

ANNOUNCER: Welcome to "Aging in Arizona," a show dedicated to educating listeners about current health care topics and local services. Now, here are your hosts, Presley Reader and Mark Young.

PRESLEY READER: Welcome to "Aging in Arizona." I am Presley Reader with your co-host -- or my co-host, Mark Young, and we're excited to have you join us this afternoon. "Aging in Arizona," as you know, is dedicated to talking to folks in Arizona about the aging process, and the services that are available as we age, the joys, the challenges that come with aging. And want to welcome first my co-host, Mark Young.

MARK YOUNG: Good afternoon, Presley. How you doing?

PRESLEY READER: I'm great. I'm great.

MARK YOUNG: Let me ask you a quick question, Presley. How are your parents doing?

PRESLEY READER: My parents are good. They live here. You never asked me that question before, so I'm thinking you're taking that in a direction.

MARK YOUNG: Absolutely. I think that's going to kind of roll in real well with our guest today.

PRESLEY READER: Okay, well, we'll think about as we introduce our guest. As the introduction stated, we are a show dedicated to educating our listeners about those joys and challenges that come with the aging process, and today we are so glad to have Amy St. Peter with us from the Maricopa Association of Governments.

We'll be speaking with Amy over the next hour about the significant population and population changes and the diversifying priorities here in Arizona, particularly in Maricopa County, and we'll talk a little bit about the Village pilot project that's been introduced. I wanted to say, welcome, Amy, to the show.

AMY ST PETER: Thank you.

MARK YOUNG: But Presley, first, we need to thank our show sponsor who makes the show possible, and that's Comfort Care Home Care. Comfort Care provides the care you need in the best place of all, and that's your home. Call Comfort Care at (602) 438-1300, or visit their Web site, www.comforcare.com to find out more about how one of their caregivers can come to your home, help your loved one, and help them live continually safe and independently in their home.

PRESLEY READER: Thanks, Mark, and Mark and Amy, both of you, I love looking for stories about aging and sharing some of those on our show, and I was looking for a story this week, and I found a woman named Jeralean Talley, who a couple of months ago turned 115 years old. So she's now the oldest living person in the U.S., and the second oldest living person in the world.

Of course, you'd ask her the question, "What do you credit your longevity to," and she says her faith, and she also lives in Michigan, and I have family in Michigan. They probably would claim that Michigan itself helps you with your longevity. They love Michigan.

And she's never smoked, never drank, and she bowled until she was 104, so only retired from bowling at 104, and to celebrate her 115th birthday, she planned to spend it with her daughter and her great-great-grandson. So Jeralean, way to go. Neat story about that.

And people today, people being born today are projected to live to 120, so we're going to hear more and more stories about that, aren't we, Mark?

MARK YOUNG: Definitely. I think it's a future trend, and I tell you what, bowling at 104? It's all about quality of life. Let me introduce Amy St. Peter here. She is the Human Services and Special Projects Manager for Maricopa Association of Governments, also warmly affectionately known as MAG. And the reason that the story related with MAG is because their strength really is in the ability to compile data, in particular population trends, that help us identify our future trends. And that's kind of why Amy is here.

Amy is in the human services side, where she's been with MAG for over 10 years. And I've known Amy for about that long, about 10 years ago I was in a different role, and I tell you what. She's one of the more positive, always smiling, just comforting.

I tell you what, she oversees the regional Human Services Planning Department, about \$30 million of funding, for one of the fastest-growing regions in the United States, and that is Maricopa County. She's been in the field for nearly 20 years. She has a Master's of Public Administration from ASU. That's something we know something about.

PRESLEY READER: Yeah, we both have that degree.

MARK YOUNG: Presley and myself.

PRESLEY READER: All three of us have the same Master's degree.

MARK YOUNG: And she also got her Bachelor's in Sociology from Loyola College. So I gotta tell you, she's one of the happiest people, as I already did. She's an absolute delight. I've been looking forward to having her on the show ever since we decided to start doing this show. Her areas of focus include aging, homelessness, domestic violence, human services, transportation, and community engagement.

PRESLEY READER: Well, I don't know Amy as well as you do, Mark, but if she's got that many areas of focus, I'm sure she's an amazing individual. She also said she has kids, and Amy, can you add a little bit to your bio for us? Tell us something about yourself that maybe our listeners wouldn't know from what Mark just told us. You said you have kids.

