



Aging Well Community Plan 2018 Year End Report

An increasing number of rural seniors engaged with Pitkin County Senior Services in 2018, and many others throughout the county participated for the first time. Still others increased their participation and engagement. Focusing on the needs and desires that were voiced by older adults, inroads were made in several focus areas, prioritized by the 8 domains of age-friendly livability, including communication and information, social participation, community support and health services, transportation and housing. Aging Well programs continued to look at the perspectives ahead and assist our valued partners and the community in recognizing the need to collectively plan for the future.

Aging Well Community Plan Work:

Early in 2018, internal work-sessions were initiated to discuss the evolution of the Aging Well Plan and its vision moving forward. Staff re-organized the Plan's objectives, goals and action items into the World Health Organization's, eight domains of livability. Respectful of the community efforts associated with the Aging Well Community Plan and the identified gaps and opportunities revealed in the Plan, great efforts were made to include the valued elements of the original process and continue the work that was done previously. By the end of the year, an outline and content were developed, which will be finalized and published in Q1 of 2019.

Communication & Information

The Pitkin County Senior Services monthly newsletter received a facelift and redesign and it is now distributed in full color. This change was well received by subscribers. The biennial mailer sent in May to all Pitkin County registered voters over the age of 60 was transformed from a business letter format to a four-color trifold, featuring a letter from the Manager, photos of activities and events and an invitation to come see what the Senior Center had to offer via a special event. This attracted new visitors to the senior center and demonstrated that the new communication vehicles were effective. Social media, via Facebook, has attracted the attention of local seniors and continues to grow in popularity.

Social Participation

Pitkin County Senior Services continues to host monthly events and activities, both on and offsite, to encourage seniors to participate in various offerings. New in 2018, a Summer Day Soirée in June invited seniors in the community for an introduction to the Senior Center. This event was promoted in the biennial mailer, in the newsletter, in advertising and on social media, attracted many participants, new and returning, to the Senior Center for an open house.

Community Support & Health Services

Efforts to share more physical and mental health information included two community

events featuring Dr. Jules Rosen, CMO/Mind Springs Health; onsite and offsite events on dementia and Alzheimer's; a caregiver panel discussion and co-hosting of the Senior Health Fair at Aspen Valley Hospital. Pitkin County Senior Services continued to participate in regular meetings with Eagle & Garfield counties to coordinate efforts on transportation needs, programming, food/meal resources, social connections and communication. In addition, Senior Law Day, held in October at the Basalt Middle School this year, continued to be a success with over 150 attendees and rave reviews.

Rural Seniors

After more than a year of preparation, Senior Services in Redstone launched in September 2018, with the inaugural lunch attracting over 35 residents. The program has been consistently successful; two exercise classes are now offered at each of the "Redstone Senior Days," along with a short informational program after lunch. Currently, Redstone Senior Days are held twice monthly with the possibility of growth, depending on participation levels. Seniors in the Redstone area are delighted with their new program.

Transportation

Pitkin County Senior Services continues to discuss transportation issues beyond the current RFTA senior bus route and throughout the Roaring Fork Valley. In December, we met with Eagle and Garfield Counties to discuss transportation to the various meal sites. Transportation discussions will continue, along with grant opportunities to assist in funding, especially as it pertains to getting seniors to new mid-valley health facilities.

Housing

As an "Age-Friendly and Livable Community," Pitkin County continues to participate in AARP forums including a Western Slope Age-Friendly conference in Grand Junction. Ideas and solutions are shared that will allow seniors to stay in their current housing and/or continue to age in place. In 2018, advocacy for senior housing continued in mid-valley development discussions and with APCHA.

Senior Council Engagement

Pitkin County Senior Services continues to meet monthly with their advisory board to discuss issues faced by the County's older population, and programs and discussions that are underway to address community concerns. The Senior Council has identified issues on which they would like to focus, and plans are underway to develop new program offerings in 2019.

In August, Senior Council members created and hosted another successful booth at the Aspen Saturday Market, sharing the activities and events of Pitkin County Senior Services with hundreds of community members.

Circle of Friends, a service club of the Aspen High School, continued to interact with seniors throughout the year. Senior Council and staff assisted these efforts by creating collateral and continuing to promote activities in the newsletter, on the website and on the Pitkin County Senior Services Facebook page.

2018 Conclusion

Senior Services continues to strengthen partnerships with non-profits, governments, caregivers and entities in Pitkin County, throughout the Roaring Fork Valley, and in the AARP Age-Friendly network. We look forward to continuing the successful programs developed as part of the Aging Well Community Plan.