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.

TURNING LIVES AROUND

We decided in this issue to remind our readers of the impact COA makes on the lives of local seniors. Sarah Gurtis, COA’s President & CEO, also reminds us of what we still need to do. She reminds us of our vision.

On page 3, Barbara Sandberg looks back and tells the story of how COA saved her mother’s life. How many more lives can we save? Part of striving to meet the increasing need for services is to fund-raise, and there’s no better way to do that than by having fun! Learn about our Bingo Binges. Read about our amazing Dancing through the Decades event. And on page 10, we announce the recipients of the 2020 Glenn & Connie Ritchey Community Service Award.

Please read about COA’s Certified Nursing Assistants (page 8). Their work is at the core of what we do and truly embodies Leo Buscaglia’s quote above. Our Impact Report shows how we served elderly Volusia County residents in 2019.

We know that with your help, we can do even more in 2020. Enjoy this issue of Senior Matters—and Happy New Year!

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

– Leo Buscaglia
I have become a little vain about my vision. When I opted to have a laser treatment for cataracts, I chose to “upgrade” to mono-vision lens implants so that I would no longer need reading glasses…ever. I still go annually for an eye exam and this year was told that my vision is 20-15…better than perfect. It’s a little freaky how I can read the smallest print on nearly every label.

I wish this “clarity” of vision applied to seeing the future.

As COA has become more financially stable in the last few years, we want to challenge ourselves to make a bigger impact for our elderly who struggle to get by. It is not long-term institutional care gives them an extended period of “normalcy.”

So…we need to figure this out. We will do what we can to push for more government funding and I hope you will make your own voice heard on that issue. But…we, as a caring community, have to do a lot more. Our vision for 2020 is to plot the course to expanded services to more in need and to set the agenda on how to get it done. So we ask for your continued support, and don’t be too surprised…if we ask you to do more.

All of us at COA wish you and yours a happy and healthy new year!

Warmest regards,
This past fall COA launched our inaugural “Bingo Binges” in two communities: Deltona and New Smyrna Beach. Enthusiastic attendees spent the day playing 20 games of Bingo with payouts for each event totaling $1450. We also drew raffle tickets for a variety of fun prizes, and one lucky winner at each location won a door prize. We will be hosting these community Bingo events twice yearly, once in spring, and again in fall. We encourage you to bring your friends for a fun afternoon of camaraderie and good old-fashioned competition for a chance to win big cash prizes.

Thank you to our 2019 sponsors:

Presenting Sponsors
ClearCaptions, Connect Hearing!, Freedom Health, and Progressive Medical Research

Jackpot Sponsors
ClearCaptions, Freedom Health, Edgewater-New Smyrna Cemetery, Lucid Hearing, and Stay for a Day Adult Day Care Center;

Raffle Prize Sponsors
Americare Assisted Living, Inc. and Florida Lifestyle Mortgage

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Bingo Binges:

Valentine’s Weekend Bingo Binge – Sunday, February 16th at the Brannon Center in New Smyrna Beach. Tickets go on sale January 13th.

Spring Bingo Binge – Sunday, March 29th at COA’s Deltona Senior Center at the Center at Deltona. Tickets go on sale March 2nd.

$10 admission tickets include lunch. Tickets available at COA Senior Centers and Dining Sites (check or cash only) or by credit card by calling 386-253-4700 x 240.

Sponsorships available from $100 to $300! Please call 386-253-4700 x 215 for details.

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Thank you to our 2019 Bingo Binge Sponsors!
CONVIVA CARE CENTER'S
DANCING THROUGH THE DECADES

What a night! On Friday, September 27, COA hosted a fantastic evening of dining and dancing at the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach. Dancing through the Decades has become the dance event of the year in our community. People of all ages celebrated as Mr. DJ Entertainment played music from the swing era of the 30s and 40s to the disco beats of the 70s and beyond. Fans of Bruno Mars’ “Uptown Funk” tore up the dance floor!

Close to 500 people attended the 2019 event. Two dance floors were packed with excited participants who enjoyed everything from ballroom dancing to group dancing and line dances. They even danced and sang along with the Village People's "YMCA" near the end of the evening.

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University once again provided volunteers from both the Navy and Army ROTC who greeted attendees as they arrived, escorted guests to their seats, and danced the night away with older guests who needed dance partners. The students prepared for the evening by taking complimentary dance lessons courtesy of Tom and Jo Sanders, owners of Dance with Me. Bethune-Cookman University also provided volunteers again who generously served as hostesses.

