

In Sylvia Herbert's photograph 'Age is no barrier to keeping active and joining in,' a female dragon boat team participates in a flotilla on the River Severn in Worcester, United Kingdom, celebrating the 90th birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Herbert's image won a University of Worcester photography contest for Active Ageing Week 2018 (see page 43 for details). The competition was sponsored by Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Photo: Sylvia Herbert. Image courtesy of the University of Worcester



Active Aging Week: 'Redefine active' with engaging life experiences



Get ready to engage adults 50+ in the fun, camaraderie and positivity of Active Aging Week 2019. Check out highlights from last year's celebration to spark ideas—and inspiration

If your organization has yet to register as a host site for this year's Active Aging Week®, why not get involved? Active Aging Week is the annual celebration of aging and active living that we all look forward to each year. It's the activities you provide that promote wellness, fun and friendship in your neighborhood or community. And it's the spotlight you shine on how to live well at any age by staying positively engaged in all aspects of life.

Started by the International Council on Active Aging® (ICAA) in 2003, Active Aging Week has grown with your help from a grassroots initiative into a global movement. In 2018, events took place in Australia, Canada, India, Romania, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States. Opportunities to engage—and perhaps try something new—encourage the efforts of older adults to maximize and enjoy their later years. The experiences of Active Aging Week remind us that every generation contributes to a vibrant, strong society. [Ed. For an overview of what some hosts did last year, turn to the sidebar on pages 42–43.]

In 2019, Active Aging Week will take place October 1–7. This year's theme,

Active Aging Week key

Theme: “Redefining Active”

Dates: October 1–7, 2019

Internet: www.activeagingweek.com,
www.facebook.com/ActiveAgingWeek, #activeagingweek

Host registration: www.activeagingweek.com/register.php

Post-campaign host stories and photos: upload through the campaign website

“Redefining Active,” highlights the fact that aging actively is about so much more than physical activity.

A broader view

Just as we work together through Active Aging Week to shift perceptions and redefine aging, we can use this year’s celebration to broaden views and redefine what “active” aging means. Active aging is about engaging fully in all of life’s dimensions. It’s participating in activities, large and small, that create a healthier, more vibrant and productive life—examples include volunteering, hiking a trail, launching a business, mentoring children, traveling with family, taking (or teaching) a course, singing in a choir and meeting friends for dinner. Ultimately, both individuals and society benefit when people lead connected, engaged lives. We can use the platform of Active Aging Week to spread these messages and shift how people see an “active” life.

As a local host site, your organization contributes to the success of Active Aging Week at the most important level. That success relies on your knowledge of your local community’s needs and interests, which is why you are encouraged to develop and deliver a version of Active Aging Week unique to your setting. The campaign has only three criteria. Activities should be:

- free-to-low cost for participants
- educational
- provided in a safe, friendly and fun atmosphere



Uptown Art leads a group painting class at La Posada in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. Image courtesy of Kisco Senior Living

Free promotional materials and planning resources are available on the Active Aging Week website, www.activeagingweek.com, to help you organize and promote your events. National sponsors will again offer theme day resources. Case studies and articles can spark ideas, while campaign posters, T-shirt designs and certificates of participation can spark enthusiasm. New in 2019, these materials are segmented into sections for host sites in the US and for host sites in other countries.

Also new this year, ICAA is holding a photo contest to find Active Aging Week 2019 images that challenge how people perceive aging. The winning image will receive the Redefining Active Aging Photo Award, while a *Journal on Active Aging*® article will highlight efforts by the submitting organization. Check out the campaign website for contest details.

A valuable opportunity

So, if your organization has yet to register as a host site for Active Aging Week 2019, what are you waiting for? Get involved! Join other hosts of Active Aging Week in bringing fun and joy to participants as we celebrate aging actively and broaden views of what “active” means.

“Active Aging Week provides a valuable opportunity for older adults to connect and engage within their communities through a wide range of activities,” acknowledges ICAA’s CEO, Colin Milner. “But it also gives us a chance to reframe aging. Older generations are simply at a different point in the timeline,” Milner says. “Their accomplishments and contributions of yesterday remain signifi-

cant. And the role they have to play in enriching society today and tomorrow remains vitally important.”

As Presenting Sponsor, Humana helps make this year’s Active Aging Week possible. Humana is committed to helping ensure that everyone has a chance to achieve their best health. Contributing to a healthy, inclusive society is an important part of its mission. This year’s national sponsors include Abbott Nutrition, EnerG® by Aegis Therapies, Domtar and the Centre for Aging + Brain Health Innovations.

Continued with the sidebar “Inspiring wellness” on pages 42–43

Share your story

Inspire others with your Active Aging Week® 2019 experiences. Send stories and photographs highlighting how your organization and participants celebrated this year. Think of campaign planning and experiences—share your adventures, triumphs, lessons learned, memorable moments and more.

Materials will be accepted in October via the Active Aging Week website. Story excerpts and photos may appear in campaign coverage by organizers, in the media and in the *Journal on Active Aging*®, so signed model release forms will be required. More details about the submission process will follow. General information about copyrights and usage rights is already available online at www.activeagingweek.com/awards.php.

‘Inspiring wellness’: A taste of Active



Imago Dei Middle School students join residents and associates from The Hacienda at the River in Tucson, Arizona, to work on creative projects. Image courtesy of Watermark Retirement Communities

To local hosts, organizers and supporters of Active Aging Week® 2018: Congratulations! It is impossible to review all your submissions—emails and stories, photos and posters, flyers and newsletters and, of course, schedules of events—without feeling awed (and, yes, inspired) by what you did last year.

