

AGING AHEAD

Supporting the journey.

WINTER 2022

Keeping you Connected

Vaccine Info

For assistance locating a COVID -19 vaccine and arranging transportation, please call us at 636-207-4209.

Friendly Caller Program

Volunteers are paired with individuals to make regular social telephone calls to help us all stay connected. To learn more, call 636-207-0847.

Meals on Wheels

Helping nearly 2500 homebound older adults and their caregivers receive a meal and live a nourished life. Call 636-207-0847 for more info or to get started.

CHOICE

Presentations and activities offered virtually and at select community locations, including the Edward Jones YMCA. Register to learn all about these programs and lunch options.
www.agingmissouri.org

Community Options and Services

Our COS team supports over 1000 individuals and their caregivers each month by connecting them to critical programs and services and helping address a wide variety of challenges.
636-207-0847

Senior Centers

Visit any of our community locations to enjoy meeting new people, learning something new and a delicious lunch. Call 636-207-0847 to help find your closest center.

Website & Newsletters

Highlighting resources, programs and services. The quarterly newsletters are available online, at our centers and now delivered to all receiving home-delivered meals.
www.agingahead.org/newsletter/

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways to help us deliver a difference in the communities we serve. We need you!
www.agingahead.org/volunteer/

Outreach

Spreading the word on the many programs and services available to individuals age 60+ and their caregivers. To make a request, call 636-207-4234 or visit
www.agingahead.org/outreach/.

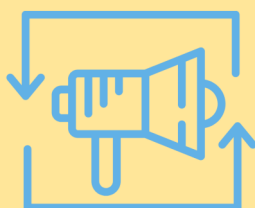


Congratulations to our Newly Certified I & A Specialists

The Community Options and Services Department of Aging Ahead is proud to announce that recently Anton Clark, Kitty Bishop, Sami Dunger, Bonnie Lococo, Janay Pirtle and Lori Zimmerman earned the distinction of Certified Information and Referral Specialist through the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems, Inc. (AIRS). AIRS is a professional membership association promoting the delivery of quality I & R services and is the sole source for setting standards, program accreditation and individual certification. These newly certified staff join Alex Burkhardt, Kathy Craig, Jessica Crawford, Sandy Lynn, Jennifer Meyer, Stephanie Paul, Sue Richmeyer, David Schimweg, Katie, Stacy, Sarah Stout, Petra Williams and Margi Valleroy in attaining this achievement. Please reach out to Aging Ahead's team of AIRS Certified staff to support your journey of aging. We're here for you!



Advocating for You!



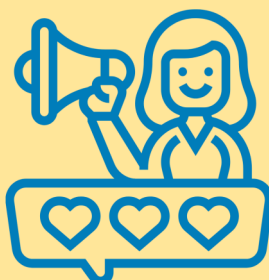
The Silver Haired Legislature is a group of passionate volunteers, aged 60 and older, who advocate on behalf of older Missourians. They care about and listen to the challenges and issues being faced by many individuals across

our area and throughout the state.

Each fall, the 10 delegations of the Missouri Silver Haired Legislature (SHL) meet to discuss, debate, and ultimately vote on which issues will be the focus of their advocacy efforts for the next year. The 2022 "Top Five Priorities" are:

- 1: Funding for the Senior Services Growth and Development Program
- 2: Increase Funding for Area Agency on Aging Meals Programs
- 3: Reinstatement of Funding to Missouri RX Program
- 4: 5 % of Internet Sales Tax to Assist Area Agency on Aging Programs for Seniors
- 5: Expand Low-Cost High-Speed Internet to Rural Areas

If you are interested in sharing something with your SHL legislator OR would like to learn about joining in our efforts to make sure Missouri is a great place to live and age well, please email info@agingahead.org or call 636-207-0847.



Your Voice Matters

Every year, Aging Ahead seeks feedback from the community on the availability of services and areas of remaining need for individuals 60 years of age and older. This feedback is presented in survey form, with dates being scheduled for January for in-person sessions. There will also be a paper survey that can be mailed as well as an online survey that will be available on our website and social media. Stay tuned for more information on Your Voice Matters and the opportunities to make your voice heard.

