

Sharing the Caring

Director's Note

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As I write this article, February is giving us a gorgeous spring day complete with blooming daffodils and orange-chested robins hopping about. Of course, it's still February, and another round of freezing weather is not out of the question.

This season of growth and rebirth is very much like the growth of CFiA in the past year. We have added new full-time and part-time employees, welcomed new volunteers and new clients, had eight new board members join our leadership team, and continue to increase the number of people we serve.

We were delighted to offer our Valentine's Day Flower Delivery as a fundraiser again this year and delivered close to 200 flowers. Thank you to all who supported this fundraiser and to all the volunteers who helped arrange and then deliver the flowers. The CFiA staff worked very hard behind the scenes to make sure all orders were processed and delivered. It was wonderful to witness the joy of the flower recipients.

On March 21 we have a presentation and will hear from guest speakers about Senior Housing Options. If you want to safely remain in your current home, are thinking of downsizing, or want to get information about housing options for a family member, this is the presentation for you. Join us at 11 a.m. for Senior Housing Options.

Spring Yard Cleanup is scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday, April 20. This free service is available only to residents 60+ living in the Collinsville Unit 10 School District. Pre-registration is required and opens on Monday, April 1. The city and township offer free yard waste pickup to those who register with CFiA. Volunteers are always welcome for this event! We'd love to have additional youth groups to join us for this afternoon of service.

Have you heard about our Quarterly Coffee for volunteers and those who want more information about volunteering with CFiA? We will be meeting on Tuesday, May 7 from 10-11 a.m. to share our volunteer experiences and tips and to get to know some of the other fine folks who volunteer for CFiA. If you volunteer with us or are interested in learning more, please join us for this Quarterly Coffee.

May your Easter season be one of growth and rebirth.



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Issue:

March 2024



Welcome to our newest CFiA Volunteers!



Luis Saravia

Michael & Grace Ohanian

Rose Lankford



Answers on Aging

Patrick Bivens - Answers on Aging

618-344-7788

answers@fiacollinsville.org

At Collinsville Faith in Action (CFiA), I fill the role of Answers on Aging Specialist. Many people have asked me what exactly that means. To clarify, I have three primary responsibilities.

- I am a Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) counselor, helping people navigate Medicare so that they may elect the best insurance that meets their needs. This includes supporting programs included in the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers (MIPPA) legislation that assists lower-income participants to access programs such as Medicare Savings Plans (assistance with Part B premiums and copays) and Extra Help (assistance with prescription drug costs).
- I help people apply for the Benefit Access Application (BAA) program offered by the Illinois Department on Aging, so that seniors can take advantage of the reduced license plate sticker benefit and the ride free transit card (bus pass) benefit.
- I support a direct assistance and referral service (called Information and Assistance, or I&A) designed to help resolve issues that come up in everyday life. The world is getting more complex every day. It is difficult to always know where to go, who to talk to, or what is needed when questions arise.

Information and Assistance (I&A) is perhaps the least understood of my functions because it is a bit arbitrary. Questions I get are varied in subject matter, urgency, and scope. Examples of questions I have addressed include:

- You received a letter from Social Security and you don't understand what they need. What should you do?
- You are recently out of the hospital and are not quite at full speed. Can you get assistance in your home?
- You haven't seen your elderly neighbor in several days, and she is not answering her phone or door. What should you do?
- You stopped driving, but need to get around town. How can you get a free bus pass?
- You are now reliant on a wheelchair, but because of steps leading into the house, you can't easily or safely leave your home. Can you get a ramp into your home?
- Your energy bill is beyond what you are able to pay. How can you get assistance?

To be sure, I do not have all the answers. In many cases, I won't be able to help you directly, but I will research the issue so that I am able to refer you to someone who can help. Think of the Information & Assistance service as your new Yellow Pages, as a tool that allows you to resolve your issues and remain as independent as possible.

If you are unsure of how to resolve an issue, give me a call at 618-344-7788.

Have a great spring, everybody.

Welcome:**Karen Saravia - Manager of Volunteers****618-344-8080****Karen Saravia - Manager of Volunteers****volunteers@fiacollinsville.org**



As children, we all dreamed about what we would be when we grew up. Did you ever say to yourself, “When I grow up, I want to be a Manager of Volunteers”? I know I did not. I did not even know that position existed. Well, here I am to tell you that the position is very real and is very needed. I will do my best to fill that need. This position is challenging, rewarding, and helping me as a person. I am learning new things every day with a full schedule of formalized training through United Way, Metropolitan Volunteer Management Association, and Send Me St. Louis (an organization through the Lutheran Foundation) to prepare me to be the best Manager of Volunteers, I can be. We have an amazing group of volunteers and I want to give to them as they give to our organization and clients.

