

NEWSLTR

A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS

AGE-FRIENDLY LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

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Livable Community Spotlight:

Age-Friendly Wilton Manors and Equity

How the Florida city is working to ensure fair access and opportunities for its older adults.

Reported by Mary Kay Bailey for AARP Florida AARP Livable Communities

The Community

Wilton Manors, Florida, a city located just north of Fort Lauderdale, is home to 12,756 residents — nearly 25 percent of whom are age 65 or older. In a review of 2010 Census data, researchers at the University of California Los Angeles noted that Wilton Manors has the second highest rate of same-sex couples in the United States: Wilton Manors has 125 gay couples per 1,000 households while San Francisco, by comparison, has 30.

Wilton Manors joined the [AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities](#) in 2018 and is in the process of publishing its Age-Friendly Action Plan.



ABOVE: The Residences at the Pride Center at Equality Park. Photo Courtesy Eisenthsky Productions

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Livable Community Spotlight: Wilton Manors...continued from page 1



Creating a Safe, Affordable Home to Age-in-Place

"Wilton Manors is home to many older LGBT+ adults, and we are focusing on the issue of social isolation and providing affordable, accessible housing for this population," says Johnnie Goodnight, liaison to the LGBT+ community and the City of Wilton Manors [Community Affairs Advisory Board](#). "We want to make sure that LGBT+ seniors don't 'Go back into the closet' as they age, as many don't feel safe coming out to medical providers or caregivers, and they sometimes feel uncomfortable in 'mainstream' assisted living facilities. Many older community members in Wilton Manors don't have children, or don't have relatives nearby, which makes it difficult for them to reside in their homes as they age."

One of Age-Friendly Wilton Manors' major partners is the [Pride Center at Equality Park](#), which has been operating since 1993 and provides LGBT+ focused health care and safety net services, social and educational opportunities, and office space for sister organizations and programs. The center's active aging programming is one of the nation's largest LGBT+ senior programs and its events reach thousands each year. A key component of the Age-Friendly Wilton Manors' Action Plan was supporting the construction of the center's [Residences at Equality Park](#), an affordable

ABOVE: Pre-COVID, residents gathered for a game of chair volleyball. Photo Courtesy City of Wilton Manors Leisure Services Department

housing project for senior adults, with a special focus on LGBT+ individuals.

The Equality Park residence is Florida's first affordable housing community with customized supportive services for LGBT+ seniors. The project gives residents a safe place to live and the services they need to age in place. The city provided financial support for the project and the first 48 units (out of a future total of 130) opened in October 2020.

"The Pride Center received nearly 1,500 applications for the 48 units, so we know there's a huge demand for affordable senior housing in South Florida," says Goodnight.

The City's Action Plan also calls for making its streets more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly. "We recently acquired property to upgrade access to one of our popular parks so it's easier to enter if someone is using a wheelchair or has difficulties walking," Goodnight explains.



Activating Civic Participation

The Community Affairs Advisory Board, which is made up of engaged volunteers, leads Wilton Manors' participation in the AARP Age-Friendly network. The Board submitted the City's application and led its community survey.

"Through the survey we discovered the community wasn't aware of the City's programs," says Goodnight. To get the word out about what's available and how to access it, the Board created the [Wilton Manors Senior Resource Guide](#).

"During the pandemic we've been able to activate volunteers from our retiree community. As we checked in on our vulnerable homebound seniors, we learned that they needed face masks and home food deliveries," notes Goodnight. "Our volunteers helped staff food distribution events. Volunteering helps to reduce social isolation and keeps our senior population active in community life."

Marrying the Personal and Professional

"My husband and I moved to our dream retirement home in Wilton Manors after long careers in Southern California — and we both started second careers working for the City!" Goodnight shares. "As a same-sex couple that has been together for more than 40 years, it was our dream to move to a city with a large LGBT+ population that was also Age-Friendly. We've been in Wilton Manors for seven years and absolutely love it here! I was always fascinated

ABOVE: Members of the Wilton Manors Community Affairs Advisory Board. *Photo Courtesy City of Wilton Manors*

by seniors who reinvent themselves. I never thought I'd become one of them!"

