

Nassau County Council on Aging

# Senior Life

Celebrating Happy, Healthy Lives

## How to Foster Healthier Aging

Plus:

Common Health Conditions  
With Aging

Mnemonics Could  
Save Your Life

The Gift of Legacy

Adult  
Classes  
for ALL  
Ages!

NASSAU COUNTY

*Council on Aging*

SENIORS LIVING HAPPY, HEALTHY LIVES

January - March 2026



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### Janice Ancrum Senior Life Center

1901 Island Walk Way, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Phone: 904-261-0701 • FAX: 904-261-0704

[nassaucountycoa.org](http://nassaucountycoa.org)

#### Staff Contacts

Adult Day HealthCare, The Club - **Jennifer Gundling**

Advocate Home Healthcare - **Carla Hadden**

Caregiver Services - **Jennifer Gundling**

Case Management - **Donna Granieri**

CHORE Program - **Frances Bartelt**

Development - **Brian LaVacca**

Electric/Water Assistance - **Case Management**

HR, Compliance and Facilities - **Don Harley**

Just Friends/Westie Besties - **Frances Nobles**

Marketing and Communications - **Chris Boek**

Lifelong Learning - **Melody Dawkins**

Nutrition and Meal Programs - **Gina Thompson**

Program Operations - **Donna Granieri**

Volunteer Opportunities - **Chris Fournier**

### Westside Senior Life Center

37002 Ingham Road, Hilliard, FL 32046-1011

Phone: 904-845-3331 • FAX: 904-845-4491

[nassaucountycoa.org](http://nassaucountycoa.org)

#### Staff Contacts

Administration/Case Management - **Linda Rogers**

Nutrition/Meal Programs - **Frances Nobles**

Activities - **Melissa Snead**

## Follow NCCOA on Social!



@NassauCountyCOA



@NC\_COA



@NassauCountyCouncilOnAging



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# About Nassau County Council on Aging

## SENIOR LIFE CENTERS

Both Senior Life Centers offer those 60 and older assistance, information, and support, in addition to many fun and engaging activities for adults of all ages. Meeting space is available for rent in both Fernandina Beach and Hilliard locations for group functions.

**Janice Ancrum Senior Life Center, 904-261-0701**

**Westside Senior Life Center, 904-845-3331**

## PROGRAMS & SERVICES

NCCOA is the lead agency for the Florida Department of Elder Affairs state and federally funded grant programs. Programs & Services include Case Management, Nutrition (Meals on Wheels), Fall Prevention and CHORE small home repair. 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. Free legal assistance is offered through Nassau County Legal Aid, and SHINE provides free consultations to Medicare beneficiaries and caregivers.

**Donna Granieri, 904-775-5497 | [dgranieri@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:dgranieri@nassaucountycoa.org)**

## THE CLUB/TRAINING & CAREGIVER SERVICES

- The only one of its kind in Northeast Florida, NCCOA's Adult Day HealthCare Program – 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, provides appropriate therapeutic, social, and health-enhancing activities for those with chronic illness, Alzheimer's disease or other cognitive deficits, and is supervised by a licensed nurse.
- Caregiver resources include workshops, education and training, stress-busting forums, and support groups. NCCOA's Memory Café is an offering for those living with Alzheimer's and related disorders. Learn how to adjust to life changes, combat stigma and isolation, and develop a safe social peer group.

**Jennifer Gundling, 904-775-5488 | [jgundling@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:jgundling@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

# Board of Directors



Karen Hackett | Chair



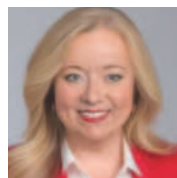
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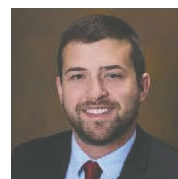
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Brian Rafferty



David Sharpe



James Staton Jr.



Dr. Pedro L. Tamayo IV



Ken Saitow | Past Chair

and companion services. Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) and Home Health Aides may also accompany members to appointments and activities. Fees for these services are paid via private pay, and/or pre-qualified state and federal programs.

**Carla Hadden, 904-675-9835 | [chadden@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:chadden@nassaucountycoa.org)**

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

If you are interested in helping seniors, there are many opportunities available at both the Fernandina Beach and Westside Senior Life Centers. Seven main volunteer support areas are offered: Administrative, The Club, CHORE, Community Room, Instructors and Presenters, Meals on Wheels Drivers, Friendly Visitors and other opportunities.

**Chris Fournier, 904-775-5490 | [cfournier@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:cfournier@nassaucountycoa.org)**



## MESSAGE FROM OUR President & CEO

Each season brings its own rhythm, and winter reminds us to slow down, reflect, and focus on what truly matters—connection, compassion, and care for one another. At the Nassau County Council on Aging (NCCOA), these values guide everything we do, especially as we work to ensure that every senior in our community can age in place with comfort, dignity, and good health.



While this time of year often brings celebration, it can also bring hardship for many older adults. Across Nassau County, too many seniors are faced with impossible choices, whether it's paying for medication, buying gas, heating their homes, or filling their pantries. Due to a lack of resources, food insecurity has become one of the most pressing challenges we face, affecting one in ten seniors locally.

That's why NCCOA has made the fight against hunger one of our top priorities. Through expanded Meals on Wheels routes, the development of food pantries at our Senior Life Center in Fernandina Beach, grocery gift card assistance, and partnerships with local organizations, we are ensuring that no senior has to wonder where their next meal will come from. Our recent Giving Seniors Hope Thanksgiving Luncheon was a powerful reminder of what community looks like when we all come together to serve the greater good. More than 300 seniors were welcomed with warmth and gratitude as they enjoyed a homemade Thanksgiving meal prepared and served by caring members of our community.

Beyond nutrition, NCCOA's programs and services support the whole person. From health and wellness classes to home repair assistance, from our Adult Day HealthCare program to our Senior Life Centers, we are focused on helping older adults stay active, connected, and well. The articles in this issue, from maintaining friendships to understanding chronic conditions, highlight how vital it is to nurture both body and mind as we age.

