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Agging Outlook

SUMMER 2023

Secretary's Message

Dear Reader,

I am honored and grateful to have been reappointed as Secretary of Elder Affairs in December 2022 by Governor DeSantis. This last year has been full of monumental developments to ensure everyone in Florida is able to live well and age well, and I am excited to see where the second half of 2023 takes us!

I have enjoyed spending the last year traveling across our state and meeting with our providers, advocates, employees, and seniors. Over the course of that year on the road, we received, and continue to receive, invaluable feedback and best practices. We are constantly implementing changes and enhancements in all corners of our Department to best serve the needs of Florida's aging population.

Part of being a Floridian is being prepared and ready to respond to a potential disaster. Our state government is ready for any storm or disaster that threatens

our state, but it is important for all individuals to have their own emergency preparedness plan that fits their specific needs. Our 11 Area Agencies on Aging are dedicated to supporting seniors in their areas, including providing resources and transportation services during an evacuation.

Over the past few months, the Department has held roundtables with seniors to learn more about the special challenges they face in preparation, evacuation, and recovery when disasters hit. Through these listening sessions, we have uncovered barriers that we are working with state, local, and federal partners to mitigate on behalf of our seniors.

If we learned anything from the 2022 Hurricane Season, it is to have a plan and be able to act quickly when necessary. Now is the time to talk to your family, friends, and neighbors to make a plan. I encourage everyone to review the tools at floridadisater.org under "blue skies" so we can be ready when



an emergency strikes. For additional resources, you can contact our Elder Helpline (1-800-963-5337) to be connected to your local Area Agency on Aging.

Remember, taking the time to plan before the threat of a storm is vital to ensuring we are all as best prepared as possible. Please don't forget that our Department and partners are here to serve you in any

way we can. If you haven't yet, I urge you to connect with your local Area Agency on Aging to learn about all the incredible programs and services they offer year-round. You can find the information for all 11 Area Agencies on Aging in the back of this publication on page 23. Together, we can ensure that everyone in Florida can live well and age well, no matter the season!

Planning for Your Pets

By Department of Elder Affairs

If you evacuate your home, **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS OR ANIMALS BEHIND.** It is unlikely for pets or larger animals to survive on their own. If by some chance they do, you may not be able to find them when you return.

Have a Safe Place to Take Your Pets

Service animals who assist people with disabilities are allowed in Red Cross shelters. It may be difficult to find shelter for your animals during a disaster, so plan ahead. Do not wait until disaster strikes to do your research. Many communities are developing pet-friendly shelter plans, so check to see whether your local emergency shelter plan includes pets.

- Contact hotels and motels outside your immediate area (outside of an evacuation zone) to check policies on accepting pets and restrictions on number, size, and species. Ask if “no pet” policies could be waived in an emergency. Keep a list of “pet-friendly” places, including phone numbers, with other disaster information and supplies. If you have notice of an impending disaster, call ahead for reservations.
- Ask friends, relatives, or others outside the affected area whether they could shelter your animals. If you have more than one pet, they may be more comfortable if kept together, but be prepared to house them separately.
- Prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who could shelter animals in an emergency; include 24-hour phone numbers.
- Ask local animal shelters if they provide emergency shelter or foster care for pets in a disaster. Animal shelters may be overburdened caring for the animals they already have as well as those displaced by a disaster, so this should be your last resort.

Your Pet Disaster Supply Kit

Whether you are away from home for a day or a week, you will need essential supplies to care for your pet. Keep items in an accessible place and store them in sturdy containers that can be carried easily (duffle bags, covered trash containers, etc.). Your pet disaster supply kit should include:

- Medications, medical records (stored in waterproof container), and a first aid kit.
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and/or carriers to transport pets safely and ensure that your animals cannot escape.
- Photo of you and your pet(s) – in the event you are separated from your pet, having an updated photo with your pet will help validate pet ownership.
- Food, potable water, bowls, cat litter/pan, and can opener.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you must foster or board your pets.
- Pet beds and toys, if easily transportable.

As a Disaster Approaches

You may not be home when the evacuation order comes. Find out if a trusted neighbor would be willing to take your pets and meet you at a prearranged location. This person should be comfortable with your pets, familiar with their location, know where your pet disaster supplies kit is kept, and have a key to your home. If you use a pet sitting service, discuss the possibility or emergency service well in advance.

Planning and preparation will enable you to evacuate with your pets quickly and safely. However, bear in mind that animals react differently under stress. Outside your home and in the car, keep dogs securely leashed. Transport cats in carriers. Do not leave animals unattended anywhere they can run off. The most trustworthy pets may panic, hide, try to escape, or even bite or scratch. When you return home, give your pets time to settle back into their routines. Consult your veterinarian if any behavior problems persist.



Planning for Larger Animals

When planning for larger animals (i.e., livestock), take the following into consideration when developing your disaster plan:

- Disaster supply kit that includes, but is not limited to, the following items:
 - » Form of identification for each animal
 - » Food and water
 - » Medications
 - » Handling equipment
 - » Dry bedding
 - » Windbreaks
- Develop an evacuation plan to include different routes and possible shelter sites suitable for your animals.
- Ensure you have the necessary resources to transport your animals – vehicles, trailers, and experienced drivers and handlers.

Animal-Related Emergencies

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) serves as the lead agency for the State Emergency Response Team Emergency Support Function 17 (Animal and Agricultural Issues). Visit fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Animals/Animal-Related-Emergency-Response to view additional information and resources to help you prepare a disaster plan for your animals.

Disaster Preparedness and Recovery for Older Adults

By Agency for Persons with Disabilities

We should all be prepared for disasters! Make a plan by assessing your individual situation and unique needs and knowing the resources available in your community. Preparing for emergencies is especially important for older adults who may need to make special arrangements. Below is information that you can use to build your own Disaster Supply Kit, what to do to be prepared, and some resource links to help you along the way.

