



# The S.A.L.T. Communicator

*Seniors and Law Enforcement Together*

**Serving & Protecting Senior Citizens**

**January 2004**

Coordinated by Milton Township Trustee Ken McNatt

## Home Fire Safety Reminders

**C**lifford Mortenson, *Wheaton Fire Department Certified Fire Investigator*, presented a very informative program on fire safety for older adults to the S.A.L.T. members in October. The fall and winter months represent the highest number of fire incidents for older adults. Seniors, 65 years and older, are at special risk for death and injury from fires and are twice as likely to die in fires as any other age group. This should remind us all to be more alert and check around our living environment!

- ❑ Install and maintain smoke alarms on every level of your home, especially near sleeping areas. Test and dust alarms monthly, and change the batteries at least once a year.
- ❑ Never smoke in bed, use large, deep ashtrays for smoking debris and let the contents cool before disposing of them.
- ❑ Never leave candles unattended.
- ❑ Cooking fires are a leading cause of burn injuries among older people. Prevent fires and burns by being watchful and alert when you cook. It is wise to have a fire extinguisher near the kitchen area.
- ❑ Have a professional service all heating equipment annually. Never use a range or oven to heat your home.
- ❑ Have a professional electrician inspect your home's electrical wiring system at least



Clifford  
Mortenson,  
*Wheaton Fire  
Department  
Certified Fire  
Investigator*

every 10 years, and make the recommended repairs.

- ❑ Store matches and lighters in a locked drawer or a high cabinet away from the reach of grandchildren or youngsters that visit.
- ❑ Practice two ways out of every room in your house. Get out as soon as you discover a fire. Once out of the house, stay out! Do not attempt to enter a burning home to gather possessions left behind. Immediately dial 9-1-1 for help when you notice smoke or have a fire issue in your home.
- ❑ If a fire occurs in a high-rise building, one should stay in their apartment and call 9-1-1. "Safe Haven" areas in high rises are labeled areas for people to stay and wait for fireman to find them during a fire.

Mr. Mortenson ended his presentation by reminding us all; the Fire Department is here to serve us, the community.

*Consider doing a safety check on your home by contacting your local fire station*

## 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.

## Local Scam

A news release and newspaper article described the latest senior scam in DuPage County. November 5<sup>th</sup>, late afternoon, an elderly woman was flagged down at a stoplight on Diehl Road just west of Route 59 in unincorporated Naperville by a white van pulling along side of her. The driver pointed to the right rear wheel of her car and signaled for her to pull over to the side of the road.

When she stopped, the driver of the van approached her and said that her right rear tire was wobbling and he would check it for her. The driver and his passenger, described as a male Hispanic with a slight Latin accent, then removed the hubcap from the tire and told her she needed a part replaced and offered to do it for her for \$200.

The victim informed the two men she had no money or credit cards. The two men told her they would follow her home to make sure she got there safely. After arriving in

the victim's driveway one of the subjects removed cash from the victims change purse while the other subject pretended to have an injury to gain entry into the woman's home. The woman refused to let them inside her home and the two left the woman's home.

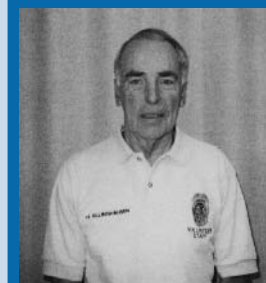
"This scam is one of the more brazen scams I have seen in a long time," reported Sheriff Zaruba. "This woman was accosted in broad daylight, by two men intending on victimizing her because she was elderly. I hope that each and every one of you who read this will tell your friends and neighbors about this incident and remind them to be vigilant."

We are printing this article with the hopes that all of you will be extra cautious this winter... and not pull over to the side of the road *for a stranger for any reason. Do not let strangers follow you to your home.* Drive to the nearest well lit public area and call the police or if you have a cell phone, call 911 while staying in your car. If you do not have a cell phone, contact your local police to see if you are eligible for one of the "free" cell phones available through the police departments Senior Emergency Program. ■



## Cell Link

Harold Ellinghausen, a representative of the DuPage Sheriff's Office, would like to remind all the Milton Township seniors of the Cell Link program. This program provides "free" cell telephones programmed with 911 for emergency and safety. The cell phones are not set up to receive or make general telephone calls, only 911. This program serves all seniors who may not otherwise have the funds to purchase a cell telephone.



