

NASSAU COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING

# Senior Life

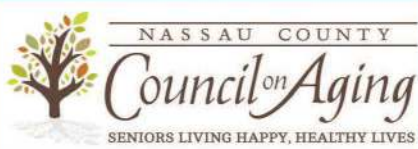
CELEBRATING HAPPY, HEALTHY LIVES

## Groundbreaking News:



## ***Westside Senior Life Center Renovation Underway!***

JANUARY - MARCH 2021



Inside:  
More Free Virtual Classes  
Pets Bring Comfort  
Friendships: Solid as a Rock



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### Fernandina Beach Life Center

1901 Island Walk Way, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034  
Phone: 904-261-0701 – FAX: 904-261-0704  
Facebook: Nassau County Council on Aging  
Website: [www.nassaucountycoa.org](http://www.nassaucountycoa.org)

### Fernandina Beach Life Center Staff Contacts:

Adult Day HealthCare – Debra Dombkowski, LPN, CDP  
Advocate Home Healthcare – Debra Jean Landolfi  
Case Management – Lisa Martin  
Circle of Friends – Frances Bartelt  
CHORE Program – Frances Bartelt  
Development – Wallace Bennett  
Electric Assistance/Water Assistance – Emily Kunzelmann  
Finance – Lory Mauricio  
Human Resources and Compliance – Don Harley  
Memberships, Presentations and Classes,  
Room Rentals and *Senior Life* Magazine – Melody Dawkins  
Marketing and Communications – Liz Dunn  
Nutrition and Meal Programs – Gina Cox  
Program Operations – Lili High  
Transportation – Michael Hays  
Volunteer Opportunities – Margo Morlock

### Westside Senior Life Center

37002 Ingham Road, Hilliard, FL 32046-1011  
Phone: 904-845-3331 – FAX: 904-845-4491  
Facebook: Nassau County Council on Aging  
Website: [www.nassaucountycoa.org](http://www.nassaucountycoa.org)

### Westside Senior Life Center Staff Contacts:

Administration/Case Management – Linda Rogers  
Case Management – Sue VanZant  
Nutrition/Meal Programs and Activities – Frances Nobles

### NassauTRANSIT

Phone: 904-261-0700 – Toll Free: 800-298-9122  
FAX: 904-261-3940  
Facebook: NassauTRANSIT Website: [www.nassautransit.org](http://www.nassautransit.org)  
Contacts: Michael Hays and Scott Nile

**ON THE COVER:** The Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Westside Senior Life Center attracted leaders, officials and community members to Hilliard, Nov. 16. Participating in the ceremony are (left to right): Katherine Woodby, Legislative Assistant for Rep. Cord Byrd (D-11); Geoff Clear, NCCOA Board Chair; Florida Senate President Pro Tempore Aaron Bean (D-4); Chris Bryan, NCCOA Board; Floyd Vanzant, Mayor of Hilliard; Janice Ancrum, NCCOA President & CEO; Tim Eberle, NCCOA Board; John Cotner, President, Cotner Associates, Inc.; and Steve Wetherell, President, ShayCore Enterprises.

*Cover Photo by Jimmie Stone Photography*

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# A Message from our President & CEO



Dear Friends,

This year has certainly been one of surprises and challenges. Through it all, we have come together as an NCCOA family to help ensure our seniors are living the happiest and healthiest lives possible. While we have continued *Meals on Wheels*, Home Health, case management and transportation services, I think we can all agree that reopening the Fernandina Beach Life Center at 1901 Island Walk Way will provide the return of much-needed in-person activities and much-missed socialization.

We are still setting our sights on reopening the Life Center in Fernandina Beach in January, with guidance from the Florida Department of Health and CDC. This will most likely happen in a phased approach with programs and activities opening in a staggered fashion, such as our “Just Friends” group in early January and limited Adult Day HealthCare “Club” members later in the month. Of course, we will practice social distancing, mask-wearing and hand-sanitizing – as well as other precautionary measures. Please stay tuned for additional information.

On November 16, we broke ground for our “new” Westside Senior Life Center in Hilliard during a special ceremony. Our facility at 37002 Ingham Road, built in 1984, is in desperate need of major repair and safety upgrades. The center will be refurbished and modernized with a \$600,000 appropriation from the state of Florida and an additional \$50,000 (required by the state as a match) which we are in the process of fundraising. The renovation will solve drainage issues to address flooding, connect the sewer system to the Town of Hilliard, resurface the parking lot with accommodation for handicap-accessible spaces and NassauTRANSIT buses, replace the roof and remove low-hanging tree branches, and expand nutrition support operations for Westside seniors. This is an exciting milestone for NCCOA and is expected to be completed next spring or summer. More details to come.

Finally, I would like to welcome several new staff members to our NCCOA team: Lili High, Program Operations Director; Lory Mauricio, Finance Director; and Tanya Johnson, Receptionist. Formerly serving as “director of first impressions” at the front desk, Margo Morlock is our new Volunteer Manager, following the retirement of Lynne Starling. When we reopen, please introduce yourselves to these NCCOA team members.

Here’s to continued flexibility, patience and compassion as we look to a new year!

Thank you for your enduring support,

Janice Ancrum  
President & CEO

## Our Funding Partners



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# About Nassau County Council on Aging



*Please visit [www.nassaucountycoa.com](http://www.nassaucountycoa.com) and [Facebook.com/nassaucountycoa/](https://www.facebook.com/nassaucountycoa/) for information and updates on NCCOA's facilities, programs and services.*

## LIFE CENTERS

Both Fernandina Beach and Westside Senior Life Centers offer those 60 and older assistance, information and support, in addition to many fun and engaging activities...plus opportunities to socialize, the key to a happy, healthy life. Meeting space is available for rent (maximum occupancy 320 persons) at 1901 Island Walk Way for group functions.