Go Kit

Pack your go kit to last at least 72 hours. Include the following:

- Food and water
- Medicine
- Important documents in a waterproof container
 - » Medical records and primary care physician contact information
 - » Specifics on any medical devices
 - » Service animal ID, proof of ownership
 - » Insurance cards
 - » Bank and credit card numbers
 - » Copies of birth and/or marriage certificate
 - » Set of car, house, and office keys
 - » Important phone numbers (family, friends, caregivers, doctors, veterinarian, pharmacist, banks, schools, an out-of-town contact, transportation provider, and your county emergency management office)
- Personal items
- Any needed equipment (including batteries and medical devices)
- Service animal and/or pet supplies (food, water, proper identification, medical records, carrier, leash, muzzle, medications, food/water bowls)

Preparedness Checklist

- Put together your Disaster Supply Kit (for when you stay home)
- Put together your Go Kit (for when you must evacuate)
- Update your Personal Disaster Plan
- Keep your vehicle gas tank full
- Have cash on hand
- Post important phone numbers on your refrigerator and other areas where you live

Evacuation Planning: Know the evacuation zones and routes for your county. Only evacuate if necessary. If you must evacuate, know where you will go (e.g., a relative's or friend's house or a hotel outside the impact area). Do you live in an evacuation zone?

FloridaDisaster.org/Counties

Communication Planning: Make a contact list of important phone numbers (county emergency management office, doctors, caregivers, banks, schools, veterinarian, etc.) and keep several copies handy. Post it on the refrigerator and keep a copy in your Go Kit and Disaster Supply Kit. Include an out-of-town friend or relative on your list – sometimes those in a non-affected area are easier to contact. Keep your phone charged and have an extra charging cord.

Resource Links

Florida's Division of Emergency Management: Includes information about preparedness, disability planning, county emergency management agencies, information about evacuation, weather terms, a planning tool to develop a disaster plan, and specific information for people with disabilities. FloridaDisaster.org

Florida Department of Health Special Needs Registry: Each county health department provides individuals the



opportunity to register with their local emergency management agency to receive assistance during a disaster. The statewide registry provides first responders with valuable information to prepare for disasters or other emergencies. Completing the Florida Special Needs Registry does not automatically qualify the individual for a special needs shelter. Additional information will be provided by your local emergency management agency regarding evacuation and sheltering options available to you. snr.flhealthresponse.com

For more information on your local options or about sheltering, transportation, and evacuation, please visit FloridaDisaster.org/Counties.

APD has a Recovery Toolkit available on its website that includes resource links across the state, press releases, and more. The toolkit can be found at apd.myflorida.com/news/toolkit.htm. This site is updated regularly and specifically during major disasters affecting Florida.



During a Disaster

Getting Care and Prescription Drugs in an Emergency Area

By Jamila Griffin, Department of Elder Affairs

If you live in an area that's been declared an emergency or disaster, look for news from Medicare or the Department of Health about your situation, as the usual Medicare rules for your medical care may change for a short time.

To find out if you live in an area affected by an emergency or disaster, visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website at [FEMA.gov/disasters](https://www.fema.gov/disasters). This website shows which areas are eligible for individual and/or public assistance because of an emergency or major disaster.

Seeing Doctors or Other Providers

If you have Original Medicare, you may always see any doctor who accepts Medicare.

If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan (like an HMO or PPO) or other Medicare health plan, check your plan's website or contact your plan to see what temporary changes to its rules will be made when services for your health plan get disrupted during an emergency or disaster.

If access to health plan services gets disrupted in your area:

- Your health plan will allow you to get care from other health care providers at Medicare-certified facilities, even if they

aren't in your plan's network and your health care need isn't an emergency.

- Your health plan will not require you to follow your plan's prior authorization rules for out-of-network services.
- If you usually pay more for out-of-network or out-of-area care, your plan will apply the in-network rate during the emergency or disaster period. Save all receipts if you pay out-of-network costs and ask your plan to give you a refund for the difference.

If you are affected, contact your plan or check its website to find out when the normal rules will again apply.

Getting Your Prescription Drugs

If you have a Medicare drug plan and you live in an area that's been declared an emergency or disaster, and:

- **If you cannot go to your usual network pharmacy to replace your prescription drugs**, contact your Medicare drug plan to find another network pharmacy nearby.

- **If you evacuated without your prescription drugs**, or your prescription drugs have been damaged or lost, contact your Medicare drug plan.
- **If you cannot reasonably get to a network pharmacy**, your plan can help you get drugs at an out-of-network pharmacy. Save receipts for all out-of-network costs.

Using in-network pharmacies

- You'll be able to move most prescriptions from one network pharmacy to another, and back to your regular pharmacy when the emergency or disaster ends. Tell your pharmacist where you plan to evacuate and get your list of drugs in case you need to call Medicare.
- If you lost your Medicare drug plan card and don't know your plan's phone number, call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227 to get your plan's contact information.

Using out-of-network pharmacies

- Contact your plan for information about its out-of-network rules.
- When buying your drugs at an out-of-network pharmacy, you may be required to pay full cost for the drugs at the time you fill your prescriptions. Keep receipts for a possible refund.

Getting Additional (Extended-Day) Supplies

If you evacuated and think you won't be able to return home for a long time, you may want to get an extended-day supply (a 60-to-90-day supply) of your prescription drugs. Ask your plan whether it offers extended-day supplies and which pharmacies you can use to get them.



Getting Dialysis Treatments

If you have Original Medicare, your End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Network can help you get your dialysis treatments. Find out who to contact for your supplies, drugs, transportation to dialysis services, and emergency financial assistance if you need it.

Call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227 to get your ESRD Network's contact information. If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan or other Medicare health plan and have ESRD, contact your plan to see what temporary changes to its rules it will make in an emergency or disaster.

Replacing a Lost Medicare Card or Medicare Plan Membership Card

Call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227 to get a replacement for a lost Medicare card or plan membership card.

Replacing Lost or Damaged Durable Medical Equipment or Supplies

If you have durable medical equipment (such as a wheelchair or walker) or diabetic supplies that have been lost or damaged in a disaster or emergency:

- In certain cases, Medicare will cover the cost to repair or replace your equipment or supplies.
- Generally, Medicare will also cover the cost of rentals for items (like wheelchairs) during the time your equipment is being repaired. Call Medicare at 1-800-633-4227 to get more information about how to replace your equipment or supplies.

If you have questions or need more information about your Medicare options, call 1-800-963-5337 and ask for a SHINE counselor. You may also contact SHINE on its website at [floridashine.org/Contact-Us.aspx](https://www.floridashine.org/Contact-Us.aspx).



The SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) program supports the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' mission by providing free and unbiased health insurance counseling through a dedicated network of volunteers, empowering Florida seniors to make informed health care choices. For more information, visit [FloridaShine.org](https://www.FloridaShine.org).