Property Tax Credit

The COS Department is celebrating a special time of year: property tax credit season! If you have never applied for the Missouri Property Tax Credit (MO-PTC), it is a good time to check your eligibility. This benefit is a refund on your property taxes and open to anyone who meets the requirements—even renters. You could get a refund of up to \$750 (renters) or \$1100 (owners). The refund amount is based on your home's real estate taxes (or rent paid to a landlord who pays real estate tax) and your total household income. The application is due April 15 each year, but you can file up to 3 prior years. There is an online application on the Missouri Department of Revenue website or a paper form.

To qualify, you must meet one of the following:

- You or your spouse were age 65+ as of December 31, 2021.
- You or your spouse are 100% disabled.
- You are age 60+ and receiving surviving spouse social security benefits as of December 31, 2021.

In addition, there are income guidelines:

Renters' annual income is under:

- \$27,500 (single)
- \$29,500 (married)

Homeowners' annual income is under:

- \$30,000 (single)
- \$34,000 (married)

If you are unsure whether or not you qualify, or need assistance applying, the COS

Department offers support at: 636-207-4213.



What is "Intuitive Eating"?

Intuitive eating is an "anti-diet" approach which can be used alongside mindful eating techniques to eat based on your body's cues for hunger and fullness. This practice includes permission to eat **without** restriction, eating without distractions to pay close attention to the body's hunger and fullness cues as well as likes and dislikes, and daily meditation or mindfulness to become more connected with the body.

How can I practice intuitive eating?

- Pay particularly close attention to how you feel before, during, and after a meal. Do you feel very full? Do you still feel hungry after your meal? Listen to your body!
- Eat using the senses: smell your food, pay attention to how it tastes, and think about texture as you're eating. Does this food taste good to you? If it does, what do you like about it?
- Eat without distractions. We can miss the purpose of mindful eating if we are having a meal while watching tv, scrolling through social media, or driving.
- Removing the "diet" mentality. Much of this practice begins with the breakdown and removal of the idea of dieting for weight loss. Restricting calories and certain foods can lead to disordered eating patterns, a decrease in trust to honor the body's cues and instincts, and often leads to a rebound weight gain after restriction.

Intuitive Eating is not: A diet, A way of restriction from calories or foods you love , or A weight loss plan.

Some may say, "I can't control myself around food." Or, "I'm worried if I remove restriction that I won't be able to stop eating." By choosing foods that are nutritious and foods you enjoy, you can take the intuitive eating approach to trusting your body and feeling more confident in how to nourish it.

Disclaimer: this is not a medical diet. If you have specific nutrition needs due to a medical condition, please consult a medical professional before making major changes in your diet.



AEC Corner

"Mind the Gap" is a safety announcement broadcasted in the London Subway due to safety concerns of the gap between the train and the platform. Adaptive Equipment & Caregiving Corner is asking Caregivers to "Mind the Gap" in care that is created when a loved one is discharged home from a hospital or skilled facility until home health care is initiated. One night at home, without proper preparation, can be disastrous. Bringing a loved one home can be very stressful, thus we promote being proactive rather than reactive in this situation.

The best way to do this as a caregiver is to perform a Home Safety Check before your loved one returns home. The top 3 areas of the home to address prior to your loved one's return are:

1. Comfy Chair Height – usually too low
2. Toilet Height – usually too low
3. Bed Height – usually too high

If you do nothing else, take care of these 3 areas to improve your loved one's successful transition home.

Adaptive Equipment & Caregiving Corner's mission is to help maintain function and safety for both caregivers and their loved ones. As part of this mission, we provide educational videos to assist caregivers. We are working with Aging Ahead to provide you the tools to do just that.

Scan the QR code with your phone or type in:

<https://aecorner.video/video/agingaheadaaa/home-safety-series-intro1>

Follow the instructions in the comment section below the video to get started. AECorner wishes you a Happy and Safe Holidays. Take care and don't forget to "Mind the Gap". If you need more support in your role as a caregiver, please call Aging Ahead at 636-207-0847.



