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Marlene Humphry... A Seasoned Leader!

by CLAIRE HOUSER-DODD

Cover: Marlene accepts an award from District Governor Hannah Flynn at the recent Georgia Lions State Convention held at Callaway Gardens. Vice District Governor Willie Cooper looks on.

We had the good fortune to sit by Marlene Humphry at the Head Table at the Byron Area Historical Society Luncheon of

the 30th annual Georgia Peach Festival on June 3. Let us explain, we sat, Marlene popped up and down.

Besides many other charities and volunteer events Marlene works on, she is the current president of Byron Area Historical Society, therefore in charge. No sitting and relaxing for her! However, Marlene is a seasoned leader and doesn't seem to get rattled. Actually, it appears to us that

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July 2016
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Taking Care

Lighten Up This Summer... Here's How!

by LISA M. PETSCHKE

Many people look forward to the mild temperatures and increased daylight of summer, which positively affect their mood



Lisa Petschke

and allow new opportunities for enjoyment, especially outdoors.

Those who are looking after a frail, ill or disabled senior relative, however,

may be so preoccupied that they find it hard to reap the benefits of the season.

If you are a caregiver, read on for a variety of ideas for streamlining necessary tasks in order to ensure some time for leisure this summer. Ideas for activities to enjoy with your relative are also included.

General Tips

- Establish and stick to priorities, and curb perfectionism. Not everything needs to be done to a high standard. Set a time limit for

chores if necessary/

- Be flexible about plans and expectations, taking into account your relative's energy level and yours at any given time, as well as the weather. Take things one day at a time.

- Pay for a grounds keeping service if you can afford it.

- If you do not have central air conditioning, get a window air conditioner or oscillating fan for the room(s) you use the most. Before a heat wave hits, check that any such appliances are in good repair.

Meal Preparation

- Collect recipes for one-dish meals, such as main course salads.

- Cook double batches of recipes and freeze half for later use.

- Keep a supply of heat-and-serve entrees in the freezer.

- Buy convenience foods that reduce preparation time: packaged salads, shredded cheese and boneless chicken breasts, for example.

- Order takeout now and then, as finances permit.

- Get a box of favorite ice cream treats the next time you are at the

grocery store. Or, if feasible, take your relative out to the local dairy bar for an ice cream cone or sundae.

Shopping and Errands

- Run errands and schedule appointments early in the day, before temperatures peak.

- Shop by mail order whenever possible.

- Take advantage of stores and other services that offer home delivery.

- Research mobile services in your area, such as hairdressing and foot care for your relative, and dog grooming, especially if transportation is an issue.

Ideas for Activities

The following are some ideas for enjoying quality time together.

- Have morning coffee or evening tea on the balcony, deck or patio, as applicable.

- Cook favorite foods on the grill.

- Watch a favorite summer-themed movie.

- Have a picnic in your backyard or at a nearby park.

- Go for a stroll around the neighborhood, using a wheelchair if necessary.

- Take your relative to the local farmers market for fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as favorite meats, cheeses and baked goods.

- Go to an accessible park or

other outdoor public space and people-watch.

- Attend some or your children's or grandchildren's baseball or soccer games. Just be sure your relative can safely navigate the distance and terrain from parking lot to sports field. And do not forget a chair for them that offers good support.

- Attend an outdoor concert or summer art festival.

- Go for a drive in the country.

- If it is hard to get out, obtain some CDs featuring summertime sounds of nature (babbling brooks, loons calling, and so on), and play them in the background while eating meals or reading the newspaper, for example.

- Reminisce about summers from your youth, including family customs, special people and places and touching or humorous moments.

Do not forget to set aside some personal time, for self-care. Make a habit of doing something you enjoy every day: read, listen to music or spend time in the garden, for example, even if fifteen or twenty minutes are all you can manage. Consider this a necessary time to recharge your batteries.

Lisa M. Petschke is a social worker and a freelance writer who has personal and professional experience with elder care.

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The 2016 Georgia Golden Olympics

Special to Senior News

The 2016 Georgia Golden Olympics is scheduled for September 21-24, 2016 in Warner Robins, Georgia and hosted by the Warner Robins Recreation Department. Join us for the 2016 event and qualify for the 2017 National Senior Games scheduled for June 2-15, 2017 in Birmingham, AL.

