

The Senior Dog Sanctuary of Maryland

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Senior Dog Sanctuary Launches “The Tommy Raskin Seniors 2 Seniors Program”

*Program will provide Pet Wellness Expos and pet food to
Anne Arundel County Senior Citizens In Need*

Severn, MD Chairman of the Board Ritchie Brooks and the Board of Directors of The Senior Dog Sanctuary of Maryland, Inc (SDS) are proud to announce the launch of *The Tommy Raskin Seniors 2 Seniors Program*. This first of its kind program aims to provide senior citizens (age 55 and older) with Pet Wellness Expos at all eight of the county senior centers, free pet food through a pantry at the Sanctuary, and to further the mission of the Sanctuary: to help rescue, rehabilitate, and rehome senior dogs.

In partnership and with support from Congressman Jamie Raskin, the new initiative honors his late son, Tommy Raskin, and Tommy’s passion and love for animals and people. “Our family is honored by this awesome program which Tommy would have loved. It brings animals and humans together in a truly wonderful way. We are grateful to Ritchie Brooks and the Senior Dog Sanctuary for this moving and living tribute to Tommy and look forward to its great success,” said Raskin.

Funding for *The Tommy Raskin Seniors 2 Seniors Program* was provided through Anne Arundel County’s Community Support Grant Program. Last month, County Executive Stuart Pittman announced SDS as one of several award recipients for fiscal year 2024. The grants range between \$10,000 and \$50,000 and are awarded to nonprofit organizations that offer services meeting one or more of the administration’s following priorities: providing services to underserved populations, addressing the health and wellbeing of communities, promoting equity and inclusion, and eliminating the opportunity gap in education. The award process and administration of the grants is managed by Arundel Community Development Services, Inc. (ACDS), the County’s nonprofit housing and community development administrator.

The Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities will help provide inventory, personnel, marketing, and outreach support to facilitate the operation of the program. "Aging in place holds not only an importance for humanity, but for all life, inclusive of our pet family members" said Karrisa Kelly, Director, Department of Aging and Disabilities, "The vision and partnership that we share with the Seniors 2 Seniors Program supports older adults and their pet family companions so that they may remain together in a supportive community environment."

Additional support was received from Lowe's, which supplied materials that were used to create a dog food pantry that is stocked with pet food supplied from both Giant Food of Maryland, LLC and Pet Barn, Inc. in Maple Lawn. The Sanctuary will rely on donations from these and other local businesses to keep the pantry filled for seniors in need.

"The Seniors 2 Seniors Program helps continue the vision of our late founder, Val Lynch. Val's goal was to spread the mission of SDS deeper into the community and make it easier for senior citizens to be able to afford to keep their pets. SDS is especially grateful to Jamie Raskin and his family, County Executive Steuart Pittman, Karissa Kelly and the Dept. of Aging and Disabilities and everyone who is making Val's goal into reality," said SDS Chairman of the Board Ritchie Brooks. Vice President Karin de Francis added, "The comfort and companionship of a good dog nourishes the heart and soul of us all. For people and dogs in their golden years, that connection is all the more crucial for continued health and wellness. We are grateful for the way in which Jamie Raskin, Anne Arundel County and other supporters have come together to help people and pets."

A Grand Opening is planned for later this year.

The pantry will open on August 5th and continue operation on the first and third Monday and Saturday of the month from 9am-12pm. The Sanctuary is located at 8336 WB&A Road Severn, MD 21144.

Please visit us [www. seniordogsanctuary.com](http://www.seniordogsanctuary.com) for more information and for ways to support the Senior Dog Sanctuary's Seniors 2 Seniors Program.

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