

Governing Board Member Highlight



Stan Summers was born and raised on a dairy farm in Box Elder County, and currently lives in Bothwell, a small community several miles west of Tremonton. He currently serves the people of Box Elder County as a County Commissioner. At a young age, he learned to work hard and appreciate the compensation of doing

a good job. Stan is the youngest of 5 children, and is the son of the late Cleon and Gerry Summers of East Tremonton. He attended Bear River High School, where he excelled in sports and student government. He spent one year at Utah State University and played football while he was there.

Stan is married to Jennifer Christensen, and they have two children; Talan and Jandie. His family is very important to him and he spends his time working hard to support them. He has driven bus for Box Elder School District for 13 years, and has owned and operated his own windshield repair and replacement business for over 25 years. He also opened a car wash in Tremonton in 2001, the week before the events of 911 took place.

Stan is dedicated to his family, and is involved with community and church activities. He enjoys meeting new people and learning from them. He also enjoys watching USU Football when he can.

New Employees



Shawn Israelsen is the Aging Department's newest employee. Shawn and his wife, Hannah, have been married for a year and a half. He loves to play and watch football, and is a huge 49ers fan. He graduated from USU in 2013 where

his wife attends full-time. He loves to hunt and camp, and his favorite part of the day is being home with his wife. We're happy to welcome Shawn as the newest BRAG staff member.

Open Access Program

BRAG staff, under the direction of the Bear River Regional Access and Mobility Council, recently created a business recognition program called "Open Access." This program promotes local businesses that make a good-faith effort to be access and mobility friendly, in Box Elder, Cache, and Rich Counties.

Many people in our region, and in the state

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and nation as a whole, have limited mobility or difficulty accessing various services due to age, disability, income, or other issues. Likewise, alternative modes of transportation such as biking or walking are becoming more popular, and improve air quality, citizen health, and can reduce transportation costs. As part of the Open Access program, businesses can learn how they can become more access and mobility friendly in the four following ways: 1) Mobility (ADA Access), 2) Public Transit, 3) Bike/Pedestrian, and 4) Improved customer service for people of all abilities.

If a business is access and mobility friendly, they can receive a sticker for each of the four categories to place on their front window or entryway. These stickers indicate to potential customers that the business is striving to provide services to people of all abilities and transportation modes. Businesses are also listed on the Open Access website, located at bearrivermobility.org.

For more information, contact Zac Covington at 435.713.1423 or zacc@brag.utah.gov.

Please submit articles or ideas to Dolores Berkley at doloresb@brag.utah.gov or call at 435.752.7242



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BRAG's Aging Department Receives Agency of the Year Award



BRAG's Aging Department staff shortly after receiving the Cache Interagency Council's Agency of the Year Award. Pictured from left to right: Lisa Freund, Shanna Andersen, Debra Smith, Deb Crowther, Melissa Lewis, Alyson Frederick, Storee Powell, and Aging Services Director, Michelle Benson.

In October, the Cache Interagency Council recognized the BRAG Aging Department as the Outstanding Program of 2013 for their service to older adults and their families in Cache Valley. The Bear River Area Agency on Aging provides services to older adults and people with disabilities in Cache, Rich, and Box Elder counties. Our mission is to support a lifetime of dignity and independence by ensuring adequate health care, nutrition, and social services.

Over 4,000 individuals are served each

year through a variety of programs and partnerships with local senior centers, home care, and assisted living providers. Individuals and families are assisted at all stages of the aging process through education and activities, volunteer opportunities, meals, caregiver support groups, home care services, and dignified care at the end of life. Older adults are vital to our community and have made and continue to make significant contributions to enhance the lives of everyone.

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CALENDAR

- Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday from 1:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M. - Caregiver support group held at Aqua Worx located at 209 West 300 North in Logan. Contact Deborah Crowther at 435.713.1462 with questions.
- Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday from 10:30 A.M. to 12:00 Noon - Caregiver Support and Memory Club Group held at the Brigham City Senior Center at 24 North 300 West in Brigham City. Contact Vickie Wright at 435.226.1455 with questions.
- January 31st - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications due.
- February 1st - Permanent Community Impact Fund Board (CIB) applications due.
- March 14th - Economic Development Administration Grant applications due.

Bear River Association of Governments
170 N. Main
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BRAG Services

2013 SENIOR AND CAREGIVER FACTS

Nearly **60%** of Seniors rely on their meal at senior centers for **1/2 or more** of their total food for the day.

The number of seniors is growing at **twice the rate** of the regular population.

For every **\$1 invested** in Meals on Wheels, up to **\$50** could be saved in Medicaid¹.

Unpaid caregivers are meeting an estimated **90%** of long-term care needs.

The average American woman can expect to spend more years caring for her parents than she did her children.

The typical caregiver is a 46 -year-old woman providing **more than 20 hours** of care each week.

72% of Caregivers care for individuals requiring physical care beyond their abilities.

43% of Caregivers have missed work to provide care.

* Data courtesy of the Utah Association of Area Agencies on Aging, 2013. ¹ The Center for Effective Government.

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The Cache Interagency Council (CIC) supports not-for-profit agencies and groups throughout the valley. Monthly meetings are held to help inform one another of services made available by their members and facilitate collaboration. BRAG helped initiate the council more than three decades ago and continues to support its efforts. According to Doug Stephenson, Director of the CIC, BRAG's Aging Department works well with other local agencies, and provides many critical services for Cache Valley residents.

For more information, contact Michelle Benson at 435.752.7242.

