

Sharing the Caring

A Note from the Director: By: Lisa Ciszczon Brennan - Executive Director
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As summer starts to wind down and students return to school, we've had plenty of activity at CFIA. Here are just a few of the events that have taken place or are about to happen in the coming weeks.

As I write today, two new HVAC systems are being installed to replace units that were inefficient and unsafe. I'm so grateful to the donors who contributed to our Capital Campaign, to the CFIA Board for approving the expenditure, and to AgeSmart who provided a grant to help pay for part of the new systems. The AgeSmart grant also reimbursed us for the installation of instant water heaters that replaced four 40-gallon water heaters this past spring.

The Capital Campaign draws to a close in December, and we are grateful to our many donors. We will honor all donors to the Capital Campaign by affixing an engraved "leaf" on a wooden Giving Tree displayed in our office. If you have not yet pledged or donated, it's not too late to offer your help in maintaining our building and grounds. Please join us at our Giving Tree Dedication and Open House on Thursday, September 23 from 4-6PM. We look forward to seeing you here at 233 N. Seminary!

Sunday, September 12 is Grandparents Day and our annual chrysanthemum sale. We will be on the lot next to the Collins House on Main Street in Collinsville from noon until 4P. Please stop by our sale that day to choose the plants for yourself or the grandparent in your life. If you prefer to preorder, call 618-344-8080 and pick up on September 12. We are expanding our mum sale this year; we now offer two sizes of hardy mums, and we will also have a variety of fall decorations available.

Faith in Action Sunday is on the 19th of September, when our Partner Churches take time with their congregations to pray for and recognize the collaboration of churches and CFIA in making our community stronger. I've had the pleasure of speaking at Our Lord's Lutheran Church in Maryville and Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Collinsville. St. John UCC has us on their schedule to speak in October, and we look forward to visiting all of our Partner Churches.

We are rebuilding our volunteer base, and are happy to welcome Carol, Jean, Tracy, and Andrea, all of whom were oriented and trained for CFIA service. Our volunteer opportunities are wide and varied and can be catered to your individual interests, talents, and schedule. If you or someone you know can be "a neighbor helping neighbors," please contact



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Issue:

September 2021



me (Lisa) at 618-344-8080.

Patrick Bivens joined us in late June as the new Answers on Aging specialist and has completed extensive training with the Medicare and Medicaid trainers from the State of Illinois offices. Please be sure to read his Answers on Aging column in this edition of Sharing the Caring and give Pat a call to set up your Medicare counseling session. Annual Open Enrollment begins in October and closes in mid-December, so schedule your appointment soon. Pat is beginning to schedule site visits at local libraries and community centers as well as here at the CFIA offices.

Elder Connection, our social activity program, began meeting face-to-face in June. It's so wonderful to see our clients gathered again after many months of isolation. In July we gathered for a rousing game of trivia and lunch. The monthly activities are a fun way to connect with other community members, but we must limit the number of people in the building due to Covid restrictions. If you or someone you know would like to join us for lunch and some fun, please call us to learn more and to reserve your spot. Of course, there is no cost to attend, but we do need you to reserve a spot.

The CFIA staff had a fun night out at the Grizzly's game this summer. We are so grateful to one of our funders (who wishes to remain anonymous) for sending us a gift for CFIA employees. The gift allowed our three staff members to enjoy a night at the ballpark, and meet one another's family members. Beth Baker and her son Kenneth even enjoyed a specialty of the ballpark: burgers served on Krispy Kreme donuts!

It's been a busy summer season at CFIA, and we look forward to seeing you at our Mum Sale, CFIA Sunday, and the Giving Tree Dedication and Open House. In October we will be offering our Fall Yard Clean Up and are planning a Roadblock fundraiser along Main and Clay Streets, so watch our webpage for updates or contact us for information about volunteering for either of these events.



ON THE MOVE WITH BETH...

We are moving further into the 21st century! Our scheduling computer program has received recent updates that allow us to send text messages. If you have a cell phone and would like to receive text confirmations for your service requests, please, give me a call.

Due to the recent increase in COVID-19 cases the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Illinois Department on Aging (IDOA) have reinstated our need to conduct a COVID-19 screening questionnaire before each service. So, I will be call you to conduct this brief survey.

Elder Connection events are beginning to take off. Everyone really enjoyed our July trivia game. If you are not currently on the list for these events call me the office and I will add you to our list. See the schedule of events for the remainder of 2021 in this newsletter. Please reserve your spot for each activity, as space is limited. All events are subject to the above mentioned COVID screening, and dependent on maintaining or decreasing COVID numbers.

Our volunteers continue to visit care receivers over the phone, and everyone seems to enjoy sharing their lives and building friendships this way. If you are not receiving your calls, or would like to become a Reassurance volunteer, please contact me at the office.

Answers on Aging

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“The mission of Collinsville Faith in Action is to put our faith into action by serving neighbors 60 years of age and older and persons with disabilities throughout our community with door-to-door, no cost services to support their independence.”

