



# Spirit of celebration



## **The third annual Active Aging Week Spirit Awards highlight active, engaged living**

*by Julie King, MS*

Active Aging Week® 2021, led and organized nationally by the International Council on Active Aging® and presented by Humana, was a vibrant demonstration—both in-person and online—of older

adults participating in the seven dimensions of wellness as fully engaged members of society.

Illustrating the enthusiasm that permeates the annual event, the Active Aging Week Spirit Awards showcase local host organizations and participants as they celebrate what it means to be active. The awards capture success stories and moments in images to exemplify the multitude of ways in



*At Stoneridge Creek Retirement Community in Pleasanton, California, residents portray Clint Eastwood, Tom Cruise (as 'Maverick' from Top Gun), Liza Minnelli and Humphrey Bogart in iconic acting roles during the Resident Calendar photo shoot*

which people can embrace healthier, more active and engaged lives.

"It's always exciting to see how organizations embody the essence of Active Aging Week each year," says Colin Milner, ICAA founder and CEO. "Spirit Award winners exemplify both the spirit of this popular celebration and the greater emphasis on aging well that's emerged during the pandemic."

Congratulations to the 10 organizations below for winning this year's awards. Thank you to all the entrants to the Spirit Awards contest and other local host organizations for participating in Active Aging Week

2021. A follow-up *Journal on Active Aging*<sup>®</sup> article will present a roundup of some programs and activities they offered in their neighborhoods and communities.

### **2021 Spirit Award Winners**

#### ***1. Stoneridge Creek Retirement Community (Pleasanton, California)***

In its first year participating in Active Aging Week, Stoneridge Creek Retirement Community hosted more than 450 residents in a variety of programs, including Senior Olympics, with a host of physical challenges; a table tennis tournament, workshops and coaching sessions; and an

artwork exhibition and demonstration. Nearly 200 residents checked off a bucket list item by walking the two-mile expanse of the Golden Gate Bridge, and residents also tapped into their creativity to portray their favorite iconic actors and figures for a fun photo shoot for the community's first resident calendar. <https://www.stoneridgecreek.com/>

#### ***2. Legacy at Willow Bend (Plano, Texas)***

The Legacy at Willow Bend community enjoyed exercise classes such as Move It or Lose It, Balance & Strength and American Tai Chi. In the Changing Bodies, Changing Lives class, participants performed strength exercises with canned goods, and then donated them to a local charity. A health & wellness fair featured a 3D movement analysis, a balance and strength tune-up, and hearing and dental screenings. Residents kept moving with foxtrot lessons, a homecoming dance, and a friendly competition between the two communities in bocce, corn toss and mini golf. A lunch & learn session ("Laughter for the Health of It!") provided both giggles and new insights. <https://thelegacyseniorcommunities.org/legacywillowbend/>

#### ***3. White Oak Estates (Spartanburg, South Carolina)***

Now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year of participating in Active Aging Week, White Oak Estates runs a packed and varied schedule, including a wine tasting at a vineyard, an Oktoberfest celebration, guided meditation, a smart device learning forum, and Wii™ video games. An adventurous group took on hang-gliding in Thermal Valley, North Carolina, where one resident finished the experience with tears of joy. "I never thought I would be able to do something like this," she exclaimed. "I'm so happy right now!" A staff member who witnessed the experience added, "It's truly incredible to be part of this every year. We are changing lives with Active Aging Week." <https://whiteoakmanor.com/white-oak-estates-spartanburg-sc>

*Continued on page 70*



## 4. Spanish Cove Retirement Village (Yukon, Oklahoma)

Transforming a classic sedentary game into a dynamic experience, Move Your Body Bingo had Spanish Cove Retirement Village residents lifting, lunging and laughing while keeping their competitive spirits fueled. Another annual competitive outlet for this community during Active Aging Week is entering Dragon Boat Paddling teams in the senior division of the Oklahoma Regatta Festival's OG&E Night Sprints on the Oklahoma River. The community's two coed teams each won their heat, and one team made it to the finals and won bronze. The female team, which included two paddlers in their 90s, also earned the bronze. <https://www.spanishcove.com/>

