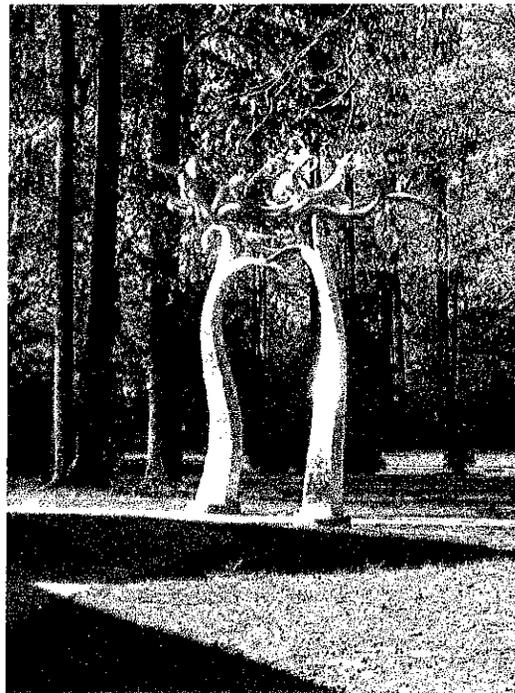


**Rockville
Senior Citizens Commission**

**2014
Annual Report**



Honorable Bridget Donnell Newton, Mayor
Honorable Virginia D. Onley
Honorable Beryl L. Feinberg
Honorable Tom Moore
Honorable Julie Palakovich

November 10, 2014

The Rockville Senior Citizens Commission is pleased to present this Annual Report describing the Commission's projects and initiatives for 2013/2014. The Commission is proud to serve Rockville's rapidly growing senior population and be an advocate for programs and services that will enhance the quality of life for our senior population.

The **Senior Citizens Commission** is a nine member board appointed by the Mayor with confirmation from the Council. The Commission identifies issues which support making Rockville a community where seniors choose to remain and live a healthy, safe and active life. The Commission is proud to serve as a voice for Rockville seniors.

This Annual Report provides the Mayor and Council with an overview of our vision to serve our City's senior population. We hope you will find the information in this report both informative and useful. It is only through a collaborative effort that we can successfully meet the ongoing needs of our aging population.

Senior Citizens Commission Members are: Kathy Neale, Chair, Morris (Monk) Casper, I. Marshall Levy, Lynn Wagman, Elizabeth Slyne, Bruce Abram, and Jill Martineau Cornish. Presently, we have two open positions on the Commission and two very well qualified candidates. Both candidates recently attended Commission meetings and have submitted their Expression of Interest Forms to the City. We believe both candidates, Ardell Hilliard and Alex Gonzalez, will make excellent additions to the Senior Citizens Commission.

The Commission appreciates and supports the leadership of the Mayor and Council and is honored to have Councilwoman Virginia Onley serving as Liaison. The Commission would also like to acknowledge the remarkable aid and support given the Senior Commission by members of the Senior Center staff, especially our Staff Liaison, Lorraine Schack and Bette Sanders, our Secretary.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Neale, Chair
Senior Citizens Commission

Background Information

In 2006 the City of Rockville, through the Department of Recreation and Parks, created a **Long Range Plan Task Force** to examine the services provided the senior population by the Department of Recreation and Parks through the Senior Services Division and suggest directions for the future.

City of Rockville Department of Recreation and Parks Senior Services Long Range Plan Conclusions: The City has an excellent Senior Services Program which operates out of a multi-functional facility with a competent and dedicated staff. Its many programs, activities and services are far ranging and varied. Many are self-supporting or nearly so. Few localities in Maryland and Montgomery County, in the Task Force's opinion, are similarly positioned.

The City of Rockville, however, will experience major increases in senior citizens age 60 years and older between now and the year 2020. Estimates for the City are for a 100% increase in its senior population. The impact of this growth on the City, its residents' quality of life and its programs and budget will be quickly apparent. The Task Force commended the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Senior Commission, and Rockville Seniors, Inc. for recognizing the need to begin preparations.

The tsunami is coming. The change provides both challenges and opportunities for the City of Rockville. The Task Force has identified a set of challenges that it believes will require high priority attention by the Mayor and Council, the Department of Recreation and Parks and the Division of Senior Services in the years ahead.