Florida Electric Utilities

Prepared to Weather the Storm

By Cynthia Muir, Florida Public Service Commission

If you live in Florida, you know that Hurricane Season runs from June 1 – November 30 every year. While some years are better than others, Florida rarely escapes the season without at least one storm threatening to impact the state. So, especially for seniors, it's important to be proactive and prepare for a potential storm before the season begins.

Preparation is key, not only for seniors and their families, but also for electric utilities. Power outages are a major concern following a storm. While outages are impossible to eliminate completely, Florida's electric utilities work year-round to harden their grids to better withstand storm impacts.

The Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC) oversees regulating the state's investor-owned electric utilities (IOUs), which include Florida Power & Light Company (FPL), Duke Energy Florida, Tampa Electric Company, and Florida Public Utilities Company. Each year in May, the FPSC holds a Hurricane Preparedness Workshop to learn and discuss the progress made in each utility's storm hardening activities. Electric municipalities and cooperatives are also represented at the workshop, which includes topics of discussion



such as vegetation management, utility pole inspections, customer communications, lessons learned, and continuing challenges.

The extremely active 2004 – 2005 hurricane seasons brought eight named storms that crisscrossed the Sunshine State, causing statewide impacts. As a result, in 2006 the FPSC implemented rules requiring the state's IOUs to implement storm-hardening programs to strengthen infrastructure, reduce future outages, and lower restoration costs. In 2019, the Legislature enhanced the rules by implementing section 366.96, Florida Statutes, which requires public electric utilities to file a Storm Protection Plan, covering a 10-year period, for FPSC approval at least every three years.

Since the FPSC storm-hardening rules were established more than 15 years ago, Florida's utilities have made strong progress in tracking and reducing outages and

in communicating with their customers. Modern technological developments, like real-time outage information via text message, drones that quickly assess grid damage, and self-healing infrastructure technology, help reduce both the number and duration of outages. As technology continues to develop, Florida utilities will continue to improve storm preparedness and response initiatives.

This is good news for Florida's seniors, who sometimes depend on electricity to power medical equipment. It's important that your electric utility company is aware of your circumstances before a storm strikes. You can find utility contact information in the FPSC's *A Guide to Utility Assistance* at floridapsc.com or by calling FPSC consumer assistance at 800-342-3552.

Florida Inspectors General

What Do They Do?

By Taroub Faraj, Department of Elder Affairs

Inspectors General have a history that extends to the Revolutionary War, but in Florida, the Inspector General Act of 1994 established duties, responsibilities, and authority of an Inspector General in the State of Florida (section 20.055, Florida Statutes).

Currently, Inspectors General provide oversight in 31 state agencies, five Water Management Districts, and the Board of Governors for Florida's University System. In the State's public universities, Chief Audit Executives provide this type of oversight. Inspectors General are also appointed in the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, the State Board of Administration, Citizen's Property & Casualty Insurance Corporation, and the Florida Gaming Control Commission.

Inspectors General are appointed based on their integrity and expertise in accounting, auditing, financial analysis, law, public administration, or investigations. They are independent, objective, unbiased, and are appointed by the agency head or, in agencies under the direct jurisdiction of the Governor, appointed by the Governor's Chief Inspector General in consultation with the agency head.

Inspectors General serve as the conscience of the organization and as ambassadors for good government. Inspectors General do things like helping to ensure public funds are spent in the public interest, reporting results and outcomes of programs and



services, preventing problems by identifying and assessing effectiveness of internal controls, and conducting investigations, inspections, and evaluations of state programs. These duties help enhance accountability to taxpayers and build credibility with citizens by ensuring state agencies are consistently reviewing processes and implementing improvements.

Inspectors General also detect and report fraud, waste, and abuse. As part of the governance structure, Inspectors General serve government and the public by communicating independent and objective information to policy and decision makers (i.e., Legislature, Agency Heads, and Other Government Officials). This is done in a transparent manner to ensure that state resources are handled properly, economically, and efficiently. Inspectors General ensure that government officials are accountable to the people by doing the following:

- Offering analysis on critical government initiatives,
- Independently examining problems and recommending possible solutions,
- Issuing fact-filled reports based on professional audit and investigative standards,

- Performing independent investigations of allegations,
- Conducting whistle-blower investigations, and
- Providing technical and consultative advice to management.

If you are aware of fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, or employee misconduct involving a state agency, you should contact the agency's Inspector General. To ensure a complete understanding of your concerns, remember to include who the allegations are against, what the allegations are, why they occurred, where they occurred, when they occurred, and how they occurred. Be as specific as possible, and provide any supporting documentation you may have and whether others witnessed the violations you believe occurred. You may remain anonymous if you choose. However, it is most beneficial if the Office of Inspector General can contact you for additional information and/or clarification of the issues you are reporting.

Each state agency Office of Inspector General can be accessed at floridaoig.com/contact.htm.

DELRAY MEDICAL CENTER

First Hospital in Florida to Treat Alzheimer's Patient With Non-invasive Focused Ultrasound Technology

By Delray Medical Center

In February 2023, Delray Medical Center became the first hospital in Florida to treat an Alzheimer's disease patient using non-invasive focused ultrasound technology as part of a groundbreaking study being conducted in collaboration with Florida Atlantic University's (FAU) Institute for Human Health and Disease Intervention.

In the FDA-approved clinical trial, focused ultrasound technology is used to disrupt the blood-brain barrier in participating Alzheimer's patients. Alzheimer's may be caused by a buildup of certain proteins in the brain. Precisely guided by magnetic-resonance imaging, ultrasound waves are directed at specific areas of the patient's brain to create a temporary opening in



the blood-brain barrier where the protein buildup may be reduced. The Delray Medical Center patient enrolled in the clinical trial received the first of three treatments at the hospital on February 15.

"Delray Medical Center is proud and excited to be a leader in this effort to determine the safety and efficacy of this potentially revolutionary treatment for Alzheimer's patients," said Lloyd Zucker, MD, FAANS, a board-certified neurosurgeon and Medical Director of Neurosurgery at Delray Medical Center. "The study will help determine whether the use of this non-invasive focused ultrasound technology can lead to cognitive improvement in patients with Alzheimer's disease."

"Drug passage through the blood-brain barrier is perhaps one of the greatest challenges in neurology," said Gregg Fields, PhD, Executive Director, Florida Atlantic University's Institute for Human Health and Disease Intervention (I-Health), a professor of chemistry and biochemistry in FAU's Charles E. Schmidt College of Science, and the program director for the project. "The treatment of the first patient in Florida with the non-invasive focused ultrasound technology represents a significant advancement for potential drug delivery and treatment of Alzheimer's disease and other neurological disorders. In tandem, we are also working on non-invasive, blood-based monitoring to determine if treatments are effective."

