

A close-up portrait of George Clinton, an older Black man with a full grey beard and mustache. He is wearing a dark fedora and a grey herringbone jacket over a dark shirt and a colorful, patterned tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. His right hand is visible in the lower left, wearing a large, ornate gold ring with a black stone and a smaller ring with a blue stone.

COMING of AGETM

Presented by Council on Aging of West Florida

L I F E S T Y L E M A G A Z I N E F O R S E N I O R S

SPRING 2015

**Spring Arts
and Culture**

**Income Taxation
for the Elderly**

Phased Retirement

An Exclusive Interview with

George Clinton

(Dr. Funkenstein)



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I don't know about you, but I am thrilled that spring has finally sprung! Though the winter months were inconsistent, up and down temperature-wise, the cold days were often unbearable. Dangerously low temperatures put many of our clients at risk, but our generous community came through with dozens of blankets that kept local seniors warm during the winter season. Thank you for your compassion!



Exciting things are happening at Council on Aging of West Florida (COA), including the recent announcement of our 2015 Rat Pack. Flip to page 38 to see this year's "A" team of rats. We've already begun planning this year's Rat Pack Reunion, and we hope you consider partnering with us to help make it another successful year. There will be more information about partnership opportunities to come!

In addition to our exclusive celebrity interview with funk legend George Clinton, this issue is packed with information on how you can make the best of this beautiful spring weather. Topics include gardening, the health benefits of volunteering and some local events you won't want to miss. Haven't filed your taxes yet? Check out page 20 for more information about the AARP Tax Aide program, which was created to assist low and moderate income taxpayers, especially those 60 and older.

As always, we love to hear your feedback. Read an article that you loved? Is there a topic you'd like us to cover? Let us know! You can contact me at (850) 432-1475 or rcox@coawfla.org. And don't forget... Coming of Age TV airs Monday through Friday on Cox Channel 4. You can also view episodes at youtube.com/coawfla.

To stay connected with Council on Aging and the exciting things we're doing in the community, follow us on Facebook and Twitter. Until next time – Enjoy life. You've earned it!

Rachael Cox
Marketing Communications Director and Editor-in-Chief



Readers' Services

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Your subscription to Coming of Age comes automatically with your membership to Council on Aging of West Florida. If you have questions about your subscription, call Rachael Cox at (850) 432-1475 ext. 130 or email rcox@coawfla.org. Please do not hesitate to contact Rachael with any questions or comments about your service, and thank you.

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When calling or emailing us your change of address, please provide Council on Aging of West Florida with both the old and new addresses to expedite the change.

BACK ISSUES

Is there an issue of one of our magazines that you just have to have? Was your relative seen in a recent issue and you lost it? Give Ballinger Publishing a call at (850) 433-1166 ext. 30, and they will find one for you.

LETTERS

Council on Aging of West Florida welcomes your letters and comments. Send letters to Council on Aging c/o Rachael Cox at 875 Royce St., Pensacola, FL 32503, emails to rcox@coawfla.org or contact editor Kelly Oden at Ballinger Publishing, P.O. Box 12665 Pensacola, FL 32591 or kelly@ballingerpublishing.com.

WRITING OPPORTUNITIES

We are always willing to consider freelance writers and article ideas. Please send queries and/or suggestions to Kelly Oden or Rachael Cox at the above addresses.