As the year comes to a close, I ask you to consider the difference you can make through your end-of-year giving. Every gift, whether large or small, strengthens our ability to serve, sustain, and uplift Nassau County's seniors. And this year, every donation will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling the impact of your generosity.

Together this winter, we can bring warmth to the table and hope to every home we serve.

Janice Ancrum  
President & CEO

## Thank You

To Our  
Funding Partners



ElderAffairs  
FLORIDA



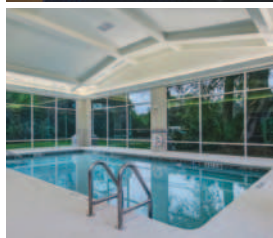
1235 South 10th Street  
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034  
904.261.3696  
fbnewsleader.com

## Our Mission

*Our mission is to enhance the lives of older adults through services and compassionate care designed to improve the health, independence and economic security of all Nassau County seniors and their families.*

  
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 AT AMELIA ISLAND PLANTATION

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 An Interdenominational Community Church

**Sunday Worship Services**  
 9 am & 11:15 am

**36 Bowman Road**  
 Amelia Island, FL 32034  
 904.277.4414 [www.ameliachapel.com](http://www.ameliachapel.com)

We livestream our 9 am service on our website  
[Amelia.Plantation.Chapel](http://Amelia.Plantation.Chapel) 





# How to Foster Healthier Aging:

## *Why Friendships and Activities Matter*

**F**riendships and activities are more than just pastimes – they are proven cornerstones of healthy aging. They play a vital role not only in physical well-being, but also in maintaining strong mental, emotional, and cognitive health. At Nassau County Council on Aging (NCCOA), we believe that staying connected and engaged in our close relationships and diverse activities leads to longer, happier, and more independent lives.

Through a wide variety of lifelong-learning classes, fitness classes, and creative social activities, NCCOA helps adults stay engaged and informed. Our programs are not only enjoyable, but they also offer a lifeline to connection, especially for those experiencing life transitions, isolation, or caregiving responsibilities.

### **Meaningful Friendships**

Research consistently shows that staying socially connected helps combat loneliness and depression, and can even reduce the risk of cognitive decline. Human connection combats isolation, which is particularly dangerous for older adults. Physical health and mobility, including walking, stretching, gentle yoga, or dancing, not only builds strength and flexibility but also supports mobility and balance,

lowering the risk of falls and chronic disease. Nurturing friendships produces emotional fulfillment and purpose. These special relationships bring joy and reduce stress. Sharing hobbies, interests or even a meal creates strong emotional bonds and improves life satisfaction.

### **Diverse Activities**

NCCOA supports connection through a constantly evolving menu of classes and activities at two Senior Life Centers—one in Fernandina Beach and one in Hilliard. These vibrant community hubs offer the following:

- Daily exercise classes such as chair yoga, Tai Chi, and even line, belly, and tap dancing
- Arts & crafts, painting, photography
- Tech classes, history
- Wellness clinics and health check-ups
- Social lounges and support groups

At NCCOA's Senior Life Centers, adults of ALL ages benefit in mind, body, and spirit.



- **Social connection** through in person visits, shared classes and friendly conversation.
- **Regular physical activity** with a variety of movement options tailored for comfort and ability.
- **Mental stimulation** via workshops, lectures, classes and creative pursuits.
- **Emotional support** from volunteers, staff, peers and community gatherings.
- **Practical assistance** that enables seniors to remain independent and engaged in daily life.

Nurturing friendships and participating in activities are essential pillars of healthy aging, providing emotional resilience, mental clarity, and physical strength. NCCOA takes a holistic, community-based approach to foster those connections in a caring, inclusive environment.

One of our beloved members wrote the following in a column for the News Leader this spring:

*"I am a snowbird from upstate New York. For the past nine years, my husband and I have taken advantage*

*of everything Fernandina Beach has to offer. But this past winter was our best ever, thanks to discovering the true gem of the area — Nassau County Council on Aging's Janice Ancrum Senior Life Center at 1901 Island Walkway.*

*This beautiful, modern facility is more than a senior assistance center. I see it as a vibrant community hub for adults of ALL ages. I joined for the art classes — watercolor, acrylic, drawing, and even a new shell class. The teachers are patient, kind and talented, and the bonus is the genuine friendships I have formed. I still stay in touch with many of them. My projects now decorate my home, bringing joy and pride.*

*I can't wait to return next season, both as a member and volunteer."*

By staying socially engaged and physically active, NCCOA members are maintaining their health, independence, and joy well into later years. With NCCOA as your partner, you can do the same.

*Source: National Institute on Aging*



# Lifelong Learning



All classes are held at the Janice Ancrum Senior Life Center, 1901 Island Walk Way, Fernandina Beach, unless noted otherwise  
Questions? Contact NCCOA at 904-261-0701.



## Special Events

### Amelia Island Whale Ambassadors

Theresa Hartz  
Tue – Jan 20 • 1 – 2 pm

### Book Club - Reading Between the Lines - Free

Lucy Martin, Kathy DeAngelis & Traci Canada

*James by Percival Everett*

Wed – Jan 7 • 5:30 – 7:00 pm

*My Friends*

*by Fredrik Backman*

Wed – Feb 4 • 5:30 – 7:00 pm

*Strangers in Time*

*by David Baldacci*

Wed – Mar 4 • 5:30 – 7:00 pm



## Cards & Games

### Fun & Games with Haley! – Free

Haley Saget, Conviva Care Centers  
Date to be Determined

### Pennies – Must Know How to Play

Sue King  
Every Mon • 1 – 4 pm

### Mah Jongg – Instruction Class

Theresa Macwithey  
Mon – Jan 12, 19 & 26  
1 – 3 pm

### Rummikub

Janet Chatfield  
Every Mon • 3:00 – 4:45 pm

### Rummikub - Free

Nancy Chandler  
Every Tue • 9 – 10 am

### Trivia - Free

Nelson Insurance  
3rd Tue • 9 – 10 am

### Mah Jongg - Tuesdays

Sherri O'Hara  
Every 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th Tue  
1 – 4 pm