Vaccine Information:

Over 3 million Missourians have received the COVID-19 vaccine. Are you ready to join them? Missouri is currently vaccinating anyone age 5 and up. The Department of Health and Senior Services has outlined important information to help you make the choice for your family and community. For more information on receiving the vaccine and accessing transportation to the appointment, please call Aging Ahead at 636-207-4209. <https://covidvaccine.mo.gov/>

Donating Made Easy

Donating to Aging Ahead is now easier than ever with our new QR Code! Using your smartphone, open your camera and point it at the code to scan. You will be brought directly to the Aging Ahead donation page on our website. Thank you for continuing to **support the journey;** we couldn't do it without you!

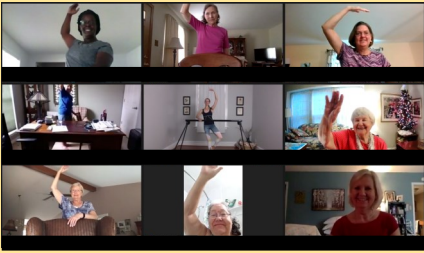


Now Hiring!

Aging Ahead offers a friendly work environment, advancement opportunities, great hours, comprehensive benefits, as well as the satisfaction of a career that also makes a positive difference in your community. Check out our current openings at www.agingahead.org or by calling 636-207-0847.



CHOICE offers many... well, choices!



The Aging Ahead CHOICE program has continued to grow this year with virtual programming offered through

Zoom. Aging Ahead remains committed to keeping our community safe, while providing social connection opportunities for older adults, even from their own homes. Through our 2021 CHOICE program, we have offered over 156 virtual presentations and have connected with more than 2800 participants!

In addition to our virtual programming, we are slowly adding limited in-person options based on the policies and guidelines of our partner locations. In September 2021, we began a partnership with the Brentwood Community Center, offering in-person presentations, up to twice a week. Fol-



lowing social-distancing guidelines, participants can enjoy a wide variety of programs and a delicious lunch! Aging Ahead's dedicated volunteers have delivered over 200 meals to the participants of those in-person workshops and classes! In October, we were thrilled to bring back our wildly successful Y's CHOICE program at the Edward Jones YMCA on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9am – 1pm. Participants at Y's CHOICE enjoy exercise, socialization, games, crafts, and a healthy meal they can either share with others at the YMCA or take home for later. The delicious lunches include a variety of hearty sandwiches, salads, and fresh fruit.

A big THANK YOU to those who have enjoyed our programs this year. It's been wonderful to be back together – both virtually and in-person. If you'd like to join us, please check out the CHOICE program schedule - we have something for everyone! To enquire about any of our programs or workshops, please visit our website at <https://www.agingahead.org/what-we-do/choice/> or call Jean, at 636 207-4227.



South Central Pension Rights Project

Questions about your Pension Benefits? South Central Pension Rights Project can help. "I had been receiving a monthly benefit from my late husband's pension for 23 years. Then the pension plan suddenly decided I was no longer eligible for it. The pension counseling project helped me get my pension back. I don't know what I would have done without their help." said Doris

D, an 85 year old widow. A predictable and secure pension provides peace of mind and improves your life in many ways. Pension income increases your financial freedom and expands your choices for enhanced health, nutrition, living conditions, and overall independence well beyond retirement age. The South Central Pension Rights Project provides assistance free of charge to anyone with a pension question or problem regardless of age, income or value of the claim. They can also assist in finding pensions you may not realize you have earned. Their attorneys and paralegals provide services over the phone or by mail. You are eligible if you currently live or work (or have ever lived or worked) in Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Texas or Oklahoma while earning the pension. Also, you are eligible if the company or pension plan is headquartered or has operations now within those states. Call 1-800-443-2528 to speak with the South Central Pension Rights Project or go online at www.southcentralpension.org.