In December 2010 the City began construction of the Rockville Senior Center's 20,000 square foot addition. The work included expansion of the existing fitness center to include a separate entrance lobby, an exercise room with attached storage, a fitness area with storage, a locker room and changing area, and renovation of the administrative offices. Also in 2010 to help seniors age in place, the **Senior Citizens Commission** established the **Pete Sante Aging In Place Home Maintenance Program** to assist Rockville seniors who wish to remain in their homes and age in place.

On behalf of the **Senior Citizens Commission**, Commissioner Lynn Wagman nominated the Rockville Senior Fitness Center Addition to receive the **Peerless Rockville Award in 2012**. As a result Peerless Rockville awarded the City of Rockville and SWSG the Award for excellence in the design and construction of a major addition to the **Rockville Senior Center**. The addition was designed to fit harmoniously into the existing surroundings without significant tree removal or change to the park-like feel of the property.

As we approach the end of 2014 and the beginning of 2015, the Senior Citizens Commission continues to address the needs and challenges facing Rockville's aging population. The Senior Commission would like to take this opportunity to thank the City for its ongoing support and lastly, we would like to recognize and applaud the Senior Center staff for their day in and day out commitment to the well being of all Rockville seniors.

Rockville Senior Citizens Commission

Senior Commission Appointed Liaisons

- **Montgomery County Commission on Aging**
Commissioner Monk Casper, Liaison
Commissioner Bruce Abram, alternate Liaison

Montgomery County Commission on Aging – an influential voice advising Montgomery County government on issues affecting older adults, as well as advocating at the local, state, and federal levels for policies and programs that contribute to successful aging in place in the community.

- **United Seniors of Maryland**
Commissioner Marshall Levy, Liaison
Commissioner Jill Martineau Cornish, alternate Liaison

United Seniors of Maryland – a consortium of organizations and individuals that advocates to preserve and enhance the mental, physical, and financial well being of Maryland seniors. USM is a key player on State Boards, Commissions, and Task Forces concerned with senior issues.

- **Rockville Seniors Inc.**
Commissioner Elizabeth Slyne, Liaison
Commissioner Lynn Wagman, alternate Liaison

Rockville Seniors Inc. - an eleven member non-profit corporation created by the Mayor and Council to ensure that the quality of life of all Rockville senior citizens is improved through a properly supported senior center. RSI recruits volunteers to run the gift and thrift shop, book sales and bazaars, and weekly bingo, just to name a few of the current fundraisers. Proceeds from the fundraisers as well as donations to the corporation support the annual senior center budget, and center needs such as supplies, furniture and equipment.

Senior Citizens Commission - Accomplishments for 2013/2014

- Established the **Pete Sante Aging in Place Memorial Fund** to assist low-income Rockville homeowners with necessary repairs.
- Planned and hosted two special events - **Concert Under the Stars** on the front lawn of the Senior Center and an evening **Square Dance party**.
- Drafted a new **Rockville Senior Commission Brochure**.
- Continued and expanded **Drop-in-Corner** to gather input from Senior Center members to better understand their needs, expectations, and suggestions.
- Established **Movie Night** at the Senior Center.
- Testified before the **Mayor and Council regarding the 2014 Budget** to increase the hours and funding for the **Outreach worker position** and to increase funding for the **Call 'n Ride Taxi Program**.
- Established a relationship with **Dawson's Market**. Met with the store manager and arranged **Senior Day Wednesday's 10% off and Free Coffee in the a.m.** Also printed and placed green flyers at the **Senior Center and Dawson's Market** reminding seniors about the senior discount and free coffee.
- Hosted the **Candidates Forum** for Rockville's Mayor and Council prior to the November 2013 election.
- Worked with **United Seniors of Maryland** to develop and support legislative priorities and participated with the United Seniors of Maryland in Annapolis for support of Maryland senior programs and funding.
- Held joint meetings with **R.S.I.** to discuss possible Senior Center name and age change.
- Assisted with fundraising for the **Senior Assistance Fund**.
- The Senior Commission invited Rockville Seniors Inc. to join the Commission and Senior Center staff in putting on a **2015 Senior Field Day** to be held at the Senior Center.
- Partnered with the **Public Information Office** on senior programming.
- Installed a 1 ½' X 4 ½' professional grade photograph of the new **Fitness Center and Administrative Offices addition** in the lobby of the Senior Center.
- Increased the number of volunteers to serve on Senior Commission sub-committees.

Senior Commission Accomplishments for 2013/2014 (Continued)

- Pursued the need for **moderate and low-income housing** for Rockville seniors.
- Prepared articles for the Senior Center's monthly **Newsletter** and other media as needed.
- Monitored the plan for Montgomery County Rapid Transit
- Recommended more senior programming in the evening at the Senior Center.