**Contacts:** **Fernandina Beach Life Center, 904-261-0701**  
**Westside Senior Life Center, 904-845-3331**

## PROGRAM OPERATIONS

NCCOA's Program Operations Department serves seniors by providing vitally important resources such as Case Management, Nutrition, Fall Prevention and Adult Day HealthCare (ADHC). NCCOA also partners with local and state-funded programs to assist with home energy crises (EHEAP) and facilitate City of Fernandina Beach Wastewater, Refuse and/or Storm Water Fee Exemption applications and Town of Hilliard Water Bill Assistance for qualified residents.

**Contact:** **NCCOA, 904-261-0701**

## ADULT DAY HEALTHCARE – “THE CLUB”

The only one of its kind in Northeast Florida, NCCOA's Adult Day HealthCare Program – also known as “The Club” – provides respite for caregivers and offers their loved ones a safe and secure environment. The program, licensed by the state of Florida, specializes in Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias, and offers families an affordable alternative to the rising costs of long-term care. The Club is supervised by a licensed nurse and Certified Dementia Practitioner (CDP).

**Contact:** **Debra Dombkowski, LPN, CDP, 904-775-5480 or [ddombkowski@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:ddombkowski@nassaucountycoa.org)**

## ADVOCATE HOME HEALTHCARE

Advocate Home Healthcare, a division of Nassau County Council on Aging, provides members with non-medical, in-home services related to daily living activities such as personal care, respite, homemaking and companion services. Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and Home Health Aides may also accompany members to appointments and activities. Members receive a minimum of two hours of care to full 24-hour shifts, depending on the need. Fees for these services are paid via private pay or approved Medicaid Long-Term Care (MLTC), pre-qualified state and federal programs, and Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

**Contact:** **Advocate Home Healthcare, 904-775-5499 or [advocatehomehealthcare@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:advocatehomehealthcare@nassaucountycoa.org)**

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION – NASSAUTRANSIT

The public transportation system in Nassau County, NassauTRANSIT provides both scheduled public bus and registered paratransit services. Our public bus service has convenient stops across the county between Hilliard and Fernandina Beach, at River City Marketplace and in downtown Jacksonville. The *Island Hopper* bus provides local public transit service around Fernandina Beach from Thursday through Monday. The fare for scheduled public bus service is only \$1 with no charge for transfers. Registered paratransit is available to all qualifying county residents and the fare is only \$2. All NassauTRANSIT bus operators and vehicles are credentialed to FTA and FDOT requirements, and all vehicles are wheelchair accessible.

**Contact:** **NassauTRANSIT, 904-261-0700/800-298-9122 or [www.nassautransit.org](http://www.nassautransit.org)**



# NCCOA Breaks Ground for Westside Senior Life Center Renovation

BY LIZ DUNN,  
NCCOA Marketing & Communications Director  
*Photos by Jimmie Stone Photography*



**Senate President Pro Tempore Aaron Bean (D-4) congratulates the Westside.**

**T**he safety net for seniors on Nassau County's Westside – namely, the Westside Senior Life Center in Hilliard – is primed and ready for renovation, thanks to local residents and the state of Florida. Built in 1984, Nassau County Council on Aging's (NCCOA's) facility at 37002 Ingham Road is in desperate need of major repair and safety upgrades to meet the expanding needs of our seniors. After the official ground-breaking ceremony on Nov. 16, the center is one step closer to a refurbished and modernized facility with a \$600,000 appropriation from the state of Florida and an additional \$50,000 (required by the state as a match).

While Governor Ron DeSantis's FY 2020-2021 budget included more than \$1 billion in vetoed spending requests, NCCOA's request to renovate the Life Center on the Westside survived the cuts (part of only 4% of requests approved). Sen. Aaron Bean (D-4), newly appointed Florida Senate President Pro Tempore, and Rep. Cord Byrd (D-11) helped make this possible through their hard work and dedication.

"The success of Nassau County Council on Aging truly depends on a partnership with Nassau County," said Sen. Bean. "We had a great group working on this appropriation,



**NCCOA Board Chair Geoff Clear addresses the crowd.**

*Continued on page 8*



**An enthusiastic and socially distanced crowd gathers for the ceremony.**





**Hilliard Mayor Floyd Vanzant (left) and NCCOA Board Member Tim Eberle discuss the Westside Senior Life Center renovation project.**



**NCCOA President & CEO Janice Ancrum thanks Westside community leaders for their support.**

*Continued from page 7*

and your team – led by Janice Ancrum – spent a lot of time in Tallahassee making sure that the legislators understood the need on the Westside.”

“There definitely is a need,” he continued. “People who we know and people who we will never meet are depending on what we do today and going forward to have a home away from home at the Westside Senior Life Center.”

Floyd Vanzant, mayor of Hilliard, echoed Sen. Bean’s sentiments. “Twenty years ago when I was County Commissioner, I used to get calls all the time about this building...flooding and falling trees,” Mayor Vanzant said. “We are looking forward to a new Senior Center. My mother-in-law is 97 years old and can’t wait for the programs and activities to start up again.”

