

ADVOCATES for Senior Issues

OVER
40
YEARS OF
ADVOCACY
ADVOCATES
for Senior Issues

YOU'RE INVITED

AFSI MEMBERSHIP MEETING

June 20, 2025 10am – 12pm

AFSI monthly meeting presentation and program beginning at 10am

WHO: The Advocates for Senior Issues Members, Guests, and Sponsors

WHAT: An opportunity to advocate, learn, and grow together. There will be a continental breakfast so **be sure to arrive early and bring a guest!**

WHEN: June 20, 2025 10am-12pm

WHERE: Kids' Food Basket
1300 Plymouth Ave NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Questions?

Please contact

AAAWM Advocacy & Planning Director

Sheri Harris

SheriH@aaawm.org | 616-222-7015

Please note: The AFSI Housing Committee will be meeting prior to the regular membership meeting starting at 9am, if you wish to participate.

Legislative Speaker

Mayor David LaGrand

David LaGrand was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He graduated from Calvin College and earned a law degree from the University of Chicago. When David returned to Grand Rapids, he served as an Assistant Kent County Prosecutor. David also served as Grand Rapids City Commission for the Second Ward and as a member of the Grand Rapids Public Schools board. He served as a State Representative between 2015 and 2022.

Program Presentation

"HELLO SUMMER"

**Discover the best ways to enjoy the sunshine
and fresh air this summer!**

Hello Summer is a guide to the many outdoor activities tailored for seniors in West Michigan's beautiful parks. From scenic walking trails and accessible nature programs to group picnics, bird watching, and wellness classes, this presentation highlights fun, safe, and enriching ways for older adults to stay active and connected all season long. Whether you're looking for relaxation or light adventure, come explore what West Michigan parks have to offer.

ADVOCATES for Senior Issues

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

WHEN

Friday, June 20, 2025 @ 10 am

WHERE

Kids' Food Basket

1300 Plymouth Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505

AGENDA

Call to Order and Announcements:

Margaret Howard, President

Legislative Presentation

Mayor David LaGrand

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Advocates for Senior Issues is a non-partisan organization, affiliated with the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan www.aaawm.org/afsi

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Eastgate



Beth A. Swagman, PLLC
Elder Law & Estate Planning Services

Lody and Joanne Zwarensteijn



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PEN

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Region 9
MEA – Retired

Senior NEIGHBORS
no longer alone



Beth Mans
Senior
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Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM)

