

April, May, June 2020



A NON-PROFIT SERVING VOLUSIA SENIORS

SENIOR MATTERS

THE NEWSLETTER OF COUNCIL ON AGING OF VOLUSIA COUNTY

*"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt."
– Margaret Atwood*

SPRING INTO ACTIVITY

While we Floridians don't experience the winters of "up north," springtime still brings a sense of renewal as the weather warms, more flowers blossom, and leaves get greener. It's also a good time for us to think about renewal—about getting active or more active. Sarah's message on page 2 reminds us that we can be active while remaining vigilant about our health. We began writing this newsletter before the coronavirus was in the news, but we decided to move forward with our article about our Senior Centers and Dining Sites (page 4) because when this passes, we invite current members, new members, and guests to join in the wonderfully dynamic activities our centers offer, including (on page 14) "Painting for Wellness."

If you're a gardener or you have considered gardening, take a look at "It's Time to Garden" on page 7. You'll learn about the community gardens throughout Volusia County, and you'll get a few tips on gardening at home.

Beginning on page 12, learn about the impressive group of movers and shakers who make up the COA Board of Directors—the behind-the-scenes people committed to our county's seniors!

Lastly, we are serious about asking you to let us know how your spring gardening goes. Please take photos and send them to us! Show off your green or soon-to-be green thumb. It's ok, really, to smell like dirt!

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The mission of Council on Aging of Volusia County is to enrich the lives of our most vulnerable elderly citizens by providing needed services that enable them to remain safely in their own homes.

www.coavolusia.org



"Now, as always, be mindful of your own state of health...eat well and exercise often."

HEADLINE

By Sarah F. Gurtis, President & CEO

Much of our spring newsletter deals with becoming more active and even suggests turning your hand to gardening whether you have a green thumb or not. But first, let's acknowledge the many impacts the coronavirus is having in our communities. Your COA is well prepared. The fact is that our Meals on Wheels (MOW) clients are already homebound and self-isolated. Our MOW volunteers are taking even greater precautions in hand sanitation and monitoring their own health. We continue to provide meals to our congregate diners, encouraging them to pick up their meal at our prep sites or let us move them to home delivered meals for the time being. Our In-Home aides are Certified Nursing Assistants and well-versed in best practices.

Senior Center activities were (and may still be) suspended—things like bridge, mah jongg, bingo,

billiards, dances, and continuing education classes. They will be (or have been) resumed as soon as it is safe to do so.

If you have a family member or friend in a nursing home or assisted living facility, go to extra lengths to call them or keep in touch by facetimeing or texting, whatever they prefer. We have talked often about the negative impacts of social isolation.

Now, as always, be mindful of your own state of health: eat well and exercise often. Our COA Senior Centers are a tremendous asset in Volusia County. Allowing seniors to keep mentally and physically active and socially engaged is an important part of what we do. We look forward to welcoming you!

Warmest regards,



*Sarah F. Gurtis, President & CEO,
Council on Aging of Volusia County*

The newsletter of Council on Aging of Volusia County

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COA SENIOR CENTERS AND DINING SITES: MAKING CONNECTIONS

By Mark Shaw, COA Communications and Events Manager

COA operates four Senior Centers and four additional Dining Sites throughout Volusia County—all filled with activities. In 2019, we averaged a whopping 441 activities per month in all of the centers combined! You can pick up some new dance steps, sharpen your card playing skills, or just relax and socialize with old and new friends year-round.

Senior Center membership is very affordable and allows you access to all four locations—and includes meals. There are no membership fees for our Dining Sites; however, donations for meals and some activities are requested. View the current monthly activities calendars and menus by visiting www.coavolusia.org.

Neighborhood Dining Sites have shorter hours and fewer activities than our Senior Centers, but still offer a great way to get out of the house and socialize while enjoying a nutritious meal. Dining Site activities include games, educational presentations, and other activities (including a live band and dancing in Holly Hill!). Please call your local Senior Center or Dining Site to inquire about lunch or activities (see page 5). This year, we're generating more excitement by adding fun, energetic activities designed to get you moving and keep your blood flowing. Do you have a dance move you've always wanted to learn? Or just like to show off the moves you already have? You can find ballroom dancing, line dancing, even salsa lessons in our centers!



Ormond Beach Pool Sharks

If dancing isn't your thing, chair aerobics, yoga, Tai Chi, and cardio/strength training all add to the repertoire of physical activities available to our members.

Gladys Lacen, who manages our Senior Centers and Dining Sites, embraces the active lifestyle. "We've recently started a walking group in many of our centers, and every week, more and more people participate. It's so important to stay active. For me, being active is more than just physical—or it's therapeutic."