As a designated AARP Livable Community, Florida’s population of seniors is expected to increase by nearly 40% in the next decade. More than 23,000 seniors (60+) live in Nassau County, 29% of the population. The county’s westside is currently home to approximately 8,300 seniors, and that number continues to grow. With a renovated facility on the westside, NCCOA projects doubling seniors served from 1,500 to 3,000. Specific improvements will be based on priorities and need, and include the following: Solve drainage issues to address flooding; connect sewer system to Town of Hilliard; resurface parking lot with accommodation for handicap-accessible spaces and NassauTRANSIT buses; replace roof and remove low-hanging tree branches; and expand nutrition program operations for Westside seniors.

“We are ecstatic that our “new” Westside Senior Life Center will soon help enrich the lives of our seniors in Hilliard, Callahan and Bryceville,” said Janice Ancrum, President & CEO, NCCOA. “The state funding will enable us to renovate our Westside facility and provide a Life Center on par with 1901 Island Walk Way in Fernandina Beach. Huge thanks to Sen. Bean and Rep. Byrd for their commitment to our senior population.”

Cotner Associates, Inc., an architectural firm based in Fernandina Beach, and ShayCore Enterprises, a Jacksonville-based construction company, will lead the renovation process. Both companies were involved with renovation of the Fernandina Beach Life Center. NCCOA Board Chair Geoff Clear and Board Members Tim Eberle, Chris Bryan and Mark Bridwell are leading the westside effort for the agency.

“Our new Life Center will serve our entire senior community on the westside,” said NCCOA Board Chair Geoff Clear. “With the completion of the project, we will have state-of-the-art facilities on both the westside and eastside of the county. It’s a reminder that agencies like Nassau County Council on Aging must grow and expand to remain

*Continued on page 9*



*Continued from page 8*

relevant for the people who rely on us for the programs and services that enrich their lives.”

Ancrum agrees. “Our Westside seniors deserve the best kind of facility to congregate with their peers, and fully participate in wellness classes and educational opportunities,” she said. “Our dedicated staff in Hilliard has managed to make miracles happen while serving seniors at the same time. What we have envisioned for the Westside Senior Life Center for quite some time will now become a reality.”

An expanded roster of activities is planned once the “new and improved” Life Center in Hilliard is ready for the public. Depending on construction schedules, the facility may close temporarily due to safety concerns. However, Meals on Wheels will continue throughout the renovation which is expected to be completed by late Spring 2021.

“We are so grateful to many, many people who have made this dream a reality,” Ancrum added. “From Sen. Bean and Rep. Byrd to our Board members, from our Westside Advisory Council and community supporters to our leadership team, and of course the Department of Elder Affairs and ElderSource, we are truly in a better position to empower all seniors in Nassau County to live happier, healthier lives.”

If you would like to help support seniors in West Nassau, please contact Wallace Bennett, Development Director, 904-775-5481 or [wbennett@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:wbennett@nassaucountycoa.org).



**NCCOA Board Member Chris Bryan leads the Westside fundraising effort.**



**Sen. Aaron Bean (left) and Nassau County Commissioners Thomas Ford (center), Interim Chairman (D-4), and Aaron Bell (D-2) discuss the benefits to the county with the renovation of NCCOA’s Westside Senior Life Center.**



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# Socializing with our Rock-Solid Friendships

BY JEAN KERRY, PhD, LMFT

**L**et's face it, this COVID thing has put a strain on relationships. And the new rules? Will I ever hug you again?

The good news is that our rock-solid friendships will adjust, and get as flexible as a Slinky!

Friendships are one of the most important relationships we have as human beings. Without friends, we would feel lonely, rejected and left out. Even in a marriage, we need friends outside of the relationship to fulfill our social needs or help us through difficult situations...

*Building rock-solid friendships takes loyalty, trust and honesty. It can't happen overnight.*

Most people have rock-solid friendships with only a couple of people or a handful at the most. The truth is a friendship is about quality, not quantity. Yes, you can have several friends, but most are merely casual friendships and don't have that deep inner connection.

*A good example of this is Jesus.*

He had 12 disciples, but only three were considered as his closest companions – Peter, James and John. Jesus had companionship with all 12, but only three were truly close to him, like a best friend.

*The friendly sacrifice ...*

Being a true friend also requires sacrifice. In a rock-solid friendship, we may be asked to give up our desires for our friend's needs. Our friend may need us when it's not so convenient for us, such as in the middle of the night. In a rock-solid friendship, this would involve sacrificing the comfort of a good night's sleep in a nice, warm bed in order to be there for our friend. But that's what friends do! *Be patient, take deep breaths...we are so worth each other.*

Sometimes miscommunication gets in our way which can create a new challenge in our relationships. In a rock-solid friendship, there is both give and take. There are mutual feelings between the parties and it's never one-sided. That doesn't mean there won't be conflicts because we're human, after all. However, when there is a conflict between two very close friends, the struggles usually don't last long because there is forgiveness, understanding and communication:

- *Forgiveness* means that you let go of any malice or grudge and you move forward at peace with one another.
- *Understanding* comes from knowing your friend inside



and out – where they're coming from and what they're going through.

- *Communication* means that you connect with your friend and have an overall understanding of his or her relating style.

When a friendship is truly rock-solid, the parties are real with each other; there are no facades, no masks and no secrets. There is trust, honesty, sincerity and loyalty; however, this comes only as a friendship grows.

*How to connect with a new friend...*

You may have stumbled upon someone new by chance or through friends. If there's enough common interest, you may decide to meet again. Sounds pretty obvious, right? With each encounter you have, your relationship grows and strengthens. Then as you continue to get to know one another, the communication becomes easier and more comfortable. The key here is that it can't happen overnight. If you try to force it, you may make the other person feel uncomfortable and threatened, so go at a smooth and steady pace.

