

THE JOURNEY



Pathlights

Enriched by experience.
Empowered in life.

WELCOME!

Greetings and welcome to this year's publication in partnership with the Chicago Tribune titled, The Journey: Positive Possibilities, Partnership & Progress.

Safety comes in many forms and, as the pandemic has reminded us, many of us find that we are not as prepared to address these situations. This is why we felt it was necessary to dedicate this edition to such a critical subject.

Areas of safety that you will read about in this publication, include:

- **Physical and Mental:** It is critical that we all become more aware of exercising our bodies and our minds, especially as our unique situations evolve over time.

- **Food:** As we age, it is crucial to keep basic principles of everyday safety at the forefront of our mind, such as: how we prepare, handle and store our food, all while becoming more conscious about sanitary spaces.

- **Financial:** Becoming more connected to your local protective services partners and providers, such as human service organizations and local law enforcement, is important to evade or respond to fraud, scams, and financial abuse situations.

- **Personal:** Establishing a connection with your neighbors provides an additional layer of safety for you and them.

- **Home:** It is important that we fully understand the safety of our home environment as well as the trusted service providers and partners who help us maintain that safety.

Thank you again for your attention to this topic. I hope that the stories of impact in this publication will inspire you to help continue the advocacy efforts to ensure safety in our communities.

Sincerely,



Kenneth D. Grunke
Executive Director



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Engaging with your community | 3 |
| Creating connections to reduce social isolation and loneliness | 4 |
| The Journey sponsors | 6 |
| Home modifications help transition for aging in place | 10-11 |
| May and June events | 12-14 |
| Take precautions to avoid food borne illnesses | 16-17 |
| Stay vigilant and report suspicions to prevent financial abuse | 18-19 |

GET IN TOUCH

Pathlights

7808 W. College Drive, 5th Floor
Palos Heights, IL 60463
708-361-0219
Flexible Appointments
Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.*

* Please note that our services continue remotely. Our office is currently closed to the public due to the pandemic.

pathlights.org
facebook.com/PATHLIGHTSIL/
linkedin.com/company/pathlights/
youtube.com/channel/
UCqV5W57D3NHp9euSbGRjn3w

Engaging with your community

Getting and staying connected to our neighbors has never been more important.

As older adults navigate life after the pandemic, neighbors and community resources will play an essential role in returning to the new normal. Knowing your neighbors and maintaining community connections help build your social network and create stronger ties to your community.

As the post-pandemic world moves from virtual to in-person or hybrid with both remote and in-person activities, some may struggle to find ways to reconnect with neighbors and rejoin their communities. Fortunately, the Southland has several wonderful organizations and resources to help folks get re-engaged. Whether you looking to share a meal, volunteer at a community garden or get out into nature, community leaders from around the South Suburbs share ideas for reconnecting with your neighbors.

Making Connection and Getting Social **Betsy Dine, Fire & Life Safety Education** **Coordinator, Orland Fire Protection District** orlandfire.org/coffee-and-conversation

"It's vital to the health and safety of older adults in Orland to provide opportunities to stay connected. One of the ways we do that is through our Coffee & Conversations program which is a monthly presentation on topics important to residents. We've covered issues related to final expenses, understanding dementia and senior services."

Sandy DeMoor, Community Resources **Supervisor, City of Palos Hills** facebook.com/City-of-Palos-Hills-Resource-and-Recreation-Department-847190775377387/

"Senior groups offer a great opportunity to meet new people and connect with old friends. We have two vibrant senior groups, the 39'ers and The New Horizon Group, for people who live in Palos Hills. Both offer older adults fun activities like bingo, day trips to casinos and luncheons through the Palos Hills Community Center."



Joe Carlson & Michael Mathis, **Palos Heights Police Department**

palosheights.org/149/Police-Department

"Community involvement helps foster feelings of belonging and support. As police officers, we do all we can to build relationships with our community by interacting with people as much as possible. Whether it's through our Coffee with a Cop program, community events or just saying hello as we patrol the neighborhoods, we look forward to engaging with the public and encourage people to connect with us."

Getting Active and Involved **Moy Mendez, Executive Director** **of The Hope Center, Blue Island** facebook.com/hopecenterblueisland/

"At the Hope Center, we believe in not only helping people but empowering them to help themselves. Our older residents are the foundation of our community, and we offer them workshops to learn new skills, as well as volunteer opportunities to garden or share their skills through our Hope Garage, Hope Technology Center, and Hope Garden."

Joanna Huyck, Volunteer Program **Coordinator, Forest Preserves** **of Cook County**

fpdcc.com/volunteer/trail-watch/

"Volunteering for the Cook County Forest Preserves Trail Watch Program is a wonderful way to stay physically active while enjoying the beauty of our natural areas. Trail Watch volunteers are a welcome presence on our many miles of trails and are helpful in relaying back any issues that need to be addressed."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



Creating connections to reduce social isolation and loneliness

As we age, we do not need to make the journey alone.