Of course, we'll continue having weekly Bingo games (always popular!), dominoes, mah jongg, and card games of all sorts. In Ormond Beach, you can make your own jewelry or join a book writing club. In New Smyrna Beach, you can brush up on your painting skills. And in Orange City, you can learn French. Parlez vous Francais?

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In addition, we plan fun events like the East/West Billiards competitions between our Deltona and Ormond Beach Senior Centers. In February, the "Ormond Beach Pool Sharks" took home the coveted trophy by defeating the "Deltona Ugly Coyotes." Freddie Diaz and Brenda Bayer, activities coordinators, enjoy getting their members excited for this cross-town rivalry.

Recently, we celebrated the 100th birthday of Dining Site regular Bennie Trzcinski, who attends the weekly dances at the COA Holly Hill Dining Site and the Ormond Beach Senior Center (both dances feature live music).



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Bennie Trzcinski on the dance floor

COA SENIOR CENTERS & NEIGHBORHOOD DINING SITES

COA Senior Center & Dining Site - Deltona

The Center at Deltona
1640 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.
386-574-0060
Senior Center Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Dining Site Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

COA Senior Center & Dining Site - New Smyrna Beach

Live Oak Cultural Center
1050 Live Oak St.
386-410-5839
Senior Center Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Dining Site Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

COA Senior Center & Dining Site - Ormond Beach

351 Andrews St.
386-672-4146
Senior Center Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Dining Site Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

COA Senior Center - Orange City

WAVA's Hall
200 N. Holly Ave.
386-775-3121
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

ADDITIONAL COA NEIGHBORHOOD DINING SITES

DeLand

Tomoka Christina Church
1101 E. Plymouth Ave.
386-736-9706
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Holly Hill

Sica Hall
1065 Daytona Ave.
386-236-2997
Hours: Mon./Wed./Thurs./Fri.: 8:00 am - 2:00 pm
Tues. 8:00 am - 4:00 pm (for dance)

Orange City

First Congregational Church
259 W. University Ave.
386-774-0001
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Port Orange

Port Orange Adult Center
4790 S. Ridgewood Ave.
386-788-8892
Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

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We asked Bennie what his secret to longevity is. "You've got to keep busy, that's for sure," he said, adding, "Have something that interests you. It's nice to be in love, and love somebody always. And be kind, too. And have a good attitude. I like to have fun."

We invite you to join us at our Senior Centers and Dining Sites, which also provide guest speakers who provide educational seminars on topics such as nutrition, Medicare changes, and Alzheimer's.

More examples of what we offer are detailed below.

SAMPLE OF SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES

NOTE: For some classes and activities, we may ask for a nominal participation fee. Activities and class schedules are subject to change.



IT'S TIME TO GARDEN!

By Penny Young-Carrasquillo, COA Chief Development Officer

Most of us have heard that our nutritional needs change as we age. While we generally need more nutrients, there can be a number of barriers to attaining them—a diminishing sense of taste and/or smell, hunger-suppressing medications, or financial limitations, to name a few. Still, the National Institutes of Health tell us that there is no reason to assume that nutritional deficiencies and subsequent health problems among seniors are inevitable.



Miguel Rodriguez, Louise Bosworth, and Russ Royce at Derbyshire Place Community Gardens

One way to counter some of the obstacles to proper nutrition is to grow our own vegetables. Low in fat and containing no cholesterol, vegetables are vital sources of nutrients, including potassium, which is good for heart health and blood pressure, and fiber, which promotes proper digestion while helping to reduce cholesterol. People who get outside in the sun to garden benefit by getting that natural dose of vitamin D, something we need as we age in order to increase bone density and ward off osteoporosis. And we have known for a long time now that diets rich in vegetables and fruits can boost our immune systems, reduce the risk of heart disease, and protect against certain kinds of cancer. The practice of gardening can also help sharpen mental focus, improve sleep, and relieve anxiety and depression. Digging in the dirt is not only therapeutic, but when

we expose ourselves to native soil bacteria—yes, bacteria—our immune systems are strengthened, especially when it comes to combatting allergens. Tasting food we have grown ourselves can make it more satisfying; it's natural to want to eat something that we put our own effort into creating; and growing our own vegetables is much more economical than buying them!

But don't you need your own land to garden? What if you have mobility issues? Isn't this too much work for an older person? Not necessarily. One option is community gardens, which provide safe, affordable ways to grow your own herbs and vegetables while enjoying the company of your neighbors—and many of these gardens provide accessible elevated vegetable beds for those who cannot work on the ground.

