



### US Aging Conference

Attending the USAging Answers on Aging Annual Conference provided several Aging Ahead staff with the opportunity to come together with local leaders, government experts, policymakers, business leaders, and other Aging Network practitioners and partners to share knowledge, insights and new directions in the field of aging.

The USAging Conference provided attendees with peer-to-peer learning, insight into federal policy and national trends that affect local communities, and tremendous opportunities for learning. In addition, the conference offered different ways to learn about and discuss innovative approaches, hot topics, current issues in aging, replicable programs, new opportunities for procuring sustainable funding streams and more. The staff returned home full of new insights, best practice examples, program ideas and connections to other aging colleagues who understand the challenges and opportunities ahead.



USAging is the national association representing and supporting the network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocating for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs. Prior to August 25, 2021, USAging was known as the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging. USAging and their members, which includes Aging Ahead, work to improve the quality of life and health of older adults and people with disabilities, including supporting people with chronic illness, people living with dementia, family caregivers and others who want to age well at home and in the community. Together, we are working to help ensure that all people can age well. Source: USAging.org



### Congratulations, Lisa Knoll!

This year, NOCA was proud to recognize five honorees who stand out for their commitment to creating the innovative and inclusive programs, services, and spaces that every older adult needs to Age Well and Age With Dignity.

Congratulations to CEO, Lisa Knoll, for winning the National Council on Aging 2023 Trailblazers in Aging Innovator Award for creating innovative solutions to improve the health and economic security of older adults.



## Introducing Pat Bowers

**Meet Pat Bowers** SHL Delegate Tom Eysell interviewed Pat Bowers, delegation First Vice-President of the Missouri Silver Haired Legislature and House Speaker Pro-Tem.



## September is Fall Prevention Month

Falls among Americans occur at a staggering rate of 25% of all individuals over age 65. The fall rate for Missouri's older adults is higher at 27.3%. Although most people think falls are an inevitable part of aging. However, they are not! Exercising, managing your medications, having your vision checked, and making your living environment safer are all steps you can take to prevent a fall. To decrease your chances of falling, consider the list below provided by the National Council on Aging to make sure your home is safe.

### Avoid Falls at Home:

#### 5 Easy Ways to Make Your Home Safer

1. **Clear the way.** Remove tripping hazards, like throw rugs, cords, or clutter on the floor. Move furniture to create a path for safe movement.
2. **Light it up.** Replace lightbulbs with bright, non-glare bulbs to help you see around the house.
3. **Have a seat.** Place a chair in your bedroom so you can sit while getting dressed or putting shoes on.
4. **Secure some support.** Buy a shower seat, grab bar, and an adjustable height handheld showerhead to make bathing easier.
5. **Store for success.** Keep frequently used items between waist and shoulder height, making them easier to access without the need for a stepstool or unsafe reaching.

## South Central Pension Rights Project

Questions about your Pension Benefits? 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. Call 1-800-443-2528 to speak with the South Central Pension Rights Project or at [www.southcentralpension.org](http://www.southcentralpension.org).

**How long have you been a member of the Silver-Haired Legislature?** 10 years

**What caused you to join the Silver-Haired Legislature?** I have always been interested in senior issues and discovered the Silver-Haired Legislature through an article in the *St. Louis American*. I came to a meeting and was initially voted in as an alternate.

**How long have you lived in Franklin County?** 11 yr

**Tell us a bit about your background - what did you do before retiring, what interests do you have these days (apart from senior advocacy)?** Much of my career was in contracts and procurement. I bought everything from computers to planes to trains. I retired from the Defense Contract Management Agency and also served in the U.S. Navy Reserves for twenty years. I am an avid reader and enjoy travel and spending time with my grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Another organization I am active with is Neighbors United Undoing Racism. We are active in Franklin County programs such as Stories Matter and Vacation Culture School. The Stories Matter program places books featuring Black and brown children in the county libraries and the Vacation Culture School focuses on educating people about different cultures and ethnic groups. I also chair the Martin Luther King celebration each year in Franklin County. And, I am a new notary!

