Planning for the golden years

A free informational program that helps seniors plan their future is steadily gaining interest among the public. Cobb County Senior Services has sponsored the series “Aging by Design,” which continues through this month and culminates in a summit 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Monday, April 28, at the Cobb Galleria Centre.

“We are seeing an overwhelmingly positive response,” Senior Services Director Jessica Gill said of those who have attended the prior lectures. “When you are armed with the information, you can do a lot more. They are hungry for information.”

Often, seniors don’t plan far enough ahead for things like financial security or health problems. By providing accurate information, the sessions are designed to educate the public about the aging issues they should prepare for.

“You get to take control,” Gill said. “The importance there is to make the sort of decisions you want early.”

The first seminar in March covered elder abuse with about 50 people attending. Later that same month, more than 250 came to the event discussing dementia, organizers said.

On Tuesday, April 8, “Housing Options” will be the main topic at 7 p.m. at the Senior Wellness Center, 1150 Powder Springs St., Marietta.

More than 100 people were already registered by the end of March. The speaker will be LeadingAge Georgia President Walter Coffey.

Gill said each forum has provided the public, whether they are seniors, relatives or caregivers, a chance to hear directly from experts and get information.

For example, a panel of doctors from WellStar will be discussing health, wellness and aging at the April 28 event. Other guest speakers will include the Atlanta Regional Commission director of the Area Agency on Aging, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services deputy commissioner of programs and a certified dementia specialist.

“They aren’t just people you can contact on a regular basis,” Gill said.

The various events also ask attendees to bring their ideas and solutions to help others. Gill said the public has been able to discuss housing issues, transportation issues and provide their thoughts on how the community can support those with dementia.

“We’re asking them to take action,” she said.

To register for these events online, go to cobbseniors.org. Contact agingbydesign@cobbcounty.org for more information.
Recognition and honors

The Board of Commissioners and the Cobb Community Relations Council recently honored nominees and winners of the 2014 Creating Community Awards at the fourth annual awards dinner. The dinner was held at Windy Recreation Center in Smyrna. Cobb County Commissioners presented awards to winners from each of the four commission districts. The winners are, from left: (District One) Ivan Shannas general manager of Telemundo in Atlanta and Jinger Robins, SafePath; (District Two) Zanobia Rainey and David McKenna of Georgia Community Support & Solutions - Art and Food Program; (District Three) Diana Schwartz representing The Children's Bilingual Theater; and (District Four) Albert McRae III and Eric Coleman of the Amateur Advocate Association.

Your help needed to clean up river

Volunteer slots are open for Sweep the Hooch, the Chattahoochee River’s annual spring cleaning, scheduled for Saturday, April 12. The multi-site cleanup will traverse some 60 miles and include 27 sites, many within the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. There will be an array of walking, wading and paddling locations. Volunteer registration will close at noon, Wednesday, April 9. However, once capacity is reached for a site, registration for that particular location will close. Last year, more than 550 volunteers hauled 3.7 tons of refuse from the river. For more information, including how to register, visit chattahoochee.org or sweepthehooch.org.

Triple ‘Triple A’ renewed for Cobb

This month the nation’s top three bond rating agencies each gave Cobb County Government its top “Triple A” rating for the 16th consecutive year. The firms, Fitch, Moody’s and Standard and Poor’s, cited the county’s financial health in the renewals that place Cobb County among the top communities in the nation. For example, Moody’s report said the rating was “based on the county’s sizeable and diverse economic and employment base, a sound financial position supported by conservative fiscal management and satisfactory fund balance levels and a low debt burden.”

Beware ‘Sheriff’s Office’ phone scam

Cobb County Sheriff’s Office staff recently received several complaints from residents stating they received phone calls from a male representing himself as a member of the “Sheriff’s Office.” He said the resident failed to appear for jury duty and that a warrant had been issued for his or her arrest. However, if the victim pays a substantial amount of money, the warrant will be dismissed and he or she will not be taken into custody. The caller may also indicate that if the person pays the “fine” a warrant will not be issued for his or her arrest. According to Sheriff Neil Warren, the caller tells the victim to make a payment using a “Walmart Money” card.

“When they purchase the card, the victim is instructed to provide the card number to the caller,” Warren said. “This type of scam has been used for many years and is making a comeback. The Cobb County Sheriff’s Office would not contact a citizen demanding payment of a fine nor does the Sheriff’s Office have the authority to dismiss a warrant.”

Warren further stated if an individual has a question regarding jury duty service, he or she should call the Superior Court Jury Administrator at 770-528-1757 or the State Court Jury Administrator at 770-528-2628. If you have received a phone call similar to this, please contact the Cobb County Sheriff’s Office Investigative Unit immediately at 770-499-4653.