*Show your true colors.*

As the friendship continues to blossom, casual friends build trust and loyalty through both the peaks and valleys of life. However, it's in the difficult times that a person's true colors are revealed. When you're going through a tragedy, a personal crisis or simply a rough patch, it is the rock-solid friends who are there to help lift you back up.

*Friends help friends grow.*

True friends help each other grow mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. A true friendship requires both unconditional love as well as tough love. Building a rock-solid friendship takes time to achieve, but once you're in one with someone you will know who you can trust. Neither distance nor hard times can spoil a truly rock-solid friendship.

*Dr. Jean Kerry is best known as a Relationship Expert who helps develop satisfying and quality choices. She is a licensed psychologist and marriage and family therapist who is here to serve both individuals and couples. She loves to help "sort things out."*





# FREE Classes and Presentations from NCCOA's 'Virtual' Life Center!

Even when our Life Centers are closed, seniors and adults of all ages can still exercise, travel, learn and socialize...virtually of course!

NCCOA continues to provide access to hundreds of free online resources; all you need is a personal computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone and an internet connection. Virtual opportunities include exercise classes, lifestyle presentations, technology basics, cooking, photography, music appreciation, brain games and Lifelong Learning.

You can get the latest updates of our opening, classes, presentations and opportunities via the **NCCOA web-site:** [www.nassaucountycouncilonaging.org](http://www.nassaucountycouncilonaging.org) - **Facebook:** Nassau County Council on Aging - **News-Leader** and other local and social media. All offerings listed are subject to availability.

## Partnership with GetSetUp

NCCOA is proud to partner with GetSetUp – [www.getsetup.io/partner/nassaucountycouncilonaging](http://www.getsetup.io/partner/nassaucountycouncilonaging) – an online learning platform for seniors, providing free virtual classes to Nassau County's older adults. These classes are live, interactive and taught by seniors for seniors covering topics such as Zoom, Gmail, Smartphone, iPad, Facebook, Instagram and 150+ other classes on technology, health and wellness, personal enrichment and entertainment. These classes are a fun way to learn something new and make new friends. Any GetSetUp class with a fee can be waived by entering NASSAU to override the price.

**Our local instructors will be returning** both in person as well as via Zoom, sometimes both, as we enter the new year! We plan to start phasing in classes offered by our instructors who miss you as much as we do, with guidance from the Florida Department of Health and CDC.

## ◆ HAPPENING NOW ◆

**Virtual EnerChi** – every Monday and Friday, 10 am – 11 am  
**Virtual Strength & Balance** – every Wednesday, 10 am – 11 am

Christy Hickey is our EnerChi and Strength & Balance certified fitness instructor for SilverSneakers and Renew Active. You do not have to be enrolled in either of these programs to participate. Both classes are offered via the Facebook Group: Lite Weights and are available for replay until 4 pm the following day.



**Tech Talk** – offered every Tuesday from 9:00 am – 10:00 am via Zoom by David Sproul, owner of Island Tech Support. Tech Talk offers anyone the opportunity to ask technical questions you may have about your computer, tablet, smartphone, smart TV and Bluetooth devices, as well as software, apps and security. David also provides a technical tip and app suggestion every week. To join a session, go to Zoom at <https://bit.ly/2HXH5pp>, Meeting ID: 851 6468 0496, Passcode: Tech.

To help you explore new apps which may fit your lifestyle, David has provided the following free or low-cost suggestions (NCCOA does not endorse any of the following resources):



**Lumosity: Brain Training** – Lumosity is a cognitive training program that is a fun, interactive way to train your brain and learn about how your mind works. The program consists of science-based games designed to exercise memory, attention, speed, flexibility and problem-solving. Lumosity - 3 free activities per day or Premium: \$11.99/month or \$59.55/year



**Magnifying Glass & Flashlight** – Free



**WebMD**  
Symptoms, Rx and Doctors – Free



**Pandora**  
Music & Podcasts – Free



**The Weather Channel** – Free



**Senior Discounts and Coupons**



**GoodRx**  
Prescription Coupons – Pharmacy Discounts – Free



**Words With Friends**  
Classic – Free



**Pillboxie**  
Friendly Medication Reminder – \$1.99



**Due to popular demand, two line dancing classes will be offered at the Fernandina Beach Life Center in 2021.**



**Majic Mixx Arts & Crafts** – continue in January via Facebook Group: Majic Mixx – Join our local artist, Christy Hickey, and other guest artists who teach various arts and crafts. Skill levels from beginners to advanced.



**Legal Chats** – Offered by Jacksonville Legal Aid, Inc., via Zoom. This organization offers free legal assistance to persons age 60 and over (and other groups) in Nassau, Duval, Baker, Clay and St. Johns counties. Attorneys are

available to discuss such topics as consumer protection and debt defense; housing matters including foreclosure and eviction relief; Social Security, food stamps and other benefits; healthcare; employment; immigration; family law and protection from abuse or exploitation; and certain probate and estate planning issues.

## ◆ COMING UP ◆

### Line Dancing

Our popular line dance instructor, Kathy Ball, will be returning to teach two different line dancing classes, each once a week:

**Beginners Line Dancing** designed for new students who need to practice fundamental moves.

**Beyond the Basics Line Dancing** designed for those who have line dancing experience and want to keep up with the newest dances.



**Cards and games such as Bridge, Canasta, Chess, Mahjong and Rummikub** will resume at 1901 Island Walk Way when we reopen.

Card games are offered as classes and social play by NCCOA. If you are interested or available to

teach another card and/or board game please contact [mdawkins@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:mdawkins@nassaucountycoa.org).

