

Happy Older Americans Month — Age Strong! Live Long!

May is Older Americans Month — a tradition dating back to 1963 to honor the legacies and ongoing contributions of older Americans and to support them as they enter the next stage in life.

The Sheridan Senior Center has joined communities nationwide in celebrating this month with special activities and events.

This year's theme for Older Americans Month — Age Strong! Live Long! — recognizes the diversity and vitality of today's older Americans, who span three generations.

They have lived through wars and hard times, as well as periods of unprecedented prosperity. They pioneered new technologies in medicine, communications, and industry while spearheading a cultural revolution that won equal rights for minorities, women, and disabled Americans.

These remarkable achievements demonstrate the strength and character of older Americans and underscore the debt of gratitude we owe to the generations that have given our society so much. But the contributions of older Americans are not only in the past.

Older Americans are living longer and are more active than ever before. And with the aging of the baby boomer generation — the largest in our nation's history — America's senior population is expected to number 71.5 million by 2030.

While keeping the growing population of older Americans healthy and active will increase the demand for senior services, what is remarkable is the extent to which older Americans themselves are supporting each other. They are spending time making significant contributions in their communities through civic and volunteer opportunities.

In fact, older Americans are a core component of service delivery to seniors — embodying and modeling the drive to Age Strong! Live Long!

Here in Sheridan they volunteer at group meal sites and provide home-deliv-



Center Stage

Carmen Rideout



ered meals; they teach classes; they help seniors with home maintenance, shopping and errands; and they provide vital companionship to those alone.

Their energy and commitment remind all of us — not just sen-

iors and their caregivers — to do our part to enhance the quality of life for older generations.

The annual commemoration of Older Americans Month is our opportunity to recognize the contributions of older citizens and join them in providing services and supports that empower them.

Americans of all ages and backgrounds can volunteer with programs that improve health literacy, increase access to quality health services, offer food and nutrition services, provide financial and housing counseling, sponsor social activ-

ities and community engagement, and more.

Thanks to all of you who helped us celebrate Older Americans Month this year! Sheridan is elder-rich in having a community full of older adults who contribute every day to the quality of life for people of all ages!

Those of us who work at the Center are honored to know and serve this wonderful group of people. It is more than just a job for us ... it is our mission — “To celebrate, embrace, and serve older adults for the betterment of our community.”

Contact the Center by visiting <http://www.sheridanseniorcenter.org> or calling 672-2240 to find out what you can do to strengthen services for older Americans, this month and all year-round.

Carmen Rideout is executive director for the Sheridan Senior Center.

Center Stage is written by friends of the Senior Center for the Sheridan community. It is a collection of insights and stories related to living well at every age.