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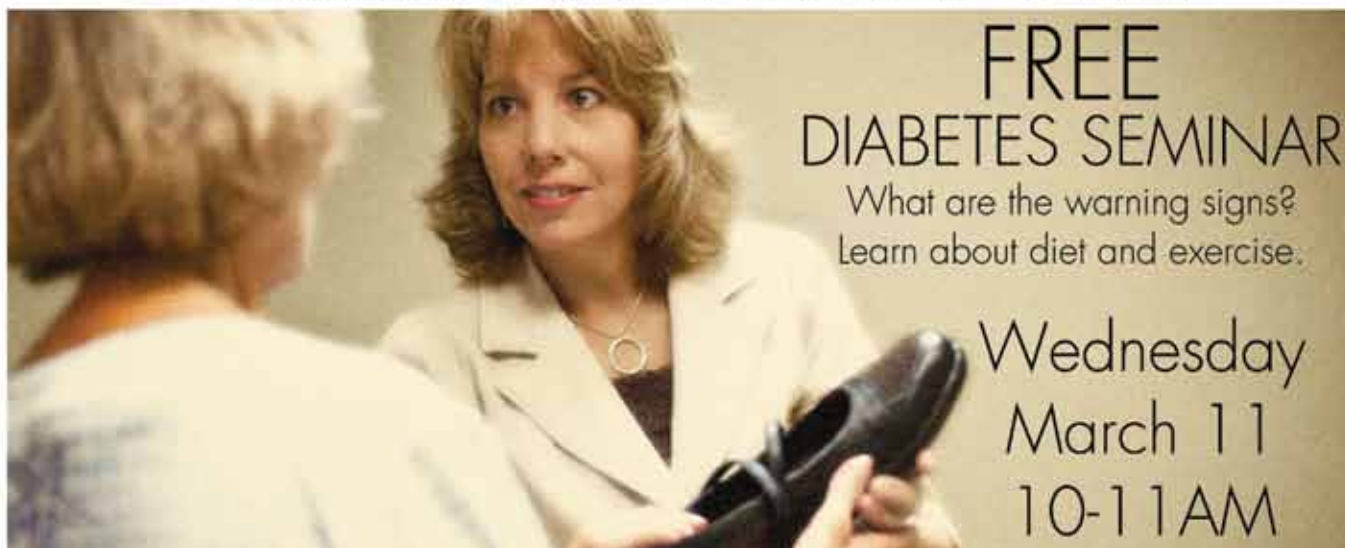


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Florida's Funding of Aging Services



John B. Clark,
President/CEO,
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During the 2015 Florida legislative session, legislators will be debating Florida's annual budget. This is a huge task for our legislators who are faced with making decisions among competing priorities and who have finite resources from the state's General Revenue funds. Our legislators are to be commended for stepping up to the plate and offering themselves in service to our state and for tackling these challenges. One of the priorities they will be reviewing in 2015 is the funding of home and community-based aging services from state General Revenue funds. What are some of these services and to whom are they provided?

Home and community-based aging services funded by Florida General Revenue include Alzheimer's respite care, adult day health care, Meals on Wheels, personal care, homemaker services, nutritional supplements, case management and much more. Services are provided to persons who are at least 60 years of age and older, frail, need some level of nursing home care and who are typically not eligible for Medicaid. All of

these services are available to eligible seniors in both Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Two legitimate questions you might ask are, "Why are these services so important and what do they cost?"

For many decades, legislators and policy makers in our state (and the country) have understood if we can help seniors remain at home and avoid more costly institutional care which is, in most cases, *ultimately* paid for by Medicaid, then we can help reduce the rate of growth of the Medicaid Program; but above all this is a more humane way to help people and it is what seniors prefer. In addition, if you consider that it costs an average of \$7,266/year to provide an array of home and community-based services to an eligible senior versus \$27,326/year for nursing home care (the cost of the *state's share* of Medicaid), it becomes clear why it makes sense to support General Revenue funding of home and community based services for Florida's seniors. So what does 2015 look like for General Revenue funding of these programs?

The first step in Florida's budget process was the governor's budget proposal, recently submitted to the legislature for consideration/approval. Florida aging advocates were pleased that Gov. Scott recommended an increase in General Revenue funding for aging services; an increase of \$2 million for the Alzheimer's Disease Initiative (ADI) Program and \$3.7 million for Community Care for the Elderly (CCE) Program. This proposed increase would allow approximately 602 seniors in need of in-home and community-based services to be removed from the statewide waiting list of 55,000. This waiting list number is as of September 24, 2014, according to the Florida Department of Elder Affairs. This 55,000 figure includes some 523 persons on the waiting list for services in our area alone, who have been assessed as "high risk of nursing home placement" if they do not receive home and community based services. For this reason, Florida's aging advocates recommended an \$11.2 million increase in funding for Florida's General Revenue