It Takes a Village to Create an Age-Friendly Community

In addition to the work of the City's Community Affairs Advisory Board and the Pride Center at Equality Park, the City of Wilton Manors collaborates with several non-profit organizations that contribute to making Wilton Manors more Age-Friendly. These organizations include the [Poverello Center](#), whose food pantry benefits residents in Broward County; the [South Florida Institute on Aging](#); [SunServe](#); and [Latinos Salud](#), all of which provide many services to the aging demographic in and around Wilton Manors. Several organizations outside of Wilton Manors also benefit the senior community such as the [Aging and Disability Resource Center of Broward County](#), [Broward 2-1-1](#), and of course, [AARP](#). All of the organizations work together to corroborate the City's logo "Life's Just Better Here!" This is especially true for the senior community!

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

*By Lisa Conway, Registered Nurse and Certified Care Manager, Senior Partner Care Services
Once Senior Place, Viera*

The [National Institutes of Health](#) (NIH) predicts that people 65 and over will comprise nearly 17 percent of the world's population by 2050 (1.6 billion). As declared by the United Nations General Assembly, June 15th is designated as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Global and regional events take place throughout the month. This day represents one day in the year where nations of the globe officially voice their opposition to the abuse, suffering, and neglect inflicted upon our elder population. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is also a time to educate others and reflect on our duty to protect this vulnerable aging segment of our society.

What Is Elder Abuse?

The [World Health Organization](#) describes elder abuse as "a violation of human rights and a

significant cause of illness, loss of productivity, isolation and despair." More specifically, elder abuse is the mistreatment of an older person by someone (typically) in a position of trust. This may be a partner, family member, friend, or caregiver. Elder abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual, financial, or mistreatment by neglect, self-neglect, or abandonment.

Financial abuse is the fastest growing and most common type of abuse affecting older adults and is categorized as theft, fraud, or electronic exploitation. Theft may extend from the outright stealing of money and valuables to medications and more. Fraud includes acts of dishonesty, falsification of records, or forgery. Electronic exploitation may take the form of suspicious emails or calls that lead to the victim surrendering their passwords or personal information.

Elder abuse is a global issue affecting seniors. Both men and women, rich and poor are victims of elder abuse. And it is increasing. As the population of many countries continues to age, elder abuse continues to rise.

Sadly, only one in six cases of elder abuse is ever reported. If you suspect elder abuse, it is always best to err

on the side of the elder and let the authorities make the determination.

Physical abuse leaves clues. Unexplained bruises, welts, burns or lacerations, difficulty walking or sitting, bloody undergarments, emaciation, or unexplained pain should be reported. Any time you witness a life-threatening situation, you should immediately call 911.

If elder abuse—of any kind—is suspected in Florida, it should be reported to the Department of Children and Families Florida Abuse Hotline by calling 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873), or online at reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us. Similar to the provisions of Florida's "Good Samaritan law," anyone reporting abuse in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability. Your actions could literally save a life.

One Senior Place is a marketplace for resources and provider of information, advice, care and on-site services for seniors and their families. Questions for this column are answered by professionals in nursing, social work, care management and in-home care. Send questions to askOSP@OneSeniorPlace.com, call 321-751-6771 or visit One Senior Place, The Experts in Aging at OneSeniorPlace.com.



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
Seventh Global Summit
MONDAY, JUNE 14TH

*Register to Attend
This Virtual Event*



WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

5 Things Everyone Can Do to Prevent Elder Abuse



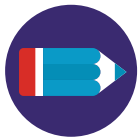
1. Learn the signs of elder abuse and how we can solve the issue together.



2. Prevent isolation. Call and visit our loved ones and encourage them to strengthen their circles of connection.



3. Talk to friends and family members about how we can age well and reduce abuse in our communities by engaging in activities that help us connect, learn, give, and grow as we age.







4. Sign up to be a friendly visitor to an older person in our communities.



5. Send a letter to a local paper, radio, or TV station suggesting that they cover World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15) or Grandparents Day in September.

