



SOUTH COUNTY SAMPLER

Welcome to the new look of the **South County Sampler**, a quarterly publication of South County Community Services. This newsletter is one more way we're working to meet the diverse needs of the residents of **the most important** 38% of Kalamazoo County! If you live in the villages of Schoolcraft, Vicksburg, Fulton, Climax or Scotts; or the townships of Wakeshma, Schoolcraft, Brady, Pavilion or Prairie Ronde, all of what you read here is for you. The *Sampler* is intended for **all** our audiences — clients, seniors, volunteers, donors, businesses, churches and community leaders.

Our continued effort to make sure that we are meeting the needs of our residents is also dependent upon your help. We want your input. Let us know what you would like to see – and how our services can best help you. We are a *community center which provides services* and the goal is to serve many residents in a variety of ways. SCCS is not a “senior center” although we have programs for seniors, nor are we just a “food pantry” although we have a pantry available for emergency assistance. The more you read – the more you will realize that our agency serves a variety of needs.

During the recent Christmas season, SCCS celebrated its 40th anniversary. Much has changed, but the goals remain the same – to make sure that residents' food and shelter, financial, educational, and social needs are met to the best of our ability. Unfortunately, too many people who live in this area who do not know about SCCS or its services and programs. You can help spread the good word about us!

In these crazy and unstable economic times, all of us at SCCS have been witness to our citizens' great kindness and willingness to help their neighbors in need. Donations large and small allowed us to provide a hearty holiday food basket, gifts and a lovely party complete with Santa and Mrs. Clause for more than 200 local families. Some of these families have never needed assistance before. Others who are doing better financially than in years past turned out to help with this year's Christmas assistance, saying they wanted to “give back.” I recall opening the mail one day and finding a \$20 bill – no name or address of the donor. A humble gift, yes — but every bit as important as any other.

In our villages and townships, I have seen the support that is generously given to those in need. Our staff has received many thanks, which we in turn pass on to our many community angels because we simply could not do this without you. To everyone who gives, whether it is in time or money, thank you for all that you do, because without you we would have to close the doors.

We hope that you enjoy our new publication and will share it with your family, friends and neighbors. —Jan Neblock-VanStratt, Executive Director

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SCCS OFFICES:

Vicksburg Community
Center 649-2901
101 S. Main St.
Open Mon.—Fri.
8:00 AM—4:00 PM
Closed for lunch from
11:30 AM—Noon

Schoolcraft Commu-
nity Center 679-5563
498 E. Cass St.

Website:
www.scs.us

News for South County Clients

Learn how to *stretch* your food dollars in a fun, relaxed way!

South County Community Services and Michigan State University will host another **FREE cooking class** for the Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) beginning in March.

The program is based around a 90 minute presentation/demonstration, discussing both nutrition and cooking. **You'll learn tips on how to prepare easy, nutritious, low-cost meals.** There will be enough food prepared for everyone to sample the recipe of the day and a cookbook will be given to all participants at the end of the class. Classes are held once a week for four weeks. Please make sure you can attend all four classes.

The class will be hosted at the Vicksburg Community Center, 101 S. Main St., Vicksburg, on four consecutive Wednesdays: March 17, March 24, March 31, April 7. Each class will run from 12:30—2:30 PM. Call (269) 649-2901 to reserve your spot!!



Free Income Tax Preparation Help Available

Don't pay someone to get your taxes done!

Free tax preparation help is available for individuals or families with a household income under \$49,000 in 2009.

This service is provided by IRS-certified volunteer tax preparers from Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). E-filing is available.

Call South County Community Services at (269) 649-2901, ext. 10 to schedule an appointment. **Appointments will be available on:**

Thursday, February 18, from 2:00—6:00 PM, & Thursday, March 11, from 10:00 AM—2:00 PM.

DOCUMENTATION NEEDED

- Copy of last year's tax return
- Photo ID
- Social Security Card (s) for filer and anyone claimed as dependent
- For direct deposit for your refund you must bring bank routing and checking/ savings account numbers.
- All W'2 and/ or 1099's (Social Security)
- Supplement Security Income benefit letter for 2009
- Cash grant documentation letter from DHS
- If you itemize your deductions (schedule A), bring required documentation
- Education Credit— proof of tuition paid
- Student Loan Interest 1098 T- verification of tuition loan interest paid
- Child Care Credit- Provider's name, address and social security number or Business ID number and total amount paid

Home Heating Credit- information from Consumers can be received by calling (800) 477-5050. If you use a different heating source (LGP gas, Fuel oil, etc.) bring proof of expense.