## 5. Spring Lake Village (Santa Rosa, California)

Spring Lake Village kicked off Active Aging Week with an outdoor event called "For the Love of Music," where residents and staff played a variety of selections on instruments including piano, drums and even a ukulele. Another opportunity to

showcase the talents of residents and staff was a virtual talent show with prerecorded acts that aired via the in-house TV channel. And to support mental health, residents and staff participated in a walk-a-thon by tracking their mileage with pedometers and donating proceeds to the 2021 fundraiser for the National Alliance on Mental Illness. <https://covia.org/spring-lake-village/>

## 6. Tapestry Arbutus Walk (Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada)

Celebrating Active Aging Week 2021 with the theme "Everything is Possible," Tapestry Arbutus Walk hosted an Impossible Relay Race with five teams of staff and residents dressed in fun costumes and competing for the fastest combined time on four events—Nordic Expedition; Noodle Crawl; Grind; and Calm, Cool and Coordinated. The Everything is Possible Talent Show also engaged residents and staff, featuring traditional dance performances from the housekeeping team, staff leading a line dance, an *I Love Lucy* skit and an employee crooning "Can't Help Falling in Love" by Elvis, joined by the entire audience. It was a huge hit! <https://discovertapestry.com/community/arbutus-walk/>

## 7. Tapestry at Wesbrook Village (Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada)

Taking a wellness approach, Tapestry at Wesbrook Village focused on enhancing community through a scavenger hunt. Guided by clues, residents had to visit various parts of the campus in search of letters that would be combined to spell the secret word—*community*. To emphasize important messages about the emotional and social aspects of wellness, Wesbrook Village hosted a presentation entitled "Social Isolation and Loneliness: The Importance of Community." And in response to residents' requests, qigong, a martial art form closely related to tai chi, was introduced with great response and added to the weekly class schedule. <https://discovertapestry.com/community/wesbrook-village/>

### Active Aging Week 2021: thanks to sponsors

The International Council on Active Aging® thanks Presenting Sponsor Humana and the following national sponsors of Active Aging Week® 2021: Abbott Nutrition and Aegis Therapies/EnerG® by Aegis Therapies. Their support is essential in making this year's celebration possible. Thanks also to content providers Spiro100 and One Day University for their participation.

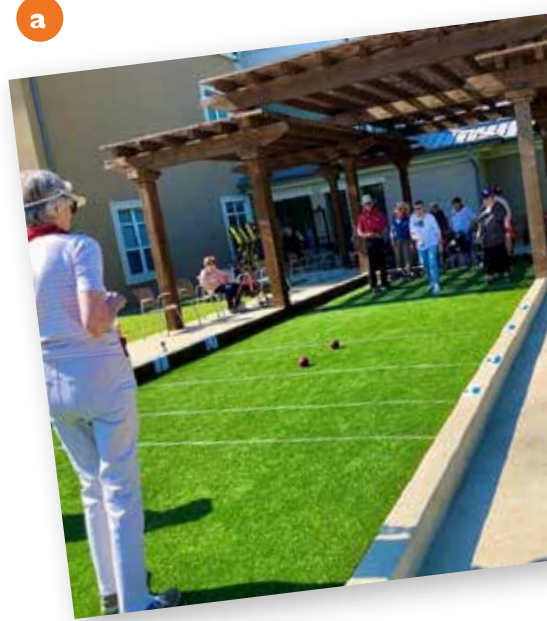
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Sponsors