### Downsize, Document, Declutter or Donate Series – scheduled next year –

Presented by Carmen Fee Drake, Sales Associate, Sotheby's International Realty. The new year is right around the corner! Aren't we all ready to say goodbye to 2020 and welcome 2021 with a fresh start? Through this series, learn how to effectively downsize your home situation, document important information, declutter and donate to local charities.



**Fluid art beach scene by Christy Hickey.**

### Free Virtual Acrylic Fluid Art by Christy Hickey

This class will be offered on January 21 at 2:00 pm. Join [facebook.com/groups/majicmixx](https://facebook.com/groups/majicmixx). Supplies list will be provided (or) a kit will be available for purchase with advance reservation.

### SHINE Medicare Overview Presentation

Join ElderSource on January 20 at 2:00 pm <https://bit.ly/2ROX4rp>



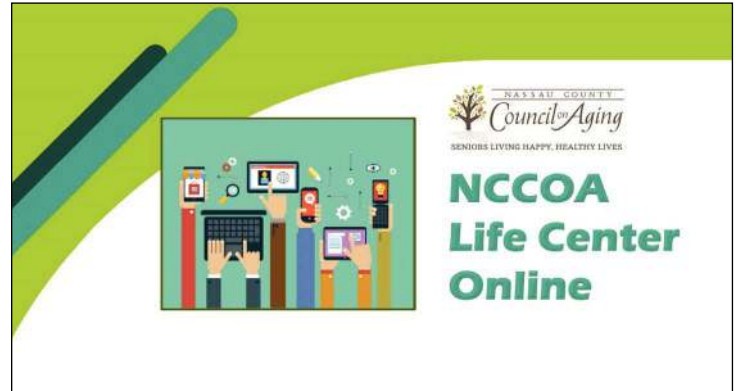
# NCCOA's Well-Informed Citizens "Meet" on Tuesdays!

BY BOB BOLAN, PhD

Since 2019, NCCOA has conducted the eight Great Decisions sessions organized each year by the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), as well as other topics with a national and worldwide focus, most recently under the *Tuesday Topics* banner. The goal of this weekly virtual session resulting from the pandemic is to foster informed discussion of important topics facing all of us in the United States.

Topics addressed during 2020 have included online discussions related to U.S. involvement with China, Russia and the Middle East. We've also focused on worldwide issues including climate change, artificial intelligence, and global health and pandemics. Most recently, sessions have focused on our national election process, the U.S. federal budget and comparative health care payment practices.

*Tuesday Topics* is scheduled to continue in 2021 – with both in-person sessions (when the Fernandina Beach Life Center reopens) and virtual availability each Tuesday at 2 p.m. More details to come. As with previous sessions, each



one seeks to answer three primary questions:

1. What is in the best interest of the people directly involved?
2. What is in the best interest of the United States?
3. What are the policy options reasonably available for U.S. action?

*Continued on page 15*



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People in our country share multiple values that sometimes create disagreement about the best action on a topic. For example, sometimes the short-term benefit (e.g., payments to help alleviate pandemic-caused financial hardship) conflicts with long-term goals (e.g., reduce federal debt). Sometimes it is difficult to maintain conditions for equality of opportunity at the same time as protecting adequate standards for outcomes. Sometimes values that are important to the United States clash when, for example, we deal with a dictator who has a poor record for human rights but provides safety, open trade and stability in his/her area of the world.

These discussions seek to identify all these elements in a factual manner without taking a stand for or against anyone's specific "position." Our participants may think of themselves as the closest advisors to a U.S. governmental official (such as the President), debating the pros and cons of various courses of action before the final decision is confirmed.

Tuesday Topics discussions planned for 2021 include eight FPA sessions, plus many other topics of national and worldwide interest including the following:

- The role of international organizations in a global pandemic
- Global supply chains and national security
- Persian Gulf Security
- Brexit and the European Union
- U.S. Supreme Court decisions
- Support for seniors (housing, food, lifestyle)

We welcome your requests and recommendations. Sessions are facilitated by Bob Bolan, NCCOA member, donor and volunteer.

To receive session materials and make suggestions, please contact Bob at [bolanbob@aol.com](mailto:bolanbob@aol.com).

**Bob Bolan, PhD, is a wellness advocate, current pro bono consultant for the NCCOA Board of Directors and lifelong learning volunteer instructor.**



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# Pets Bring Comfort in Uncomfortable Times

BY DICKIE ANDERSON



Dickie Anderson and Katie.

In times of stress, pets bring great comfort. It is a proven fact that time with a dog or cat can decrease stress, lower blood pressure, and increase social interaction and physical activity. In addition, pet owners often experience increased self-esteem and reduced feelings of loneliness.

The National Poll on Healthy Aging surveyed 2,051 adults aged 50 to 80 in late 2019. More than half the respondents reported owning a pet; 72% said their pets helped them cope with physical or emotional problems.

Dionna Sowers, volunteer coordinator for the Nassau County Humane Society ([www.nassauhumane.org](http://www.nassauhumane.org)), shared that adoptions have continued through the coronavirus concerns, but with some important safety precautions. Overall, there has been increased interest in adoptions and fostering since people found they have more time to spend with a newly adopted pet.

There are many responsibilities in adopting a pet. Cats may be better for seniors since they are calmer, require less maintenance and do not need to be walked. Older dogs may also be a good fit since they are past the energetic puppy phase. Be realistic about taking care of a pet, and have a support system to help with veterinarian visits.

Nassau County Council on Aging (NCCOA) provides *Meals on Wheels (MOW) for Pets*, an offshoot of the MOW program. When it was determined that seniors fed their own meals to their pets, the *MOW for Pets* program was born. Now, Fido and Fifi receive their own nutritious food. Volunteer MOW drivers also monitor the pets' health and welfare and arrange transportation for necessary health-care procedures or exams.

