

## ‘Ignite your passion’: Hosts share what they did for Active Aging Week 2017

Whether through host reports or emails, websites or blogs, traditional or social media, Active Aging Week hosts reported on what they did for Active Aging Week® 2017 and shared stories of meaningful events. To review all these offerings is to be impressed anew at the array of fun, engaging and educational opportunities available to participants. Below are 10 mini-profiles and a sampling of news to give a flavor of the week.

### Snapshots: 10 host profiles

#### **An open house for the 55+**

Individuals explored healthy aging during Active Aging Day 2017, September 26, at The Wellness Institute, powered by Seven Oaks General Hospital in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The day featured testing and screenings, group exercise classes, five-minute massages, exhibits in the gym, live music and a farmers market. Among other things, the Institute’s Rehabilitation & Sports Injury Clinic and the Active Living Coalition for Older Adults in Manitoba (ALCOA Manitoba) demonstrated exercises and activities (e.g., fly fishing). Educational highlights included “The Power of Prevention” keynote by former wellness consultant Gail Pollard, MD, delivered to a full room; and a health talk on preventing and managing back pain. The Institute’s Active Aging Ambassadors were on hand to inspire and encourage participants. ALCOA Manitoba also actively promotes Active Aging Week participation each year, connecting older adults with community events across the province.

#### **A week of wellness**

At La Posada in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, Active Aging Week kicked off with a Monday morning health fair. Attendees gained information on different



*The Wellness Institute’s Active Aging Ambassadors and trainer Ashley joined Active Aging Day 2017 festivities in Winnipeg, Canada. Image courtesy of The Wellness Institute at Seven Oaks General Hospital*

aspects of wellness, and opportunities to win raffle prizes. On Tuesday, Lisa Ochs, DPT, and La Posada Director of Rehabilitation Linda Borgmeyer, OTR/L, gave a presentation on how residents could stay strong and active, which was followed by a sampling of healthy appetizers. Residents could also try an acrylics painting class, watch a chair yoga demonstration by Peilin Ko of Elder-musik, and go for a sea glass hunt on the beach followed by lunch at Café Sole.

#### **A week of workouts**

24Hr Fitness, with headquarters in San Ramon, California, offered a free seven-day pass to guests ages 50 and beyond who came into one of the chain’s clubs for Active Aging Week 2017. Participants could enjoy free workouts, including Silver&Fit and SilverSneakers group-exercise classes. In the end, more than 1,000 classes took place in 300 locations nationwide.

#### **A partnership expands options**

Celebrating Active Aging Week a little early, nine organizations in Western North Carolina—including longtime local host Area Agency on Aging, Land of Sky Regional Council—partnered to present a week of events. Among the activities to kick off the week on Monday, September 18, was “Healthy Aging Day” at the Reuter Family YMCA in Ashe-

ville. The day featured health screenings and workshops, plus exercise and food demonstrations, among other things. Other events during the week focused on safety, security, Medicare, health education, management of pain and diabetes, falls prevention, and creativity. The week wound to a close with “Walk With Purpose,” a community walk and discussion connecting participants with AARP in the Mountain Region; and with the fundraiser “Over the Edge for the Council on Aging of Buncombe County.” Fundraiser participants each raised USD\$1,000 for the thrill of rappelling down a seven-story Asheville building.

#### **An invitation to participate**

Seeland Park in Grinnell, Iowa, opened its group exercise classes to the public for Active Aging Week, inviting adults ages 55+ to participate in fitness sessions ranging from seated classes for any fitness level to high-energy line dancing. The community invited the local Senior Meals group to participate in the week’s daily activities as well, noted Julie Klein, fitness specialist for Seeland Park and its healthcare center, St. Francis Manor. These activities included a line-dancing session with “The Parkettes” (“a huge hit”), a games competition with prizes, a kazoo band, a popular mile walk around campus, and a closing celebration. In her

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Residents displayed their artworks as an Active Aging Week ‘Paint & Wine’ evening concluded at Warwick Forest in Newport News, Virginia. Image courtesy of Warwick Forest Retirement Community

host report, Klein related that one centenarian who participated in the games competition didn’t think she could play the games (water balloon and bean bag toss) but she was persuaded to give them a try—only to win first prize!

### A health fair with takeaways

In Redwood City, California, nearly 500 people wearing purple Active Aging Week T-shirts took part in Adaptive Physical Education’s seventh annual Active Aging Week Health Fair, held at Veterans Memorial Senior Center. A healthy breakfast and walk launched the week. Among other offerings were blood pressure and blood glucose testing, circuit workouts, badminton, chair yoga, gardening, immunizations (for participants and their pets), health and travel presentations, and a music trivia dance-a-thon. According to APE, “Participants went home with ... a senior exercise CD, newly potted plants and instructions, a small flashlight, travel guides, personal health information, better balance, flu shots, healthy pets, health education and a dance in their step.”

