

THE MARIELDERS, INC.

June 2020



THE MARIELDERS, INC. is a non profit senior center dedicated to the enrichment of life for adults 55 years and older by providing activities and services. We were established in 1977, and membership is open to any older adult living in any neighborhood. For transportation services, we serve Mariemont, Fairfax, Madison Place, Plainville, and Terrace Park.

MariElders updates....

Remember, the van is still running! We will take you - by yourself - to appointments or shopping. And if you need to go somewhere else, just ask! OR we can do your grocery shopping for you, so you don't even have to leave the house!

If you are getting this paper newsletter, it's because I do not have a good email address for you. Please call us with your email address at 513-271-5588 OR email me at marielders@yahoo.com Why? Because we are sending out WEEKLY emails with updates and fun things to do! The engagement doesn't stop because we are forced to stay physically away from each other!

We have the following at the center for any members who need them:

Masks—made by our very own Sandra Garland

Puzzles

Books and more books

DVD movies

PLEASE call us if you need any of the above or anything else: 271-5588

Starting June 1st, there will be a staff member in the center every day, Monday through Friday, 9am to 4pm. We will not be open for activities, but someone will be there in person if you need anything. We would prefer that you call ahead to let us know you are coming, so we only have one person there at a time. You will be required to wear a mask, although we have them at the center if you need one!

