



Florida Association of
Aging Services Providers

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Florida Association of Aging Services Providers

Guest Editors: Josh Newby, Council on Aging of West
Florida & Andrea Marsh, Bay County Council on Aging

Message from the President

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



IT'S ALL ABOUT JOHN

We spend most of our careers immersed in the day-to-day routines of our individual agencies and don't often get a chance to fully appreciate the efforts of our contemporaries around the State. This month's article is all about "John". It is rare when you get an opportunity to publicly recognize greatness and I, as President of FASP, have decided to take this time to highlight the professional career of one of the State's greatest

advocates for seniors.

I have been involved with my agency for thirty (30) years this year. I have been the top executive for twenty-three (23) of those years. As my fellow executives around the State can attest, the daily, monthly, and yearly grind of the job can sometimes be overwhelming. The average lead

Continued on Page 2

Table of Contents

President's Message	1-2
DOEA 30th Anniversary	3
Improving Board Engagement	4-5
A Respite Center Story	6-7
Aging in Place	8-9
AARP Announces Finalists	10
Thank You Sponsors!	11

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Continued from page 1

executive across all disciplines, rarely last more than ten (10) years. The ability to motivate staff, recruit talent, satisfy board members, work with other organizations, educate legislators, fight for adequate funding, can be exhausting. Over time it becomes cyclical that the issue last year returns as the issue ten years from now and the battle with and for funding never ends. It has always been my thought that if I could survive in this position for twenty-five (25) years, I would consider myself special!

Imagine navigating all of the challenges of the job for forty-seven (47) years; the politics, the staffing issues, the constant battle over funding and the need to grow the organization and expand the mission. To be honest, I can't imagine such a thing but that's what John has done! Beginning in 1974, running a small senior dining program, a one vehicle transportation fleet and some outreach, John has spent the last forty-seven (47) years growing that agency into the large lead agency for Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties with an annual operating budget of over six million dollars (\$6,000,000). Trust me, that is enough to applaud his career as a successful leader of a senior agency but alas, there is so much more.

John has devoted his life to helping improve the lives of seniors across the State. When the Department of Elder Affairs was created under Governor Lawton Chiles, John was there. In the early years of the Florida Council on Aging (FCOA), John was there, actually serving as its' President two (2) times. In 1986, when the Florida Association of Service Providers (FASP) was created, John was there, again, serving as our President on multiple occasions. When the Community Care for the Elderly (CCE) Coalition was created, John was there. John has served on numerous State ad-hoc committees dealing with senior issues, he has advocated on behalf of seniors before the State legislators several times and he has travelled around the State to

assist other senior agencies when called upon by our leadership.

I met John in 1995 at the annual FCOA conference. New to the network, I didn't know my way around but found in John, an individual who quickly made me comfortable in this new environment and introduced me to many of my colleagues that I interact with today on a continuing basis. John has always been quick to share a good joke and on occasion a not so good joke, but always a spirit of positive attitude for all who know and work with him. More importantly, when hard decisions needed to be made and strategy on how to tackle a problem developed, John could be counted on to provide wise counsel.

His agency, on the occasion of his retirement, wrote an article about his life and career and I found it to be very enlightening and an absolute must read. Follow this link to access the article; https://issuu.com/ballingerpublishing/docs/coming_of_age_winter_2021_web.

Too often, we don't receive our "flowers" while we are living but on this occasion, I want to thank JOHN CLARK, "the Man, the Myth, the Legend" for all he has done to help develop and strengthen the senior network and the wonderful friend and colleague he has been to us all. John, I look forward to all of the great things you will do in your next chapter and I, like all of our membership, wish you well and look forward to seeing you in the future.

Darrell Drummond



The Florida Association of Aging
Services Providers would like to
recognize the Florida Department of
Elder Affairs for 30 years of serving
older Floridians

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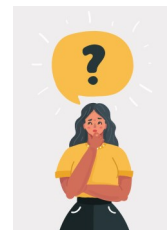
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Improving Board Engagement

By: Josh Newby, Council on Aging of West Florida

“Board engagement” is one of those buzz-phrases we hear a lot from consultants and management experts. The issue is important, of course, and often overlooked, but it also means different things to different organizations. Too little board engagement and leadership is left to their own devices, often with unproductive, unethical or even illegal consequences; too much and organizational leaders are hand-tied by committee thinking that is overly involved in the minutiae of staffing or day-to-day operations. I personally am lucky to have a board in the perfect middle-ground, but this requires clearly outlined expectations, a thoughtful nominations process, and an intentional accountability mechanism.

