

# WELCOME SPRING



**Howard County**  
Office on Aging and Independence

News & Events for Howard County Older Adults • April 2026

## Howard County Joins the Dementia Friendly America Network



On March 23, Howard County Executive Calvin Ball announced Howard County has joined the Dementia Friendly America (DFA) network. The initiative brings together government agencies, clinical providers, community-based organizations, individuals living with dementia and their care partners to build a more inclusive and supportive community. "Dementia is not just a diagnosis; it is a daily reality that touches lives, families and entire communities," said Ball. "More than six million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease, and that number continues to grow. Here in Maryland, and in Howard County, that impact is being felt in households, in workplaces and in our community every single day."

The Office on Aging and Independence (OAI) will coordinate and implement the initiative, convening cross-sector partners and leading planning, implementation and sustainability efforts in alignment with the County's Age-Friendly Action Plan 2025–2029. Joining the Dementia Friendly Network will expand access to direct services, community programming, professional training, and partnerships to complement OAI's dementia-related services.

"Becoming a Dementia-Friendly community reflects our commitment to ensure every resident feels valued, understood, and supported," said Ofelia Ross Ott, OAI Administrator. "This initiative strengthens our ability to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where individuals living with dementia can remain engaged in community life, and their caregivers have the guidance, education, and support they need throughout every stage of the journey." [Read the press release about the Dementia Friendly announcement](#) and [view photos from the press conference](#).



*Pictured above at the March 23 press conference to announce Howard County's joining the DFA network, are, from left, Jackie Scott, Department of Community Resources and Services Director; Sandy Markwood, CEO, USAgging; Gloria Lawlah, former Secretary, Maryland Department of Aging; Howard County Executive Calvin Ball; Ofelia Ross Ott, OAI Administrator; David McShea, Executive Director of the MD and DE Chapters of the Alzheimer's Association; David Conway, State President, AARP; and Mark Tesoro, Maryland Department of Aging.*

**OAI**  
Your Circle  
of Connection  
Howard County Office on Aging and Independence Showcase

**MAY 1 2026**  
@ The Mall in Columbia  
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

**REGISTER NOW!**  
bit.ly/OAIShowcase2026

- Enjoy line dance with friends and neighbors
- Sing along with the Fabulous 50+ Players
- Interact with special (furry) guests from Pets on Wheels
- Be inspired by a keynote address on The Power of Staying Connected
- Explore resources and services for older adults in #HoCoCommunity and MUCH MORE!

## Join OAI at the Mall in Columbia to Kick off Older Americans Month with Your Circle of Connection

May 1, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. • The Mall in Columbia • Lower Level

[Register for Your Circle of Connection](https://bit.ly/OAIShowcase2026)

The **OAI 2026 Showcase: Your Circle of Connection** will bring together community members, service providers and local organizations to highlight Howard County programs, resources and supports for older adults, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities. Explore exhibitor booths, attend educational presentations, participate in hands-on activities, enjoy line dancing and a magic show, and connect with experts in aging, health, and wellness, including keynote speaker, Jessica Chaney, Older Adult

[View the full event schedule](#)

## OAI Volunteers Find Purpose and Connection in Giving Back to the Community

**National Volunteer Month** in April celebrates the impact volunteers have on our lives and community and encourages active volunteerism for all generations. “My mom and aunt absolutely love volunteering with OAI,” says Darlene Vaselaros, assistant director of the North Laurel 50+ Center. “Volunteering gives them a sense of purpose and connection and an opportunity to give back in a meaningful way while also having fun.” Over the years, Darlene’s mom, Rosemary Marsiglia, (pictured below, left) and her twin sister, Bobbie Walker, (right) have become familiar faces at OAI’s annual Thanksgiving Luncheon. “We love helping serve the meals, but what really means the most is seeing everyone together, smiling, talking and enjoying the day,” says Rosemary. “It’s such a joyful, intergenerational experience. Volunteering keeps us active, connected and part of something bigger than ourselves.”



Are you interested in making a meaningful difference in our community? Volunteer opportunities are available throughout OAI, the Age-Friendly Howard County initiative and across the county. Discover how your skills, interests, and life experiences can have a

positive and lasting impact! To explore ways to volunteer in Howard County attend an upcoming volunteer information session. [View the schedule](#) and [register to attend one of the volunteer sessions](#).

