

NEA Aging Today

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 on Aging**

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Communities of Strength

In tough times, communities find strength in people—and people find strength in their communities. In the past year, we’ve seen this time and again as friends, neighbors, and businesses have found new ways to support each other.

In our communities, older adults are a key source of this strength. Through their experiences, successes, and difficulties, they have built resilience that helps them to face new challenges. When communities tap into this, they become stronger too.

Each May, the Administration for Community Living leads the celebration of Older Americans Month (OAM). This year’s theme is Communities of Strength, recognizing the important role older adults play in fostering the connection and engagement that build strong, resilient communities.

Strength is built and shown not only by bold acts, but also small ones of day-to-day life—a conversation shared with a friend, working in the garden, trying a new recipe, or taking time for a cup of tea on a busy day. And when we share these activities with others—even virtually or by telling about the experience later—we help them build resilience too.

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This year, Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging (NEI3A) will celebrate OAM by encouraging community members to share their experiences. Together, we can find strength—and create a stronger future.

Here are some ways to share and connect:

- Look for joy in the everyday: Celebrate small moments and ordinary pleasures by taking time to recognize them. Start a gratitude journal and share it with others via social media, or call a friend or family member to share a happy moment or to say thank you.
- Reach out to neighbors: Even if you can't get together in person right now, you can still connect with your neighbors. Leave a small gift on their doorstep, offer to help with outdoor chores, or deliver a home-cooked meal.
- Build new skills: Learning something new allows us to practice overcoming challenges. Take an art course on line or try a socially distanced outdoor movement class to enjoy learning with others in your community. Have a skill to share? Find an opportunity to teach someone, even casually.
- Share your story: There's a reason storytelling is a time-honored activity. Hearing how others experience the world helps us grow. Interviewing family, friends, and neighbors can open up new

conversations and strengthen our connections.

When people of different ages, backgrounds, abilities, and talents share experiences—through action, story, or service—we help build strong communities. And that's something to celebrate! Please join NEI3A in strengthening

our community through one of our virtual activities such as our virtual senior centers, Tai Chi class, Seniors In Motion exercise classes, Fresh Conversations classes, and caregiver support groups. For more information call 1-800-779-8707, follow us on Facebook, or visit www.nei3a.org.

This virtual Medicare fair is for people turning 65 or joining Medicare because of a disability. Learn about Medicare – and all its parts - to assist you in your initial enrollment decisions. Get trusted, unbiased Medicare education to help you make Medicare choices that best meet your needs.

There will be national expert presenters on Medicare eligibility, enrollment, and coverage options. There will also be exhibitors from state health insurance assistance programs (SHIPs) to answer your individual questions.

There is no cost to attend.
To register go to www.shiphelp.org.



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Thank You Volunteers

We appreciate you!

The past year has been full of uncertainties and new normals. April 18 through 24 is National Volunteer Week. During this time, and all year long, we appreciate every one of our volunteers who helped us through these times, as well as those who helped us before the pandemic. We look forward to having all of our dedicated volunteers back to delivering daily meals and assisting at our centers!





Visit your Local Farmers Market

Farmers markets are becoming more popular, serving not only as a way for people to purchase locally grown produce, but also a way for them to connect and socialize with others in their community. Are you shopping at your local farmers market? If not, here are some reasons you should!

Farm Fresh: The fruits and vegetables at the farmers market are the freshest and tastiest available. Fruits and vegetables you find at the grocery store are often several days old before they reach the produce aisle sometimes going through processes to stimulate ripening. Farmers market foods are as real and fresh as it gets – fresh from the farm!

Enjoy the Season: The food you buy at a local farmers market is seasonal, reflecting the truest flavors. Some nutritionist suggest eating seasonally available foods is better for your body, because that was the way humans ate for thousands of years before refrigeration.

Peak Nutrition: Farmer's market food is generally picked

at the peak of their ripeness when the plants' natural sugars are at their peak. Eating produce when it is ripe not only tastes better, but it also provides the best nutrition possible.

Variety to Spice up Your Life: At the Farmer's Market you will find many different types of fruits and vegetables that you won't find in your local supermarket. And that's not all! Many times the farmers will give you tips on how to cook the items they are selling.

Affordable: You can find a variety of fresh, great tasting produce at more affordable prices than a supermarket.