Decide what you want your board to be

Hey, you’ll get no judgement from me if you want your board to primarily be a technicality of approval on financial documents and legal opinions. If you want to consult them on every hiring decision and HR policy, feel free to go that way, too. The important thing is that you decide what role you want your board of directors to play, including their racial, economic and professional makeup, and then recruit based on that. A nominations committee is helpful to broaden the field of applicants, but it is not necessary. Your bylaws should have some guidance on the specifics of this, and if they do not, now is as good a time as any to add those in. I personally have a “take-all-comers” approach; they could be a CEO, a legislator or a bus-driver: all people have different perspectives

and ask different, important questions. The only prerequisites are that they be passionate about the organization and able to meet their expectations. Speaking of...

Set board expectations

This is something we recently retooled at my own agency. For years, we have had a list of a dozen or so to-dos that board was expected to, well, do. These included your typical items, such as “raise \$1,000,” “attend at least half of all meetings,” “advise and consent,” etc. We would track them, but only haphazardly, and only enforce the expectations if the outcomes were especially egregious. It was only after we had the difficult internal conversations that we discovered some members had professional conflicts with some of the expectations. This may not work for your organization, but we now have a list of non-optional items (“attend at least half of all meetings,” “give a personally meaningful financial gift”) and some optional items (“volunteer with an agency program,” “host a donor-appreciation party”) that has gone over quite a bit better.

No exceptions

“Instead of making an exception, make a better rule” is a principle I was taught in one of my master’s classes that has stuck with me. That is what we strove to do in reworking our board engagement strategy. The challenge, of course, is now enforcement. If you’re lucky like me, you have a good board chair who does not mind being the bad guy and calling or emailing

Continued on Page 5

Continued from page 4

lagging board members. That takes the burden and the awkwardness off of staff and turns the board into a truly self-policing body. In my experience, most directors on the board do not mind the reminder; if anything, they are thankful for it. If, however, you continue to have troubles, your board chair or at-large board member will need to have a conversation about making it right or offering a resignation. That is their job; it should not be yours. Make sure that is in your bylaws and is clear at the outset, which leads us to the importance of that outset.

Board orientation

You can't have a take-all-comers board nominations policy if you are not going to have at least a casual onboarding process. So-called "dumb" questions are always welcome and often necessary, but they should be coming from a place of a general awareness about the agency. So have a lunch, have a meeting, have something wherein you go over your organization's budget, services, leadership structure, public advocacy efforts, etc., so that your new board member feels informed and

empowered to both be an advocate and offer a much-needed critical eye toward groupthink and longstanding practices. Don't make the mistake of underestimating an outsider perspective and the opinions that will be all the more valuable when they come from an individual with an appreciation for the mission and challenges of the agency.

Be willing to change

Maybe some of this advice works for your organization and its culture, and maybe some of it does not. That's fine. After a year or so, reassess and be willing to change things up, with proper approval, of course. Change is necessary, and involving those whom it impacts can increase buy-in and ensure sustainability. Research tells us that real transformation, in life and in business, is most successful when it is incremental and self-motivated. It has to come from within, and that starts with you. Your staff, your community, and (though they may never admit it) your board are counting on you.

Hometown News celebrates Darrel Drummond

Kimberly Heveron-Hurlbert for Hometown News Feb 10, 2022

ST. LUCIE COUNTY – A few minutes after meeting Darrell Drummond, President and CEO of the Council on Aging of St. Lucie County, it is abundantly clear that he is someone who loves his job. REALLY loves it. His enthusiasm for the subject is infectious and inspiring. Sitting with Mr. Drummond makes a person want to get out there and DO SOMETHING for their community, something Mr. Drummond himself has been doing for a lifetime.



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



A Respite Center Story

By: Andrea Marsh, Bay County Council on Aging

Once upon a time there was a need for a place for caregivers of elderly individuals who suffer from Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and other memory disorders to have a safe, welcoming environment so that they, the caregivers, could get a break from the 24 hours a day, 7 days a week care for their loved ones. Getting a break was essential so they could continue to keep their loved ones at home. Here's how the story goes...

In the early 1990s, the agency in Bay County, Florida which operated the local adult day care had to stop providing these services for financial reasons. At the time, Bay County Council on Aging ("BCCOA") was buying services from the agency. While a 30-day notice was provided to BCCOA advising that the services would no longer be continued, that only provided a short period of time to find another resource so there would be no gap in service. The caregivers were concerned because there were no other local adult day care centers. They asked BCCOA what they were going to do??? Without services a number of the caregivers would have no choice but to place their loved ones in nursing homes.