"The cumulative effect of aging wears on all of us. Slowly many of us start to back away from activities we used to enjoy and do more easily," says Mike Ideran, co-founder of The Genesis Therapy Center. "Once an older adult gets discouraged that's when they might start giving up. Discouragement can lead to resentment. Resentment can lead to bitterness. Pretty soon the isolation gets too big."

"Go do something with other people whether it's playing bridge or pinochle. Get involved with a church or committee. Visit a new neighborhood, take a trip, or attend a travel series that are often hosted by local libraries," says Ideran.

Ideran, 75, has provided counseling since 1987 and has first-hand experience seeing the benefits of socializing through programs that

The Genesis Therapy Center has provided at the Oak Lawn Senior Center since 2011.

"We do a variety of things to engage people in different ways," says Ideran about activities such as box lunches and coffee hours with entertainment.

"The COVID-19 pandemic increased isolation for so many and we need to do everything we can to engage older people in our community."

Ideran suggests playing canasta, cribbage, Monopoly or Scrabble with older people in your life.

Citing a 2020 report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM), Margaret McCall, caregiver caseworker intern at Pathlights, says that, even before COVID-19, about one-quarter of Americans over age 65 were socially isolated and more than 40% of people over age 60 reported feeling lonely. She adds that the



report identifies that social isolation and loneliness put older adults at a 29% increased risk of heart disease and a 32% increased risk of stroke and is associated with a greater risk of dementia for older adults.

“It’s important that we start to look at technology to combat social isolation and loneliness. We can help so many by bridging the digital divide,” says McCall.

During her internship at Pathlights, McCall has been researching and planning new programs in collaboration with other community organizations to help older adults learn and adapt to technology.

“I’m excited about the potential we have to provide hands-on instruction about technology that can connect more people across the generations and combat social isolation and loneliness,” says McCall. For example, Pathlights is piloting a program with the Oak Lawn Public Library that offers a small group a series of carefully planned classes about everything from computer basics and online security to social media and socialization tools online. The effort will be tested and evaluated to determine its effectiveness and potential to roll-out across Pathlights’ service area.

“I see a lot of older adults who are concerned about going online. They’re worried about getting scammed and that’s a real threat. So, it’s important to help them get more comfortable with technology. These classes are a chance to develop new skills and build new relationships with classmates in person and later through technology. There are some great things that can happen online,” says McCall.

McCall notes that the AARP Foundation lists boredom or lack of interest/withdrawal from social activities, poor dietary decisions, and hoarding, disrepair and clutter in the home as some signs that a person might be isolated.

“Some things go a long way,” says McCall about gestures such as calling someone. “I would hope we are creating a society in which older adults feel they can reach out to



a neighbor, friend, family member or grocery store cashier and have a conversation. Not being afraid to ask for help is so important.”

Pathlights recognizes the devastating effects of social isolation and, through funding from the Illinois Department of Human Services, is committed to educating the community, to build awareness and help mitigate the impact. We have resources that can enhance your life and aid caregivers, friends, and family with in-house services, support groups, Respite, benefits’ assistance, and options for safe transition from hospitals or skilled nursing facilities. Call us at 708-361-0219 to learn about programs and services, education, general support, and in some cases, emergency funding.

THE JOURNEY SPONSORS

Thank you to our supporters and the work they do to help strengthen our communities!



A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company,
an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



APPRECIATION SPONSORS

Moraine Valley Community College

Law Offices of Stephen Sutera P.C.



No one is safe until everyone is safe.

Get the facts. **Get vaccinated.**

For more information about the COVID-19 vaccine
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html

To make an appointment to get vaccinated call
800.232.0233.



Grant funding by the Illinois
Department of Public Health



Moraine Court Supportive Living Community, Chicagoland's premier affordable senior living community, is designed to help seniors achieve a *comfortable & rewarding* lifestyle at an affordable price.

The Supportive Living services offered are personalized to fit each resident's individual needs.

Moraine Court is conveniently located on Harlem Avenue in Bridgeview, Illinois. We offer just the right level of care & assistance while fully respecting your personal independence and privacy.

- 5-Star Guest Experience
- Medication Assistance
- Assistance with Activities of Daily Living
- Apartments with Kitchenettes
- 3 Meals Per Day
- Individualized Care & Service
- Certified Nurse's Aides 24 Hours Per Day
- Life Enrichment Events, Activities, & Fitness
- Housekeeping & Laundry Services



8080 S. Harlem Ave. Bridgeview, IL 60455 | 708-594-2700 | morainecourt.com

SUPPORTIVE LIVING + SUPPORTIVE LIVING MEMORY CARE PROGRAM

Asbury Healthcare is now home to a **Memory Care Neighborhood** certified by the Illinois Department of Health & Family Services Supportive Living Program.