It is up to all of us to prevent and address elder abuse! For more information on elder abuse prevention, call:

 Elder Helpline	1-800-96-ELDER Information & Referral Available in Spanish (1-800-963-5337)		
			



Protect Our Elders From Scams

*University of Southern California
Center for Elder Justice*

Everyone has a right to safety and justice. However, it is estimated millions of older adults, from all walks of life, encounter harmful scams every year. We are not providing the necessary supports needed to keep everyone safe and engaged as we age. Ageism (biases against or stereotypes about older people that keep them from being fully a part of their community) also play a role in enabling elder abuse. By changing these contributing factors, we can prevent elder abuse and make sure all of us have the opportunity to thrive as we age. Here are things we can do to help protect our communities from abuse and neglect:

Build Supports

If we think of society as a building that supports our wellbeing, then it makes sense to design the sturdiest building we can—one with the beams and a solid foundation and walls necessary to keep everyone safe from scams and healthy as we age.

- We can construct community supports and human services for family caregivers and older adults to alleviate risk factors tied to elder abuse like ageism or social isolation.
- We can increase funding to support efforts to train service providers in how to prevent and detect scams when working with older adults.
- We can create, maintain and improve organizations like consumer protection agencies that work to stop scams and make sure companies, banks and lenders treat us fairly.



Is It A Scam?

- Is the sales person using high pressure sales tactics? Scams often say things like, "Act Now!"; "Time is running out!"; "This is a one time offer!"
- Are you being asked to pay upfront fees? Lottery and sweepstakes scams often employ this tactic. If you really won something the fees can be taken out of your winnings.
- Are you being told that you won a contest that you didn't enter? Lottery and sweepstakes scams almost always start this way. You can't win a contest that you didn't enter.
- Have you been scammed in the past? Often scam victims have their personal contact information sold to other con artists. You may get unsolicited calls from people promising to get your money back or provide other remedies or offers. These 'offers' can be scams, too. Beware!
- Did you receive unsolicited mail, emails, or phone calls for services that you were not seeking? Research the companies that you want to employ. Many scams begin with someone knocking on your door offering services, or sending out promotional materials. This often happens in the case of home repair scams.
- Are you being contacted by the police over the phone? Verify that they are who they say they are. Some scams begin with a person pretending to be a police officer who tells you that they are concerned that you have been a victim of a crime. They then proceed to solicit your personal information. In truth, the police will contact you in person if they have questions for you or believe that you have been a victim of a crime.

If You See Elder Abuse, Report It!

You can take the lead to help protect the elderly, if you see it, report it! No matter how minimal the information you share is, it could be the missing piece to stopping the next fraud scheme. Even if you are not a victim, it's important to report any fraud scams you encounter to the appropriate authorities. Report suspected fraud by calling 1-800-96-ELDER or visit one of the resources listed below.

Report Healthcare Scams

Medicare:
1-800-633-4227
[medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov)

Social Security Administration:
1-800-772-1213
[ssa.gov](https://www.ssa.gov)

Florida Senior Medicare Patrol:
1-800-963-5337
[floridashine.org](https://www.floridashine.org)

Federal Trade Commission:
1-877-382-4357
[reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov)

Report Money Transfer Scams

MoneyGram:
1-800-666-3947
[moneygram.com](https://www.moneygram.com)

Western Union:
1-800-448-1492
[westernunion.com](https://www.westernunion.com)

MoneyPak Green Dot:
[moneypak.com](https://www.moneypak.com)

Federal Trade Commission:
1-877-382-4357
[reportfraud.ftc.gov](https://www.reportfraud.ftc.gov)

Report Mail/Email/Online Scams

FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center:
[ic3.gov](https://www.ic3.gov)



OnGuard Online:
[onguardonline.gov](https://www.onguardonline.gov)

U.S. Postal Inspector:
1-877-876-2455
[uspis.gov](https://www.uspis.gov)

Florida Attorney General's Senior
Protection Team:
1-866-9NO-SCAM
[myfloridalegal.com](https://www.myfloridalegal.com)

Report/Detect Check Fraud Scams

Postal Money Order
Verification System:
1-866-459-7822

Florida Attorney General:
1-866-966-7226
[myfloridalegal.com](https://www.myfloridalegal.com)