AARP | Beacon Hill | Giving Back Realty

Beth Swagman | Blue Cross Blue Shield

Elders' Helpers | Reliance Community Care Partners

SILVER

Pine Rest | Revive and Thrive Project | Priority Health | Life EMS

West Michigan Credit Union | MKD Funeral Directors | Kelso Homes

BRONZE

Community Care Givers | Grand Rapids Elderly Care

Lody and Joanne Zwarensteijn | Parents Empowering Network

Care Resources PACE | The Village of Heather Hills

Fair Housing Center of West Michigan | Tom Appel

Porter Hills Village Retirement Community

Ofield Funeral Home | Leslie Sanford

FRIEND

Chris Becker Kent County Prosecutor | Oasis Senior Advisors

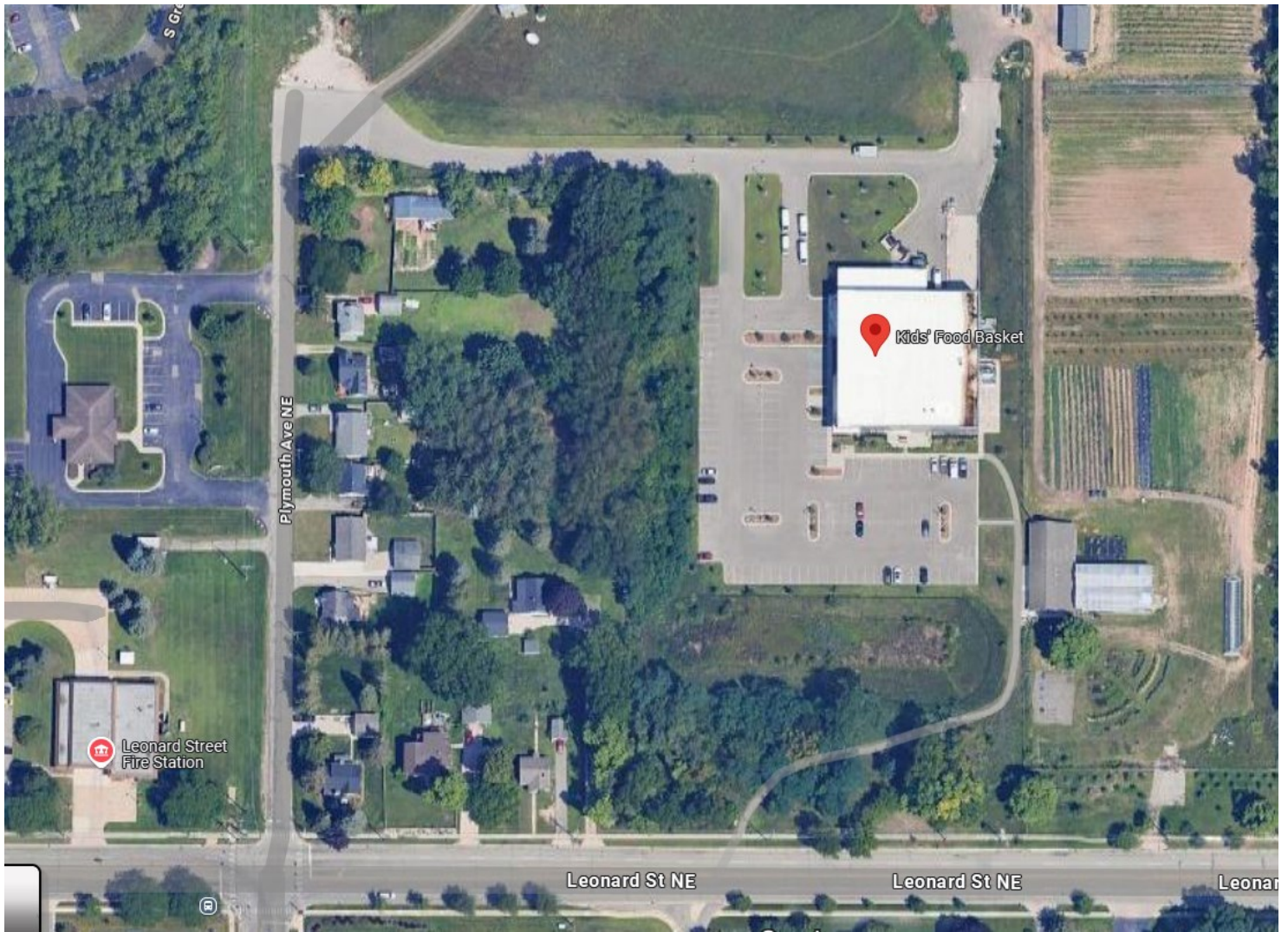
Beth Mans Greenridge Realty | Grand Rapids Savvy Senior Learning Series