Registration will continue

through August 1, 2016. If you have competed in the Georgia event in previous years, you may register online (after May 1, 2016) from the website: www.georgiagoldenolympics.org

If this is your first time to compete, you may print the form from the website and mail with your fees and age verification to Georgia Golden Olympics, PO box 958, Winder, GA.

For more information about the games you may go to website or call 770-867-3603.

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Let us entertain you

by CLAIRE HOUSER DODD

It is a wise father that knows his own child.

William Shakespeare

Although it's "Hallelujah it's Coming," and it is also "hallelujah it's Gone" when talking about the Georgia Peach Festival every year. Maybe even a Prayer to begin, "Please help us Oh Lord."

We don't see many of the movers and shakers around yet, we wonder if any end up hospitalized. They all deserve a rescuer.

The 2016 Georgia Peach Festival started Friday June 3rd at the Festival Park with a Family Fun Day to a spurs crowd and ended with great entertainment and fantastic music by the Conquest Band with Jackie at the helm. Always a winner.

Thanks to the Peach Festival Board, Mike and Emily Griffin, Jane Hopeca, Sandee and William Khoury, for the hard work and President Sandee, who got some heavy equipment and seriously looking machines from the Army, a band and several great items and folks for the parade. Michelle Yingling had a spectacular parade with Miss America, Betty Cantrell, Mayor Barbara Williams, Representative Robert Dickey, driving his Great Grandpa's Vintage Green Cadillac with a black hard top. "We originals thought it was a convertible." It's a Jewel and much more in the extra long parade.

Miss America "WOWED" the crowd, especially by bringing the little children up on stage to be part of her act. Fantastic! Betty has changed from Opera to Country Music so smoothly you'll never guess she'll

be interested in anything else. Miss Cantrell has an excellent voice, one that can belt out any song with feelings from the heart, and be heard without effort.

From the Gazebo, she went to the McArthur-Saxon House for the Fort Valley Historical Society chicken salad luncheon, which was great, and many people were excited to have lunch with Miss American. We met couples from Ontario, California, New Mexico, and Atlanta in a very short while. They drove a long ways. Weren't we fortunate to just go around the corner or across town, or as our President, Connie Rainey Freshwater, just next door to visit and have a picture made with the 2016 Miss America? Betty was accompany by her lovely companion and her mother, Tessie Cantrell, from Fort Valley and fit right in with everybody and the Georgia Peach Festival Queens. Of course there were two body guards on the porch.

After the luncheon we went by the gazebo, which was still alive with the sound of music and on to the Rail Road Café for the Passion for Peaches contest. Jeff and Wendy Hall had their restaurant all set up for the contestants and to our surprise, a few who just came to show support. The winner was Barbara Davidson, who won a year supply of Dixie Crystal sugar and the honor of having her Peach Slaw featured on Dixie Crystal's website, plus she won a three-tier server. Second place winner, Beverly Delton, won a handsome party punch dispenser. After the contest, Jeff served the group a delicious ice cream peach drink.

By the time some vendors were leaving, however, many of the food wagons stayed on through the DJ music and games at the Peach

Beach. It's always fun to dance in the sand. Sandee and Emily were on stage announcing games and dances and keeping the ball rolling. The Womenless Wet T-Shirt contest was a highlight, especially, Scooter, who always supplies a comedy act. Lots of prizes and fun was had by all and one young man won a \$100 bill.

Then came the fire works, which are as spectacular as they are expensive and it takes an expert to shoot them. We talked to people who were not able to get out but enjoyed them from their home in Westview.

All and all, it was quite a successful event with many people working hard and helping to support our new President, Sandee, besides her husband, William, Cousins Luwana and Laura and our good friends Tommy and Francis Nixon, who came over from Thomaston to give a helping hand. We are thankful and blessed for all our support.

We at the Fort Valley Historical Society especially want to thank our food folks, we could not have our chicken luncheon without them. Purdue gave us 60 pounds of chicken breast, Pearson Farms gave us peaches and 10 quarts of their heavenly ice cream, Lane Southern Orchards gave peaches and their delicious pickled peaches that helped make the chicken luncheon popular

and these last two even delivered their gifts to our door. What an honor for us to have such thoughtful and helpful givers.

