



The S.A.L.T. Communicator

Seniors and Law Enforcement Together

Serving & Protecting Senior Citizens

January 2002

Coordinated by Milton Township Trustee Ken McNatt

Emergency Help Anytime

The emergency help article printed in the last S.A.L.T. Communicator was effective. There were almost 400 calls to the Emergency Help Program following the publication mailing. If you had to wait or did not get immediate response, be patient. The Emergency Help Program is working quickly to respond and get telephones out to those seniors or persons with disabilities that have requested them, through volunteer efforts.

The participation in this program has been very good and we encourage those of you who did not respond before to consider calling now. The Emergency Help Program is a new program that provides **free** cell telephones programmed to call 911 with a push of one button. All 911 calls are received by the DuPage County Sheriff's Office.

These cell telephones will not work for any other calls. They are pre-programmed to work for 911 only. This program is available for individuals if the following criteria are met:

Mission Statement

The purpose of Milton Township S.A.L.T. Council is to determine and to meet the needs of Senior Citizens by reducing crime and abuse and by enhancing safety through communication and education in cooperation with the Township, law enforcement agencies, and other community agencies and organizations.



A DuPage County Sheriff demonstrates how to use the cell telephone provided free through the Emergency Help Program

- ❑ Age 62 or older and do not own a cellular telephone; or
- ❑ Have physical or mental disabilities and do not own a cellular telephone

Given the events and the high alert we are all on since September 11th, this program offers Seniors who live alone, do not own a cell telephone or who have difficulty responding quickly due to a physical limitation, an easy and safe way to provide quick assistance and the ability to notify 911. *(continued on page 2)*

emergency continued

We want to thank all of you who have taken advantage of this new program and hope more people will take the time and contact the Emergency Help Program for your free cell telephone. Remember, be patient; the Emergency Help Staff and volunteers are working hard to respond to all the requests in a timely manner. ■

Contact

Emergency Help Program
Corporal William Shreffler
630•682•7790

Mail Precautions

The United States Postal Service has sent all of us these precautions for handling our mail. If you did not see it in your mail or did not receive it, here is a reminder:

√What should make me suspect a piece of mail?

- ❑ It's unexpected or from someone you don't know.
- ❑ It's addressed to someone no longer at your address.
- ❑ It's handwritten and has no return address or bears one that you can't confirm is legitimate.
- ❑ It's lopsided or lumpy in appearance.
- ❑ It's sealed with excessive amounts of tape.
- ❑ It's marked with restrictive endorsements such as "Personal" or "Confidential".
- ❑ It has excessive postage.

√What should I do with a suspicious piece of mail?

- ❑ Don't handle a letter or package that you suspect is contaminated.
- ❑ Don't shake it, bump it, or sniff it.
- ❑ Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- ❑ Notify local law enforcement authorities. ■

Senior Sources

- Are you a Veteran? If so, you might want to call for your free copy of A Guidebook of State and Federal Programs and Benefits Available to Veterans. You can call Senator Peter Roskam's office for your free copy at 630•790•1709.
 - We reported in the last S.A.L.T. Communicator about the Senior Fair to be held at the County Fairgrounds. It was a great success. Milton Township S.A.L.T. Council participated and handed out a free, **Resource Guide for Seniors, Caregivers & Professionals**. This comprehensive resource guide provides a wealth of information about the Chicago and Suburban areas including Northern Indiana and Southwestern Michigan. It offers useful resources, indexes, checklists, and many contact numbers.
- If you did not attend the fair or have not seen this Resource Guide the S.A.L.T. Council has them available at the Township Hall **free of charge**, it is entitled, Care Matters.

Assistance for Abuse

The Senior Citizen & PwD Unit is made up of a special group of people from all branches of the DuPage County State's Attorney's Office. Joe Birkett, DuPage County State's Attorney, reports each is specially trained to address the problems and concerns, which are common to all victims of abuse special to seniors and persons with disabilities. "The Senior Citizen & PwD Unit is a pilot project," says Joe Birkett, "our senior citizens, the developmentally disabled and persons with disabilities deserve respect and understanding-not abuse."

Why is there a special unit to deal with victims? According to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, each year four to five percent of older people are victims of some form of abuse. Experience has demonstrated persons with disabilities are especially vulnerable to abuse.

Often times, abuse happens to the caregiver. The person who abused me is mentally ill. Can I get them help instead of punishment? If the person is mentally ill, has Alzheimer's or dementia there are special considerations. The rights and concerns of victims are top priority. The goal is to improve not only the handling of cases but

also the quality of life for victims of abuse.

If you, or someone you love is being abused, you have the right to seek help. The Senior Citizen & PwD Unit has the cooperation of and works in conjunction with, the Abuse and Neglect Division of the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Department on Aging, the Illinois State Police and Illinois Attorney General's Office. This unit is a pilot project and is here to answer questions or assist you. So long as the person making the report is not the abuser, he or she has immunity for any report of abuse, which is made in good faith.

Don't wait, if you are experiencing abuse or know of someone who is, contact the Senior Citizen & PwD Unit today!

Call 630•682•7988

TDD 630•510•3611 ■

INFORMATION SOURCE

If you are one of the many people using a computer to gather information these days, here are some web sites that provide useful information. Check them out!

