



Bruce Rauner, Governor  
Jean Bohnhoff, Director

One Natural Resources Way, Suite 100, Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271  
Phone: 800-252-8966, Fax: 217-785-4477, Web: [www.illinois.gov/aging](http://www.illinois.gov/aging)

## PRESS RELEASE



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### CONTACT:

Mike Dropka 312-814-8449

[Michael.Dropka@illinois.gov](mailto:Michael.Dropka@illinois.gov)

## IL Department on Aging celebrates Older Americans Month

*Department encourages older adults across the state to “Engage at Every Age”*

**Springfield, IL** – May is Older Americans Month in Illinois and the state’s Department on Aging (IDoA) is encouraging its more than 2.5 million older adults to “Engage at Every Age.” That’s the theme of this year’s recognition, which emphasizes the importance of being active and involved, no matter where you are in life.

“You are never too old - or too young - to participate in activities that can enrich your physical, mental, and emotion well-being,” said Jean Bohnhoff, Director of IDoA. “I encourage our older adults to take advantage of resources and social programs throughout their communities - get out and do something new!”

Governor Bruce Rauner has issued a proclamation, recognizing the contributions that older Americans have had on Illinois’ history.

“Older Americans are the backbone of our society,” Rauner said. They offer the wisdom and guidance that will lead us into the future. Their contributions will have a lasting imprint on Illinois’ history and Older Americans Month provides an opportunity for all of us to highlight those accomplishments.”

The IDoA and its network partners will be recognizing some of those accomplishments at its 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Central Illinois Senior Celebration on May 16<sup>th</sup> at the Orr Building on the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield. The event features free health screenings, information, exhibitors, prizes and entertainment and is co-hosted by Advanced Healthcare; HSHS St. John’s Hospital; Illinois Secretary of State & State Librarian, Jesse White; Illinois Senior Olympics; Memorial Medical Center; Senior Services of Central Illinois; SIU Healthcare; and Springfield Supportive Living.

Springfield resident Carol Schempp will receive the 2017 Senior Illinoisans Hall of Fame award for her commitment to health and the promotion of well-being for individuals of any physical ability at the event.

For more information about programs and services to assist older adults in Illinois, their families and caregivers, log on to the department website at: <http://www.illinois.gov/aging/> or call the Department on Aging at 1-800-252-8966 (hearing impaired call 1-888-206-1327).

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For more information on the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Central Illinois Senior Celebration, please contact Elizabeth Delheimer at [Elizabeth.Delheimer@Illinois.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Delheimer@Illinois.gov).

The text of the Governor's proclamation is below:

**Whereas**, the State of Illinois is home to more than two million residents aged 60 years or older who richly contribute to our communities; and

**Whereas**, older adults are members of our communities entitled to dignified, independent lives free from fears, myths, and misconceptions about aging; and,

**Whereas**, each community in the United States must strive to recognize, understand and address the evolving needs of older adults, and support their caregivers; and,

**Whereas**, the State of Illinois is committed to supporting older adults as they take charge of their health, explore new opportunities and activities, and focus on independence; and

**Whereas**, the State of Illinois can provide opportunities to enrich the lives of individuals of *all ages* by:

- involving older adults in the redefinition of aging in our communities;
- promoting home- and community-based services that support independent living;
- encouraging older adults to speak up for themselves and others; and
- providing opportunities for older adults to share their experiences; and

**Whereas**, older adults in our state deserve to be recognized for the contributions they have made and will continue to make to the culture, economy, and character of our community and our nation; and

**Whereas**, this year's Older Americans Month theme, "Engage at Every Age", emphasizes that you are never too old or too young to take part in activities that can enrich your physical, mental, and emotional well-being. It also celebrates the many ways in which older adults make a difference in our communities:

**Now therefore, I, Bruce Rauner, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim May 2018 as OLDER AMERICANS MONTH in Illinois, and encourage all older adults to stay engaged, active, and involved in their own lives and in their communities across the State of Illinois.**

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