

SAGE Eldercare is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. *Engage SAGE* is a publication for SAGE's friends and supporters.

WAYS TO GIVE

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 908-598-5504
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 855-908-7243

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Or contact SAGE at
 908-273-5550 or
www.sageeldercare.org

WE'RE **OPEN** FOR BUSINESS!

FURNITURE RESTORATION WORKSHOP
 908-598-5531
 Open Monday to Friday
 8:30 am – 11:30 am

SAGE RESALE SHOP
 908-273-5564
 Open daily (except Tuesday and Sunday)
 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Stay tuned!

LOOK FOR WAYS TO
"JOIN TOGETHER"
 IN SUPPORT OF SAGE THIS FALL!

WITH THIS NEWSLETTER, we bid farewell to our Executive Director, Angela Sullivan, who stepped down on August 30. For more than eight years, Angela served in leadership roles at SAGE, first as a Trustee, then as Assistant Director and finally Executive Director. Throughout her tenure, Angela increased SAGE's impact for older adults and their families in the community. Her deep commitment to SAGE's mission and her genuine empathy for every program participant will be missed. The search for a new Executive Director is underway and is being led by Board Vice President, Christine Gottesman.



The coronavirus pandemic has had an extraordinary impact on those who depend on SAGE. Our dedicated staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to develop new ways to deliver our essential services. Meals on Wheels has seen a nearly 50% increase in demand for meals and has deployed flexible delivery methods to ensure the safety of volunteers and those in the program. We are grateful for our local community partners who have stepped up to provide additional meals and funding, ensuring that all of those in our care have remained food-secure when our supply chain was threatened. Our Spend-A-Day program remains temporarily suspended, along with all medical adult day centers state-wide, under the Governor's Executive Order issued mid-March. To ease this burden, our dynamic Spend-A-Day team developed telehealth services in lieu of in-person care. This allows them to monitor participants' health, address any concerns that may arise and continue to offer essential social interaction and respite for caregivers. Similarly, our popular support groups, Your Decisions Matter and SHIP programs, have successfully transitioned to virtual programming. HomeCare's dedicated certified home health aides have and continue to serve on the frontlines to provide essential services to homebound clients.

Throughout this extraordinary period, we have seen an outpouring of support from the community—and for that we are truly thankful. The vulnerable older adult population SAGE serves continues to be at the greatest risk for the most dire consequences of COVID-19. Unfortunately, none of us know how long this will continue. We do know that the care we provide is needed now like never before. **Please consider a gift to SAGE at this time. Your gift will mean that a Meals on Wheels participant will remain food-secure, an older adult with dementia will engage in cognitively stimulating activities by a professional, friendly voice on the phone, a grieving spouse will be able to attend a remote support group and so much more. Your continued support will make it possible for SAGE to do what it has been able to do for more than 65-years—"To make your home a great place to age."**

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Cotter
 President, SAGE Board of Trustees

"Our dedicated staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to develop new ways to deliver our essential services."

-Christopher J. Cotter

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DURING THIS VERY DIFFICULT TIME, WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT OF INDIVIDUALS, FOUNDATIONS, VOLUNTEERS AND CORPORATE SPONSORS. YOUR GENEROSITY HAS HELPED SUSTAIN US THROUGH COVID-19 AND WE THANK YOU!

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SAGE! · THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SAGE ELDERCARE! · THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING SAGE ELDERCARE!

SAGE SUPPORT GROUPS ARE HERE FOR YOU!

During this difficult time our social work staff is here to help. Whether it is providing information about available resources, health care choices or additional guidance we are here for you. **Call 908-598-5509 for assistance and to inquire about our many support groups via Zoom.**

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

MEET SAGE HOME HEALTH AIDE SCHIDELINE ALTENOR



SCHIDELINE ALTENOR,
HOME HEALTH AIDE

SAGE: How many years have you been a Home Health Aide with SAGE?

SA: Eight years. I am currently assisting one client on an hourly basis.

SAGE: What do you consider the most important part of your job?

SA: Keeping my client safe.

SAGE: How has your job changed since COVID-19?

SA: So many things have changed since the pandemic. The main thing is that because visitors are limited due to safety, I have become my client's family. I spend a lot of time reminding her to wash her hands often and have had to adjust how loudly I talk because wearing a mask makes it difficult for her to hear me.

SAGE: Is it true that you help your client even on the days you are not working?

SA: Yes. If she needs something she knows she can call me. If I'm out shopping, I'm glad to pick up whatever she needs. She doesn't have anyone else to help her.

SAGE: What is it about working with older adults you enjoy?

SA: I was very close to my grandmother. I started working for SAGE when she had dementia. I like to make older people happy. I'm comfortable with them and they really need the help.

For more information about SAGE HomeCare please call 908-273-8400.

