

GRAY PANTHERS of Sacramento On the Prowl



P O Box 19438, Sacramento, CA 95819..... 916-332-80 www.gpcal.org
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****NEXT GENERAL MEETING****

Are we Really Protecting Elders from Abuse?

June 13th, 1:00—3:00 pm

Hart Senior Center, 27th and J Sts.

Marjorie Murray, Gray Panther and Advocate for Elder Rights, will speak on the critical subject. We will also have an opportunity to discuss the outcome of the June Primary Election.

Bring your neighbors and advocacy friends to this important session. Beverages and goodies provided.

For more information, call (916) 332-5980.



JOIN US FOR DISABILITY CAPITOL ACTION DAY, June 1st

Access Equals Choices!

People of all disabilities, families and supporters, UNITE to PUSH BACK the budget cuts and protect our freedom and way of life.

- **Educational Forum**, 10:00 to 11:30 am, The Grand, 1215 J Street (between 12th and 13th Streets), Sacramento 95814
- **March to the Capitol**, 11:30 am, starting at the Sacramento Convention Center
- **Rally** on the Capitol's West Steps, noon to 1 o'clock
- **Visit with your Legislators** 1-4 pm, in the State Capitol Office

For more information, call 1-800-390-2699(voicemail) or 1-800-900-0706 (tty) or e-mail rhannon@cfilc.org

IN OUR COMMUNITY

Metro Transportation Plan Workshops Provide your input and opinions on needs:

- Sat. June 3, 9-noon, Rusch Park Clubhouse, 7801 Auburn Blvd.
- Wed. June 7, 6-9 pm: Elk Grove School District Board Room, 9510 Elk Grove-Florin Road.





FROM WASHINGTON

Congress Attacks Identity Theft Protection Laws

California's best-in-the-nation identity theft laws are under attack. Congress is trying to weaken national identity theft protections while simultaneously eliminating our stronger state laws. A new Bill would also prevent states from passing new identity theft laws.

Ask your member of Congress to join Gray Panthers and CALPIRG in opposition to any new federal law that would block California's existing identity theft laws. Then ask your fiends and family to help by going to the following site: <http://calpirg.org/CA.asp?id2=17990&id3=CA&>. Or you can go to <http://www.calpirg.org/> and choose **Identity Theft Prevention**.

Background

It was a California law that forced the data-dealing company ChoicePoint to reveal nationwide that it had mistakenly sold personal information on millions of Americans to identity thieves posing as businessmen. It is a California law that allows each of us to put a freeze on our credit reports, protecting our credit from thieves. Both of these laws are now sweeping the country, thanks to the work of PIRGs in other states.

California's identity theft laws were passed despite opposition from credit bureaus, banks and other companies that collect, store and sell our personal information. Now, Congress wants to do them a favor by passing a federal law that will set weak national identity theft protections but will pre-empt all stronger state laws and eliminate state authority to pass new strong laws.

The so-called "Financial Date Protection Act," HR 3997, would:

- Require companies to alert consumers about data breeches only if the company deems it a threat to the consumers; establish a weak, but preemptive security freeze that only applies to victims, meaning that it wouldn't help non-victims of identify theft protect themselves

- Fail to even lightly regulate the activities of data brokers like ChoicePoint, the virtually unregulated data dealer company that sold 2163,000 dossiers to identity thieves
- Prevent state Attorneys General from protecting their citizens from privacy invasions,
- Fail to assist non-English speaking individuals who have difficulty gaining access to their credit reports

Ask your member of Congress to join CALPIRG in opposition to any new federal law that would block California's existing identity theft laws. Then ask your friends and family to help as well!



FROM THE STATE CAPITOL

As the work of the legislature and legislative advocates moves from a committee hearing mode to a budget examination, we will need to keep a keen eye on just what the Governor proposed in his "May Revise" with a larger than expected revenue amount coming from taxpayers. Issues that will be covered are the Medicare and Medi-Cal co-payments, which are burdensome or impossible for low income seniors and disabled persons to afford. The experience of the first half-year of Medicare Part D proved that these \$1-5 co-pays actually caused a great deal of harm, since may of these individuals take multiple medications. So advocates lobby hard to cover those co-pays, while waiting for Federal reform of the confusing and difficult law.