COA is very grateful to the volunteers, guests, and sponsors who made this event a successful one! Conviva Care Center was our presenting sponsor. Additional sponsors included Florida Health Care Plans, Humana, Florida Power & Light, Sender Retreat Adult Activity Center/Stay for a Day Adult Day Care Center, Merrill Lynch, Progressive Medical Research, Halifax-Health Hospice, ClearCaptions, Guardian Medical Monitoring, and US Blinds. All event proceeds benefited Council on Aging.

We invite you to join us for our 2020 Dancing through the Decades event, scheduled for Friday, September 25 at the Plaza Resort & Spa! Stay tuned for more information!

Thank you to our 2019 Sponsors!

• ClearCaptions • Guardian Medical Monitoring • Merrill Lynch • US Blinds •
Two major themes jump to the forefront when speaking with Council on Aging Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs): They love the stories and the history they hear from their clients; and they possess boundless compassion for those they serve.

CNAs are at the core of what Council on Aging does: delivering services that enable local seniors to remain safely, comfortably, and with dignity in their own homes. Their jobs involve providing personal care such as bathing and dressing; taking care of light homemaking tasks to ensure that seniors’ living environments remain clean; running errands, including helping with grocery shopping; preparing meals; assisting with transportation to appointments; and being there as companions.

Jacqueline Lewis-Henry, who goes by Jackie, has been with COA for 10 years, but her bubbling enthusiasm about her job is like something you might see in a brand new employee. “I have some of the best people!” she says, adding that she loves being able to get to know so many different people “with so much history.” She talks about hearing the stories of a client who was a World War II Tuskegee Airman. Another client was a cousin of an astronaut. And another had been a trailblazing female pilot several decades ago. “There’s nothing like learning history firsthand. And everyone’s life is a story.”

In addition to the usual CNA duties, Jackie makes sure that her clients have clean clothes, and she takes them on outings to make sure they stay active. “I get them up and out of the house when I can,” she says. She has also been known to dance with her clients, going the extra mile to make sure they are safe, healthy, and engaged. She adds, “My job is to make them shine and to make them happy. The most fulfilling part is seeing their smiles.”

A DeLand native, Jackie’s caregiving skills were instilled at a young age. She explains that her father made sure that the family helped those less fortunate—mainly elderly people—in their neighborhood. It’s not surprising, then, that her sister is also a CNA. For Jackie, “This is about people and what they need. It’s about becoming like family and making sure their dignity remains intact.”

Similarly, CNA Donna Christaldi says she loves hearing her clients’ stories—she had one client who played piano for silent movies. Having worked with COA for more than 20 years, Donna says she becomes like family to her clients, attending birthday parties and going on outings.

“I work to build them up,” she says, describing how she often feels the need to remind one veteran that he is a hero.

Donna says that when she meets a new client, she immediately notes something in the environment that will help her to connect with them. Or she’ll ask them questions, such as what kind of games they played as children or what kind of pets they had. Once the connection is made, she says, the relationship becomes one that is extremely beneficial for the client and very satisfying for both the client and Donna. “It’s beyond just caregiving,” she says.

Donna sometimes sings with her clients. “People are nice,” she says. “It’s all about the people.” She concludes, “You treat your clients the same way you would like your mother or father to be treated.”

MaryLou McKeon, Senior Vice President of COA Guardianship & Client Services, says, “Our CNAs all care about their clients and help them maintain their dignity and independence. Their role is critical to all seniors who age in place. The CNA’s work is often the difference between staying comfortably in one’s own home and being institutionalized.”

COA currently employs 60 CNAs and is always looking for dedicated aides to join our award-winning team. If you are interested in learning more, we’d love to speak with you. Just call 386-253-4700 x 203 or visit our website at www.coavolusia.org and click on “About Us” and “Employment.”
“JEANS, BOOTS & WINE”
Mike and Lynda Helton to be honored at 16th Annual Glenn & Connie Ritchey Community Service Award Event April 24, 2020

The 16th Annual Glenn & Connie Ritchey Community Service Award Celebration benefiting Council on Aging (COA) is scheduled for Friday, April 24, 2020 at Daytona International Speedway’s Daytona 500 Club. The award recipients are Mike and Lynda Helton, well-known for championing local arts, health, and human services organizations as well as national NASCAR-supported charities.

“Lynda and Mike are known for their generosity to the NASCAR nation in addition to their involvement in our own community, which includes their support of Council on Aging and SMA Healthcare, among countless other organizations,” said Sarah Gurtis, COA’s President & CEO. She added, “We are thrilled that this wonderful couple was selected to receive this honor, and we are genuinely looking forward to this event!”

The theme for the April 24 celebration is “Jeans, Boots & Wine,” and will include a silent auction with a number of international and domestic “bucket list” trips and fine wines, with the highlight of the evening featuring the tribute to the honorees.