National Consumers League
Fraud Center:
[fraud.org](https://www.fraud.org)

Report Fundraiser and Charitable Giving Scams

Florida Attorney General:
1-866-966-7226
www.myfloridalegal.com

Better Business Bureau:
1-703-276-0100
[bbb.org](https://www.bbb.org)

National Association of State Charities:
[nasconet.org](https://www.nasconet.org)

Protect Yourself Against Scams

Get Your Free Credit Report Annually:
1-877-322-8228
[annualcreditreport.com](https://www.annualcreditreport.com)

Sign-up on the "Do Not Call" List:
1-888-382-1222
[donotcall.gov](https://www.donotcall.gov)

Receive Better Business Bureau
Scam Tracker Alerts:
[bbb.org](https://www.bbb.org)

For more information or additional
resources, contact Anne Chansler,
Bureau Chief of Elder Rights at
chanslera@elderaffairs.org.



Individual Preparedness Planning for Those At Risk of Wandering

By Scent Evidence K9

Preparing for fires and weather events, like hurricanes or tornadoes, is usually the first item that comes to mind when you implement a family safety plan. But how do you protect a loved one with dementia who is at risk of wandering? For families and caregivers looking to improve their safety plans, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) has partnered with [Scent Evidence K9](#) to provide a specially packaged Scent Preservation Kit. The Kit helps help K9 responders find a person who has wandered by using their pre-collected unique scent. Preparing a Scent Preservation Kit only takes a few minutes. All you do is swipe, seal, and store.

DOEA is providing the Scent Preservation Kits through Florida's [Memory Disorder Clinics](#) and [Dementia Care and Cure Initiative](#) (DCCI) Task Forces to ensure those with the highest risk of wandering



ABOVE: Charlotte County Sheriff's Deputy Sella and Scent Evidence K9 CEO Paul Coley

are protected. Individuals may also request complimentary Scent Preservation Kits [here](#) on DOEA's website.

In Charlotte County Florida, a missing woman with Alzheimer's disease was located using a Scent Preservation Kit she had received from DOEA only two weeks before she went missing. Charlotte County Sheriff's Deputy Steven Sella and K9 Copper, a bloodhound, responded to the call and the woman's son gave Deputy Sella the Scent Preservation Kit. The woman had been missing for over 24 hours when Deputy Sella presented the scent to K9 Copper. The K9 Team followed the trail for two miles through a park before finding the woman in a canal behind the park, clinging to a life preserver. She was unable to say where the life preserver came from.

In addition to providing responders with an uncontaminated scent article to conduct an accurate search, the Scent Preservation Kit also contains an [Individual Preparedness Plan](#) flash

drive that allows family members and caregivers to prefill valuable information to help responders identify and locate the missing person. It also includes a section with person-centered, trauma-informed information that alerts responders to potential triggers that may upset the person and provides comforting methods to help calm them. Having this information not only helps emergency responders locate the individual faster, but it reduces the risk of trauma caused by the wandering event.

When a loved one goes missing, emotions and safety concerns are at their highest level. To help you be prepared for an event, the Individual Preparedness Plan also contains guidelines for reporting missing persons, a video message from DOEA Secretary Richard Prudom, and other DOEA resources, so that you will know just what to do if someone wanders.

The [Alzheimer's Association](#) states that three in five of those with the



ABOVE: Scent Evidence K9 Scent Preservation Kit



ABOVE: Charlotte County Sheriff's Deputy Sella and K9 Copper

disease will wander and go missing. Florida ranks second in the nation for having the highest dementia population of residents with numbers reaching over 580,000. Those numbers are expected to climb to over 720,000 by 2025.

Scent Evidence K9 CEO Paul Coley, stated "We are proud of our partnership with DOEA and the work DOEA does to protect Florida's vulnerable populations aligns perfectly with our mission to bring the lost home safe." Coley is also a member of the DCCI Big Bend Task Force and conducts

missing person awareness presentations across the state to families and caregivers of those at high risk of wandering. To learn more about Scent Preservation Kits visit ScentEvidenceK9.com.



