INSPRIRATION
"Inspiration exists, but it has to find you working."
—Pablo Picasso

COA’s President and CEO, Sarah Gurtis, agrees with Picasso. You’ll find on page 2 that she suggests we challenge ourselves, and she calls on you not only to challenge yourself, but to write to us and tell us how you do this. Shortly after Sarah prepared her message for this edition of Senior Matters, she attended an event where a former NASCAR driver invited her for a 190-mph spin around the track at Sebring International Speedway. She’s going to do it. We suggest she strap a GoPro to her head so that we can livestream this event! (Stay tuned.)

Gale Henderson, a COA Team Leader at the Orange City Respite Care program, challenges herself and finds inspiration in another way—through dancing—something which, like many activities, inspires us to keep doing it each time we engage in the activity. As with many new pursuits, the challenge is to get started. See “Just Dance!” on page 3.

Our main article, “Meditation on Caregiving,” is written by Chaz Mena, an accomplished actor, writer, and researcher who is a current associate artist at the Atlantic Center for the Arts. He shares his deeply personal experience with caregiving, writing about what caregiving taught him, how it fostered personal growth, and how stepping outside of ourselves to be there for others can be a profoundly inspiring experience.

We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and find inspiration here and in your everyday lives!
Challenging Ourselves

By Sarah F. Gurtis, President & CEO

At least once a year, I purposely try to scare myself. That is, I make myself do something that I know will push me out of my comfort zone. It might frighten me, but I do it anyway. Without realizing it at the time, this started many years ago when my first boss made me speak to a statewide gathering of marketing professionals. It was only a 15-minute talk, but I was terrified. The night before, I didn’t sleep a wink and, truth be told, my stomach was so upset, I threw up. He was unrelenting, however, telling me that if I wanted a career in marketing, speaking in public was a prerequisite. Over the next year or two, he kept expanding the length of my presentations until finally I was the sole presenter in a two-day new product orientation. It got to the point that I loved communicating to groups and even became the “talking head” for my company’s video messaging.

Over the years, I have ridden countless rollercoasters (don’t like the “death drop” ones anymore), parasailed, gone swimming with stingrays, bungee jumped, gone cross country on a motorcycle, been around Daytona in a stock car, been taken on a white knuckle rally car ride in England, zip lined, flown in helicopters, acted on stage, and even tried out at Universal Studios for a spot in an improv comedy group. Got the part—Thank goodness it didn’t go into production so I didn’t have to give up my day job. And I’ve changed careers four times, each new career drawing on those that came before.

Now that I’m a senior myself, I’m trying especially hard to keep the new experiences coming. The happiest older people in my life are those who continue to grow. They try a new hobby or learn a new skill. They travel if they can, work at their long time friendships while developing new ones. They have a positive attitude.

Aging certainly presents some challenges. But, truth be told, every phase of our lives has challenges. My wish for you is that you make the most of what is to come. We’d love to hear how you challenge yourself — or what tools you’ve used to work through your fears. Please email us at marketing@coavolusia.org. We look forward to hearing from YOU!
Dancing has been a love of mine since high school, and I eagerly attended freestyle dancing at the Orlando Youth Center. In 2000, I became inspired through my discovery of ballroom dancing.

After moving to Alaska and Michigan, I returned to Florida in 2014 and joined COA’s Deltona Senior Center, where I volunteered with the Meals on Wheels program. The following year, I was hired by COA as a substitute Site Manager, working as needed at Dining Sites, as a Respite Program assistant, and as an Activities Director. Now, I’m thrilled to be a Team Leader for COA’s Orange City Respite Care Program. Seniors fascinate me: So much interesting history and lots of fun to be around.

Outside of work, dancing has remained a central part of my life. A friend told me about the dances at USA Dance Blue Springs Chapter #6086, and in 2015 I joined. The following year, another friend suggested attending Friday dinner and dancing at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #8093 in DeBary. It was there that I met 94-year-old WWII veteran Peter Bitzer and learned what an awesome swing dancer he is! We have such a blast dancing, and have danced every weekend. Pete told me how his right arm movement is restricted due to the War; however, it’s the left arm that twirls the ladies, and he loves showing off his great dance lead!