"By establishing the Florida Alzheimer's Center of Excellence last year, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has placed Alzheimer's disease as a priority health issue in Florida, which will benefit the more than 580,000 people now living with Alzheimer's as well as their families," said FAU President Stacy Volnick. "We are excited to collaborate with Delray Medical Center, Insightec, and others on this groundbreaking technology that will create the next generation of patient care for Alzheimer's disease and other neurodegenerative disorders."

"Insightec is committed to working with our partners to help drive innovation," Dr. Maurice Ferre, Chairman and CEO from Insightec said. "By providing our medical technologies to hospitals and universities across the state of Florida, we are building a cross-sector network with advanced capabilities to accelerate research for potential treatment solutions for brain diseases."

"Today marks a historic milestone in the fight against Alzheimer's as we begin trials in Florida using Insightec's cutting-edge focused ultrasound technology," Jonathan Weiss, Chairman of the Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Committee and VP of Strategic Innovation at Insightec said. "Thanks to Governor DeSantis's visionary leadership, the Florida legislature's support, and the unprecedented partnership between Florida's academic powerhouses, health systems, and private industry, we are proud to launch this pioneering research program aimed at treating and ultimately finding a cure for Alzheimer's. This achievement signals a new era in medical research, offering hope to millions of patients and families affected by this devastating disease."

"I have spent a great deal of my career working and hoping for advancements in Alzheimer's research, so I am incredibly excited for what this means for the hundreds of thousands of Floridians living with Alzheimer's and their caregivers," said Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Michelle Branham. "Our Governor has

been a steadfast supporter of the Brain State program and continues to champion Alzheimer's initiatives and increasing budget recommendations to ensure Florida remains a leader in research, support, and treatment. This successful treatment is a historical and pivotal moment for our state and its commitment to a fortified structure to support Alzheimer's and other dementias. I am very proud to be a partner in the Brain State Program."

An estimated 6.5 million Americans age 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's disease, which is the sixth leading cause of death for those age 65 and above in the U.S., according to the Alzheimer's Association. Florida has the second highest incidence of Alzheimer's in the country, with an estimated 580,000 cases.

The clinical trial, called ExAblate Blood-Brain Barrier (BBB) Disruption for the Treatment of Alzheimer's Disease, is designed to evaluate the safety and efficacy of Insightec's ExAblate Model 4000 Type 2.0 System as a tool for disrupting the blood-brain barrier in probable Alzheimer's patients. The study, part of Florida's Brain State initiative, is being conducted at up to eight sites in the country. Patients who meet the specific study criteria receive three focused ultrasound treatments, two weeks apart, and will be followed for five years after the final procedure.

The Insightec technology has already been shown to be effective in treating patients with Parkinson's Disease and essential tremor, a neurological disorder that causes involuntary trembling of the head and hands, preventing people with the condition from performing simple tasks, such as drinking from a glass or tying shoelaces.

To find out more about Delray Medical Center's focused ultrasound program, visit delraymedicalctr.com/services/neurosciences/focused-ultrasound.



How to Get Your Aging Outlook

The *Aging Outlook* is published twice per year and is available digitally via email and our website. Printed copies are limited and only provided through our partner agencies. Please contact your local Area Agency on Aging for a printed copy.

To subscribe to the digital copy, visit elderaffairs.org.

Ask an Ombudsman

Our State Ombudsman answers your questions regarding the health, safety, welfare, and rights of residents in long-term care facilities.



By Terri Cantrell, State Ombudsman

How can an ombudsman advocate for residents who are incapable of communicating their problems or who live in memory care units?

Ombudsmen take the same approach as family members in visiting with residents. First, the ombudsman will observe the resident – does the resident appear clean? Well dressed? Alert and oriented? Observations will lead the ombudsman to ask questions of staff to ensure the proper level of care is being given to the residents.

The ombudsman may also ask for a random sample of “face sheets,” which are cover pages to a resident’s record. A “face sheet” contains contact information for legal representatives or family members and allows the ombudsman to observe resident confidentiality. The ombudsman can then call family members of residents, ask them about the care at the facility, and inform them about the Ombudsman Program and its services.

Ombudsmen visits to facilities are always unannounced and, therefore, give the ombudsmen a good idea of what life is really like in the facility for the residents.

Our parents moved into a long-term care facility last month. At first, they had to be split up due to the facility being full, but now the facility has fewer residents and more open rooms. Can we ask the facility to move our parents into a room together?

Yes, you can. Residents have the right to share a room with a spouse if both individuals are residents of the facility.

What are the benefits of volunteering as a certified long-term care ombudsman?

Many individuals feel a special calling to help others or serve vulnerable populations. Too many elderly citizens are abandoned, neglected, and otherwise forgotten about. Becoming a volunteer ombudsman means that, if called upon, you give an immediate voice to elderly citizens living in long-term care facilities. You become their advocate.

The Ombudsman Program recognizes the need to achieve results quickly for residents of long-term care facilities. As an ombudsman, you will regularly visit facilities and be able to bring resident problems to the appropriate staff member and assist in ensuring that the problem doesn’t happen again. Many ombudsmen stay with the program because they are able to see the results of their work on behalf of residents. Nothing makes a volunteer happier than to see that what they’ve given their



time to do has an impact on other people. Ombudsmen are able to see this impact each time they visit their facilities.

If I am interested in volunteering as an ombudsman, will I receive training on how to advocate for residents with Alzheimer's, dementia, mental health issues, and other age-related disorders?

Many of the volunteers currently serving as ombudsmen were drawn to volunteer with the program due to their experience with elderly persons. In fact, many ombudsmen were once caregivers themselves.

As an ombudsman, you will receive initial certification training that introduces you to the diseases that often affect older people (especially Alzheimer's and dementia) and interviewing skills, as well as continuing education throughout the year on these and many other topics related to the elderly and long-term care.

Terri Cantrell is the State Ombudsman for the Florida Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

To ask for an ombudsman's assistance, learn more about the program, or to become a volunteer ombudsman, call toll-free at 1-888-831-0404.



you



Can Be Their Voice!

VOLUNTEER WITH US!