**What do you think are the biggest issues facing seniors today?** I think the biggest issues facing seniors today are: The ability to stay in their homes, Lack of access to transportation, and Voting access and education.

**What would you like to say to someone interested in joining the SHL?** I would say "Do it!" I enjoy the camaraderie, and the knowledge I have gained about senior issues and the political process has been invaluable.





### We Need You, Volunteer Today!

Our volunteers are the heart and soul of what we do, and we couldn't meet the needs of our community without them. Meals on Wheels service is expanding rapidly, and we have an urgent need for more volunteers in many of our service areas. Areas that are recruiting meal delivery volunteers right now are West County, South County, Affton, Ferguson, St. Charles, Sullivan, St. Clair, House Springs, Crystal City and DeSoto. If you are looking for a rewarding and meaningful way to serve your community and have 1 ½ to 2 hours a week to give, please reach out to Volunteer Coordinator, Lydia Franklin to learn more at 636-207-0847 or lfranklin@agingahead.org, or visit our website: [www.agingahead.org/volunteer](http://www.agingahead.org/volunteer)



### Senior Centers

We are excited many of our centers are now open five days a week for in-person activities and meals! All of our centers are serving hot meals as well. Please contact your center to find out which days of the week meals are served and when to make lunch reservations. Menus and activities can be found on our website under Community Locations.

### CHOICE

CHOICE has expanded beyond one library location for the first time since spring of 2020. We are now in 2 different library locations and continue to rotate throughout the region. We are pleased to be serving the patrons at the Thornhill library branch in West County and Florissant Valley in North County through September. By October we will be at the Lewis and Clark Library in North County on Fridays and at Grant's View Library in South County on Tuesdays. We continue to gather online through Zoom to enjoy community and learn from dynamic presenters every Monday at 10am. Every Thursday we meet at Brentwood Community Center and have loved moving and learning with Vitality in Motion while growing relationships. Y's CHOICE has invited us to be creative, laugh, and play games all while providing opportunities for fitness and wellness. Check our website for an update on our latest programs!




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 Call: (618)206-8401  
 Easy-to-Understand Videos | Helpful Caregiver Tips | Links to Senior Service Resources

### Did You Know Aging Ahead has a Podcast?

Aging Ahead is always looking for ways to share important information, impactful stories, and engage with our community. *Always Aging Ahead* is our official Aging Ahead podcast. 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! *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.



## IN A CRISIS, FEELING OVERWHELMED?

If you or someone you know is suicidal or in emotional distress, call 988.

A year ago this July, the 988 three-digit dialing code for the national suicide and crisis hotline became the phone number for all mental health, substance abuse, and suicide crises. People can call or text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org if they are in crisis or are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support. According to [Kansas City Public Radio](#), Missouri and Kansas answered more than 90% of 988 calls this past year. The remaining 10% were answered at the national level. Missouri has also launched its own website, [missouri988.org](#).

## STAY SAFE. STAY UP TO DATE.

Protect your health and the people you love. Vaccines are safe, effective, save millions of lives and are the best defense against many infectious diseases. If you are 65+ or have a compromised immune system, you may be more vulnerable to certain diseases, so get vaccinated today. **You have the power to prevent and protect.** Contact Aging Ahead at 636-207-0847 for information on receiving vaccines and accessing transportation to appointments and upcoming vaccination clinics.



## Coming Soon: Aging Ahead Flu and Covid Vaccine Events

Aging Ahead will hold Flu and Covid vaccination events at Senior Centers and Community Locations this fall! Stay up to date on our website to learn more about when and where vaccination clinics will be held!

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AHEAD

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(636) 207-0847  
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\*These providers and/or pharmacies will be a provider in our Medicare advantage network in 2023. They may also contract with other plans. Aetna Medicare is a HMO, PPO plan with a Medicare contract. Our SNPs also have contracts with State Medicaid programs. Enrollment in our plans depends on contract renewal. Plan features and availability may vary by service area. We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options.

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## 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.

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