

AGING AHEAD

Supporting the journey.

SUMMER 2022



For nearly 20 years, the lives of Don and Betty have been intertwined with Aging Ahead and the West County center. It's clear that their presence in the Aging Ahead community has touched countless lives along the way.

Seeking out a sense of community, Betty became involved with Aging Ahead's West County center and wanted to share her dancing skills as a way to stay active. An avid dancer, Betty began teaching and leading a weekly line dancing class, and her peers liked it so much that she continued to teach for nearly 17 years! ***"I just love to dance, and it feels good to teach others. I've made so many great friends over the years through***

dancing at the center!" In 2019, Betty suffered a health condition that resulted in leg surgery. She is in pain but is optimistic as ever that she will be back dancing again soon. ***"It's never too late to do something if you're determined, and I always feel supported in that group."***

While Betty was an active dance leader, Don volunteered with Aging Ahead by delivering Meals on Wheels to older adults for over seven years. ***"It's really come full circle. I delivered meals, and now we receive meal deliveries. Isn't life funny like that? I love helping people, and when we needed help, we knew exactly who to call."*** Don and Betty received help from our Community Options Specialist team and signed up for home-delivered meals after Betty's surgery. Don continued by saying, ***"Aging Ahead is just a wonderful blessing. We've met***

great friends, and we feel taken care of, and that's important. We feel we are looked after."

Speaking of full circle, Denise, the volunteer that delivers meals to Don and Betty was a regular in Betty's line dancing class! ***"I looked forward to Betty's classes each week before the pandemic. I'm so glad I get a chance to pop in and say hi when I deliver their meals! They're one of my favorite stops."***

Married for nearly 49 years, Don and Betty are a dynamic duo. They finish each other's sentences and cheer on each other's accomplishments—proud of what the other has done and faced throughout their lives. Don said, ***"For me, Aging Ahead is just that—we are doing it, and I'm only 91. We both have a lot of life in us still. On and up, I say!"***





#Humblebrag: Podcast

Aging Ahead is always looking for new and exciting ways to share important information, impactful stories, and engage with our community. We are proud to introduce our newest venture: a podcast! *Always Aging Ahead* is the official Aging Ahead podcast where we will

discuss topics on aging independently. In each episode, host, Kerri Gallagher, will have conversations with others in the aging network and community, share important resources, discuss critical services, and have a blast while doing it! Our mission is to *support individuals through the journey of aging*, and we couldn't be more thrilled to dive into topics that may help you and your loved ones on the journey!

Always Aging Ahead will release a new episode every month. You can subscribe to our podcast on Spotify or on the Apple podcast app, or you can listen to each episode on the blog page on our website. Join us, won't you? We are delighted to be *Always Aging Ahead* with you!



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Join DHSS in building strong support for elders by knowing the signs of adult abuse and neglect, and reporting them to the Adult Abuse and Neglect Hotline by calling 1-800-392-0210, or reporting online at

<https://health.mo.gov/abuse>



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.





REAL ID—Are You Ready?

Beginning May 3, 2023, residents of every U.S. state and territory will be required to present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or ID card, or another form of ID accepted by the Transportation Security Administration, to board federally regulated domestic flights.

Individuals must also present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or ID card to access federal facilities, including military bases and federal courthouses, and to enter nuclear power plants.



Important Elections Upcoming!

On August 2, 2022, Missouri will hold its Primary Election. The registration deadline to be able to vote in this election is July 6, 2022. The General Election will be held on Nov 8th and the deadline to register for that election is October 12. We encourage all voters to ensure their registration is current by visiting the Secretary of State's website or contacting their local election authority. Registered Missourians who expect to be prevented from going to their polling place on Election Day may vote absentee beginning six weeks prior to an election. For further information or assistance, we would like to encourage all voters to either contact the Secretary of State office at www.sos.mo.gov or by calling 573-751-4936 or reach out to your election authority.

To contact your local voting authority office:

In St Louis County, call 314-615-VOTE

In St Charles County, call 636-949-7550

In Franklin County, call 636-583-6355

In Jefferson County, call 636-797-5486 extension 2

Remember your vote matters!!! Please act now to ensure you are ready to vote in August!



Coming Soon NEW Volunteer Video

A HUGE thank you to all the volunteers that shared their experiences with Aging Ahead while filming our new volunteer video! In addition, thanks to all the center participants at Ferguson senior center and our West County Meals on Wheels clients! We appreciate your help supporting older adults in our community! We look forward to sharing the video soon! Stay tuned!

Saving Money - It makes Cents!

