

Local

# Senior Day Out to focus on education, entertainment

✍ By Austin Ramsey Messenger-Inquirer

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A number of western Kentucky agency partners will host the 17th annual Senior Day Out in Owensboro on Thursday.

Hundreds of area senior citizens are expected to fill Towne Square Mall on Frederica Street for the event, where they can learn about disaster preparedness, consumer fraud, identity theft, Medicare benefits and more. The Green River Area Development District is partnering with the mall, the Kentucky State Police, Green River Regional Citizen Corps Council and the Green River Regional TRIAD/Elder Justice Coalition to present the day of free education and entertainment.

Speakers will include Attorney General Andy Beshear and his head of the Office of Senior Protection, Gerina Whethers, Johnny Allen, a benefits counselor with the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs and Battalion Chief Steve Leonard of the Owensboro Fire Department.

Coordinator Ursula Mabrey said the event was originally intended to distribute up-to-date information about identity fraud and financial scams that target the elderly, but, over time, various agencies with social service programs and products tailored to that population have used it as an opportunity for education, shopping and entertainment.

"It has to do with a lack of communication and resources," she said. "Living in rural areas, there aren't a lot of resources out there for individuals, especially as opposed to urban areas. Transportation, in particular, is a huge feat to overcome for many people in the area."

Senior citizen centers in all seven counties of the GRADD service region will be transporting individuals to the Senior Day Out, she said.

Last year's event, she said, attracted almost 1,000 people, not only because so many resources are available, but also because it is a fun time of socialization for many people in and around the community. Plus, a free breakfast starts at 8:30 a.m.

Entertainment will include a Buddy Holly and an Elvis Presley impersonator.

Thursday's event starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 1 p.m. A complete agenda is available at [gradd.com](http://gradd.com)

The Senior Day Out is also taking place in conjunction with a National Council on Aging Benefits CheckUp, which screens people for benefits that could help pay for prescription drugs, heating bills, housing, rent, food and more. What's unique about hosting a Benefits CheckUp at the senior day event, said NCOA Outreach Specialist Ken Lawson, is that until then, people would have to actually apply for the benefits at multiple locations. Now the report and the applications will be available in one place.

GRADD is among some of the first organizations in the country to pair a Benefits CheckUp with service agencies. Those participating include: AT&T, Audubon Area Community Services, CrossRoads, the Daviess County Property Valuation Administrator's Office, the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services, Health First Community Health Center, GRADD, Green River District Health Department, Green River Intra-County Transit System, Housing Authority of Owensboro, Owensboro Transit System, U.S. Social Security Administration and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

GRITS will be providing free bus service to the event from several centralized locations. Checkups will start at 8 a.m. and run until noon.

#### FREE BUS ROUTES FOR BENEFITS CHECKUP

Green River Intra-County Transit System Free Bus Service Routes for Sept. 22 Benefits CheckUp

Providence, 101 Center Ridge Drive: 7:30-7:45 a.m.

Sturgis, 115 Old Providence Road and 221 S. Hope Drive: 8-8:15 a.m.

Morganfield, 703 Culver St. in the Courtyard: 8:15-8:30 a.m.

Henderson, 703 Culver St. in the Courtyard: 9-9:15 a.m.

Hartford, 2320 Kentucky 69 North (Ohio County Senior Services): 9 a.m.

Austin Ramsey, 270-691-7302, aramsey@messenger-inquirer.com, Twitter: @austinrramsey