

# PRESS RELEASE

## Area Agency on Aging to Host Free Caregivers Conference and Luncheon This Saturday

*What About Me? Conference will cover caregiver resources, legal information, mental health and counseling services, and more*

**Tyler, TX, November 10, 2015:** As loved ones age, debilitating disease, chronic health conditions or simple frailty can arise in a family, one may end up a caregiver, sometimes unexpectedly. While some employ paid providers, most rely on unpaid assistance from families, friends and neighbors, who soon become "on call" 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Area Agency on Aging of East Texas and the St. Louis Baptist Church's Comfort and Care Ministry invites the public to attend What about me?, a free caregivers conference to be held on Saturday, November 14th, at the St. Louis Baptist Church located at 4000 Frankston HWY, from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Lunch will be served.



What About Me? is designed to offer caregivers – families and individuals in East Texas caring for loved ones with chronic, disabling health conditions – with information and resources needed to carry out this very important work. The conference will feature the following expert speakers and discussion topics: Reverend Ralph Caraway, Sr. of St. Louis Baptist Church – Spirituality; Joy Neal, Alzheimer's Alliance of Smith County – Caregiver Resources; Steve Houston, Allegiance Specialty Hospital, Mental Health Resources; Carol Jackson, Area Agency on Aging of East Texas, Benefits Counseling & Local Services; Valita Waits, Attorney at Law, Legal Information; Doris Parker Johnston, Grace Hospice, What About Hospice?; Bettye Mitchell, Director of the Area Agency on Aging, Taking Care of Yourself; and featured special guest Piper M. Dellums, Emmy-winning producer and writer of Los Angeles, California.

*"Every day we see the role stress plays in the lives of family caregivers who are trying to do too much with too few resources," said Bettye M. Mitchell, director of Aging Programs for the Area Agency on Aging of East Texas. "One common mission for both of our organizations, the AAA and St. Louis Baptist Church, is to provide valuable information to caregivers in our community."*

*"Caregivers are a gift of honor," says Rev. Ralph E. Caraway, Sr., senior pastor of the St. Louis Baptist Church. "St. Louis' Comfort and Care Ministry and I are dedicated to honoring those who give so much of themselves."*

Pre-registration is necessary by Thursday, November 12<sup>th</sup> for adequate lunches to be ordered. For reservations, please call (903) 595-5211 or email us at [Juanita.Perez@etcog.org](mailto:Juanita.Perez@etcog.org).

**About Area Agency on Aging of East Texas**

The Area Agency on Aging of East Texas is designated by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services to coordinate services for persons in East Texas who are 60 or older, with particular attention to low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas. Programs include, but are not limited to: Information, Referral and Assistance, Benefits Counseling/ Legal Assistance, Nursing home Ombudsman, Care Coordination, Caregiver Support Program and transportation provided by GOBUS. The Area Agency on Aging provides Nutrition programs delivering hot, nutritious meals to eligible homebound senior and providing congregate meals at local senior centers. The Area Agency on Aging is a program of ETCOG serving its 14 county region.

**About ETCOG**

The East Texas Council of Governments (ETCOG) is a voluntary association of counties, cities, school districts and special districts within the fourteen-county East Texas region. ETCOG assists local governments in planning for common needs, cooperating for mutual benefit and coordinating for sound regional development. Established in 1970, ETCOG, either directly, or through its contractors, provides programs and services for East Texas seniors, employers, and job seekers. ETCOG and its contractors also build the 9-1-1 emergency call delivery system, provide peace officer training and homeland security planning services; and deliver rural transportation services, business finance programs, and environmental grant funding for the region.