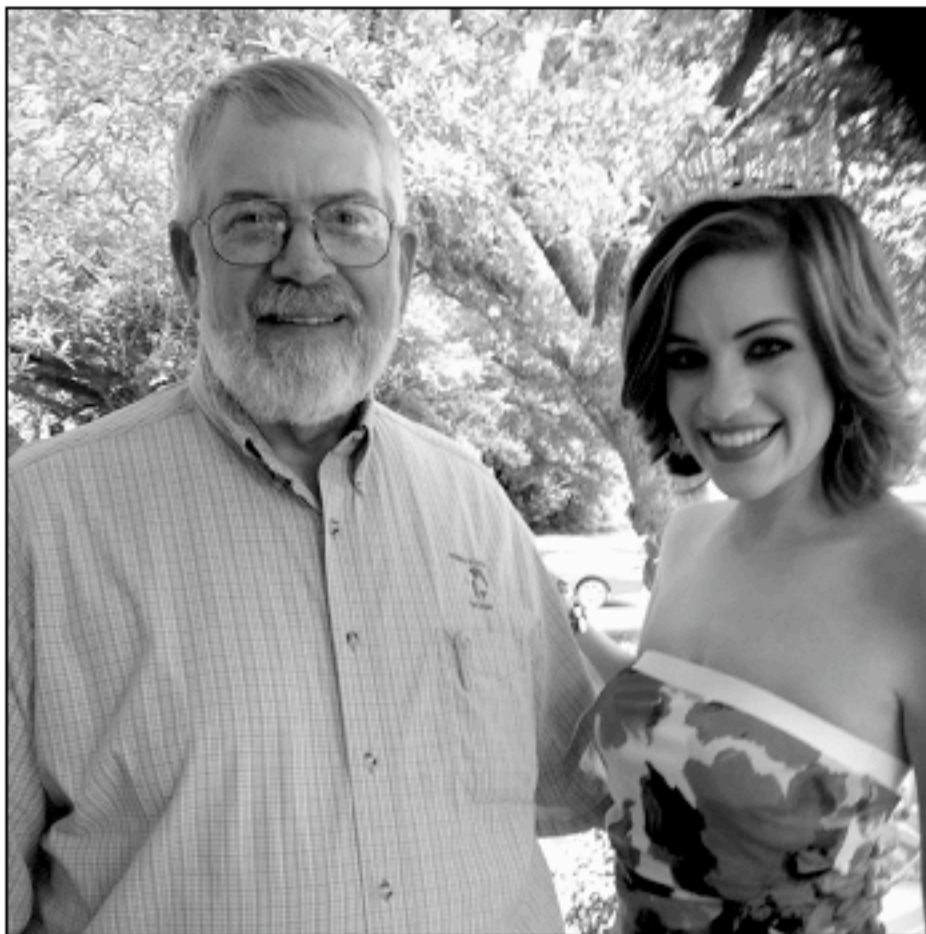
Seta and Todd at Harvey's and Joey at Food Depot was so nice to go around with us and load our Buggies with what was needed. John at Kroger in Perry and David at Sam's in Macon also gave food for free. We appreciate each and every-one, and are aware of our good fortune to have these superior souls behind us. We could not do it otherwise, and many thanks to our friends who helped cook and serve.

Many thanks to the City workers, Sheriff's Department, Police Department, Fire Department, and County workers... all were cooperating for a successful festival with no problems. Practically no large gathering can boast this. Peach County is proud to do so.

Thanks again to everyone who helped and to those who came to enjoy this 2016 Georgia Peach Festival.

When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.

Mark Twain



Frank Freshwater and Miss America, Betty Cantrell, at the McArthur-Saxon House in Fort Valley.

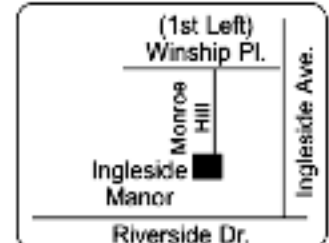
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Poets' Corner

Editor's Note: If you have written a "well-worked" poem which you would like considered for publication, please email it to seniornewsga@cox.net or mail it to Senior News, 214 Wilsons Creek Bend, Bonaire, GA 31005. Please include your name and address on your poem. We will publish selected poems (or excerpts) as space permits.

