



Florida Association of
Aging Services Providers

Volume 93: March/April 2023

Florida Association of Aging Services Providers

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Message from the President

By Darrell J. Drummond, Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc.



This is the end of April in which we celebrate our National Volunteer Appreciation month. Like organizations around the country, I am sure our members took time to recognize the major contributions our volunteers make to our ability to meet our mission within our communities. My agency, annually, has a volunteer breakfast for our volunteers to thank them for their service. As I find myself closer to the end of my professional career, I am convinced that I will seek to continue to contribute to my community through volunteer service.

On May 18th, the FASP Board will be convening in Orlando to review the results of this year's legislative session and to prepare for the upcoming FCOA/FASP Conference in August. As part of

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This Issue's Sponsors



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the discussion, we will be discussing how we may effectively work with DOEA to make sure that the additional funds we are receiving throughout the year are provided in a fashion that allows for the greatest opportunity for success. One of the initiatives offered this year was an enhanced HCE program that allowed for additional assistance in the homes for clients who qualified under HCE and/or were on the waitlist for those services. This is indeed something I feel we all support. The problem is the extremely tight deadline we were given to accomplish the implementation of this program. We must work to make sure we don't lose these types of funds as a result of not having adequate time to successfully implement the program.

The FL Legislative Budget Conference Committee began Monday, April 24th.

The Budget Conferees have been announced and can be reviewed at the links below:

[Senate Conference Committee Assignments](#)

[House Budget Conferees](#)

As the House and Senate Budget Conferees started work this week, here are the current projected increases they approved: CCE: \$2 million; HCE \$3 million; Alzheimer's Respite Care: \$4 million; Memory Disorder Clinics: \$8.5 million; Local Services Programs: No cuts. Many, many new projects and final funding are still in play. FCOA members: check your inbox or the Advocacy Tab on the FCOA website for updates (fcoa.org). A very important issue for service providers and clients! The Legislature also agreed to provide \$113 million in additional federal grants budget authority to support Older Americans Act and ARPA funding AAA/Provider contracts through FY 2023-2024. This additional budget authority will allow DOEA to contract for these unspent federal grant dollars available in FY 2023-2024. We should not have the budget authority shortfall issue happen again as a result of this additional appropriated budget authority. Remember, they're NOT finished and there are still many issues unresolved at this point. The committee continues to meet daily.

Over the years FASP and FCOA's Advocacy Initiative have helped increase funding to home & community-based programs by over \$79 million in Florida. However, with over 107,000 seniors still on the wait list, there is still a lot of work to do. Read more about FCOA's advocacy work on their website found [HERE](#) and review the [2023 FCOA Advocacy brochure](#).

On April 7th it was announced that the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) would be cutting off funding to E HEAP and LI HEAP programs due to not having sufficient budget authorization for these programs. The federal funds are available, but the state agency's authorization to spend them is not approved because they did not request the authority on time. Organizations providing services using these funds will now be unable to assist their consumers whose utility bills are in arrears, to avoid them having their utilities turned off. These delayed payments to service providers, and then, to utility companies, mean the utility companies will be forced to cut off the utilities of thousands of low-income persons. Agencies will have to end employment for staff, as well as end the programs that are currently assisting thousands of vulnerable families across the state. Many of these individuals depend on their utilities for life-saving items, like keeping insulin in their refrigerators or for oxygen. This is most frustrating, as low-income elders will lose the financial assistance that they have been receiving for many

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services including their utility bills. Thankfully, with the Legislature currently in session, the hope is that a resolution to this tragic oversight may be found.

Lastly, FCOA's 2023 Conference on Aging will be held this year August 7-9, 2023 in Orlando, FL. Registration for conference attendees and exhibitors is now open. We are looking forward to another great year of meeting with our members and other participants sharing information and learning about a vast array of topics relevant to all of us in the aging network. Please share this year's conference logo with your network and post it to your organization's upcoming events page to help us spread the word about this exciting event coming up in August!