For the Home Improvement / Appliances refund credit- bring in proof of equipment cost and efficiency qualification such as a copy of sales receipt and Energy Star rating information.

Homestead Property Tax Credit – If you own your home, bring proof of the home's taxable value and the 2009 tax bill. If you rent, information needed is: rental location, occupants, months rented and the amount of monthly rent.

If you paid real estate taxes on your home, please bring documentation, even if you take the standard deduction.

Please bring any other documentation that will assist us in accurately completing your tax return.

Emergency Assistance Appointment Schedule

Emergency assistance for utility shut-offs, evictions, prescriptions and food pantries are available **by appointment only**. Appointments are available on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:00 AM—11:30 AM, and Noon — 3:00 PM.

Persons needing emergency assistance or food pantries should call SCCS at 649-2901 as much in advance as possible to schedule an appointment. You can call any day to request a Monday, Wednesday or Friday appointment. SCCS works with other agencies, churches and organizations to provide relief to residents. You must qualify through proof of income, address and verification of members of household. **Financial assistance is limited to \$150 per year. Pantries are limited to once every 30 days.**

Free Legal Assistance Available

Vicksburg attorneys Brett Grossman and Mitch Moldovan provide free legal clinics twice a month at SCCS. They will answer questions and evaluate issues involving civil, criminal or family law. The free legal clinics are held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, starting at 5:00 PM. **Appointments are required.** Call SCCS at 649-2901.

Program for Adults with Disabilities (PAD)

Disabled adults have weekly social gatherings which include lunch and activities. The group is facilitated by a staff person and local volunteers. Shopping and field trips are often a part of the fun.

Counseling Programs

SCCS and Family and Children Services have teamed to provide a therapist for South County residents. Call 344-0202 to request an appointment here at SCCS.

Clothing Shop Closed Until February 4.

The SCCS Clothing Shop, located inside Lakeland Reformed Church on Sprinkle Rd., will be closed until February 4, 2010. **Clothing donations also will be suspended during that time.** Please do not bring clothing donations to the SCCS office.

Angel Food Ministries In Here!! Stretch Your Food Dollars Every Month!!

There are no income or age requirements to participate! Anyone who eats qualifies! This is a FABULOUS program for anyone who wants good food at low prices.

For just \$30 you will get \$60-\$70 worth of food!! You must order in person and pay in advance (cash, money order or **food stamps/Bridge Card accepted; no personal checks, no phone orders**). Your Angel Food box will be delivered to the Vicksburg United Methodist Church. You must pick up your order on the designated delivery Saturday during distribution hours. Stop by SCCS and pick up the monthly menu and order form, or visit **www.sccs.us**.

News for South County Seniors



Medicare Help for Seniors

As money gets tighter, it is more important than ever to know about services and programs that may help save you money. Here are two such programs:

“Extra Help” — Possible savings \$3,900 per year

This program, offered by Social Security, helps with the costs of Medicare Part D for prescription drugs. “Extra help” can reduce or waive the premiums and co-pays and continues your plans coverage when you are in the donut hole. Income and assets determine eligibility, but don’t let that stop you from checking, since the levels are considerably higher than other programs. **MMAAP can help you.**

Medicare Savings Programs (MSP) — Possible savings \$1,200 per year

This program of Medicare also uses income and assets for eligibility, but the amounts for 2010 are will increase. Benefits for MSP include the return of the Part B premium back to your Social Security check. Besides paying the premium, the highest benefit level covers Medicare deductibles and co-pays.

MMAAP is the Medicare Medicaid Assistance Program at Senior Services, Inc.

The 2010 increases will benefit many people who thought they were not eligible in previous years. To reach MMAAP, please **call 800-803-7174**. A MMAAP representative is available at SCCS on the second Tuesday of every month, **by appointment**.

