



## PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Kimberly Parker 312/814.1577

### **State Pays Homage to Older Adults in Observance of *Older Americans Month***

*Statewide events highlight programs that help seniors maintain active, healthy lifestyles in their communities.*

**EVANSTON – May 13, 2011.** In observance of May as Older Americans Month, Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) Director Charles D. Johnson today served as keynote speaker at the City of Evanston's 13th Aging Well Conference. The Aging Well Conference hosted older adults, their families, professionals and other caregivers. Director Johnson highlighted state programs that offer independent living and other protections to seniors. He also presented a proclamation from Governor Pat Quinn that May is Older Americans Month. (See the full proclamation on the next page.)

"Older Americans Month is observed each year in May. It's a national observance to assist the aging services network of state, area agencies on aging, and local community services providers plan activities to take place in May or throughout the year," Director Johnson said. "On behalf of the Governor, I am proud to present this proclamation honoring more than two million older adults living in Illinois."

The theme of this year's celebration is *Older Americans: Connecting the Community* which recognizes the many ways in which older adults bring inspiration and continuity to the fabric of our communities. It also highlights the many ways technology is helping older Americans live longer, healthier and more engaged lives. Older Americans Month is celebrated through ceremonies, events, fairs and other such activities.

IDoA, the Area Agencies on Aging and a network of local service providers hold events throughout the month. Some of the scheduled events include: a healthy living expo today hosted by the Area Agency on Aging of Southwestern Illinois at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville; the Central Illinois Senior Celebration, May 18, at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield; seniors take to the stage in "Serendipity", May 24 in Chicago's Millennium Park; and Chicago hosts its Senior Conference on May 26.

In an added effort, IDoA staff is assisting with home delivered meals in Springfield, donating toiletries to local nursing homes and donating baked goods for the upcoming Springfield Senior Center Bake Sale.

For more information about program services to assist older adults in Illinois and their caregivers, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966 or for TTY (hearing impaired use only) call 1-888-206-1327.

The text of the Governor's proclamation follows:

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois is home to more than two million citizens aged 60 years or older; and,

WHEREAS, the older Americans of the State of Illinois are a vital part of our nation's demographic makeup; and,

WHEREAS, older citizens are members of our community 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 the contributions of our older citizens, understand and address their evolving needs, and support their caregivers; and,

WHEREAS, our society is dependent upon intergenerational cooperation and support, and benefits from our collective efforts to serve older Americans and the people who love and care for them; and,

WHEREAS, increasing numbers of adults are reaching retirement age and remaining strong and active for longer than ever before; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois has worked to develop strategies to get older adults engaged in civic activity in their communities and to encourage interaction between the generations; 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:

THEREFORE, I, Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim May 2011 as **OLDER AMERICANS MONTH** in Illinois, and encourage all citizens to recognize the many ways in which older adults bring inspiration and continuity to the fabric of our communities which have benefitted the State of Illinois.

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