FLORIDA
OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM
ADVOCATING FOR QUALITY LONG-TERM CARE

ombudsman.elderaffairs.org

(888) 831-0404

Dementia-Friendly Dining

By Florida Department of Elder Affairs

Many people enjoy going out to eat at local restaurants, but oftentimes for those living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ARD), dining out can be overwhelming. Dennis Dulniak of Oviedo started the Dementia-Friendly Dining initiative in Central Florida to help provide friendly, safe, and enjoyable places that families and friends know they can bring their loved ones living with ARD for a better dining experience.

Dennis served as a caregiver for his loving wife, Nancy, who was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's in 2015. After Nancy was placed in a local memory care community, Dennis enjoyed taking her on outings to restaurants for meals and other treats. He started Dementia-Friendly Dining in January 2020 – and revived it in May 2022 – to honor Nancy after she passed away. The goal is to allow those living with ARD and their families to still have enjoyable experiences in the areas they live, while also involving and educating the community.

The Dementia-Friendly Dining program trains servers at partnered restaurants on best practices for interacting with people living with memory-loss disorders and creating a calm and inclusive space in the restaurant for them. Partnered dining establishments must have a private dining area, a quieter time and day, and management and staff willing to receive training. Currently, the program has over nine partnered restaurants in cities like Sanford, Oviedo, Orlando, and Altamonte Springs, and is quickly growing with more locations to be added this year.



ABOVE Photo from Dementia-Friendly Dining

The program helps reduce isolation by increasing social contact and encourages opportunities for engagement, stimulation, and communication. This benefits not only those living with ARD and their caregivers but also the community.

Dennis teamed up with local advocates through the state's Dementia Care & Cure Initiative, which aims to engage communities across Florida to be more dementia friendly, promote better care for Floridians affected by dementia, and support research efforts to find a cure. In collaboration with Florida's 11 Area Agencies on Aging and 17 Memory Disorder Clinics, participating communities organize Task Forces consisting of community professionals and stakeholders who work to bring education about, awareness of, and sensitivity regarding the needs of those affected by dementia.

To learn more and see all partnered restaurants, visit www.centralfloridadementiafriendlydining.com

Top Reminders for Dementia-Friendly Dining:

- Speak clearly and slowly
- Make eye contact
- Smile and keep smiling
- Use short sentences
- Be patient and allow time for response
- Approach from the front – never startle
- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Offer no more than two menu options
- Avoid physical contact
- Support the caregiver
- Kindness and compassion

Volunteer Highlight

By Florida Department of Elder Affairs

As one of Florida's smallest state agencies, volunteerism is a large component of services provided by the Department of Elder Affairs. In fact, our Department started as a group of six workers and a handful of volunteers and has since grown into an agency with more than 300 employees and over 700 volunteers. With the help of our volunteers, the Department and the aging services network foster an environment where seniors can thrive, grow, and engage in civic opportunities in their community.

Thank you to all our volunteers, who selflessly give their time and talents to help further our mission for all Floridians to live well and age well!

Below are our volunteer programs and just some of the amazing volunteers who dedicate their time to serving Florida's aging population:



SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) provides educational materials and free, unbiased insurance counseling to Florida's seniors, their caregivers, and their families.

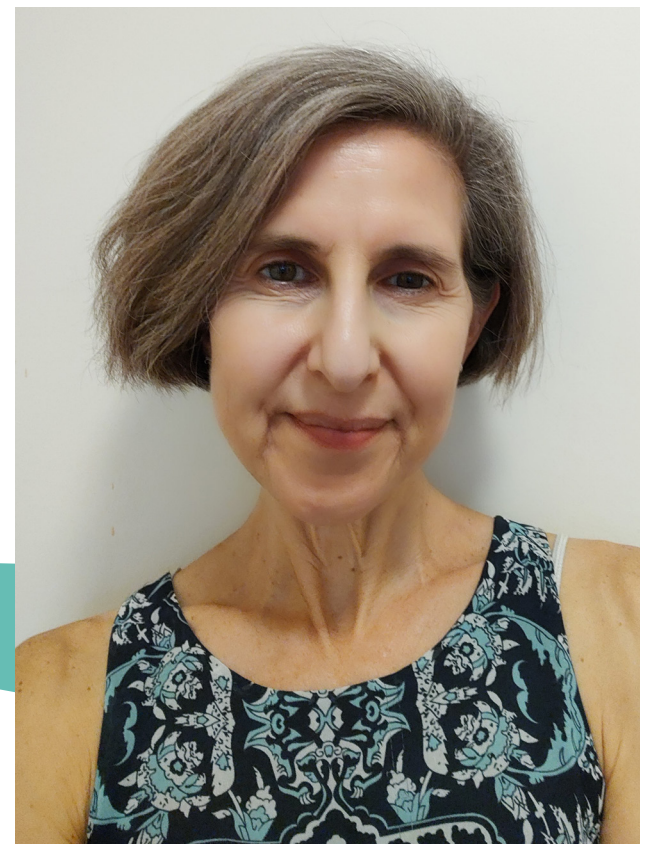
John Risler ▶

A retired United States Air Force veteran and former human resources director, John has volunteered with ElderSource for over 10 years. For eight of those years, he has been the SHINE Area Coordinator for St. Johns County. He is knowledgeable and adapts to change – all with a smile on his face!



Josie Hagel ▶

Josie started as a SHINE volunteer in July 2021 and officially became a SHINE volunteer in May 2022 with the Alliance for Aging. She is known for her understanding approach and kindness when helping Florida's seniors through SHINE's outreach efforts. In addition to assisting and following up with SHINE clients, Josie is a caregiver to her over-100-year-old aunt!



RELIEF (Respite for Elders Living in Everyday Families) offers respite services to caregivers of older adults who need assistance and those with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias.

Altamese White ▶

For over 28 years, Altamese has used her knowledge as a former caregiver to volunteer and provide Jacksonville-area caregivers much needed respite. As a former live-in dementia caregiver for her aunt, Altamese knows first-hand about caregiver burnout. Her favorite activities with clients are planting flowers and gardening!



Sallie Springer ▶

Since 2008, Sallie has been committed to providing respite service to overwhelmed caregivers in Miami-Dade County. She is a problem solver and always willing to help when unexpected needs arise. Her supervisor says that Sallie’s reliability, advocacy, and compassion demonstrate true volunteerism.



LTCOP volunteers (Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program) help improve the lives of Floridians by advocating on behalf of those who live in long-term care settings – such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult family care homes.