BCCOA was very limited for space with really nothing available to add a program of this size. Time to think outside the box. The Executive Director decided to use a building that was being used for activities and "repurpose" the space for a Respite Center. This was not a large space, by any means. Small and cozy would be an accurate description. But, at the

time, it was enough space to continue respite services for the caregivers who had loved ones attending the adult day care.

There was much to be done to get the respite space ready for when the adult day care closed. At the time there were no respite centers in Florida. So, a staff member along with a volunteer visited several adult day care centers in the state to get a better understanding of what would be required to provide this service. The goal was to have a day respite center patterned as an adult day care but without the medical model. The visits proved most helpful and BCCOA opened a day respite center once the adult day care center no longer provided services. BCCOA's Executive Director worked with their Area Agency on Aging to develop a facility-based respite rate for Community Care for the Elderly, Alzheimer's Disease Initiative, and (what we now know as) Long Term Managed Care.

In its early days the Respite Center had limited space

which required lunch to be served in shifts because of only a small area available for dining. In time, the center was able to move into another building with more space. There was a fire station located a few steps away which was no



Continued on Page 7

Continued from page 6

longer being used as a fire station. After a long drawn out process with the city and the county, BCCOA was granted use of the old fire station and it was modified to house a larger respite center. Grant funds were used for the building modifications and volunteers assisted with decorating and new furnishings. Several years later enough local donations were raised for an addition to the building. Currently, there is enough space to serve up to 50 clients.

In addition to respite services, the facility also hosts two caregiver support meetings per month. Many of the individuals who attend these meetings currently have, or have had in the past, loved ones who attend the Respite Center. The meetings are open to any caregivers. Each month there is a “caring and sharing” meeting which allows the caregivers to talk and share experiences. There is also an education meeting with a speaker who addresses topics of interest to caregivers such as elder law, Alzheimer’s disease, hospice, VA, Medicare, Medicaid, activities, etc.

Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, and memory disorders do not pick and choose who they target. People of all walks of life, regardless of gender, race, religion, education or socioeconomic level can suffer from a disease or disorder affecting memory. Our Respite Center has served veterans, pilots, teachers, principals, housewives, psychiatrists, psychologists, and those that have had careers in social services. We even had one client who was on a team that won the Nobel Prize for Physics. Our clients have been as young as 43 and as old as 99. No picking or choosing.

Caregivers also come from all walks of life. Our caregivers have been spouses, children, step-children, siblings, nieces, nephews, partners, grandchildren, and friends. I believe that being a caregiver is the hardest job anyone can ever have. Again, no picking or choosing.

Once upon a time there was a need for a Respite Center. While there may not have been a fairy tale ending in the traditional sense to this story, with some quick and smart thinking and community support the ending did result in a safe place for caregivers to bring their loved ones so they could get a break and keep their loved ones at home. Maybe not a fairy tale ending but a happy ending, nonetheless.





Aging in Place

By: Andrea Marsh, Bay County Council on Aging

What is aging in place? And, how does one go about doing it? The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines aging in place as: “the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.” So, if a senior adult wants to stay in their home are they aging in place? It's not quite that simple.

Certain things should be in place for a senior to age in place in an appropriate and safe environment. There are many services in the aging field in Florida which can assist seniors to age in place. Sometimes a little bit of help makes the difference between a senior being able to safely stay in their home versus moving to a more institutional setting.

Some things to consider for a senior to age in place include:

The individual's health – Are they healthy enough to take care of most of their day-to-day needs?

A safe environment – Is the home safe and free from things which may make the home unsafe such as stairs, crowded rooms, or rugs and other items which can become trip hazards? Are there secure locks on the doors and windows?

Transportation – Is there available transportation? Even if the senior no longer drives, transportation can be available through friends and family, public transit, taxis, and other transportation providers such as Uber and Lyft. Transportation to necessary appointments is essential.

Continued on Page 9

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**Continued from page 8**

Basic necessities – Is the senior able to get basic necessities such as food and prescriptions? With the Coronavirus pandemic, the home delivery market has exploded making it very convenient for home delivery of just about anything. Even if an individual cannot easily get out, many things can now be delivered right to their front door.

Local support – Are there friends and neighbors close by who can assist when needed and regularly check on the senior to make sure that everything is okay?