### Bridge - Tuesdays

Rhona Walsh  
Every Tue • 1 – 4 pm

### Party Bridge

Lois Stewart  
Every Wed • 9:30 am – 12:30 pm

### Canasta Hand Knee & Foot

Sue King  
Every Wed • 1 – 4 pm

### Cribbage - All Levels

Shirley Green  
Every Wed • 12:30 – 3:30 pm

### Samba Game

Sue King  
Every Thu • 1 – 4 pm

### Canasta – Hand, Knee, Foot & Toe – Open Play and Instruction

Debbie Price  
Every Fri • 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

### Mah Jongg – All Levels with a Current Mahjong Card

Theresa Macwithey  
Every Fri • 12:30 – 3:30 pm

### Bridge Open Play – All Levels

Every Fri • 12:30 – 4:00 pm

### Bridge – Friday

Carolyn James-Rudd  
Every Fri • 12:30 – 4:00 pm



## Computers & Technology

### iPhone/iPad – Series of 3

Marc Williams  
Mon – Tue – Wed – Jan 5, 6 & 7  
9:30 – 11:30 am

### Apple Mac- Including OS-26 – Series of 3

Marc Williams  
Mon – Tue – Wed – Feb 9, 10 & 11  
9:30 – 11:30 am

### iPhone/iPad – Series of 3

Marc Williams  
Mon – Tue – Wed – Mar 2, 3 & 4  
9:30 – 11:30 am

### Snapseed Photo Editor App

Jensen Bell  
Tue – Feb 17 • 10 – 11 am

### AI: 3 Courses – Tools, Protection & Creating

Shirley Singleton, Secure Data Consortium  
Tue – Jan 13, Feb 10 & Mar 10  
2 – 3 pm

### Android Savvy – Series of 6

April Blue-Moseley  
Thu – Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, Feb 5 & 12  
10 – 11 am