Harold  
Ellinghausen,  
DuPage  
County  
Sheriff's  
Office

Nine cell phones were distributed during the Auto Inspection event from the Cell Link program offered by the Sheriff's office. These phones are available to seniors who otherwise would not have access to a cell phone for emergencies. ■

**For Participation & Questions Call 630.682.7824**



## Safeguarding the Mail and You!

The mission of the United States Postal Inspection Service is to protect the U.S. Postal Service, its employees and its customers from criminal attack, and protect the nation's mail system from criminal misuse. Jeffrey Sack, of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, presented a very interesting and informative program to the S.A.L.T. Council discussing mail fraud, abuse and identity theft.

Below are some interesting facts to ponder among the many services provided by the Postal Inspection Service. In an average year, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service:

- Arrests about 12,000 criminal suspects, nearly half for mail theft or possession of stolen mail.
- Responds to more than 1,000 postal-related assaults and credible threats, resulting in hundreds of arrests.
- Investigates more than 3,000 mail fraud cases, resulting in some 1,600 arrests and millions of dollars in restitution.
- Investigates an average of 100 incidents of suspicious items in the mail, including mail bombs.
- Responds to more than 75,000 consumer fraud complaints, including reports of identity theft, which claims 750,000 victims each year.

Most identity theft involves the U.S. mail. That is why the Postal Inspection Service is a lead agency in investigating incidents of identity theft. It is a criminal offense. It occurs when a person knowingly transfers or uses, without lawful authority, a means of identification of another person with

the intent to commit or to aid or abet any unlawful activity that constitutes a violation of federal law or a felony under any applicable state or local law.

Identity theft occurs when a crook steals key pieces of personal identifying information, which may include a name, address, date of birth, social security number and mother's maiden name, to gain access to a person's financial accounts. Armed with this information, an identity thief may open new credit or financial accounts, buy cars, apply for loans or social security benefits, rent an apartment, or set up utility and phone service in someone else's name.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service offers a number of printed brochures and flyers with information, education and suggestions. For more information, report a claim or ask a question contact:

### **U.S. Postal Inspection Service Congressional & Public Affairs**

475 L'Enfant Plaza SW

Washington, DC 20260-2175

800.332.0317

option 4 customer service and then press 2 ■



Come and join the S.A.L.T. Council to hear enlightening speakers and meet the Council members. Meetings are open to the public and held the second Monday of each month at 10 am, unless

it is a holiday. Call the Milton Township office at 630.668.1616 for the exact date, time and meeting location.

We encourage you to come, participate, provide feedback and submit articles.



# Serving & Protecting Senior Citizens

## S.A.L.T. Council Members

Ken J. McNatt, Chairman • Joe Vanest, Vice Chairman • Gail Hinkle, Social Services Coordinator  
Carl Lofgren, Seniors Coordinator/Asst. to Assessor • Bill Parbs, Director of Communications

## DuPage Sheriff's Office

Sharon Todd, DePuty Sheriff Liaison • Jim Hatcher, Director of Senior Services • Bill Mennell

Chief Greg Berk, Wheaton Fire Chief • Sue Davison, Medicare Advocate CDH  
Chief Phillip DiMensa, Winfield Fire Dept. • Marcy Fairbank, Community Nursing Service  
Jodie Hefler, Glen Ellyn, Senior Services • Rich Janske, Wheaton Police Dept.  
Debbie McKenzie, Glendale Heights Police Dept. • James Monson, Glen Ellyn Police Dept.  
Clifford Mortenson, Wheaton Fire Dept. • Chief Douglas Riner, Winfield Police Dept.  
Lt. Bill Rizer, Winfield Police Dept. • Kathy Sommerfield, Wheaton Police Dept.

## Citizen's Committee

Hector Fuster • Larry Gage • Sister Peg Ivers, St. Daniel the Prophet • William Krick  
Rose Palma • Jeanne Pitra • Horace Polglaze • Don Russell • Claude de St. Paer  
Barbara Smith • Jack Udelhofen

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

- ▶ Fire Safety
- ▶ Beware of Local Scam
- ▶ Safeguarding Your Mail
- ▶ Food Pantry Assistance
- ▶ Auto Inspection Results

## *HOT* Topics

1492 N. Main Street  
Wheaton, IL 60187  
[www.twp.milton.il.us](http://www.twp.milton.il.us)




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## Auto Inspection A Success!