I am excited to combine my current knowledge with the new knowledge and experience I am gaining in this opportunity. I can see wonderful things ahead of us and cannot wait to grow, train, and serve alongside our current volunteers and the ones to come.

Collinsville Faith in Action has volunteering opportunities in so many areas. One area specifically is our Phone Friends. Our volunteers make phone calls to specific clients at least twice a month and have real conversations to get to know each other. For our clients that are isolated and lonely, this program is a godsend. Also, for our volunteers, it provides a non-intrusive way to serve those in need of friend. We have people who start as strangers calling to check in on someone, and they become friends due to this program.

We also have other areas and opportunities to volunteer. We can always use new volunteers, whether it be every week, driving clients to appointments, making those Phone Friends call, or just a couple times a year with special projects such as the seasonal yard cleanups. We will welcome you with open arms. Please contact me at 618-344-8080, or ksaravia@fiacollinsville.org. I look forward to getting to know our volunteers, bringing in new volunteers, and serving alongside these amazing people.

Having said all of that, let me introduce myself. Hi, I am Karen Saravia, Manager of Volunteers for Collinsville Faith in Action. I am a wife of almost 30 years to the love of my life and momma to our two beautiful grown daughters, son-in-law, and fur baby.

I am honored to be part of this incredible organization and work to fulfill the purpose of our mission: to serve our neighbors 60 years of age and older with services to support their independence.



It is nice to meet you.

Safety Tip:

Please use caution when a person comes to your door when you don't know them or weren't expecting them. Even people dressed in the uniforms of service workers or delivery workers should not be allowed in your home unless you have made a service appointment with that company. Delivery people and mail carriers should never ask to enter your home, so if asked, do not allow them to enter.

Ways to Give

Click to Donate: Click the DONATE button on our webpage to make a one-time or recurring monthly donation. Regularly scheduled monthly or quarterly donations help us plan our budget more accurately.

Text to Donate: Text the word PLEDGE to 618-249-3227 on your smart phone to quickly and easily set up a one-time or regularly scheduled donation. This is an easy way to donate, and you can share the text-to-donate information easily with friends and family.

Plan to Donate:

1. Check with your employer to see if they offer a Matching Donor benefit. If so, for every dollar you donate, your employer will match that amount thereby doubling your donor power.
2. Bequests are a beautiful way to build your Faith in Action legacy. Working with Land of Lincoln Legal Aid at no charge or your own lawyer, you can name CFIA in your will or as an organization that is named by you as a recipient receiving donations in your memory.
3. Talk to your financial advisor to have funds that may increase your taxes to be directly donated to CFIA. You help your community, and you don't have to pay income tax on the earnings.

Call to Donate: Call us at 618-344-8080 to set up a one-time or recurring donation with your credit or debit card. In just a few minutes, we'll have you set up!

Mail to Donate: It's always a pleasure to receive notes from our supporters, so if you prefer to mail in a check, we appreciate it! CFIA, 233 N. Seminary St., Collinsville, IL 62234.

Phone Friends: Focus on a CFiA Service

While many people in our community know about CFiA volunteers providing services to those ages 60 and up, not as many know about our Phone Friend service.

Phone Friends are CFiA clients and CFiA volunteers who are paired up for friendly phone calls every other week. Some of our Phone Friends have been cultivating their friendships for close to three years! This service is so valuable for our clients, especially those who are at risk of being socially isolated and for those who don't have easy access to transportation. Those clients know their Phone Friend (a background checked and trained CFiA volunteer) will call them at least twice a month to share stories, listen, and provide valuable information. This program is also great for volunteers who like talking on the phone and cultivating friendships.

If you'd like more information about our Phone Friends program, or want to become a Phone Friends volunteer, we'd love to talk with you. Pick up the phone and give us a call today!



Overcoming Ageism

On March 7, four CFiA staff members and three CFiA board members attended a training together at AgeSmart to learn more about ageism and how to avoid making or perpetuating stereotypes based on age. Trainer Cheryl Mitchell facilitated an eye-opening discussion on ageism and outlined characteristics of and influences on different generations.

