

TIME MANAGEMENT 101: Getting it all Done

Tips for Busy Seniors

BY DIANE E. SHEPARD

Whether one is newly retired, about to retire, or a long-time retiree, here are a few tips to keep as organized as possible for what may be the busiest time of one's life.

For Linda Richards, professional organizer and owner of Organize and More in Gainesville, this is a common refrain among her clients.

"I've heard many Seniors state to me, 'I'm busier now than I've ever been in my entire life!'" Richards said.

SET BOTH SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM GOALS FOR RETIREMENT

"Most people don't plan ahead of time for what they'll do once they retire, and thus many have a difficult time adjusting to retirement," Richards said.

Ed Dickson, of Ocala, retired in 2007 from a career in retail, not knowing exactly what he was going to do, but he did take some time early on to find out. He has since adopted a full schedule of activities, including volunteering and community service.

"Particularly early in retirement, I think it's important to plan and to set goals for what you want to do and how you would like to spend your time, so you will have the pleasure of knowing and experiencing things that are important to you," Dickson

said. "Otherwise, you may find that what you did wasn't as important or fulfilling as you had hoped."

When his wife, Fran, retired from teaching in 2002, she already had a long list of things she wanted to do.

and a simple to-do list keeps them from missing appointments and helps them feel more in control of their lives."

Richards recommended keeping the calendar and to-do list together,

in the same place, all the time.

"First thing in the morning, plan the top three to five priorities and/or appointments that you want to complete that day," she said.

Richards also recommended reviewing the upcoming week (each Sunday), to be reminded of any special appointments (i.e., bringing an appetizer to bridge club on Thursday).

"Even if you don't go to a paying job anymore, you do have a busy life," she said. "A calendar and a to-do list will help you better manage it, and use each day to its best advantage."

Fran Dickson stressed the importance of keeping the calendar with a spouse or significant other to

minimize conflicts.

Ed Dickson uses a desk calendar to keep up with his scheduled activities and appointments. He also carries a pocket-sized calendar with him at all times.

MAKE LISTS

Ocala residents Mark and Pat Croft retired in July 1999.

Croft said his wife keeps a small day-planner, as she has many more appointments than he does. She is the social secretary for the couple and she uses her Day-Timer to keep track of their commitments.

He prefers using an electronic spreadsheet for making lists.

"With a spreadsheet I can make the list, add or subtract from it, prioritize the items, sort it and print it," Croft said. "I can also delete items when they are completed, add new items to it, re-prioritize, sort again and print it without starting from scratch. It saves a lot of time and work."

He uses the back of an envelope or a pocket-size spiral notepad for his daily to-do list.

"We are the king and queen of list makers," Croft said. "We make lists of what we need to do and then when it's all done we make a list of how to do it better next time."