Maritza Ramos-Pratt

Maritza (not pictured) has been reminding her residents that they are valued and important for almost 15 years. She is a retired Army dietician, hospital chaplain, and author whose infectious laugh helps raise spirits wherever she goes!



JoAnne Moore ▲

JoAnne has been a true resident advocate for four years in the Northeast Florida area. Those who work with her say she is always willing to do whatever it takes to ensure that the residents she serves have the best quality of life possible.

HOPE HEROES The Hope Heroes Program is a collaborative effort, spearheaded by First Lady Casey DeSantis and administered through the Department of Elder Affairs, to fulfill special needs that can't always be met through traditional means. Hope Heroes deploy on special volunteer missions where they volunteer their time and services to help members in their community.



Carrie Caruso ▲

While volunteering during Hurricane Ian recovery, Carrie met an aging couple whom she has been assisting since October 2022. The couple lost their home in Ian and Carrie has gone above and beyond to support them through the process – including assisting the couple with getting married!



▲ HealthSun Health Plans and Elevance Health Teams

These two teams of medical professionals volunteered on eight missions during Hurricane Ian recovery, totaling 53 hours.

Joan Eberhart ►

Joan went on over six missions during Hurricane Ian recovery, volunteering a total of 32 hours.





Memory Mornings

Program Brings Together Art & Seniors Living With Dementia

By Ann Marie Winter, Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas

Joe and his wife Marge* marveled at the amazing glass sculptures that hovered above their heads. The iridescent colors shimmered against the ceiling and four walls around them. Joe and Marge were at the Morean Arts Center participating in Memory Mornings, a project funded by the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, to bring seniors with dementia and their

caregivers to the museum to go on private tours and participate in art activities. The program hopes to provide activities that stimulate the brains of those living with dementia and an opportunity for caregivers to enjoy all the museum has to offer.

The Memory Mornings program brings together art and seniors living with dementia. Participants and caregivers enjoy a private tour of the Chihuly Museum, followed by a guided art activity inspired by one of the glass pieces in the collection. Adults living with dementia and their caregivers need creative outlets to express themselves. Research has shown that seniors with dementia often enjoy and benefit from creative activities that give them the opportunity for non-verbal expression.

Directed and non-directed art activities with other people can provide numerous social and communication benefits for someone living with dementia and for their caregiver at the same time. Studies have shown that art therapy activities may help boost cognitive function in various areas

of the brain while enhancing communication and brain function in people with dementia. Research has shown that seniors with dementia often enjoy and benefit from creative activities that give them the opportunity for non-verbal expression. The Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas (AAAPP) in Florida partnered with the Morean Arts Center to provide caregivers and seniors with dementia the opportunity to visit the museum, participate in art projects, and enjoy the collection with a guide specifically trained to work with seniors with dementia.

In addition, this new nontraditional partnership has expanded the type and scope of partners our AAA works with to provide services to the seniors we serve.

So far, 26 seniors and their caregivers have participated in the project with as many registered to participate in the coming months. For more information about this project, please call (727) 822-7872.

*These are not our clients' real names.

Sudoku Puzzles

Solutions found on page 21.

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | | 1 | | | 2 | 7 | 8 | |
| 2 | | 9 | 7 | | | | 4 | 1 |
| 7 | 3 | | | | 1 | | | 9 |
| | | 7 | 3 | | 4 | 9 | 2 | |
| 3 | | | | 2 | | 4 | | 7 |
| 9 | 2 | | 1 | 7 | | 3 | | |
| 4 | | | 2 | | 3 | 1 | 7 | |
| | 1 | | | | 7 | 8 | | 2 |
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| 6 | | 9 | 5 | 1 | | 3 | | |
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| | 5 | | | 9 | 3 | | 1 | |
| 9 | 3 | | 1 | | 4 | | 5 | 6 |
| | | 2 | 7 | 6 | | | 4 | 3 |
| 1 | | | | | 5 | 9 | | 2 |
| 4 | 6 | | 9 | | | 5 | | 1 |

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MY MENUS

Healthy Snacks

No-Cook Dishes

Picnic Ideas

Potluck

FRESH FROM FLORIDA: Join the Club

Create a Free Account With the Fresh From Florida Club to Access Exclusive Member Benefits

The “Fresh From Florida” brand is recognized worldwide and represents the state’s 47,500 farms and ranches. Launched in 2020, the “Fresh From Florida” Club offers its members exclusive perks including the ability to browse and save their favorite Florida recipes, create and share shopping lists, and ask Chef Justin cooking questions. “Florida agriculture offers a rich variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, and seafood,” said Susie McKinley, Director of Marketing and Development for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. “Our goal is to familiarize Floridians with our state’s unique seasonality and encourage more people to cook with ‘Fresh From Florida’ ingredients.”

Recipe and Menu Collections

Anyone can visit [FollowFreshFromFlorida.com](https://www.FollowFreshFromFlorida.com) and access the expansive library of recipes developed by Chef Justin Timineri, but by signing up for the “Fresh From Florida” Club, you can save your favorite recipes and create custom menus. As you browse recipes on the site, click on the heart button to save a recipe. Build menus for special holidays, family gatherings, or for weekly meal planning based on what’s in season.

Monthly Email Newsletter

In addition to the website features, “Fresh From Florida” Club members receive a monthly email newsletter full of seasonal shopping and cooking tips. Hand-selected recipes are paired with what’s in season in addition to other agriculture-related info like U-picks and agritourism activities. Every month, members have the opportunity to win free “Fresh From Florida” Club kitchen items including measuring cups, Tervis tumblers, spatulas, T-shirts, and more.



Florida Watermelon Poke Bowl



Florida Watermelon Pops



Florida Watermelon Slices with Balsamic Syrup, Mint Oil and Feta Cheese



Florida Watermelon and Pork Lettuce Wraps



PICTURED ABOVE: Chef Justin Timineri is a certified executive chef, author, award winner, teacher, and television personality.

Ask the Chef

We all know how it feels to be in the middle of cooking a new recipe and suddenly wish we could ask an expert for advice. With the Ask the Chef feature, you can do just that. Look for the "Our Chef" tab at the top of every page on the website and click on the "Ask Chef Justin" button to send your question.

Chef Justin Timineri is a certified executive chef, author, award winner, teacher, and television personality. He currently serves as the state chef and culinary ambassador and develops recipes utilizing Florida products.