AMY ST. PETER: I do. Thank you. My son is Calen. He is 8 and a half, and my daughter is Ellie. She is almost five, but she'll tell you, she is almost 16. So we're wanting her to slow down just a little, which is unlikely.

PRESLEY READER: That's fantastic. And the summer's going well?

AMY ST. PETER: Summer is going very well. We have a lot of work under way. We're actually receiving an award tonight. We're very excited about that. Our Greater Phoenix Age-Friendly Network is being honored with a Desert Peaks Award in the category of public/private partnership. So we actually have our funder, John Feather, from Grantmakers in Aging, flying in to help receive the award. He's flying in from D.C. just for this awards ceremony, so it's a very big deal and we're very excited. There's a lot of great work under way.

MARK YOUNG: That's fantastic, because when I saw Amy, I'm like, "You're kind of overdressed for radio."

PRESLEY READER: Anybody beats us out, Mark, I know that. But congratulations. That's really quite an honor.

AMY ST. PETER: Yes, yes, it is. Thank you. We're very thankful

PRESLEY READER: I'm sure it's the result of a lot of hard work and passion, and we want to talk to you about this community engagement piece, and that's why we've invited you here today. And we like to get to know our guests, so tell us how you got into this in the first place.

AMY ST. PETER: We started in on this work, probably in terms of the Age-Friendly Network, back in 2011, 2012, and we were brought to this work really because our elected officials were seeing the writing on the wall. We had just conducted a survey of local governments, and we're asking them, because we knew that they all had to make very difficult budget decisions because of the recession years back.

MARK YOUNG: Amy, just to interrupt. What do you mean by elected officials?

AMY ST. PETER: The council members who serve on our Human Services Coordinating Committee at the Maricopa Association of Governments.

MARK YOUNG: And we're talking the mayors of the each of the cities and towns within Maricopa County?

AMY ST. PETER: Yes, the mayors, the council members, the people who have been elected to office. And so they're concerned about their residents, and they're concerned that some of the programs that serve older adults had received reductions in funding, and they were concerned, because we have an increase in population of older adults. Right now, we have 463,000 people age 65 and older, just in Maricopa County, which is a huge number. That number is projected to grow to 700,000 just by 2020.

So on one hand, we're seeing programs really kind of struggle, and then on the other hand, we're seeing greatly increasing numbers. So we started a really extensive community outreach campaign, and we realized that not only did we maybe not have enough money, perhaps we weren't even necessarily putting it in the right places.

So some of the more traditional responses to aging are still relevant for a small portion of the community, and very relevant to them, but increasingly, not as relevant to the broader community. So places like senior centers are wonderful for the people who do go to them, but we conducted a scientifically valid survey of people in Maricopa County, and 73% said they don't go to senior centers.

So we obviously need to continue senior centers, but we also increasingly need to develop alternative options. So for people who don't want to go to senior centers for whatever reason, what can they do? And it used to be that the average life expectancy and the average retirement age were actually fairly close. So you could expect to work really hard for the majority of your life, retire, play bingo, play golf, and then maybe pass away.

But now people can live 20, 30 years in what's been known as retirement, and it's not psychologically healthy. It's also not always financially feasible for people just not to do anything. And so people are really wanting to be more active and be more engaged.

MARK YOUNG: And if you go back to the stat that Presley shared with us in the beginning, that people born today have the opportunity to live to 120, so you're telling me that my children are going to have to work to 120? My goodness.

AMY ST. PETER: Well, no, but the beauty of it is that we're redefining what retirement looks like. And I talked to one woman. Her name is Carol. She's a blogger on our Web site, connect60plus.com, and she just had an absolutely wonderful approach to this. She said that for her, retirement is a lot like exploration. She can go back and do all the things that she never had time to do before.

So for her, it's kind of like starting over. It's like kindergarten. So she can just go back and explore all these great new interests, and people don't always associate retirement with that. They think of it maybe as slowing down in more of a traditional way. But now, people are just getting started.

And we as a community need to support their individual life choices, and we can do that if we're really open to redesigning and putting new structures in place, putting new supports in place.

PRESLEY READER: Right, so you talked about how government and elected officials have identified some of these challenges, some of these opportunities, and that you said there not only might be an issue of not enough money being spent, but also an issue of prioritizing that money. So what are we doing to prioritize that money here in Maricopa County?

