



GIFT TO GASTON COLLEGE - Tim Gause, Region Director, Government and Community Relations for Duke Energy, presents a check for \$249,850 to Gaston College President, Dr. Patricia Skinner and members of the college's leadership team. The grant from the Duke Energy Foundation will help Gaston College purchase welding equipment for the Pharr Trade and Industrial Building on the Dallas Campus. (Pictured front row - L to R) Dr. Silvia Patricia Rios Husain, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; Gaston College President Patricia Skinner; Tim Gause, Region Director, Duke Energy. (Back row - L to R) Dr. Dennis McElhoe, Vice President for Economic and Workforce Development; Todd Baney, Chief Administrative Officer; Dr. Don Ammons, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Julia Allen, Executive Director, Gaston College Foundation and Cynthia McCrory, Vice President for Finance, Operations and Facilities.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - Want to volunteer to run a refreshment stand for the Greater Shelby Community Theatre at the American Legion World Series in Shelby? Three volunteers are needed to work the booth for each game and for their work they will receive a GSCT season ticket worth \$30.

GSCT President Dan Treharne of Kings Mountain said game schedule includes: Aug. 13 concert of Champions at 5 p.m.; Aug. 14 games at noon, 5 p.m., 8 p.m. Aug. 16 games at 1 p.m., 5 p.m. 8 p.m.; August 17 games at 1 p.m., 5 p.m., 8 p.m.; Aug. 17 semifinal games at 5 and 8 p.m. and Aug. 19 championship game at 7 p.m.

Email Treharne at president@gscct.org if you are willing to work any time slot.

GATHERING OF CHURCHES AUG. 25 - People's Baptist Church, 1010 Groves St., will host a gathering of churches August 24 at 4 p.m. Guest speaker will be Dr. Mike Hapheth from Nigeria, Moderator of the Assemblies of God in Nigeria. The community is invited.

'SORELLA JACK' TO PERFORM AUG. 22 - Melody Cox, vocalist and guitarist, will return to Owl's Eye Friday, August 22 and will play from 7:00 until 9:00 PM on the patio, weather permitting. Melody and two of her talented friends have formed a trio, "Sorella Jack," and all three will be in Shelby that evening. Their style is similar to that of Crosby, Stills and Nash, and they have been playing at area wineries and small venues for the last several months. Small fruit and cheese trays will be available for purchase; since Owl's Eye is "picnic friendly," you are welcome to bring snacks or a pick-up supper.

THE ENGAGE EXPERIENCE - The Engage Experience will be launching Sunday, Sept. 7, at 9:45 a.m. on the campus of First Wesleyan Church, 505 N. Piedmont Ave. Check out our website www.theengageexperience.com The public is invited.

ID THEFT: can be life threatening

From page 6A

diagnoses can be added to your file. Having incorrect information mixed in with your medical files can put your health at risk, especially in an emergency.

Patients who discover that they've been victims of medical identity theft must work to get corrected information in their files.

What are the warnings signs of medical ID theft? You could be a victim if you:

- Get a bill or other paperwork regarding a medical procedure or service that you didn't receive.

- Discover incorrect information in your medical records.

- Are notified that you have "maxed out" your medical benefits when you haven't.

- Are contacted by a debt collector about a medical debt you don't owe.

- Discover collection notices or other indications of medical debt activity in your credit report.

- Are denied insurance coverage because of incorrect information in your medical

records.

Fortunately you can take steps to protect yourself against medical identity theft. Start by shredding outdated health insurance forms, prescription labels and paperwork, physician statements, and any other old documents that contain your medical information.

Be cautious about sharing your medical and insurance information. Identity thieves want this information, and they'll masquerade as an insurance company employee, a pharmacist, or even your doctor's office to try to get it.

Don't respond to pitches that ask you to

share your health plan ID number or other confidential information in order to receive "free" medical services or products.

When you get medical bills and paperwork, read them carefully to make sure they match the care you really received. Check to see if the name of the doctor and the facility are correct and the dates of service match your records. If you see information that isn't right, report it to your health plan.