Connect with Your Community: The Farmers Market is a great place to gather and feel connected to your community - but also keeping safety and COVID requirements in mind. Many Farmers Markets are held outside allowing for extra safety with access to fresh produce!

To find a local farmers market in your area visit: tinyurl.com/iowafarmersmarkets

Farmers Market Checks

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides qualified seniors aged 60 and over with coupons (checks) to use at farmer's markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agriculture programs for unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, herbs, and honey. As of this newsletter's writing, we are assuming checks will once again be distributed through the mail, much like last year, beginning in June. Watch for more details on our website and Facebook pages for updates.

Eligible participants must:

- Be 60 years of age or older, born in or before 1961
- Live in the NEI3A service area
- Gross household income (i.e., before taxes) must be no more than \$23,828 for a single person and \$32,227 for a married couple.

Ten checks totalling \$30 are given to each eligible participant once each program year. The checks are valid through October 31.

NEI3A Partners With Wartburg College to Build the Future for Social Work Students



Social workers help people find ways of living more satisfying and productive lives through counseling, group work, community organizing, advocacy, and social action. An ever-expanding spectrum of human service agencies and organizations rely on the unique skills of professionally-trained social workers. At NEI3A, we rely on our social workers' expertise to help the older individuals we serve with evaluating, locating, and coordinating services they need to remain healthy and independent and save billions in tax dollars by keeping them out of more costly healthcare alternatives.

NEI3A and Wartburg have partnered together for over 20 years, offering internship opportunities to students to give them first-hand experience in the field of social work.

"Social work students and the college in general benefit from partnering with NEI3A because students gain experience that goes far beyond their textbooks. Students expand their skills and their knowledge base through collaborative efforts with NEI3A," stated Tammy Faux, Professor of Social Work at Wartburg College. "Also, many college

students only have limited exposure to both community-based work and helping older adults meet their needs. This partnership helps social work students explore working with older adults and increase their understanding of the range of services our communities offer older adults, adults with disabilities and their support systems."

NEI3A has also benefited from the partnership with Wartburg College.

"We are excited to expand the passion of serving the aging population by introducing students to the field at an early point in their education," stated Kristi Shannon, NEI3A Director of Quality Assurance and Wartburg College grad. "The agency also has the opportunity to stay current on new practices in the social work field as it relates to the older population and utilize the students to take on projects and program evaluations."

Last year, NEI3A started the year with five students at the beginning of the pandemic and two additional through the summer. As everything changed from in-person to virtual, the students jumped right in to help make reassurance calls to individuals

to help assess their needs, playing a pivotal role in limiting their exposure to the virus and remaining healthy.

"NEI3A has provided valuable opportunities for students to work side-by-side with NEI3A staff, Faux added. "These placements are especially valuable

to social work students because, in addition to working with individual clients, they encounter work with families, groups, organizations, and communities - the whole range of social work practice all within one agency."

NEI3A is very enthusiastic about our internship programs. If you would like to learn more contact Bob Schaffer, Director of Employee Services at 1-800-779-8707.

"NEI3A has given me the chance to gain practical experience at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of Social Work. I feel more ready and confident to go on in the field as a new Social Worker to help individuals and families and to develop my community." Imelda Odjo, current Wartburg Intern at NEI3A.

We Appreciate Your Support!

Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging would like to thank our supporters. The donations and grants we receive allow us to live out our mission of empowering older individuals to age with dignity and independence. Thank you to the following first quarter 2021 supporters!

Donations:

- Michael Gerber
- Heather Bartlett
- Network for Good
- Mary Rittweger
- Nancy Colehour
- Kathleen Zane
- Front Stream
- Sisters of Charity BVM
- Westminster Presbyterian Church
- Kathy Westberg
- Kimball Avenue United Methodist Church
- Farmers State Bank
- UPS

Grants:

- Dubuque United Way FEMA
- Winneshiek Community Foundation
- Tama Community Foundation
- United Way Marshalltown
- Grundy Community Foundation
- Chickasaw Community Foundation
- Fayette Community Foundation
- Howard Community Foundation
- Clayton County Foundation

If you would like to donate to help provide valuable services to older individuals, visit our website at www.nei3a.org/support-nei3a or call Lisa Wetzel at 319-874-6879.