AMY ST. PETER: Exactly. Right now, we're trying to develop a support system for the traditional responses, so alternatives for people. So we have our Greater Phoenix Age-Friendly Network, and the network has three main functions.

The first one is to support cities, to support cities and towns. So we're providing technical assistance. We're really working hand in glove with communities that want to be more age-friendly, that want to be even better places for people of all generations to live, and really to identify meaningful opportunities for people to contribute.

And so we're working with communities across the region. We have pilot sites that have been implemented right now in Phoenix, Tempe, and the northwest valley. We have pilot projects coming online in Scottsdale, Wickenburg, and the city of Maricopa. And with all of these communities, we're helping them conduct the community engagement, take a look at the data, and then determine what new approach, what new program, agency, mindset they can put into place that will offer these meaningful opportunities, so people can give back.

PRESLEY READER: Interesting. It makes me think a little bit about Sun City and the age restriction on moving in to Sun City, designed to be an age-friendly community originally, and still is. What you're trying to do is, what, bring that all together a little bit more maybe?

AMY ST. PETER: Exactly. Even if there are programs that are really focused on older adults, the goal is to make them more intergenerational. So how can those people, for example, living in Sun City volunteer at the schools in the neighboring communities? And how can they be more involved? Because people really want to be with people of all ages. They don't necessarily just want to be with their age group.

PRESLEY READER: Sure. And you've used the term a few times so far, "age-friendly." I want to talk a little bit more about that in the next segment, because I don't think we all maybe have an idea of what an age-friendly population is.

And this idea of intergenerational. We talked about your daughter. So what are the benefits to a 5-year-old going on 15, as well as an 85-year-old, interacting with each other? I think that's an exciting concept, along with the age-friendly concept, and I want to talk about that some more. Anything to add there, Mark?

MARK YOUNG: No. I think the biggest is the importance of what's going on. I mean, you're realizing that the fastest-growing population is also the population that their budgets are getting cut. So we're trying to figure out an alternate method of where we should be creating our resources.

PRESLEY READER: Absolutely. So when we come back from break, we'll talk more with Amy St. Peter. You're listening to "Aging in Arizona" on 960 the Patriot.

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PRESLEY READER: Welcome back to "Aging in Arizona." I am your host, Presley Reader, with my co-host, Mark Young, and we're here with Amy St. Peter from the Maricopa Association of Governments.

And in our first segment, she was walking us through some fascinating data and trends that are happening here in Maricopa County, and how the Association of Governments is responding to those trends. Two of the terms that we talked about in the first segment were "age-friendly" and

"intergenerational." So I want to follow up and hear more from Amy about both of those. Why don't we start with "age-friendly."

AMY ST. PETER: Great. Thank you, Presley. Age-friendly is a term that's used to describe how a community can really be welcoming and inclusive of people, no matter what their age is. So there are things that are really critical to that happening, such as transportation, the built environments. Is there access to public transit as people are less able to drive? Do they have other options so that they can give up their keys and not give up their lifestyle?

Also, things like sidewalks. Are there good sidewalks? Because after driving, walking is the most-preferred kind of transportation that older adults will prefer. And so are the sidewalks really conducive to that? So in an age-friendly community, it's looking at things in a really holistic way to make sure that everyone can really fully participate in that community and not become isolated in their homes.

PRESLEY READER: Great. And then "intergenerational."

AMY ST. PETER: Intergenerational is a concept of all generations all together. Actually, our region just received an award earlier this year. We're recognized as being one of the best intergenerational communities in the entire country. We received that distinction from Generations United, and that's funded by the MetLife Foundation.

PRESLEY READER: Is that right?

AMY ST. PETER: Really, which is really exciting, because they received a whole number of applications from across the country. And because of the great work under way here by a variety of leaders, we were recognized as being among the best.

PRESLEY READER: Wow, that's great, so we're among the best. We've been putting these programs in place. You mentioned maybe 2010, 2011, elected officials started to see the need for some of these programs. What were you drawing from to try to develop these? Does that go back further than that?

AMY ST. PETER: Well, in terms of the region's interaction with this work, it's been going on for decades. There are agencies like Benevilla, Duet, who've been doing this work really, really well for a number of years, and so we are here to support them. We're here to explore what can be done that's new together. And so they're very much working hand in hand with us, and so we're very thankful for their partnership.