As a member of the "Fresh From Florida" Club, you are just one click away from Chef Justin's expertise. Request help with a specific recipe, ask for an ingredient substitution or seek advice on creating a weekly meal plan. Chef Justin is here to help!

How to Sign Up

Joining the "Fresh From Florida" Club is free and only takes a minute.

Visit followfreshfromflorida.com/register to create your account.

Follow us on social media:

Facebook: [@Fresh From Florida](https://www.facebook.com/FreshFromFlorida)

Instagram: [@freshfromflorida](https://www.instagram.com/freshfromflorida)

Twitter: [@freshfromFL](https://twitter.com/freshfromFL)

Pinterest: [@freshfromfl](https://www.pinterest.com/freshfromfl)





Florida Avocado and Mango Salad

Salad

In a small mixing bowl, combine the lime juice, garlic, red pepper flakes, sesame seed mix, chili-garlic sauce, vinegar, ginger and soy sauce. Use a whisk to mix ingredients thoroughly. Slowly whisk the vegetable or avocado oil into the rest of the dressing. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, add the avocado, mango and cucumber. Add half of the dressing to the fruit and vegetable mixture and carefully stir to coat.

Arrange the torn lettuce leaves around the edge of a large serving bowl and add the dressed avocado mixture to the middle. Lightly drizzle the lettuce leaves with some of the reserved dressing. Garnish the salad with extra sesame seed mix and pickled red onions. Serve cold.

Pickled Red Onion Garnish

Combine ingredients and let sit in the refrigerator for at least one hour before use.

INGREDIENTS

Salad

- 1 cup Florida avocado, diced large
- 1 cup Florida mango, diced large
- 1 cup Florida cucumber, sliced
- 8 ounces Florida bibb lettuce, hand torn
- 1/2 lime, juiced
- 1 teaspoon fresh garlic, minced
- 1 pinch crushed red pepper flakes (if desired for heat)
- 1 teaspoon sesame seed mix (black, white and toasted), plus more for garnish
- 1 teaspoon chili-garlic sauce (if desired for heat)
- 1/4 cup rice wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
- 2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- 1/3 cup vegetable or avocado oil
- Sea salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

Pickled red onion

- 1/4 red onion, peeled and sliced as thin as possible
- 1/2 cup rice wine vinegar

Watch Video Demonstration: [followfreshfromflorida.com/recipes/florida-avocado-and-mango-salad](https://www.followfreshfromflorida.com/recipes/florida-avocado-and-mango-salad)



It's Time to SHINE

Whether you are a senior with Medicare questions or you are looking for a new volunteer opportunity, it is time for you to call the SHINE Program. We provide unbiased Medicare and health insurance information. SHINE's volunteer counselors are committed to helping you make informed choices about your Medicare benefits. All counseling is confidential, and SHINE's services are free to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers.

Volunteer Locally

As a SHINE counselor, you can help seniors by:

- explaining Medicare benefits;
- describing the difference between Medicare Prescription Drug plans;
- answering questions about Medigap and other health insurance programs;
- assisting with claims, appeals, and other Medicare issues;
- identifying other local benefits and programs; and
- offering educational presentations.

Bilingual Volunteers Are Always Needed!



FloridaShine.org

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

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

PUZZLE ONE

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 3 |
| 2 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| 7 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 9 |
| 1 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 8 |
| 3 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 7 |
| 9 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 5 |
| 5 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 2 |
| 8 | 7 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 4 |

PUZZLE TWO

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 2 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 4 |
| 3 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 5 |
| 8 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 7 |
| 2 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 9 |
| 7 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 8 |
| 9 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 3 |
| 1 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 2 |
| 4 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 1 |

AGING OUTLOOK CROSSWORD

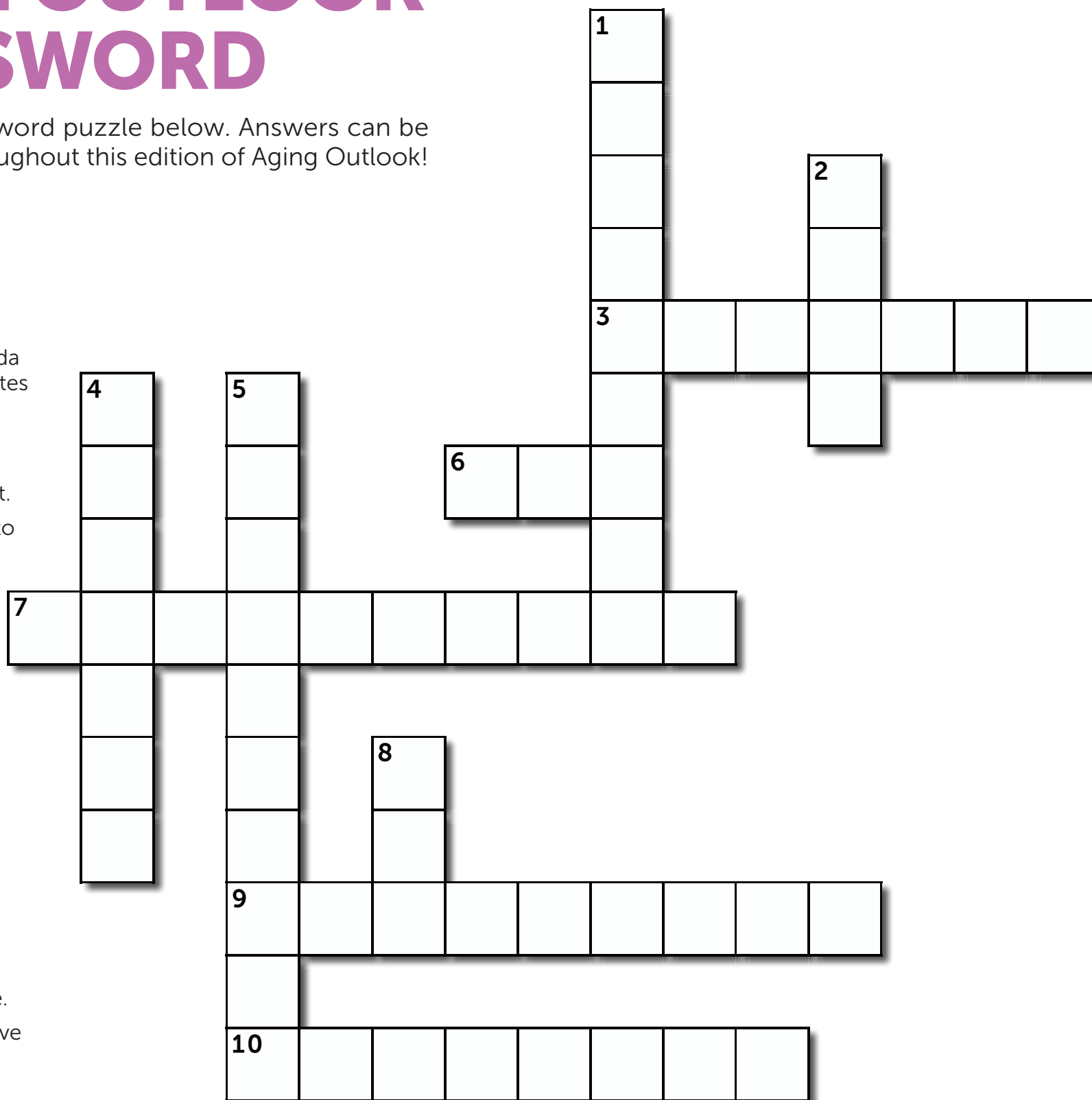
Complete the crossword puzzle below. Answers can be found in articles throughout this edition of Aging Outlook!