IT'S GOOD TO BE ALIVE

by Allie Morris

*Lying in bed one Saturday morning
I could see the sunlight through my
blinds.
Thought, "It's Good to Be Alive!"*

*Get out of bed on my own, able
to walk,
Dress myself, I thought, "It's Good
to Be Alive!"*

*Have pretty good eye sight, fix my
own meals,
Make my own decisions. Go where
I please.
Read my Bible daily, also pray.
I thought, "It's Good to Be Alive!"*

*To the others who complain about
what's not so good about their
morning.
There's many who would love to
be in your shoes.
They can't get out of bed on their
own,
Nor walk, can't dress themselves.*

*There's others who have lost their
eyesight, would love to read again,*

*Would love to make their own meals,
Make their own decisions, or go
where they please.*

*So, the next time you complain
about what's not so good about
your morning,
They are saying this, "It's so Good
to Be Alive!"*

WHEN YOU CAN'T SLEEP

by Gerry Noel

*When you can't sleep
Counting sheep doesn't do for you
Then talk to the Shepherd
He will pull you through*

*When you stumble
Make it a part of your dance
Make a joyful noise unto the Lord
He will hear your rants*

*When you say you can't
And you don't try
You're staying behind
Life is passing you by*

*For I am 50% blind
Have trouble sleeping
But I imagine my Pastor
Into the night comes creeping*

*He says, call on the Shepherd
Who is attending his sheep*

*Read your Bible
Then go fast asleep*

THE LONELY PATH

by Edna Kuhn
(96 Years Young!)

*I know the time has come, when
I must walk alone.
I have a question to God, why he
waited so long to call me home?
I guess he had a plan for me, I
don't know what it was.
But who am I to question God,
I knew someday I would be
walking alone.*

*So I want to bid everybody
goodbye, prepare yourself, the
day will come.
When you will walk down the
lonely path.
My life has had ups and downs,
not knowing when God would
call me home.
I tried to be ready to walk down
that lonely path.*

*This is my fair well to each and
everyone that had a part in my
life.
So just remember, we will meet
again, but you too will have to
walk down that lonely path.
So hope someday we will meet in
heaven, when God calls you home.
Then you too will walk down that
lonely path just like everyone
before you.*

*So this is my good bye until we
meet at the pearly gates; but, the
only way here is to walk down
that lonely path. (2016)*



Senior News columnist Claire Houser-Dodd, right, and Miss America, Betty Cantrell, enjoy a moment during the 2016 Peach Festival's Fort Valley Historical Society Chicken Salad Luncheon.

MARLENE from cover

everything went so smoothly there was no reason for a rattle!

The luncheon was delicious and really nice to be seated and served. (Usually it has been a buffet.) The congealed salad was already at the table and the entrée included Pork Loin, Potato Salad, Bean and Corn Salad, Rolls and Butter, with Peach Cobbler and Ice Cream for dessert. Really delicious. Iced tea glasses were refilled as desired. A really nice luncheon catered by Mickey Walker and crew of BAHS, Byron Centerville Area Lions Club (did the serving).

Marlene introduced the dignitaries, Mayor Collins, Rep. Dickey, etc., those of us involved with the Peach Festival and special thanks to the Peach People: Lanes Southern Orchard, Dickey Farms, Sledge farms and Pearson Farms. All present enjoyed the 50's theme. Las Tres Hombres played exactly the right music for the crowd and Marj Liaguno handled the Raffle and Door Prizes. The display of Black & White Saddle Oxfords gave us a jolt, as did the key and skates, phonograph players, old toys, etc.

You'd think Marlene and Steve were originally from Byron, since they are so well known and involved. No, they moved here in 1985, but have been in the Middle Georgia area since 1977.

Marlene is a native of Cleveland, Ohio and a graduate of Miami University. She taught school for many years, has lived in the Chicago area and in Florida. When moving to Byron and retiring, Mrs. Humphry decided to connect to her new community and become heavily committed to helping her chosen home town, volunteering when and wherever she could. She has been Secretary of BAHS and President twice. She is also active in the Lions Club, not only locally, but at the District and

State levels.

While writing this article Marlene and Steve went on vacation to Ohio to visit family. It's kinda what people around here do after the Georgia Peach Festival. Vacate. And goodness knows, they need it! A good long vacation.

