



Department of Aging and Disabilities

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For Immediate Release

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Showstoppers troupe wins Governor's Award

Annapolis, MD (May 10, 2011) – The South County Showstoppers of Anne Arundel County took home the Performing Arts Award for 2011 today, May 10, 2011, winning the category in the Fourth Annual Governor's Leadership in Aging Awards competition. The presentation was made at a sponsors reception and awards ceremony at the Catonsville Senior Center in Baltimore County.

The event recognizes excellence and outstanding contributions to the Field of Aging and quality of life for seniors. It is held annually during May, which is Older Americans Month. Senior citizens are celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs, and other such activities.

The troupe is comprised of more than 40 seniors from the South County Senior Activity Center in Edgewater. Founded by Vickie Smith, it is directed by Joanne DeWilde. The seniors range in age from 60 to 86 and offer a variety show with dancing, singing, comedy and fun entertainment. Among the costumed performers are guitar players, belly dancers, singers, joke tellers, and tap dancers. They have presenting a minimum of two free shows and as many as five shows a month for four years at a variety of venues.

"They are a very talented, enthusiastic, and energetic group," says Dr. Carol Baker, director of the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities. "They travel all over, and have been in five counties. They even have been down to the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home (in St. Mary's County) to provide entertainment for the veterans there."

"In their four short years of existence, the Showstoppers have come so far! We are all very proud of their accomplishments," says Sharon Poet, director of the South County Senior Activity Center, who nominated the troupe for the state honor.

"We do it because we make other people happy and they smile, and we also get back as much as we give," says Ms. DeWilde. "We are thrilled by the huge success we've experienced. The award is a bonus on what we do."

The Showstoppers created a 2011 calendar to help fund their performances and transportation, and will be presenting shows at senior centers and at Charlotte Hall Veterans

Home this month. For booking information, contact the South County Senior Activity Center at 410-222-1927.

Cutline (courtesy photo)

Joanne DeWilde, left, director of the South County Showstoppers, accepts a trophy from Gloria Lawlah, Secretary, Maryland Department of Aging, during the Fourth Annual Governor's Leadership in Aging Awards ceremony held May 10 in Catonsville.



The Showstoppers perform various routines for the awards ceremony. (that can go with all of the various performance shots)

Joanne DeWilde, director, Showstoppers, receives a trophy award from Gloria Lawlawh, Secretary, Maryland Department of Aging.

AND

Joanne DeWilde, director, Showstoppers, left, and Gloria Lawlawh, Secretary, Maryland Department of Aging, with trophy while Denise Koch, WJZ-TV and mistress of ceremonies, describes the Showstoppers' activities.







- Making Life Better -