[Click to visit FCOA Conference Website & Registration page.](#)



Darrell Drummond

Women's History Month 2023

Women and Aging



This year to honor Women's History Month, which was celebrated in March, we saw it as a good opportunity to shine light on the unique challenges and differences that women are faced with as they age. In the aging community, the topic of aging is not frequently discussed within the context of women's issues, however it's a different, and in many ways, a more difficult, experience for women as they age; and studies show even more so, for women of color.

Women are more likely to have financial instability as they age. According to the [Elder Index](#) more than half of all single older women don't have enough money to meet their basic needs. These rates are significantly higher for Black and Latina women.

Studies show that women take on the physical, mental, and emotional effects of aging more than men do, and they suffer from more physical and cognitive impairments as they age, and they will spend more on healthcare throughout their lifetime. Compared to men, women generally live six years longer and are more likely to be caregivers of children and older adults as they age. These factors can create a significant financial burden for women, who are also more likely to experience the so-called "pink tax."

The pink tax is the extra cost that women often pay for goods and services that are marketed to them. This can include items like razors, shampoo, and deodorant. Often, these products are priced higher for no other reason than the fact that they are marketed to women!

This injustice can be compounded by the fact that women often earn less than men, even when doing the same job. This means that women must spend a higher percentage of their income on essential items like food, housing, and healthcare.

Another major financial challenge for women is the lack of affordable childcare. In most cases, it is still cheaper for a woman to stay at home than to pay for quality daycare. This means that many women are forced to choose between their careers and their children.

Despite these challenges, women are thriving as they age. They are more likely than men to take care of their parents and grandparents, and they are more likely to provide emotional support to their loved ones. In addition, women are more likely to seek healthcare advice and to take care of their health. Women are the backbone and often the glue holding so many households together and take on much of the emotional burden that comes with that.

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Women's History Month 2023

Words of Wisdom From Some of Our Favorite Women

By: Shelley Emling, [AARP](#), February 26, 2018

March is [Women's History Month](#), a time to celebrate the many contributions of women to society. To mark the occasion, we've curated a list of favorite quotes from famous women 50 and older. While there are plenty of other women to inspire us, the following 25 are a good place to start.

[Click here to read the rest of the article](#)

“If you don’t like the road you’re walking, start paving another one.” — Dolly Parton, 72.

“A surplus of effort could overcome a deficit of confidence.” — Sonia Sotomayor, 63.

“Be thankful for what you have; you’ll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don’t have, you will never, ever have enough.” — Oprah Winfrey, 64.

“Connect deeply with others. Our humanity is the one thing that we all have in common.” — Melinda Gates, 53.

The Gap Between Our Teeth

By: BWH Communications, [The Harvard Gazette](#) February 8, 2023

Older adults in the U.S. have a tooth problem: half of them lack dental insurance, and in 2018, nearly half received no dental care.

Seeking to shed light on the issue, investigators from Brigham and Women's Hospital examined changes in dental care and oral health after older adults become eligible for Medicare, the traditional version of which covers medical services but not dental care.



In their study of more than 97,000 people, the researchers found a dramatic drop in the percentage who received restorative dental care and an almost 5 percentage point increase in the number of people who lost all their teeth after they turned 65 and became eligible for Medicare. The [results](#) are published in *Health Affairs*.

“Older adults have the lowest rates of dental insurance in the U.S. and cost is a major barrier for many in seeking dental care,” said corresponding author [Lisa Simon](#), a resident in the Brigham’s Department of Medicine and a physician and dentist at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine and Harvard Medical School. “We know that Medicare, by covering medical services, improves health outcomes and reduces racial health inequities among older adults, but it has the exact opposite effect for dental care.”

[Click here to read the rest of the article](#)

Senior care is crushingly expensive. Boomers aren't ready.

By [Christopher Rowland](#) , [The Washington Post](#) , Published March 18, 2023

A wave of Americans has been reaching retirement age largely unprepared for the extraordinary costs of specialized care. These aging baby boomers — 73 million strong, the oldest of whom turn 77 this year — pose an unprecedented challenge to the U.S. economy, as individual families shoulder an increasingly ruinous financial burden with little help from stalemated policymakers in Washington.