home and community-based aging services. While this amount would not allow all those on the current waiting list to be served, it would help to make a significant dent for those on the waiting list who are considered as high risk in need of services. If you feel these services are cost effective for our state and a good investment and the most logical way to help frail seniors of modest income remain in their homes, then please make your feelings known by contacting our legislators. Thank them for their historical support of General Revenue funding for aging services and ask them to consider supporting the \$11.2 million dollar increase in funding for these services.

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Phased Retirement



After 40 or 50 years of working 40 or 50 hours a week, retirement is the welcome respite everyone dreams of. Days will be filled with relaxation, exercise, community events and time with family and friends, while retirement benefits and years of savings support the golden years. It is a beautiful dream, and a reality for many, but for some who cannot financially or psychologically handle a cold-turkey transition from fulltime work to fulltime retirement, there is an option in place gaining traction in both public and private organizations.

An emerging trend is phased retirement, a human resources tool that allows fulltime employees to work part time schedules while drawing retirement benefits. In fact, 28 percent of recent retirees have been working a part-time job following their lifelong career for some time now, but phased retirement allows the worker to continue on at their professional vocation while maintaining a contribution to their retirement plan.

The reasons for engaging in the program are varied and dependent on individual need. Many older workers, for example, identify strongly with the work they do and consider it a part of who they are. Therefore, suddenly quitting a passionate career can feel like an abandonment of one's identity. Phased retirement allows the individual to still have the social and emotional benefits of work while slowly withdrawing into fulltime retirement. Generally, these individuals will work a half schedule and draw a salary proportionate to their contributions.

Alternatively, many may find that in today's economy they simply did not save as much as they needed to or that Social Security benefits are not enough to sustain the quality life they've become accustomed to. Thus, phased retirement allows for supplemental income while older workers transition from having a steady, dependable income stream. By weaning these employees off of fulltime salary, they are more likely to successfully shift over to a life heavily dependent on savings and government benefits.

Jeff Comeau, a human resources professional at the University of West Florida, administers the organization's phased retirement plan and explained how it all works.

"Many workers simply aren't ready or able to quit at 62 or 65," said Comeau. "When that happens, the university extends to that faculty member the option to continue to teach at a half schedule. It gives them latitude to enjoy retirement while still getting to work and draw health benefits. It's a great way to wean them off."


Many public jobs have phased retirement programs in line with the regulations set out by the Florida Retirement System and the Office of Personnel Management. At universities, for example, phased retirement is the result of collective bargaining agreements.

The program is great for employers, too, who want to hold on to treasured talent. While a younger and more technologically savvy workforce seems to be the way of the future, many organizations still value the wisdom and experience of aging workers. With phased retirement, they can hold on to knowledge that would have walked out the door.

Right now, only about 11 percent of private businesses offer the option. If you work somewhere with phased retirement or are considering recommending it, it's important to speak with a financial advisor to ensure that the program is a viable option. In private organizations, phased retirement often affects health benefits differently than in public organizations. Many companies require a minimum amount of weekly hours to maintain insurance subsidies and cost-sharing. Pension protocols also differ from company to company.

Social Security is a concern, as well, as benefits are based on average monthly earnings for your 35 highest-income years. Entering phased retirement technically counts as retirement, so drawing Social Security before you have had 35 years of work under your belt may shortchange your benefits. Also, while you can earn up to \$15,480 per year while drawing Social Security without it affecting your benefits, every dollar over that means \$.50 less in benefits until you fully retire or reach full retirement age.

As with any big financial decision, experts recommend patience and research before deciding to participate in phased retirement. After all, transitioning into retirement may or may not be right for your particular situation. Regardless, the new HR initiative does offer a promising future in which businesses are mindful of their aging workers and interested in satisfying their financial and psychological needs in a way that demonstrates compromise and promises mutual benefits.

