was arrested in Merced County this week, the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office announced Friday.

Morgan Blake -- also known as Morgan Psychic Blake, Laura Blake, Laura Ann Miller and "South Bay" Psychic Laura -- is facing charges of grand theft and embezzlement, according to the district attorney's office. In a "sweetheart scam" a younger person wins the affections of an elderly person and then convinces the victim to provide them with money or other material items.

Blake is suspected of persuading an 82-year-old man to lease a new car for her, as well as giving her thousands of dollars in cash supposedly to be used in convincing a family member to let her adopt that person's child.

In another instance an 84-year-old victim went to see Blake as a psychic and the two began a close friendship. Blake allegedly convinced the man to loan her hundreds of thousands of dollars over a seven-year-period, by telling her she was the single mother of two children. He also gave her jewelry and household items.

Together, both victims gave Blake more than \$450,000 in cash and gifts, according to the district attorney's office.

Anyone with information about Morgan Blake is asked to contact district attorney's office investigator Dennis Brookins at (408) 792-2851.

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More Senior Safety related articles are located at www.nationaltriad.org; e-news section

SURVEY ASSESSES ELDERLY MISTREATMENT IN AMERICA

Newswise — About 13 percent of elderly Americans are mistreated, most commonly by someone who verbally mistreats or financially takes advantage of them, according to a University of Chicago study that is the first comprehensive look at elder mistreatment in the country.

“The population of the country is aging, and people now live with chronic diseases longer. So it’s important to understand, from a health perspective, how people are being treated as they age,” said lead author Edward Laumann, the George Herbert Mead Distinguished Service Professor in Sociology at the University of Chicago.

Other studies have been based on small, non-representative samples of the population or on data gathered from the criminal justice system or welfare agencies such as adult protection services. They are not as comprehensive as the new study, which was made in response to a report from the National Research Council calling for scientific study of elder mistreatment.

Laumann and his research team found that 9 percent of adults reported verbal mistreatment, 3.5 percent reported financial mistreatment and 0.2 percent reported physical mistreatment. Physical impairment apparently plays a role in mistreatment, the study found.

“Older people with any physical vulnerability are about 13 percent more likely than those without one to report verbal mistreatment but are not more likely to report financial mistreatment,” said co-author Linda Waite, the Lucy Flower Professor in Sociology at the University.

Their study showed that adults in their late 50s and 60s are more likely to report verbal or financial mistreatment than those who are older. “Perhaps the respondents are including fairly routine arguments, perhaps about money, with their spouse, sibling or child in their reports or perhaps older adults are more reticent to report negative behavior,” Laumann said.

The findings, which found wide variations in mistreatment depending on age and ethnicity, were reported in “Elder Mistreatment in the U.S.: Prevalence Estimates from a Nationally-Representative Study,” published in the current issue of the *Journal*

of Gerontology: Social Sciences.

The study found that females were about twice as likely to report verbal mistreatment, but no higher level of financial mistreatment, than men; Latinos were about half as likely as whites to report verbal mistreatment and 78 percent less likely to report financial mistreatment; and blacks were 77 percent more likely to report financial mistreatment than whites.

Regarding mistreatment, respondents were asked about the past 12 months and answer three questions: “Is there anyone who insults you or puts you down?” (verbal); “Is there anyone who has taken your money or belongings without your OK or prevented you from getting them, even when you ask?” (financial); and “Is there anyone who hits, kicks, slaps or throws things at you?” (physical).

Of the people reporting verbal mistreatment, 26 percent identified their spouse or romantic partner as being responsible, 15 percent said their children mistreated them verbally, while the remainder said that a friend, neighbor, co-worker or boss was responsible.

Among people who reported financial mistreatment, 57 percent reported someone other than a spouse, parent or child, usually another relative, was taking advantage of them.

Waite said there is good news, though. Few older adults reported mistreatment by family members, with older adults quite insulated from physical mistreatment. However, the authors pointed to the need for sensitivity on the part of physicians and other medical personnel to the possibility, although infrequent, of physical mistreatment of their patients.

Sarah Leitsch, a research scientist at the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, joined in the study.

The study was based on the National Social Life, Health and Aging Project (NSHAP), a 2005-2006 survey of a random sample of 3,005 community-dwelling adults, ages 57 through 85. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) supported the study, which collected data on individuals’ social lives, sexuality, health and a broad range of biological measures.

The NSHAP is supported by several components of the NIH, including the National Institute on Aging, the Office of Research on Women’s Health, the Office of AIDS Research and the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research. The National Opinion Research Center, whose staff was responsible for the data collection, also supports the project.

Source: [University of Chicago](http://www.nationaltriad.org) © 2008 Newswise. All Rights Reserved.

Helping Outreach Programs to Expand Grants

Through a series of roundtable meetings with crime victims and victim advocates, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) has become aware of a growing body of grassroots, nonprofit, community- and faith-based victim organizations and coalitions that are not linked to mainstream victim service programs.

As such, they do not have access to traditional funding sources for services, outreach, and networking.

Often only a small amount of money and access to resources are needed to expand and enhance their outreach and services to crime victims.

Organizations and coalitions operating for at least 1 year that have not received federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) victim assistance grant funding and that have an annual operating budget of \$50,000 or less are eligible to apply.

All applicants must also have a history of serving crime victims.

The HOPE grant program is part of OVC's funding efforts to support victim assistance programs at the grass roots level.

For details on how best to present this information, consult the [template for submitting a HOPE request](http://www.ovc.gov/ncvrw/pdfxt/HOPEtemplate.pdf) (<http://www.ovc.gov/ncvrw/pdfxt/HOPEtemplate.pdf>).

For more information on the application itself, please visit <http://www.ovc.gov/fund/expandingoutreach/welcome.html> or contact:

Office for Victims of Crime

Tel.: 202-307-5983

**Fax: 202-514-6383 and
202-305-2440**

Please send requests to:
HOPE Program Manager
Office for Victims of Crime
810 Seventh Street NW.
Washington, DC 20531

"Good Samaritan" Targeting Elderly Dallas Women

Reporting [J.D. Miles](#) DALLAS (CBS 11 News) — Dallas police are looking for a motorcyclist who acts as if he's giving elderly women a helping hand before leaving them empty handed.

It's happened five times in the past week along a stretch of Forest Lane between Marsh and Inwood. Elderly women need to be on guard for a motorcycle riding robber who is attacking them in store parking lots.

Geraldine Petty was leaving a North Dallas grocery store when she fell while loading bags into her car. A man on a motorcycle came to her aid and then asked her for some money for gas. "I got my billfold and started to get out \$2 to give to him, and he just reached and grabbed that billfold and was gone on that motorcycle before I could blink an eye," said Petty.

The man charged more than \$200 on the 83-year-old's credit cards by the time she got home to cancel them.

"I think he's kind of a Good Samaritan who stabs you in the back," she said. Four other women, all in their eighties, have reported the same type of crimes.

One victim was walking out of a home improvement store when a man on a motorcycle helped her load potted plants into her car before taking her purse.

"It is pretty cowardly, but I guess we're pretty much sitting ducks," she said.

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1450 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
800/424-7827 phone 703-519-8567 fax
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