NCCOA recognizes the healing and calming qualities of dogs and cats, and offers a pet therapy program for Adult Day HealthCare "Club" members every Friday (when the ADHC program is in session). For more than 10 years, the Soft Touch Pet Therapy program volunteers arrive at "The Club" with two to six dogs. From a Great Dane named Lily Rose to a tiny Maltese named Molly, the dogs bring smiles to the seniors who look forward to their calming visit.

Never underestimate the power of a furry friend.

*Dickie Anderson is a freelance writer and the author of six books and a weekly column, From the Porch, for the Fernandina Beach News-Leader. She also coordinates the Soft Touch Pet Therapy Program. For more information on the program, contact Dickie at [dickie.anderson@gmail.com](mailto:dickie.anderson@gmail.com).*



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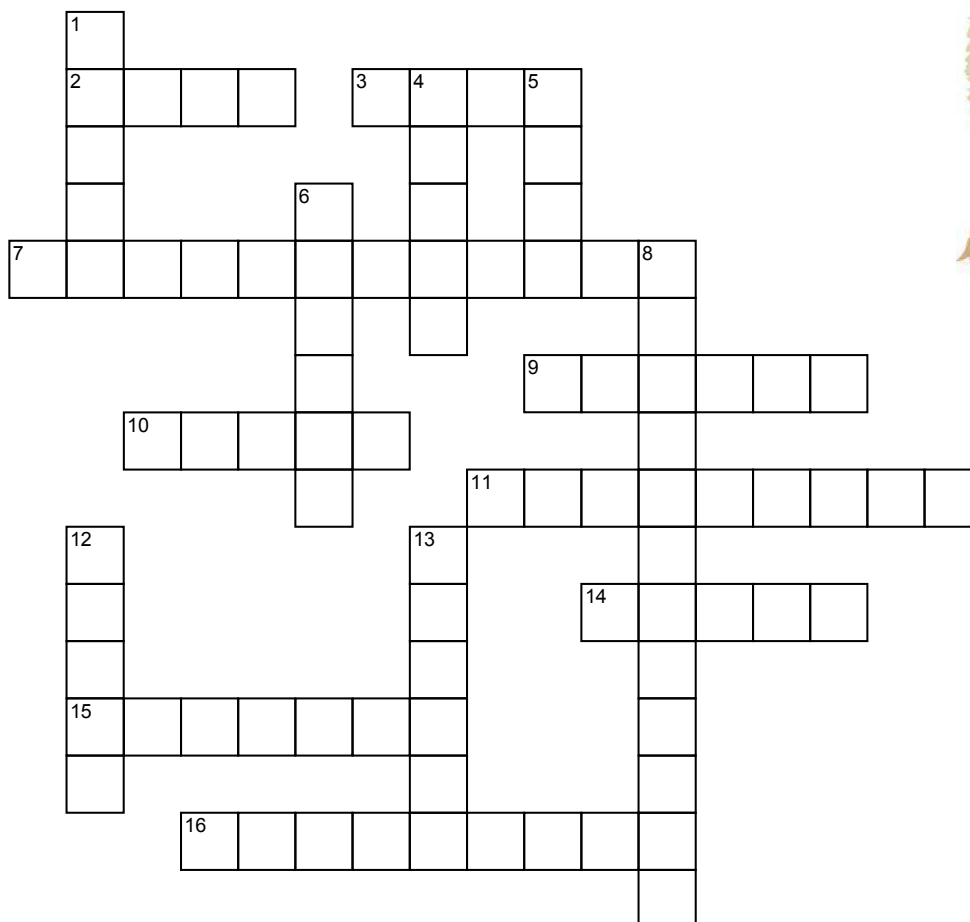
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# Famous Dogs



## ACROSS

- 2 This Wire-Haired Terrier appeared on The Thin Man.
- 3 This dog was made famous in early readers, with lines like this: "See \_\_\_\_\_run."
- 7 These protect dogs from getting diseases.
- 9 Dogs are Man's best\_\_\_\_\_.
- 10 A young dog, not yet a year old.
- 11 This German Shepherd, rescued from a WWI battlefield, went on to star in silent films.
- 14 To walk a dog, you need a collar and a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 15 Cats are felines; dogs are\_\_\_\_\_.
- 16 This famous dog protected two brothers before contracting a disease.

## DOWN

- 1 This dog was launched into space on Sputnik 2 in 1957.
- 4 Mickey Mouse's favorite sidekick.
- 5 The Name of Dorothy's dog in The Wizard Oz.
- 6 This cartoon dog slept on his doghouse and imagined he was a World War I flying ace.
- 8 This breed of dog is often shown with a barrel hanging from its collar.
- 12 Dogs love to play\_\_\_\_\_.
- 13 This famous Collie was Timmy's companion on the TV show named after him.

Solution on page 23 – Crossword puzzle courtesy of The Lakeside at Amelia Island



# A Reflection of 2020

**T**he year has come and gone, and what a year it was! Throughout 2020 we realized that while this in many ways has been the worst of times, it has also been the best of times. By that I mean that many Americans have risen to the challenges faced by themselves and others, and have reached out to help. This is not just in neighbors helping neighbors, families caring for friends and relatives, but philanthropically many have blessed others with giving. While it's difficult to find an article that absolutely matches each person's

view of the world, I found the following article penned in mid-2020 which captures a lot of what we have seen at Nassau County Council on Aging.