Our secured memory care program combines the best of **Asbury Healthcare Senior Living** with specialized programs, layouts, and safety measures to maximize dignity, comfort, and independence so our memory care residents can live full lives.

Our **expertly trained nurses** are sensitive to the specific health needs of residents affected by memory loss. Ongoing training allows our staff to deliver individualized person-centered care with the most caring, compassionate approach.

Our **Memory Care** teams utilize our home-style kitchens, dining, living rooms, and lounges to create pleasant and structured days, allowing our residents to stay involved with many daily activities such as setting the table and doing laundry. This helps our residents maintain high levels of physical function and independence.

Our **Memory Care** teams are also trained in techniques and programs that engage residents with targeted games, events, and activities designed to be fun as well as helpful in maintaining the highest levels of cognitive function for our residents.

Asbury
OF KANKAKEE

1975 E. Court St. Kankakee, Illinois | 815-258-1219



asburyhealthcare.com

A NEW APPROACH TO HEALTH + WELLNESS

CELEBRATING OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

 LIVING *joyfully*

*Nothing is too small
for us to celebrate.
Each day is filled
with possibilities!*



Looking for a senior housing where you can enjoy a variety of spiritual, physical, intellectual, and social wellness opportunities — then visit www.franciscanvillage.org/fran-village to learn more.



FRANCISCAN VILLAGE
FRANCISCAN COMMUNITIES

Franciscan Ministries sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago



1270 Village Dr., Lemont, IL 60439 • 630-243-3479

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO MAKE A PLAN

- Family Law
- Divorce
- Parenting Matters
- Estate Planning
- Grandparent's Rights
- Guardianship
- Power of Attorney
- Wills/Trusts



Schedule a free, no-obligation consultation to discuss your plan.

815-600-8950
sterkfamilylaw.com

 **Sterk Family Law Group**

Empower Yourself With Options

Advertising Material

of



The biggest part of our name will always be the smallest—**of**. We are Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois. Which means we are of our communities, of our loved ones, of a promise passed down for a healthier tomorrow. And above all else, ***we will always be of service... to you. Through it all.***

A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Home modifications help transition for aging in place

Many aspects of a home environment that were once easy to access and navigate can suddenly become challenging as we age.

Assessing what adjustments are needed in one's home is a proactive step to help ensure safety and independence.

"Making modifications in the home can help prevent falls from happening, can help mitigate hospitalizations and can really just make an older adult's life easier and more efficient in their daily activities," says Jenelle Murphy, PT, DPT, CDP, LSVT, a physical therapist and regional director with FOX Rehabilitation.

"A third of older adults fall each year. One out of five falls causes a serious injury. AARP reports that nearly 90% of older adults want to stay in their homes so it's critical to make sure their environment is safe to prevent falls from happening."

Brittany Donnelly, MOT, OTR/L, is an occupational therapist and regional quality assurance liaison who works with Murphy at FOX Rehabilitation. She says that physical changes during aging can cause our muscles to weaken and decondition causing possible effects in one's balance and performance in everyday activities such as getting dressed, making meals, or moving around the community. In addition, one may experience cognitive changes



secondary to the progression of various medical conditions that can hinder their ability to safely complete their daily activities.

"Simple modifications can make a significant difference," Donnelly says. "Make sure pathways are clear to minimize as many obstacles as possible. Make sure lights are reachable with a light switch right by the entryway of the room or put a lamp or night-light people can easily access so they don't walk into a dark room. Make sure things you use most often are in an easy-to-reach range. That might mean rearranging the kitchen. The same goes for bathrooms or bedroom closets."

Elaine Grande, director of program development for Pathlights, notes that mobility can be affected by increasing health issues and concerns.

"Many times, as you age, you're confined to your home or living area. Maybe it's harder for you to go outside. Maybe you can't get outside because there's too many steps. Lots of things can impact your quality of life when you are not as mobile as you once were," she says.

In response, AgeOptions, the Area Agency on Aging of suburban Cook County, is teaming up with Pathlights and a network of other community-based partners to focus on housing preservation, modifications and related shelter services to better address and prepare for the complex changes that



"AARP reports that nearly 90% of older adults want to stay in their homes so it's critical to make sure their environment is safe to prevent falls from happening."

Jenelle Murphy, PT, DPT, CDP, LSVT, a physical therapist and regional director with FOX Rehabilitation.

one will experience while aging in place and in the community.

