

# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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## County Celebrates Older Americans Month Age-Friendly, Senior Summit Events

**SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO**—Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro and County Council are proud to declare the month of May as Older Americans Month, celebrating older adults and their contributions, as well as encouraging older residents to attend Age-Friendly Friday at the Akron Zoo and professionals serving older adults to attend the Senior Summit.

As Summit County continues to age, ensuring adequate and equitable transportation, recreation, communication, healthcare, finance, and civic engagement for older residents is an increasingly important set of priorities. In 2019, Executive Shapiro announced that Summit County would embark on becoming an [AARP Age-Friendly Community](#), a process that reviews the needs of older residents and makes recommendations for making the community more age-friendly. In 2022, the strategic plans for Summit County Age-Friendly and Akron Age-Friendly were completed, and their overlap led to the two initiatives to join forces as Akron-Summit Age-Friendly, a coalition of local governments, community partners, and residents.

Now, Akron-Summit Age-Friendly is launching its landmark Age-Friendly Seal of Approval pilot, which will allow businesses and institutions to be certified as “Age-Friendly” after meeting a set of criteria. The program is a cross-sector collaboration that includes Summit County, the City of Akron, Direction Home Akron Canton, the Better Business Bureau of Akron, and VANTAGE Aging. The Akron Zoo will be the first zoo in Ohio to receive the Age-Friendly Seal of Approval on May 26. The Seal of Approval ceremony (**media only**) will be followed by an Age-Friendly Friday at the Zoo, where older adults 62 and older will be offered a ticket promotion and will be eligible for giveaways.

“Summit County is aging and we must ensure that there are ample opportunities to thrive for *all* of our residents,” said County Executive Shapiro, “By giving our businesses the opportunity to earn this certification, we are ensuring our older adults are included in our economy and community. The Zoo has been a champion at leading by example, and we are proud to embark on this pilot program alongside it, BBB and Vantage.”

Older Adults Month also includes the [2023 Senior Summit](#) on May 19, 2023, organized by Probate Court Judge Elinore Marsh Stormer. The conference offers lawyers, social workers, and other professionals a slate of CEUs and CLEs that prepare and improve their abilities to serve older adults. The keynote speaker for this year’s Senior Summit is retired Deputy District Attorney Paul Greenwood, who served as the head of San Diego’s Elder Abuse Prosecution Unit. Professionals may register for the conference until May 12.

**What:** Age-Friendly Seal of Approval Ceremony *(for media only)*

**Who:** Age-Friendly Akron-Summit and partners

**When:** May 26 at 9:00 a.m.

**Where:** Akron Zoo Barnhardt Family Welcome Center

500 Edgewood Ave.

Akron, Ohio 44307

**What:** Age-Friendly Friday

**Who:** Age-Friendly Akron-Summit and partners

**When:** May 26 at 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Where:** Akron Zoo

500 Edgewood Ave.

Akron, Ohio 44307

**What:** 2023 Senior Summit

**Who:** Summit County Probate Court and partners

**When:** Friday, May 19 at 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** St. George's Fellowship Center

3204 Ridgewood Rd.

Fairlawn, Ohio 44333

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