If you're interested in learning more about understanding and reframing ageism, consider joining the April 10 Summit on Reframing Aging. This is a free, online event, and you can learn more about the event and register at <https://www.reframingaging.org/Events/Summit-2024-The-Movement-to-Reframe-Aging>



Collinsville Faith in Action Board of Directors

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Moment

Bobbie Sue celebrated a special birthday with CFiA this year: She turned 60.

Why is this significant? We provide services to community members 60 years of age and older, but Bobbie Sue has been a client for many years because we have also been serving adults with disabilities. Bobbie Sue was born with physical and cognitive disabilities, but her unwavering faith and optimism seem to have replaced any disability with an ability-focused mindset.

Bobbie Sue loves our social programs and relies on CFiA volunteers to take her to and from her many doctor's appointments. She writes poetry and calls the office at least once a week to tell us how much she loves us.

For many years, CFiA has included Bobbie Sue on local trips to museums and restaurants. She attends our monthly luncheons and enjoys befriending volunteer drivers who take her to her regularly scheduled neurologist and prosthetic adjustment appointments. Volunteers sometimes deliver books or writing supplies to Bobbie Sue's home so that she can continue her poetry writing and see samples of other poets.

As an adult with disabilities and now of an officially qualified age to receive CFiA services, Bobbie Sue is a double winner in our books!

Save-the-Date

Mark your calendars for the evening of Friday, July 12. CFiA is preparing a special evening with our community supporters, volunteers, and friends. More information coming in our May newsletter.

National Volunteer Caregivers Network 40 in 40 Challenge

Collinsville Faith in Action is linked with other Faith in Actions and volunteer caregiving organizations across the country through the National Volunteer Caregiving Network (NVCN). At CFiA, we meet online at least once a month online with FiAs all over the country the network. This year is the 40th anniversary of the very first Faith in Action, and the National Volunteer Caregiving Network (NVCN) is celebrating with a 40 in 40 challenge. “In celebration of 40 years, NVCN is recruiting new volunteer caregivers to give one hour per week over 40 weeks, with the goal of reaching ONE MILLION hours of service by the end of 2024, as part of our 40th Anniversary celebration.”

According to the NVCN website: “The National Volunteer Caregiving Network (NVCN) estimates nearly 700 local organizations that provide volunteer caregiving across the United States and in the territories of Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The typical program is...serving 560 clients with 230 volunteers That equates to more than 350,000 seniors and people with disabilities who benefit from this successful model of volunteer service. Topping the demand are transportation services which account for almost 2 million trips per year—mostly medical-related.



Volunteer Caregiving was established in 1984 with initial funding from the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's](#) Faith in Action® program and has since been entrusted to NVCN for safekeeping. This signature project, with its trademarked “heartburst” launched 25 initial pilot programs. Thanks to the Foundation’s help, more than 1,000 programs were funded in the years that followed, many of which survive to this day along with new programs that continue to follow the business model. The Volunteer Caregiving movement continues to thrive—sometimes on a wing and a prayer—across America, thanks to donations from corporate, foundation, and individual donors – like YOU!” (<https://nvcnetwork.org/wp/index.php/about-the-nvcn/>).

So here’s the challenge for our readers:

Join Collinsville Faith in Action as a volunteer and perform 40 hours of service over 40 weeks. You’ll feel connected to your community, and your work will be so appreciated by those who need you. As a bonus, CFiA will provide a 40 for 40 gift to all CFiA volunteers who complete 40 hours of volunteerism in a 40-week period.

The challenge begins April 1, 2024,
so call Karen at 618-344-8080 to
sign up as a volunteer!
If you’re already a volunteer, call
Karen to sign up
for 40 for 40 challenge!



Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Forty hours across forty weeks

Many Thanks to Our Generous Donors!!!!

