



BEHIND THE WHEEL

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Special Edition
December 2024

Help Us Bridge the Gap

In Oceana, Muskegon, and Ottawa counties, there was a 19% increase of adults ages 60 and older over the last ten years. The state of Michigan now ranks the 14th highest population of elders in the United States, while at the same time Michigan's population is declining. AgeWell Services has properly planned for this growth over the last 16 years, yet we never saw the COVID-19 pandemic coming. Instead, it demonstrated the intense need for our programs. **Our vulnerable population continues to wait for services. Will you help us BRIDGE THE GAP for hundreds of older adults through year-end donations and volunteering?**

AgeWell is experiencing a reduction in federal funding, loss of pandemic relief funding, and high inflation of costs at the same time demand for services is rising. It is causing us to run in a deficit. **We cannot meet the continued demand for our programs without your help.**

We share more about ways that you can help, our programs and impact of the programs in this special edition of the Behind the Wheel newsletter. Additionally, throughout December, we'll be sharing on social media and newly launched Wheels in Motion e-newsletters the impact your support has made in the past and will continue to make in the future.

Will you help us BRIDGE THE GAP? We can't do this without you.

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Note from the Executive Director



Access to services for ALL older adults is at the core of our mission and services. Not being able to meet the demand is beyond heartbreaking, but we're doing everything we can to ensure that participants aren't impacted. Operations are running lean, team members are working diligently to be extra conscious about spending, we're leveraging new funding sources while rallying against further reductions in funding from other sources and we're evaluating every expense prior to purchasing. **But even with these changes, we're asking you to help us BRIDGE THE GAP for hundreds of older adults through year-end donations and volunteering.**

Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for helping us end the wait.

Kris VanderStelt

Kris VanderStelt
Executive Director

How You Can Help Us Bridge the Gap

Donate. The impact from a financial donation that is most meaningful to you or contributing towards a wish list item supports thousands of older adults. Envelope is included in this newsletter or you can donate through our website - <https://agewellservices.org/support-agewell-services>

Volunteer. Our programs require over 300 annual volunteers to support our programs. From one hour a week to four hours per day, there are a variety of opportunities. Learn more on our website - <https://agewellservices.org>

Help Advocate. Engage with us on social media. Likes, comments and shares go a long way! Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/agewellservices/>

Questions? Reach out to Advancement Director, Jennifer Drury, at (231) 733-8635 or jennifer@agewellservices.org



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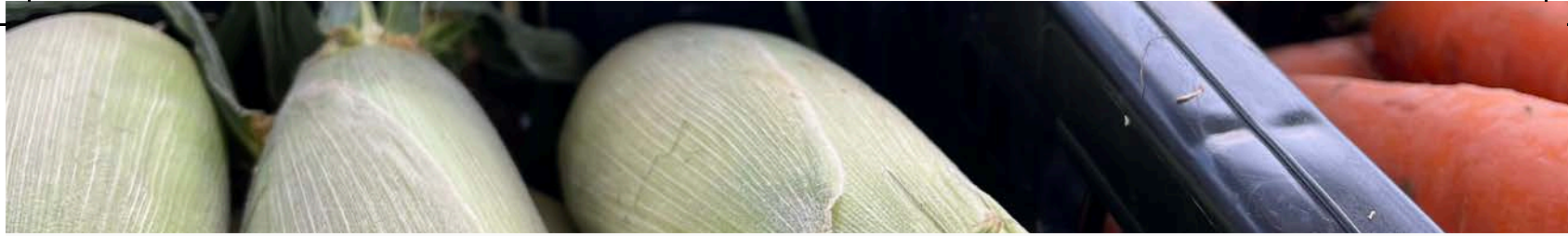
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Mission Statement

AgeWell Services invites you to redefine age! We provide vital connections to keep you nourished, active, learning and living independently.





Our Programs

We provide a variety of programs in Oceana, Muskegon and Ottawa counties, each unique to the communities we service. These include Meals on Wheels, Lunch & Activity Centers, Discount Dining, Senior Medical Transportation, Wellness and Fitness and SafeSeniors. Last fiscal year, over 10,000 older adults in our service counties were impacted by our programs.

We'll be sharing impact videos on social media throughout December highlighting the quotes below from our programs.

Food Access

We help older adults access healthy and nutritious food through Meals on Wheels, Lunch & Activity Centers, Discount Dining, Project Fresh, Healthy Harvest Kits and Farm Fresh Bags. In February 2024, our waitlist for Meals on Wheels was at an all-time high of 600 older adults.



“It’s very comforting for me to know that my dad is getting a meal that is well balanced, something that he likes and I know that every day, there’s a variety to the meal.”
- Daughter of Meals on Wheels participant

Medical Transportation

Medical Transportation provides safe, reliable, door-to-door, non-emergency medical transportation for low-income Muskegon County residents 60 and older. We are the only source of transportation for 88% of participants.

“I’ve overcome two of the diseases through AgeWell [Services] taking me back and forth to my medical appointments.”
- Senior Medical Transportation participant



Wellness & Fitness

The Wellness Center at Tanglewood Park, provides holistic wellness opportunities for all adults, with a focus on 55 and older. We provided 262% more classes for 29% more participants last year than four years ago.

After open heart surgery, “I was able to get moving in the hospital rather quickly...I credit that to the fitness classes here.”
- Wellness Center participant



“By working together as a community, bringing all of our resources together, we can look at each situation and provide the best outcome for our seniors.”
- Muskegon County SafeSeniors Task Force Detective



Seeking Justice

SafeSeniors brings together key partners to help prevent abuse, neglect and financial exploitation of older adults, to increase reporting, and to identify, support, and seek justice for victims of these crimes. Since 2018, we’ve investigated over 800 cases and provided over 33,000 people with information and education on prevention and reporting.



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Is your name and mailing address correct?
Please contact Jennifer Drury with any changes:
Email: jennifer@agewellservices.org
Phone: (231) 733-8635

Heels for Meals & More

One last tremendous thank you to our 2024 Heels for Meals & More sponsors!

Dress Boot

Jackie Engel, CFP®



Securities and advisory services offered through LPL Financial, a registered investment advisor, member FINRA/SIPC.

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Best Shoe Contest



See our Platform, Stiletto, Slipper and Croc sponsors

on our website (<https://www.agewellservices.org>) and in our upcoming e-newsletter.
We're so excited for 2025 Heels for Meals & More on Thursday, April 17, 2025!