"The first thing people need is a plan," said Don Moore, a financial advisor at Safe Harbor Fiduciary, LLC. "It's not all about the money; it's about the taxes, healthcare, legacy planning and more. As we approach the end of life, any road will get us there. It's important to make sure we are on a road that gives us money in our pocket and peace of mind." 



A Mediterranean Menu for Outdoor Entertaining – *Opa!*

When al fresco entertaining calls for some flavorful inspiration, look to the fresh and abundant offerings of Mediterranean cuisine.

Inspired by its coastal origins, traditional Greek dishes feature a colorful collection of fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes and grilled fare. Whether you're serving friends with a themed event or simply enjoying a homemade meal with the family, delicious Greek cuisine is perfect for sharing with those you love.

From raw to roasted, pickled to caramelized, the onion is one of the most versatile vegetables, and is commonly found among the many fresh flavors of this fare. Plus, when you cook with the mighty onion, you're serving up a good source of vitamin C.

The growers and shippers of the Idaho-

Eastern Oregon Onion Committee and the National Onion Association offer the following tips about onions:

- One large onion, diced equals about 1 cup fresh and 1/4 cup cooked.
- Grill and saute onions over low to medium heat. This will bring out a savory, sweet, mellow flavor. High heat can cause the onion to taste bitter.
- Store onions in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place with minimal exposure to light.
- Keep peeled and cut onions in a sealed container in the refrigerator for seven to 10 days.

For more tips and ideas to add flavor to your outdoor celebrations, visit www.onions-usa.org and www.usaonions.com.

Orange, Mint and Onion Salad

Servings: 6

3 navel oranges
1/2 sweet yellow onion, peeled and thinly sliced
1/4 cup fresh mint leaves, torn
1/4 cup black olives, oil cured, pitted

Vinaigrette:

1/3 cup cider vinegar
2 tablespoons honey
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup canola oil



For salad, cut top and bottom off each orange so it sits flat on cutting surface. Remove peel and pith (white part) by taking sharp knife and running it down sides of orange from top to bottom, following shape of each orange. Slice oranges into rounds.

Arrange slices, overlapping each other slightly, on large platter. Scatter onion, mint and olives over oranges.

For vinaigrette, whisk vinegar with honey, mustard, cinnamon and salt. Slowly add oil while whisking constantly, until well combined.

Drizzle vinaigrette over salad and serve immediately.

Note: Any leftover dressing can be stored, tightly covered, in refrigerator for up to five days.



Turkey and Onion Meatball Kebabs with Yogurt Dipping Sauce

Servings: 6 large or 9 small kebabs

1 tablespoon cumin seed
1 cup plain yogurt
1 tablespoon chopped cilantro
1 tablespoon chopped chives
3/4 teaspoon honey
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 pound ground turkey
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 teaspoons lemon zest
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 large yellow onion, peeled and cut in thin wedges
1 green pepper, cut into 1-inch dices
12 cherry tomatoes

Heat small pan over medium heat. Add cumin seeds to toast. Stir frequently, for about 3 minutes or until seeds are fragrant and slightly browned.

Remove seeds to spice grinder or mortar and pestle; grind to moderately fine powder.

In medium bowl, combine yogurt, cilantro, chives, honey, salt and 1 teaspoon ground toasted cumin. Cover and refrigerate at least 1 hour.

In second medium bowl, combine turkey, garlic, lemon zest, salt, cayenne and 1 teaspoon ground toasted cumin; mix gently but thoroughly. Shape into eighteen 1 1/2-inch meatballs.

Preheat grill. On metal skewers (or bamboo skewers soaked in water 30 minutes), thread meatball, onion wedge, pepper square and cherry tomato. Repeat. Finish skewer with another meatball and onion wedge.

Grill until meatballs reach internal temperature of 160°F, turning as needed. Serve immediately with dipping sauce.

For mini-skewers, use 2 meatballs, 2 onion wedges, 1 cherry tomato and 1 pepper square on each skewer.