Safe Home Michigan | Lois Carey | Luv Doula | Faith Hospice

Phil and Judy France | Senior Neighbors | Gauthier Family Home Care

Neptune Society | Hulst Jepsen Physical Therapy | Joel Jason

Meals on Wheels Western Michigan | Kristyn Vander Zouwen



June's Meeting will be held at



Kids' Food Basket

Kids' Food Basket

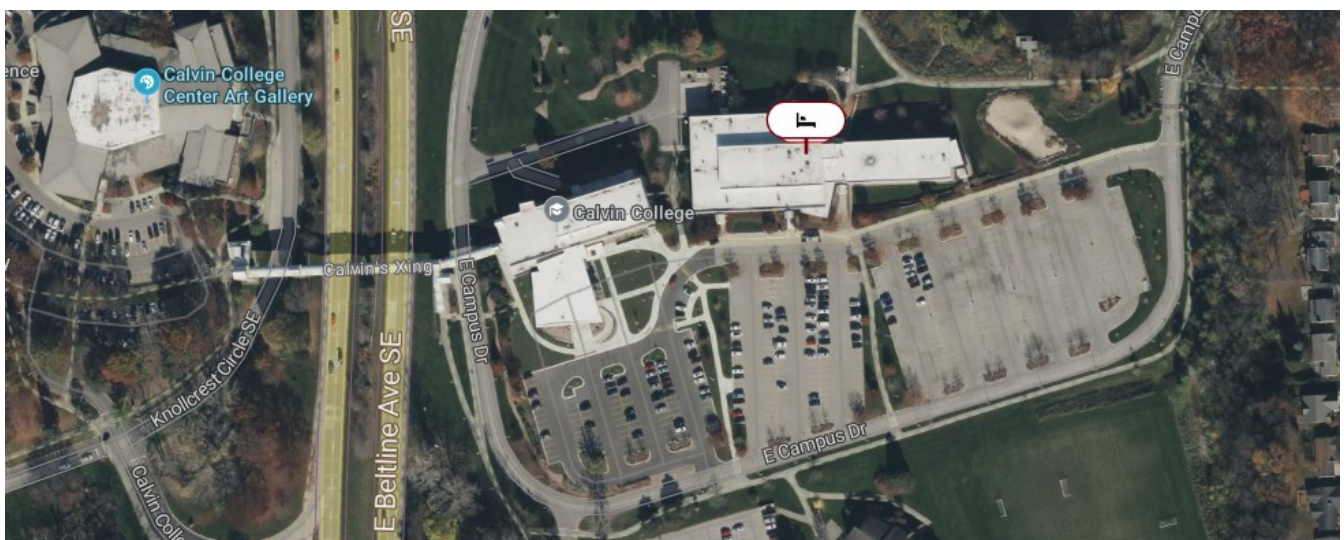
1300 Plymouth Ave NE

Grand Rapids, MI 49505



The Advocates for Senior Issues Executive Committee wish you a wonderful summer!

Check out our new calendar, within this packet, for the 2025-2026 program year kicking off in September with Sponsorship Day at the Prince Conference Center at Calvin University on September 19, 2025 at 10am.



ADVOCATES for Senior Issues



OVER
40
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ADVOCATES
for Senior Issues

JOIN US MONTHLY TO...

ADVOCATE | LEARN | BUILD COMMUNITY

2025-2026 MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

3RD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

Except July, August, & December

THE SALVATION ARMY KROC CENTER

(Unless otherwise noted)

10:00 AM MEETING CALL TO ORDER

September 19th
Prince Conference Center

January 16th

April 17th
TBD

October 17th

February 20th

May 15th

November 21st

March 20th

June 19th
TBD

**All meetings are FREE and
open to the public!**

QUESTIONS?



SheriH@aaawm.org



616-222-7015



www.aaawm.org/afsi

LOCAL SENIOR ADVOCATE GROUP GIVES VOICE TO OLDER ADULTS

THE WHY

The Advocates for Senior Issues (AFSI) has a reputation as the premier older adult advocacy group in the state. The AFSI is a non-partisan group that strives to be inclusive of all of Kent County's diverse senior communities.

THE WHO

Some of our 300+ members represent retiree groups, senior centers, or retirement communities, bringing the estimated reach of the group to over 10,000. AFSI members have various backgrounds, affiliations, and work histories, but many have a history of services, volunteerism, and/or activism.

THE IMPACT

In addition to learning how to advocate, members are educated on topics of importance to seniors. Programs include elder abuse and scams, healthy aging programs, senior driving issues, aging in place, Medicare Part D, and much more. State Senators and Representatives, as well as local County Commissioners and other special guests, are also invited to address the group.

THE HISTORY

The group started meeting in 1982 under the name Senior Citizen Senate. Founded and led by Sister Agnes Theil, they originally started with just a few dozen members. In 2001 the group officially changed its name to "Advocates for Senior Issues". The group was instrumental in bringing the Medicaid Waiver program to Kent County in 1992, making it one of the first counties in the state to have this cost-efficient program. They also played a major role in the Kent County Senior Millage campaign in 1998, and the renewal and increase in 2006 and 2014.

THE LEGACY

Two members earned the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Claude Pepper award for advocacy. Three members of Advocates for Senior Issues have received the Governor's statewide Senior Leadership Award, and five members from the group have been awarded a Medal of Merit by former U.S. Congressman Vern Ehlers. Three members have received the Maggie Fegel Award.

THE ACTION

General membership meetings are held monthly, with the exception of July, August, and December. Membership meetings take place on the third Friday of the month, 10 am-12 pm, with an average attendance of 125 members. Visitors are welcome and encouraged to attend a meeting to see the organization in action.