Federal Trade Commission:

www.ftc.gov

Consumers:

www.consumer.gov

Frauds and Scams:

www.fraudnews.com

www.scamwatch.com

BEWARE Your Personal Checks Can Hang You Out to Dry

Article written by Bill Parbs, S.A.L.T. Council Member

A new scam is popping up across America that requires no direct contact in person or by telephone for you to be the victim. It is called “Check Washing”. The scam artist steals outgoing mail from mailboxes and other convenient and unguarded places and looks for checks. Their targets are envelopes addressed to utility and phone companies that would usually include a check. They literally “wash” the check in a chemical solution that lifts the ballpoint pen ink off the check, but does not affect the printed information, like, bank name and, your personal identification. This leaves the scam artists with a clean fresh blank check.

Your signature, which is essential to success, is copied before the “washing”. Then a new check is made out to the scam artist in any amount from several hundred to several thousand dollars. They take it to your bank and cash it.

Usually they dress as a laborer and make a note on the check such as “install carpeting” or “repair roof”. Unfortunately, the victim is not aware of the scam until well after the fact when they receive their checking statement from their bank.

The scam artists search for outgoing mail in any unguarded areas such as mail baskets in apartment buildings and offices and rural mailboxes on parkways where mail is left for the postal deliverer to pick up.

How to protect against “Check Washing”:

1. Take your mail directly to the Post Office or place it in an official Post Office drop box in a busy location. Do not leave mail in an open basket in apartment or condo buildings, in offices or in parkway mailboxes.
2. Use an indelible or permanent ink pen when writing checks.
3. Contact your bank or check printing company about tamper-proof checks. They are not readily available, but they are coming and will soon be available in more places.
4. Review your bank checking account statements as soon as you receive them.
5. Consider using electronic or automatic bill payments through your bank or the Internet. Many utility companies offer automatic deductions from your checking account to make payment for your heat, electric and telephone services. ■

Power of Attorney

Power of attorney! This is usually one of those subjects most people do not like to discuss. We always think, I can deal with that later, or I don’t want to pay an attorney to have this taken care of. Well, you don’t have to pay an attorney to get the forms and have them filled out and signed. Don’t wait until you need the power of attorney, it is usually too late to do it then.

Chris Heidorn, Attorney at Law and Milton Township Supervisor, reports these are separate statutes and either of them can be exercised without an attorney. Power of Attorney for

(continued on page 5)

Auto Safety Inspection

Thank you to all of you who took the time to take advantage of the Auto Safety Inspection program offered through the S.A.L.T. Council. We had 24 cars inspected and a number of satisfied customers. This auto safety inspection was free to all Milton Township Seniors. Come out and take advantage of this program next fall.



Auto Safety Inspection being conducted

Power of Attorney continued

HealthCare provides a designate (your “agent”) authority over critical life sustaining decisions while hospitalized or seriously ill following surgery.

The purpose of Power of Attorney for Property is to give your designate (your “agent”) broad powers to handle your property which may include powers to pledge, sell or otherwise dispose of any needed personal property without advance notice to you or approval by you.

If you don’t understand power of attorney or are not certain how to deal with it, call and talk with your attorney. If you do understand it, the forms are now available through the Township **free**. Just call and ask for them to be sent or stop by and pick them up.

It is important to designate someone else to make decisions for you when you are unable to make

these decisions. These forms walk you through the process and tell you what permission you are giving and to whom you are giving it. The forms are legal and will provide you with peace of mind in case you are unable to let your family or extended family know what you want.

Do not fill out these forms unless you clearly understand what the forms say. It is important for all of us to think through these decisions and make them before we are sick, or have an accident and unable to speak for ourselves.

These forms are provided free as a courtesy by the Milton Township S.A.L.T. Council. Stop by Township Hall and pick up your forms or call 630•668•1616



Serving & Protecting Senior Citizens

S.A.L.T. Council Members

Ken J. McNatt, Chairman • Joe Vanest, Assistant Chairman • Jackie Jones, Admin. Asst.
Carl Lofgren, Seniors Coordinator/Asst. to Assessor

DuPage Sheriff's Office

Deputy Cpl. William Shreffler • Jim Hatcher, Director of Senior Services • Bill Mennell

Bill Parbs, S.A.L.T. Council Member • Kathy Sommerfield, Wheaton Police Dept. • Daniel Romanowski,
Glen Ellyn Police Dept. • Lt. Bill Rizer, Winfield Police Dept. • Clifford Mortenson, Wheaton Fire Dept.
Chief Phillip DiMensa, Winfield Fire Dept.

Citizen's Committee

Rose Palma • Hector Fuster • Jack Udelhofen • Gail Smith • Don Russell • Jeanne Pitra
Miriam Hartigan • Claude de St. Paer • William Krick • Barbara Smith • Sister Peg Ivers,
St. Daniel The Prophet

In Cooperation with DuPage Sheriff's Office - John Zaruba, Sheriff

- ▶ Senior Sources
- ▶ Scams & Fraud
- ▶ Mail Precautions

HOT Topics

1492 N. Main Street
Wheaton, IL 60187



PRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CAROL STREAM, IL
PERMIT NO. 475