In terms of where we're drawing this work from, really it's from the community. It's people telling us how they want to live their lives as they get older, and what we can do to support they will. And so we've touched more than 5,000 people to date through this program, through focus groups, interviews, surveys, special events, conferences, really trying to hear from the community, "What do you want, what do you need, and how do you want to be involved?" And so it's really empowering and it's very much grass-roots.

MARK YOUNG: Is there anything that floated to the top of that list of what do the seniors need?

AMY ST. PETER: They really need transportation options, and so a lot of what we're doing -- really, everything that we're doing is looking at how can we provide those transportation options.

So the traditional responses, driving, the bus, all of those are really well and good, and they're very important, but we need options, and the options that can be found can be found in the community itself. So in all of our work, we're trying to build community capacity. Really simply put, trying to help neighbors help neighbors.

MARK YOUNG: Excellent. Presley, let me ask you a question. We've known each other for a few years, and we've both, on several occasions, talked about our fathers, correct?

PRESLEY READER: Absolutely.

MARK YOUNG: I know you think very highly of yours, as I do mine, but in fact, our listeners, they don't know this, but our opening song, what is it? "When I Drive 64," or "When I Turn 64"?

PRESLEY READER: Sure, the Beatles, "When I'm 64."

MARK YOUNG: That is actually, we picked that up because of your dad.

PRESLEY READER: I started singing right there. I don't think our listeners want much of that.

MARK YOUNG: The show isn't that great, right? But nonetheless, we've shared story the about our fathers. Your father is an educated man.

PRESLEY READER: He is, very.

MARK YOUNG: Successful, done well for himself. Planned for the future, all of that.

PRESLEY READER: A lot of great decisions. Been a great dad.

MARK YOUNG: Now, I'm going to steal a story from Amy that when I ran into her again probably about a year ago, that I want you to imagine, Presley, that your father's 85. He's in good shape, lives alone with your mother, the two of them. They're in Michigan, because you know that's where the healthy living is. He wants to live to 150. He's going to break the record.

But imagine they live in a two-story house, and he kind of notices that the leaves are starting to clutter up the gutter, and they need to be cleaned out. He really doesn't know anybody. You live too far away. There really aren't resources out there that he's aware of. So with your dad being a smart man, ties a rope around his waist, goes out on to the roof, as your mother is holding the other end.

PRESLEY READER: That sounds like Dad.

MARK YOUNG: What do you think of that situation?

PRESLEY READER: Well, I think that the first thing that strikes me is that I wouldn't know that it was happening, especially if I didn't live down the street, wasn't visiting them if I lived here in Arizona, they're in Michigan. Obviously, I'd be concerned, horrified, to know that Dad's leaning out the window with a rope tied around him and Mom -- I can't even imagine something like that happening.

MARK YOUNG: Absolutely, but that story is the very story that Amy brought to -- re-brought to my attention, with these Village pilot projects that she's working on. Can you expand on that story a little bit or start telling us a little bit about what's going on?

AMY ST. PETER: Absolutely, thanks, Mark. And that story is true, and it happened in Beacon Hill, an area just outside of Boston, approximately 10 years ago, and that's how villages were initially formed, because people who live there, they're fairly affluent. They're well-educated. They had these great careers and made great life decisions, but they found that as they're getting older, there are still gaps.

There are things that government wasn't going to do. Non-profits, as much as they serve people, they weren't going to come in and clean out the gutters necessarily. But those things still really needed to be done for them to continue living in that neighborhood where they raised their children, lived out their lives, and they wanted to continue living.

So they looked around Boston. They didn't find what they needed. Looked around the state, looked around the country, looked around the world. Couldn't find what they were looking for. So being very industrious and very intelligent, they started developing something, a new model called a village.

And the whole idea of a village is to fill those gaps, to meet those unmet needs that aren't being served by anyone else right now, and that really won't be. I mean, it's just not appropriate. And so it really puts a nice system in place where neighbors can really help neighbors.

So there are three basic things that happen with a village. First, the residents themselves define what their community is. It can be their street, it can be their block, it could be their city, and then they

define what they need in order to continue living there. Most often, the needs are transportation, home and yard care, even things like changing out light bulbs.

And then they define what they're willing to contribute to make those services available. So it's a membership group, and so normally there's some kind of fee that averages about \$250 a year. Our local villages are very affordable. They're \$60 a year, up to \$90 a year for a household.

And then those services are made available, so villages, they focus on information and referral to make sure people have the information that they need, socialization activities, because people can't help each other if they don't know each other, and so villages are trying to make sure that neighbors know each other. Because all too often now, we drive into our driveway, we pull into the garage, we put the garage door down, and then we go and enjoy our backyard, and we never see our neighbors.