I strongly encourage everyone to get involved in dancing! It’s great exercise, you meet lots of different people, you make new friends, and it’s just plain fun!

COA’s Ormond Beach Senior Center hosts a live band and ballroom dancing every Wednesday, and our Holly Hill Dining Site at Sica Hall offers live music and dancing each Tuesday. Call 386-672-4146 (Ormond) or 386-236-2997 (Holly Hill) for more information. To find other dance opportunities, check your local paper as well as the Internet for dances in your area.

See you on the dance floor!

Pete is quite the character and dresses according to different occasions. “I dance to live and live to dance!” he says.

At times, dancing can cause some aches and pains, which are usually alleviated by stretching both before and after each dance. And the enjoyment that comes from dancing makes the occasional soreness all worth it. In addition to the fun of music and movement, dressing up for dances can give you such a Cinderella feeling of going to the ball—and dancers don’t have to spend a fortune on outfits. I have found some gently worn dance outfits at consignment shops and other second-hand stores.

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See you on the dance floor!

BENEFITS OF DANCING:

- Increases flexibility
- Improves strength
- Fights depression
- Reduces stress
- Helps maintain healthy weight
- Improves balance and stability
- Boosts energy
Honorees Announced for the 15th Annual Glenn & Connie Ritchey Community Service Award

The 15th Annual Glenn & Connie Ritchey Community Service Award celebration, presented by Brown and Brown Insurance, is just around the corner! On May 10, 2019 Nancy and Lowell Lohman will be honored at Daytona International Speedway’s Daytona 500 Club for their extraordinary contributions to our community.

Nancy Lohman served as the campaign chair of the Halifax Humane Society’s (HHS) recent capital campaign to renovate the HHS campus, and was named Humanitarian of the Year in 2017 at HHS’s Fur Ball. She served as president of both the Ormond Beach Chamber of Commerce and the Ormond Beach Historical Society, and was selected as one of the county’s most influential women in business in 2006 and 2018. She currently serves as secretary of COA’s Board of Directors and chair of the COA Fundraising Committee. Nancy is also a member of the Board’s Executive and Finance Committees.

Lowell Lohman, who received a lifetime achievement award from the Florida Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association, is the author of The Lohman Way: Entrepreneur Lowell Lohman's Story and Strategies for Building Multimillion-Dollar Family Businesses, published in 2017. He was appointed to Volusia County’s CEO Business Alliance in 2018.

Sarah Gurtis, COA’s President and CEO, said, “Nancy and Lowell are true community leaders. Their commitment to the mission of COA is indicative of the extent of their corporate and personal philanthropy.”

Ormond Beach City Commissioner Susan Persis and her husband, Volusia County School Board Chairman Carl Persis, will serve as Masters of Ceremony of the event.

The Glenn and Connie Ritchey Community Service Award honors local champions who work tirelessly to make Volusia County a better place to live, work, and play. In addition to recognizing local heroes, the event has raised over $1 million since 2004 to provide services to at-risk seniors.

For event sponsorship information, contact Penny Young-Carrasquillo at pyoung@coavolusia.org or 386-253-4700 x 215.

MetCare’s Dancing Through the Decades

Mark your calendars! The dance event of the year takes place on Friday, September 27 at the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach. A buffet dinner, free valet parking, and an evening of Dancing through the Decades to the music of Mister D.J. Entertainment is included with your ticket purchase. As always, we will have a free photo booth, a door prize drawing, and raffle items.

You spoke; we listened: Several event guests have told us that you would be willing to pay more for a ticket to this fabulous event. Due to your input, increasing event-related costs, and, most importantly, because Dancing through the Decades raises funds to provide critical services to Volusia County seniors, we have decided to raise the ticket price for the first time in five years:

- **General tickets**: $45
- **Senior tickets (age 65 or older)**: $35

Tickets go on sale August 1st. Look for details in your next Senior Matters newsletter, on our website (www.coavolusia.org) and on our Facebook page!
Best For My Parents

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- Walt Disney

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COA's New Smyrna Beach Senior Center, previously located on US 1, has moved to the 5,000-square-foot Live Oak Cultural Center at 1050 Live Oak Street. Our southeast Volusia County Meals on Wheels and Neighborhood Dining programs are now operated from this site. In addition, our New Smyrna Beach Senior Center offers an array of social, fun, and educational activities. Exercise classes, bridge, chair yoga, creative writing, bingo, and educational speakers combine with coffee and conversation to make the new COA Senior Center a destination for full-time residents and snowbirds alike.