### iPhone Basics

Becky Clark  
Thu – Jan 8, 15, 22 & 29  
11 am – 12 pm





## Financial

### **FL Estate Planning: Who, What, When, Where & Why**

Harrison Poole, Poole & Poole Law  
Mon – Feb 2 • 2 – 3 pm

### **Managing Your Portfolio After Retirement**

Ted Doss, Vystar Credit Union  
Wed – Jan 14 • 1 – 2 pm

### **Budgeting & Buying Your Next Car**

Ted Doss, Vystar Credit Union  
Wed – Feb 4 • 1 – 2 pm

### **Real Estate Matters**

Doug Mackle  
Thu – Feb 19 • 1 – 2 pm



## Fitness & Dance

### **Pelvic Floor & Core - Mat Required**

Janice Clarkson  
Every Mon • 8:30 – 9:30 am

### **Chair Yoga**

Tina LaVacca  
Every Mon • 9:00 – 9:45 am

### **Exercise with Tissa - Free**

Tissa Lewis  
2nd & 4th Mon • 9 – 10 am

### **Enerchi**

Mary Bleck  
Every Mon • 10 – 11 am

### **Beginning Ballet**

Laura Giordano  
Every Mon • 10:30 – 11:15 am

### **Standing Yoga**

Mary Bleck  
Every Mon • 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

### **Tap Dancing**

Laura Giordano  
Every Mon • 12:45 – 1:45 pm

### **Tap FUNdamentals!**

Gwen White  
Every Mon • 1:00 – 2:30 pm

### **Tai Chi: 13 Elements**

Tom Gagne  
Every Mon & Wed • 3 – 4 pm

### **Tai Chi: 24 Postures**

Tom Gagne  
Every Mon & Wed • 4:00 – 4:45 pm

### **Standing Core**

Catherine Paradise  
Every Tue • 8:15 – 9:15 am

### **Floor Yoga Stretch - Mat Required**

Catherine Paradise  
Every Tue • 9:30 – 10:30 am

### **Stability Exercises**

Mary Bleck  
Every Tue • 10 – 11 am

### **Standing Pilates**

Merle Sauer  
Every Tue • 10:45 – 11:45 am

### **Belly Dancing**

Laura Giordano  
Every Tue • 11:15 am – 12:15 pm

### **Hula Hooping: All Levels Welcome**

Heidi Freilich & Laura Giordano  
Every Tue • 12:15 – 12:45 pm

### **Chair Aerobics**

Merle Sauer  
Every Tue • 12 – 1 pm

### **Zumba Gold**

Stacey “Sparkle” Vinson  
Every Tue • 1 – 2 pm

### **Line Dancing - Basic**

Kathy Ball  
Every Tue • 1:00 – 1:45 pm

### **Line Dancing - Intermediate**

Kathy Ball  
Every Tue • 2 – 3 pm

### **Energy Burst Stations**

Tina LaVacca  
Every Wed • 8:00 – 8:45 am

### **Stretch & Balance - Advanced**

Janice Clarkson  
Every Wed • 8:30 – 9:30 am

### **Never Too Late Boxing - Free**

Joe Granieri, Urban Revolution  
Martial Art  
Every 2nd & 4th Wed • 9 – 10 am

### **Tighten and Tone - Mat Required**

Merle Sauer  
Every Wed • 9 – 10 am

### **Weight Training and Toning**

Janice Clarkson  
Every Wed • 9:45 – 10:45 am

### **Aerobic Exercise - Mat Required**

Merle Sauer  
Every Wed • 10 – 11 am

### **Pilates - Mat Required**

Merle Sauer  
Every Wed • 11 am – 12 pm

### **Enerchi**

Mary Bleck  
Every Wed • 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

### **Line Dancing - Basic**

Kathy Ball  
Every Wed • 1:00 – 1:45 pm

### **Line Dancing - Intermediate**

Kathy Ball  
Every Wed • 2 – 3 pm

### **Sit & Be Fit!**

Catherine Paradise  
Every Thu • 8:15 – 9:15 am

### **Resistance Training - Advanced**

Debi Senger  
Every Thu • 8:30 – 9:30 am

### **Mat & Core - Advanced - Mat Required**

Debi Senger  
Every Thu • 9:30 – 10:30 am

### **Qigong Healing - The Art of Inhaling Life**

John Cipriani  
Every Thu • 9:30 – 10:30 am

### **Posture & Balance**

John Cipriani  
Every Thu • 10:30 – 11:30 am

*Fitness continued on the following page*

## Just Dance

Laura Giordano & Heidi Freilich  
Every Thu • 10:30 – 11:30 am

## Dancing Queens

Lorraine Gaito  
Every Thu • 12:00 – 12:45 pm

## Zumba Gold

Stacey “Sparkle” Vinson  
Every Thu • 1:30 – 2:30 pm

## Zumba Gold: Weight Training & Toning

Stacey “Sparkle” Vinson  
Every Fri • 8:30 – 9:30 am

## Chair Yoga

Tina LaVacca  
Every Fri • 9:00 – 9:45 am

## Zumba Step Up

Stacey “Sparkle” Vinson  
Every Fri • 9:45 – 10:45 am

## Aerobic Exercise I

Merle Sauer  
Every Fri • 10 – 11 am

## Aerobic Exercise II

Merle Sauer  
Every Fri • 11 am – 12 pm

## Pilates – Mat Required

Merle Sauer  
Every Fri • 11 am – 12 pm

## Total Body Workout

Stacey “Sparkle” Vinson  
Every Fri • 11:30 am – 12:30 pm

## Yoga Full Body Stretch

Merle Sauer  
Every Fri • 12 – 1 pm

## Golf Fitness Training

Terry McGriff II  
Every Fri • 2 – 3 pm



## History, Culture & Travel

### Armchair Travel – Free

Nancy Cerra, Realtor,  
Keller Williams Realty  
1st Tue • 9 – 10 am

## Photo Destinations – Free

Alwynne Lamp  
3rd Thu • 9 – 10 am

## Great Decisions

### America & the World: Trump 2.0 Foreign Policy

Brian Dieffenbach  
Tue – Jan 20 • 3:00 – 4:30 pm

### Trump Tariffs & the Future of the World Economy

Greg Doyle  
Tue – Jan 27 • 3:00 – 4:30 pm

### U.S. – China Relations

Mark Ericson  
Tue – Feb 3 • 3:00 – 4:30 pm

### Ruptured Alliances & the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation

Richard Scribner  
Tue – Feb 10 • 3:00 – 4:30 pm

### Ukraine & the Future of European Security

Tom Smith  
Tue – Feb 17 • 3:00 – 4:30 pm

### Multilateral Institutions in a Changing World Order

Paul Pierson  
Tue – Feb 24 • 3:00 – 4:30 pm

### U. S. Engagement of Africa

Robert Weintraub  
Tue – Mar 3 • 3:00 – 4:30 pm

### The Future of Human Rights & International Law

Presenter TBD  
Tue – Mar 10 • 3:00 – 4:30 pm



## Hobbies - Arts, Crafts & Gardening

### All About Fishing (Series of 8)

Harley Ess & Friends  
Dates To Be Determined

### Crocheting Circle - All Levels - Free

Brenda Brubeck  
Every Tue • 10:00 – 11:30 am

## Observe, Interpret and Create

Ann Freeman  
Wed – Jan 7, 14 & 21  
12:30 – 2:30 pm

## Having Fun with Perspective

Ann Freeman  
Wed – Feb 11, 18 & 25  
12:30 – 2:30 pm

## The Creative Doodle with Loralie!

Loralie Harris, LoralieDesigns.com  
Thu – Jan 8 • 9 – 10:30 am

## Creating a Tabletop Topiary (Supply fee \$15.00)

Beverly Williams & Bartram Garden Club  
Thu – Mar 5th • 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

## Casual Knitting & Conversation - Free

Every Thu • 1 – 3 pm

## Shell Creations

Cheryl Allen  
Every 1st & 3rd Thu • 2:30 – 4:30 pm

## Crocheting Circle - All Levels - Free

Brenda Brubeck  
Every Fri • 11am – 1 pm

## Art Therapy

Leeanne Saylor,  
Saylor Accounting & Tax  
Every Fri • 2:00 – 4:30 pm

## Creating Beaded Jewelry

Francis Peters, Front Porch Beads  
Sat – Feb 7 • 1:00 – 2:30 pm



## Language/Literature

### Spanish Level 1 – Basic Spanish

Maria Hernandez  
Every Thu • 10 – 11 am

### Spanish Level 2 – Beginning Conversation

Maria Hernandez  
Every Thu • 11 am – 12 pm

Language/Literature continued on the following page



## Spanish Level 3: Intermediate Conversational Spanish

Maria Hernandez  
Every Mon • 1:30 – 3:00 pm

## Beginning French

Naima Hashem  
Every Tue • 1 – 2 pm

## Sign Language

Lynn Freeman  
Every Thu • 10 – 11 am



## Music

### Guitar Slow Jam w/Bass - All Levels

Joyce Whorton, Musician  
Every Mon • 2:30 – 3:30 pm

### Elvis Music with Lane - Free

Lane Mashburn, Amelia Auto Mart  
1st & 3rd Mon • 9 – 10 am

### Ukulele - Open Play

Julie and Jim Black  
Every Mon • 10 – 11 am

### Guitar Adventures with Joyce - Free

Joyce Whorton  
2nd & 4th Tue • 10 – 11 am

### Celebrating with Music - Free

Sandi Haynes  
Dates to be Determined

### String Ensemble – All Levels

Judith Ward  
Every Tue 3:00 – 4:45 pm

### Sing Along with Bruce - Free

Bruce Beville  
1st, 3rd, & 5th Wed • 9 – 10 am

### Tunes with the 2J's - Free

Julie & Jim Black  
2nd & 4th Thu • 10 – 11 am

### Music with Bill - Free

Bill Gallerizzo  
Every 1st Thu • 9 – 10 am

## Songs with Terry – Free

Terry Murphy  
Every 2nd Fri • 9 – 10 am



## Other Opportunities

### Coffee & Conversation - Free

Walker Davis  
Every Tue • 9 – 10 am



## Wellness

### Longevity Foods From Around the World

April Blue-Moseley  
Every Mon • 10:30 – 11:30 am

### Common Health Conditions with Aging

Dr. Robin Beck, Geriatrician, Baptist  
Age Well Center for Health

#### Meet Dr. Beck

Wed – Feb 4 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### What to Expect With Normal Aging

