"There's no place like home!"

March 2014

Building for boomers – by Richard Jackson, Realtor, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices

More than 76 million baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) are confronting lifestyle modifications as they age. Although many remain more active than previous generations, their living environment priorities are changing.

Once the empty nest realities (the children are finally out of the house) set in and if boomers are not faced with in-home care giving for elderly parents or relatives, they have the opportunity to consider their future housing needs. Coincidentally, builders are recognizing the increased number of boomers, as well as their evolving residential needs. They are incorporating new features to cater to changing lifestyles as well as the aches and pains that are part of the aging process.

Specifically, home builders and remodelers are now including wider doors and hallways, better lighting, first-floor bedrooms and baths, easy-to-maintain exteriors, simple landscaping, and flexible space (rooms that can be utilized and adjusted as you age). Realistically, many boomers do not like to or cannot climb stairs for various reasons and the new housing trends reflect this fact.

Atlanta has become a retirement haven (ranked number three, nationally), according to the March/April 2009 edition of Where to Retire magazine. Baby boomers are preparing for the next exciting phase of their lives, so expect a differing housing market in the next decade.

Volunteer driver program



Most of us cannot imagine life without access to transportation, but that is a reality for many aging Gwinnett residents who no longer drive. Aside from not being able to go to the grocery store or run errands, increased isolation and possible inability to keep medical appointments

become real possibilities for seniors without immediate family, friends, or caregivers to support them.

In response to the growing number of seniors still living independently and not being able to get where they need to go, Gwinnett Senior Services

is launching an innovative volunteer driver program. This program seeks to match approved volunteers



with seniors needing local transportation. Please note that qualified volunteer drivers may be eligible for insurance premium reductions by completing an AARP Smart DriverTM course.

For more details, **Chris Johnson** urges prospective volunteer drivers to contact him at **678.377.6715** or **christopher.b.johnson@gwinnettcounty.com**.

Spring cleaning



Spring is just around the corner and with it comes warmer weather, flowers, and a reminder to clean or de-clutter our homes and our lives. Many seniors grew

up with the concept of spring cleaning and continue to make it a part of their annual routine. Remember to ask for help from family, friends, or neighbors.

Here are some tips to help with your spring cleaning:

- Clean the medicine cabinet and check all items for expiration dates. Are the medications stored in their own containers? Are they stored in a cool, dry place? Discard any unused medications.
- Check batteries in smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Run a test to ensure they're working.

- Remove clutter to reduce the risk of trips and falls. Organize cabinets to make frequently-used items more accessible, and throw away outdated food from the pantry or refrigerator.
- Program the phone with emergency contacts on speed dial. Work with neighbors — at home or in a senior community — to watch out for each other. An extra set of eyes and ears can help identify problems before they happen or when something has gone wrong and help is needed.
- Spring showers can make outdoor surfaces slippery. Place non-slip mats on floors to help seniors avoid a fall if they plan on working or socializing on patios or decks.
- Check lighting and replace any burned-out or dim bulbs.

Adapted from http://www.saratogian.com/general-news/20120223/ senior-strategies-keeping-spring-cleaning-safe-for-seniors

Nutrition drinks and supplements can interact with medications

Dr. Amy Ehrlich warns that supplements, including nutrition drinks, can cause dangerous drug interactions in the same way prescription medications do.



If an elder is taking prescription and over-the-counter drugs and supplements, the drugs may conflict and, basically, go to war against each other, while also damaging otherwise functioning body organs and systems. She advises you to check with your doctor to avoid interactions. "I encourage my patients to bring in all their medications, supplements and vitamins, so I can check for possible interactions. I

call it the 'brown bag visit," Dr. Ehrlich says. As an example, vitamin supplements may negatively interact with blood thinners like Coumadin.

The bottom line is that nutrition drinks are not a magic fix for lack of eating or under-nutrition. These products are not bad when used as a dietary aid and supplement to regular meals. However, they should not be used as a meal replacement for elders — especially those who are frail or thin.

Adapted from: http://www.agingcare.com/Articles/nutritional-drinks-seniors-elderly-problems-139710.htm

Gwinnett County Senior Activity Center Locations

Buford

2755 Sawnee Avenue Buford, GA 30518 770.614.2527

Lawrenceville

Rhodes Jordan Park 225 Benson Street Lawrenceville, GA 30046 678.277.0970

Norcross

5030 Georgia Belle Court Norcross, GA 30093 678.225.5430

Centerville

Satellite Center 3025 Bethany Church Road Snellville, GA 30039 770.978.4532