Overall, please stay healthy! We want to see your smiling face back at the center as soon as we possibly can!

~~~~~ Stephanie



## **Put Technology to Work for You**

by Kim Flick, MariElders Transportation Coordinator

The Corona Pandemic has proven how technology can keep us connected even though we are Socially Separated. And those who have not embraced technology are perhaps feeling more isolated. Isolation is not a good thing.

There's a widening chasm between folks who use smart devices or digital assistants and those who assume it is beyond their grasp. The fact remains, technology has become part of our culture. The really good news is it's becoming more affordable, easier to get the hang of and its uses are becoming more far-reaching all the time.

For instance, our neighborhood bank lobby became off limits when the Governor ordered businesses to close to the public. But by banking online, we can manage our accounts securely, watch activity, make payments and transfer funds, 24-7. We can shop for our groceries and personal needs, order most items online and have them carried to our car or delivered to the door. Before you make purchases online, you can compare prices and read how other people rate the product, so you can make a more informed decision.

If you're used to visits with friends, video chats and conferencing is a new twist on getting together for discussions, worship services, exercise classes, spending time with family and looking-in anywhere your imagination can take you. Social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram can give you a great way to share news and photos.

If you find that some devices are awkward to use because of vision or hearing impairment, you will be surprised at how adaptive technology has evolved, offering easier to use, large buttons and bright screens. And there are apps that can pair hearing aids to a Smartphone, allowing clearer communication and custom adjustments for whatever your surroundings. Large format tablets, like the GrandPad, come preloaded with features seniors can use, large buttons and no frills.

With Voice Command Devices or Digital Assistants, such as Alexa, you can set reminders, get information, make notes, send messages, be entertained with music, audio books and even adapt it to manage lighting, climate and security / emergency alerts in and around the house.

Smart technology can go a long way toward extending your independence. It all starts with taking the first steps. Just because you've never needed it in the past, doesn't mean you won't find it useful going forward.

If you're uncertain or intimidated about incorporating technology into your life, get with friends who will help you along. The MariElders offers free tech tutoring sessions and advice to help you get started and up to speed - at your pace. The more you use it, the easier it becomes. And think about it, we are always learning.

Although the center is closed, we have been moving forward with some much-needed improvements to the MariElders center.

Drum Roll Please.....

**WE HAVE A STAIR  
CHAIR LIFT!!**

yes, we do!



You all can take the ride of your life when we open back up (whether you need it or not!)

We are **SO THANKFUL** for generous donations from the Mariemont Preservation Foundation and the Mariemont Civic Association toward the purchase of this chair lift for our members!! If you know any of these members, please let them know how much this means to us!

Not just that, but.... a **NEW TOILET!!**

And while that may not seem exciting to you, it's very exciting for me, as I was the one plunging the old toilet several times a day. It's "comfort height," and could flush anything you throw down it (but don't get any ideas!)



There are more changes coming - we are moving things around, making more "homey" comfortable spaces, and cleaning up the outside of the center.....

## Assistive Devices for Seniors

Assistive devices are fantastic resources to help seniors maintain their daily activities and routines, while encouraging personal freedom and prolonging independent living. Many devices can restore confidence, increase mobility and provide family members with peace of mind that their loved one is safe. Learn more from our list of must-have assistive devices for seniors:

### 1. ACTIVATOR Poles

These specialized poles increase balance and mobility, and are a terrific alternative to canes and walkers. The dual poles offer lateral stability and are designed for individuals living with conditions such as chronic pain, Multiple sclerosis (MS), Parkinson's disease and stroke, or for people who are recovering from hip or knee surgery. Each pole has the capacity to bear up to 200 pounds of weight and offers a bell-shaped tip for stability and an ergonomically correct handle for core strengthening.

The poles are adjustable to accommodate all body shapes and sizes, and can be used both indoors and outdoors. The developer's website is a wealth of information and includes a variety of user guides and video instructions on how to get the most out of the poles.

### 2. Buttoning Aid Hook

This device is fantastic for seniors with arthritis, fine motor impairment or reduced dexterity. This tool is simple, with a hook and wire design and comfortable grip that allows the user to button blouses, jackets and pants easily, with only one hand.

### 3. Freedom Grip Bed Handle

The specialized bed handle makes getting out of bed safe. The handle securely attaches to any average height bed frame with a snap lock mechanism and the assembly is fast and simple with no tools necessary. The handle itself is non-slip and nine inches wide, allowing for a firm, stable grip. This is a must-have item for individuals with arthritis, Multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease or vertigo.

### 4. Jobar Long Reach Comfort Wipe

Maintaining personal hygiene is deeply important for your senior loved one's dignity and independence. This assistive device is ergonomically designed for people with limited dexterity or who have difficulty reaching. The Long Reach Comfort Wipe is over 15 inches long and equipped with a soft flexible head that securely grips moistened wipes or toilet paper. There is also a quick release function for fast, sanitary disposal.

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## 5. Lively Wearable by GreatCall

This medical alert device is a wearable product with an urgent response button that can call for help whenever it is pushed. It is fashion forward and can be clipped onto clothing or worn around the neck or wrist, and can also be worn in the shower – where a significant number of falls occur. Lively Wearable has built in fall detection technology that will alert a Certified Response Agent if a fall is detected and family members can also be registered for notification if the button is pressed.

## 6. Reminder Rosie Recordable Alarm Clock

This unique alarm clock is voice controlled and a great device for seniors struggling with brain injury, dementia or memory loss. It is incredibly user friendly, without fussy buttons or difficult programming features and can be personalized with the voice of the user or their loved ones. It can be customized to set daily time-specific reminders for appointments or every-day tasks.

## 7. TV Ears

This audible device can be connected to a television and worn like a headset to hear dialog clearly, while reducing the volume for others in the room. The television can even be muted and listened to through the headset only. This will improve the experience for everyone in the room, while ensuring your senior loved one is still able to hear and enjoy their program.

## 8. Uplift Seat Assist

This assistive seating device can be used in conjunction with an armchair, love seat or sofa to manually lift the user into a standing position without overexertion or strain. This is an amazing device for people living with arthritis, coccyx pain or other joint ailments who struggle to rise from a seated position to standing without pain. The memory foam cushion is extremely comfortable and features a waterproof cover; it also folds flat for easy mobility and storage.

Assistive devices can greatly improve the independence and livelihood of your senior parent. By investing in items to help your loved one perform their daily activities, not only will you help to restore their freedom and mobility, you will also have peace of mind that they are comfortable and safe in their own home.