MARK YOUNG: With our CMU walls. I'm guilty as charged. I don't know many of my neighbors, but you know what? At the same time, I'm just as guilty in the fact that I'm a horrible neighbor.

AMY ST. PETER: But with this, it's creating better neighbors and it's creating stronger neighborhoods as a result.

PRESLEY READER: Absolutely. This idea of neighbors helping neighbors is as old as, you know, time. The whole community element, I've often felt since I've been in the elder care industry and around aging, that a lot of the services that we have, the professional services, wouldn't even be necessary if communities were engaging with each other in this way.

And so I want to hear more about that, revisit some of those themes in our next segment. Thank you so much for what you shared there, Amy, and we'll be back. Don't go away here on 960 the Patriot. You're listening to "Aging in Arizona."

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PRESLEY READER: Welcome back to "Aging in Arizona," here on 960 the Patriot. We are talking with Amy St. Peter from the Maricopa Association of Governments, and we were just talking about the Village pilot project and the Village is kind of a movement in general that's been happening.

Really fascinating to me to hear about these villages, and the term, as Amy described it, refers to a group of residents who have decided to come together and make a few decisions that are designed to help them as they age. And it primarily starts with their preference of aging in the community that they're in. So as they get older, they're going to need different types of things.

And you talked about three things that these residents decide. First, they define their community. What are the boundaries? Who's in the community? Second, they define their needs, so they're actually doing some planning. We talk about that so much on this show, how as we age, we tend to live in a state of denial about the ways that we're going to behave and the things that are going to happen to us as we age.

So these villages have decided, "We're going to be pro-active about this. We're going to try to identify these needs in advance." And then they define a contribution, typically, in a monetary amount that they're going to each contribute to the community. One question about that that I had, Amy, was are there people in the community who either contribute the money and offer their own skills and

expertise, or don't contribute the money and instead, offer -- they're maybe a retired CPA, someone with a profession. Does that ever happen?

AMY ST. PETER: It does. It does. And the villages that we have here locally, as well as the ones across the country, usually offer some kind of sliding fee or scholarships for people who may not have the money. Now, our local fees are very low. They're \$60 for an individual, \$90 for a household. But some people may not have that much --

PRESLEY READER: Per year

AMY ST. PETER: Per year, right. But some people may not have that much. So for example, with Central Village, which is located here in Phoenix, it's also a time bank. So the whole idea of a time bank is that you give and you receive. So that retired CPA that you're talking about can give an hour of their time, and then receive an hour of somebody else's time. And so it's all about the reciprocity, and everyone has value. Everyone adds value. So it's a really good dynamic to set up among the different people being involved.

MARK YOUNG: I think the great thing that exists with this program is you get those individuals that are in denial, like you said, and they don't know their own limitations. But a program like this helps them maintain their independence.

So the story where I picked on your dad in Michigan at the age of 85, trying to crawl on the roof, this is an opportunity for him to, "Hey, you know what? I've paid into a system, or I'm part of that exchange system to where maybe I can get somebody more youthful or with a boom box or whatever it is to get up there in exchange for something." And that's kind of how it works, right?

AMY ST. PETER: It is. It is. So right now we have two villages that are up and running. We have Central Village here in Phoenix. That's a partnership between All Saints Episcopal church and day school and the City of Phoenix. And so it's not about people needing to be in the Episcopalian faith. It's just about people wanting to live in their homes. So Central Village is a separate, non-profit agency.

In Tempe, we have Tempe Neighbors Helping Neighbors, which is an existing non-profit that's evolved into a full-scale village, and they're being supported in a great way by the Tempe Community Council. So it's really all about the partnerships and really inviting people to become part of the answer, part of the solution.

PRESLEY READER: Can you give us an idea of the size of those communities?

AMY ST. PETER: Yes. With Central Village, they are up to about 30 members. They just launched this past fall. They offer 58 different services through the people offering their time, and they've logged more than 900 hours so far of neighbors helping neighbors, people helping each other to live better lives.

PRESLEY READER: Wow, and how are you working with them to help them build this program?

AMY ST. PETER: Through the Maricopa Association of Governments, we're providing technical assistance. We're helping, really, to cross-fertilize. And so what's being developed on one site is shared with all the other sites, and so we're able to really bend that learning curve.