[Click here to read the rest of the article](#)

14 Top Scams to Watch Out for in 2023

By: Patrick J. Kiger and Sari Harrar, [AARP](#)

Published January 04, 2023/Updated April 12, 2023

Scammers are continually evolving like viruses. Today's scammers are constantly evolving and adapting in response to the latest news and trends. Every day they come up with new ways to separate innocent people from their money.

Anti fraud experts say with new twists to traditional criminal operations such as the romance scam and Ponzi scheme, scammers have made them more convincing and efficient.

In a recent article by AARP, anti fraud experts outline 14 emerging scams being tracked in 2023 as well as tips for how to avoid falling victim to them.



[Click here to read the article](#)

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Women and Aging

Despite these challenges, women are thriving as they age. They are more likely than men to take care of their parents and grandparents, and they are more likely to provide emotional support to their loved ones. In addition, women are more likely to seek healthcare advice and to take care of their health. Women are the backbone and often the glue holding so many households together and take on much of the emotional burden that comes with that.

Ultimately, it's important for women to be aware of the unique challenges that come with aging. By taking steps to plan for these challenges, women can ensure that they are able to live healthy, happy, and financially secure lives. Planning ahead and saving for retirement, prioritizing mental health and wellness, and keeping relationships with family and friends close can all contribute greatly to the quality-of-life women experience as they age.

Women can also look for ways to reduce their expenses. This might include downsizing their home, cooking more meals at home, or choosing less expensive healthcare options.

Women continue to age with grace and strength. They are a vital part of our society, and we must do more to support them as they enter their golden years. With more support, women can continue to thrive - and make the world a better place for all of us.

AARP Releases First Ever Comprehensive Snapshot of Nursing Home Staffing in Florida

By [AARP Florida](#), March 06, 2023

AARP Florida released a comprehensive snapshot featuring the history of Florida's nursing home staffing standards, compiling peer-reviewed research to examine the intricate relationship between high-quality nursing homes and staffing requirements. The AARP report was commissioned in collaboration with [Dr. Lindsay Peterson](#), an assistant professor at the University of South Florida (USF), Director of the Long-term Care Administration and Aging Sciences Internship Program, and Interim Director of the Florida Policy Exchange Center on Aging.

[Read AARP's Comprehensive Snapshot of Nursing Home Staffing in Florida](#)

AARP Florida State Director Jeff Johnson said, "As we look closely at the history of Florida nursing home staffing standards over the last two decades, it's clear that legislative changes have eroded Florida's approach to care in nursing homes."

"Florida families deserve peace of mind that those in nursing homes receive the high-quality care they need, so AARP has committed to be a watchdog on this issue. This first-of-its-kind report is a starting point for a much larger conversation about what Florida must do to provide superior care to our increasing population of elders with rising levels of need."



[Click here to read the rest of the article](#)

Dementia Care Programs Help, If Caregivers Can Find Them

By: [Judith Graham](#), Kaiser Health News, February 27, 2023

There's no cure, yet, for Alzheimer's disease. But dozens of programs developed in the past 20 years can improve the lives of both people living with dementia and their caregivers.

Unlike support groups, these programs teach caregivers concrete skills such as how to cope with stress, make home environments safe, communicate effectively with someone who's confused, or solve problems that arise as this devastating illness progresses.

Some of these programs, known as "comprehensive dementia care," also employ coaches or navigators who help assess patients' and caregivers' needs, develop individualized care plans, connect families to community resources, coordinate medical and social services, and offer ongoing practical and emotional support.

[Click here to read the rest of the article](#)

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When Grandparents Are Called to Parent — Again

Millions of older Americans are being forced by circumstances to raise their grandchildren

By A. J. Baime, [AARP](#) Published March 2, 2023

Mercedes Bristol was living in San Antonio, working for the state of Texas and a few years away from retirement, when circumstances forced her to take in five grandchildren. The oldest was 9. "I didn't have five beds for kids," she says. "I remember crying at Walmart because I was so overwhelmed with the amount of supplies that the kids needed." More than a decade later, three of her grandchildren still live with her.