To learn more about fighting identity theft and medical identity theft, visit www.ncdoj.gov or call 1-887-5-NO-SCAM (toll-free in NC).

THE SAVVY SENIOR

By JIM MILLER
Editor



Food Assistance Programs Can Help Seniors in Need

Dear Savvy Senior,

I run a community counseling program for needy families and am frustrated that so few eligible seniors take advantage of the food stamp program. Can you write a column on this to help educate seniors to this underutilized benefit?

Reaching Out

Dear Reaching,

It's hard to imagine that a government program serving more than 46 million Americans each month is considered severely underutilized. But that's the reality of the federal Food Stamp Program when it comes to serving seniors.

Nationwide, food stamps (now called the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) reaches around 80 percent of those eligible, but the numbers are much slimmer among the seniors, age 60 and older. Recent statistics indicate only 39 percent of eligible seniors receive SNAP benefits.

There are a number of reasons for the lack of participation. Some seniors are too embarrassed or too proud to apply. Others think that if they receive SNAP they will be taking food benefits away from others (which they won't). Some

think it is too difficult to apply for SNAP, and others don't even know the program exists.

With all that said, here's a run down of which seniors are eligible for SNAP, what they get and how they can apply.

Who's Eligible?

For seniors to get SNAP, their "net income" must be under the 100 percent federal poverty guidelines. So, households that have at least one person age 60 and older, or disabled, their net income must currently be less than \$958 per month for an individual or \$1,293 for a family of two. Households receiving TANF or SSI (except in California) are also eligible.

Net income is figured by taking gross income minus allowable deductions like medical expenses that exceed \$35 per month out-of-pocket, and shelter costs (rent or mortgage payments, taxes and utility costs) that exceeds half of the household's income.

In addition to the net income requirement, a few states also require that a senior's "assets" be below \$3,250, not counting the home, retirement or pension plans, income from SSI or TANF, and vehicle (this varies by state). Most states, however, have much higher asset limits

or they don't count assets at all when determining eligibility.

The SNAP pre-screening tool at www.snap-step1.usda.gov/fns can help seniors, and their family members, figure out if they qualify.

To apply, seniors or an authorized representative will need to fill out a state application form, which can be done at the local SNAP office or it can be mailed or faxed in, or in many states it can be completed online.

If eligible, benefits will be provided on a plastic card that's used like a debit card and accepted at most grocery stores.

Depending on the person's financial situation, the amount of SNAP a beneficiary may be eligible for will range between \$15 and \$189 per month as an individual, or \$15 to \$347 for a family of two.

To learn more or apply, contact your local SNAP office - call 800-221-5689 for contact information or visit www.fns.usda.gov/snap.

Produce Coupons

In addition to SNAP, the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is another underused program that provides coupons that can be exchanged for fresh

fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets, roadside stands and community supported agriculture programs.

This program is currently available in select counties in 43 states, seven Indian reservations, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, to seniors, age 60 and older, with gross monthly household incomes below 185 percent of the federal poverty line, which is currently below \$1,800 for individuals, or \$2,426 for a family of two. For more information visit www.fns.usda.gov/sfmnp or call 703-305-2746.

Other Programs

Seniors that are eligible for food assistance may also be eligible for a host of other programs that can help pay for medications, health care, utilities and more. To locate these programs, visit benefitscheckup.org, or call the Eldercare Locator at 800-677-1116.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.



AT SUMMIT PLACE OF KINGS MOUNTAIN, YOU'LL FEEL *right at home.*

Life at Summit Place is a chance to enjoy a healthy, happy retirement, where every day brings a new experience. Offering...

- Three meals served restaurant style daily • Emergency call system
- Staff available 24 hours a day • Assistance with activities of daily living
- Social, recreational, educational and spiritual activities

Call 704-739-6772 to learn more.

SUMMIT PLACE
OF KINGS MOUNTAIN

FIVESTAR SENIOR LIVING™

FIVESTAR SENIOR LIVING™

1001 Phifer Road • Kings Mountain, NC 28086

704-739-6772

www.SummitPlaceOfKingsMountain.com