The three-year program is funded through the American Rescue Plan Act. Grande says the effort is intended to assist people who need either minor modifications or some accessibility improvements and devices. "By collaborating with other agencies, we can take on bigger projects like this and collectively make a positive impact."

Grande notes that family and friends can contribute to home safety by helping older adults with ongoing maintenance and make sure smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are up to date and working properly. "Lots of things can be done to make sure the environment is safe," she says, listing measures such as removing rugs that may cause someone to trip, making sure older adults have devices to safely shower and ensuring people have quick access to a phone if they need help.

Pathlights also helps counsel people on safety beyond the home environment. The nonprofit can help evaluate if an older adult is able to do daily tasks independently. Does someone need to come in periodically to provide light housecleaning,

laundry or meal preparation?

Grande adds, "These are all things that can be put in place to allow people to remain in their homes as long as possible."

In addition to creating a safer environment, it is critical to take care of yourself. Get your vision and hearing checked annually, have your medications reviewed by a medical provider to see if you are at higher risk of falls and take action steps to increase your strength and mobility through a fall prevention workshop. AgeOptions offers workshops such as Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention, Bingocize and A Matter of Balance. Each workshop offers different information and exercises to help reduce your fear and risk of falling. Find the right program for you and register for an upcoming workshop at ilpathwaystohealth.org (click "search" to see a full list of upcoming workshops).

Pathlights is a vital component of a healthy, empowered, and compassionate community. Everyone has someone they care for who can benefit from our services. For resources call 708-361-0219

Home Safety Checklist



Floors

- ☐ Keep objects off the floor such as shoes, books, papers, and clothes
- ☐ Remove rugs or use double-sided tape or a non-slip backing so rugs won't slip
- ☐ Coil or tape extension cords and wires next to the wall and out of the way
- ☐ Keep pathways clear of furniture
- ☐ Put no-slip strips on tile and wooden floors



Bedroom

- ☐ Place lamps close to the bed where they are easy to reach and use bright light bulbs
- ☐ Plug in night lights; battery-operated lights are available for areas without electrical outlets
- ☐ Keep a flashlight by your bed in case the power goes out
- ☐ Install a phone on the floor in case of an emergency

Bathroom

- ☐ Put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower
- ☐ Consider a shower chair
- ☐ Use non-skid mats
- ☐ Install grab bars next to toilets and inside showers/tubs

Kitchen

- ☐ Keep often-used items in easy-to-reach places (about waist level)
- ☐ NEVER use a chair as a step stool
- ☐ If you must use a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to

Stairs

- ☐ Fix loose or uneven steps
- ☐ Ensure carpet is firmly attached to every step, or remove carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads to steps
- ☐ Install handrails on both sides of stairs
- ☐ Have bright lighting and light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs

Falls are not an inevitable part of aging and the risk of falling can be reduced! Find evidence-based workshops that can help reduce the fear and risk of falling near you at <https://www.ilpathwaystohealth.org/>

For more information call the Health Promotion Team at AgeOptions at (800)699-9043 or email ilpthreferral@ageoptions.org

May and June Community Events

Open to all at no cost unless indicated. Virtual and hybrid registration, full program descriptions, and additional events at pathlights.org.

MAY 2 - MONDAY 11 A.M. **Affordable Housing Options for Older Adults (Virtual)**

Housing affordability concerns those nearing retirement & planning for future needs. Mainstreet Assoc. of Realtors' Senior Services Forum and local organizations explore housing & modification options and more.

MAY 4 - WEDNESDAY 12 P.M. **Pathlights 101**

The Andrew Biela Center • 4545 Midlothian Turnpike • Crestwood
Learn about comprehensive & coordinated services to assist older adults and caregivers in living their best lives while remaining as independent as possible.

MAY 5 - THURSDAY 11 A.M. **Estate Planning is Important to Your Retirement Plan (Virtual)**

Without proper legal documents and financial guidance retirement may not be in your future. Join a discussion on estate planning, advanced directives for healthcare & finance, living wills and more.

MAY 11 - WEDNESDAY 8 A.M. - 12 P.M. **Pathlights at the Palos Heights Farmers Market**

Palos Heights Municipal Parking Lot • 12217 S. Harlem Ave.
Come out to see us. While there pick up local produce, fresh bakery & more.

MAY 12 - THURSDAY 10 A.M. **Seniors Enjoying Nature Inside/ Outside Rain or Shine! (S.E.N.I.O.R.S.)**

Little Red Schoolhouse • 9800 Willow Springs Road
Registration required: Call LRS at 708-839-6897
Have you played outside lately? Join Pathlights as we check out this nature-inspired adventure for ages 55 & up.

MAY 12 - THURSDAY 11 A.M. **Tools for Aging in Place Successfully (Virtual)**

Aging in place is achievable for most with forethought and planning. Learn simple changes, products, assistance, and habits to keep older adults safely at home & options when that's not possible.