Tomato, Olive and Lentil Salad

Servings: 6–8

2–3 medium tomatoes cut into eight wedges
1 (9.5-ounce) jar whole, pitted Greek olives, drained
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
8 thyme sprigs, leaves removed
Sea salt
1 1/3 cups lentils
1/2 medium red onion, thinly sliced
1 1/2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
2 garlic cloves, pressed
1 medium cucumber, chopped
1 (12-ounce) jar artichoke hearts, sliced
1/4 cup parsley, chopped
3 tablespoons chives, chopped
2/3 cup crumbled feta
1 tablespoon lemon juice
Fresh ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 400°F. On medium-sized baking sheet lined with parchment paper, arrange tomatoes skin side down. Add drained olives to pan; drizzle with 1 tablespoon olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Sprinkle with thyme leaves and sea salt. Roast for 20 minutes. Remove from oven and cool completely.

Cook lentils according to package directions, approximately 20 minutes.

While lentils are cooking, place red onion in small bowl. Pour red wine vinegar over onions and sprinkle with sea salt. Stir and let stand at room temperature while lentils are cooking.

When lentils finish cooking, drain if needed. In large bowl combine lentils, marinated red onion, garlic and remaining olive oil. Mix well and cool completely. When cool, combine rest of ingredients with lentils. Serve cold.



Health Benefits of Volunteering

The benefits of volunteer service at a not-for-profit organization and the community as a whole are obvious and oftentimes measurable. Studies show that the positive impact of volunteerism not only benefits the recipient, but the volunteer as well.

In a report titled “The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research” the Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS) shares research that has established a strong connection between volunteering and health. More specifically, “those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer,” the report states.

Perhaps even more interesting is that in comparing the health benefits of volunteering among age groups, the research showed that older volunteers are most likely to receive greater benefits from volunteering, as it provides a sense of purpose during a time of life that typically involves major life changes including loss of loved ones and shifts in social roles.



Patti Bryan, volunteer for The Retreat

Patti Bryan, a longtime volunteer for Council on Aging of West Florida, knows firsthand how volunteer service helps during times of loss. Patti had been a caregiver for her parents for many years, and when they passed away she began to lose her sense of purpose.

“I got really good at caregiving. When my parents passed away, all of a sudden I had no one to care for. I knew I needed more,” she says.

When Patti’s son moved away to college, Patti and her husband, now of 44 years, left their home in Maryland and moved back to Pensacola, where they had gotten married many years before. Soon after, Patti read about Council on Aging and wanted to get involved. She spoke with Council on Aging’s volunteer coordinator and almost immediately began volunteering as a friendly visitor.

Thirteen years later, Patti still serves as a friendly visitor for Alice, a homebound senior who also receives meals through the



Patti Bryan with clients from The Retreat

Meals on Wheels program. Once a week, Patti spends a few hours a day with Alice taking her to doctor's appointments, picking up groceries and simply spending time with her.

"Sometimes we just have a cup of tea and some ginger snaps and gab," Patti says.


The time they spend together has become so important that even when Alice's family comes to visit she insists that Patti be the one to take her to doctors' appointments. "Because you and I go," Alice tells Patti.

In addition to her weekly visits with Alice, Patti also faithfully volunteers at The Retreat, Council on Aging's adult day health care center. On Mondays and Fridays, you'll find Patti helping with all sorts of activities like arts and crafts, exercise classes and The Retreat's cooking club.

"Even individuals with Alzheimer's or dementia can remember smells," she says. "So when we bake cakes or cinnamon rolls, we talk about the memories the smells remind us of."

Patti's value to Council on Aging and the clients she impacts every day cannot be measured. But she says she has gotten much more than she has given in her many years of volunteer service.

"I leave here singing, knowing I've made the world a better place," she says. "Volunteering is something anybody can do. Council on Aging has so many opportunities. The world is your oyster."

National Volunteer Week is April 12-18, 2015. If you would like more information on how you can get more than you give through volunteer service, please call (850) 432-1475 or visit www.coawfla.org. 