Often times, modifications or devices can help ensure a comfortable and safe environment. Things such as grab bars installed in the bathroom and shower, grabbers to reach items versus getting on a step stool, landline phones in multiple rooms or a cell phone that can be carried around for emergency communication, wearing a fall detection device, clothing that makes it easier to get dressed (zippers or snaps versus buttons; Velcro versus shoe laces), use of a microwave instead of an oven to prepare food, and a ramp in place of stairs to enter and exit the home can all assist with aging in place.

In addition to the home itself being suitable for aging in place, services can also provide assistance. In-home services that provide assistance with housekeeping, laundry, grocery shopping, personal needs, and meals can sometimes determine whether it is feasible for a senior to stay in their home. Technology can also play a big role. Devices such as cell phones, computers/tablets, fall detectors and other electronics can provide communication and help keep in touch. For the tech savvy senior, electronic devices can provide face-to-face communication with family and

friends and even for medical appointments through FaceTime and with platforms such as Zoom. Staying social is important. Necessities can be ordered online and delivered to the home. Banking can even be done online.

People are most often comfortable in their homes. Seniors have sometimes lived in their homes for many years. It's where they've raised their families, seen their children and grandchildren grow up, had family gatherings for holidays and birthdays and where they have lived their lives. A home holds memories, familiarity, comfort and a feeling of ownership and personalization. For a senior to be able to age in place can provide a sense of happiness, security, quality of life and, most importantly, independence that they may not have somewhere else. As long as it is safe for a senior to stay in their home and they are able to maintain their independence, even if that includes help from others, aging in place can be the ideal option.

Both of my parents were able to age in place. There were some adjustments to their activities of daily living and some modifications in their home but they were fortunate enough to be able to remain in their home. My aunt was able to age in place in her multi-story home until age 93. She currently resides in a beautiful assisted living facility and recently turned 97. I am hoping that I have some of those same genes!



AARP Innovation Labs Announces Startup Finalists for 2022

WASHINGTON—Feb 22, 2022, AARP Innovation Labs and Venture Miami announced the six finalists for the Connect & Thrive Pitch competition, which sought out digital innovations to combat loneliness and social isolation an issue that affects many adults as they age. The finalists will present their AgeTech solutions in front of a global audience and distinguished panel of judges at the Phillip and Patricia Frost Museum of Science in Miami, FL on March 9. The people's choice winner will receive a \$5,000 cash prize and the grand prize winner will receive a \$20,000 cash prize.

"Tech solutions can be critical in reducing social isolation among older adults, from telehealth visits, to online shopping to virtual connections with loved ones," said Andy Miller, Senior Vice President, AARP Innovation Labs. "We look forward to hearing how these innovative solutions can help further address the issue of social isolation and loneliness among older adults."

"We would like to congratulate the finalists on making it to the final stage of the Connect & Thrive Pitch," said City of Miami Mayor Francis Suarez. We look forward to hearing from these inspiring innovators on March 9th and following their success for years to come."

Finalists:

Mind&Melody, Inc. (Miami, FL)— Mind&Melody uses interactive music programs with educational and therapeutic benefits for individuals experiencing neurological impairments in order to improve quality of life.

Storybook App (Miami, FL)- Storybook app combines narrated bedtime stories, music and relaxation techniques like meditation and infant massage to help parents and grandparents spend high-quality time with their children before bedtime to improve emotional health and sleep.

Chatables (West Palm Beach, FL)- Chatables creates virtual characters to engage isolated older adults in conversation and interactive skits to reduce feelings of loneliness, exercise the social and emotional brain, and potentially slow the onset of mental decline.

RAZ Mobility, LLC (Tysons Corner, VA)- RAZ Mobility offers mobile assistive technology and services to people with disabilities, including the RAZ Memory Cell Phone for seniors with cognitive decline.

Vivo (Atlanta, GA)- Vivo provides small group personal training online that, unlike video or live-streamed classes, is a live and interactive two-way experience that addresses the loss of strength and independence in older adults.

Carevocracy (Hollywood, FL) - Carevocracy aims to reduce social isolation and promote independence through tech education. They do this by matching older adults with tech tutors (Carevocates).

In addition to these prizes, the winner will have an opportunity to be considered in the AARP Innovation Labs startup portfolio; recognition and interview opportunities through Venture Miami; and an opportunity to meet with mayor Francis Suarez for a "Cafecito Talk."

About AARP

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also produces the nation's largest circulation publications: AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org, www.aarp.org/espanol or follow @AARP, @AARPenEspanol and @AARPadvocates, @AliadosAdelante on social media.

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