

Memory Moment

Celebrate Older Americans Month!

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Every May marks the beginning of Older Americans month, a month dedicated to celebrating aging Americans and their contributions in our community. Originally founded in 1963 by President Kennedy, this month also sought to highlight available resources and supports for older adults to remain healthy and independent. In recent years, the Administration on Community Living (ACL) has given each May a new theme to celebrate Older Americans Month. This year's is Connect, Create, Contribute. The ACL website has ideas how to engage in this year's theme, and I've chosen to highlight and expand on a couple of them. These ideas are not just for older adults, but for the entire community!

Connect

- Attend a group to connect with others through socializing and enjoying a mutual activity.
 - The Effingham Public Library hosts a 'Seniors with Attitude' group that meets the first Monday of every month at 10 AM with the goal of making and maintaining friendships, and fostering connection through learning, conversation, and fun. Call Catherine Bailey at 217-342-2464 for more information.
- Connect with a support group that can help you cope with effects of a disease, life experience, or current caregiving role.
- Honor and celebrate older adults in your life, especially on Memorial Day, recognizing those who have served our country!

Create

- Offer a class or event for older adults and community members to learn a new skill. (i.e. disease management classes at HSHS St. Anthony's Hospital or classes at Effingham Public Library)
- Attend a class that allows you to tap into your creative side! (i.e. check out art programs, dance classes, or yoga sessions)

Contribute

- Recognize staff, volunteers, and organizations that provide support to older adults and their families.
- Attend fundraising events or make a donation to an organization that supports older adults.
- Host a resource fair highlighting services available to older adults. Check with your local Senior Centers, libraries and hospitals for events near you.

- Effingham Senior Center will hold its 25th Annual Senior Health and Information Expo on Thursday, May 2nd, 2019 at the Senior Services Center in Effingham from 8:30 AM to 11:30AM.
- Tailor your programs and services to accommodate needs of older adults. (i.e. highlighting information about maintaining healthy and active lifestyle or for long-term financial and legal planning)

Much of the research for this article is from the Administration for Community Living website on Older Americans Month. For more information, check out their website at acl.gov/oam.

Effingham Area Alzheimer's Awareness (EAAA) is a volunteer-run, not-for-profit organization founded to provide education and support to all families, caregivers, and people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia in Effingham County and the surrounding area. For more information about Effingham Area Alzheimer's Awareness, check out their website at www.effinghamalz.org. If you are a caregiver & have specific questions or situations you would like information on, please feel free to call Shannon Nosbisch at 217-663-0010 or Amy Sobrino at 618-363-8372.