And so MAG is kind of the central coordinating body. We have a great leadership team that meets every month, and we help to support the villages. We also have a membership-based transportation program in the northwest valley, which is a partnership between Benevilla and Sun Health. And so with all of our projects, we're helping to share those best practices.

PRESLEY READER: Great. So you're really a central coordinating point for the sharing of resources among these villages?

AMY ST. PETER: Yes, definitely, and the project's Web site, connect60plus.com, has all of our material. And so we're just adding a new section to it which will be called Community Tools, which will have all of our documents in a downloadable format that people can revise and make their own.

PRESLEY READER: Wow, what was the Web site?

AMY ST. PETER: It's connect60plus.com.

PRESLEY READER: Great, so we'll put that on our Web site for the show, www.aginginaz.com, and also you should visit it directly at connect60plus.com.

When we come back from our break, we'll have our last segment with you, Amy, and this is just a great conversation. I mean, there are so many things changing as our population ages in the coming years, and we are right at the center of some of the cutting-edge stuff happening here. So thanks for sharing, and we'll have a great last segment. You're listening to "Aging in Arizona" on 960 the Patriot.

[MUSIC]

PRESLEY READER: Welcome back to "Aging in Arizona" here on 960 the Patriot. We are here with Amy St. Peter from the Maricopa Association of Governments, and we have been talking about some exciting things here in Maricopa County, including the Village projects, and one of the things that Amy said earlier was that their role is to gather information from the community; that the way new programs are being developed is really by going out there and understanding what folks are needing and wanting as they age here.

So Amy, obviously that depends on people being involved. It's a good example of our democratic form of government. We have to have citizen involvement. How can we encourage our listeners to be involved? What can they do?

AMY ST. PETER: Great. Thanks so much, Presley. There are multiple ways to be involved, and it just depends on a person's preference and how much time they have, and how often they want to be involved.

So a person can get involved in their local community through one of the villages. Central Village, Tempe Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Northwest Valley Connect, so there's multiple ways in person, face-to-face.

There's multiple ways also online. So we have our project Web site. That's connect60plus.com, and there are a variety of different elements really designed to be interactive. When we were first developing the site, we went out to the community and heard from people, "Listen, there are a lot of great Web sites with a lot of great information. There are not a lot of opportunities to really interact with each other," and that's what people were really just hungry for.

So on our Web site, we have people blogging about their lives. We have some people who are 60-plus. We have someone on there, I think he's in his 20s or 30s, so it's really intergenerational, and it's just people talking about their lives and how they're connected and what their interests are, really to inspire other people. So if they're bored, if they're feeling isolated, they can look at somebody else and say, "Well, wow, they seem really happy. Maybe I could try doing that they're doing."

And we also invite people to tell us about their lives. So to tell us and to upload their own stories, their own pictures, because there are champions across the whole region. It's not just the four or five or six that we have on the Web site right now. It's really everybody, and so we want to hear from the public, "How are you living these really connected, great lives?" And then conversely, "What are some of your challenges, and what can we do about that?" It's really about celebrating this exploration that people are doing.

There are also discussion forums led by local experts on different topics. So for example, we have the area Agency on Aging talking about Medicare, Medicaid. We have Dr. Rick Knopf from ASU talking about the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and really lifelong learning in general. We have Dean Jones Jr. on there as one of our champions. He's an executive chef. So we have people representing a really interesting diverse array of interests, because people have all different kinds of interests, too.

When we were out conducting the focus groups, they said, "Please don't make it about old stuff. We don't want to hear about having to make out our wills and all this other stuff. We want to hear about life and all of its rich variety."

We also have a monthly webinar series called, "Feed Your Mind." It's on the first Friday of every month at noon. We're taking break over the summer. Stay tuned for our webinars coming up in August and September. But we've had different topics, like the one this month was with Dr. Hamilton, and she was talking about how to reduce stress. We had another one on lifelong learning. Another one on how to eat the right way, and again, just really connecting people.

So people can go on to connect60plus.com, and they can find out about these webinars. We also have something that's really important that's reaching across the country, and that's our Human Services Transportation Provider Inventory. And so very often, people don't know how to get from here to there if they can't drive themselves, and so they're looking for a ride.

So we have a searchable database online on connect60plus.com, where people can search according to different criteria, where they are, where they want to go, what kind of trip is it, what are their demographics, and they can find that ride. But the exciting part about it is that we're finding that adult children who live in other places across the country are using it to help their parents who are aging right here. So it's a nice resource that's really available to everybody.