Joining COA in programming at the site is Atlantic Center for the Arts (ACA), which offers a variety of Arts & Wellness activities, including Tai Chi and music programming (see page 14).

The Live Oak Cultural Center was funded by the City of New Smyrna Beach and a Volusia County ECHO—Environmental, Cultural, Historical, and Outdoor recreation project—grant. Designed by the Orlando-based architecture firm Le-Huu Partners, P.A., the Center has a fireplace, soaring ceilings, artistic details, and a beautiful exterior space with a water feature and rain chains.

Easy access to the City Gym and County Library expands the range of activities available in one area for seniors.

The COA Senior Center operates 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and can be reached by calling 386-410-5839. Monthly calendars of activities are posted on the COA website at www.coavolusia.org. ACA offers additional activities on Saturdays and some evenings.
Building Dignity

Naming Opportunities at COA’s New Administrative Offices

A fter being displaced for a year due to Hurricane Irma, COA moved into our new administrative offices at 420 Fentress Blvd. in Daytona Beach last September. In January, we launched a new fundraising campaign, Building Dignity, which gives those who love the work of COA the opportunity to show their support by putting their names or the names of loved ones on the building and its various interior spaces for the period of our lease. Once our lease is renewed in 2023, we will offer the same naming opportunities at the same giving levels. Funds raised through this campaign will be directed toward the greatest need at the time of the gifts.

Cici and Hyatt Brown made the lead Building Dignity gift, contributing $100,000. The Browns’ generosity will be recognized on the front of the building on signage that reads, “Cici and Hyatt Brown Senior Services Building.”

Nancy and Lowell Lohman recently committed to naming the Community Room—an area where we will host board meetings, staff trainings, and other gatherings—for $50,000. And Connie and Glenn Ritchey agreed to a gift of $50,000 for our “Connie and Glenn Ritchey Welcome Lobby.” We are deeply grateful to the Browns, the Lohmans, and the Ritcheyes for getting this campaign off to a fabulous start.

“We fashioned this campaign in a way so that supporters across the spectrum are provided an opportunity to help while also receiving the public recognition they deserve,” said Sarah Gurtis, COA President & CEO.

If you are interested in learning more about Building Dignity, please contact Penny Young-Carrasquillo at 386-253-4700 x 215 or pyoung@coavolusia.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Recognition/ Signage</th>
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<tr>
<td>COA Building</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>One-time or $25,000/year</td>
<td>[SOLD to Cici and Hyatt Brown]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome Lobby</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>One-time or $12,500/year</td>
<td>[SOLD to Connie and Glenn Ritchey]</td>
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<td>Community Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meals on Wheels area</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>One-time or $5000/year or two $10,000 payments</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
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<td>Guardianship</td>
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<td>Finance</td>
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<td>In-Home Services</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
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<td>Case Management</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
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<td>Respite Care</td>
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<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
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<td>Kitchen-Break Room</td>
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<td>“COA Café”</td>
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<td>Conference Room</td>
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<td>Customer Service</td>
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<td>One-time or $875/year each</td>
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Our conversation ended with my agent reminding me not to take anything personally. How she appreciated my coming to see her in person rather than having to tell me over the phone! A few compliments later with a few remonstrations thrown in for good measure, but the long and the short of it was that she had to let me go. Thus ended my 12-year relationship with my New York City agent who decided she simply couldn’t work with someone in Miami.

“Out of sight, out of mind, Chaz, you know how it is.” Looking back, of course she was right. Still, how that smarted at the time! I had made her money, I had accounted myself pretty well, and had eked out a living as an actor in New York. Wasn’t I a player? She couldn’t let me go . . .

I went to see her after returning from six months in Miami attending to my father, who was stricken with cancer. My mother, whose Alzheimer’s had been diagnosed the year before, was rapidly declining. It all began when my sister called me from Miami: “I don’t know what to do, I’m FREEEAAAKING OUT!”