Senior Commission Goals for 2014/2015

- Research ways to include more diversity in senior activities city-wide. Reach out to our culturally diverse senior population.
- Complete and publish a **Rockville Senior Commission Brochure**.
- Make communications with senior citizens more efficient via survey, e-mail, and the monthly Senior Center Newsletter.
- Continue the highly successful **Drop In Corner**, a program the Senior Commission started in 2012. This program gives Senior Center members the opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns. In addition it gives the Commission the opportunity to gather information on what is important to them.
- Conduct internal focus groups for **Commissioners** to brainstorm.
- Host a **Senior Field Day** at the Senior Center and invite all Rockville seniors to participate (**the Senior Commission** invited the **Senior Center Staff** and **RSI** to participate in this event).
- Contact **HOA's** – to share information about senior needs and services in the City.
- Work on senior programming with **Channel 11**.
- Establish integrated schedule/calendar system to get info out to the community.
- Install monitors throughout the Senior Center with streaming event information.
- Continue to meet with R.S.I. to benefit both the Commission and RSI as well all senior residents of Rockville.
- Establish a system to gather, compare and contrast senior programming throughout Maryland.
- Assist with fundraising for the **Senior Assistance Fund and the Pete Sante Aging in Place Memorial Fund**.
- Tour Rockville senior housing and new Police Station.
- Work with Mayor and Council to make Rockville a more senior friendly community.
- Monitor and track **Senior Commission** volunteer hours for one month.
- Work with **United Seniors of Maryland** to develop and support legislative priorities and participate with the **United Seniors of Maryland** in Annapolis for the support of senior programs and funding.
- Publish and post Senior Center building maps at each entrance.
- Contact and maintain relationships with other City Boards and Commissions.
- Continue to monitor the **Montgomery County Rapid Transit Expansion** in Rockville.
- Work with the **Mental Health Association Veteran's Program** to make Rockville vets aware of the benefits and services that are available to them.

The Future for Rockville Seniors Looks Bright

Many questions are being asked — some simple, some complex — to which planners can help find answers. What qualities of a community make it more livable for older persons? Nearly 90 percent of Americans over the age of 65 say they would prefer to “age in place” in their own homes as long as possible and, according to AARP, four of five people in that age bracket believe their current home is where they will always live. They want the opportunity to remain in their neighborhoods and be near their families and friends.

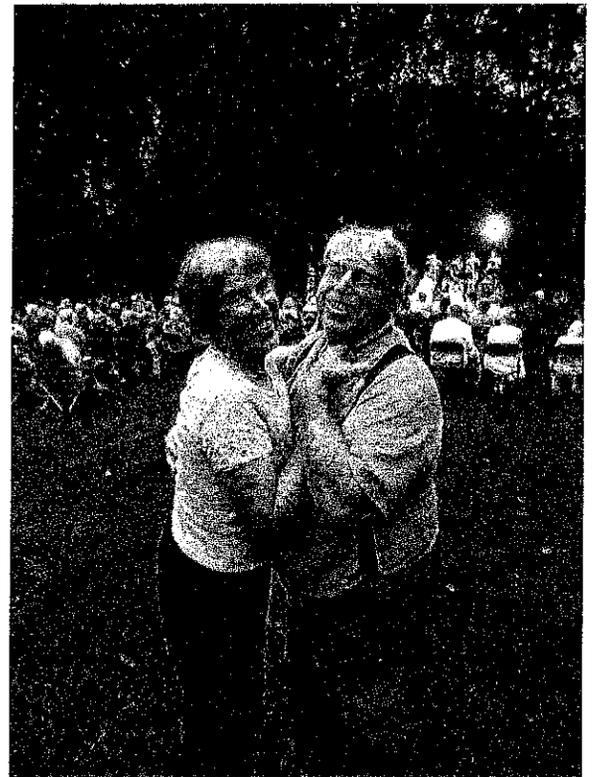
Like all residents of Rockville, they want a place to continue to live an active lifestyle with access to education, recreation and culture. They want to live in a safe, affordable, engaging community.

This report by the Senior Citizens Commission would not be complete without recognizing the commitment and dedication of the Rockville Senior Center staff that keeps the senior programs running smoothly and meeting the expectations of its membership.

