



VALLEY NEWS

AAA MERRIMACK VALLEY

Volume 47
February 2010

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It's Cruise Month

AAA Valley News Now Online

A full version of *AAA Valley News* is now available online. Notification of the availability of each new edition will be sent to anyone on our email list via email alert with an easy-access link.

To make sure you are alerted to our online version, please update your email address today! Just go to AAA.com/update. If you prefer to email your changes to us, send your updated information to memberships@aaamv.com. Make sure to give your membership number, name, address, phone number and email address.

You can also call or



stop by any AAA Merrimack Valley office and we will be happy to add your email address to your membership file. "The benefits of electronic media are obvious," said Eleanor Baker, *AAA Valley News* Editor. "We are happy to be able to offer this online convenience for those read-

ers who would like it. We will continue to offer the printed publication as we move toward a more efficient system."

Updating your information will also mean fewer post office returns and fewer re-sendings of traditional mail.

Moving toward a greener system is a process which will be ongoing and we appreciate your help every step of the way.

To update your information simply go to our homepage at AAA.com and click on "Going Greener."

You can also visit AAA.com/update.

Commercial Business Insurance: A Great Fit

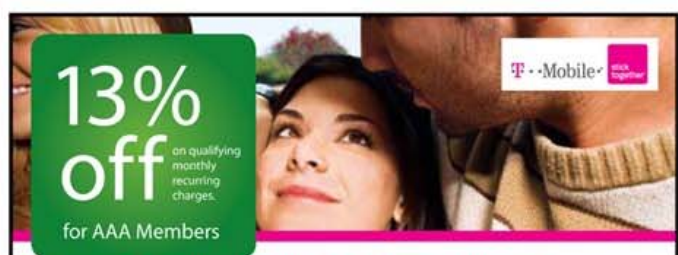
The recent economic downturn that has hit so many across the nation has affected many residents of the Merrimack Valley, as well.

"The loss of a steady job or income has created a boom in independently-minded entrepreneurs creating small start-up businesses," said Amy Beardsley, Director of Insurance and Financial Services for AAA Merrimack Valley. "We have seen so many people create

a new venture to support their families and we applaud their initiative but we also want to advise them that they may want to talk to us to make sure they are protected as a small business owner."

Anyone starting a new business, whether it's landscaping, snowplowing, interior decorating, baking, cleaning service or home daycare needs to

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AAA members are eligible for the following special discounts:

- 13% discount* on monthly recurring charges for new and existing customers
- Discounts on the latest devices for new customers*
- No activation fee -- a \$35 value

Act now -- this offer is available by calling T-Mobile at 1-877-AAA-7494, by visiting www.AAA.com/T-Mobile or by going to your local T-Mobile® retail store. Use promotional code: AAA

*Limited time offer; subject to change. Qualifying postpaid individual-line plan required. FlexPay and certain other plans (e.g., plans no longer marketed by T-Mobile) excluded. Credit approval and two-year service agreement may be required; up to \$200. See www.AAA.com/T-Mobile for restrictions. Monthly device cost is based on current prices and does not include taxes.

Lowell Memorial Auditorium Winter 2010 Schedule

Members can receive a 10% discount on select performances when they present their AAA card at the Lowell Memorial Auditorium box office. In addition, one lucky winner will win a pair of tickets to *The Chieftains*. Current deadline for entry is February 17, 2010. Winner will be chosen February 24, 2010. Send us your name, membership number and easiest way to contact by:

email:
contest@aaamv.com
Subject: LMA contest-Chieftans
Or U.S. mail:
AAA Merrimack Valley
P.O. Box 32
Lawrence, MA 01842-0039
attn: LMA contest-Chieftans
No double discounts. Not valid on previously purchased tickets.

Lowell Memorial Auditorium 2009-2010 Season

Phil Vassar
February 11, 8 pm

Stomp*
February 23, 8 pm
February 24, 8 pm

The Chieftains
March 11, 7:30 pm

Le Grand Cirque*
March 19, 7:30 pm

Girls Night: The Musical*
April 16, 8 pm

Tony Orlando
April 17, 8 pm

One Night of Queen*
Performed by
Gary Mullen & The Works
May 6, 8 pm

Daniel O'Donnell
May 26, 7 pm

Shows marked with* receive 10% AAA discount one month out from show date

For Tickets, visit the LMA box office,
Call 978-454-2299 or log on to

How Do We Know When It's Time to Give Up the Keys?

By Sarah Riley

Have you ever worried about an aging family member's safety behind the wheel? Perhaps your own safety?