Wed – Feb 11 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### Vascular Disease

Wed – Feb 18 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### Depression and Anxiety

Wed – Feb 25 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### Memory Concerns

Wed – Mar 4 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### Arthritis & Osteoporosis

Wed – Mar 11 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### Diabetes/Mellitus (Type 2)

Wed – Mar 18 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### COPD

Wed – Mar 25 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### Obesity/High Lipids

Wed – Apr 1 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

#### Kidney & Bladder

Wed – Apr 8 • 3:30 – 4:30 pm

## Tapping Meditation - Tapping Cafe

Jean Kerry, PhD  
Every Thu • 1 – 2 pm

## Holistic Health Diet

April Blue-Moseley  
Every Fri • 1 – 2 pm

## Brain Boosters

Dr. Marc Case, Case Chiropractic  
Neurology Center  
Fri – Jan 30, Feb 27 & Mar 20  
10 – 11 am

## Mental Health First Aid – Series of 2 - Free

Katrina Wheeler-Robinson, LMHC,  
LPC, MCAP, SAP  
Wed – Jan 7 • 8 am – 12 pm  
Fri – Jan 9 • 8 am – 12 pm

## Linking Lives with Social Connections – Series of 3 – Free

Katrina Wheeler-Robinson, LMHC,  
LPC, MCAP, SAP  
Wed – Jan 14, 21 & 28 • 9 – 11 am  
Wed – Mar 11, 18 & 25 • 9 – 11 am

*Classes marked Free are usually held during our “Just Friends” program (free for seniors, 60 or older residing in Nassau County). Guests are welcome.*

*Lifelong learning classes can be reserved at [MyActiveCenter.com](http://MyActiveCenter.com).*

# Senior Life

## Word Search



U A C J D L N G I M D E S C O W S B Z N L F C K C Z N U D G  
H F Q F K L W R R Q K B P H E A R I N G R V R C G Q L P Q X  
H U C U Z I J W E Z A W B B S T R O K E Y Q M V B K Y I X H  
Y X E Z J I Q M E M O R Y C O N C E R N S U F Z H H P E E H  
W I S D I N U S K Z T W Z J K H F Z L W K A J T Y F A O Z I  
O O W E O N M G C R Y C Z F S N O S H R L E O M G G B H G P  
C P H H B B G J H S E C I O G L I Y M T B J L D S K O G P H  
J N Z E E V Q G R C M W H M G N E C R C H C B Y N E N O V H  
Q F L A S V C Q O K A M P O A P A E F U S P X B U G J Z L R  
R M M L I S A D N S C C W Q L N X R P Q S W M C M Q V E A H  
Q Q V T T N O I I W I O R M P E W Z K C D F C Y M B J A X E  
B J I H Y I Y A C B O Z F F R J S C W E W H Q M I X S U J A  
J R S P K F Y B K B H E M Q M R G T O T G I Y R U N L W J R  
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D S U W E O Y V I L N U P P I T K W B O T U P J W N E A X S  
E E E V W C H L S X S V G O F O I Q S C R Q A Y I B C N J E  
F M P F E Q J W E Q I S C J W Z N E Z W E O C O K K G X F O  
J D D R K K Q B A N O X T Z K Q U B O I H R S Y O U I I U P  
I D B G E P F S S C N F P W O N U C C U H R X I T J J E U V  
X F E N A S O E E Q N X B T W T G N V K U Z Q S S Y X T F F  
C V T N S E S J Y D E M E N T I A D Y U O L A X V Q Y Y Z L  
L B P A T R P I H V H O O A R T H R I T I S X C U W O R C M  
F O B G Y A V U O B M M O B I L I T Y Z O X C M F Q X X C A  
G F L B U L L V M N O P C N Q X A U L Z J Z D B I O X E G X  
D Y C M H G G R P Q K N B B O K C K V X V G F W C O P D F F

**Hypertension**  
**Cholesterol**  
**Depression**  
**Skin**  
**Arthritis**  
**Condition**  
**Mobility**  
**Diabetes**  
**Dementia**  
**Hearing**  
**Anxiety**  
**Obesity**  
**Vision**  
**Sleep**  
**Heart Disease**  
**Memory Concerns**  
**Stroke**  
**Dental**  
**COPD**  
**Health**  
**Kidney Disease**  
**Osteoporosis**

*Solution on page 23!*



## GIVE THE GIFT OF LEGACY

Celebrate the people who've made a difference in your life through the Legacy Pavers Program.

Two sizes available!

[nassaucountycoa.org](http://nassaucountycoa.org)





# Common Health Conditions With Aging



**C**hronic diseases increase with age, but doctors note they are not inevitable. Many can be prevented or delayed with lifestyle choices.

We may have avoided health issues in our younger years, but by our 50s or 60s, higher blood pressure, cholesterol, and joint pain have grown more common. Few over 65 are without chronic conditions.

An April 2025 report in *Preventing Chronic Disease*, a journal sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), found that almost 80% of adults aged 35-64, and over 90% of adults 65 and older, had at least one chronic health condition in 2023. Among U.S. adults age 65+, nearly 80% reported having two or more chronic health conditions.

“A lot happens as we age that predisposes us to some of these conditions,” says Kahli E Zietlow, M.D., a geriatrician and clinical assistant professor at Michigan Medicine.

Part of it, she says, is due to increased inflammation, which can contribute to a number of health conditions, including heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

“We also see things like our

arteries just naturally start to stiffen with age, and that may predispose people, for instance, to hypertension. Our pancreas starts to lose some of its metabolic effect with age, and that can, in turn, drive insulin resistance and diabetes,” Zietlow adds, “So just these normal processes of aging make us more predisposed to chronic illnesses.”

With this in mind, let’s examine some of the most common health issues among older adults and ways we can avoid or delay them.

## **The Most Common Chronic Health Conditions**

While the prevalence of chronic conditions can vary with age, many adults over the age of 50 share a common set of health issues.

For example, the *Preventing Chronic Disease* report found that the most frequently reported conditions for adults in midlife (ages 35-64) were obesity (37%), high cholesterol (37%), and high blood pressure (35%). For adults 65 and older, the top three were blood pressure (61%), high cholesterol (55%) and arthritis (51%).

