



NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Older Americans Month

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Established in 1963, Older Americans Month (OAM) is celebrated every May and is a time for us to acknowledge the contributions and achievements of older Americans. Currently, the majority of our Older Americans consist of the Silent Generation and Baby Boomers.

The Silent Generation, born between 1928 and 1945, is responsible for rebuilding the United States economy after The Great Depression. Those from the Silent Generation lived through World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam War, with many serving as soldiers. This Generation witnessed the Red Scare, bomb shelters, the civil rights movement, the birth of rock 'n roll, the assassination of JFK, and Neil Armstrong placing the US flag on the moon. Martin Luther King, Jr. was from the Silent Generation.

Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964 were preoccupied with the Vietnam War and Woodstock, and social change was led through activism, freedom, riots and boycotts. Baby Boomers created computers and the internet. Billy Joel, Samuel Jackson and Oprah Winfrey are a part of the Baby Boomer Generation.

It's important that we understand our history and the impact our older Americans have had on shaping the world we live in today. If you really want to be educated, sit down with one of our Older Americans and ask them to tell you about the time period they grew up in. You may be surprised at what you learn. In addition, we should be challenging the stereotypes of aging and understand Older Americans still have so much to contribute due to their life experience. Not all people who are aging are unwell. We have many vibrant Older Americans around us. Celebrate Older Americans Month with us by recognizing a special older adult in your life by sharing a picture on social media of them doing what they love! Aging is something we are all doing together – let's celebrate older adults in our community and showcase the positivity surrounding their contributions to society.

This year's theme, *Aging Unbound*, offers an opportunity to explore a wide range of aging experiences and to promote the importance of enjoying independence and fulfillment by paving our own paths as we age. Here are some ways we can all participate in *Aging Unbound*:

- **Embrace the opportunity to change.** Find a new passion, go on an adventure, and push boundaries by not letting age define your limits. Invite creativity and purpose into your life by trying new activities in your community to bring in more growth, joy and energy.
- **Explore the rewards of growing older.** With age comes knowledge, which provides insight and confidence to understand and experience the world more deeply. Continue to grow that knowledge through reading, listening, classes and creative activities.
- **Stay engaged in your community.** Everyone benefits when everyone is connected and involved. Stay active by volunteering, working, mentoring, participating in social clubs, and taking part in activities at your local senior center or elsewhere in the community.
- **Form relationships.** As an essential ingredient of well-being, relationships can enhance your quality of life by introducing new ideas and unique perspectives. Invest time with people to discover deeper connections with family, friends and community members.

The Area Agency on Aging District 7 has many programs and services for Older Americans in our ten-county district. We have programs for well seniors, such as education programs and our annual Art Show, as well as programs for those who may need help to remain in their home. For more information, call us at 1-800-582-7277, or email info@aaa7.org.