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SENIOR MATTERS

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At Derbyshire Place in Daytona Beach, community members can rent a garden plot for \$25 a year. The fee provides either a 4 x 12 ground garden bed or a 4 x 4 elevated bed that allows access for people in wheelchairs or who otherwise cannot bend or kneel. Derbyshire Place supplies soil, seeds, and gardening tools—and they have an automatic irrigation system in place. Local gardeners take care of their plots throughout the year, planting, weeding, and, best of all, harvesting their own organic herbs and vegetables. Master Gardener Russell Royce is often on-site. In fact, every other week, he leads “Coffee with a Gardener” groups, where he answers questions, provides expert advice, and chats about gardening. Participants are only asked to bring their own coffee cup. Says Miguel Rodriguez, executive director of Derbyshire Place, “When you’re talking about gardening, you’re talking about life.”

Louise Bosworth, a volunteer with Derbyshire Place and the Ormond Beach Community Gardens, adds, “People have fun, enjoy themselves, learn, and share.” She reports that the Ormond Beach Community Garden on Hammock Lane was the first of its kind in the county. Both Ormond gardens, overseen by the City of Ormond Beach, are located in Central Park. They provide accessible beds, soil, seeds, tools, and water for gardeners, who rent 4 x 12 beds. The fee for a six-month period is \$15 for Ormond Beach residents and \$22.50 for non-residents. Many gardeners, Bosworth says, are apartment dwellers. And while there is normally a waiting list for a garden plot, she adds that the public is always welcome to the site for socials, gardening demonstrations, and tours. Get-togethers sometimes include fresh foods



made from organic harvests. “This is a real community,” she says.

This community focus is also central to the mission of the New Smyrna Beach Community Garden: To create and maintain a sense of community through a Community Garden that promotes healthy lifestyle choices and offers a place for those who share a common desire to learn more about gardening.

Located at Mary Avenue Park, the New Smyrna Beach Community Garden provides 36 garden plots, each for a \$15 semi-annual fee. Soil, irrigation, tools, water barrels, and hoses are provided. Faith Miller, the program coordinator, says that through a partnership with the New Smyrna Beach Garden Club, gardening classes are occasionally offered. She adds that accessible garden beds are available, and all of the gardening is organic.

In DeLand, Spring Hill Community Garden is flourishing through a collaboration between Stetson University’s Center for Community Engagement, the University of Florida Agricultural Extension Office, and the City of DeLand. The Garden has thirty-nine 4 x 12 garden plots that are leased for a \$20 annual fee. There are plans in the future to create accessible beds, says Joe Sowards, Urban Horticulture Agent and Master Gardener Coordinator with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS). No chemical pesticides are used in the gardens, but fertilizers are used. Lance Harding is the Master Gardener who manages Spring Hill Community Garden and makes himself available the last Saturday of every month from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. because, “. . . sometimes it’s easier to get to the garden after work. . . .”

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The Spring Hill Community Garden is located at 501 S. Delaware Avenue in DeLand.

About ten miles away in Orange City, a Community Garden is currently under construction at the northwest rear corner of the AdventHealth Fish Memorial Hospital campus. The garden's grand opening is scheduled for August 14 at noon. The AdventHealth Fish Memorial Community Garden will have 90 garden plots, including ADA accessible beds. In addition to plans for vegetable gardening, Kit Twenter of AdventHealth reports that the area will include walking paths and orchards with fruit trees. Partnering with the University of Florida Master Gardeners, AdventHealth will be leasing 4 x 8 garden plots—which come with soil, irrigation, a composting system, and gardening tools—for \$50 semi-annually or \$75 per year. Membership includes invitations to garden events. AdventHealth is also seeking volunteers and sponsors for this project.

Deltona Strong, a nonprofit organization, operates Deltona Community Gardens with the goal of strengthening the community by providing a learning environment to meet and share cultural experiences and enjoy the benefits of growing a garden—taking it from seed to table. Located at 675 Elgrove Drive in Deltona's Vann Park, Deltona Community Gardens offers 4 x 8 raised garden beds as well as elevated beds for those with special needs—and they even have a butterfly garden! The fee to lease a bed is \$20 per season. Their spring/summer season runs from February through July, while their summer/fall season is August through January. Gardeners are asked to bring their own tools, and each gardener waters, weeds, and maintains his or her own garden bed.

Check Facebook for Community Garden pages by typing their names in the search bar:

- City of Ormond Beach Community Gardens

- Spring Hill Community Garden
- Deltona Community Gardens
- Derbyshire Place Community Garden

You may access more information about the AdventHealth Community Garden in Orange City through this website: www.AHFMGarden.com.