MAY 12 - THURSDAY 12:30 P.M. **Aging is Mandatory, Acting Your Age Isn't**

Lemont Township Community Center Woodland Sanctuary • 16300 Alba
Make age less relevant! Think you must act a certain way? "Too old" for certain things? If not engaging in activities you used to enjoy, attend this fun event led by Rhonda Richter, M.A., Life Coach, educator, nature guide. Generously sponsored by Mom's Meals®.

MAY 14 - SATURDAY 10 A.M. **Prepare to Care (Hybrid)**

In person: Oak Lawn Public Library • 9427 Raymond Ave.
Register for in person at cal.olpl.org/event/8515492
Caring for aging loved ones is an important role to take on. It is also demanding and daunting. Elder law attorney Helen Mesoloras of Dutton Casey & Mesoloras PC addresses necessary legal documents, decisions you can legally make, caregivers' rights & responsibilities, and professional & community resources to help navigate caregiving. Generously sponsored by Moraine Court Supportive Living.

MAY 18 - WEDNESDAY 11 A.M.
Outsmart the Scammers Lunch & Learn

Franciscan Village • 1270 Village Drive • Lemont
 Registration required: cwarsaw@franciscancommunities.org or 630-243-3479
 Incidents of fraud are on the rise. Scammers' tactics are becoming more complex. Chris Deacy, Financial Advisor with Edward Jones® teaches how to recognize fraudulent encounters, steps to protect yourself and resources to turn to if targeted. Lunch provided by Franciscan Village.

MAY 19 - THURSDAY 11 A.M.
Senior Resources - Who can I call for. . . . (Virtual)

Community resources can't help if you don't know about them. Pathlights' presentation covers programs and services available to older adults.

MAY 24 - TUESDAY 11:30 A.M.
Pathlights Lunch and Learn

Palos Heights Parks and Rec Center • 6601 W 127th St.
 Pre-registration required; paid ticketed event. Pathlights does amazing work in SW Suburban Cook County. Get an overview of our services and learn how we work with partners to further advocate for the needs of older adults. Raffle to be held with proceeds benefitting Pathlights.

MAY 25 - WEDNESDAY
10 A.M. - 12 P.M.
Nature is Accessible Drop in Event

Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center • 9800 Willow Springs Road
 Join Pathlights in Little Red Schoolhouse's garden with accessible trail. Visitors of all abilities can interact with nature through accessible activities. Questions? 708-839-6897; littlered.schoolhouse@cookcountyil.gov.

MAY 26 - THURSDAY 10:30 A.M.
Don't Be a Victim of Scamming! (Hybrid)

In person: Chicago Ridge Public Library • 10400 Oxford Ave.
 In 2020, older adults lost almost \$1 billion to scams. Learn to protect yourself by identifying signs of scams in this discussion with experts from Blue Cross Blue Shield of IL, Nicor, and the Cook County Sheriff's Dept.

JUNE 2 - THURSDAY 11 A.M.
Practical Tips for Aging in Place Safely

Palos Hills Resource & Rec Department • 8455 W. 103rd St.
 Physiological changes of aging affecting balance, vision, and continence impact activities and mobility. FOX Rehabilitation experts give a home tour, teaching simple modifications to movement and space to address these changes. Generously sponsored by Mars Medical Home Medical Equipment & Supplies.

JUNE 3 - FRIDAY 7 A.M. - 1 P.M.
Pathlights at Hills Farmers Market

City of Hickory Hills • 8652 W. 95th Street
 See what's new with Pathlights at the grand opening of the Hickory Hills Farmers Market.

JUNE 6 - MONDAY 11 A.M.
Nutrition Essentials

Worth Public Library District • 6917 W. 111th St.
 Joe Smith from Mom's Meals® leads a talk on how nutrition impacts physical and mental health and can exacerbate chronic conditions. Caregivers and older adults encouraged to attend. Generously sponsored by Hoyne Savings Bank.

JUNE 8 - WEDNESDAY 6 P.M.**Retirement Readiness: Will You Have Enough Income in Retirement?**

BankFinancial • 48 Orland Square Drive • Orland Park

Retirement planning requires understanding the income you'll need and positioning assets to support the lifestyle you want. Vince Bailey, Wealth Advisor, discusses ways to maximize the possibility of a financially secure retirement. Full program description on our website.

JUNE 23 - THURSDAY 6 P.M.**Alzheimer's Community Forum**

*Orland Park Public Library • 14921 S Ravinia Ave.
Registration requested: Call (708) 428-5114 or via our website*

Learn about Alzheimer's, dementia, and memory loss. Bring a friend affected by the disease. Share thoughts on how we can better serve caregivers and those with Alzheimer's. See our website for details & participating experts.