Individual Donations

Anonymous	Kristi A. Johnson
Judy Agne	Phyllis G. Kesler
Harvey Baca	C R Kindle
Ella Ball	Laura M. King
Paul Bargiel	Barbara Kusmierczak
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Jerome & Donna Jesse	Bill & Lori Yanousek

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Community Group Donations

Collinsville Area
Community Foundation

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by Thomas H. Kampwerth
Jeffrey Deutsch
by Sharon Deutsch
J. Marion and Deanna Hott, Virgil Kassing
and Phyllis Karrer
by Frances Kassing
Beulah Kalbfleisch
by Jim & Pat Schapp
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by Thomas H. Kampwerth
Frances Konopka
by Stella K. Lawler
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by Pamela Gates and Tom Schnitzius
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Paul Pfaff
by Jane E. Pfaff
Harry & Perry Pluta
by Alberta Hoffman
Evelyn Ratay
by James & Rebecca Shimkus
Helen Sagovac
by Kenneth M. Lawrence
Pat Walker by Karen Bosen

In Honor of

Carol Ricketts by John Duft & June Blaine
Staff & Volunteers by Jean M. Buchana

Church Donations

Caseyville United Methodist Church
First United Methodist Church
Jerusalem Lutheran Church
Ladies Auxiliary of Collinsville K of C

Donations received are updated monthly and acknowledged with a receipt sent by mail to the donor. Online donations are acknowledged with a receipt sent automatically and immediately by email. 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.



Monthly Luncheon & Social Time 2024 Schedule & Reservation Deadline

- there is no charge for this program
- participants must register in advance by calling 618-344-8080 ONLY during the “reserve” dates listed below and speak with a CFIa staff member (a voice mail will not reserve your spot)
- participants in need of transportation to the event, should request transportation when calling to reserve their spot (The township Folks Wagon will provide transportation most months)
- only a limited number of seats available



January 10, reserve from 1/4-1/8

February 21, reserve 2/15-2/19

March 13, reserve 3/7-3/11

April 10, reserve 4/4-4/8

May 8, reserve 5/2-5/6

June 12, reserve 6/6-6/10

July 10, reserve 7/3-7/8

August 14, reserve 8/8-8/12

September 11, reserve 9/5-9/9

October 9, reserve 10/3-10/7

November 6, reserve 10/31-11/4

December To Be Announced

in September 2024



Give STL Day 2024

Give STL Day is “an online day of giving powered by the St. Louis Community Foundation” and will be on May 9, 2024. Collinsville Faith in Action will once again be participating in this event, and donations made to CFiA are given, in full, from the St. Louis Community Foundation to CFiA.

Throughout the 24-hour period of online giving, CFiA will also be eligible for additional cash and professional development prizes. For instance, the 6-7 a.m. hour may be this year’s Power Hour, and if CFiA receives your online donation through Give STL Day page, our organization becomes eligible for additional cash and prizes. The Power Hours and prizes will be announced in April, and CFiA will share that information on our social media, but please plan to donate on May 9 by visiting www.givestlday.org

We are in search of local businesses who would support CFiA by offering “matching donations.” Many donors love to make a donation if it will be matched! Matching donors can set their matching dollar limit and can receive publicity for being a matching donor. Call Lisa Brennan at 618-344-8080 to learn more about Give STL Day and becoming a matching donor.



Shout Out to Partner Churches

Special thanks to the following Partner Churches who have been actively promoting our services, sending us volunteers, and supporting our work in the community.

- **Our Lord’s Lutheran Church** supported our Valentine’s Day fundraiser, invites us to speak to the congregants, and consistently sends new volunteers to CFiA. Welcome to volunteer Tim Schoenecker!
- **Our Mother of Perpetual Help** shares CFiA information in their bulletin and sent two new volunteers. Welcome to Michael and Grace Ohanian! Welcome also, to our new board member from Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Joe Benker.
- **Navigation Church** hosted our February board meeting at their beautiful facility and even provided snacks and drinks. Thank you to Pastor David Amsden, Pastor Aaron Semanek, and Administrative Assistant Heather for your warm welcome.
- **St. Peter and Paul** consistently shares CFiA news in their weekly bulletins and helped us find one of our new board members, Teri Lesicko.
- **St. John United Church of Christ** shares CFiA news with congregants and recently invited us to speak at their Sunday service. We appreciate that St. John UCC allowed us to take flower orders for our fundraiser in February. Two of our new board members are congregants of St. John UCC: Dorothy Young and Kyla Waltermire.
- **Collinsville First United Methodist Church** allowed CFiA volunteers to take flower orders for our Valentine’s Day fundraiser after Sunday services. Thank you for supporting our fundraiser. One of our newest board members, Barb Buxton, is also a congregant at Collinsville First United Methodist Church.

Would your church like to be involved with Collinsville Faith in Action?
All faith traditions and practices are welcome to work with us to better serve community members!