Improving Health Care Access and Quality for Veterans in Rural Areas

The Bear River Area Agency on Aging, in partnership with the Utah Aging and Disability Resource Center and the Office of the Veterans Rural Health, is participating in a grant to improve health care access and quality for veterans in rural areas. Nationally, 30% of all veterans are from rural America. There are approximately 152,000 veterans in the state of Utah.

The purpose of the grant is to create an access point for rural veterans of any age to receive information about their benefits and application assistance. Additionally, veterans also receive information and referrals to other community resources that may be needed.

Three community events have been held this summer to identify veterans who may be interested in the service. A representative from the Veterans Administration attended each of these events to answer individual questions. Veterans interested in exploring their benefits or options for health care may contact Deborah Crowther at 435.713.1462 for assistance.

Dr. John Kauwe Presents on the Genetics of Alzheimer's Disease

To celebrate National Caregiver Month and the 30th anniversary of President Ronald Reagan's proclamation making November National Alzheimer's Disease Month, the Cache County Caregiver Coalition hosted a presentation by Dr. John "Keoni" Kauwe titled "Debunking the Myth of Alzheimer's: The Genetics of the Disease."



Dr. "Keoni" Kauwe, professor in the Departments of Biology and Neuroscience at Brigham Young University, recently gave a presentation on the genetics of Alzheimer's Disease.

Dr. Kauwe is currently a professor at Brigham Young University in the Departments of Biology and Neuroscience. His research, in partnership with hundreds of scientists throughout the world, seeks to identify specific genes which affect the onset of Alzheimer's disease in order to identify successful treatment options. Nearly 80 caregivers, professionals, and Utah State University students and faculty attended the presentations.

According to the Alzheimer Association Utah Chapter, 50,000 individuals and 132,000 family caregivers in Utah are affected by Alzheimer's disease. It is expected that the number of individuals with Alzheimer's disease in Utah will increase by 45 percent by the year 2027. Additional studies by researchers at Utah State University are also being conducted to examine the role of non-pharmacologic strategies such as stress management, exercise, and nutrition in the onset of Alzheimer's disease.

Executive Corner

Helping Those in Need

Roger C. Jones
Executive Director, BRAG

It is heartwarming for me to know how well people and organizations work together in our tri-county area to help those in need. This is especially true during times of tragedy or emergency such as the apartment fire in Brigham City in early December.

Michael McCullam, manager of BRAG's Box Elder County office located in Perry prepared this summary of events:

On December 2, 2014, an apartment fire occurred at 580 N. Main in Brigham City, displacing 11 families in 8 apartments. The Corrine, Honeyville and Willard fire departments were called in to assist Brigham City, but they were unable to get the fire out before it caused severe damage. Eight units were damaged to the point they were no longer inhabitable. Eleven other apartments lost electricity, forcing their owners to leave for the night.

The American Red Cross and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints worked together to provide emergency shelter. A local church opened its doors for residents to stay warm while 21 individuals stayed in the local fire station, where the Red Cross began operating an emergency shelter.

While the Red Cross worked on providing food, clothing and other necessary items, Bear River Association of Governments (BRAG) began working on a plan to provide permanent shelter to the families. BRAG worked as part of the team with the Red Cross, local churches, Brigham City Council Member Ruth Jensen, and local realtors to reach out to displaced families.

BRAG worked closely with local realtor Stefanie Tugaw to meet with the families, complete applications and gather necessary documentation. BRAG also met with most of the displaced families and provided detailed case management. BRAG helped the majority of the families relocate by paying rent, and worked with involved agencies to assure other emergency needs were met.

All families were referred to BRAG's HEAT program as well. BRAG has continued to work with agencies and families through January 3.

Community support was abundant. Donations of food, toiletries, youth and adult clothing and other necessities were generously given. Donation efforts were organized by the Brigham Senior Center.

Regional Insights

Local BRAG and Community Programs Help Combat Senior Hunger



Volunteers for the Meals on Wheels program in Cache County. The Cache County Senior Center, with the assistance of devoted volunteers, provided 3,135 meals in the month of October with the help of 88 volunteers (Photo courtesy of the Cache County Senior Center).

Senior hunger in America is a monumental problem. According to the Meals on Wheels Association of America, 8.8 million seniors in the United States face the threat of hunger. Nearly 50% of American seniors receiving Meals-on-Wheels are in poverty and at high nutritional risk. Additionally, nearly 60% rely on their meal provided through a senior center for half or more of their total food intake for the day.

There are approximately 5,000 local Senior Nutrition Programs in the United States. These programs provide over one million meals to seniors who need them each day. Some programs serve meals at congregate locations like senior centers, others deliver meals directly to the homes of seniors whose mobility is limited, and many programs provide both services.

BRAG contracts with four senior centers in the region to provide meals both in a senior center and in the homes of older adults. In 2013, 2,114 older adults received a congregate or home delivered meal. A total of 131,693 meals were provided through four local

senior centers in Cache County, Brigham City, Tremonton City, and Rich County. In addition, 648 volunteers provided 52,676 hours of service in senior centers and the homes of older adults.

This year, senior nutrition programs received an 8% cut in federal funds due to sequestration. As sequestration continues for the next several years, additional cuts will be realized. Good nutrition is the foundation upon which independent living is built. Helping seniors remain healthy and independent by providing nutrition programs, both home delivered and in senior centers remains the highest service priority for counties and Area Agencies on Aging.

The senior programs in the Bear River area have succeeded due to the support of the community, elected officials and numerous volunteers. We truly appreciate the support of all those who work together to provide a hot meal to those in need as we continue to battle senior hunger.

For more information, contact Michelle Benson at 435.752.7242.