ABOVE: DOEA Secretary Richard Prudom and Scent Evidence K9 CEO Paul Coley with Rex, a bloodhound in training.



Get Prepared With the 2021 *Disaster Resource Guide for Older Adults*

The new edition of the *Disaster Resource Guide for Older Adults* is available now. The guide can be accessed online at elderaffairs.org/publications-reports/elder-update. The 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season begins on June 1 and lasts through November 30. Download your copy today and be prepared. The *Disaster Resource Guide for Older Adults* includes a checklist for assembling your disaster supply kit, State and Federal emergency resources, contacts for the Emergency Special Needs Registry, and informative articles.

The *Elder Update* is a complimentary publication produced by the Department of Elder Affairs. It is distributed to over 45,000 Floridians including seniors, caregivers, policymakers, and elder-care service providers.

To subscribe to the *Elder Update*, fill out the online form at elderaffairs.org/doea/elder-update.php.

Walking Booklet Now Available!

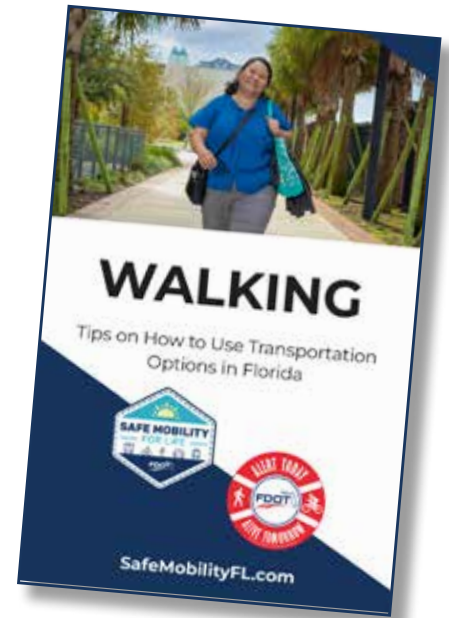
Walking is an essential part of your day no matter how you choose to get around. The [Safe Mobility for Life Coalition](#) and [Alert Today Florida](#) worked together to create the new Walking booklet, a free resource that can help you safely explore your community on foot. The new booklet includes:

- Information on the benefits of walking
- Tips on introducing more walking into your day and transportation plan

- Visuals on the signs, signals, and markings that you may come across while walking in your community

- Florida's pedestrian laws

You can pre-order a printed copy of the [Walking: Tips on How to Use Transportation Options in Florida](#) booklet or download a digital version through the Resource Center at fdot.tips/resourcecenter. If you need additional support, email the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition at Contact@SafeMobilityFL.com.



Walking briskly



for



can burn
up to



150 calories

Highway Safety

The 2021-2025 [Florida Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#) (SHSP) was recently released by the Florida Department of Transportation's Safety Office and is now available for viewing and sharing with partners, employees, family, and friends. The SHSP provides a framework for how Florida's traffic safety partners will move toward the vision of a fatality-free transportation system during the next five years. It is a call to action for public, private, and civic partners, identifying areas for collaboration, investment, and innovation.



The Office of Public and Professional Guardians (OPPG) is responsible for the registration, education, and oversight of professional guardians and the appointment and oversight of public guardians. We also administer a complaint line related to all public and professional guardians.



Protecting Florida's Most Vulnerable Citizens

Program Overview

One of Florida's priorities is to help the state's most vulnerable citizens. As a result, the Florida Legislature created the Office of Public and Professional Guardians, which is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that every Floridian in need of a guardian receives the services of a qualified guardian.

Definition of a Guardian

A guardian is an individual or a corporation that is appointed by the court to manage some or all of the delegable rights of another individual who has been deemed incapacitated by the court.

A person may be determined to be incapacitated once an examining committee has reviewed a petition filed with the court by an attorney. This petition can be initiated by any adult with concern for the alleged incapacitated person.

Advance Directives such as Living Wills, Durable Power of Attorney, and a Health Care Surrogate can help avoid the need for guardianship.

There are certain requirements necessary to become a Professional Guardian. A Professional Guardian course approved by OPPG must be taken and a competency exam passed. A credit and criminal history check is also a requirement. A blanket fiduciary bond must be posted in each county circuit court in which he or she is serving as a professional guardian.