Please contact Lisa Brennan at Collinsville Faith in Action (618-344-8080) and learn about the many benefits of working with CFiA and our Partner Churches to serve others.

Sharing the Caring: Spring 2024 Fun

K I H L W Z S F F V T G V S W N V K P J Y A G F A
 Y N H A S H A J E U N C D T E Z H O Y Q B I C Y U
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interdependence	independence	acceptance	trust
caregiver	seasonal	volunteer	
matching	national	friends	
daffodil	saravia	support	
ageism	spring	united	
phone	Easter	robin	

Sharing the Caring: Spring 2024 Fun

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

interdependence	independence	acceptance	trust
caregiver	seasonal	daffodil	
matching	national	friends	
volunteer	saravia	ageism	
united	Easter	phone	
robin	support	spring	

“If there is anything I can do...” by Answers on Aging Specialist Pat Bivens

One of our most common expressions of sympathy or support is some variation of “Please let me know if there is anything I can do.” Whether it is said when a loved one dies, during an illness, or when someone experiences a significant loss, it is a sign of support and empathy.

Think about when you’ve said it. When you’ve made the offer, do you mean it? Are you willing to go out of your way to help someone if they ask? Most people are. You will gladly pick up groceries, run to the pharmacy, or watch someone’s children so they can deal with the problem.

But when we are the recipient of the offer, why are we so reluctant to request help? During our most trying life events, when we are suffering grief, when our lives are most chaotic, when we have a million things that need to be done, why don’t we say “As a matter of fact, I could use some help...”? Why is it so hard to ask for assistance?

Geriatrician [Lee A. Lindquist, MD, MPH, MBA](#) researched this question, and the results appear in the publication [Northwestern Medicine \(2024, “Why Are Seniors Reluctant to Accept Help?”\)](#).

Some of the reasons why we may be hesitant to ask for or accept help that Linquist identified are:

- **Fear of losing independence.** Accepting help may create the perception that we are no longer able to do certain things, like driving or running errands, and we may feel less independent as a result.
- **Desire to not be a burden.** Even if help is readily available, many of us may feel that by asking for help, we are being a nuisance or hindrance to others.
- **Lack of trust.** From hired caregivers to other relatives, we may shy away from asking for help because we are not sure whom we can trust.
- **Fear of giving up control.** We may fear that by asking for help, we are losing control or giving control to others.

How do you feel about asking others for help? How do you feel about accepting help from others, even when you didn’t ask? Do the reasons above ring true for you? Then ask yourself: How do I feel when I help someone else? Chances are, you feel pretty darn good. So why are you so reluctant to ask for help when you need it, knowing the positive impact it will have on your helper?

Here at CFIA, we strive to provide services that help seniors and people with disabilities to support independence. Independence does NOT mean that we have to do everything ourselves. Independence means that we are managing the things that need to get done in our lives, whether performing the tasks ourselves or reaching out and asking for (and accepting) help from someone else. Another way we can look at this, per Dr. Lindquist, is to **reframe independence. The term interdependence more accurately describes how all people rely on each other. No one is truly independent. By asking for help, we are not becoming less independent; rather, we are embracing interdependence.**

No one is suggesting that we turn our lives over to others. If we can reasonably perform a task, by all means, we should do it ourselves. But sometimes, the number of tasks is overwhelming. Sometimes there are medical issues or safety issues that prevent us from **reasonably** performing the task. Let’s give ourselves permission to ask for help. It will benefit us and the person we ask to help. A perfect win-win situation.

Lee Ann Lindquist, MD, MPH, MBA

Chief of Geriatrics in the Department of Medicine

George M. Eisenberg Research Professor of Geriatric Medicine

Professor of Medicine (Geriatrics)

Collinsville Faith in Action
233 North Seminary
Collinsville, IL 62234



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A Neighbor's Independence Depends on You!

Faith in Action

Partner Congregations

Caseyville

Caseyville United Methodist Church
St. Stephen Catholic Church

Maryville

Copper Creek Christian Church
Our Mother of Perpetual Help
Catholic Church
Our Lord's Lutheran Church

Collinsville

Collinsville First United Methodist Church
First Baptist Church
First United Presbyterian Church
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Meadow Heights Baptist Church
Navigation Church
Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church
Revive
St. John United Church of Christ
S.S. Peter & Paul Catholic Church