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## Key to photos

- a. *Legacy at Willow Bend: A friendly competition—in bocce, corn toss and mini golf—between two communities highlights Active Aging Week.*
- b. *White Oak Estates: Resident Jane Phipps can hardly wait for her hang-gliding flight.*
- c. *Spanish Cove Retirement Village: Sure to be a classic, B14 in 'Move Your Body BINGO' was 14 arm circles.*
- d. *Spring Lake Village: At the Active Aging Week kickoff concert, 'For the Love of Music,' residents and staff play instruments and enjoy music.*
- e. *Tapestry Arbutus Walk: Residents Irene and Mary Anne admire the bubbles that embellish the General Manager's toddler costume for the 'Impossible Relay Race.'*
- f. *Tapestry at Wesbrook Village: An energizing fitness walk through Vancouver's Pacific Spirit Park starts the morning for residents.*
- g. *South Port Square: The community is proud of its resident military veterans, who posed in uniform in front of a Huey helicopter used during the Vietnam War.*
- h. *Heisinger Bluffs: During the 'Living Well with Arthritis' presentation, residents practice some of the exercises learned.*
- i. *TriFitness Gym: The 10 am regular crew, ages 60–90+, stay active and healthy as a family!*





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## **8. South Port Square (Port Charlotte, Florida)**

The staff at South Port Square looks forward to Active Aging Week each year because “it’s very rewarding to see our residents flourish in the wellness-driven culture on our campus.” In their efforts to enhance engagement and create the fountain of youth in this senior living community, employees “step it up a notch” during this week with multiple activities that keep residents busy. Among them: a variety of exercise classes, educational lectures, gardening and nature programs in partnership with the master gardeners, historic tours, tennis and pickleball tournaments, music appreciation, art expression, a dance social and a harvest festival. <https://southportseniorliving.com/>

## **9. Heisinger Bluffs (Luther Senior Services, Jefferson City, Missouri)**

To inspire residents to gain a positive perspective on aging, Heisinger Bluffs kicked off Active Aging Week with a weeklong scavenger hunt that worked their bodies and minds by traveling throughout the community to solve various puzzles and riddles. To connect with the local community, residents participated in a local hospital’s “Keeping the Keys” presentation

### **Mark your calendar!**

**20<sup>th</sup> Annual Active Aging Week**  
October 3–9, 2022

#activeagingweek  
[www.activeagingweek.com](http://www.activeagingweek.com)  
[Facebook.com/activeagingweek](https://Facebook.com/activeagingweek)

Encourage adults 50+ to embrace wellness and engage in life as fully as possible by participating in Active Aging Week®. Access free promotional and planning materials online when you enroll as an Official Active Aging Week Host Site.

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and a local garden club's tea party social. As the state capital was illuminated in purple for Alzheimer's Awareness Day, residents and staff also donned purple to honor the day. Summarizing the week's mission, one employee said, "Though we have no control over getting older, we do have control of our own wellness journey." <https://www.lssliving.org/communities/heisinger-bluffs/>

### 10. TriFitness Gym (Clear Lake, Texas)

To engage members in Active Aging Week, TriFitness Gym—which specializes in fitness after age 50—adopted the theme, "We are athletes in the game of life." Staff added more sports-related, dynamic warm-ups and exercises into small group training sessions, and taught clients these new movements. To keep the community motivated and educated about healthy aging, the

TriFitness team posted educational and inspirational material each day on social media. And to raise awareness about the way people age, they also interviewed several clients, asking them to personally define active aging and how they are staying active. <https://www.trifitnessgym.com/>

*Thanks to Active Aging Week Presenting Sponsor Humana for supporting the Active Aging Week Spirit Awards.*

*Julie King, MS, has been a certified group exercise instructor and personal trainer for more than 25 years. She holds multiple certifications and a master's degree in science (kinesiology). Over her career, King has led virtually every class format—including indoor cycling, mat pilates, yoga, kickboxing, boot camp and aquatics—at commercial*

*health clubs, corporate fitness centers, wellness centers, schools and online. She also has served as a fitness director, fitness/wellness coordinator, health club manager and a contributing editor for Club Business International magazine. King has been published in Club Industry, Club Solutions, Campus Recreation, National Fitness Trade Journal, Recreation Management and Fitness Management. A regular contributor to the Journal on Active Aging, King can be reached at [julie.king1@comcast.net](mailto:julie.king1@comcast.net).*

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