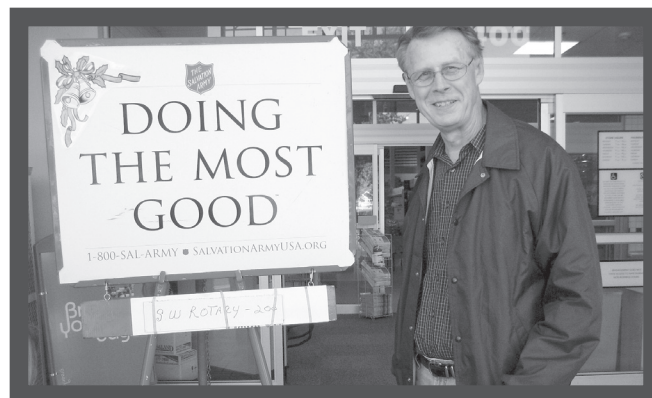


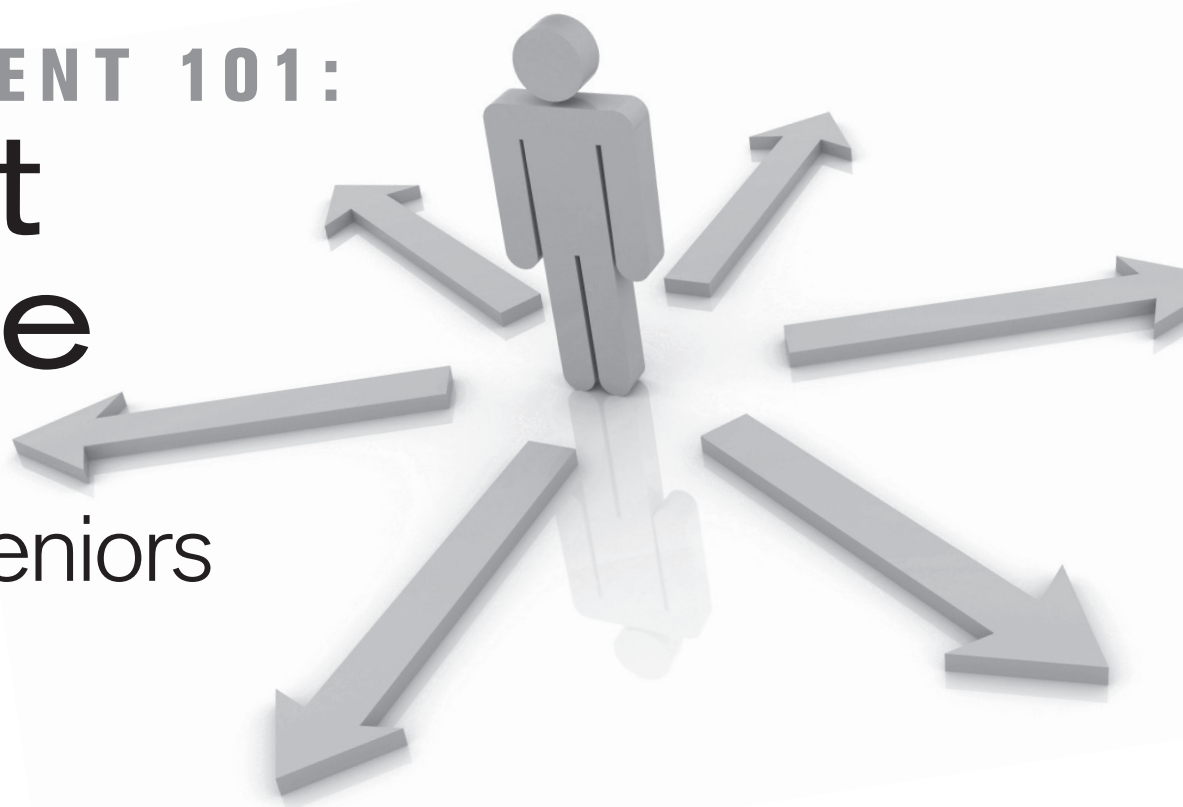
Photo by Diane Shepard

Ed Dickson, of Ocala, retired in 2007 from a busy retail career. He now spends a great deal of his time volunteering for various organizations including the Salvation Army, the Lions Club, Meals on Wheels, Friends of the Library and his church.

"And the list just keeps expanding," Fran said.

KEEP A CALENDAR

"My organizing clients often say, 'I don't go to work anymore so I don't need a calendar,' yet they are frustrated because they've missed a lunch date with a friend or forgotten a doctor's appointment," Richards said. "They are still doing work — as a volunteer, as a grandparent, as a community activist. Thus, a calendar



PRIORITIZE AND RE-PRIORITIZE GOALS AND LISTS

Reevaluate goals and lists often. What was important last month, or even yesterday, may not be as important today.

LEARN TO SAY NO

Retirees often fall prey to over-commitment. Richards advised learning how to say 'no.' If this is a challenge, she suggested practicing ahead of time.

"Have a friend call you and ask you to serve on the board of a community service organization," Richards said. "Practice saying, 'No, I'm sorry, I'd love to be involved, but with the many things I'm already doing right now, I could not do a quality job like I'd want to do. Thanks for thinking about me, though!'"

Richards said to remember that every time you say 'no' to something that is not a priority in your life, you are saying 'yes' to something that is a high priority.

"And you will enjoy not being exhausted everyday by saying 'yes' to too many things," she said.

