

Rock Around the 14th Annual Bell County Senior Expo

By Michelle Rodriguez

The Belton Journal

It will be a beautiful sight at the 14th Annual Bell County Senior Expo this year on Tuesday, September 24th. The celebration of seniors living in Central Texas will be held in the Exposition Building at Cadence Bank Center (formerly Bell County Expo) located at 301 West Loop 121 in Belton. This year, there is a new, earlier start time. The event will be from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm.

“You’ll have lots of fun with the plans that we’ve made. The no-pressure, sales-free, fun-filled event will host almost 200 costumed vendors with Winter Wonderland themed booths and hundreds of door prizes and giveaways! You’ll receive an entry form on your bag when you enter the event, which you can use to vote for your favorite booth and get entered for a chance to win our GRAND PRIZE! Be sure and drop your entry form off at the “welcome tables” at either door before you leave,” said Kimberly Cables, Senior Expo Expert committee member, and Belton Journal Sales Executive.

Sammons Community Center will be back again this year, spreading cheer from 8:30-9am with their Silver Beats group drumming on their medicine balls to some festive carols. You’ll have a holly jolly time watching Sammons’ Rusty Dusters, dancing with their feather dusters from 10-10:30am. Then, 11:30-12pm Betty Hartman, instructor/coordinator for the Bell Dancers line dance group will take you for a wonderful Sleigh Ride of a time.

“Everyone enjoys the giveaways and winning door prizes, and seeing the entertainers, but the Bell County Senior Expo really is a great resource of information for seniors as well. We try to get everyone under one roof to make it easier to find the resources available. We want it to snow on every senior-friendly business, non-profit, and volunteer opportunity at the event, so seniors and friends can know of their options in the area. No one likes to have to hunt down what they need.” added Cables. This event is free, open to the public, no RSVP or tickets necessary.

It will be a full day with speakers at 9am and 10:30 am. George Losoya from The Area Agency on Aging of Central Texas (AAACT) will speak from 9-10am about avoiding scams. “Older adults are often seen as easy targets because they might be more trusting and less familiar with the latest technology, but staying informed and vigilant can help protect against these fraudulent activities,” Losoya said.

If you love a Rainey night, you’ll want to attend our second speaker session with Rainey and Rainey Attorneys At Law LP. Mr. Rainey will provide invaluable information regarding nursing home & estate planning. Each speaker will host drawings for \$100 gift cards. Attend both speaker sessions, and you’ll be dancing merrily with double the chances of winning!

Visitors can gather information on nutrition and fitness, housing, Medicare & Medicaid financial and after-life planning, volunteer opportunities, leisure activities, and more. Free health screenings will also be available.

“As care providers, we see seniors who have health issues. We want to help them cope with those difficulties and bring them joy,” said Rosa Hernandez, Community Liaison with AACT.

“AACT has been a proud partner of the Bell County Senior Expo since its inception. Our primary focus is to support seniors in the aging process while promoting health and wellness. The Senior Expo offers a valuable opportunity for us to engage with the community and collaborate with our dedicated partners who support the aging population,” George Losoya, Director of AACT said.

“Cornerstone Gardens has participated in the Bell County Senior Expo planning from day one. Partnering with other professionals who understand the need to educate our aging population before a health care crisis arises or guiding them in the right direction when one has occurred. It has been a privilege watching the event grow over the years. Last year, we moved into a larger building of the Cadence Bank Center because more vendors and more seniors are taking advantage of the resources available, often asking questions or sharing stories of their stay with us at Cornerstone Gardens,” Cornerstone Gardens Healthcare & Rehabilitation Marketing Director, Tommi Fettig said.

“The move to the larger Exhibition Building was necessary for the safety of guests and vendors. Looking at pictures from previous years, everyone was literally elbow to elbow. The new venue allows us to be more senior-friendly. It allows wider aisles for wheelchairs and walkers, additional seating, and we’ve added more golf carts to help transport guests from the parking lot to the venue,” Cables said.

“We are proud to be families and residents’ first choice in quality health care. We proudly display our best booth awards and eagerly look forward to participating in this event every year. We like to have fun and interact with everyone,” Fettig said.

“I have been on the Senior Expo Committee since it started, because I wanted to assist the aging population in our community with resources. I was working at Scott & White at the time and one of my co-workers asked me to join the committee. The Senior Expo has grown tremendously over the years with so many organizations in the community that have resources for our senior population. I think it will continue to grow as we have more citizens moving to the area. Everyone has enjoyed the event! There is entertainment and lots of information for the attendees,” said Donna Dunn, Executive Director at the Body of Christ Community Clinic, a non-profit charity clinic that provides medical and dental services to uninsured, low or no income residents in east Bell County.

So, come all ye faithful to the Bell County Senior Expo on September 24th at Cadence Bank Center from 8-1pm and you will be counting your blessings. Ring our sleigh bells for more information at 254-683-1166 or come by 210 N. Penelope St. in Belton.