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### Your Conversation Starter Guide

## Make your care wishes known NOW to ensure your future peace of mind!

Celebrated on April 16, [National Healthcare Decisions Day](#) (NHDD) encourages and empowers people to begin conversations about their wishes for care through the end of life. During the month of April, OAI's Guardianship Program staff will host information tables at 50+ centers to answer questions and share resources for residents to learn about advance care planning to

ease the burden of decision-making for their loved ones. Stop by one of the following centers to pick up a Maryland Advance Directive form, Five Wishes packets, local legal resources, and more information:

- April 2, 10 a.m. – noon | Bain 50+ Center
- April 6, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. | Elkridge 50+ Center
- April 9, 10 a.m. – noon | East Columbia 50+ Center
- April 13, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. | Glenwood 50+ Center
- April 14, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. | Ellicott City 50+ Center
- April 15, 10 a.m. – noon | North Laurel 50+ Center



## Stay active and connected at a 50+ Center near you

This Spring, visit a 50+ Center near you to meet new friends, find a new hobby or join us for [lunch](#). While you're there, check out our fully equipped indoor fitness rooms and walking tracks (at North Laurel and Glenwood) and pick up information about OAI programs and services to help you age well. For more ideas, check out the activities featured in [April issue](#) of OAI's monthly 50+ Connection newsletter and the Centers' quarterly newsletters:

- [Bain 50+ Center Newsletter](#)
- [East Columbia 50+ Center Newsletter](#)
- [Elkridge 50+ Center Newsletter](#)
- [Ellicott City 50+ Center Newsletter](#)
- [Glenwood 50+ Center Newsletter](#)
- [North Laurel 50+ Center Newsletter](#)

[Subscribe to have these publications sent directly to your inbox.](#) Here are some activities coming up this month, highlighted by our 50+ Center directors:

## Senior Planet presents: iPad Basics Workshop

**Elkridge 50+ Center**

**Wednesdays, April 8 – 29, 10 – 11:30 a.m.**

[Register for iPad Basics](#)

Join Senior Planet volunteer Walter Seymour (pictured with Elkridge member Wendy Reynolds) to explore using an Apple iPad to navigate the internet. Learn to take pictures, use email, search the internet, download apps, and connect to people, organizations and topics of interest that matter to you. ([Read more about Walter in the April issue of the 50+ Connection](#)).



## Learn to Develop Chess Skills – Level 1

**Elkridge 50+ Center • April 9, 11 a.m. – noon • [Register for Chess Skills](#)**

Chess is an exercise for the brain that can sharpen your mind and strengthen problem-solving skills. This class is geared to an average (not beginner) player; bring a chess set.

## Natural Burial: What is it and should I consider it?

**Elkridge 50+ Center • April 9, 1 – 2 p.m. • [Register for the Natural Burial info session](#)**

Dan Law of Serenity Ridge Natural Burial Cemetery will discuss natural burial as an earth-friendly alternative to contemporary burial practice and explore other trends such as cremation, human composting and alkaline hydrolysis. For details, call 410-313-5192.

## History Alive! Performance Show: Rosie the Riveter

**Elkridge 50+ Center • April 22, 1 – 2 p.m. • [Register for History Alive](#)**

During World War II, women joined the U.S. workforce by the millions, replacing the men who had gone off to fight. Mary Ann Jung brings the story of Rosie the Riveter to life, portraying Rose Leigh Monroe, a worker at the largest aircraft factory in the world. Cost: \$5.

## 70's Dance Party!

**Glenwood 50+ Center • April 22, 1 – 2:30 p.m. • [Register for the 70's Dance Party](#)**

Sign up for a “dancing good” time as we celebrate Earth Day with a 1970's themed dance party! DJ "Spotify" will help us revisit the songs we danced to decades ago.

## Howard County History: Solving the Mystery of the Hobbs Schoolhouse

**Ellicott City 50+ Center • April 30, 1 – 2:30 p.m. • [Register for Solving the Mystery](#)**

Oliver Cromwell Gilbert escaped slavery from a Howard County plantation in 1843, recounting his journey in a memoir of his life. When his great-great granddaughter, Stephanie Gilbert turned to the Howard County Historical Society to learn more about him, researchers located a key part of his journey and made an astonishing discovery!

**Boost your Nutrition and Health at 50+ Centers**

### **Tasty Tidbits: Veggie Latkes (Waffled)**

**Elkridge 50+ Center • April 7, 10:30 – 11 a.m. • [Register for Tasty Tidbits, Vegetable Latkes](#)**

Learn how to make these healthy snacks at home. Explore the ingredients to make veggie latkes, their nutritional benefits, simple cooking techniques, and sample what may become your new favorite treat.



### **Tasty Tidbits: Banana Chocolate Ice Cream**

**North Laurel 50+ Center • April 14, 1 – 1:30 p.m. • [Register for Tasty Tidbits, Banana Chocolate Ice Cream](#)**

Sweet treats can fit into a healthy eating plan with smart swaps, moderation and portion size in mind. Indulge in diabetes-friendly desserts to satisfy your cravings in a healthy way.

### **Building a Better You**

**North Laurel 50+ Center • Wednesdays, April 15 – May 6, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. • [Register for Building a Better You](#)**

This four-part wellness series focuses on practical tips and sensible solutions to everyday problems that get in the way of living well! Attend all four sessions and complete an evaluation survey to receive a gift.



### **Gardening For Health**

**Bain 50+ Center • April 17, 11 a.m. – noon • [Register for Gardening for Health](#)**

Spending time in the garden not only benefits your landscape; it can also enhance your physical and mental health. Learn to boost the health benefits of gardening and explore ergonomic practices to prevent injury and adaptive tools to maximize your enjoyment.