Registering as a Professional Guardian entails completing the necessary forms and submission of the following:

- background screening - every 5 years
- credit screening - every 2 years
- fiduciary bond
- completion of 16 CEU's - every 2 years. A list of approved classes can be found at cebroker.com.

These forms and information can be obtained by visiting elderaffairs.org/programs-services/office-of-public-professional-guardians-oppg.

Public Guardianship is necessary to accommodate the growing number of elders that make up our state's population. Many elders are indigent and have no other qualified person to serve as guardian; these individuals need help in the form of a public guardian.

Currently there are 17 Public Guardian Offices providing services to 67 counties. A list of local offices can be found [here](#) online.

Complaints Against Guardians

OPPG maintains a statewide toll-free hot-line, **1-855-305-3030**, to receive complaints made against registered professional guardians. In addition, complaints may be submitted by email at OPPGComplaints@elderaffairs.org or via our website at elderaffairs.org/doea/oppg_complaint.html. Any person who wishes to file a complaint against a registered professional guardian may do so anonymously.

A Time to Recognize

By Laura Copeland, Statewide Dementia Care and Cure Initiative Program Coordinator

It is hard to believe that we are already at the halfway mark of 2021, and being that it is now June, many people will be gearing up for summer preparations and vacations. Many Floridians recognize June is the beginning of hurricane season, but did you know that the month of June is recognized as [Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month](#)?

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder, which over time affects one's cognition, thinking, and behavior, and it is the most common type of dementia. Alzheimer's is a leading cause of death across the United States and in Florida, and it is the only one that does not yet have a cure. At present, it is estimated that over 580,000 individuals are living with Alzheimer's in Florida, and this statistic does not account for other types of dementia.

The designation of June being Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month is given by the [Alzheimer's Association](#), which is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support, and research. During the month of June, conversations about the brain and brain health are encouraged, and the attention is cast on the fact that Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) is a national public health crisis.

The Alzheimer's Association states that "anyone with a brain is at risk for Alzheimer's," but it is important to note that there are ways to reduce one's risk of a diagnosis, by adopting key lifestyle habits. [10 Ways to Love Your Brain](#) by the Association details ways to modify lifestyle habits, which



may be able to reduce cognitive decline. During the month of June, it is suggested you wear purple, raise awareness about ADRD, honor a friend or family member(s) who is living with or lived with the disease, or is/was a care partner or caregiver, and more. Start conversations about brain health with your friends, families, colleagues, or neighbors, and ask them what they are currently doing to love and take care of their brain.

Throughout the year, [Dementia Care and Cure Initiative](#) (DCCI) task forces work tirelessly to increase awareness of ADRD. The initiative began in 2015 in response to the rapidly increasing rate of ADRD in Florida and seeks to create Dementia-Caring Communities throughout the state. While it is a state-directed initiative, it is community-driven, with volunteer led and run task forces as the MVPs. The DCCI task forces work to break down barriers and reduce stigma surrounding dementia, and they provide free dementia sensitivity education and training to all sectors of their communities. They assist in making their communities empowering places for individuals with dementia and equip community members with the ability and knowledge to respond appropriately and with understanding and compassion to those impacted by dementia. DCCI task forces have great

flexibility in the dementia-caring work they do, but all operate under the same [three goals](#):

- Increase awareness of dementia, services, and supports.
- Provide assistance to dementia-caring communities.
- Continue advocacy for care and cure programs.

DCCI has grown since its inception, and we invite you to join us in welcoming the Manatee County DCCI Task Force into the dementia-caring network as the 16th DCCI task force in the state.

As we bring attention to June being Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month, a takeaway message should be it is never too late to adopt a new lifestyle habit or modify an existing one, nor do you have to be a certain age to start paying attention to brain health. What we change today for better health could pave the way for improved health outcomes in the future, and June is a great month to make a renewed commitment to yourself and to brain health.

For more information about the Dementia Care and Cure Initiative, please reach out to DCCI@elderaffairs.org.



ALZHEIMER'S & BRAIN awareness month

alzheimer's  association®

GO PURPLE!