Across

- 3. Last name of the founder of Dementia-Friendly Dining in Florida.
- 6. Abbreviation for Florida agency that coordinates response to disasters.
- 7. New technology used at FAU for Alzheimer's treatment.
- 9. Value that is integral to an Inspector General.
- 10. Hurricane Season ends on the last day of this month.

Down

- 1. Volunteer advocate for elders in long-term care.
- 2. Hurricane Season starts on the first of this month.
- 4. A place to seek out for safety during emergencies.
- 5. A region of low atmospheric pressure.
- 8. A "Go ____" should have enough supplies to last at least 72 hours.



Created using the
Crossword Maker on
TheTeachersCorner.net

- | | | | | | |
|---------------|---------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 3. Dulniak | 6. DEM | 9. Integrity | 1. Ombudsman | 7. Ultrasound | 10. November |
| Across | | | Down | | |
| 5. Depression | 2. June | 4. Shelter | 8. Kit | | |

Connect With the Elder Helpline

Local Resources and Assistance

Florida's Aging Network

Through our 11 Area Agencies on Aging, we offer a wide variety of assistance programs and activities. Area Agencies on Aging are the designated private non-profit entities that advocate, plan, coordinate, and fund a system of elder support services in their respective Planning and Service Areas (PSAs).

The Elder Helpline

The AAAs operate a statewide network of 11 local Elder Helplines. Our Elder Helpline is ready to connect you with anything from caregiver assistance, meal programs, and

health care counseling to group exercise programs, volunteer opportunities, and even computer classes! Individuals and community agencies seeking accurate, unbiased information about federal, state, or local social, health, and human services in their area may access the Elder Helpline by calling toll-free **1-800-96-ELDER (1-800-963-5337)** or the county-specific Elder Helpline listed below

Call our Elder Helpline today and speak with a real person! We are here to connect you to a multitude of resources and opportunities to promote vibrant and fulfilling lifestyles.

Other Assistance

1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873)

Are you worried that an elder may be the victim of abuse? You can make a confidential report by calling Florida's Abuse Hotline.

Senior Legal Helpline 1-888-895-7873

For legal assistance specific to seniors, you can call the Florida Senior Legal Helpline. This helpline provides free civil legal advice and brief services over the telephone to eligible Florida residents 60 years and older (*income guidelines apply*).

Northwest Florida Area Agency on Aging

Serving Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton Counties

Phone: 850-494-7101

Elder Helpline:

866-531-8011

nwflaaa.org



Advantage Aging Solutions

Serving Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, Wakulla, and Washington Counties

Phone: 850-488-0055

Elder Helpline:

866-467-4624

advantageaging.org



Elder Options

Serving Alachua, Bradford, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Hernando, Lafayette, Lake, Levy, Marion, Putnam, Sumter, Suwannee, and Union Counties

Phone: 352-378-6649

Elder Helpline:

800-262-2243

agingresources.org



ElderSource

Serving Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, St. Johns, and Volusia Counties

Phone: 904-391-6600

Elder Helpline:

888-242-4464

myeldersource.org



Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas

Serving Pasco and Pinellas Counties

Phone: 727-570-9696

Elder Helpline:

727-217-8111

agingcarefl.org



Senior Connection Center

Serving Hardee, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, and Polk Counties

Phone: 813-740-3888

Elder Helpline:

800-336-2226

seniorconnectioncenter.org



Senior Resource Alliance

Serving Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties

Phone: 407-514-1800

Elder Helpline:

407-514-0019

seniorresourcealliance.org



Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida

Serving Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Lee, and Sarasota Counties

Phone: 239-652-6900

Elder Helpline:

866-413-5337

aaaswfl.org



Your Aging and Disability Resource Center

Serving Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie Counties

Phone: 561-684-5885

Elder Helpline:

866-684-5885

aaapbtc.org



Area Agency on Aging of Broward County

Serving Broward County

Phone: 954-745-9567

Elder Helpline:

954-745-9779

adrcbroward.org



Alliance for Aging

Serving Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties

Phone: 305-670-6500

Elder Helpline:

305-670-4357

allianceforaging.org





HOPE HEROES VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Communities Coming Together to Create A Pathway to Purpose

The **Hope Heroes Program** is a way for retirees and everyday good citizens to volunteer their time and connect with their community. Through a collaborative effort by **First Lady Casey DeSantis** and the **Department of Elder Affairs**, Hope Heroes are matched with volunteer opportunities to fulfill special needs that can't always be met through traditional community services. The Department of Elder Affairs encourages retirees and older Floridians to get involved in their community by becoming a Hope Hero. Seniors helping others creates a clear **pathway to purpose** and enhances everyone's quality of life.

Hope Heroes are able to carry out a variety of missions to serve members of their community. Missions include opportunities such as:

- Reducing isolation and loneliness by providing **companionship** and friendship to seniors in long-term care settings (may be partnered with existing programs for visits)
- Providing **disaster-recovery** to vulnerable community populations following an unexpected event
- Offering assistance with **veteran, disabled, and special needs** populations

To become a Hope Hero and start accepting missions in your area, sign up online at helpcreatehope.com or call 1-800-96-ELDER