PLAN OUT EACH DAY

Retirees, Richards said, sometimes have an unrealistic idea about time management because they no longer go to a job, and they feel they should be able to accomplish everything they want to do during the day, but when they do not, they feel unproductive — even though they have been busy all day.

"Use your daily planning session to focus on finding and making time to work on those top three to five priorities on your to-do list," Richards said. "Fill in less important priorities in the little moments that open up during your day. That way, your main focus and energies will be used toward accomplishing your top priorities. This will allow you to fill your day with meaningful, worthwhile projects, and help you to feel more productive at the end of each day." §



Diane Shepard is a freelance writer. She may be contacted at diane@towerpublications.com

Education Series at Shands Eastside Community Practice

JUNE 2009 SCHEDULE

Special to Senior Times

The University of Florida Shands Eastside Community Practice will continue with its Education series. The series is comprised of a host of health care issues and is offered free of charge to all citizens at a variety of venues throughout Gainesville.

Nutrients! What Do I Need to Eat and How Much?
Thursday
June 4
Noon to 1 p.m.
Springhill Baptist
120 SE Williston
Road

Getting Financially Organized
Thursday
June 4
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Church of God
by Faith
735 SE 15th Street

Get Fit to Gospel
Monday
June 8
10 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Thelma Boltin
Center
516 NE 2nd
Avenue

Know Yourself Inside & Out - Body Image
Tuesday
June 9
Noon to 1 p.m.
Oak Park
Apartments
100 NE 8th
Avenue

Nutrients! What Do I Need to Eat and How Much?
Tuesday
June 9
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Faith Missionary
Baptist

2905 SE 21st
Avenue

Keep it Down (Blood Pressure)
Wednesday
June 10
Noon to 1 p.m.
St. Matthew's
Baptist Church
15712 NW 140th
Street, Alachua

Lets Talk About Family Relationships
Wednesday
June 10
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Williams Temple

Emotional Eating and Weight Gain
Thursday
June 11
Noon to 1 p.m.
Church of Christ
1034 SE 10th
Street

Get Fit to Gospel
Wednesday
June 17
Noon to 1 p.m.
Oak Park
Apartments
100 NE 8th
Avenue

CHOICES Benefits - Do I Qualify?
Wednesday
June 17
Noon to 1 p.m.

St. Matthew's
Baptist Church
15712 NW 140th
Street, Alachua

Diabetes 101
Wednesday
June 17
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Greater Bethel
AME
701 SE 43rd
Street

A Guy's Guide to Prostate Health
Wednesday
June 17
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

New Beginnings
COGBF
2800 NE 59th
Street

Seniors and Oral Health
Wednesday
June 17, 2009 at 6
p.m. to 7p.m.
Pine Grove
Apartments
1901 NE 2nd
Street

Natural Supplements: The Good the Bad and the Ugly

Thursday
June 18
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Greater New
Salem MBC
5707 SW 62nd
Blvd

Low Back Pain - Strengthening Exercises
Wednesday
June 24
Noon to 1 p.m.
St. Matthew's
Baptist Church
15712 NW 140th
Street, Alachua

Memory...Help Me to Remember
Thursday
June 25
Noon to 1 p.m.
Church of Christ
1034 SE 10th
Street

Am I Sleep Deprived?

Thursday
June 25
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Church of God
by Faith
735 SE 15th Street

Food Fixes (Swaps and Recipe Modifications)
Monday
June 29
Noon to 1 p.m.
Pine Grove
Apartments
1901 NE 2nd
Street

How to Keep our Bond Strong - Strengthen Your Family
Tuesday
June 30
Noon to 1 p.m.
Johnson Chapel
1334 NE 4th
Avenue

Prostate Cancer Clinical Study Is Looking for Volunteers.

If you are aged 60 or older and have been diagnosed with low-risk, localized prostate cancer, you may be eligible to participate in a research study investigating the safety and effectiveness of an investigational ultrasound procedure for treatment of this type of prostate cancer.

For more information or to find out if you may qualify to participate, visit www.PCaResearch.com or call toll-free 1-888-711-3939.

Florida Foundation for Healthcare Research Inc.
Donald Russell Locke, M.D.