



NEWS RELEASE

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82-Year-Old Fraud Fighter Volunteer to be Honored by SM Human Relations Council for Helping to Protect Seniors from Scams

SANTA MONICA (May 15, 2009) - Heroes can come in all shapes and sizes, but there is one 82-year-old local hero who has joined the ranks of superhero contributors.

Santa Monica resident Jean Kelly is one of the first "heroes" to be honored by the Human Relations Council, Santa Monica Bay Area, for her work in helping and protecting seniors.

Jean makes some 90 phone calls a day to warn seniors across the country about potential telemarketing fraud, fake lotteries and other scams.

She has worked at the Senior Fraud Prevention Call Center at WISE & Healthy Aging, a nonprofit social services organization, since August 2007.

As a "Fraud Fighter" she explains how scams are run and provides tips on avoiding Internet identity theft and other types of fraud targeting older adults.

"It keeps me young," Jean confides. "I walk 12 blocks round trip to work each day and when I go to my volunteer job, I take the city bus. I'm healthier than most young people."

Jean also trains new volunteers, runs the busy switchboard when operators need a break and compiles reports for AARP, which funds the Call Center's efforts. She enjoys working with many people her own age.

"Some are even older," she chuckles. "We have a number of volunteers who are in their 90s. We get to socialize and I like that very much."

A former legal secretary, Jean has logged more than 7,000 hours as a volunteer at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center & Orthopaedic Hospital in its UCLA Healthcare 50 Plus Program in the past 10 years.

Fielding phone calls, assisting others and working at community events make Jean the kind of hero that is needed now more than ever. In the future we can expect to see Jean's picture displayed on a Big Blue Bus poster as part of her designation as a hero.

For more information on WISE & Healthy Aging, please call 310-394-9871.