

A Publication of the Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services

Georgia Interfaith Aging Action

Division of Aging Services | 1-866-552-4464 | www.aging.ga.gov



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Welcome to **Georgia Interfaith Aging Action**, a bimonthly e-newsletter for faith communities, featuring aging program news, current volunteer opportunities, training and resources, and inspiring best practices from the field. Together, we'll explore topics such as how to identify aging needs in your congregation, ways for your faith community to fight senior hunger, how your members can get the most from Medicare, how to start or expand a nursing home visitation program, and much more.

Georgia Interfaith Aging Action is an outgrowth of the Department of Human Services' [Faith and Community Alliance](#). This rapidly growing statewide initiative gives faith-based organizations tools and information for serving congregations and surrounding communities in areas such as aging services, children and vulnerable families, parental responsibility, fatherhood and child support, mental health, and community reentry

Dates to Remember

Looking for newsletter and bulletin content, program ideas, and discussion topics for groups? Plan ahead for these December and January dates:

National Older Driver Safety Awareness Week (Dec. 7-11)

<http://www.aota.org/Conference-Events/Older-Driver-Safety-Awareness-Week.aspx> See "Highlighted Volunteer Opportunities" for ways to support older-driver safety.

Martin Luther King Day of Service (Jan. 18) - www.mlkday.gov

Visit www.mlkserviceproject.com to find out how groups in one Georgia community mobilized 1,300 volunteers to repair seniors' homes and clean yards in a single weekend

Highlighted Volunteer Opportunities

Older Driver Safety – What You Can Do

Raise awareness.

Your members can learn how to safely extend their driving years, have productive family conversations about driving, and find transportation alternatives here:

[Getting Where You need to Go: Driving, Transportation, and Mobility.](#)

Host a CarFit event

Volunteer CarFit trainers educate older adults about how to adjust their vehicles' environment for safer operations. The program is jointly sponsored by the American Automobile Association (AAA), AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association. Visit the link below to find a certified

CarFit, continued

CarFit event coordinator in your area. The event coordinator can help your organization plan and host an educational CarFit event for older drivers in your community.

[Georgia Traffic Injury Prevention Institute](#)

Host a driver safety class.

Visit the link below to learn about what host sites do, the basics that every host needs, and the expert support that the organization provides. The online form will be routed to Georgia's AARP driver-safety leadership team.

[AARP Driver Safety Courses: Information for Prospective Hosts](#)

Start a volunteer-driver program.

Volunteer driver programs can operate one to seven days per week, using an organization's vehicle(s) or volunteers' personal automobiles. A group may choose to transport riders to doctors' offices, grocery stores and pharmacies, worship services, or a range of other destinations. You choose the scope that's right for your mix of resources. For program models and technical assistance, visit the links below and contact your region's Area Agency on Aging.

Links to Resources & Action Ideas

- [The National Volunteer Transportation Center](#)
- [National Center on Senior Transportation](#)
- [Easter Seals Project Action](#)
- [ITNAmerica](#)

Resource Spotlight



Amplified Phones & More Free Equipment Loans

A hearing or speech difficulty can make it hard for someone to communicate on the telephone and call for help in an emergency. Did you know that assistive devices are available to many Georgians, free of charge? The Georgia Public Service Commission and GACHI can help income-eligible Georgians get specialized equipment on-loan.

The Georgia Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (GATEDP) offers amplified phones, TTYs, and other equipment to people who have:

- An application and certificate of need signed by a designated professional
- an income that is 200% or less of the federal poverty limit
- residential phone service (a land line)
- proof of Georgia residency.

To learn more and find an application, visit this link: <https://www.gachi.org/gatedp/> or call GACHI at 404-292-5312 / 800-541-0710. (Both numbers accommodate voice and TTY communication.)

Inspiration from the Field

Southwest Georgia is in bloom, thanks to volunteers from The Pointe Church in Albany. Ten congregation members built raised community garden beds to give local seniors better access to dirt, seeds, and plantings that will yield both flowers and produce. Church members' handiwork is located outside the beautiful new Senior Life Enrichment Center at SOWEGA Council on Aging in Albany.



Inspiration from the Field, continued

“The seniors loved the garden,” said Kay H. Hind, Executive Director of the SOWEGA Council on Aging. “Everyone enjoyed the vegetables that were cooked in the Senior Center and served to the participants.”

“Community Gardens are an important step in preventing hunger but also in bringing communities together to address many issues,” said Gwennyth Johnson of the DHS Division of Aging Services. “Fresh produce is the obvious product of a community garden, but don’t underestimate the benefit of organizing communities to address social and physical environments. Gardens go beyond feeding the individual. They can feed the needs of the community.”

“When looking to begin a community garden, reach out for as many local partnerships as possible (faith, community and business organizations, etc.), and also look to those who have done this in multiple settings,” Johnson added. To get started on your own community garden project, visit these helpful websites:



- American Community Gardening Association (www.CommunityGarden.org)
- Georgia Organics (www.GeorgiaOrganics.org).

Need a partner? Find the Area Agency on Aging that serves your community by visiting www.aging.ga.gov or by calling 866-552-4464. Happy planting!

Call for Stories

Readers, please share your success stories with us! In each issue, Georgia Interfaith Aging Action will feature faith-based communities making a difference in the lives of older Georgians. Let’s hear from you! Contact us at CynthiaHaley.Dunn@dhs.ga.gov or 404-657-1515.