PRESLEY READER: Human Services Transportation Provider Inventory. And I know the government loves acronyms, so that would be HSTPI?

AMY ST. PETER: Yes. We usually just refer to it as the Inventory, because the acronym really isn't conducive to that.

PRESLEY READER: That addresses a major concern which you raised earlier, which is transportation, so it's a fantastic program.

MARK YOUNG: Now, is that locally, or does that go broader?

AMY ST. PETER: The focus is on Maricopa County, although we are taking it statewide, so that we will have different transportation providers, and it's for-profit, not-for-profit, different community groups. So people can find a ride, no matter what it costs.

PRESLEY READER: That's great. I just want to say to our listeners, you heard it here on "Aging in Arizona." Someone is listening. And Amy, she's here in the room with us. I can guarantee it, and she's telling you that she's listening. You go online and you get involved in these interactive communities.

You can interact with each other, but also there's someone with a voice into the programming that's receiving that feedback and trying to incorporate it into all of those different activities that are going on. So that's encouraging to me. Sometimes you're not sure if your vote counts. But in this case, get involved.

MARK YOUNG: It's definitely a rarity. I mean, this is a situation where we kind of have to applaud our elected officials that give Amy that direction to put this. Amy, some of these pilot projects, these villages that have gone, they kind of take on their own little personality. I remember one specific that kind of threw me was a story that you shared with us about you discovered there was a bunch of insomniacs?

AMY ST. PETER: Oh, yes. It's really interesting to see, but there's a saying, "If you've seen one village, you've seen one village," because every single village is absolutely custom-tailored to the very specific needs, characteristics, of that community.

And so there's a village in California, and it just happened that a number of their members couldn't sleep at night. And so they're all up and they're very tired the next day, feeling very lonely, very isolated, because it's the middle of the night. Who can they talk to? And so they realized and they connected with each other that they all had the same issue, so they started this chat room and when they're up in the middle of the night, they can go online and start chatting with each other.

So it's not like calling someone and waking somebody up, if it's a rare night that they're actually sleeping. But they're able to really connect and provide that support to each other in a way that no one else could. And there's no job description that's going to say, "And by the way, please run a chat room for insomniacs." It just comes from the community, for the community, by the community.

PRESLEY READER: Great example. Yes, coming up with your own -- identifying the needs of the community and coming up with a specific -- that's a very specific way to address it. I want to find out what the future holds. We have a few minutes left here on the show, and we want to talk about what you're envisioning. What are you hearing? What is the next five, ten, however far out you want to else, what does it look like?

AMY ST. PETER: Thank you so much. We are very excited, even just about the next year, because we'll be taking our Greater Phoenix Age-Friendly Network and expanding it into an Arizona age-friendly network. And so we've been working with a number of different partners to make that happen.

And so we're meeting with the Councils of Governments and their directors, with the Area Agencies on Aging, with AARP, Arizona Community Foundation. The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust has been a great source of support for us here in Maricopa County. We're looking more broadly now to

determine who can we be working with statewide, and everyone's just really excited about it, because we're here to support. We're here to support those community choices, people's individual life choices, and we can do that better by working together.

PRESLEY READER: Absolutely. So that's in the next year. And what do you see for the years ahead in Arizona? Just give us your vision. You've been involved in this for a decade. Give us what you predict.

AMY ST. PETER: Absolutely. I'd love to see every community have some kind of new response that helps to connect people across generations, and it doesn't have to cost a lot of money. It doesn't necessarily even have to take a lot of time. It's people working together with a different mindset, and every single community can be involved in this work.

PRESLEY READER: So you think the intergenerational piece is really at the core of where we're headed?

AMY ST. PETER: Yes, absolutely, both here locally as well as across the country. People are realizing that it's not healthy, it's not constructive, to put people in silos or cylinders of excellence or whatever you want to call them. It's much more effective to really have an intergenerational focus, and because the strengths of one generation can really serve the needs of another generation in just a beautiful way.

PRESLEY READER: Can you give me an example?

AMY ST. PETER: Exactly. So for example, I can give you a very personal one. I do have my two children, and we have our neighbors right next to us, and it's an older couple. They're in their 90s and they're still living in their own home, which is wonderful.