Friendly Caller Program

Aging Ahead responds to the critical needs of older adults in St. Louis, St. Charles, Franklin, and Jefferson counties in many ways. The *Friendly Caller Program* was introduced last spring to help address social isolation among individuals in our service area. Trained volunteers are connected to an older adult for friendly phone conversations, providing ongoing socialization, connection, and an opportunity to make a new

friend.

Meet Kevin, an Aging Ahead volunteer who fell in love with *the Friendly Caller Program*! Kevin cared for his mother and noticed that nothing gave her more comfort and happiness than simply calling and checking in on her regularly. ***"It felt good making her day and letting her know that someone cared for her. She lived alone, and sometimes I was the only person she talked to in a day."*** After Kevin's mother passed away, he felt driven to make a difference in the lives of other older adults struggling with loneliness. He reached out to Aging Ahead's Volunteer Coordinator, Laura Connors and once trained, Kevin began calling three participants who now feel more connected to our community. ***"I really enjoy making the calls and connecting with my folks. It's not a job or chore for me, I genuinely care, and my folks know that. The loneliness can really get to a person, so I'm just happy to help."***

Studies have shown that social isolation results in the same health risks as smoking 14 cigarettes daily. Not only are these calls "friendly", but they can also help to improve a person's quality of life!

The *Friendly Caller Program* has already made a big impact in the lives of our participants as shared by "C", ***"It's so good to hear a voice and it's life affirming that I'm not forgotten. The Friendly Caller Program really helps reduce my isolation. To know someone cares means just everything to me."*** If you are interested in the *Friendly Caller Program*, please email or call Laura at lconnors@agingahead.org or (314) 413-4710.

Generous Group Helping Seniors

What a haul! An overwhelming amount of donations by fellow Senior Resource Team (SRT) members were brought to Cedarhurst of Tesson Heights just before Christmas to benefit Aging Ahead's South County Senior Center's homebound seniors.

SRT is a group of professionals and community members who work together to address the problems associated with older adults. The group meets monthly under the guidance of Joyce Jackson, Outreach Coordinator at Cedarhurst Senior Living of Tesson Heights, who does an outstanding job of arranging for speakers and networking opportunities.

For the past several years SRT has held a shelf staple food drive and a raffle of donated gift baskets to benefit the homebound seniors of the South County Center. This year the group added personal care items such as shampoo, lotion, tissues, etc., so that every South County homebound client can receive a holiday gift bag of goodies just before the holidays.

"The food and personal items are such a welcomed surprise for our clients who are feeling especially lonely and isolated during the holiday season," said Pamela Guest, Senior Resource Administrator at South County Center. "The monetary donations and the raffle proceeds will enable staff to send additional and much needed surprise gifts to our seniors throughout the year."

A special thank you to SRT for outdoing itself once again!



2021 Aging Ahead Stats

Agency Meals

Congregate Meals 2,430
Home Delivered Meals 744,418

Information & Assistance

Phone Calls 11,712

Volunteer Support

268 People Volunteered 7,464 hours

Family Caregiver Services

1,533 Clients Served

Whiskers on Wheels

Delivered 11,900 lbs of Food
114 Clients with 254 Pets

Friendly Caller Program

21 Clients in the Program
18 Volunteers Trained and Making Calls
116 Volunteer Hours Logged

CHOICE Program

Participants 3,560
Virtual Programs 156

Newsletter

31,668 Copies Emailed
6,532 Printed Copies Delivered

Online Numbers

Website Views 109,027
Social Media Posts 305
Social Media Reach 27,451

*Numbers through 11-30-21

Aging Ahead & Edward Jones Miles for Meals 5K Run/Walk

The 4th Annual Miles for Meals 5k was held virtually for the second year. With 93 participants and 8 sponsors, we raised over \$14,000. This helped us provide 1,688 meals to homebound older adults and their caregivers.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors for helping us deliver a difference: Edward Jones, Oasis Senior Advisors, Anthem, Axius Financial, Comprehensive Benefits, NHC Healthcare, The Estep Law Firm, New Market Connections. Stay tuned as plans for the 6th annual 5KRun/Walk are being finalized www.agingahead.org. Thank you All!