Meanwhile, a different CDC report, published in June, found that adults 85 and older most

commonly experienced high blood pressure (67%), arthritis (56%), and high cholesterol (46%).

Ardeshir Hashmi, M.D., endowed chair of geriatric innovation and section chief at the Center for Geriatric Medicine at the Cleveland Clinic, says hearing loss is another common condition he sees among older individuals. According to the National Institute on Aging, hearing loss affects about one-third of older adults. Despite its prevalence, Hashmi says, patients are often reluctant to discuss hearing troubles with their doctor because “folks feel like nothing much can be done about it,” and because “a little bit of it is a stigma that is also associated with it.”

Allowing hearing loss to go untreated can lead to other health issues. It increases the risk for depression, dementia, social isolation, and falls. Hearing aids, medication, and surgery are some of the treatments that can help with hearing loss.

Another common condition among older adults is depression, which, according to the *Preventing Chronic Disease* report, affects nearly 20% of adults aged 35-64 and nearly 15% of people 65+. Hashmi says depression can be overlooked in older patients

because it doesn't always present the same way as it does in young adults.

For example, instead of losing sleep, older adults with depression might sleep too much. Hashmi says another sign of depression in an older person could be a lack of pleasure in everyday things they previously looked forward to.

Thomas Gill, M.D., professor of medicine and epidemiology at the Yale School of Medicine, notes that dementia is rare in patients aged 50-64, but is more prevalent in older patients, notably those aged 85 and older. "We're more effective in managing conditions like heart disease, and so people are living into older ages," he says, ages when dementia is more likely to occur. The CDC report states that an estimated 12% of adults 85 and older were living with dementia in 2022-23.

## Reducing Your Risk for Chronic Health Conditions

The good news is that there are things you can do that can help prevent or delay most chronic conditions at every life stage! Chief among them is exercise, which, Thomas says, "has benefits across multiple risk factors."

## 9 Ways to Prevent Chronic Diseases

These everyday actions can help prevent or delay common chronic conditions.

1. Stop smoking to lower the risk of multiple diseases.
2. Choose a diet with fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats to maintain heart and metabolic health.
3. Engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week.

4. Limit alcohol intake to reduce risks for liver disease, cancer, and high blood pressure.

5. Schedule regular preventive screenings, such as blood pressure, cholesterol, cancer checks (e.g. mammogram, colonoscopy), and routine vision and hearing checks.

6. Maintain oral hygiene with daily brushing, flossing, and routine dental visits.

7. Aim for 7 to 8 hours of quality sleep each night to support body and brain health.

8. Be aware of your family's health history and inform your doctor about relevant conditions.

9. Frequent visits with family and friends are important to prevent isolation, which can negatively impact memory and mood.

Exercise can reduce the risk of diabetes and heart disease and improve symptoms of depression and arthritis. Regular physical activity can also help lower blood pressure and improve cholesterol levels.

"[Exercise] is sort of the penicillin of healthy aging," Hashmi says, "When you exercise, your joints are more supple, your muscles are stronger. You are improving your circulation, not only to your heart but to the entire body, including the brain. You're releasing positive hormones and neurotransmitters, endorphins, that will be good for your physical health but really good for your mental health."

"There are other conditions that become increasingly common with older age, such as falls," Thomas adds, "and one of the most effective strategies to prevent fall-related injuries is physical activity, with the best single physical activity being walking."

Diet, along with exercise, is

another key factor in chronic disease risk. Zietlow highlights the Mediterranean diet which is rich in fruits, vegetables, healthy fats, and moderate amounts of fish, poultry, and dairy, while Hashmi points out the importance of protein for muscle health as we age.

Beyond diet and exercise, Hashmi also suggests practicing mindfulness, especially by limiting distractions. He explains that constantly switching focus can raise cortisol, a stress hormone. High cortisol levels may then lead to weight gain, high blood sugar, and high blood pressure, among other problems.

Doctors also urge older adults to stay on top of medical appointments, recommended vaccines, and routine screenings. Take charge by scheduling your next checkup or screening today. Early action makes all the difference.

Robin Beck, MD, Geriatrician with Baptist AgeWell in Fernandina Beach, agrees with all these tips and suggests that going to a geriatrician for primary care can help older adults start talking about aging in a proactive, positive way. He urges that going to an office like Baptist AgeWell, one that is set up with resources to help older adults prevent chronic illness, can be extremely beneficial in helping these adults to achieve their best, most healthy life as they continue to age.

NCCOA is offering classes on the top chronic health conditions. See the Lifelong Learning section of this magazine for more information.

*Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

*Kahli E Zietlow, M.D. (Geriatrician and Clinical Assistant Professor at Michigan Medicine)*

*Thomas Gill, M.D. (Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology, Yale School of Medicine)*





# Mnemonics Might Save Your Life

*Mnemonic devices, a set of letters or associations that help you remember things, are certainly helpful. But did you know that they could also save your life?*

*Sources: WebMD, DevelopGoodHabits*

Mnemonic devices are tools and techniques you can use to help boost your ability to remember, retain, or retrieve information quickly. This memory technique allows your brain to encode important information in a unique way that helps you learn it. A simple shortcut creates an association between the information that you're trying to remember and a visual picture, a unique sentence, or a single word.

Here are a few possibly lifesaving mnemonic devices:

## Stroke symptoms | **BE FAST**

A stroke is caused by blocked blood flow or a ruptured artery in the brain, which restricts the brain's access to oxygen. Insufficient oxygen in the brain can cause cell death and brain damage. If you notice stroke symptoms, act FAST and seek emergency medical attention right away.

The acronym FAST has long been the standard for recognizing stroke symptoms. Now, BE FAST is being used because of its more inclusive list:

- B** Off balance, staggering, or having leg weakness
- E** Blurred or loss of vision in one or both eyes
- F** Face drooping (to test, ask the person to smile)
- A** Arm weakness (to test, have them raise both arms)
- S** Speech difficulty (have them repeat a simple sentence)
- T** Time to call 911

## CPR needed | **CAB**

If someone is struggling for breath, cardiopulmonary resuscitation may be needed. Here are the steps:

- C** **Chest compressions:** Give 100-120 compressions per minute over the middle of the person's chest to help blood pump to the brain.
- A** **Airway:** After 30 chest compressions, tilt the head back and lift the chin. This helps open the airway.
- B** **Breathing:** If you're trained in CPR, make a seal over the person's mouth and pinch their nose shut before giving them two rescue breaths.