The Senior Medicare Patrol: Be On the Lookout, COVID-19 Scams



As the number of people and communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic grows, so do the scams associated with it. Scammers use public health emergencies as opportunities for new fraud schemes, and because older adults are at greater risk for serious illness from COVID-19, they may target older populations.

Scammers rapidly alter their tactics and adapt their schemes to the changing landscape, and we anticipate that they will leverage the COVID-19 vaccine to prey on unsuspecting beneficiaries. Be vigilant and protect yourself from potential fraud concerning COVID-19 vaccines and treatments.

Things you need to know about the COVID-19 vaccine:

- You will not need to pay anything out-of-pocket to get the vaccine during this public health emergency.
- You cannot pay to put your name on a list to get the vaccine.
- You cannot pay to get early access to the vaccine.
- You will not be solicited door to door to receive the vaccine.
- No one from Medicare or Health Department will contact you.

- No one from a vaccine distribution site or health care payer, like a private insurance company, will call you asking for your Medicare number, Social Security number, or your credit card or bank account information to sign you up to get the vaccine.

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) recommends that Medicare beneficiaries:

- Contact your own doctor if you are experiencing potential symptoms of COVID-19.
- Do not give out your Medicare number, Social Security number, or personal information in response to unsolicited calls, texts, emails, home visits, or booths at health fairs and other public venues. If your personal information is compromised, it may be used in other fraud schemes as well.
- Be suspicious of anyone going door-to-door to offer free coronavirus or COVID-19 testing, supplies, treatments, or vaccines.
- Beware of providers offering other products, treatments, or medicines to prevent the virus. Check with your health care provider before paying for or receiving any COVID-19-related treatment.
- If you get a call, text, email

— or even someone knocking on your door — claiming they can get you early access to the vaccine, STOP. That's a scam.

- Carefully review your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB), looking for errors or claims for products or services that weren't received.
- Follow the instructions of your state or local government for other actions you should be taking in response to COVID-19.
- Contact your local SMP for help. SMPs empower and assist Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers to prevent, detect, and report health care fraud, errors, and abuse.

The SMP is ready to provide you with the information you need to PROTECT yourself from Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse; DETECT potential fraud, errors, and abuse; and REPORT your concerns. SMPs help educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries in the fight against health care fraud. Your SMP can help you with your questions, concerns, or complaints about potential fraud and abuse issues. To locate your local SMP, call 1-877-808-2468, email info@smpresource.org, or visit www.smpresource.org.

Join Us for FUN and CONVERSATION about health & food!



New Topics Each Month

Events held on Zoom and Conference Call monthly. There is no cost to participate. For information on joining call Kayla Brincks at 563-422-1014.



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Helpful Tips for Dealing with Hoarding

If you or a loved one has an excessive amount of *stuff* and live in an extremely cluttered environment it could be a sign of hoarding. Hoarding is the collection and failure to discard large quantities of objects to the point where the storage of these items often causes impairment to basic living activities. People who hoard are often resistant to attempts to get rid of anything because of the belief that the items are useful, may be needed for future use, or has great sentimental value.

It is important to distinguish hoarding from collecting. In general, collectors have a sense of pride about their possessions and take great care in displaying them. Those who hoard usually experience embarrassment about their possessions and feel uncomfortable when others see them.

Hoarding behaviors are especially dangerous for seniors because they create

physical dangers that can lead to falls, cause fires, or could prevent emergency workers from reaching them should a medical issue occur.

If you or a loved one has a problem with hoarding and want to make some changes the following tips can help with the process.

1. Safety First: Clear walkways, hallways, and doorways. Identify and remove fire and tripping hazards (e.g. paper next to heating sources) and remove enough items to make space to safely move through the home.

2. Manage Paper: Use three bins or boxes when sorting through piles of paper. Put items that can be recycled, such as newspapers and old magazines, in one, papers to be shredded in another, and personal documents, such as bank statements, in a third.

3. Reduce the Pile of Clothes: Sort through overflowing closets by categories, such as socks,

pajamas, pants, and shirts. Get rid of all clothing that no longer fits; take them to a consignment shop if they are in good condition or throw them away if they have holes or stains. Only keep items that will be regularly worn.

4. Donate right away: When the decision has been made to part with an item, get it out of the house right away to make sure the item doesn't find its way back inside.