As many of us know, prices are continuing to rise each and every day. When prices rise, it can be difficult to make money stretch and make ends meet. To assist older adults, especially those with a fixed income, we've gathered some tips for those residing in our four-county service area:



Find Free Entertainment—The St. Louis area is lucky to have so many free attractions! From well-known fun in Forest Park with free theatre seats at The Muny and no cost admission to the Zoo, Art Museum, and Missouri History Museum. The metro St. Louis area is a gateway of fun. Additionally, our agency's CHOICE program has free Zoom programming to bring the fun right into your home.



Utilize the Library – Libraries are much more than books these days, they're a community hub. Some library branches can even come to you via curbside and home delivery. Resources that can be checked out of libraries include magazines, e-books, DVDs, activity kits, and more. Different libraries in the area offer access to resources galore including genealogy information, notarization services, internet access, computer classes, and more. Like they say, "Having fun isn't hard when you've got a library card!" Check with your local library branch for specific resources available to you.



Get a Breath of Fresh Air - If outdoor activities are more your style, check out Laumier Sculpture Park as well as Missouri State Parks like the Mastodon Historical Area and Meramec State Park. If you're in the market for a new friend, agencies

like Oasis hold walking classes where you can enjoy both fresh air and company.



Buy what you can Second-Hand – If something in your house breaks or you're in need of some new-to-you clothing, local thrift shops and secondhand stores are fantastic. Additionally, the internet has opened the doors to online consignment shops across the country. Besides the benefits of saving money, you'll also help the planet!



Take Advantage of Discounts – There's a great deal of local businesses that offer older adult discounts. Several stores have senior days when older adults can utilize special offers. You never know where you could save money, so don't be afraid to ask!



Get a Benefits Check-Up - There may be free money out there waiting for you! Our agency has Community Options Specialists that are happy to discuss benefit eligibility. COS can help people apply for all kind of benefits from applying for benefits to help reduce the cost of home internet to Property Tax Relief Credit to the unique Farmer's Market program, our COS department is here to help!

Though times may be tough, creativity and community can help get us through difficult times. Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help from your local resources. Our Community Options Specialist are here to help and can be reached at 636-207-0847.



Volunteer contributions allow **Aging Ahead** to expand our services well beyond our funding capabilities. We are currently seeking volunteers to assist with:

- Delivering Meals on Wheels in St. Clair, MO
- Friendly Caller, help older adults remain connected to their community
- CLAIM help older adults understand Medicare healthcare benefits

To learn more, visit our website under **Get Involved** to complete volunteer information or call or email Laura Conners at lconners@agingahead.org or 636-207-4204.



SUMMER SAFETY FOR OLDER ADULTS



Wear sunscreen and use it correctly.



Avoid direct sun, especially between 10am and 4pm.



Wear sunglasses any time you're outdoors.



Stay hydrated—drink fluids even if you don't feel thirsty.



Wear loose-fitting clothing. natural fibers like cotton are best.



Cool your home with air conditioning or fans, or go to a cooler place.

Know the signs of Heatstroke:

- Fainting, unconsciousness
- Confusion, agitation, acting strangely
- Body temperature higher than 104
- Dry, flushed skin, no sweating
- Very rapid or very slow pulse

Heatstroke is an emergency. Call **911** right away.



How to Find the Best Nutrition Information on the Internet

You can find just about anything on the internet, from how to change a tire to buying your favorite pair of socks to checking the scores of your favorite sports team. Unfortunately, that also means that there is a lot of misinformation on the internet. The world of nutrition is probably one of the most confusing areas of the internet to navigate. Below are some tips for how to look for websites with helpful and hopefully less confusing information.

American Diabetes Association—www.diabetes.com
How to treat and manage diabetes, healthy recipes, exercises, and how to check blood sugar

American Heart Association—www.heart.org
Ways to identify a Heart Attack or Stroke, information on eating for a healthy heart, recipes, sleep and stress management tools, and many other resources

U.S. Department of Agriculture—www.myplate.gov
Information on healthy eating, shopping on a budget, exercise, nutrition label reading, and other resources

National Kidney Foundation— www.kidney.org
Treatment and support for kidney disease, including recipes and disease management

What about other forms of media, like blogs, podcasts, and social media posts?

This can be tricky to understand, but please check your source! Does the person giving advice have sources or further links to research you can review yourself? Who funds the website and information? Does the information sound reasonable? For example, if someone's suggesting you eat nothing but cabbage soup for 3 weeks, you may not be getting reasonable nutrition information!

Websites that end in the following are likely more trusted sites for valuable information. .gov, .edu, and .org

Scholar.google.com, is also a great source for research articles.