SAGE ROLLS OUT TELEHEALTH

When SAGE had to temporarily shutter its Spend-A-Day program on March 16, we wanted to find a way to stay in contact with our participants and their caregivers. We launched Telehealth on April 1. The program is a combination check-in and cognitive engagement. "During this difficult time connecting with others is more important than ever for everyone," explained Spend-A-Day Director Pam Marusic. "This program is just as important to caregivers as it is to our participants."

The calls are approximately 30 minutes and are available as many days per week as needed. SAGE's nurse and social worker also remain in touch with the families through phone calls and a weekly email blast containing activities and other helpful information.

"I am so grateful for this program," said Nancy Baumer, whose husband Larry, 72, has Alzheimer's Disease and has been a Spend-A-Day participant for 1 ½ years. Nancy had to resign from her job in March to care for Larry full time. "On Tuesdays and Thursdays when Sue calls Larry is so happy. The socialization makes such a difference. He is better and more alert the rest of the day." Baumer added that Telehealth calls are helpful to her as well. "I'm able to talk with someone who really understands what I'm dealing with."

For more information about Spend-A-Day and our new Telehealth program please call 908-598-5520.



SUSAN WIRTH,
SPEND-A-DAY
RECREATION
MANAGER

In Memoriam

SAGE extends deepest condolences to family and friends mourning the passing of two esteemed community members:



Mary Joan Li worked at the SAGE Resale Shop for 30 years. Some years she was on staff and others she volunteered. A big fan of SAGE, it showed in her happy attitude and work ethic. Resale Shop Manager Rose Rittweger, who worked with Mary Joan for 17 years, said she was a bundle of energy, amazingly focused and adored by everyone who knew her. "She was just fabulous and we miss her terribly."



Lorrie Williamson worked at the Millburn Shop Rite for 40 years. Lorrie was instrumental in assisting with our grocery shopping service for many years. She greeted SAGE staff and volunteers each week, ensuring that our homebound clients got what they needed. We joked that Lorrie knew our clients as well, if not better, than we did and made sure the items were in stock. We are thankful for all the years we got to work with Lorrie and will always appreciate how much she cared for our homebound clients.

MEALS ON WHEELS

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Joe Gottesman, 18, began delivering Meals on Wheels with his mom, Christine, as soon as he could walk. After getting his driver's license, Joe continued delivering during school breaks. He understands how much the socialization part of the delivery means to homebound adults. This was put to the test recently when Joe was dropping off food at a client's home in Springfield. He knew right away something was wrong. Charlotte, who is 85 and suffers from dementia, normally answered the door happy and ready to chat, but on this day she was obviously in distress.



It means a lot to us, too, Joe...thank you!

Hunched over, she told Joe her chest hurt. He immediately called the SAGE office. They contacted her neighbor who came over and got Charlotte to the hospital. The neighbor later called SAGE to say Charlotte was diagnosed with abnormal pneumonia and that if Joe hadn't responded the way he did, she would have died. Asked how it feels to be a life saver Joe answered, "At 18, I haven't been in many close to death experiences; it means a lot to me that I was able to help."

MEALS ON WHEELS WHAT IT MEANS

"Now more than ever it is important to connect with our elderly clients and bring them a meal and a distance-free safe visit. We can deliver extra supplies, groceries and check to see how they are feeling both physically and mentally. It is so important for them to connect—as human connection is critical in times of crisis."

- Christine Galiardo, volunteer 20 years



"With social interaction so limited, our homebound clients need the socializing now more than ever—even if it is done at a social distance. I'm glad that I am able to help this vulnerable population by delivering food and a few moments of happiness."

- Chris Glacken, volunteer 4 years



"The majority of seniors we deliver to are isolated and lonely. More so now because of COVID-19. In most cases we are the

only person they see. A hot meal and a warm smile are nourishing for body and soul."

- Natalie Cahoon, volunteer 18 years

For more information about Meals on Wheels please call 908-273-5554.

SAVE THE DATES!

OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR MEDICARE BENEFICIARY CHANGES TO 2021 HEALTH AND DRUG PLANS

October 15-December 7, 2020

It is a good idea to review your plans each year and SAGE's SHIP counselors are here to help. Individual counseling services are free and confidential and will be provided by telephone or Zoom.

GROUP PRESENTATIONS

We also offer group presentations via Zoom at the following dates and times:

October 19-December 3, 2020

**Mondays @2pm
Wednesdays @7pm
Thursdays @10am**

Registration is required. Please contact ship@sageeldercare.org or call 908-273-6999 to register and with questions.



**your decisions
matter**

October 1, 2020 @2pm

Your Decisions Matter will host a Zoom meeting with attorney Lauren Marinaro to discuss end-of-life decision making and legal concerns.

Registration is required. Please visit <https://bit.ly/millburnsenior> to register.

If you would like to schedule a Zoom event for your organization, or to learn about upcoming events, please email yourdecisionsmatter@sageeldercare.org or call 646-331-6979.