We are grateful for the untold hours given by our *Meals on Wheels* drivers and willing volunteers to help us when and where they can. In addition, our donors have made a huge difference in helping us help seniors. We are fortunate to live in a place where the sense of community transcends individual objectives.

Thank you.

*Wallace Bennett is NCCOA's Development Director. You may help us support seniors by contacting Wallace at 904-775-5481 or [wbennett@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:wbennett@nassaucountycoa.org).*



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## Positive Trends in Philanthropy

BY RUSS HODGE, CEO,  
*The Hodge Group, GivingUSA.org, July 15, 2020*

I hope this update finds you safe and healthy as we move into the second half of 2020. As you likely know, Giving USA recently released its numbers which showed that in 2019, Americans donated almost \$450 billion to charity. Furthermore, in comparison to 2018, individual giving increased by 2.8%. As good as this news is, most in our industry are deeply curious and even concerned about the outlook for 2020. I am optimistic about this year, and am reaching out to share with you some data The Hodge Group has been tracking, as well as some anecdotal information from our clients.

1. Though the stock market has taken some hits and unemployment is still over ten percent, the conversations we've shared with our clients and their stakeholders, suggest optimism toward recovery. We've also found that the non-profit community has a significant opportunity to emerge as a leader in this recovery by optimizing their strategic partnerships and remaining relevant and flexible in the current environment. To date, The Hodge Group has facilitated or is in the process of facilitating a half-dozen major gifts this year. In fact, we recently secured a transforma-

### How will COVID-19 impact charitable giving?



- tional gift through a Zoom solicitation.
2. A Fidelity Charitable Survey from March showed that almost 80% of donors plan to continue or increase the size of their gifts even in the midst of the COVID-19 Crisis. This is in contrast to the AFP survey data that shows an overall 6% decrease in charitable giving during the first quarter of 2020. The AFP survey also showed a bright spot of a 6% increase in smaller gifts of \$250 and under. We celebrate these because

*Continued on page 19*

we all recognize how deeply sacrificial these are under our current economic circumstances.

3. The desire to help is something many hope to carry beyond this life, and according to a recent article in the Chronicle of Philanthropy, FreeWill, a company that provides free online estate-planning tools, “saw a 600% increase in bequest commitments” in 2020 compared to 2019 for the last week of March. Bequest commitments in April 2020 were up 150% compared to 2019, and May commitments increased by 40% compared to 2019. This is consistent with everything The Hodge Group has observed about philanthropic tendencies during major life events.

The entire second quarter of 2020, beginning with COVID-19 and ending with one of the most era-defining social justice movements of our time, has certainly set the stage for the desire to leave a legacy.

4. A recent article in the New York Times makes clear that people are looking to help during these challenging times. Indeed, the article cites a study of thirty-two community foundations that found that donations from those organizations increased by 80% from March – May 2020 compared to that same time period in 2019.

I am privileged to do this work and look forward to observing profound recovery and change through the continued spirit of philanthropy.

*Russ Hodge has over 35 years of fundraising experience. Throughout the years, Russ's hands-on management style and innovative fundraising techniques have helped The Hodge Group raise more than half a billion dollars for organizations of all sizes across the country. Russ is often sought out as a key speaker at fundraising conferences locally and nationwide, and is a member of both the Giving Institute and Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP). In 2019, Russ Hodge presented at Candid (Formerly Foundation Center and Guidestar) and CASE Center for Community College Advancement on “How Board Culture Leads to Hyper-PhilanthropyTM.” Russ is the past recipient of AFP's Fundraiser of the Year for Central Ohio and is an AFP Master Trainer.*



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# Stay Safe This Holiday Season

The holidays are upon us, and, as we enter this joyous time of year, we may let our guard down a bit. We may allow ourselves to get distracted by all the shopping that needs to be done and all the events we plan to attend. But, as important as it is to savor these festivities, we also need to follow some simple steps for staying safe, whether we are on the go or at work.

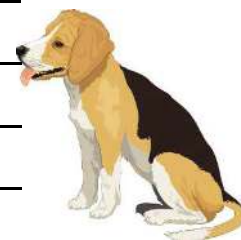
Jay Farhat, executive director of Security for Baptist Health, has pulled together some tips to help everyone stay safe this holiday season. If you see something when you are out and about, be sure to say something and report the suspicious person or incident to security.



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## Dog Breeds Word Scramble

ptoinre \_\_\_\_\_  
reirter \_\_\_\_\_  
dgollub \_\_\_\_\_  
peedhsog \_\_\_\_\_  
dlopoe \_\_\_\_\_  
bdralora \_\_\_\_\_  
gup \_\_\_\_\_  
snduachd \_\_\_\_\_  
yhuks \_\_\_\_\_  
eebagl \_\_\_\_\_  
clloei \_\_\_\_\_  
niespal \_\_\_\_\_  
dmnalaita \_\_\_\_\_  
mffstai \_\_\_\_\_  
Indafnewoudn \_\_\_\_\_



Solution on  
page 23 - Word  
Scramble  
courtesy of The  
Lakeside at  
Amelia Island

## Personal Safety Tips for the Holidays

### ON THE GO:

- Follow the three **A**'s of crime prevention:
  - Be **Aware** of your surroundings
  - Be **Alert** to suspicious people and vehicles
  - **Avoid** dangerous situations.
- Keep any bags closed and in front of you.
- Carry only the cash or credit cards necessary.
- Do not carry a lot of packages.
- Do not carry a spare set of keys in your purse.
- Place all packages in your trunk, not in the seats where they can be seen.

### AT WORK:

- Lock your office when you leave it.
- Lock your purse and personal belongings up. Do not leave them unattended.
- Try to go in groups when walking to your vehicle.
- Call Security and report suspicious people, vehicles or situations.