## Seniors With COVID-19 Show Unusual Symptoms, Doctors Say

Older adults with COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus, have several “atypical” symptoms, complicating efforts to ensure they get timely and appropriate treatment, according to physicians.

COVID-19 is typically signaled by three symptoms: a fever, an insistent cough and shortness of breath. But older adults — the age group most at risk of severe complications or death from this condition — may have none of these characteristics.

Instead, seniors may seem “off” — not acting like themselves — early on after being infected by the coronavirus. They may sleep more than usual or stop eating. They may seem unusually apathetic or confused, losing orientation to their surroundings. They may become dizzy and fall. Sometimes, seniors stop speaking or simply collapse.

“With a lot of conditions, older adults don’t present in a typical way, and we’re seeing that with COVID-19 as well,” said Dr. Camille Vaughan, section chief of geriatrics and gerontology at Emory University.

The reason has to do with how older bodies respond to illness and infection.

At advanced ages, “someone’s immune response may be blunted and their ability to regulate temperature may be altered,” said Dr. Joseph Ouslander, a professor of geriatric medicine at Florida Atlantic University’s Schmidt College of Medicine.

“Underlying chronic illnesses can mask or interfere with signs of infection,” he said. “Some older people, whether from age-related changes or previous neurologic issues such as a stroke, may have altered cough reflexes. Others with cognitive impairment may not be able to communicate their symptoms.”

Recognizing danger signs is important: If early signs of COVID-19 are missed, seniors may deteriorate before getting needed care. And people may go in and out of their homes without adequate protective measures, risking the spread of infection.

Dr. Quratulain Syed, an Atlanta geriatrician, describes a man in his 80s whom she treated in mid-March. Over a period of days, this patient, who had heart disease, diabetes and moderate cognitive impairment, stopped walking and became incontinent and profoundly lethargic. But he didn’t have a fever or a cough. His only respiratory symptom: sneezing off and on.

The man’s elderly spouse called 911 twice. Both times, paramedics checked his vital signs and declared he was OK. After another worried call from the overwhelmed spouse, Syed insisted the patient be taken to the hospital, where he tested positive for COVID-19.

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“I was quite concerned about the paramedics and health aides who’d been in the house and who hadn’t used PPE [personal protective equipment],” Syed said.

Dr. Sam Torbati, medical director of the Ruth and Harry Roman Emergency Department at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, describes treating seniors who initially appear to be trauma patients but are found to have COVID-19.

“They get weak and dehydrated,” he said, “and when they stand to walk, they collapse and injure themselves badly.”

Torbati has seen older adults who are profoundly disoriented and unable to speak and who appear at first to have suffered strokes.

“When we test them, we discover that what’s producing these changes is a central nervous system effect of coronavirus,” he said.

Dr. Laura Perry, an assistant professor of medicine at the University of California-San Francisco, saw a patient like this several weeks ago. The woman, in her 80s, had what seemed to be a cold before becoming very confused. In the hospital, she couldn’t identify where she was or stay awake during an examination. Perry diagnosed hypoactive delirium, an altered mental state in which people become inactive and drowsy. The patient tested positive for coronavirus and is still in the ICU.

Dr. Anthony Perry, an associate professor of geriatric medicine at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, tells of an 81-year-old woman with nausea, vomiting and diarrhea who tested positive for COVID-19 in the emergency room. After receiving IV fluids, oxygen and medication for her intestinal upset, she returned home after two days and is doing well.

Another 80-year-old Rush patient with similar symptoms — nausea and vomiting, but no cough, fever or shortness of breath — is in intensive care after getting a positive COVID-19 test and due to be put on a ventilator. The difference? This patient is frail with “a lot of cardiovascular disease,” Perry said. Other than that, it’s not yet clear why some older patients do well while others do not.

So far, reports of cases like these have been anecdotal. But a few physicians are trying to gather more systematic information.

In Switzerland, Dr. Sylvain Nguyen, a geriatrician at the University of Lausanne Hospital Center, put together a list of typical and atypical symptoms in older COVID-19 patients for a paper to be published in the *Revue Médicale Suisse*. Included on the atypical list are changes in a patient’s usual status, delirium, falls, fatigue, lethargy, low blood pressure, painful swallowing, fainting, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and the loss of smell and taste.

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Data comes from hospitals and nursing homes in Switzerland, Italy and France, Nguyen said in an email.

On the front lines, physicians need to make sure they carefully assess an older patient's symptoms.

"While we have to have a high suspicion of COVID-19 because it's so dangerous in the older population, there are many other things to consider," said Dr. Kathleen Unroe, a geriatrician at Indiana University's School of Medicine.

Seniors may also do poorly because their routines have changed. In nursing homes and most assisted living centers, activities have stopped and "residents are going to get weaker and more deconditioned because they're not walking to and from the dining hall," she said.

At home, isolated seniors may not be getting as much help with medication management or other essential needs from family members who are keeping their distance, other experts suggested. Or they may have become apathetic or depressed.

"I'd want to know 'What's the potential this person has had an exposure [to the coronavirus], especially in the last two weeks?'" said Vaughan of Emory. "Do they have home health personnel coming in? Have they gotten together with other family members? Are chronic conditions being controlled? Is there another diagnosis that seems more likely?"

**HEAP** has been extended!! – Home Energy Assistance Program applications are available at MARIELDERS. HEAP is a federally funded program designed to assist eligible Ohioans with their utility bills. Eligibility requirements are based on your total gross household income, proof of citizenship, and that your gas & electric bill is in your name. For a single person the income is \$21,857.50, two people \$29,592.50.

For an application call 271-5588.

**MariElders Board Members**

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**MariElders Staff:**

Stephanie Crellin—Executive Director

Kim Flick—Transportation Coordinator

Nicole Christ—Activities Coordinator

**THANK YOU to the Village Church of Mariemont!!**

They had several members from the church come by last weekend to clean up the outside of the center. They cleaned off of the roof, got rid of all of the debris outside, scraped and painted the bench, potted plants, re-stripped the parking lines, and painted the sign on the back of the building. It was an amazing transformation!!

Before



## Happy Birthday to our Members in June!

- 6/2 Judy Kagrise  
Eleanor Lawhorn  
6/3 Bonnie Bishop  
Sally Santoro  
6/6 Ruth Bullock  
6/8 Margery Mattox  
6/10 Kathie Hertenstein  
6/11 Anne Schneider  
6/12 Emilie Murphy-Daudon  
6/13 Bob McKee  
6/16 Bonnie Kleimeyer  
6/18 Carol Donahue  
6/18 Linda Gee  
6/18 Dick Wendel  
6/23 Kevin Mahoney  
6/27 Jolene Dancey



## Thank you for renewing your membership!

Paul Pschesang  
Charles Short  
Kimberlee Arp  
Judy Barron  
Marianne Jenkins  
Jane Payne  
Kay Boniface  
Tom Woerner

John & Susan Mullan  
Mary Ann & David Randolph  
Dale & Jim Liming  
Lisa Smith  
Sallie Jo Huston  
Barbara Anderson  
Carol Donahue  
Ralph & Patricia Blasi

And **welcome new members**

Dick Wendel  
Lilias Folan

**Junque Sale**  
**is postponed**  
**until the fall!**



***Thank you for donating to MARIELDERS!***

Ann Marie Wendler  
Marianne Jenkins  
Delores Tate  
Kelly Pharmer  
Lisa Smith  
Tom Woerner  
Ralph & Patricia Blasi