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. Over the past 15 years, the event has raised well over $1 million to provide services to local at-risk seniors. The first honorees were Glenn and Connie Ritchey, who embraced the event and have remained vital to its growth. Past honorees also include Nancy and Lowell Lohman, Jennie and Kevin Bowler, Chris and Charlie Lydecker, Anne Bledsoe France and Bill France, Sr., Dr. Michelle Carter-Scott and Vince Carter, Jill Simpkins and Gale Lemerand, Betty Jane and Bill France, Jr., Larry and Joan Kelly, Hyatt and Cici Brown, Mori and Forough Hosseini, Joe and Barbara Petrock, Bert and Julie Reames, Jimmy and Phannye Huger, and Lisa Kennedy and Brian France.

For information on sponsorships, please contact Penny Young-Carrasquillo at 386-253-4700 x 215 or email pyoung@coavolusia.org.
The 65+ population is the fastest-growing age group in Volusia County! One crisis—an accident, the loss of a spouse, illness, sudden financial problems—can create an unforeseen rapid downward spiral for too many local seniors. Help us help our elderly neighbors. Your gifts of all sizes provide critical services such as nutritious meals, In-Home Care, Guardianship, and so much more! Thank you.

You may donate online at www.coavolusia.org, call 386.253.4700 x 215, or mail a check made payable to COA to 420 Fentress Blvd., Daytona Beach, FL 32114. Thank you!
COA SENIOR CENTERS and DINING SITES

COA SENIOR CENTER—DELTONA
The Center at Deltona
1640 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.
386-574-0050
Senior Center Hours: Mon - Fri 9 am - 4 pm
Dining Site Hours: Mon - Fri 8 am - 2 pm

COA SENIOR CENTER—NEW SMYRNA BEACH
Live Oak Cultural Center, 1050 Live Oak St.
386-410-5939
Senior Center Hours: Mon - Fri 9 am - 4 pm
Dining Site Hours: Mon - Fri 8 am - 2 pm

COA SENIOR CENTER—ORANGE CITY
Wawa Hall, 200 N. Holly Ave.
Senior Center Hours: Mon - Fri 9 am - 4 pm

COA SENIOR CENTER—ORLANDO BEACH
Sica Hall
1056 Daytona Ave.
386-236-2987
Hours: Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri 8 am - 2 pm
Tues 8 am - 4 pm

COA SENIOR CENTER—DELTONA
351 Andrews St.
386-672-4146
Senior Center Hours: Mon - Fri 9 am - 4 pm
Dining Site Hours: Mon - Fri 8 am - 2 pm

SENIOR CENTERS and DINING SITES

ADDITIONAL COA DINING SITES

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

HOLLY HILL
Sica Hall
1065 Daytona Ave.
386-236-2987
Hours: Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri 8 am - 2 pm
Tues 8 am - 4 pm

ORANGE CITY
First Congregational Church
259 W. University Ave.
386-774-0001
Hours: Mon - Fri 7:30 am - 1:30 pm

PORT ORANGE
4790 S. Ridgewood Ave.
386-738-8892
Hours: Mon - Fri 8 am - 2 pm

• Click on the Senior Centers and Dining Sites link on our website at www.coavolusia.org to view the monthly activity calendars and menus for each of our locations.
• Call a Senior Center or Neighborhood Dining Site today to find out how you can socialize, make new friends, and participate in vibrant classes and activities.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY

Council on Aging of Volusia County 386-253-4700

AARP Tax Aid, Defensive Driving 888-227-7669
Adaptive Technology Solutions 386-334-7698
Alzheimer’s Association 800-272-3900
American Red Cross 386-226-1400
Braille and Talking Books Library 386-239-6000
CareerSource Flagler/Volusia 386-323-7001
Community Legal Services of Mid-FL 386-255-6573
Department of Veterans Affairs 800-877-1000
disability Solutions 386-255-1812 x 301
Easter Seals 386-257-1700
Elder Abuse Hotline 800-962-2873
Elder Helpline 800-963-5337
ElderSource 888-242-4464
Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE) 888-242-4464

Florida Attorney General’s Office (Price Gouging Hotline) 866-966-7226
Medicaid 866-762-2237
Medicare 800-633-4227
Salvation Army (local) 386-236-2020
Social Security 800-772-1213
United Way of Volusia/Flagler Counties 201-1 or 386-253-0563
First Call for Help 888-273-8255, press 1
Veterans Crisis Line 386-253-0563
Volusia County Emergency Management 386-254-1500
Disaster Preparedness Helpline 386-254-1500
Public Information Network Hotline 866-345-0345
Volusia County Health Department 386-254-1500
Volusia County Housing Authority 386-253-5653
Votran 386-322-5100

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In the Next Issue:

- COA Senior Centers
- Save the Date: 2020 Dancing through the Decades
- Board Member Profile
- Benefits of Gardening