



# Keeping Texans Standing Tall

TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

701 Brazos, Suite 780, Austin, Texas 78701

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## Congratulations to the 21 new master trainers– Texas total 98

### Progression at the Session



HB 703– Falls Prevention Awareness Week

On, Thursday, April 30, 2009, HB 703 filed by Representative Rose, and sponsored in the Senate by Jane Nelson, was heard in public hearing at the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. The bill passed the House with a unanimous vote in early April. It will now be placed on the Senate uncontested calendar. HB 703 designates a “Fall Prevention Awareness Week” and

authorizes the Department of Aging and Disability Services to develop recommendation to raise public awareness about fall prevention, and incorporate fall prevention guidelines in state and local planning documents.

During the public hearing Texas Silver-Haired Legislator Katy Kappel testified for the bill with several individuals supporting the

bill but did not testify.

As the bill moves forward, the Texas Falls Prevention Coalition has begun planning for activities for “Falls Prevention Awareness Week” September 21-25, 2009.

### Featured Article– Balancing by Slipping

Everyone is looking for that new way to help older adults prevent falls in and around their home. Programs have been developed, tested, analyzed and considered to be effected. But, what about practicing slipping to improve someone's balance. Who would have guessed? This puts the famous saying “practice makes perfect”

into a new perspective of sorts.

This is what some researches at the University of Illinois at Chicago decided to do. They trained people on a moveable platform that created a surprise slip. This training eventually help with gaining better control of their feet while walking on slippery surfaces.

The study showed that people trained on the platform when walking on a slippery floor, only one lost their balance. The untrained people, loss their balance and a third fell.

To learn more about this study, it can be found published in the *Journal of Neurophysiology* 101: 948-957, 2009.

#### Front

PROGRESSION AT THE SESSION

FEATURED ARTICLE

#### BACK

TEXAS FALLS PREVENTION MEETING

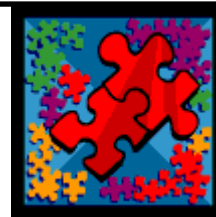
WORDS OF WISDOM

#### Important Dates

TEXAS FALLS PREVENTION COALITION MEETING May 29, 2009

FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK September 21-25, 2009

## Texas Falls Prevention Coalition Meeting– Staying Connected



The first meeting was a success. Representatives from the AAAs, State Departments, Home Health Care Agencies, Hospitals, Associations, Universities, Health Insurance agencies, and medical groups began the process of determining the work the coalition needs to do for falls prevention in Texas. The next meeting is scheduled for May 29, 2009 at the Capital Area Council of Governments in Austin, Texas from 11:00 am to 4:00pm. This meeting will build on the previous meeting looking at improving on the mission statement, and prioritizing strategies and actions that will help in **“Keeping Texans Standing Tall.”** Anyone interested in falls prevention is welcome to attend.

## Words of Wisdom– Updates from MAINE Partnership for Healthy Aging

National Dissemination of *A Matter of Balance* has produced 520 Master Trainers nationwide. There have been approximately 6000 participants that have taken the classes: average age 79; 80% female; 53% live alone. These results are similar to how we are doing in Texas. We now have 98 people trained as Master Trainers and over 250 lay person trained as coaches.

Updates for all materials will be sent to master trainers later this month. Patti League and her team are working diligently to provide the information. During a recent master trainer conference call, Patti addressed several questions that a TFPC coordinator has been asked. One such issue was starting the exercises at the beginning of the class. She recommended against it but agreed that showing one or two of the more simple stretches/exercises is permissible. It is advisable for the participants to be cleared by their doctors before starting the exercise portion of the class. Another question: Who is able to teach classes and how many master trainers are needed to train lay leaders? The answer is one master trainer can teach a participant class and train lay persons as coaches by themselves. It is highly recommended that an extra person is present during the exercise portion of the participant class. Two coaches are still required to lead a participant class.

Spanish materials are now available. Versions of the *Matter of Balance* Coach Handbook and Participant Workbook can be purchased online from J.S. McCarthy Printers. The Spanish *A Matter of Balance* Toolkit CDs are also available for those of you who wish to print your own Spanish Coach Handbooks and Participant Workbooks, as well as other class materials and handouts.

The next translation is underway in Japanese. The coach and participant book are being translated and this should be completed before summer. On another note, the Russian participant translation has not yet been piloted. The Chinese translation of the participant workbook and outcome tools will be available sometime this summer. Bilingual coaches will be needed.

## Lay Leader Volunteers

This article describes the benefits of using lay leaders as volunteers for programs. Enter or click on the following link [http://www.mainehealth.org/workfiles/mh\\_PFHA/Leadersarticle\\_ICAA.pdf](http://www.mainehealth.org/workfiles/mh_PFHA/Leadersarticle_ICAA.pdf)

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