FOOT CLINICS

Vicksburg Community Center: First Monday of the month, Feb. 1, March 1, April 5. By appointment only! 649-2901. \$25 fee. Bring your own towel.

Schoolcraft Community Center. Third Monday of the month, Feb. 15, March 15, April 19. By appointment only! 649-2901. \$25 fee. Bring your own towel.



Out to Eat — our monthly out-to-breakfast and out-to-lunch are cancelled

in February due to weather concerns. We will resume in March 2010. Out to Breakfast: First Fridays of the month at 9:00 AM. Out to Lunch: Third Fridays of the month at noon.

- ◆ Friday, March 5, 9:00 AM—Breakfast at Yogi’s, 2070 E. V-W Ave., Vicksburg.
- ◆ Friday, March 19, noon—Lunch at Schnauzer’s, 201 N. Grand, Schoolcraft.
- ◆ Friday, April 2, 9:00 AM—Breakfast at Colonial Kitchen, 7617 S. Westnedge, Portage.
- ◆ Friday, April 16, noon—Lunch at Main St. Pub, 208 E. Prairie, Vicksburg.

MiCafe

Michigan's
Coordinated Access to
Food for the Elderly

This program provides money for food assistance (Bridge Cards/food stamps) to Seniors age 60 and up who meet income requirements.

Call 649-2901 for an appointment.

Senior Services meals are served Monday—Thursday at the Schoolcraft Community Center, 498 E. Cass St. Call **679-5563** by 11 AM the day before to order a meal. \$2.50 suggested donation. **Home Delivered Meals also** are available to qualifying home-bound seniors through Senior Services. Call **382-0515**.

Thursday morning **Coffee and Donuts** at the Schoolcraft Community Center suspended until 9:00 AM on March 4, 2010, due to winter weather concerns.

South County Community Services provides support for **Caregivers**. On the **Second Tuesday afternoons** of each month, Colleen Simpson, from Senior Services, Inc. will be available at the Vicksburg Community Center for on-site caregiver support Education & Training **Call 269-382-0515 ext. 200** for an appointment.

Come Exercise With Us!

SCC: Mon. & Wed. classes with Patra! Call 544-2273 for details.

VCC: Monday, Wednesday & Friday at 10:15-11:15 AM. Let Debbie help get you limber with a little movin' and shakin'! \$18/mo or \$2.50/class. Instructor Debbie Snell. 207-7421

Tai Chi Class—VCC: Tuesdays at 10:15 AM. \$5.00 per class. Come and join us in learning how Tai Chi can help our physical balance and arthritis. Let Ed Kehoe, certified instructor, show us how!

Line Dancing—Thursdays from 9:15-10:15. Call Debbie Snell, 207-7421 for details.

Potlucks at Noon bring a dish to pass & table service

Fulton Christian Church: Second Tuesdays of the month, February 9, March 9, April 13

Pavilion Township Hall: Third Wednesdays of the month, March 17, April 21 (no February meeting)

Matter of Balance Class Returns! 1:30—3:30 PM on Thursdays, from May 6—June 24. Cost: Just \$10 for the entire 8 weeks.

Are you concerned about your balance, mobility or risk of falling? SCCS will schedule **A Matter of Balance** information and exercise class each Thursday from May 6—June 24, from 1:30—3:30 PM. The information will help you identify and eliminate falling risks in your home. The gentle, low-impact exercises will help strengthen your core muscles and improve your balance and mobility.

The class will be held at the Vicksburg Community Center, 101 S. Main St., Vicksburg. Participants should plan to attend all 8 classes to get the most benefit out of the program. **Class size is limited!** Call Terri at 649-2901, ext. 14, to register. **Registration begins Feb. 8.**

2009 Tree of Lights Donors South County Community Services

extends its sincere thanks to all those who contributed to the 2009 Tree of Lights Project. Each year donors are invited to "purchase" a beautiful Christmas ornament for the SCCS Christmas Tree of Lights in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one. The proceeds benefit all SCCS programs. We are pleased to acknowledge those donors here, along with the person(s) being remembered.