### **No More Worries: Let Go of Stress**

**Bain 50+ Center • April 21, 11 a.m. – noon • [Register for No More Worries](#)**

Chronic stress can wreak havoc on your mind and body. Deniqua Taylor-Gordon from Humana will help you learn how to identify the areas in your life that can cause stress.

## Mind, Body & Energy

Elkridge 50+ Center • April 24, 10 a.m. – noon • [Register for Mind, Body & Energy](#)

Explore basic techniques from Reiki and Healing Touch, and learn how gentle energies can soothe, calm, relax, and help relieve pain, and support balance and health using hands, mind and spirit. For more information, call 410-313-5192.

## Fight Fraud, Be Prepared and Save Money



### Fight Fraud: AARP Shred It Community Event

North Laurel 50+ Center • April 22, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. • [Register for AARP Shred It](#)

OAI is partnering with the AARP Fraud Watch Network™ to help protect you from identity theft. Just drive up, unload up to two large boxes and your documents will be shredded on-site, free of charge (no business documents). [View the flier for details](#). If you need more information, 877-926-8300.

### Flood Safety and Preparedness

East Columbia 50+ Center • April 13, 11 a.m. to noon • [Register for Flood Safety](#)

Flooding can happen anywhere, at any time - are you prepared? Join the Howard County Office of Emergency Management to learn about flood safety and preparedness, local flood risks, emergency planning, and resources to help you and your family stay safe before, during and after a flood.

### Age Wisely with MAP: Tax Credits - Do you qualify?

East Columbia 50+ Center • April 15, 6 – 7 p.m. • [Register for Age Wisely with MAP](#)

Learn about tax credits available to older adults in Howard County that can reduce property taxes or support home modifications. Whether you're looking for financial relief during retirement, trying to reduce housing costs or need help with home accessibility, get clear guidance on the credits and incentives for which you may be eligible, including the Howard County Aging in Place Credit, Senior Tax Credit and Livable Homes Tax Credit; and the Maryland Property Tax Credit, Renter's Tax Credit and Homestead Credit.

## Beyond the Thermostat: Save Money on your BGE Bill

North Laurel 50+ Center • April 16, 11 a.m. – noon • [Register for Beyond the Thermostat](#)

Join Howard County's Office of Children & Families and Civic Works Energy for a hands-on workshop about home performance upgrades to save energy and money. Learn how to make your home more comfortable and efficient, and enjoy raffles and giveaways.



The poster features a central figure of a person in a suit with several circular icons around them, each containing a different person's face. A QR code is located in the bottom left corner. The text is arranged in a clear, hierarchical manner, with the event title and date being the most prominent elements.

**CALLING ALL  
JOBSEEKERS  
AGE 50+**

**Register today!**

Howard County, MD  
**Virtual 50+  
Employment  
EXPO**  
(via Zoom)  
**Thursday, May 7, 2026  
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

- Morning workshops to help you with your job search
- Meet area employers in the afternoon
- Be one of our success stories!

Free registration is required:  
[HowardExpo.AccessJCA.org](https://HowardExpo.AccessJCA.org)

Howard County  
Office on Aging and Independence

JCA  
Jewish Council  
for the Aging

## Don't miss Howard County's Virtual 50+ Employment EXPO May 7, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. (via Zoom) • [Register for the Virtual Employment EXPO](#)

If you are an older adult seeking employment, register now to participate in Howard County's free Virtual 50+ Employment Expo. Sponsored by OAI and the Jewish Council for the Aging®, the expo is open to all job seekers age 50 and older. Join us to network, learn about job search topics and talk with local employers about their job openings. Registration is free, and required for job seekers. Employers with at least three different job openings (other than home health care) are also encouraged to participate in the virtual employment expo. Registration is also required for employers; [learn more and register](#).

## Manage your Chronic Condition with Living Well!

OAI's [Living Well program](#) offers free evidence-based workshops designed for people living with one or more chronic conditions and/or caregivers. Weekly topics include nutrition, exercise, communication skills, stress management, action planning and goal setting. [View the schedule of upcoming Living Well workshops.](#) For more information, email [Heather Sites](#) or call 410-313-3507 (voice/relay).



## Salute to 250 Years of Military Service



### A Community Celebration of Service, Sacrifice & Patriotism

DATE: **Sunday April 19th 2026**

TIME: **11am - 4pm**

LOCATION: **Belmont Manor & Historic Park**  
6555 Belmont Woods Rd, Elkridge, MD 21075

**FREE & OPEN  
TO ALL AGES!**

Join us for a heartfelt community celebration honoring the rich legacy of the Army, Navy and Marines—from the Revolutionary War to today—as part of HoCo250, Howard County's year-long celebration of America's 250th anniversary!



[For more information about Office on Aging & Independence programs, visit our website](#) or follow us on social media @HoCoCommunity. If you need assistance, contact Maryland Access Point of Howard County at 410-313-1234 (voice/relay) or visit [www.howardcountymd.gov/map](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/map).



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