*Submitted by Bill Parbs, S.A.L.T. Council*

The Third Annual Auto Inspection was held October 25<sup>th</sup> at the Wheaton North High School. It was considered a success with 22 people having their cars inspected by volunteers. "If we prevent one accident or offer one piece of advice that is helpful, we consider our time and effort a worthwhile investment," reports Bill Mennell, a local S.A.L.T. Council member who has participated the past three years. Mark your calendars and consider coming to this event next fall. It is particularly helpful for those seniors who do not have mechanical knowledge or car safety expertise.

Keeping your car's tires properly inflated is the main problem most car owners should be concerned with according to the results of the free auto inspection conducted by Milton Township S.A.L.T. Council.

"Most of the cars inspected had one or two tires underinflated," said Bill Mennell. Tires on regular passenger cars should carry 30 to 35 psi (pounds per square inch). If you drive an oversize vehicle or truck, check your owner's manual or an auto service center to learn the correct psi.

Spare tires also were underinflated on many of the cars tested. Smaller tires are used to save trunk space and should carry 50 to 60 psi.

It is recommended that drivers carry a tire pressure gauge and check their tires on a regular basis or have them checked at the gas station each time they fill up. Underinflated tires do not wear well and do not provide the good traction, especially in winter driving.



Third Annual  
Auto Inspection  
held October 2003,  
Wheaton

Other tips from the auto inspection team include:

- ✓ Carry a first aid kit in your trunk
- ✓ Carry a blanket during cold weather driving
- ✓ Be sure your windshield washer bottle is full

We are all appreciative of those individuals who give of their time freely to participate and help for this "free" service to our local seniors. The community volunteers for this years event were; Bill Mennell, Ken McNatt, Jo Ocasio, Bill Parbs, Kyle Southern and Joe Vanest. ■

## FILE OF Life

Clifford Mortenson, Wheaton Fire Department Certified Fire Investigator, congratulated the S.A.L.T. Committee on supplying File of Life packets to seniors in the area. Firefighters and paramedics have used these medical records in assisting seniors. "If you do not have one of these File of Life packets, contact Milton Township S.A.L.T. Council, to get your **free** File of Life packet," says Ken McNatt, Trustee and Chairperson of the S.A.L.T. Council. **Call the Township Hall at 630.668.1616.**



Call 630.668.1616 to learn more  
about the programs offered by  
the S.A.L.T. Council or visit  
[www.twp.milton.il.us](http://www.twp.milton.il.us) for past  
issues of the S.A.L.T. Communicator

## Proposed New Transportation System for County

*Submitted by Mary Keating, Research & Operations,  
DuPage County Human Services*

Public transportation has long been an issue in DuPage County. There are a variety of services available like Dial-A-Ride and others, but none of them are countywide or as efficient and convenient as needed to serve the citizens in DuPage County.

A number of municipal groups are in conversation to create a new countywide service that would be known as "Ride DuPage". Currently it is in the discussion and organizational phase. If all goes as planned, there may be a new service available as early as mid 2004. Mary Keating spoke to the S.A.L.T. Council about the proposed program.

The general concept would be to combine all the current services into one contact point. Citizens would call a single dispatcher who would assign a vehicle or method of transportation at a cost to the individual depending on where in the county they desired to go.

No further details are available, but we will keep you informed, as information becomes available on this proposed new service. ■

## In Memory

Miriam B. Hartigan, a former S.A.L.T. member...a real gem! That is how many people describe and remember her. Miriam, a long time Wheaton resident and active republican committee member, devoted her time and life to family and the Republican Party in DuPage County.

She will be missed and remembered as a volunteer who never said "no" and always said "yes" to the call when help was needed. Mrs. Hartigan passed away in November 2003, at the wonderful age of 91, with 2 daughters, a son, 11 grandchildren and 25 great grandchildren surviving her.



## Local Food Pantry Needs Your Assistance

The Milton Township Food Pantry, Inc., an IRC 501c(3) non-profit corporation, operates a food pantry for resident individuals and families in need of sustenance. This year the numbers of individuals and households served is close to double the number served since January 2003. Demand continues to increase and October of this year over 600 individuals were provided with non-perishable, refrigerated and frozen foodstuffs through the pantry.

Caseworkers are on duty during regular business hours Monday through Friday, to meet with individuals that have special needs. An open pantry is hosted every Wednesday. It is most helpful if you call for an appointment.

Stocks are quite low at this point in time given the significant requests and the 350 families served for the Christmas Sharing Basket program. If you would remember the food pantry while doing your shopping and pick up several items on sale and donate them to the pantry, it would be most appreciated. Monetary donations are also acceptable.

If you know of someone who is in need, pass along the telephone number and have them contact the Food Pantry at Township Hall for information and assistance at 630.668.1616.