Whoa. Breathe, speak slowly. I haven’t had my coffee yet.

“Mother is dressed and waiting outside the house for her brother to drive her to Havana!” This was her brother who had died in 1965; to Havana: the capital of the country that she had emigrated from in 1961.

I dropped everything, which included a plum job at the Humana Theatre Festival in Louisville, Kentucky, to come to Florida and have Mom diagnosed at the world-class Wien Center for Alzheimer’s at Mount Sinai Hospital in North Miami Beach. They conducted physical and cognitive exams, brain scans, echocardiograms, blood tests. Within a month, we learned it was irrefutably Alzheimer’s. Mother was put on medication and the family braced itself. The signs of the illness were showing fast.

Meanwhile, my father was listless and, naturally, depressed—defeated. It was exhausting for him, caring for Mother. Spots began to appear on his skin. Chafing. His heart, long affected by arterial disease, began to give out, and we discovered that he was suffering minor strokes. Oncology proved the worse. It was melanoma. All of this occurred within the six months that I had been “out of sight” in New York.

Show business is patently disininterested in disease or malignancies of any kind. Only in service of the genre: many good plays have been written about Alzheimer’s and cancer. However, should theatre people get sick, we usually tend to retire to a safe place and hide—like cats. Hermetically sealed from the hustle and bustle. It’s just the way it is: nothing more boring than to be backstage and listen to what ails you.

By the time I left my agent’s office in New York and was hailing a cab to the airport for a flight to Miami, it all hit the fan: I learned that my sister’s 30-year marriage had come to an end. Practicing primary care will do that. It can break relationships of any kind, whether business or personal. Those you assumed would be there for you when seas get rough and the water’s spilling over the gunwales jump ship and head for the shore as soon as they reasonably can.
Within a period of six months, my father was diagnosed with cancer, my mother’s Alzheimer’s had turned from moderate to severe, and my sister’s marriage had disintegrated—but this is show business and you can’t take anything personally!

By 2012, my father’s heart and the ravages of his cancer left him debilitated, and we moved him to hospice. My mother, whose marriage to Dad went back 60 years, could have helped except that she was too far along in her Alzheimer’s. She was now living with us in a room of a house that my wife and I bought. My wife, my hero (who helped me along with every step into this nightmare) was now pregnant! Things got focused. We would all live together in our home and deal; there was no time to mope! An addition to the family was on the way. I was acclimating to Florida by teaching at a high school for the performing arts, directing college students’ shows at night, doing the odd commercial or dubbing and looping in post-production work.

Nights were usually spent in my father’s hospice room, a privilege that I looked forward to every evening. I’d massage his arms, legs, and stomach. My poor delirious father who one night under the effect of interminable painkillers kicked me out of his room for being a Japanese spy, claiming that our countries were at war and extolling, “Victory is just around the corner!”

"Is this an out-of-body experience I’m feeling?” I asked myself. I was lying on the marble floor in our home, unable to move.

If the 16 months I spent caring for my father could be projected onto a graph, it had peaked right from the get-go: sent off by my aggravated victimhood where all was happening to me, “woe is me,” etc. I was once a working actor in New York but now a nurse to my parents and a useless consultant to my sister coming to me like she was frustrated and scared for her future. What the hell did I know? I’m just good at learning words and missing the furniture onstage. I could do a jig and knew how to hold for a laugh. But slowly, steadily, the anxiety peak began to flatten, stabilizing, and I got used to being there for my family.

“No one else can do this, only me,” was my mantra—and boy, did that help! It was me on the hot seat. Who else can man this trench? My sister? Her 30-year marriage was lost and her two kids were at a loss.

What else could happen, right? Like with Job, it would. She was feeling ill. The obstetrician asked her to stay home and work, not to wear heels or go to the office. “Put your feet up at home and let your husband massage your feet and relax a little,” we were told. We laughed at that. Who was going to keep Mom from leaving the house or calm her when she was having her panic attacks while sun-downing? Who would clean and feed her and put her to bed? Who would make sure she had taken her pills and was not in the kitchen turning on the stove?

Then, a week later, my father passed.