The majority of bills supported by Gray Panthers are now in "suspense" until decisions are made on how the State's revenues will be spent. Even those that do not "have money in them" are stalled while budget discussions take place. Bills that await attention in Appropriations include:

- AB 170 (Chan), which would create a consumer report card on Part D plans
- AB 2877 (Frommer), which would

establish a website to facilitate the purchase of safe and affordable medications from other countries.

- Companion bills AB2911 (Nunez) and SB 1702 (Perata) which would establish an Rx discount program using the purchasing power of the state to negotiate prices for the uninsured in California.

Baca's measure, AB2667, is a non-appropriation bill that would allow the state to monitor and regulate drug prices just the way health plans are regulated. WE ask that you give a call to your legislator to support its passage.

One bill that has been difficult to get a handle of is the Berg/Daucher "Coordinated System of Care Act," AB 2014. We have a support-only-if-amended position on this bill, which attempts to bring all state services for seniors and disabled persons under one roof, called something like the Department of Adult and Aging Services. We understand the reluctance of many about the formation of a megalithic department, including everything from aging services to those provided by Rehab. But we applaud the authors' work to open a discussion which in the long run may be the road to Olmstead implementation, to helping folks live in the community no matter what their health condition is. Service is highly spread out, common assessments and other connections are non-existent, so we give a reserved "Support if Amended," working with our friends in many organizations to get a handle on both the problem and the solution. We can't hang back and do nothing forever!

Watch for developments as advocates and legislators continue negotiations.

There are abundant opportunities to participate directly in the advocacy work of Gray Panthers. Speak to Chair Lee at the next meeting about doing so.

"Clean Money" Bill Moves Forward

This



historic bill, with a lengthy list of co-authors and an immense amount of public support, has now moved to Senate Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments, as of 4/19. The author, Assembly Member Loni Hancock, is accepting amendments and working to provide more research before the bill comes to that committee. Hancock, author of AB 583, brought Marc Spitzer, the cleanly-elected Republican Chair of the Corporations Commission from Arizona, to recite the success of the system in his state, where the new law works to free up candidates and elected officials from relying on lobbyists. He and other supporters believe the Clean Money Campaign has reignited the faith of both voters and potential candidates in the democratic process. The hope is that California can have such a system, where a set number of \$5



contributions can represent your individual voice being heard.

We are hopeful that AB 583 will pass Elections before moving on to its next step in the Senate

Appropriation committee. Senate president pro tem Don Perata has seemed optimistic, buoyed by public sentiment about the issue. He looks forward to the vote on the bill and said that “there is much work ahead, but I am hopeful for a positive outcome.”

Senator Debra Bowen chairs the Elections Committee, with members Batten and Poochigian (R), Dunn, Murray and Romero (D). There’s a good chance, so drop supportive note to her, citing AB 583, at Capitol Bldg. #5046, Sacramento 95814, or FAX it to the committee at 916-445-1389.

The Bitter Pill Awards for 2006

The Prescription Access Litigation Project (PAL), of which Gray Panthers is a member, announced winners of the 2006 Bitter Pill Awards in late April. The awards were presented in four categories to drug companies engaging in over-zealous and questionable market practices. The drug industry’s national lobbying group, PhRMA, received two awards, and the remaining three awards were shared among members of five of the nation’s most drugs: Lunesta, CR, Crestor, and positive “Real also presented to MedVantx, one working to consumers with alternative to name drugs.



well-known Ambien/Ambien Strattera. A Deal” award was call attention to company that is provide affordable expensive brand-

Coming in June: Report on the Outcome of Medicare Part D!



You've got to love the titles they give!

- The *While You Were Sleeping* Award: for overmarketing Insomnia Medications to anyone who’s had a bad nights sleep. Winners: Lunesta (Sepracor) and Ambien/Ambien CR (Sanofi-Aventis)
- The *Driven to Distraction* Award: For hawking an Attention Deficit drug by distracting consumers with ADD.
- The *Fox Guarding the Hen House* Award: For pushing toothless voluntary guidelines on Drug Advertising
- The *Truth is Stranger Than Fiction* Award: for commissioning a hackneyed thriller to scare Americans about Canadian drugs. Winner: Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
- The Real Deal Award: For promoting safe, effective generics and counter drug industry marketing> Winner: MedVantx.