Although a good majority of older drivers are safe drivers, the combination of medical conditions, use of medication and reduced physical function can increase the risk of accidents and injury among older adults.

Motor vehicle injuries are the leading cause of injury-related deaths among 65- to 74-year olds and are the second leading cause (after falls) among 75- to 84-year olds. Compared with other drivers, older drivers have a higher fatality rate per mile driven than any other age group except drivers under the age of 25.

The older driver will often self-regulate their driving behavior by reducing mileage traveled, refraining from nighttime driving or avoiding highway driving to accommodate for the visual and physical changes that occur with age.

There are, however, situations in which the older driver may not realize that the physical, visual and cognitive changes that have occurred may affect their driving skills. Certain medical diagnoses such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia affect a person's capability of having that insight and the



Encourage loved ones to participate in a driving assessment program for their safety and the safety of others.

ability to recognize that the effects of the disease may diminish their ability to drive safely.

Family members are often plagued with the burden of addressing this difficult crossroad with loved ones. This frequently creates much anxiety and turmoil for families.

Often the older adult feels as though they are losing a vital source of their independence. They do not want to inconvenience friends and family members for rides, do not want to be confined to a bus schedule, and want the freedom to go out when they desire.

Here, in the Merrimack Valley and Southern New Hampshire, there are not as many options for public transportation as are available in the bigger cities. For this reason, giving up the keys

often becomes a detrimental loss to the older adult.

There are programs that exist at area hospitals that will assess a person's driving skills. Generally, these evaluations are less intimidating to the older adult than participating in a road test at the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital in Salem, N.H., offers a comprehensive driving assessment program that is designed for anyone who has had an illness, injury, or an age-related decline in driving skills that may affect the ability to drive safely.

The goal of the driving assessment program is to keep people on the road and independent for as long as it is safely possible. With a doctor's referral, the client participates

in a two-part evaluation.

The first step is a pre-screening. This is a one and a half hour, in-clinic assessment with a trained occupational therapist. During this time, all of the skills required to drive are evaluated including vision, cognition, physical status, reaction time, and knowledge of the road.

Once the pre-screen is complete an on-road assessment is performed. During this time, the client is evaluated for basic driving skills by a certified driving instructor and the occupational therapist.

At the completion of both the pre-screen and the on-road evaluation, recommendations are provided based on the individual's performance. Recommendations may include: 1) a safe return to independent driving; 2) further training with a driving instructor with or

without adaptive devices to enhance independence; 3) therapy to address deficient driving skills; or 4) driving retirement.

Should driving retirement be recommended, the individual is also provided with resources for transportation alternatives. Once the recommendations are provided, the results are forwarded to the referring physician and a copy to the individual as well.

If you would like more information on the driving assessment program at Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital please contact the outpatient occupational therapy department at (603) 893-2900, ext. 3212.

Sarah Riley is a registered occupational therapist at Northeast Rehabilitation Hospital in Salem, N.H. She is a certified brain injury specialist and coordinates the driving assessment program for NRH.

2010 U.S. Census Begins This March

The U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States and is required by the Constitution to take place every 10 years.

The data collected by the 2010 Census will help communities receive more than \$400 billion in federal funds each year for public-works projects and emergency services.

It also helps determine the number of seats your state has in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It is important to note that any information you provide in the census is protected by federal law.

In March of 2010, census forms will be mailed to every residence in the United States and Prer-

forms, just answer the 10 short questions and then mail the form back in the postage-paid envelope provided. This is the easiest and most cost-effective way to respond to the census. If you don't send back your form, you can expect a visit from a census taker.

Should a census taker need to visit you, here's what the census bureau suggests you should do:

- First ask to see their ID. All census workers carry official government badges marked with just their name; they may also have a "U.S. Census Bureau" bag

- Note that the census taker will never ask to enter your home

- If you're still not certain about their identity, please call the Regional

Census Bureau

- Answer the census form questions for your entire household (you must be at least 15 years old to answer questions) so that the census taker can record the results for submission to the Census Bureau

You may also schedule a visit with your census taker by calling your regional census office.

If the census taker visits when you are away from your home, they will leave a contact number.

If you have a question about participation with the census, call the Regional Census Center located in Boston at 617-223-3700 or the Regional Partnership Group at 617-223-3610. You can also visit

pacsafe
travel security

anti-theft

Slashproof Strap

Snatchproof Strap

eXomesh Slashguard

Tamperproof Zippers

eXomesh
anti-theft technology

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