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## Senior Citizens Flood Parish Hall for Expo

by Nathan Lasher

The St. Mary Parish Hall in downtown Kittanning was filled with local senior residents who were laughing, socializing, and learning, yesterday, as State Senator Don White and State Representatives Jeff Pyle and Donna Oberlander hosted the Eighth Annual Senior Expo.

“I hope you’re enjoying this,” said Senator White during the event’s introduction. “I hope there’s a lot of information here that you’ll find useful, and if not at least you are having a good time. We appreciate very much you being here.”

During the event, which lasted from 10AM until 1PM, seniors were offered food and beverages as they viewed informational booths regarding many local businesses and services. Organizations who were present included Citizen’s Bank, Visiting Nurses Association,

Lenape Vo-Tech, Kittanning Care Center, MetLife, Pennsylvania Securities Commission, Butler County Association for the Blind, Kittanning Lions Club, Melody Manor Personal Care Home, Social Security Administration, Community Action, Bauer Family Funeral Homes, Armstrong County Tourist Bureau, Addiction Recovery Center, ArmsCare, and HAVIN.

Representative Pyle shared why this particular year’s Expo is special for him. “If you didn’t know it, you’re standing right in the middle of the 60<sup>th</sup> District, and we’re very proud to be hosting the Senior Expo with Senator White and Representative Oberlander,” he said. “Just had a thought on my way up; this is the sixth one of these that I’ve come to, and this one’s a little bit special because I got my first AARP solicitation the other day. So, I think I’m part of the crowd now.”

While the afternoon was very informative, for many seniors the social aspect was the main reason to come. Two women who have attended the event for the last four years, Mary O’Neil and Janet Cowan from Ford City, have been friends since 1945.

“I like to keep up on what’s going out for the seniors, and I like to visit with people that I’ve known,” said O’Neil. “I used to work in the public, and I just thought this would be a way to run

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in to some of these people. Friendships are important.”

“There’s a lot of change, but they are always giving out new information and updating things,” said Cowan. “It’s also nice to be able to bump into your political acquaintances.”

Her second year attending the event, Representative Oberlander enjoyed socializing with those in attendance as well. “It’s wonderful to have a chance to get to meet some of the constituents from this part of my District and see them get the information that they need and just enjoy themselves,” said Oberlander. “I think it’s important because many of these agencies and the people who are here are able to give them valuable information that if they had to go through the phone book or if they had to try to find them in town it would be difficult. So, to bring them all together and allow them that opportunity really makes a worthwhile event for them and a worthwhile event for the vendors who are here too.”

As an extra enticement, as attendees entered the event, they were able to enter to win locally-sponsored door prizes such as gift cards, books, gift baskets, camp chairs, home items, emergency survivor kits, and many more.

“This is a way that you can get information and pass it to other people,” said Cowan. “Some people don’t come out; they are afraid of crowds or they don’t drive or anything. So, we’ll pass the information on to them.”



Hundreds of senior citizens filled the St. Mary Parish Hall yesterday morning in order to view exhibits at the Eighth Annual Senior Expo.



Senator Don White and Representatives Jeff Pyle and Donna Oberlander drew names for door prizes during yesterday morning’s Senior Expo.

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