This Month and Every Month

Worldwide, 50 million people are living with Alzheimer's and other dementias. Join the Alzheimer's Association in going purple and raising awareness this June. The more people know about Alzheimer's, the more action we inspire.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

MEN'S
HEALTH
AWARENESS
MONTH
JUNE

NOT
ALL
WOUNDS
ARE VISIBLE

PTSD
AWARENESS MONTH



Upcoming Events

JUNE

Alzheimer's and Brain
Awareness Month

PTSD Awareness Month

Men's Health Month

- 1 Beginning of Hurricane Season
- 1-7 CPR & AED Awareness Week
- 14 NAPSA WEEAD Global Summit
- 15 World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

JULY

- 4 Independence Day
- 26 National Disability Independence Day



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MEMORY SCREENING!**

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Wednesdays
Fridays

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to make an appointment

[Learn more here](#)



Town of Cutler Bay Earns Florida APA's Innovation in Planning for All Ages Award

By Rafael G. Casals, Town Manager

The [Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association \(APA\)](#) has named the Town of Cutler Bay as the winner of their Innovation in Planning for All Ages Award for 2020, which recognizes the Town's efforts in becoming an Age-Friendly community.

A part of APA's 2020 Project Awards, the Innovation in Planning for All Ages Award recognizes innovative planning in meeting the needs of the 50+ population. Some of the criteria that nominees are judged on include initiatives such as the implementation of pedestrian infrastructure; innovative transportation programs that increase senior mobility; and outdoor spaces projects fostering intergenerational and multi-cultural connection and socialization.

With the guidance of the Town Council, the Town's [Age-Friendly Communities Committee](#), and Town Staff, Cutler Bay has seen great improvements for the 50+ community. Some of the highlights the Town has implemented to become a more Age-Friendly community include: the installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Town parks to ensure access for people of all ages and abilities; the expansion of the local circulator bus route to operate seven days a week with more stops at places of interest for senior residents; a partnership with the South Dade Cultural Arts Center offering seniors discounted \$5 ticket pricing for live performances; and hosting over 30 events, workshops, and social gatherings for the 50+ community every year.



"We developed the [Age-Friendly Action Plan](#) to make the life of our residents richer, more engaged, and easier," expressed former Vice Mayor Sue Ellen Loyzelle. "The process of intently listening to our residents' feedback on ways we can improve, crafting a thorough plan to put that feedback to work, and then implementing those services and programs has been rewarding in and of itself. To be recognized by the APA for our efforts is the icing on the cake—we are so proud to set the example on how other communities can become more Age-Friendly."

The Town is proud to be the first municipality in South Florida to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the second in Florida to have their Action Plan approved by AARP and the World Health Organization. For additional information, visit www.cutlerbay-fl.gov



ABOVE: Town Manager Rafael Casals Holding Innovation in Planning Award

TOP RIGHT: Participants in Cutler Bay Senior Games

or contact Town Hall at (305) 234-4262.

To find out how your community can join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, click [here](#).

The 2021 Governor's Mansion Easter Egg Roll was an egg-cellent time!



Pictured Above: DOEA Secretary Richard Prudom attended the Governor's Mansion Easter Egg Roll in April 2021. He enjoyed reading to the children. DOEA staff volunteers prepared snow cones as an afternoon treat!



What If It Were **Her?**

EVERY SECOND COUNTS IN CARDIAC ARREST



CPR WEEK IS JUNE 1-7



The Florida Department of Elder Affairs, the State Unit on Aging, helps Florida's elders to remain healthy, safe, and independent. The Department provides most direct services through its Division of Statewide Community Based Services, the state's eleven Area Agencies on Aging, and local service providers to deliver essential services to a vital segment of the population. For more information, please visit elderaffairs.org.

WE'LL MEET YOU AT HOME

Vaccine Visits for Homebound Seniors

Florida is bringing COVID-19 vaccinations to homebound seniors. Those seeking vaccinations for homebound people should email

HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com

to register for shots or for more information.

Residents can also contact the state's COVID-19 Call Center at **866-779-6121** for assistance.

Elder Helpline:

1-800-96-ELDER
(1-800-963-5337)

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