Our Own Bill Young is Honored by Senior Spectrum!

Quoted from the latest Senior Spectrum:

Let’s face it, it’s people like William “Bill” Young, 73, that make you proud to be an American. In a most recent accomplishment, Young received the 2006 Heart of a Hero “Knowledge of the Heart” award for his active role in mentoring youth and serving as a role model to local teens.

The Heart of a Hero award is sponsored by California Family Fitness and Florin Road Consolidated Charities-Florin Road Bingo, and it honors people, programs and companies helping kids in the four-county area each year to benefit the North Area and West Sacramento Teen Centers, which helps fund the free-of-charge after school drop in centers for kids and provides exceptional local role models.



Young is a mentor and role model who has spent the last 11 years helping to counsel, tutor and share with kids through the Sacramento Job Corps, and he has been a foster grandparent volunteer

since 1995.

Young participates in the annual Senior Legislature at the Capitol, and while very active in senior issues, he also makes time to share his life experience, education and outlook with kids five days a week at the Sacramento Job Corps.

Bill has donated somewhere around 27,000 hours of volunteer service to his foster grandchildren in the last 11 years. "Five days a week, eight hours a day," he said.

But receiving awards for foster grandparenting and mentoring roles in the lives of local children is nothing new to Young. He is an inspiring person who says that working with youth helps him to stay active, and it gives him the best reason to get up each morning.

(Go to our website at <http://www.gpcal.org/billyoung.htm> for the complete article.)

OFFICERS AND STEERING COMMITTEE

- Chairperson: Joan B. Lee 332-5980**
- Secretary/Program: Marge Cumming**
- Treasurer: Lola Young**
- Staff Project Coordinator, Medicare Part D Grant, Margie Metzler**
- Environmental: Dr. Karl Stoffers**
- Disabled issues: Terry Terry**
- Historian - OPEN POSITION**
- Hospitality: Joyce Westergaard**
- Housing issues: Linda Roberts & Karen Raasch (CIDs)**
- Labor/wage issues: Nell Ranta**
- Newsletter Asst. Editor - John Bernier**
- SS/Medicare Advisor: Peter D'Anna**
- Transportation: Jim & Doris Sanford**
- Members at Large - Edy Poole, Pat Naylor, Jean Mellberg, Betty Merle**
- Computer assistant - Beverly Crosby.**
- Webmaster staff: Margie Metzler**

and \$35 for families. This includes newsletter, membership in Gray Panthers National and Gray Panthers California. If new members choose to join in coming months, they may pay the full amount or choose from the following monthly pro-rated schedule for 2006.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Family</u>
January	\$20.00	\$20.50
February	17.50	18.00
March	15.00	15.50
April	12.50	13.00
May	10.00	10.50
June	7.50	8.00
July	5.00	5.50
August	Both \$3.00 + \$30 for 2007	

I WANT TO JOIN GRAY PANTHERS SACRAMENTO!!!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail Address: _____

Membership:

Regular: \$30 or pro-rated amt. \$ _____

Family/35 or pro-rated amt. \$ _____

Newsletter Subscription only \$15 _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

*Note: It is not necessary to pay for the newsletter if you join as a full member! Make any check to Gray Panthers of Sacramento and send to PO Box 19438, Sacramento, CA 95819.

REMEMBER THAT LACK OF FUNDS WILL NOT DETER BELONGING TO OUR ORGANIZATION!!

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Gray Panthers Annual Dues are \$30 for individuals



Gray Panthers California

**Gray Panthers California
Second Quarterly Meeting 2006**

Saturday, June 10, 10:00—3:00

1911 F Street

(SEIU Union Hall, next to the train tracks)

Come get to know leaders and members from all across the state. It is quite enlightening to see the enthusiasm and vitality of this group! Everyone is welcome! Beverages, ample snacks and goodies provided. Let's see Sacramentans there to welcome our out-of-town cohorts!

Parking to the rear of the building (enter off 19th) and along the street.

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P.O. BOX 19438, Sacramento, CA 95819

**Non-profit
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