You shared the messages of Active Aging Week and how your own approaches connect with this campaign year-round. You reached people in your communities and motivated them to participate, helping them glimpse the benefits of a wellness lifestyle—and perhaps embrace one, too. And you celebrated aging together, sharing experiences that affirmed the value of engaging fully in life.

Below are snapshot experiences of Active Aging Week in five host organizations last year, with a further roundup to follow in the *Journal on Active Aging*’s

July/August issue. On behalf of ICAA, thank you for the difference you make in how people see and experience aging.

Jenifer Milner

Editor-in-Chief, *Journal on Active Aging*®

During Active Aging Week 2018, **Watermark Retirement Communities** highlighted its year-round focus on purposeful living and on serving the greater good as a key component of older-adult wellness. Residents and associates dedicated 2,600 hours to developing and executing the week’s programs throughout the 51 communities that Watermark operates. “[W]e took a variety of programs to area senior centers and invited the public to our communities for complimentary exercise and nutrition sessions,” said Watermark Director of Strategic Innovation Tammy Farris. “Our residents also demonstrated how seniors enrich

society by sharing their expertise and talents with others, and that they benefit in return.”

Among the many physical fitness programs for the public were a Wellness Marathon at The Fountains at The Albemarle in Tarboro, North Carolina. The program offered sessions on standing and seated yoga, a discussion with a nutritionist, health screenings, line dancing and guided meditation, as well as a smoothie bar and a healthy lunch. Volunteer activities included residents and associates of The Hacienda at the River, located in Tucson, working on creative projects with students from the tuition-free Imago Dei Middle School, which serves children from low-income families. In St. Petersburg, Florida, residents at The Fountains at Boca Ciega Bay teamed with charity Scarlett’s Sunshine to bring handmade caps for premature infants, lunch and encouragement to families at area Ronald McDonald Houses.

For residents of **The Cardinal at North Hills** in Raleigh, North Carolina, Active Aging Week featured birds, books and balloon volleyball. Participants ventured to Sylvan Heights Bird Park in Scotland Neck, a town in eastern Halifax County, where they enjoyed a private tour and a picnic lunch. The visit to Sylvan Heights, known for its large waterfowl collection, was both “educational and entertaining,” the community’s Facebook page reported. Some other activities included a cooking demonstration, a discussion on spirituality and aging, a book club program, as well as line dancing, balloon volleyball and dinner at the award-winning Bloomsbury Bistro, shared Wellness Director Susan Drury-Rohner. Finally, The Cardinal hosted Kim Campbell, widow of singer Glen Campbell, in a keynote speech and reception attended by residents and their family members. This inspiring talk focused on the Campbells’ journey with Alzheimer’s disease, their decision

to continue living full lives, and the national conversation that accompanied the late singer's farewell tour and film.

To celebrate Active Aging Week at **La Posada** in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, Wellness Director Rick Minichino coordinated seven days of events and activities. Among the highlights were an Uptown Art acrylics group painting class (with a strong social focus) on Monday, a Healthy Breakfast cooking demonstration and a Memory and Aging lecture on Tuesday, and a Health Fair on Wednesday. The week ended with a round of Mini Golf and lunch at Café Sole in nearby Jupiter.

Instead of a health fair at **Granby Senior Center** in Granby, Connecticut, Program Coordinator Lori Blackburn felt inspired to plan an indoor carn-

ival for Active Aging Week 2018. "I wanted people to be up and moving in an interactive atmosphere," Blackburn commented. The carnival took place Wednesday, September 26, with its eight sponsors manning games or food booth activity. The day included "a basketball hot shot game, soccer goal game, ring toss, bean bag toss and 'match the swimming ducks' [duck matching game]," with prizes awarded to the winners. Food booths included a continental breakfast bar, smoothie station, salad bar and potato bar. The center also hosted two seminars. "Our attendees were engaged and most stayed for several hours playing the games by themselves, and oftentimes challenging their friends to see who did the best," Blackburn said. "Feedback from the attendees as well as our sponsors was very positive."

And, in the United Kingdom, the **University of Worcester** hosted a successful Active Ageing Week last year, according to Dr. Clare Rhoden, sports psychologist and principal lecturer, Institute of Sport and Exercise Sciences. Workshops and public talks took place during the week, and the university gave new participants a free "taste" of its existing Seniors Physical Activity and Adapted Sports program. These participants tried activities such as walking netball, ladies' fitness, men's fitness, and walking football [soccer]. Some individuals returned to continue the program after Active Ageing Week.

The most popular events, Rhoden observed, included a fitness testing session and the closing talk, "Growing Old Actively." In that talk, guest speaker Alexas Rotas "gave some wonderful messages about what the older body can achieve and stimulated lots of discussion afterwards," Rhoden noted. Finally, a photography competition was held to showcase active aging in daily life. Worcester photographer Sylvia Herbert won the contest with her photograph of dragon boat racing on the River Severn. Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire sponsored both Active Ageing Week and the competition's prizes. 🐉



A

Photo key

A. Residents play seated balloon volleyball at The Cardinal at North Hills in Raleigh, North Carolina. Image courtesy of Kisco Senior Living



B

B. A 'trash pickup' supports environmental wellness in Durham, North Carolina. Image courtesy of The Forest at Duke

A thank-you to sponsors

ICAA acknowledges the generous support of Presenting Sponsor Humana and the following national sponsors of Active Aging Week® 2018: Abbott Nutrition, Aegis Therapies/EnerG® by Aegis Therapies, Domtar, Grain Foods Foundation, and SwimEx. Thanks also to the American Society on Aging and Active Ageing Australia for their participation.