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Cathleen Dervan
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Kate Wunderlin
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Warren & Jackie Lawrence

IN MEMORY OF

Merle Owen & many
Loved ones
My family members past
Thomas & Neva Colter
Nina Quirin
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Sean Sue Hayes
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IN HONOR OF

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Randy, Tamra &
Nicholas Stafford
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Steve Goss
Don & LaVern Flanders

News for South County Donors & Volunteers



For all those volunteers and donors who graciously gave their time, energy and money to our 2009 Christmas Assistance Program, SCCS humbly says:

THANK YOU!!

We so very much appreciate all that you have done to help give South County families in need a wonderful holiday!

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

**Wednesday, April 28, 2010, at Noon
Vicksburg Community Center
R.S.V.P. to 649-2901**



VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!!! — Do you have a little free time? SCCS HAS A JOB FOR YOU!

There are many ways you can help your neighbors by helping South County Community Services. Call us or stop by for more information on any of these positions.

- ◆ **Half Day Clerical Volunteers** (answer phones, file, stuff envelopes, etc.)
- ◆ **Volunteer Drivers** (help seniors & the disabled get to medical appointments, etc.)
- ◆ **Pantry Help** (sort donated food, pack pantry baskets for families in need)

Call 649-2901 for more information.

Help South County Help Others!

Our **FOOD PANTRY** always needs donations of non-perishable food, toiletries; baby food, formula and disposable diapers (large and XL are the most needed diaper sizes); and household cleaning products. Donations can be brought to the SCCS office inside the Vicksburg Community Center, 101 S. Main St., Vicksburg, **9:00 AM – 3:00 PM, Monday – Friday.**

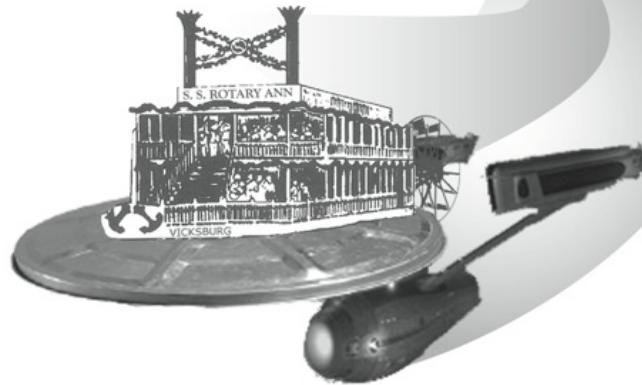
General Donors to the 2009 Tree of Lights

Irvin Chapin Family
Paul & Marilyn Schutter
Doris Grinder
Susan & Craig Imanse
Carol Knowles
Permelia Hulse
Pleasant Valley
United Methodist Church Choir

57TH ANNUAL VICKSBURG ROTARY SHOWBOAT



2010: A SHOWBOAT ODDYsSEY



SCCS SINCERELY THANKS ALL THE INDIVIDUALS, CHURCHES, BUSINESSES, SCHOOL GROUPS, CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT SO GENEROUSLY DONATED TO THE 2009 CHRISTMAS FOOD FUND! THANKS TO YOUR HELP, SCCS WAS ABLE TO PROVIDE ANGEL FOOD BASKETS FOR ALL OF ITS HOLIDAY FOOD ASSISTANCE!!

WE ALSO APPRECIATE EVERYONE WHO CONTINUED TO BRING IN FOOD DONATIONS FOR OUR REGULAR PANTRY, SINCE HUNGER KNOWS NO SEASON.

**THURSDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY
MARCH 4-6, 2010
VICKSBURG PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
VICKSBURG, MICHIGAN**



SOUTH COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES ENDOWMENT FUND **A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT SCCS**

In 2007 SCCS established an **Endowment Fund** to benefit its long term objectives. With the generous support of the Vicksburg Foundation and many community-minded individuals, the \$50,000 minimum requirement was reached and the permanent endowment was created. By definition, the principal of the endowment is never spent so it "gives forever". As the Endowment continues to grow so does the spendable income, which will provide additional funding for expanding programs and services.

Please keep this giving opportunity in mind at year's end or when you desire to honor or memorialize a friend or loved one. There is great satisfaction knowing that your gift will last and benefit others forever. For more information contact Jan VanStratt at 649-2901 or Pat Oswald at 649-9020.

Let's Travel!