5. Secure a Storage Space: There may be many items that may have some monetary value and can be sold. Find a place to store them, away from the home, to sort through and sell at a later time.

6. Consider professional help: If the hoarding problem has existed for several years, the amount of stuff in the home could be overwhelming. Bringing in a professional who has experience with hoarding situations might ease any family tensions and make the process easier.

7. Address underlying issues: Simply cleaning a home will not solve a hoarding issue. Most often hoarding behaviors are a symptom of an anxiety or mood disorder and may be intensified when a person experiences a trauma or feels a loss of control. Consult with a therapist specializing in hoarding to help identify and resolve the issues behind the hoarding behavior.



Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention

Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention offers a gentle exercise option that can help reduce the risk of falling by improving strength, balance, coordination and flexibility. Tai Chi focuses on the mental and spiritual aspects of Chinese martial arts integrated into movement. This low-impact, relaxing form of exercise is ideal for older individuals. We are offering two Tai Chi classes:

Zoom Tai Chi: April 27 - June 18

- Tuesdays and Fridays
- 10:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.
- To sign up call Patty Scholtes at 563-379-9737 or email pscholtes@nei3a.org
- Registration deadline: April 20

Tai Chi in the Park: May 3 - June 18

- Mikkelson Park - New Hampton
- Monday, Wednesday and Fridays
- 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.
- To sign up call Kelly Kuennen at 563-277-6024 or email kkuennen@nei3a.org
- Registration deadline: April 28

Become a Tai Chi Instructor!

- Tai Chi Instructor Training Workshop
- July 7 and July 8 - 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
- Dyersville Social Center - Dyersville
- Registration deadline is June 1.
- Register at <https://tinyurl.com/y57d2t84> or call 319-231-1551.



Home Modification Assistance

Do you want to remain in your home as you age but need some assistance making the proper modifications to your home? We are looking for individuals in Black Hawk County aged 60 and over or disabled who need assistance making home modifications. With this special funding, NEI3A can help with:

- Grab bars
- High rise toilets
- Lift Chairs
- Stairlifts
- Ramps
- Walk-in showers
- Tub cut-outs
- Door widening

Emergency assistance is also available (\$1,000 or less) for:

- Furnace/air conditioning repairs
- Fans
- Utility shut-off prevention

For more information, please call 1-800-779-8707.

See if you qualify for extra help

Julie Woods
 Licensed Sales Agent
563-608-1566, TTY 711

21CST30218C



Lilly is so grateful Roger gets to stay at home...

As his primary caregiver, Lilly struggled to care for her husband at home.



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Sudoku Puzzle

1		4	9					
				6		3	9	5
9	2			4				
		6	2				8	
				5	3		6	9
	4	9			5			1
					6			
		7			8			

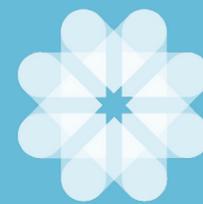
Spring Word Find

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a message about Spring.

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Allergies | Lilies |
| April | March |
| Baseball | May |
| Bees | New Leaves |
| Crocuses | Planting |
| Cyclamens | Rain |
| Daffodils | Renewal |
| Dandelions | Robins |
| Easter | Season |
| Equinox | Snowmelt |
| Flowers | Softball |
| Frogs | Spring Break |
| Golf | Spring Cleaning |
| Grass | Tulips |
| Green | Warmer |
| Growth | Wet |
| Irises | |

Source: Livewire Puzzles

T L E M W O N S S S A R G L A
 G C Y C L A M E N S A L I L P
 G N G R O W T H R L L L R S
 O Y I I D L S A R A I E S N N
 L A L N K A I E B E R R O H E
 F M L O A N F E S G M I P W W
 E N A E E E S F I U L R R A L
 I O B Q R A L E O E C S A B E
 R S T U B E S C D D F O S W A
 I A F I G R N N G L I N R H V
 S E O N N R A E O N I L C C E
 E S S O I D E W W B I R S B S
 S I N X R G E E O A A R M E G
 A Y F L P R O R N M L W P E O
 E T E W S S P I L U T R S S R
 R E T S A E P L A N T I N G F



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In accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Aging Discrimination Act of 1975, it is the policy of Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging to provide services to all persons eligible under the provisions of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, handicap, or age.



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