## Bleeding | **ABC**

It's critical to know how to stop serious bleeding if you or another person is injured. Follow these steps:

- A** **Alert:** Notify help or have someone do it for you.
- B** **Bleeding:** Find the location of the bleeding wound.
- C** **Compress:** Apply pressure to stop the flow of blood using a tourniquet. If you don't have one, place bandages or a clean cloth on the wound and push directly on the wound with your hands.

## After an injury | **RICE**

Practice these steps following a knee or ankle sprain:

- R** **Rest** and protect the injured area.
- I** **Ice** the area as soon as possible to help stop or lessen swelling and pain.
- C** **Compress** by wrapping the area (not too tightly) with an elastic bandage to help lessen swelling.
- E** **Elevate** the area at or above heart level with pillows.

# NCCOA Event Rentals

At both Fernandina Beach and Westside (Hilliard) Senior Life Centers, an assortment of rooms with maximum occupancy of 200 persons can be rented for galas and parties, weddings and receptions, fundraisers, business meetings, church services, and more!

**For reservations, please contact  
Don Harley at 904-775-5485 or  
donharley@nassaucountycoa.org**



## Berkman Pavilion & Memorial Garden

- 1,860+ square feet, covered pavilion
- Wi-Fi, audio system, speakers
- Fully landscaped with walking paths, picnic areas, benches & viewing platform
- ADA-compliant with 3 restrooms
- Seats up to 175 guests
- Tables, chairs and linens available

**WE  
NOW  
ACCEPT  
DOOR  
DASH**

# 5 POINTS LIQUORS

## Monday is Senior Citizen Day

# 10% OFF

(excludes discounts and sale items)

**Highway Vodka**  
2 FOR  
**\$20<sup>00</sup>**  
750ml

**Pendleton Canadian Whiskey**  
**\$24<sup>99</sup>**  
BOGO 750ml  
(While supplies last)

**Dewar's Scotch**  
**\$30<sup>99</sup>**  
1.75L

**Maestro Dobel Silver**  
Was \$44<sup>99</sup>  
Now **\$29<sup>99</sup>**  
750ml

**Sammy Beach Bar Cocktails**  
**\$9<sup>99</sup>**  
BOGO 4 pk  
(While supplies last)

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1 Liter





# NCCOA's Lifelong Learning Program Update

NCCOA offers lifelong learning classes for “Adults of ALL Ages” to promote socialization, enhance overall health and wellness, stay connected with others, build meaningful relationships, and remain mentally and physically active.

With the growing popularity of our classes, we have implemented a waitlist system to better accommodate demand. We are also excited to share that more than 150 classes are scheduled for the first quarter of 2026.

We are thrilled to announce that we will be offering two new programs designed to reduce social isolation and loneliness through a grant from the Humana Foundation in partnership with the National Council on Aging (NCOA). This initiative is part of a statewide rollout involving 20 community partners across Florida. It comes at a critical time: a 2023 U.S. Surgeon General report linked social isolation to increased risks of heart disease, stroke, and dementia, and in 2024 nearly 29% of older adults reported feeling isolated at least some of the time.

## Linking Lives: A Journey to Wellness

This three-part discussion series will explore the impact of social isolation and loneliness, share strategies to overcome barriers to social connection, and guide participants in creating a personalized social connection plan.

## Mental Health First Aid Training

In addition to the discussion series, NCCOA will implement Mental Health First Aid training for our community and staff. This training provides practical, evidence-based tools that anyone can use to support someone experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.

*Katrina Robinson-Wheeler, LMHC, LPC, MCAP, SAP will facilitate the two new accredited programs.*

**Lifelong learning classes can be reserved at [MyActiveCenter.com](https://www.MyActiveCenter.com).**



# Caregiver Support Groups

**Janice Ancrum Senior Life Center  
1901 Island Walk Way  
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034**

All support groups are hosted by Nassau County Council on Aging, and are open to the community. Meetings include guest speakers and group discussion.  
There is no charge to attend our support groups.



## **Grieving with Hope Support Group**

**2nd and 4th Monday of each month, 5:30 pm—7:00 pm**

*Share stories and find support from those who have also lost a family member or close friend.*



## **Successful Caregiver**

**3rd Monday of each month, 3:30 pm—5:30 pm**

*Do you want to become a more educated caregiver? This support group is facilitated by a registered nurse and public health professional. Come ask questions relating to transportation, nutrition, medical equipment, “awkward” topics and more.*



## **Caregiver Stressbuster Forum**

**2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, 1:30 pm—3:00 pm**

*Practice stress-reduction techniques, find support from other caregivers, reduce anxiety and improve quality of life. A respite activity for loved ones is available by reservation for a nominal fee for Club members during the meeting.*



## **Caregiver Support Group**

**2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, 3:30 pm—5:00 pm**

*Reduce stress and improve quality of life through conversation with fellow caregivers. A free respite activity for loved ones is available by reservation during the meeting.*



## **Memory Café**

**2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, 2:00 pm—3:00 pm**

*Find support, connection, health & well-being for those experiencing clinical memory loss in a welcoming and safe environment.*

**For more information, please contact**

Jennifer Gundling, 904-775-5488, [jgundling@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:jgundling@nassaucountycoa.org)







# Support Groups

**Janice Ancrum Senior Life Center**  
**1901 Island Walk Way**  
**Fernandina Beach, FL 32034**

All support groups are hosted by Nassau County Council on Aging, and are open to the community. Meetings include guest speakers and group discussion. There is no charge to attend our support groups.