With Marlene out of town, we talked with our mutual friend, Fran Washko who has a remarkable memory. She said, "Marlene's life is volunteer work." Besides all that she does around Byron, she still makes time to go to Macon and work with Daybreak, every Friday, an organization that feeds the homeless, does laundry and assists with text support. And she was instrumental in getting the Lion's Club Hal of Fame, and are beginning to see why, but are beginning to wonder HOW! This all seems way too much for one little lady from Ohio to do!

American Association of University Women is another. Marlene has been involved for over 30 years and it's only a 50-year national organization. Their only fund raiser, the Book sale comes in October 26-29 at the Galleria Mall in Centerville. AAUW has given out a 5-store award to members for 20 years. It was announced in the last meeting in May that Marlene won AGAIN. She has won every year. When we expressed astonishment, she said, "I just do stuff for organizations I believe in."

Marlene has 6 children, 2 by birth and 4 by marriage, 8 grands and one great grand whom she is visiting at this time.

All this begins the questions: What do you do in your spare



Marlene receives Star Award from AAUW



Steve and Marlene at the Hudson Museum in Shipsewane, IN.

time? "I read and cook and eat," she says in a hurry. We still can't fathom how in the world Marlene Humphry gets it all done and still has a happy marriage. Well, Steve is along on many of her feats. Maybe she is wonder Woman, but

no, she doesn't have a costume. She says she doesn't look good in costume. So... wonder Woman in plain clothes is how we'll leave it with many thanks to Marlene for helping so many so often and for so long.



Marlene and granddaughter Megan Humphry, a member of the Byron-Centerville Leo Club!



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- Breathe Easy' Support Group: Reservations are required; please call (478) 751-0449.
- Caregiver Support Group: Everyone is welcome. For questions, call (478) 765-4336.
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- Lap-Band Support Group: For information, call (478) 476-8045 or email chandra.churchwell@hca-healthcare.com.
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- Survivors of Suicide: Call (478) 741-1355 for information.
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• 1st Wed., 10 a.m., Martha Bowman UMC, 500 Bass Rd., Macon, 478-743-7050
Houston County
• 4th Thurs., 7 p.m., Peachbelt Rehab Center, 801 Elberta Rd., Warner Robins, 478-397-4669
• 4th Tues., 7 p.m., Houston Health Care, Classroom #1, 1601 Watson

Blvd., Warner Robins, 478-923-2532
Dodge County

• 3rd Thurs., 5:30 p.m., Dodge County Hospital, Educational Annex, 901 Griffin Ave., Eastman, 478-374-0600

Lamar County

• 4th Tues., 6:30 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 375 Thomaston St., Barnesville, 770-358-4516

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• 1st Thurs., 2 p.m., Carl Vinson VA Medical Center, 12-A Family Room, 1826 Veterans Blvd., Dublin, 478-272-1210, x2328

Monroe County

• 1st Thurs., 6 p.m., Monroe County Hospital Dining Hall Downstairs, 88 Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr., Forsyth, 478-747-8754

Peach County

• 3rd Thurs., 7 p.m., The Medical Center of Peach County Cafeteria, 1960 Highway 247 Connector, Byron, 478-951-3613

Putnam County

• 3rd Wed., 10 a.m., First Baptist Church, 115 N. Madison Ave., Eatonton, 706-485-3331

Upson County

• Last Thurs., 7 p.m., Thomaston Reflections, 302 S. Bethel St., Thomaston, 706-647-1607

Telephone Support Group

• 1st & 3rd Tues., 7-8 p.m., "Care Connection" facilitated by an Alzheimer's Assoc. staff member, 1-866-453-5550. To learn more about "Caring Connection" call 800-272-3900.

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The Macon Office of Georgia Legal Services provides free legal services to seniors (60 and over) as resources allow. We interview clients in the following counties BY APPOINTMENT ONLY: Bibb, Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs and Wilkinson.

Call the Macon Office at 478-751-6261 for an appointment.

**Meals on Wheels of
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Meals on Wheels of Macon and Bibb County needs volunteers to help deliver meals to home-bound clients. Volunteers must have a valid Georgia driver's license and a positive attitude. If you can spare two hours a day one day a week, then you may just be the person needed. We especially need help on Thursdays and Fridays. Meals of Wheels is a wonderful organization which takes pride in everything it does. This program would not exist without volunteers.