“Is this an out-of-body experience I’m feeling?” I asked myself. I was lying on the marble floor in our home, unable to move. Am I lying shiva? I remembered the exchange from my favorite play, Waiting for Godot, by Samuel Beckett:

Estragon: I can’t go on like this.

Vladimir: That’s what you think.

Suddenly, the play came to life within me. I was both Estragon and Vladimir. I was both the eternal optimist and the defeated, apathetic fatalist. Such is it with all of us, more or less. Then, another piece of text from the same play came to me:

“I can’t go on, I’ll go on!”

I said those words out loud. The importance of that line came to me in a flash. A child says: “No I can’t!” but then, when you’re teetering on the cusp of falling into a formless void of—I don’t know…fantasy?—then,

Continued on page 10
the adult in the room stands up and says: “OK, I’ll do it.” You keep going.

I’m not so self-centered, self-absorbed after all, I thought. I’m grieving. I’m seeing to everyone’s needs, responsive to each one of their complaints, each one of their sighs, pains. Could it be that this actually feels good? Why do I suddenly feel lighter? May this be actually freeing? Am I breaking out from inside my own cage, my Ego?

Or was I only just a bleeding heart, trying to make myself feel better? Coming up with faux reasons not to pick up and go back to New York, go back to being hard-nosed about it all, damn the consequences. Was I weak or was I strong? Or . . . have I inexpertly, unwittingly, bumped into selflessness?

The graph started to reflect a new trend: I was truly proud of having taken care of my father. Along with my grieving, I experienced a sense of joy at having cared for my parents and seen to my sister and my sweet wife after our losses.

I was moving, not stuck waiting in a desert with another hobo, a dying tree with a single leaf in the background. I was on a train taking me away from my Self into uncharted territory, witnessing unbounded compassion for others along the way. In one hard week: we had miscarried and dad died, yet lying there on the cold marble floor, I felt the clouds begin to break open.

When I went to shave the next morning, instead of finding Job staring back at me, I saw a human being completely free from anxiety and worry. This was someone almost illuminated with purpose and inspired by what he had achieved during two hard years. He would care for his convalescing wife and his mother, who now spent most of the day sleeping. My full-time job was to cater to the needs of everyone I loved. I had never felt such freedom in my life. This paradox has stayed with me ever since and I now feel like I can deal with anything that comes in life. Every trouble coming down the pike may be turned into an invitation that takes you away from “Self”—it will certainly demand your full attention. “The willingness is all,” as my other favorite playwright had said.

Caring for others, or the practice of compassion, is a ticket to freedom and even joy. This is what primary caregiving had taught me.

Now for my epilogue:

Four months after my father’s death on April 30th at 4:17 pm, on the 30th day of August at 4:17 in the afternoon, my adopted daughter was born. The more spiritually inclined would interject, “Here a torch had passed from one generation to another.” They may even go on further and believe that he had made room for her. I can’t; I don’t have it in me.

I am certain of one thing. My father would have readily agreed to use his death as a teaching opportunity, a parting gift to his son whom he loved so dearly: that to be selfish is to be childish. The privilege of caring for someone else, fully, completely, and without reserve can lead you to boundless freedom.
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Cost of Care

Because COA serves clients with such a wide range of needs, it is difficult to answer the question, “What is the cost to provide services to one COA client?” For example, delivering meals to one local senior three times a week will cost COA a little more than $100 a month, whereas the cost of providing an array of services including more frequent meal delivery, transportation assistance, regular personal care, intensive case management, and light housekeeping generally runs around $16,000 a year per client, but can vary widely.

Still, the cost of COA services to our most frail clients runs from 60 percent to 80 percent less than state-funded long-term nursing care—and people are generally happier and tend to experience a deeper sense of wellbeing at home! Your donations pay for meals, replace supplies related to direct services (such as meal delivery bags), and provide both simple short-term services as well as complex long-term care for our elderly neighbors. Your gifts of all sizes are truly priceless to local seniors who are able with your help to remain safely, comfortably, and with dignity in their own homes.

Please Help COA Serve More Seniors

COA is the only local non-profit focused solely on assisting Volusia County’s senior population—the fastest growing age group in our area. Your donation will provide hot nutritious meals to homebound seniors; Respite Care to those with early-stage dementia and their caregivers; engaging social and learning activities at our four Senior Centers; Case Management Services; In-Home Care; Guardianship; and more!

