

Lifestyles

SAVVY SENIOR

Jim Miller



Beware of potential 2010 Census scams

Dear Savvy Senior,
Can you offer some tips on how seniors can guard against 2010 census scams? I've heard that there are a lot of potential scams going on and I want to protect myself.

Suspicious Senior

Dear Suspicious,
Unfortunately, scams have become a persistent problem when the U.S. Census Bureau does its once-a-decade count of the U.S. population. Here's what you should know.

Fill Out Your Census

In mid-March, nearly every U.S. household received a 2010 Census form in the mail. If you haven't already done so, you need to answer the 10 questions (it only takes a few minutes) and mail the form back in the postage-paid envelope provided. If you did not receive your census form or if you've misplaced it, call the census questionnaire assistance center (866-872-6868) by April 21 and they will mail you another one.

Watch For Scams

While census participation is very important and required by law, you also need to be vigilant of census-linked scams. This is especially important for seniors who tend to be prime targets. The Better Business Bureau warns against e-mail scams as well as con artist masquerading as census workers who will try to solicit your personal financial information. Here are some tips that will help you recognize a census scam and what you can do to protect yourself.

Guard Your Info

Don't give out your personal or financial information. The Census Bureau or a legitimate census worker will never ask for your Social Security number or any information regarding credit cards, banks or financial accounts. Nor will they ask for money or a donation. If you're asked for any of these, whether it be via phone, mail, e-mail or in person, it's a scam and should be reported to your regional census office. See census.gov/regions or call 800-923-8282 for contact information.

Check Worker's ID

If you don't mail in your completed census form, a census taker will visit your home sometime between May and July to fill out the questionnaire for you. A legitimate census taker must present an identification badge that contains a Department of Commerce watermark and expiration date. The taker will also carry a hand-held device that's used to take your information, a canvas census bag and a confidentiality notice. Ask to see a photo ID and their badge before answering any questions. However, you should never invite anyone you don't know into your home. The census taker will only ask you the questions that appear on the questionnaire - your name, gender, age, race, ethnicity, type of residence and number of people living with you. They will not ask for sensitive personal information, such as your Social Security or credit card number. If you don't trust their ID, close the door and call your regional or local census office to verify that person is an actual census worker.

Avoid Phony E-mails

The Census Bureau is not conducting any part of the census on the Internet, nor will it send e-mails regarding the census. So ignore any e-mails that direct you to a census-related Web site. No matter how legitimate the e-mail and Web site look, it's a scam looking to acquire your Social Security number or other private financial information. And, don't reply to the e-mail or open any attachment. Attachments could contain viruses that could infect your computer. Forward the e-mail or Web site address to the Census Bureau at its.fraud.reporting@census.gov. Then delete the message.

Savvy Tips: For more information on the 2010 Census survey and how to guard against potential census-related scams, visit 2010census.gov.

A day for health



River Park Hospital's health fair provided healthy fun for all ages, with 3-year-old Matthew Wyman experiencing his share. He got a stuffed duck at the Curtis Cousins Teddy Bear Factory and had fun playing in the colorful balloon display.

Margaret Hobbs photo

River Park's Women's and Children's Health Fair offers screenings, tips and fun

By MARGARET HOBBS
Style Editor for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tenn.)

Relay booths set up for the health fair," said River Park community relations coordinator Ashley Wright.

A large crowd of people seeking health and fitness tips turned up at the 22nd Women's and Children's Health Fair at Three Star Mall on Saturday.

With 45 vendors participating in the day's activities, there was something of interest to all who attended - everything from jewelry to baked goods were for sale. River Park Hospital sponsors the day, and had several exhibits offering health tips and services to attendees. Other health-related fields included home health agencies, support groups, respiratory information and physician's displays.

The day started with entertaining performances from students of Gary Steele Karate, Paula's Dance Academy and a Zumba exercise class. This was followed by River Park Hospital's Baby Parade, featuring 34 babies born in their Family Birth Unit in 2009.

"We had wonderful participation this year, and attendance was really up. It was possibly due to the weather, and the opening of the new Goody's; but also the great participation from the Relay for Life community. Nine

Cute youngsters and stylish adults took to the stage in the Spring and Summer Fashion Show, sporting the latest fashions for the upcoming season. Miss Country Sunshine Emily Hobbs was the mistress of ceremonies, and attendees got a sneak peek at her Miss Tennessee fiddle talent presentation. She was accompanied by Bill Cathcart, who also entertained the crowd with his guitar and fiddle skills.

Perhaps one of the most unusual events involved a frog, a rabbit, a cat and a talking penguin. McMinnville Parks and Recreation held a mascot scramble featuring Gilley the frog, the Easter Bunny, Hello Kitty, with special guest Channel 4's Snowbird emceeding the fun scramble promoting exercise. Much to the delight of the crowd, the trio had to navigate an obstacle course around the center stage of the mall, with Snowbird offering colorful narratives of the race.

Over the past 22 years the health fair has become a Warren County tradition and plans are already being made for next year's event.



Blood Assurance supplies River Park Hospital with its blood. First-time donor Hayley Mackie makes a life-saving contribution, and is assisted by Anita Grounds.

Margaret Hobbs photo



Calisha Woodlee and son Weston have fun in the Baby Parade, featuring 34 babies born in the Family Birth Unit at River Park Hospital.

Photo provided



Korbin McGregor is ready for summer in his outfit from Ashley's Attic. Sew Sweet and Goody's also participated in the fashion show.

Photo provided



Lions Club member John Brown administers an eye screening to 8-year-old Ian DeArmond.

Margaret Hobbs photo



Channel 4's Snowbird gives a friendly head rub to 5-year-old Jacob Nunley at the health fair held at Three Star Mall.

Charlie Johnson photo



Gilley Frog is assisted in the mascot scramble by Kristie Sanders.

Margaret Hobbs photo