ILLUSTRATION BY SARAH JANE STUDIOS

# The Goldilocks Effect Related to Fear

BY JANICE CLARKSON, EdD, LMHC, CAP

**T**he Goldilocks Effect. “As customers, our emotional reactions are similar to the protagonist from the children’s tale, *Goldilocks and The Three Bears*.

Whether it has to do with the softness of the bears’ beds or temperature of their porridge, Goldilocks is turned off by the extremes,” says Johan Berger, Wharton professor and bestselling author of *Contagious* and *Invisible Influence*.

So how do we find the right amount of fear? Everyone knows finding the right amount of fear is difficult during this health crisis while the United States and other countries are closing down many of our daily activities. Like Goldilocks, imagining the worst outcomes or catastrophizing – helplessly fixating on the coronavirus – or at the other extreme blocking it out completely – can translate to ignoring even basic precautions such as washing hands several times a day.

Here are some suggestions:

- Contain the fear and remain calm during this disruption by supporting the closing down of non-essential activities.
- Change thinking. Rather than think, I will not be able to do my job now that I am working from home, think *what a gift this is to work from home*. Rather than think, I give up. I cannot deal with all these store shortages and closings due to this crisis, think, *well so far in life I have dealt with a lot worse. I have handled a lot of difficult stuff and am still kicking so I will get through this the best I can*.
- Reduce stress and anxiety. Researcher Holly Hendin, PhD, MD, Psychiatry Health & Behavioral Health

Network, recommends mindfulness-based strategies for visualizing your thoughts and worries as clouds floating by in the sky or twigs moving in a stream. This allows you to gain more distance and relief from your anxiety, and gives you a tool to use in times of stress.

- Practice diaphragmatic breathing and guided imagery to find balance and calm. Yoga, mindfulness and meditation are all widely available to people, even during social distancing via social media, apps, video sessions and YouTube tutorials.
- Stay connected. We are social animals, but physical separation – via social distancing – in a digital age no longer means you need to isolate socially. Stay connected with others in this time of increasing physical separation. Contacting others via telephone or video call can be a fun event, especially for those who feel isolated because of quarantine or shelter-in-place directives.
- Get outside with nature. The outdoors remains a wonderful tool that is available to us all, even as we socially distance from others. It is actually therapeutic to go outside and enjoy nature.

Certainly, you have heard the Chinese word for crisis - Wéijī? If you have not, it is composed of two parts meaning danger and opportunity. Now could be the time to count your blessings that are usually taken for granted. This is an opportunity to make changes for the better in what you prioritize in life. Make the most of the increasing time you have by spending it with loved ones.

Janice Clarkson, EdD, LMHC, CAP is a licensed mental health counselor, certified addiction professional and certified yoga pod instructor.





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# Support Groups

Please contact NCCOA at 904-261-0701 for updated information on these programs.

## ▲ Starting Over and Reconnecting Support Group

Group discussions focus on how to reconnect during transitions of life whether it be for divorce, death, depression, job loss, retirement, parenting as a grandparent, etc.

## ▲ Whispers Laryngectomy Support Group

Designed to help people who have had laryngectomies cope with daily challenges, exchange latest information and ideas, and provide support and encouragement for living a fulfilling life.

## ▲ Hearing Loss Support Group

Group discussions focus on hearing loss, how hearing loss impacts everyday living, your brain and your ability to keep socially engaged and live a fulfilling life.

## ▲ Low Vision Support Group

Provides information on adaptive devices and encourages members with vision challenges to share experiences through group discussions and guest speaker presentations.

## ▲ Veterans Support Group

This discussion provides an opportunity for veterans to be heard and receive information. Group-led topics are featured as well as guest speakers to assist with benefits and other requested topics.

## ▲ Parkinson's Support Group

Discussions for people living with Parkinson's disease, including caregivers, spouses and their loved ones.

## ▲ Caregivers Support Group

Offers support and education for caregivers. It is not suited for loved ones to attend; however, all caregivers are welcome. Guest speakers are often featured.

## ▲ NAMI Support Group

Support group for individuals, family members and friends impacted by mental illness. Offered by the National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI Nassau can be reached at 904-277-1886.

# Assistance Programs

Please contact NCCOA at 904-261-0701 for updated information on these programs.

## ▲ Assistance Through Government-Subsidized Programs

NCCOA is the lead agency for the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' state and federally funded grant programs. Potential clients are screened and prioritized according to their needs.

## ▲ CHORE (Small Home Repair Program)

Volunteers help with small home repairs and other assistance (such as ramps), providing the safety and security to help seniors remain in their homes.

## ▲ Emergency Home Energy Assistance Program (EHEAP)

assists senior citizens 60 years of age and over in paying their past-due electric bill once during the heating or cooling seasons. Eligibility includes: senior living in the household in Nassau County; a past-due electric bill; and income determination.

## ▲ Fall Prevention

Provides free, non-medical in-home assessments and recommends community resources to help prevent falls for Nassau County seniors.

## ▲ Free Legal Assistance

for Nassau County residents. Jacksonville Legal Aid is available at no cost by appointment to assist with topics such as health care proxy, power of attorney, family law, consumer and housing issues, as well as other matters.

▲ **Home Health Services** – Provides non-medical in-home services to homebound seniors that help them live independently in their home or the home of a loved one.

▲ **Meals on Wheels & Meals on Wheels for Pets** are available for homebound seniors.

▲ **SHINE (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders) Program** provides free, one-on-one insurance information to Medicare beneficiaries and caregivers.

## Famous Dogs

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