And it's fantastic, because they can mentor our children and they can give them kind of a sense for that history, for that experience, and then our children, I think, hopefully, kind of entertain them and bring some life into their day, and they'll go over and bring them cookies that they just baked, and then our older neighbors will tell them stories about when they were growing up.

And it just gives our kids a better perspective, because our family, like so many others, our relatives are all in different parts of the country. They're all on the east coast, and so they get to see them every once in a while, but I'd hate for my children to grow up and not understand the benefits that can be seen with having those intergenerational relationships, and our neighbors provide that for us, and hopefully we bring some joy that their lives as well.

PRESLEY READER: Absolutely. Mark, can I get on a soapbox here, because I'm about to jump out of my seat, because I get so excited hearing Amy talk about this? Can I go long?

Okay, so I love what you're saying there, because your vision is intergenerational, and the value that elders bring to our society as a whole. So obviously, children, I think a lot of people see the value that children are bringing. They see them as the future. We want to invest in them, and yet I just have this sense, and I think that there's data to back it up, that as you age in America, you are moved away from those types of interactions.

And not just because of health care issues or other, but you're just not seen as being as productive anymore. You're not seen as being as beautiful anymore. You're not brought into the relationships as much anymore for a variety of reasons, but I think it's reached epidemic proportions in our society.

And so to hear you saying, as a mother of young children, representing a couple generations, that you have a vision that includes the elderly, is so encouraging to me, and I think it should be encouraging to our listeners. I think it should be a challenge to many of our listeners who are in the baby boom generation, who may be elderly themselves.

You have something to offer if you are elderly, and we want you to engage with other generations, and if it's your parent who's elderly, we want them to stay engaged. And it's healthy for them and for the others they interact with to do that. So okay. That was it.

MARK YOUNG: Presley, I think you're absolutely correct. I mean, there is a trend out there that is not healthy, that families are segregating. Go back a generation or two, a lot of times, they were living together. What I like about this is it's limitless.

So you identified four villages that are in the works or up and running, and you envision within the next year that that is going to go statewide. So if I live in a community, and I'm like, "You know what? I think we'd be in pretty good shape if we did something like that." Do we get with you to help us get that started?

AMY ST. PETER: There are multiple options. People can always contact me. I'm more than happy to help in any way. People can call me directly at (602) 452-5049. They can also e-mail me at astpeter@azmag.gov. You can go to connect60plus.com.

But really probably the first and most powerful thing that people can do is reach out to their family and their neighbors, to go out through their front door and to knock on a door and say, "Hi, I live next door

to you. I've lived next door to you for 10 years. My name's Amy." And it sounds kind of silly, but it can be really powerful.

Just even going back, to give another example, my grandmother towards the end of her life, lived alone, and she had an arrangement with her neighbor that if her blinds were down by 10 in the morning, to come over and see if something's wrong. And when she had her stroke, it was her neighbor who came over and found her, because we all lived so far away.

So by introducing yourself to your neighbor, you can improve their quality of life. Sometimes you can even save their life. And so it's really wonderful. It's really simple and something that every single person can do.

PRESLEY READER: Absolutely. Everybody can get involved in this. We've talked about lots of different ways for you to get involved. Please, look to the Web sites that Amy's mentioned. She gave out her phone number. We'll put all that information on our Web site, aginginAZ.com, so that if you go to the show Web site, you can access all the resources and the information that Amy has mentioned on today's show. Mark, do you have anything further to add?

MARK YOUNG: I'm excited, and Amy, I wish you the best luck. And I think hopefully you'll come back and give us an update on where things are.

PRESLEY READER: Thank you so much, Amy, for coming on the show. I tell you, I'm encouraged to know that we have leaders like you, elected officials who are seeing these trends and coming up with solutions to them, and congratulations on all the awards. You've mentioned a couple that we're

getting, so we're a shining star in a lot of ways for this national trend. So I'm happy to be living in a place where that is the case.

Again, we hope that you found this information helpful. If you have a question, a comment, a topic suggestion for the show, visit our Web site, aginginAZ.com, and leave us a comment. We want to hear from you, too, and we're listening, and we'll respond so we get good information on for you.

So for my co-host, Mark Young, and for our guest, Amy St. Peter, I'm Presley Reader, thanking you for tuning in this week, and asking you to join us again next Sunday from 4:00 to 5:00 as we discuss the joys and challenges that come with aging in Arizona. You are listening to "Aging in Arizona" on 960 the Patriot.

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