## **Hearing Loss Support Group**

**1st Tuesday of each month, 12 noon—1:30 pm**

*Discuss latest technologies and member experiences to assist with hearing loss in daily living*

Contact: Frances Bartelt, 904-775-5484, [fbartelt@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:fbartelt@nassaucountycoa.org)



## **Yoga for the Grieving Heart**

**2nd and 4th Monday of each month, 4:15 pm—5:15 pm**

*Instructor: Tina LaVacca. Grief Yoga® is accompanied by Restorative Yoga to aide in the release of physical pain and emotional struggle experienced through grief and loss.*

*Sponsored by Rev. Jim Tippins, Changing Tides Bereavement Resources.*

Contact: Melody Dawkins, 904-775-5477, [mdawkins@nassaucounty.org](mailto:mdawkins@nassaucounty.org)



## **Seeing Voices: Hearing Signing Social Club**

**1st Wednesday of each month, 5:15 pm—7:00 pm**

*A deaf and hearing social group for signers.*

Contact: Lynn Freeman, 724-552-6082, [lynnmfreeman@yahoo.com](mailto:lynnmfreeman@yahoo.com)



## **Low Vision Support Group**

**4th Wednesday of each month, 11:00 am—12:30 pm**

*Discuss latest adaptive devices and member experiences to assist with vision loss in daily living*

Contact: Frances Bartelt, 904-775-5484, [fbartelt@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:fbartelt@nassaucountycoa.org)



## **Parkinson's Support Group: You Are Not Alone**

**3rd Thursday of each month, 10:00 am—11:00 am (beginning Sept. 18)**

*Open to individuals with Parkinson's and their care partners to share experiences, learn coping strategies and find encouragement. Facilitated by Tina LaVacca.*

Contact: Melody Dawkins, 904-775-5477, [mdawkins@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:mdawkins@nassaucountycoa.org)



## **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**

**Every Friday, 11:00 am—12:30 pm**

*Share experiences with individuals, family members and friends impacted by mental illness*

Contact: NAMI Nassau, 904-277-1886

For more information, contact us at 904-261-0701 or visit  
[www.nassaucountycoa.org](http://www.nassaucountycoa.org)



# What We Leave Behind Matters

By Brian LaVacca, NCCOA Chief Administrative Officer



## *Creating Meaningful Change Through Legacy Giving*

In our modern world that seems to move at whirlwind speed, the idea of leaving a legacy can seem very distant. Yet, one of the most profound and enduring aspects of the human experience is the desire to leave something behind that outlives us – something that speaks to who we were, the values we held, what we stood for, and how we made others feel.

Leaving a legacy is not about wealth or fame. It is about impact and influence. It is the lasting imprint we leave on the people, community, and causes that we care about. It is the continuation of our lifelong values, actions, and choices.

A legacy gives our lives a sense of continuity and ongoing purpose. It helps connect us to something larger than ourselves. It helps us continue to shape the world. Every act of compassion and generosity becomes part of a broader narrative that endures beyond our lifetime.

Legacy building is not one of life's final-chapter activities; rather, it is a strategic and well-thought-out process, and it can begin today through Legacy Giving (also known as Planned Giving).

When you give to Nassau County Council on Aging through Legacy Giving, you make a profound and enduring impact on the lives of Nassau County seniors while maintaining control of your own financial, estate, and philanthropic goals. Planned gifts made through financial or estate planning often have little or no immediate cost to you.

### **Common types of planned gifts include:**

- Bequests through wills or trusts.
- Beneficiary designations (IRAs, insurance policies).
- Charitable gift annuities or charitable remainder trusts.
- Donor-advised funds.
- Gifts of stock, real estate, retirement assets, or cash.

A careful Legacy Giving plan allows you to create, with intention, the kind of legacy that you desire to leave, right here in the Nassau County community.

Ultimately, leaving a legacy begins with a daily choice. It is established in the way we treat others, the resilience we model, and the values we uphold. To choose Legacy Giving is to ensure that the values to which you've committed live on well into the future.

We invite you to consider supporting Nassau County Council on Aging's mission through Legacy Giving. If you are ready to discuss your legacy through Legacy Giving, we're here to help answer any questions you may have. \*We recommend that you speak with your financial advisor prior to giving.\*

For a Legacy Giving appointment, please contact:

**Janice Ancrum**, President and Chief Executive Officer  
904.775.5475 | [jancrum@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:jancrum@nassaucountycoa.org)

**Brian LaVacca**, Chief Administrative Officer  
904.775.5476 | [blavacca@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:blavacca@nassaucountycoa.org)



# THE Club



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**Council on Aging**  
SENIORS LIVING HAPPY, HEALTHY LIVES

*The Club is proudly licensed and operated by NCCOA.*



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**Dedicated to Dignity,  
Comfort, and Quality  
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[advocatehomehealth@nassaucountycoa.org](mailto:advocatehomehealth@nassaucountycoa.org)

### SOLUTION FROM PUZZLE ON PAGE 14

UACJDLNGIMDESCOWSBZNLFCCKCZNUDG  
HFQFKLWRRQKBPHEARINGRVRGQLPQX  
HUCUZIJWEZAWBBSTROKEYQMBVKYIXH  
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OOWEONMGCRCYZCFNSHRLCOMGGHBGP  
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IDBGEFSSCNFPWONUCCUHRXITJJEUV  
XFENASOEEQNXBTWTGNVKUZQSSYXTTF  
CVTNSSESJYDEMENTIADYUOLAXVQYYZL  
LBPATRPJHVVHOOARTHRITISXCWUORCM  
FOBGYAVUOBMMOBILITYZOXCMFQXXCA  
GFLBULLVMNOPCNQXLAULZJZDBIOXEGX  
DYCMHGGRPQKNBBOKCKVXVGFWCOPDF

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that matter most.**

*Now accepting new patients  
in Nassau County.*



## **AgeWell is the premier destination for senior care in Northeast Florida.**

We're here to support older adults in living their best, healthiest lives. Specializing in proactive health care for those 65 and older, we provide a unique approach to primary care designed to enhance well-being and independence while managing the needs of senior adults.

To book an appointment at our new location in Fernandina or learn more about primary care that helps people 65+ thrive, visit [BaptistJax.com/AgeWell](https://BaptistJax.com/AgeWell) or give us a call at **904.202.4AGE** (4243).



### **AgeWell Center for Health – Nassau**

1545 South 14th Street  
Fernandina Beach, FL