JUNE 25 - SATURDAY 10 A.M.**Buying, Selling, or Renting? Pitfalls, Traps & Scams to Avoid (Hybrid)**

In person: Evergreen Park Public Library • 9400 S Troy Ave.

Many regret engaging in real estate transactions without legal representation. Attorney Michael J. Maslanka addresses navigating property transactions and the new and very pro-tenant Cook County landlord/tenant ordinance, the dangerous Quitclaim deed, and more! Q & A to follow.

JUNE 30 - THURSDAY 7 A.M. - 1 P.M.**Evergreen Park Farmers' Market**

Yukich Field • 89th and Kedzie Ave.

Attend this vibrant market to see what's new at Pathlights. Our partner, Blue Cross Blue Shield of IL, will be on site with health literacy information and giveaways. Participate in line dancing and get questions answered about Medicare or the Affordable Care Act.

**Your Palos Township Officials**

Highway Commissioner Gene Adams, Assessor Robert E. Maloney, Trustee Richard C. Riley, Trustee Brent Woods, Trustee Tasneem Abuzir, Supervisor Colleen Grant-Schumann, Trustee Pamela Jones, Clerk Jane Nolan

BankFinancial is a proud supporter of **Pathlights** and its mission to empower individuals navigating their aging years in life.

Let Us Help You Succeed During This Important Time in Your Life

At *BankFinancial*, we take a different approach to wealth management. We work with each client to provide highly customized, financial planning and solutions, utilizing our Portfolio Management, Fiduciary Services and Insurance capabilities.

Call **630-425-5874** to schedule your complimentary personal consultation with one of our expert financial advisors.

BankFinancialSM

Trust & Investment Services

1.800.894.6900 | BankFinancial.com

Not FDIC insured / May lose value / Not financial institution guaranteed /
Not a bank deposit / Not insured by any federal government agency

A hub for health and wellness solutions



Blue Door Neighborhood CenterSM

Come join us for classes and workshops to learn, connect and focus on your health. Just another way Blue Cross and Blue Shield puts unity in community.

Morgan Park

11840 S Marshfield Ave.
Chicago, IL 60643

Pullman

756 E 111th St.
Chicago, IL 60628

South Lawndale

2551 W Cermak Rd.
Chicago, IL 60608

BlueDoorCenterIL.com



BlueCross BlueShield
of Illinois

A Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company,
an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



Take precautions to avoid food borne illnesses

Eating undercooked food or leftovers that sits out too long is likely to make anyone sick.

But older adults are even more susceptible to food borne illnesses, due to their weakened immune systems and other changes in the body, according to Ron Fuhrman, owner of Food Safety Seminars in Orland Park.

"Older adults are a high-risk population," says Fuhrman. As we age, our organs are not as efficient as they used to be and the amount of stomach acid in our bodies has decreased, causing pathogens (germs) in food to sit in the intestines and grow, instead of becoming digested. As a result, it's more likely to get a food borne illness. He cautions older adults to stay away from raw or undercooked foods, such as:

- Eggs prepared over easy, sunny-side up or poached
- Rare or medium rare burgers and steaks
- Hollandaise sauce
- Caesar salad dressing
- Tiramisu

Other big no-no's are sprouts, sprout seeds, and tofu – each is associated with many foodborne illnesses. Also, only purchase pasteurized milk, juice and eggs – pasteurization is a process that uses heat to kill germs.



Proper storage

Immediately transfer raw beef, chicken, pork and other meats from store packaging to food safe containers, before placing it in the refrigerator or freezer, advises Chef Dean Eliacostas, chef instructor and program coordinator at Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills.

Be sure to store it on the bottom shelf, so the blood or raw juices don't leach onto other foods.

Follow these food-safety basics:

- Set refrigerator at 36 degrees; freezer at zero.
- Don't block air vents.
- Keep foods refrigerated until you're ready to prepare them.
- Bring hot food to room temperature before refrigerating it. Otherwise, the temperature in the refrigerator will rise.

Safe handling

Always wash your hands with soap and hot water. The biggest cause of food borne illness is cross contamination; transferring pathogens from one source to another and hands are the perfect vehicle, Eliacostas says.

When you cut raw chicken, then touch the knife and the cutting board, you spread pathogens and need to sanitize all those items.

Be mindful of time

The new FDA guidelines say you can use time rather than temperature as a guideline for proper



Chef Dean Eliacostas,
chef instructor and
program coordinator
at Moraine Valley
Community College

serving of foods. Cold foods can sit out for six hours when serving foods as long as the temperature never gets above 70 degrees (so you will need to take temperatures regularly) and there is a method to determine when the six hours are up. Hot foods can sit out during serving for four hours without taking the temperature of the food. At the end of the four or six hours all remaining food must be discarded.

