Each May, the United States celebrates Older Americans Month in order to recognize older Americans for their contributions to the nation. This year, in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Older Americans Act (OAA), the focus is on how older adults are taking charge of their health, getting engaged in their communities, and making a positive impact in the lives of others. The theme for Older Americans Month 2015 is Get into the Act. (From the US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living)

When Older Americans Month was established in 1963, only 17 million living Americans had reached their 65th birthday. Today, over 43 million Americans are over 65. Older Americans are busy launching second careers, becoming active volunteers in community and church groups, joining exercise programs designed to meet their needs, exercising their minds by learning new things, traveling the world, and using their computers to stay in touch with friends and family across the country.

Get into the Act is a very good way to summarize the idea that launched our SOKY “Silver Threads” articles and our “Golden Moments” calendar. This year, we featured some terrific options for older area residents including the Silver Sneakers exercise programs through the Bowling Green Parks and Recreation Department, Line Dancing at the Warren County Parks and Recreation Senior Center in Ephram White Park, AARP Driver Safety Courses through the Medical Center and the Corvette Museum programs, the Over 50 Citizens Academy sponsored by the City of Bowling Green, the new WKU Society for Lifelong Learning, the Fall Prevention Program through the Barren River District Health Department, Bowling Green’s participation in the United Nations World Health Organization Age Friendly Cities Program, musical events including the unique Thursday evening Bluegrass Jams at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge, and intriguing area road trips for spring!

As we look forward to our second year with SOKY Happenings Magazine, we would like to take just a moment to say “Thank You” to Home Instead Senior Care for sponsoring our “Senior Page” and to wish them well as they move into their new headquarters. We also must thank Dr. Dana Bradley and her staff at WKU Aging for their support which makes the SOKY Senior Page and the encouragement it offers to those who enjoy Getting into the Act possible!

For the most up-to-date Golden Moments calendar, visit http://www.wku.edu/aging/senior-events.php. To request a printed copy or for more information, please call WKU Aging at 270-745-3177.

Silver Threads: May is National Older Americans Month – Get Into the Act!

by Barbara Johnston