You may donate online at www.coavolusia.org, by phone by calling 386.253.4700 x 215, or mail a check made payable to COA to 420 Fentress Blvd., Daytona Beach, FL 32114. Thank you!

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Address: ____________________________________________ Suite/Apt: __________________

City: ____________________________________________ State: _________ Zip: ____________

Phone: ____________________________________________ Check Amount: __________________

Email Address: ____________________________________

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I am interested in legacy giving: ☐

Q2 2019
Aubrey E. Long, Ph.D.

Aubrey E. Long, Ph.D. was elected to COA’s Board of Directors two years ago, taking time from his busy schedule to “make sure that seniors are taken care of.” Dr. Long serves as Bethune-Cookman University’s Associate Vice President in the Division of Institutional Advancement, where he is primarily responsible for working with Business and Community Development. He also served as Dean of the School of Business for 25 years and Professor of the College of Business.

A native of Gainesville, Dr. Long earned a bachelor’s degree from Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee; a master’s degree from the University of Tennessee; and his Ph.D. from The Ohio State University. Over the course of his career, he has served as Assistant Dean of the School of Business and Industry at Florida A & M University and has taught business and business-related courses at the University of Tennessee and St. Augustine College in Raleigh, North Carolina. He also served as Department Head at Bishop College in Dallas, Texas. In addition to Dr. Long’s service on the COA Board of Directors, he has served on the boards of the PACE Center for Girls, the Daytona Beach/Halifax Area Chamber of Commerce, Easter Seals, Mid-Florida Housing Partnership, Halifax Health, United Way Volusia-Flagler Counties, the Checkered Flag Committee, Volusia Volunteers in Medicine, and several other local non-profit organizations.

Like many others, what inspired Dr. Long to get involved with COA was watching his mother age. “When I observed how she was treated, it opened my eyes to what so many seniors go through. I saw what could have been done to help her and wanted to work to make that change.” He adds, “Advocacy and caregiving are full-time jobs.”

Dr. Long and his wife, Cheryl Grimes Long, have three adult children, Aubrey II, Aleia, and Aushawn in addition to four grandchildren.
Finding Inspiration through the Arts

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

The arts are a wonderful way to find creative inspiration. Atlantic Center for the Arts, in partnership with Council on Aging of Volusia County, brings many programs to the new Live Oak Cultural Center in New Smyrna Beach, where the community can experience this spark of inspiration.

Music Café, a new program led by local music therapist and ACA Arts & Wellness ambassador Vicki Gross, is the perfect place to rejuvenate the creative spirit with an eclectic mix of music-making through dancing, songwriting, listening, and sharing. Vicki says, “Music has always allowed me a place to belong. It has an inherent way of drawing people together. I believe music is in the promise of each new day, and in the healing, hope, and beauty a single moment (note or song) can hold!”

Join Atlantic Center for the Arts and Council on Aging for creative and fun programs such as Music Café, Movement & Tai Chi, and Visual Art for Wellness! Please see the monthly calendar of events at the COA website: www.coavolusia.org

May is Older Americans Month

COA celebrates Older Americans Month in May by promoting ways that community members of all ages can take part in helping Volusia County thrive.

We encourage you to:

• Connect with friends, family, and local services and resources. Find information by visiting our website at www.coavolusia.org or by calling United Way’s 211 information line — just dial 211.

• Create through activities that promote learning, health, and personal enrichment. Become a Senior Center member. Take a class. Volunteer.

• Contribute time, talent, life experience, and funds to benefit others. Would you like to volunteer? Donate? Call 386-253-4700.

Communities that support and recognize older adults are stronger! Join us in strengthening our community in May and throughout the year.
MORE CONVENIENCE

MORE CARE

MORE COMPASSION

Our members value their coverage!

Call 1-855-Go2FHCP
(1-855-462-3427)
Hearing Impaired: TRS Relay 711

Or visit online at fhcp.com
Hours 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Seven days a week
"I was on a train taking me away from my Self into uncharted territory, witnessing unbounded compassion for others along the way."

—Chaz Mena, author of A Meditation on Caregiving