AoA is one of three programs that Collinsville Faith in Action administers to support this mission. I am Pat Bivens, the new Answers and Aging (AoA) Specialist. In my role, I assist our clients by providing the following services:

1. **Helping Medicare recipients** to access and understand the various plans that are available to them, so that the recipients can make the most informed, cost-effective choices. This assistance is especially important as clients near the age of 65 and need to enroll in a plan, and during the annual open enrollment when clients are able to change from one plan to another to better meet their healthcare needs.
2. **Assisting lower-income clients** to receive benefits offered through the Illinois Department on Aging, including:

- a. Seniors Ride Free Transit Benefit
- b. Persons with Disabilities Free Transit Ride
- c. Secretary of State License Plate Discount



3. **Assisting clients** when they have a tangible need affecting their ability to remain independent. What types of requests do we get? Almost anything. In the short time I have been with CFiA, client requests have run the gamut, from requests for safety checks on elderly neighbors to requests to customize a vehicle for wheelchair accessibility. Some of the more common request categories are:

- i. Specific, short-term financial problems
- ii. Need for durable medical equipment
- iii. Home safety and repair
- iv. Personal safety
- v. Nutrition assistance



Some requests can be handled directly in-house. Some requests result in a referral to external organizations. Throughout our 23 years, CFiA has established relationships with municipal/county government agencies, non-profit service organizations, corporate entities, food pantries, etc. who are able to fulfill requests outside of CFiA's expertise. We are proud of our ability to assist clients, whether through direct action or referral, so that our neighbors can maintain their independence.



It's easy to lose focus of the big picture. While a non-profit like CFIA requires attention to business trends, volunteer care, budgets, marketing, and building maintenance, the true job at CFIA is putting our faith into action by serving clients.

Tina is a client who reminds us of how our services can change lives. Tina has Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and just four years ago, she was working full time in a rewarding career. Now, as her disease has progressed, she relies on a scooter and a wheelchair to remain mobile, and she can no longer continue her career. Tina is a go-getter and is adapting to the disabilities brought on by her diagnosis. She has adapted her vehicle so she can continue to be as independent as possible, but she needed a rack on her van to transport her scooter. Tina called CFIA for help. Although CFIA does not have funding to support such needs, we have been able to assist her in gathering funds from different sources including the national MS Foundation and the local St. Louis region's MS chapter. Along with other agencies and groups, Tina now has funding to have a scooter rack installed on her van and will be able to complete her shopping and errands independently.

Robert is a client with end-stage renal disease. His home lacks central air conditioning, but thanks to a donation to CFIA, we have been able to provide Robert and his family with a window air conditioner to make their home more comfortable. We are grateful to Pastor Darla Ann from our Partner Church, Our Lord's Lutheran, for making the donation of the window unit, and we are so pleased for Robert and his family. Making their lives a bit more comfortable may seem a small gesture to some, but he and his family recognize it as a substantial donation.

Jane is a client from Caseyville who uses one of our loaner iPads and internet service CFIA provides through a grant we received. Jane uses her iPad almost every day. Recently, when Jane's water heater broke, she was able to research contractors and compare prices for replacing her water heater. She used our loaner iPad to do her research and contract with a vendor offering the best price. Jane's young granddaughter comes to Jane's each day after school and has taught her grandmother all about using an iPad to get things done and to have a little fun! Jane and her granddaughter watch children's videos together and find online games they can play during their after-school time together.

Please remember that your donations of time, talent, and money make a difference in the lives of others right here in the Collinsville area.

Thank you for your contribution

In Memory of...

Ellen O. Bednara In Memory of Marilyn Crowder
Alberta Hoffman In Memory of Harry & Perry Pluta
Jannie Staats In Memory of Alice McFarland

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Judy Agne, Mary L. Demetrulias, Patricia Duhr,
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 St. Louis Community Foundation, Nancy L. Tyler

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**Thank
You**

Business Donations

TEGNA

Donations received are updated monthly and acknowledged with a receipt sent by mail to the donor. Donations are then recognized quarterly in this newsletter. Gifts received after our newsletter has been sent to the printer will be recognized in the next newsletter.



Monday, September 6: Office closed for Labor Day.

Sunday, September 12: Annual Mum Sale and Grandparents' Day Fundraiser at the Collins House lot on Main Street in Collinsville. 12N-4P. Stop by to purchase chrysanthemums for yourself or your favorite grandparent. Your purchase helps CFIA clients too! Additional items for fall décor will be available.

Sunday, September 19: Faith in Action Sunday. Celebrate with our Partner Churches as we mark 23 years of putting our faith into action in the Collinsville area. We request your prayers and participation for this annual event.

Wednesday, September 22: Elder Connection field trip to Pere Marquette State Park. Call 618-344-8080 to reserve your spot or to get more information on this monthly program. Volunteer drivers needed for this special day!

Thursday, September 23: Giving Tree Dedication and Open House at CFIA. 4-6P. Join us as we dedicate our beautiful Giving Tree and honor donors who have given so generously to the CFIA Capital Campaign. Light refreshments will be served. Please plan to wear a mask.

Sunday, October 10: St. John United Church of Christ 9A and 1030A services will host CFIA speaker.

Saturday, October 16: Volunteer Training at CFIA. Thanks to a grant from the Greg Holthaus Memorial Fund, CFIA will be receiving an AED. Volunteers, staff, and board members will receive instruction on using an AED in the event of a cardiac emergency. Additional emergency preparation and response will be addressed in this training day. The Greg Holthaus Memorial fund is dedicated to providing training, testing, & equipment vital to preventing & treating sudden cardiac arrest. Like them on Facebook @gregholthausmemorialfund.

Wednesday, October 20: Elder Connection day at Willoughby Farm. 11A-1P. Call 618-344-8080 to reserve your spot or to get more information on this monthly program.

October date TBD: Bi-annual Yard Cleanup. Join other volunteers to go out into our community to do a fall yard cleanup for clients. Rakes and garden gloves provided, but we need the people power of volunteers. Please contact Lisa if you would like to spend a few hours on a fall afternoon with a team from CFIA. If you are a client in need of such a service, please call Beth to reserve a spot. 618-344-8080.

October date TBD: Roadblock Fundraiser on Friday and Saturday at intersections on Clay and Main Streets at Center Street. Volunteers needed for shifts to collect donations and pass out candy to donors.

Thursday, November 11: Quarterly Board Meeting. 3-5PM.





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Collinsville

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