

# Senior centers hit by funding cuts

By HOLLY HOBBS  
Times-Mirror Staff Writer

Though it has only been open for a year, the Carver Adult Day Center in Purcellville was at risk of closing its doors.

Cuts proposed under the fiscal 2010 county budget, which goes into effect July 1, called for eliminating the center's funding of \$433,000.

However, during the Board of Supervisor's final vote on cuts and expenditures April 7, the center received a partial reprieve.

"We are very excited that we're going to continue," said Diane Ryburn, director of Loudoun's Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department.

The supervisors agreed to restore \$247,000 to the budget for the center, which currently cares each day for about eight seniors, who live primarily in western Loudoun.

The center's funding came under the chopping block when county staff recommended its elimination, saying the center was underutilized.

Ryburn, however, said the



Times-Mirror Staff Photo/Lisa Johnson

Mary Howard, of Middleburg, exercises with weights during a fitness class April 6 at the Carver Center in Purcellville.

services the center provides mean a lot to those who use it.

"It's need-based," she said, adding that those 60 and older who use the facility have memory, health and/or physical problems that require assistance.

Rather than ending up in a retirement or nursing home, "[seniors] get to stay in their community with their friends and families as long as possible," Ryburn said.

The funding reductions to the center, about \$186,000, will result in staff reductions, she said. But the center will stay open.

Up the street from the adult day-care center sits the Carver Center,

which serves seniors from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. As many as 22 seniors eat lunch there on weekdays.

Ruth Solbach, 83, who lives near Middleburg, is a regular visitor. Four times a week for two years, Solbach has come for the tai chi, daily morning exercise programs and seated exercises to build muscle strength.

"I'm bulking up," she joked. "It helps you with your balance."

After her workout, Solbach, like several of the other seniors, stays for lunch.

Carver Center manager Carol Huff said, "The lunches are an important program because there are folks — espe-

cially seniors — [where] that's their meal for the day. ... When you're a senior you don't really cook for yourself."

Carver Senior Center, the Carver Center and the Senior Center at Cascades will see a funding reduction of \$57,000 for fiscal 2010, which will mean a reduction of operating hours.

Before the cuts were approved April 7, Huff had said the proposed cuts "would affect us drastically if they become a reality." The approved cuts will limit the center's hours after 4 p.m., which means less revenue for the center.

"That's when we make our money," Huff said. The cuts could also trickle down to other programs and services offered at the center, she said.

For seniors using the center, maintaining these services is dire, Solbach said.

"My husband [Crandall] passed away 13 years ago and being all alone, this has really changed my life," Solbach said. "If it weren't for the programs here, I would be at home alone."

Contact the reporter at [hhobbs@timespapers.com](mailto:hhobbs@timespapers.com)

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