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**Macon-Bibb County Parks &
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**Warner Robins Senior Citizen
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**Support Group for Caregivers of Frail
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**Houston County Council
Of The Blind**

The Houston County Council of the Blind meets the first Saturday of each month at the Centerville Lions Club located on Houston Lake Road voicing state and local concerns for the blind or visually impaired.

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EVENTS

from page 6

Fellowship and membership are welcomed.

Central Georgia Genealogical Society
For complete details call 478-987-7260 or visit www.cggs.org.

Divorce Recovery Group

First Baptist Church of Macon, located at 511 High Place, is offering a Divorce Recovery Group for those interested. The meetings are held on Wednesday evenings. Child care and children's activities will be provided.

For additional information call the church office at 478-742-6485.

DivorceCare Offered By Central Baptist Church

Divorced? Separated? Find help at DivorceCare.

DivorceCare is a special weekly seminar and support group for people who are separated or divorced. The group meets at Central Baptist Church located at 1120 Lake Joy Road, Warner Robins. Childcare is provided for babies through 5th grade.

For additional information call 478-953-9319.

New Dimension of Praise International Ministries, Inc.

Uletha Durham, Pastor, 207 S. Davis Dr., Warner Robins, Church: 478-329-8780, Cell: 478-283-9494

NAMI Central Georgia National Alliance on Mental Illness
Barabra Long, Executive Director
478-328-0508
(Call for details on events)

• Monthly support group for consumers and families: Last Mon. each month, 7 p.m., New Hope, 100 Story Road, Warner Robins. Free. Refreshments.

• SOS (Survivors of Suicide) Support Group: First Thurs. each month, 7-8 p.m., Houston County Medical Center, Board Room next to the coffee kiosk, Watson Blvd., Warner Robins. For loved ones of those who have experienced suicide. Free.

Substance Abuse Help Available

Did you know alcohol is the most-used drug in the country and it's the number one abused substance among teens? Although most parents don't realize it, they are the best prevention tool around when it comes to underage drinking. Children do listen to their parents. Not only can you be a good role model for drinking behavior, you can have a meaningful, honest discussion with your children about alcohol, its pitfalls and risks. If you need more information or help, Hodac, Inc. is here to lend a hand. You can talk to trained professionals 24-hours a day, seven days a week by calling the Georgia Helpline at 800-338-6745. Making that call puts you on the road to answers so why not call

today.

Volunteers Needed

GeorgiaCares, Georgia's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), needs volunteers to assist seniors and persons with disabilities with Medicare problems, fraud, and abuse. Must be computer savvy. Rewarding volunteer work. Call Carol Cannon, GeorgiaCares Coordinator for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission/Area Agency on Aging, at 478-751-6489 or email: ccannon@mg-rc.org for details.

Georgia Leathercrafters Guild

For additional information call 478-745-2320 or 770-688-2315, Tom Maldonado.

Fine Art Society of Middle Georgia

Meets 4th Mondays at the Flint Electric Building, Hwy. 96 & Sutherland Dr., Warner Robins. For details call 478-396-9198, email: fasmidga@gmail.com, or visit www.fasmidga.org. FAS Gallery of Art is located at 2507 Moody Rd., Warner Robins.

Volunteer Advocates Needed for Ombudsman Program

The Middle Georgia Ombudsman Program is seeking volunteers to train as advocates for residents of personal care homes and assisted living homes. Trained volunteers will visit residents at least once a month to have friendly con-

versations and to participate in ensuring that their rights are protected. Ombudsmen volunteer candidates will need to complete a training course to be offered in the Macon/Warner Robins area in the near future. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer advocate with the Ombudsman Program and would like more information about the program, please contact Nancy Hill at 478-922-4464 or nhill@mgcaa.org.

Alzheimer's Association Neighborhood Memory Café

Have concerns about your memory? So do we. The Café is a time of socialization and support for people with early to mid-stage memory loss AND their spouses and friends. Meets every 3rd Thursday, from 2 pm-3:30 pm. Call Allison at (478) 328-3800, x24 for location and information. The Memory Café is made possible by Summer's Landing of WR and The Alzheimer's Association of Central GA.

