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Contact: [name]

Phone: 222/555-5555

Area Senior Citizens Walk a Mile to Celebrate Older Americans Month

White Plains, May 4, 2005. Area seniors kicked off Older Americans Month by walking a mile in the downtown convention center. The walk was led by Mr. Jones and his mother, Mrs. Jones, who is celebrating her 82nd birthday this month. The walk emphasized the importance of maintaining and improving physical fitness and the quality of life as we age. The theme of this year's Older American's Month is "Celebrate long-term living!" Older Americans Month is sponsored every May by the United States Administration on Aging (AoA) and its aging network across the country.

"Providing a better quality of life for our seniors should be one of our most important community goals," said Mr. Jones. "Today's walk is symbolic because we can all improve our health by simply exercising and eating better."

Today, there are more than 80 million Americans over the age of 50. Many individuals are aging well and living longer than at any time in history, but far too many remain sedentary and inactive. Individuals age 60 and older have the lowest level of physical activity than any other age group. Senior centers throughout the area have planned a number of activities during May to help older Americans learn more about improving physical activity and nutrition.

According to [spokesperson's name], "We can achieve substantial savings in healthcare expenditures by targeting prevention programs at older people. In 2000, the total cost of obesity for all ages was estimated to be \$117 billion and health care costs associated with physical inactivity were more than \$76 billion."



As advocated by AoA, being active can help older people to stay vibrant, engaged, and independent. Some simple healthy activities include yard work, brisk walks, and dancing.

According to Josefina Carbonell, Assistant Secretary for Aging, AoA, "We can do more, and our best weapons are literally in our own hands: the food we choose to eat, and the activities that get us moving. Older adults tend to be healthier, feel better, and maintain their mobility and independence longer when they take these simple steps."

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