Miles for Meals by the Numbers



93 People Participated

\$14,355.76 was Raised



1,688 Meals Delivered

Anthem

Stay healthy while staying at home

Our Medicare plans bring care to you

Your health is important, and even more so in these times. That is why our Anthem Medicare Advantage plans offer you access to doctors and nurses without ever having to leave home. And your local agent is also on call to answer any questions you have about how to get the most from your plan.

How to stay healthy without leaving home:



Online doctor visits from your computer, smartphone, or tablet



Answers to your health questions from our 24/7 NurseLine



Online access to the SilverSneakers® fitness program with on-demand workout videos and live classes, plus health and nutrition tips



Prescriptions mailed directly to you so you don't have to drive or wait in line

1-on-1 help in person, online, or over the phone

Newsletter Ad Space Available

Do you want to see your ad here and support older adults in the community, contact Jan Keith at jkeith@agingahead.org.



**Adaptive Equipment
& Caregiving
Corner**

MAKING CAREGIVING SAFER & EASIER

Visit: www.AECorner.com

Email: AECorner15@gmail.com

Call: (618)206-8401

Easy-to-Understand Videos | Helpful Caregiver Tips | Links to Senior Service Resources

Aging Ahead thanks the advertisers included in this newsletter for their financial support. Please understand that Aging Ahead is in no way recommending or promoting these entities.

#HumbleBrag



Aging Ahead is fortunate to have a network of employees so dedicated to our mission of supporting individuals through the journey of aging, that some of them just stay...for 35

years. Cindy Hunt, our DeSoto Senior Center Administrator (SCA), and Margi Valleroy, our Community Options and Services Manager, have both been growing and evolving with the Agency for the past 35 years! Now, that's something to brag about!

Cindy began volunteering with the senior center in DeSoto and fell in love with the opportunity to connect with the older adult patrons. She applied for a job, and never looked back. Cindy began her career as an assistant cook, preparing nutritious meals to congregate and home-delivered clients. Approximately 12 years ago, she became a Senior Center Administrator, ***"I like just about everything about my job. Supporting seniors is what I was meant to do, so I keep going. They call me family, and that feels so good. At the end of the day, that's what matters."*** Cindy discussed life lessons learned from working with Aging Ahead, ***"I learned that stepping out of my box and being comfortable with being uncomfortable can be very rewarding in the end. I'm always learning new things—even now and having a good attitude about change keeps me going."***

Margi began her journey with us as an Information and Referral Specialist and has remained in the same department which is now known as the Community Options and Services department. ***"Working with older adults has always been my heart's desire. Being a part of the Agency and supporting the mission continues to be the perfect fit."*** When asked to impart a word of advice for newer employees, Margi stated, ***"Remember that the Agency is one big team. When one person or department shines, we all***

shine!" She continued by saying, ***"Although I could be doing similar work elsewhere, the reason that I've been here so long are the relationships. I've gone through so many major life changes: marriage, kids, caregiving, losses, and celebrations. I've felt supported through all of them. And the mentors—several amazing women have taught me so much over the years. Working to honor them and in a couple of cases, their memories, has kept me around."***

Aging Ahead would like to thank Cindy and Margi for their unwavering dedication to older adults and the Agency. Their big hearts, creativity, hard work, and positive attitudes have helped shape Aging Ahead into the organization it is today. Thank you!

Caring for the Caregiver

Aging Ahead is excited to share we have partnered with Adaptive Equipment and Caregiving Corner (AEC) to bring caregivers a FREE instructional video library to help improve safety and function of the adaptive equipment used in a home. To access the complete online library, visit www.agingahead.org/ae-corner to get started.

There are a couple of options to move about the library: 1) Click "Series" to see a listing of video or 2) Enter a topic (such as hip) in the search bar to see a list of videos available.

If you would like more information about the video library or our Family Caregiver Support Program, please reach out to our Community Options and Services Dept at 636-207-0847.



Aging Ahead

www.agingahead.org
(636) 207-0847
info@agingahead.org



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