The temperature danger zone is 41 to 135 degrees. The closer you get to the middle of the temperature danger zone the faster bacteria will grow. At room temperature bacteria will double every 20 minutes.

To gauge a food's accurate temperature, use an instant read digital thermometer:

- Cook meats and seafood in the conventional oven to 145 degrees; ground versions to 155 degrees.
- Stick the thermometer halfway down the center of the meat, not on the edge – edges cook faster than the middle.
- Cook poultry to 165 degrees; 175 degrees if it's on the bone – bones function as an insulator and slow cooking.

Other helpful tools include:

- Colored cutting boards: To prevent cross-contamination, designate a different color for raw proteins, fruits, veggies and breads.
- Food safe disposable gloves: Wearing gloves prevents pathogens from seeping into dry, cracked skin and causing infections.

• Kitchen timer: An alarm is a good reminder that the stove is on and needs to be turned off.

Don't get stuck with leftovers

Just like a restaurant, plan a menu for the week and keep these food safety rules in mind:

- Cook raw proteins within 24 hours of purchasing or store in the freezer, to prevent from going bad.
- Thaw raw proteins in the refrigerator two days prior to using. Remember to keep it in a food safe container – frozen foods leach more liquid than fresh.
- Eat leftover fish, chicken, lamb, pork and steak cold – once you reheat it, it doesn't taste as good.
- Toss leftovers after three days.

Don't fret if you've lost your sense of smell. To determine if food has gone bad, Eliacostas says to go by sight and timing. Toss out raw beef that looks brown, raw chicken and sliced deli meats that appear slimy, and any food past its expiration date.

With a little thought and careful planning, you can avoid contracting a food borne illness or making someone you love, sick.

Sometimes accessing basic nutrition can be a challenge for older adults living independently or with significant limitations. Pathlights delivers nutritious meals each year to residents 60 years of age and over who are either temporarily or permanently unable to access food. We also have the latest information about eligibility for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program formerly known as food stamps) and more. Call 708-361-0219.



Ron Fuhrman,
owner of
Food Safety
Seminars

Stay vigilant and report suspicions to prevent financial abuse

When older people or adults with disabilities are taken advantage of financially, the perpetrator is often someone the victim knows.

"The most common issue is family members or caregivers accessing bank accounts, using ATM (automated teller machine) cards and debit cards and making withdrawals without consent," says Velencia Myton, Pathlights' Adult Protective Services (APS) supervisor.

"In the most extreme situations, we have seen older adults sign over their home through various methods – quitclaim deeds or power of attorneys. The abuser is taking advantage to control property, bank accounts, and other sources of income."

Sadly, abuse is underreported. Every year an estimated 1 in 10 adults 60 years and over experience abuse, neglect, or exploitation in the U.S. and as few as 1 in 14 cases of abuse are ever brought to the attention of authorities. Financial exploitation is a fast-growing form of abuse. Last year, Pathlights reports that 26% of its cases were related to financial abuse.

"Although we have a total of 400 cases every year there are so many more that are not reported because the older adult or adult with a disability is embarrassed this has happened to them by someone they love and trusted," according to Myton. "If it does get reported, they're afraid their loved one will go to jail or get in trouble."



Reporting suspicions may thwart financial abuse, as was the rare case with a bank transfer of \$90,000-plus that was stopped after a call of concern.

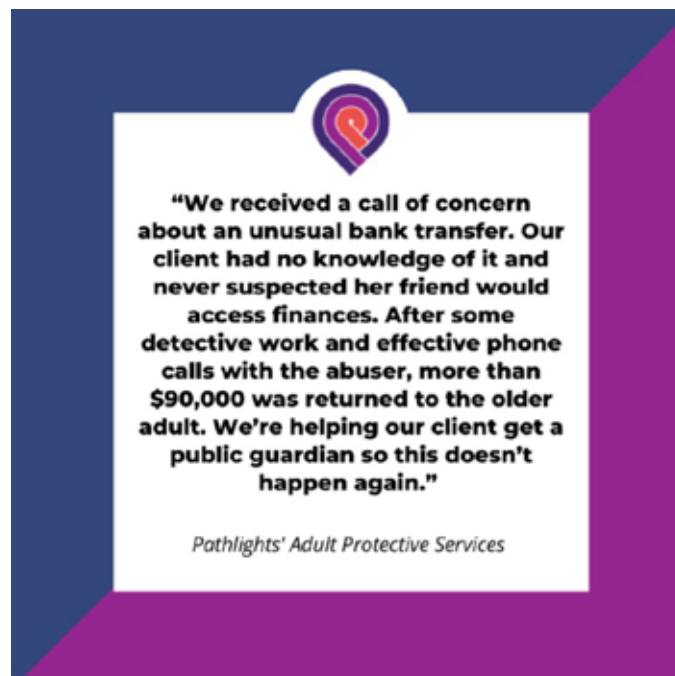
"We had a new relationship with the alleged victim as she was planning to begin home-delivered meals," says Pathlights' APS case worker Valerie.