Houston County Council on Aging/Meals on Wheels

Houston County Council on Aging/ Meals on Wheels is a non-profit that delivers meals to home bound seniors. We have openings for seniors in need of meals and for volunteers able to distribute meals. Please call Alesha Mathis, Meals on Wheels Coordinator, at 478-328-6070 for more information, to sign up for meals, or to volunteer.

General Business Directory For Seniors

America's Choice in Homecare.
VisitingAngels.
LIVING ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Dementia Care • Transportation
Hygiene Assistance • Medication Reminders
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OR CSRA: 706-650-5760

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www.goodwillworks.org

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Hang up on Robocalls

by **KELVIN COLLINS**
President/CEO, BBB of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc.

If you have a telephone, robocalls may be ruining your day. If you answer the phone and hear a recorded message instead of a live person, it's a robocall. If the recording is a sales message and you haven't given your written permission to receive calls from the company on the other end, the call is illegal.

Since most of us frequently receive robocalls, we know that being illegal doesn't mean that the calls aren't happening. Technology has made it cheap and easy for scammers to make illegal calls from anywhere in the world, and to hide from law enforcement by displaying fake caller ID information. The Federal Trade Commission reports it has brought more than a hundred lawsuits against over 600 companies and individuals responsible for billions of illegal robocalls and other Do Not Call violations.

In fact, earlier this month, the FTC brought suit against a company that they say is responsible for hundreds of thousands of these calls. According to the FTC, Life Management Services swindled people out of their money by offering two types of phony debt relief: credit card interest rate reduction services and credit card debt elimination services. The company promised lower interest rates or government funds to pay off debt, and asked people to make initial payments ranging from \$500 to \$20,000. But almost no one got the help that was promised.

Not all robocalls are illegal so which types are allowed?

Recorded messages regarding candidates running for office or charities asking for donations are allowed. Messages that are solely informational, for example a reminder from your pharmacy or doctor's office or a message from a business that is contacting you to collect a debt, are permitted. Prerecorded messages from banks, telephone carriers and charities also are exempt from these rules if the banks, carriers or charities make the calls themselves.

How do I know if a robocall is illegal?

An immediate red flag is if the recording is trying to promote the sale of a good or service. If the recording is a sales message and you haven't given your written permission to get calls from the company on the other end, the call is illegal. Beware of robocalls that are blatantly illegal because the pitch is mostly likely a scam. In addition, if you are listed on the national Do Not Call Registry and you still receive a recorded sales message, you can be sure the company is breaking the law and trying to scam you.

What are my robocall rights?

A telemarketer must have your written consent, whether through paper or electronic means, to receive a call or message. The company is not allowed to justify the call based solely on an 'established business relationship' with you. Simply buying a product, or contacting a business with a

question, no longer gives them legal permission to call you. The rules also require telemarketers to allow you to opt out of receiving additional telemarketing robocalls immediately during a prerecorded telemarketing call through an automated menu. There are harsh penalties for sellers and telemarketers who break the rules and transmit prerecorded messages to consumers who have not agreed in writing to accept such messages. They can face penalties of up to \$16,000 per call.

Before responding to unsolicited phone calls, the BBB advises:

- Never give out any financial information. If you did not initiate the call, do not provide bank account, credit card or social security numbers over the phone to unknown callers.

- Don't rely on caller ID. Scammers can use technology to make it appear as though their calls are coming from legitimate businesses or organizations. Some will even display as your own telephone number.

- Hang up the phone. Don't press 1 to speak to a live operator and don't press any other number to get your number off the list. If you respond by pressing any number, it will probably just lead to more robocalls.

- Consider contacting your phone provider. Ask your provider to block the number, and whether they charge for that service. Remember that telemarketers change Caller ID information easily and often, so it might not be worth paying a fee to block a number that will change.

- Trust your instincts. If something doesn't seem right to you, end the call.

- Report robocalls. To BBB Scam Tracker at www.bbb.org/scamtracker/central-georgia and file a complaint with the FTC at complaints.donotcall.gov or by calling 1-888-382-1222.

Kelvin Collins is president/CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc. serving 41 counties in Central Georgia and the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA). This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the Council of Better Business Bureaus. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: www.bbb.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org or info@csra.bbb.org. For more consumer tips that you can trust, visit bbb.org.

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