



# Behind the Wheel

Volume 12, Issue 1  
Winter 2023

Published four times per year by AgeWell Services, 275 W. Clay Ave., Suite 100, Muskegon, MI 49440

## The Wellness Center: Muskegon's Hidden Gem for All Adults

You won't find brassy blondes in tight leotards or Spandex-clad muscle heads. Instead the Wellness Center at Tanglewood Park provides holistic wellness opportunities for all adults, with a focus for those over the age of 55, to be nourished, active, learning and living independently! All at the pace they need and to accommodate any mobility challenges.

Weight lifting, elliptical machines, stationary bikes and exercise classes are held five days a week from early morning to some evenings. There's also ping-pong, wood carving, stitching groups and art classes for enrichment. And when everyone is done with their activities, the Driftwood Café offers a range of beverages, soups and sandwiches made fresh daily from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday.



"People who visit here are amazed at all we have," Wellness Manager Renee Sischo said. "Truly, they call it a hidden gem in the community."

In addition to the offerings at the Wellness Center, senior activities are held across Muskegon County. Aquatic exercise classes are held at the Muskegon Heights Public School Aquatics Center and a handful of stretching exercise, wreath making and other enrichment classes are held in community locations, partnering with the Lunch & Activity Centers across the three-county region served.

Richard S., 77, visits the Wellness Center four days each week. He likes weight lifting, physical fitness classes and swimming. He also meets a friend for a wood carving session each week.

Being physically fit helped him tolerate a harsh course of chemotherapy and beat cancer about four years ago. His oncologist told him at the time that being healthy and active made all the difference, so Richard continues his efforts to exercise and socialize with friends.

"[The Wellness Center] isn't just for physical fitness," he explained. "It's really important for mental fitness too."

The Wellness Center also helped Curtis T. rediscover a sport from his teen years – ping-pong!

After a triple bypass operation, he had to get regular exercise into his life, but at a pace he could manage. He joined the Wellness Center's partner program Silver Sneakers and during his orientation to the cardio machines, Fitness Specialist Francine Calandro asked him if he liked ping-pong.



(Continued on next page)

### (The Wellness Center Continued)

With the help of an intern and other interested players, regular ping-pong sessions are now part of the offerings at the Wellness Center. Curtis had to take a break during autumn after a shoulder replacement surgery, but he's eager to keep the group going, especially during the cooler months when outdoor activities are curtailed by the cold and icy conditions.

Thanks to generous donors, a gently used ping-pong table was donated, along with the funding to purchase a new table and all the other wish list items from the last issue of Behind the Wheel. The Wellness Center also was the focus of AgeWell Services' Giving Tuesday fundraising campaign, an effort to raise \$5,000 for health-related program funds.

Funding for Senior Activities is provided by Senior Resources and the Muskegon County Senior Millage.



## Another Successful and Festive Annual DTE Holiday Meal

At press time, the DTE Energy Holiday Meal was scheduled for Thursday, December 14. We anticipate serving about 1,500 meals to our Meals on Wheels participants and Lunch & Activity Centers in Muskegon, Oceana, and Ottawa counties. Additional details and fun pictures will be available on our blog and in email versions of this newsletter. Be sure to check it out online! Thank you to everyone who made this day possible for older adults in our communities.

## AgeWell Services Wish List

Please consider a contribution toward these wish list items to benefit multiple programs.

- **100 car washes** for Senior Transportation Program vehicles. This helps us make sure the cars are cleaned and well maintained. \$675
- **Three computer tablets** for volunteers to check-in for their volunteer shift for Meals on Wheels and Senior Transportation Program. \$600
- **One heavy-duty wheeled cardboard bin** to eliminate clutter from boxes used to produce meals and help keep the Tanglewood Park kitchen neat and clean throughout the day. \$336
- **One ice bin** for the Driftwood Cafe to increase current drink offers for all guests. \$145
- **One mobile white board** to highlight what is happening in our Community Room at Tanglewood Park daily. \$120

Check out our new Amazon Wish List with a variety of items needed throughout the year: <https://a.co/7A0oQuX>

To make a wish come true, contact Advancement Director Jennifer Drury at 231-733-8635 or via email at [jennifer@agewellservices.org](mailto:jennifer@agewellservices.org).

## Letter from the Director



Last year was a big season of change for AgeWell Services, and many of our team members entered their next season of life: retirement! Just like every company and every sector, we are experiencing a retirement boom. Last year, our “triplets” Sue Cloutier (HR Director), Betty Johnson (Finance Director) and Diane Smith (Advancement Director) retired, as well as long-time Oceana County Meals on Wheels Coordinator Jan Merten. Collectively, these ladies gave 48 years of service to the seniors in West Michigan, each leaving a legacy branded on our team in immeasurable ways.

Now, to introduce the next generation of leaders on our Director’s Team!

Kathy Kasprzyk-Hayes joined our Finance Team in September 2021 and was promoted to director with Betty’s retirement. She and her husband Steve raised two sons who loved life in Reeths-Puffer’s marching band before graduating onto higher ed and their careers. Kathy has an extensive finance background, including a certificate in Nonprofit Accounting.

We were lucky to score another great fit for HR Director, Karen Mogdics. Karen was a former board member and had parents who received Meals on Wheels. She brings over 30 years of experience to AgeWell. In February, you will find her very busy as co-chair of the hit event, Dancing with the Local Stars. Karen and her husband Dan especially love spending time with their two sons, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren.

Our Grants and Contracts Senior Manager took on a new role and new name! Jenny Jordan married Chris Drury in August and received a promotion, now making her Mrs. Jennifer Drury, Advancement Director. Jenny’s background in finance, grants management and donor development make her a well-rounded leader suited to advance the mission of AgeWell Services. Jenny and Chris have three rambunctious dogs to keep them active.

A legacy is created when we nurture others to grow, expand, and learn. We pay homage to all of the retirees from AgeWell and other companies who still have lots of life to HAVE FUN! If you’re newly retired, keep active! Visit us at Tanglewood Park to find out the perks of active aging.

Kris Collee  
Executive Director

P.S. Want to meet Jenny for a cup of coffee? She would love to hear from you! 231-733-8635 or email her: [jennifer@agewellservices.org](mailto:jennifer@agewellservices.org).

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### Mission Statement

AgeWell Services invites  
you to redefine age!

We provide vital  
connections to keep  
you nourished, active,  
learning and living  
independently.

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Is your name and mailing address correct?  
Please contact Colleen G. Steinman with any changes:  
Email: [Colleen@agewellservices.org](mailto:Colleen@agewellservices.org)  
Phone: 231-412-7966



SAVE THE DATE

*AgeWell Services of West Michigan Presents*

# Heels for Meals & More

*9th Annual Fundraiser*

**Saturday, April 20, 2024 | 6:00pm**  
Trillium Event Center  
17246 VanWagoner Rd. | Spring Lake, MI 49456



More information at

[AGEWELLSERVICES.ORG](http://AGEWELLSERVICES.ORG)