PLEASE call Terri Franklin at 649-2901, or email tfranklin@sccs.us with your reservations, comments, suggestions or questions about our travels in 2010.

NOTE DEADLINES AND RESERVATION MINIMUMS.

Trips that do not meet their minimums by the reservation deadline will be cancelled, so invite your friends and register early! **The SCCS Travel Program is open to all ages. Children must be accompanied by an adult.**



THURSDAY, MARCH 11—Senior Day at the KIA! We'll resume our monthly excursions with a quick trip to downtown Kalamazoo. We'll start with lunch at the fabulous Food Dance Café, then go to the Kalamazoo Institute of Art for the KIA's first Senior Day of 2010. The program will include a printmaking demonstration and tours of the new exhibit — *Woodcuts in Modern China*. Cost \$10—\$15 for transportation (depending on the number of guests — the more who travel, the lower the per-person fee), PLUS the cost of your lunch. KIA admission is free. **MODERATE WALKING.**

TUESDAY, APRIL 20 — A springtime visit to Turkeyville! School bus trip to see **Church Basement Ladies, A Second Helping.** We'll enjoy the buffet lunch, then see the 2:00 PM matinee of this new comedy, which tells the continuing tales of the lives of the women who keep the church kitchen running (and the pastor running for cover!) **Cost: \$55. MINIMAL WALKING. Only 40 seats available, so call early!**

MAY 2010 — A Holland Trip for Tulip Time. Details to be announced.

JUNE 2010 — Our annual mystery trip! Where will we go this time?

Can We Reach You by Email? You can help SCCS stretch its resources (and save a tree or two) by getting your *Sampler* and other SCCS information via email. Just email us with your name, address and email address and we will put you on our electronic distribution list. You will get an email every month that lets you know that the new *Sampler* is available on our website. You can read it at your leisure and never worry about losing a copy. Please email your information to the *Sampler* editor, Terri Franklin, at: tfranklin@sccs.us. We will NOT share your email address with any outside parties.

Mark Your Calendar Now for the Sixth Annual "Victorian Tea"

Presented by South County Community Services on Saturday, May 15, 2010 2:00 p.m.

in the historic Merritt Harper Room in the Vicksburg Community Center 101 S. Main St, Vicksburg, MI

\$20 per person; prepaid reservations required.

Make payment to South County Community Services and mail, or stop by during business hours.

Phone 269-649-2901

All proceeds assist in the implementation of agency programs.



South County Players

Watch for details for this spring's annual Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre, presented by the South County Players as a fund-raising event for South County Community Services!

Hold Your Special Event in the Historic Vicksburg Community Center!

With two multi-purpose meeting rooms, tables and chairs, a complete kitchen, ample restrooms and a central, downtown location with free parking, the Vicksburg Community Center is an ideal place for private parties, receptions, conferences, seminars or family reunions. New carpet will soon be installed in the Merritt Harper Room, the largest rental area, making it an even better choice for your event! Our rental rates are extremely low, and you can bring in any caterer you wish. Alcohol may be served. Alcohol **cannot be sold** unless the renter is a nonprofit organization that has obtained the necessary license from the State of Michigan. A \$100 deposit is required for either room. The deposit is returned after the event provided there are no damages. **Current rates (subject to change):**

Merritt Harper Room — \$160 per one day/night event. Main floor, full kitchen. Seats up to 100.

Daniels Room — \$75 per one day/night event. Upstairs, mini kitchen. Seats up to 45.

Call 649-2901 to reserve your event date today!

South County Community Services
101 South Main Street
Vicksburg, MI 49097

Non-Profit
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Vicksburg, MI 49097
Permit NO 6

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Funded in part by KCHCS / AAA and local United Way

South County Sampler Donation Form

The *Sampler* is a FREE publication, but your financial donations are appreciated! Use this form to change your address, donate to SCCS, or have a *Sampler* sent to a friend. **PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!!**

Please check all that apply

I would like to make a donation of: \$_____

Please send to a friend

I have a change of information:

Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ Township _____

Zip Code _____ Spouse's Name _____

My email: _____

Please make checks payable to:

South County Community Services, OR **SCCS**
Attn: Newsletter Donations
101 South Main St. Vicksburg, MI 49097

South County Community Services programs, activities and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status or family status.