Age my way!

The Age My Way initiative is an opportunity for older adults to explore the many ways they can remain active and involved with their communities. With the implementation of the Age-Friendly Howard County Action Plan now underway, the 2022 theme of Older Americans Month seems especially timely. We asked Howard County’s Commission on Aging members to share their thoughts on how “Aging My Way” aligns with building an age-friendly community.

“Aging My Way has meant having more time to contribute to the community through volunteer work,” said Commissioner Jennifer Asher. “There are so many fulfilling ways to volunteer in Howard County. For me, serving on the Commission on Aging and participating in the Age-Friendly initiative are great options.” Jennifer encourages residents of all ages to join the effort to make the county an even better place to live and to age. A resident of Western Howard County, she also enjoys taking exercise classes at the Glenwood 50+ Center and visiting Western Regional Park as often as possible.

As a commissioner and local realtor, Victoria Hathaway has found that sometimes the stereotypes of older adults can apply, but just as often they do not. “Whether they do or don’t, you can’t go by chronology,” she explains, “I know some 94-year-olds who run circles around me at 57! But I also meet others who are so busy looking backward or wishing they were “younger” that they miss living in the moment and finding joy in each day simply by being in the game. Aging my way means letting who I am as a person shine through the process of aging.”

“Aging is what we all have to face in the future,” says Commissioner Wei Guo. “If we can find ways to keep our health both physically and mentally, we will live a life of happiness. Aging my way means keeping active every day, learning something new, connecting with friends new or old.” Wei also suggests joining a community group that shares your interests — like gardening, reading or travel. “I think it’s very important to keep your spirit of optimism and try to enjoy every day of your life.”

Do you have your own “Age My Way” story to share? Email kahenry@howardcountymd.gov. For more details about how you can get involved in the Age-Friendly Howard County initiative, visit www.howardcountymd.gov/agefriendly.

A Message from Howard County Executive Calvin Ball

With the arrival of Spring, there is much to be hopeful about. May is Older Americans Month and we are redoubling our efforts to ensure Howard County promotes and supports an Age-Friendly community.

In my proposed Fiscal Year 2023 capital budget, I have included funding to complete the construction of the new, long-awaited 29,600 square foot East Columbia 50+ Center by the summer of 2023. Additionally, this year I’ve proposed record funding of $8.24 million for bike and pedestrian projects, so that more residents can safely walk or roll to libraries, community centers, grocery stores, and more. Improved walkways will also make it easier for residents to access our parks and green spaces – which I’ve dedicated $19 million to in our budget this year to improve and expand our recreational facilities.

As part of the downtown Columbia revitalization, we have designated $1.7 million to begin the design of a new Central Branch Library and anticipate construction of a new state-of-the-art facility will begin in fiscal year 2024.

As we continue our recovery from the pandemic, it is our priority to ensure that Howard County emerges stronger and more resilient. Our investments in critical infrastructure and community gathering spaces are a testament to my commitment that residents of all ages and abilities can thrive. Wishing everyone a healthy month ahead, and a very Happy Mother’s Day to all the wonderful moms, grandmothers, godmothers, and caregivers in our lives.

Ellen Elliott is AGING HER WAY! “My husband and I have always been very physically active — canoeing & kayaking, sailing, scuba diving, bicycling, hiking,” says the Ellicott City resident. “We are now in our 70’s and we want to keep on doing these things, so we are finding ways to do them with a little help. This past winter, we traveled (safely) to Kauai, an island we had never visited but always wanted to explore. The trail that called to me was the Kalalau Trail, 11 strenuous miles along the Na Pali. But with arthritic knees and a slower pace, we knew we wouldn’t be able to carry our tent, food and all the other gear by ourselves. So, I contacted our nephew, who willingly came along, carried most of our heavy stuff and, along with his wife, provided great company. It’s good to stay connected with the younger generations!”

Tell us your “AGE MY WAY” story by emailing kahenry@howardcountymd.gov!
Cycle2Health is Back!
Cycle2Health (C2H) Howard County is a non-competitive, peer-led, bicycling club for adults of all ages and riding abilities, coordinated by the Health Promotion and Nutrition Division of the Howard County Office on Aging and Independence. The 2022 season kicks off May 10 with ride options each week for new and experienced cyclists. Join us to explore the beauty of Howard County from a new perspective and meet new people. Registration is required at www.howardcountymd.gov/C2H or stop by any 50+ Center to register in person ($15 annual fee applies).

Play Fitness BINGO!
Celebrate Senior Health & Fitness Week (May 23-27) at all the Howard County 50+ Centers. Drop in to any location between May 9 and 20 to pick up a bingo card. Then begin marking off entries on May 23. Once a line is completed horizontally, vertically or diagonally, you can earn a prize. Turn in your card at prize pick-up at the Bain 50+ Center on Tuesday, May 31 between 10 a.m. and noon. All card entries will be entered in raffle for a $25 credit toward Howard County programs. Free, but you must be a member of a 50+ Center to participate. Call 410-313-6073 for more information.

Waffle Bar, Law Day and Age My Way Fair
Monday, May 2 • 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. • Glenwood 50+ Center
Grab a free waffle, then meet with an attorney to prepare your advanced directives at no cost. Call 410-313-5440 to schedule an individual (30 minute) or a couples (one hour) appointment. The “Age My Way” Fair will be open in the lobby from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. with information on resources.

Mother’s Day Luncheon with Iris Music Project
Friday, May 6 • 11 a.m. • North Laurel 50+ Center
Celebrate Mother’s Day and enjoy an interactive musical performance by the Iris Music Project followed by a Mother’s Day lunch. Plus, join us on May 18 at noon for our Older Americans Month luncheon. Sign up for both of these events in advance at the front desk.

Mother’s Day Luncheon with “A Girl Called Evan”
Friday, May 6 • 11:30 a.m. • Bain 50+ Center
Enjoy the music of Evan Nicole Bell, a Maryland-based singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, and join us for lunch provided by La Madeleine (donation suggested). Limited seating; register and pick up tickets at the front desk.

ShowTime Singers Sunday Concert
Sunday, May 15 • 2 to 3 p.m. • Elkridge 50+ Center
The ShowTime Singers are back! Enjoy a Sunday concert with a cappella and accompanied songs from Broadway and the Silver Screen, jazz, blues, pop standards, and rock and roll. FREE. Reserve your spot at 410-313-5192.

Jessie Barnes Dance Party
Wednesday, May 25 • 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. • East Columbia 50+ Center
Come dance, laugh and enjoy an evening of fun and friendship to celebrate Older Americans Month! FREE. Call 410-313-7680 for more information.

Older Americans Month Luncheon: “Age My Way”
Thursday, May 26 • 11:00 a.m. • Ellicott City 50+ Center
Tim Amann performs a live set of music from the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s. Plus, enjoy a boxed lunch from Honey Baked Ham (*10 suggested donation). Sign up at the front desk or call 410-313-1400 to register.