For those who have difficulty with transportation or who prefer to garden on their own property,

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LOCAL COMMUNITY GARDENS

Derbyshire Place

962 Derbyshire Rd., Daytona Beach
386-947-7708; www.derbyshireplace.org
derbyshireplace@gmail.com

Deltona Community Gardens

675 Elgrove Dr. (in Vann Park), Deltona
gardens@deltonastrong.org

Ormond Beach Community Gardens

601 Fleming Ave. in Central Park
601 Hammock Ln. in Central Park
Ormond Beach Environmental Discovery Center:
386-615-7081

New Smyrna Beach Community Garden

Faith Miller
City of New Smyrna Beach
505 Mary Ave., New Smyrna Beach
386-424-2202

Spring Hill Community Garden

501 S. Delaware Ave., DeLand
<https://www.facebook.com/SpringHillcommunity-gardendeland/>.

AdventHealth Fish Memorial Foundation

Community Garden
Volusia Medical Center
1053 Medical Center Dr. , Orange City
386-917-5525
www.AHFMGarden.com
FishFoundation@AdventHealth.com

SENIOR MATTERS

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but who cannot bend or kneel, raised elevated beds can be placed in yards, in lanais, and even in front of windows. Container gardening can also be used in small spaces. Plants that can be fairly easily grown in pots include tomatoes, radishes, onions, lettuce, eggplant, cucumbers, carrots, broccoli, and snap beans. The plants will need five or more hours of sun each day, a good soil mix, and will need more frequent watering than plants grown in the ground. Mini gardens can also be created in pots on a windowsill or on a table near a window.

If you're planning a garden—inside or out—the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) is a wonderful resource. Their Gardening Solutions program can be accessed online at <https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/>. They also offer a "Vegetable Gardening in Florida Series" online, which provides extensive information:

<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/>

Locally, the UF/IFAS Volusia County Extension Office in DeLand has master gardeners available during the week to answer your gardening questions: 386-822-5778. They can also be reached by email at Volusia@ifas.ufl.edu. In addition, the Extension Service holds several plant clinics each year at various locations around the county. For further information, visit <http://volusia.org/extension>.

Gardening reconnects us with nature and provides us with healthy, affordable food. It can help boost energy, improve health, increase mobility, and rebuild strength. When we grow our own food, we are naturally encouraged to eat healthier. When we grow food with others, we expand our social network and gain a stronger sense of community. It's springtime—let's get out there and garden!



Take photos of your fruits and vegetables, send them to us (we encourage you to be in the photo!), and we will post them on our social media pages! Send to: marketing@coavolusia.org.

Gardening Tips

- Start small and plant your favorite vegetables. "Plant what you like to eat!"
- Choose your soil carefully; consider composting.
- Choose a garden space with good light and easy access to water.
- Talk to other gardeners to learn what grows well during different seasons. Utilize the UF/IFAS website and the Volusia County Extension Office.
- Work outside in the morning or early evening.
- Drink water!
- Look into the range of tools that help make gardening more comfortable (knee pads, rolling garden seats, easy-grip tools, etc.).



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BOARD MEMBER PROFILE: RON NOWVISKIE

Ron Nowviskie has been a member of the COA board since the early 1990s, with a brief break in service about 10 years ago. He has served as Treasurer and Board President of COA and Board President of Living Gifts Foundation, which was founded to support COA.



"Having been involved with COA for so many years, I've seen first-hand the wonderful work the organization does and how important its services are for the area's frail and elderly residents and their caregivers."

– Ron Nowviskie

Foundation, and Volusia County Association for Responsible Development (VCARD). He served as Chairman of the United Way Board of Directors 2008-09 and was a longtime board member of Catholic Charities of Central Florida. He is a very active member of the Knights of Columbus at Prince of Peace Catholic Church and has co-chaired the annual Octoberfest parish festival for many years. In his spare time, Ron enjoys long bicycle rides, working in the yard, and following Gator sports.

Ron initially got involved with elder services in the early 1980s as an early member and then President of the Board of Directors of The Extended Family, Inc., a non-profit which provided adult day care respite services in Holly Hill. He says, "Gail Camputaro, COA's founding CEO, was one of the first people Betty and I met when we moved to this area, so it was a quick yes when Gail asked me to serve on the COA board."