CHOICE updates:

Since March 2020, things have looked a lot different for CHOICE. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we sprang into action and started offering virtual programs via Zoom in June 2020. Over 2 years later, these virtual programs remain highly successful and well-attended! We are excited to share our virtual CHOICE programs will continue to be offered on Mondays and Wednesdays moving forward, even as we begin to offer in-person programs. Please visit our website for a list of upcoming programs: www.agingmissouri.org, click on Become a Member.

Y's CHOICE is back at the Edward Jones YMCA and is held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9am-1pm. Participants are transported to the YMCA from their senior living facilities, enjoy all Y facilities, socialize and are served a healthy lunch. If you'd like to inquire more about this program and how to join, please contact Jean Sotomayor at (636) 207-4227.

Aging Ahead continues to partner with Brentwood Community Center providing in-person CHOICE programs. This site is located in Brentwood at 2505 S Brentwood Blvd. You can see presentations listed on their website and/or contact Allison Koger at (akoger@brentwoodmo.org) to register and order a lunch. **Upcoming programs include:** 10 warning Signs of Alzheimer's, July 12 at 10am, Cognition and You, Aug 15 at 10am, and the Importance of Quality Sleep, Oct 27 at 10am.

Aging Ahead works with partners to bring the community Chronic Disease Self-Management workshops including: Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Disease, Diabetes and Chronic Pain. These workshops are held once a week for 6-weeks with topics including making healthy food choices, increasing physical activity and exercising safely, coping with pain and fatigue, communicating effectively with your health team, and developing action plans to improve your health and wellbeing. If you are a loved one suffers from a chronic disease, please consider seeking out one of our workshops. You can contact Jean Sotomayor at Aging Ahead (636) 207-4227 for details of upcoming workshops. www.marc.org/msnclases

We hope to see you at an upcoming CHOICE program and will continue to work to bring more programs to your area.



Tina Compton O'Fallon: 35-year Anniversary

Not many people can say they've worked at the same organization for 35 years, but Tina Compton in O'Fallon can, and that's amazing! Tina started her career with Aging Ahead in 1987 as a dishwasher in St. Charles, and now she's an assistant cook at the O'Fallon location, preparing nutritious meals for congregate and home-delivered older adults. ***"I've stayed so long because I love the people we serve, and my coworkers! It feels good to make someone smile every day; it really makes a difference."*** Tina's dedication to Aging Ahead participants along with her cooking skills are infamous. She's well-known for her specialty cream puffs. When asked to provide insight to new employees of Aging Ahead, Tina said with a smile, ***"Just enjoy the work you do. Stay positive and keep moving."***

Aging Ahead would like to thank Tina for her unwavering dedication to older adults and the Agency. Her hard work and positive attitude have helped shape Aging Ahead into the organization it is today. Thank you!



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.



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Adopt-A-Route

The Adopt-a-Route program provides an excellent way for companies and organizations to engage in community service by delivering a midday meal to homebound older adults in our community. We are pleased to announce **Dedicated Senior Medical Center** is helping deliver meals in University City and **Autumn Ridge Residences** is delivering meals in Herculaneum. Thank you! We can't do it alone! For more information visit our website or contact Volunteer Coordinator, Laura Connors. lconnors@agingahead.org or call 636-207-4204.

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



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Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

Aging Ahead and Missouri Department of Agriculture have partnered to provide seniors with fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers markets.

The Missouri Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides benefit vouchers to:

- Low-income seniors (60 years+)
- Eligible seniors receive 10 vouchers (\$5 each), totaling \$50 annually
- Vouchers can be redeemed June 1-October 31, 2022
- Eligible items include Fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs and honey

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Age Verification (one of the following)

- Driver License
- Birth Certificate

Income Verification (one of the following)

Maximum gross household income of not more than 185% of the annual federal poverty level.

- Pay Stub, income statement, W-2 or tax return
- Participant in Missouri's Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Residency Verification (one of the following)

- Utility bill
- Paycheck
- Bank Statement
- Government-issued check
- Paid property tax receipt
- Housing rental contract

If you are interested in learning more about this program or to register, **JOIN US** at one of our senior centers. Contact your local center for dates and times, www.agingahead.org.



Free COVID-19 Self-Tests are available!

Get yours now! Can Aging Ahead help you order a free COVID-19 self-test kit and have it mailed to your home.

Or help you schedule a COVID-19 vaccination or booster? We can help with transportation, too! Call an Aging Ahead Community Options Specialist to receive help 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/>

The Department of Health cannot replace lost CDC Vaccination Record cards received at the time of a COVID-19 vaccine. If you need a report showing proof of receiving a COVID-19 vaccination, please reach out to the department's [Medical Records division](#). There is a \$10 cash fee for vaccination records. To speak with a Medical Records representative, please call 314-657-1548.