These grandparents share something: the unexpected role of becoming a child caregiver long after they thought those years were behind them. They illuminate a social trend in America: the high number of "grandfamilies" — grandparents raising grandchildren.

U.S. census data shows that 7.1 million American grandparents are living with their grandchildren under 18. Some 2.3 million of those grandparents are responsible for their grandchildren. About a third of grandchildren living with grandparents who are responsible for them are younger than 6.

About half of the grandparents who are responsible for their grandchildren are 60 and over, according to census data.

Generations United, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that was launched more than 35 years ago in partnership with AARP, advocates for grandfamilies. "Grandparents have been stepping in to raise grandchildren since the beginning of our country," says Donna Butts, executive director of Generations United. "But it has increased in recent years. We see spikes whenever there is a crisis."

[Click here to read the rest of the article](#)



Silver Tones Share Joy of Music with Community

By: Karen Deigl, Senior Resource Association

“The idea to form the Silver Tones started after visiting the Council on Aging in Osceola County, where their senior choir performed,” recalls Karen Deigl, President, and CEO of Senior Resource Association (SRA). “I knew the seniors in our community would benefit from a group like this and appreciate the opportunity to share the beauty of song.”

From the inspiration sparked during that 2006 visit, SRA created an engaging musical enrichment program for seniors in Indian River County. Finding interest for such a choral program, as well as creative leadership and financial support, the Silver Tones were introduced in 2007 with 15 founding members.

Now, 16 years later, the chorus is thriving. An all-volunteer senior group open to adults aged 55 and older, the Silver Tones chorus offers a meaningful musical outlet for those with a love for singing. Due to the seasonal nature of the community, the size of the choir ebbs and flows from summer to winter, ranging as high as 100 members.

Music fits into Senior Resource Association’s commitment to help older community members stay socially connected, healthy and independent as long as possible. Music benefits seniors physically and emotionally. Performing or listening to music promotes memory and enhances mood, as evident at Silver Tones concerts.

“After one of our performances, a choir member’s daughter shared with me that this group saved her father’s life,” Deigl relates. “She told me he was withdrawn and isolated after losing his wife. Then he was introduced to the Silver Tones and he became more social and invigorated. It truly is an outlet for many of our seniors.”

Under the musical direction of Dr. Jacob Craig, director of music for a local church, the Silver Tones perform many genres of music, from jazz to gospel to current popular music. Choir members enjoy being part of a group who share their passion for music and where their talents can grow, from vocal technique to sight reading ability. And they relish performing!

“I love the continued support we get from the community and how our audience has grown over the years,” notes Anne Sofronas, an original member and chair of the group. “When we share our Summer Program and sing for various assisted living facilities in Indian River County, it is wonderful to know you are bringing such joy to them.”

The Silver Tones rehearse weekly in order to present three seasonal concerts in December, February, and April. Morning and evening performances enable SRA to reach both the older and younger members of the community to spread the word about senior programs and services. All concerts are free to the public, with donations accepted to support the mission of Senior Resource Association.



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Continued engagement is important to the Silver Tones members, many of whom live alone so smaller performances for local senior residential facilities take place during the summer. Choir members who reside in Indian River County year-round benefit as much as those who hear their music. To maximize social connections during the pandemic, rehearsals took place virtually with evening concerts aired via Zoom and recordings available on You Tube.

Since its inception, the choir has been generously supported by a local family. Initially Peggy and Leo Pierce and their family foundation sponsored the Silver Tones with the enthusiastic support of son Michael and his wife Kathie. In 2015, Kathie and Michael picked up the baton to carry on the family tradition when the family foundation shifted its focus to food insecurity, including SRA's Meals on Wheels program.