### A week of fun, games, learning

At Warwick Forest Retirement Community in Newport News, Virginia, a

cornhole (bean bag toss) tournament helped “ignite” residents’ passions before Active Aging Week officially began. The friendly competition on September 14 brought team members and supporters from sister community Patriot’s Colony, in Williamsburg, to the campus. To the delight of Warwick Forest fans, the home team won. Active Aging Week featured a mindfulness workshop, a craft fair spotlighting residents’ creativity, and a “Paint & Wine” night, where residents enjoyed a glass of wine while creating autumn-themed artworks under the instruction of Create&Carry with Amy Ziglar. Finally, interior designer Richard Lecours answered questions and offered tips during the “Organization for Small Spaces” workshop. “It was a big hit,



and we’re planning another one,” commented Ashley Denney, fitness manager at Warwick Forest’s Riverside Fitness & Wellness Center.

### A showcase of talents

In East Norriton, Pennsylvania, Brightview Senior Living residents and associates also showcased their talents during Active Aging Week. The seventh annual Resident Art Show featured displays of acrylic and watercolor paintings, sketches, sculptures, stained glass, painted stemware, jewelry, needlework (knitting and crocheting), and a lot more. Showing their community spirit, some future residents contributed their artworks to the show, revealed Vibrant Living Director Elena Wilson.

### A contemplative installation

Residents and visitors reflected on their aspirations with an art installation during Active Aging Week at The Highlands at Wyomissing, Pennsylvania. Unveiled on Monday, September 25, the “As I Age” wall invited individuals to complete the sentence, “As I age I want to \_\_\_\_\_.” The Highlands were inspired by the *As I Age/Before I Die* global art project, which began when artist Candy Chang created the first wall



Active Aging Week 2017 meant fun, friendship and displays of ability at a) Edgewater at Boca Pointe (Boca Raton, Florida), b) Warwick Forest, c) La Posada and d) Azalea Trace. Images courtesy of Warwick Forest Retirement Community, Acts Retirement-Life Communities and Kisco Senior Living

on an abandoned house in New Orleans, Louisiana. Over 2,000 such walls now exist in 70 countries worldwide and in 35 languages, according to the senior living community. The ultimate aim for The Highlands' installation was to initiate a conversation about living and aging well.

**A satisfying experience**

In 2017 Acts Retirement-Life Communities, headquartered in West Point, Pennsylvania, again supported Active Aging Week across its communities. From boat rides to beach walks, health fairs to talent shows, residents experienced fun, camaraderie and the joy of being active. Among the highlights, more than 100 residents from six communities took part in the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Northeast Olympi-Acts on Friday, September 29, held at Southampton Estates in Southampton, Pennsylvania. Teams competed in 10 events, including Wii bowling, Jeopardy, walking relays, table tennis and pool. Ending the week at Azalea Trace in Pensacola, Florida, 60 older adults ascended 100 feet in a hot-air balloon ride. For Lyn Nutt, who turned 70 last year, it was an especially satisfying bucket-list experience.

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**News tidbits:  
seven samples**

The **Pennsylvania House of Representatives** passed House Resolution 493 on September 13, 2017, recognizing September 24–30 as Active Aging Week in the state.

**Beach Cities Health District** in Redondo Beach, California, offered free health assessments, fitness classes and lectures for Active Aging Week, according to its YouTube channel.

On Tuesday, September 26, **Henrico County Recreation & Parks** in Richmond, Virginia, hosted its second annual “Play It Forward ... Aging Together” intergenerational event. Older adults and preschoolers enjoyed games, arts and crafts, and exercise offered at the Deep Run Recreation Center.

The **City of Santa Maria Active Aging Committee** designated September 24–30, 2017, Active Aging Week in the California city. Free activities took place throughout the week at various locations. At the Elwin Mussell Center, a USO-themed dance opened the festivities, which continued with a fashion show and a Saturday open house.

**New York City Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr., and District 36 Age-Friendly Neighborhood** kicked off Active Aging Week in the Brooklyn communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant and Crown Heights on Tuesday, September 26. In addition to activities focused on

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improving health, skin, diet and lifestyle, the initiative invited individuals to learn more about becoming an Age-Friendly Ambassador. District 36's Age-Friendly Neighborhood is part of the Age-Friendly NYC collaboration.

In Missoula, Montana, **Missoula Public Library** hosted a handful of Active Aging Week activities in collaboration with Missoula Aging Services, AARP Montana, Missoula Writing Collective and Mountain Line transit. These included a poetry workshop; a public transit talk and bus field trip; a sign-up session for Senior Corps volunteers with Missoula Aging Services; and two offerings highlighting the possibilities of embracing life fully: “AARP: Life, Reimagined,” based on the AARP book; and “Hip Hop-eration,” a New Zealand film, followed by a sample exercise demonstration.

In British Columbia, Canada, the **City of Burnaby Parks & Recreation's** 55+ Service Area and Burnaby's four 55+ societies hosted Active Aging Week activities. In a full week, some offerings included Boomer Bootcamp, Flamenco Folk Dance, Nordic Pole Walking Sampler, TED Talks, Intro to Meditation, Theatrics for Fun Loving 55+ Sampler, and an Active Aging Week Participant Social Barbecue. ☺

**A word of thanks**

ICAA is grateful to everyone involved in developing and delivering Active Aging Week opportunities and to everyone who participated and/or supported the week. Thank you for making the campaign such a success. A big thank-you also goes to Active Aging Week's 2017 national sponsors—Abbott Nutrition, Aegis Therapies/EnerG® by Aegis, Nestlé Skin Health and SwimEx—for their support.