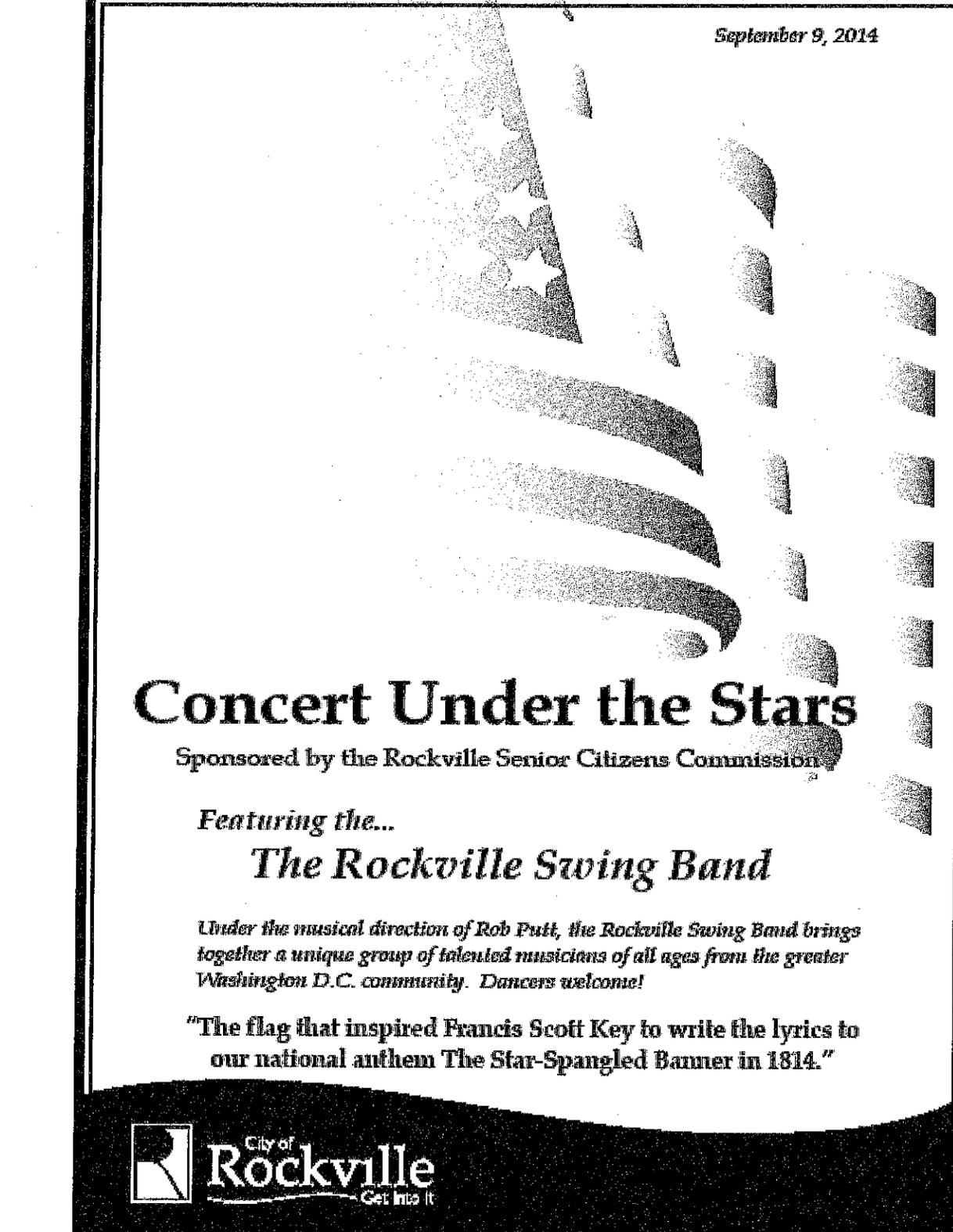
The Senior Citizens Commission applauds the City of Rockville for helping make Rockville a place for all its citizens to live a lifetime.

Highlights for 2014

The Senior Commission hosted the well attended "Concert Under the Stars" featuring the Rockville Swing Band for the third year on the grounds of the Rockville Senior Center. This year we arranged for the Band to play the Star Spangled Banner to honor and celebrate the 200th anniversary of our National Anthem.



September 9, 2014



Concert Under the Stars

Sponsored by the Rockville Senior Citizens Commission

Featuring the...

The Rockville Swing Band

Under the musical direction of Rob Putt, the Rockville Swing Band brings together a unique group of talented musicians of all ages from the greater Washington D.C. community. Dancers welcome!

"The flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the lyrics to our national anthem The Star-Spangled Banner in 1814."



City of
Rockville
Get into it