For information about joining the Silver Tones volunteer choir, please call 772-569-0760 or email Angela Bosman abosman@sramail.org



Senior Resource Association, Inc. (SRA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and the designated lead agency on aging in Indian River County. Founded in 1974, SRA continues to provide essential services and support for the community's older adults and their families. Promoting independence and dignity for all adults, SRA programs include Meals on Wheels, DayAway Adult Enrichment & Respite, In-Home Services, Public Guardianship, as well as GoLine public and Community Coach demand-response transportation services.

To learn more, visit www.SeniorResourceAssociation.org.

Intergenerational Programs—A Gift to All

By: *Elizabeth Lugo, The Volen Center*

I can still hear the crinkle of the colorful plastic wrap as my mother put the finishing touches on the baskets I had just helped her fill. The baskets were festive reflecting the fall colors outside the windows of our Iowa home. From the shiny orange peels to green and yellow pears and red apples, to the warm browns and beiges of homemade breads, rolls and cookies. Ever since I can remember, my mother and I would put together these baskets and deliver them personally to the local nursing home. We didn't know any of the residents and had no affiliation or connection to the facility. It was just something we did.

Looking back even though I had my own grandparents, going into that facility and being around all those frail older people was a little scary and intimidating to me. I was probably three or four when I experienced real memories of this and I remember having to be coaxed and coerced to go up and give hugs and high fives or to smile and wave. It wasn't until decades later that I realized the impact that I had on the residents we encountered. I do remember that they seemed to almost lift upwards in their chairs and lean forward with expansive smiles and a brightness in their eyes that had not been there prior.

How cool would it have been for those residents to see and interact with children more than once a year as they delivered fall fruit baskets to them? How amazing would it have been for children to engage with those older adults on a regular basis to lose that scared or intimidated feeling and be completely comfortable and fully engaged?

Fast forward a lot of years. Too many to mention for fear of outing myself and my true age, but let's just say the time has come for that vision to grow and develop into a true intergenerational program at a senior center in Boca Raton, Florida. The Volen Center has been providing services to seniors since the late 1960s and the Fuller Center has been providing services to children for an equal amount of time. The best part of the story is that the boards of the Fuller Center and the Volen Center were once one board. It was the South County Neighborhood Center and with the needs so great at both ends of the human spectrum, two entities were born---one to serve the elderly---and one to the young children.

Now over fifty years later, the vision and mission come full circle as the Volen and Fuller organizations join to offer a full-time early education program at The Volen Center where seniors and children will interact, learn, play, thrive, and enhance each other's lives. The project will benefit the community by expanding the opportunity for an additional twenty-eight children, ages two to five years, to access needed childcare at a time when affordable care is difficult to find.



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Intergenerational facilities save users and communities space and money while improving the health and overall outcomes of both age groups. While these programs are widely supported, they aren't well known and receive little funding. In fact, there are waitlists at intergenerational schools because of the benefits.

This new program will help working families, including employees of The Volen Center, by offering childcare at their workplace so they are free to care for the elderly who are counting on them. Equally as important, this program will give the elderly suffering from loneliness and isolation a purpose and a reason to live. Research has shown that having a purpose improves health and has a direct correlation with the extension of life.

Numerous studies have linked social interaction with decreased loneliness, delayed mental decline, lower blood pressure, and reduced risk of disease and death. In addition, children who have early contact with older people are less likely to view them as incompetent. The children are prone to feel more comfortable around those with disabilities and impairments of all kinds than their peers who lack such experiences. Children often live far from their biological grandparents; this gives them an easier way to have daily interactions with this age group.

Looking at the studies and the research, I think those visits to the nursing home did have an impact and did help shape who I am today and the career path I have taken. I doubt that my mother had any clue that what she was doing was helping lay the groundwork for an intergenerational preschool of the future. She just loved to bake, felt called to serve others, and to spread compassion and unconditional love. And it was in that spirit that the seeds of intergenerational engagement were planted, and only many years later showing fruit----although this time not in a shiny, wrapped basket.

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