He adds, "Having been involved with COA for so many years, I've seen first-hand the wonderful work the organization does and how important its services are for the area's frail and elderly residents and their caregivers. My sister in California provided wonderful care for our mother in her last years, for which I will always be grateful. I know that many seniors and distant children/siblings are not so fortunate, and that's why COA is so important."

Ron and his wife Betty grew up in southern West Virginia, and he graduated from Morris Harvey College in Charleston, West Virginia with an accounting degree in 1967. After working for Monsanto Company for three years as a cost accountant, he and Betty moved to Ormond Beach with their three children in 1970, and a fourth child was born in 1973. Today, they have 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Ron's sister, Gwen, moved here from California in 2012.

Ron retired in 2011 after 42 years working for the Root Organization—first as an Accounting Manager for Associated Coca-Cola Bottling Company, then 21 years at the original Daytona Beach Hilton in Daytona Beach Shores (the last six as General Manager) and lastly as Vice President and Senior Property Manager for Root Real Estate and Broker/President of Tri-Square Realty.

In addition to serving on the COA board, Ron also serves on the boards of Boys & Girls Clubs of Volusia-Flagler Counties, ArtHaus

COA BOARD UPDATE

Four new board members were elected to the COA Board of Directors in February. Welcome!

Patricia (Pat) Kerwick, a retired business owner from New York, has resided in Volusia County for 21 years and has been a long-time friend and supporter of COA. Along with a partner, Pat owned two successful bars and restaurants.



Dwight Lewis, a Volusia County native, graduated from Seabreeze High School and Florida State University. The retired president and CEO of Driver Oil Company, he served on the Volusia County Council for eight years—two as Chairman. He is also a former Board Chair of Daytona State College.



Dean Pepe, born and raised in Daytona Beach, was previously a staff attorney in the Fifth District Court of Appeal and an attorney with Pappas & Russell. He has served for 15 years as Legal Counsel, Supervisory Management and Realtor of the Rossmeyer family-owned companies, including Bruce Rossmeyer's Daytona Harley-Davidson and Destination Daytona Clarion Inn Ormond Beach.



Angie Skinner is the Founder and President of Accelerated Communications Solutions (ACS), specializing in Event and Contract Management of Motorsports/Corporate Events. Since 2015, she has co-hosted Skinner Round-Up Radio, which airs on SiriusXM NASCAR Channel 90. She is a published author, freelance writer, and has headed Marketing, Sales, and Athlete Management for multiple stock car teams.



"All four of our newest board members embody the spirit of community and bring an array of expertise, talent, and energy to the table. We're very fortunate to have them, along with all of our extraordinary board members, representing COA," said Sarah Gurtis, COA's President & CEO.

COA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dean P. Kurtz, Chairman
Nancy Lohman, Vice Chairman
Robert W. Lloyd, Secretary
Bobby Thigpen, Treasurer
Chris Tolland, Immediate Past Chairman

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Joie Alexander	Julian Lopez, Jr.
Ben Eby	Ron Nowiskie
Sherry Graffagnino	Dean G. Pepe
Harry Heilman	Angie Skinner
Jordan Jiloty	Catherine Twyman, Ph.D.
Patricia Kerwick	Linda Webster
Dwight D. Lewis	Connie Ritchey,
Aubrey E. Long, Ph.D.	Event Chairman

PAINTING FOR WELLNESS

By Eve Payor, Director of Community Programs, Atlantic Center for the Arts

Are you feeling connected to those in your community? People who feel confident and connected increase their ability to cope with life. It is common to feel isolated as you get older. According to a recent study by AARP, over one-third of American adults are lonely, a number that has nearly doubled since the 1980s. That means we all know someone affected by feelings of loneliness.



ACA Artist Bethany Bennett

Arts activities offer a unique way to connect with others and enjoy each moment. There are many healthcare providers that recommend engagement in the arts as a medical prescription to alleviate anxiety, reduce depression, and remedy feelings of isolation. Feeling happiness, contentment, enjoyment, curiosity, and engagement are all characteristics of someone who has a positive experience of life. Each of these feelings can be accessed by connecting with others.

Atlantic Center for the Arts (ACA) continues to bring fun and creative experiences to members of Council on Aging's New Smyrna Beach Senior Center, where ACA artist Bethany Bennett shares her skill in connecting individuals to each other.

"What I love most about combining art and wellness are the shared stories that people tell while creating art together. Not only is it



Painting for Wellness class

beneficial for the participants, it is transformative for me as well," says Bethany. Join ACA for *Painting for Wellness*, the first Friday of each month from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. at the COA Senior Center located in the Live Oak Cultural Center, 1050 Live Oak Street, New Smyrna Beach. No experience necessary!



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