Valerie met with the older woman at her home and discovered that a longtime friend connected the woman with someone representing himself as a financial planner. When Valerie called the alleged abuser and asked questions including why he was trying to transfer the money, he backed down. He cancelled the wire transfer and more than \$90,000 was returned to the client's bank account. Then Pathlights worked directly with the client to help arrange a public guardian, so this kind of situation doesn't recur.

"We all need to take care and watch out for our older neighbors, friends and family. If you notice something unusual is happening, call us," says Valerie. In addition to social supports, she noted that people can help protect themselves by not keeping financial paperwork or card

numbers out and available, and never giving out their social security number over the phone or to anyone until they've verified the source is legitimate.

Nationally, older adults lost almost \$1 billion in scams in 2020, according to a report from The Federal Bureau of Investigation.



Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart says, "We see financial crimes and what we call ruse burglaries, where it's actually not a break-in but through trickery they get into a home and usually steal jewelry and money. Unfortunately, one of the many downsides of COVID is a lot of new scams like this."



He says perpetrators have feigned everything from help with governmental assistance to expediting testing or vaccines for a fee.

Older people and adults with disabilities can protect themselves by consulting with a trusted person when something seems suspicious. "The best way is to have that loved one be that screening process," says Dart.

The Cook County Sheriff's Office, which presents crime prevention events geared toward older adults, and the Illinois Department on Aging are among Pathlights' partners.

"They have such a broad connection to so many different community organizations," says Dart. "By collaborating with Pathlights we're a stronger team and reach out to exponentially more people."

In addition, Pathlights partners directly with a volunteer community expert team known as the Multi-Disciplinary Team (M-Team) to discuss and resolve some of the most challenging cases of abuse and self-neglect.

"The team is made up of people from different

backgrounds and different professions that all bring something to the table," says John Lockie, vice president – commercial lending for LincolnWay Community Bank, who served on the M-Team for more than 20 years.

Lockie counseled on many different cases, including ones that involved family members or friends bilking victims' investment accounts or Social Security benefits. He cautions everyone to check

financial statements regularly for unauthorized withdrawals.

"Every situation is different. Sometimes it's pride. Sometimes people don't realize the significance of a situation. Denial is a big part of it," says Lockie. "It's important to let people know that abuse happens everywhere and can affect anyone across all walks of life, all ages and all socioeconomic groups and cultures – intentionally or unintentionally."

Pathlights' trained professionals in APS investigate abuse through the Illinois Department on Aging. Together we can protect our community. If you suspect an older adult or an adult with disabilities is a victim of abuse in the Palos, Lemont, Orland, Stickney or Worth Township area, please immediately make a report to Pathlights at 708-361-0219 or through the state hotline at 866-800-1409. Your identity will remain anonymous and your information confidential.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Sheikh Hassan Aly, Imam at the Mecca Center, Willowbrook

meccacenter.org/

"Our neighbors are an important part of our community. The Mecca Center is not only a place of worship, but a community center. Through our Wellness Initiative as well as educational programming, we meet with our community members across the south suburbs to help them grow spiritually, intellectually, and socially."

Larry Fetchko, Community Liaison Officer, and Director, Family + Community Resource Network for Oak Lawn-Hometown School District 123

olparks.com/parks-facilities/community-garden

"Our community garden offers a meaningful

way for people to give back to the local community. Volunteers work together to plant and grow vegetables in 45 beds designated as the "Pantry" section within the garden and harvest them for our local food pantries. This garden gives people the opportunity to work alongside their neighbors and make a difference in the community."

Meeting neighbors and finding ways to spend time with others allows you to build a support system. Remaining engaged within a community and staying connected to those around you can impact your physical and mental health in positive ways. As we continue to reemerge from spending time at home and away from social gatherings, take reentry at your own pace. Your neighbors and community are here and ready when you are.

ManorCare

IS NOW

 **PROMEDICA**
SKILLED NURSING
AND REHABILITATION



We are excited to announce our new name. Clients can expect the same great care, great team and acceptance of most insurance plans, but with the added expertise we gained by joining a not-for-profit health system. With resources covering all aspects of health care including hospitals, health plan and specialty physicians, we can't wait to share these benefits with our community.

Look for new signs and other information coming soon! To learn more please call **800-427-1903** or visit **promedicaskillednursing.org**