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INCOME TAXATION FOR THE ELDERLY

In some ways the preparation of your federal income tax return becomes more difficult when you retire. After retirement you do not receive a Form W-2 reporting your wages. If you draw on a pension or an individual retirement account (I.R.A.), you receive a Form 1099-R reporting your pension or I.R.A. distribution. While much the same in tax treatment, your income from these sources are reported on different lines on the Form 1040. If you are drawing Social Security, you will receive a Form SSA-1099. Your Social Security benefits may or may not be taxable depending upon how much other income you make. You may have stock or bond investments in which case you will receive statements from your brokerage firm reporting

your interest, dividends, capital gains and losses. Some of your investments may issue a Form K-1.

Each of these different types of income have different tax calculations. There are a number of Internal Revenue Service publications that are issued each year on the different types of income. Unfortunately, changing tax laws makes knowing the correct rules difficult. The variety of retirement plans and financial products also complicates understanding. Compounding the preparation of your return this year is the Affordable Care Act. If you or any of your dependents did not have health care insurance in all of 2014, or you had procured health care insurance through www.healthcare.gov, additional

schedules will be required on your federal income tax return and there may be an income tax consequence.

None of this discussion is intended to scare or frighten anyone. While many seek professional assistance with their taxes, some feel that their return does not justify the cost of professional assistance, but still would like competent assistance. Programs have been started to assist in the preparation of tax returns for low income taxpayers as well as the elderly. United Way and the Internal Revenue Service sponsor a free income tax assistance program aimed at low income taxpayers. In Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, United Way has sites at the Pensacola State College Main Campus, and at the Warrington

and Milton campuses, as well as Saint Sylvester's Church in Gulf Breeze. Further information may be obtained by calling 2-1-1.

The Internal Revenue Service and the AARP Foundation sponsor the AARP Tax Aide program to assist low and moderate income taxpayers, especially those 60 and older. AARP membership is not required to take advantage of this service. The service is completely free of charge. All tax aide counselors and client facilitators are volunteers who are trained in tax law and the use of the computer return preparation software.

AARP Tax Aide has four sites in Santa Rosa County: Milton Library, Gulf Breeze Library, Navarre Library and Avalon Fire Department. We have six sites in Escambia County: Bayview Center, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Pensacola Main Library, Myrtle Grove Methodist Church, Southwest Library and St. Luke Methodist Church. We will be preparing returns through April 15. The days of the week and times that the sites are open may be obtained by dialing 2-1-1, or going to the tax aide site locator at www.aarp.org.

AARP Tax Aide services are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Taxpayers should bring their picture ID, social security cards for everyone on the return, a copy of last year's return and all tax forms and information for this year. If they have numerous receipts, they should prepare a schedule of their deductions.

If you have any questions about the AARP Tax Aide Program, please call or email Stephen Takeuchi at (850) 994-8103 or srtake@bellsouth.net



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Frankie Gross, Meals on Wheels recipient

MEALS ON WHEELS

Makes an Impact on Local Seniors

"The meals are delivered straight to my home and I love that." These are the supportive words of current Meals on Wheels recipient Frankie Gross. Gross, 81 years young, has been a recipient of Meals on Wheels through Council on Aging of West Florida for almost four years. When sitting down to speak with her about her experiences with the program, there was nothing but positivity and smiles all around.

"I'm very thankful for Meals on Wheels and its volunteers," said Gross. "Without them, I would be eating my regular food." Gross heard about the Meals on Wheels program through friends and family. From there, she was directed to Council on Aging, where her case manager suggested Meals on Wheels as the program for her needs.

"I choose to eat these meals over any regular food that

I have. Think about it...the meals have delicious mixed vegetables, pasta or some other starch, and a meat. What more could you need?" Gross loves the convenience of the meals being delivered to her home and the health benefits. She does not have to go through the trouble of creating three different dishes every day. Each frozen meal is required to contain 1/3 of the recommended daily allowance

(RDA) for adults and comply with Florida Department of Elder Affairs guidelines. "Not only do I get my daily nutrition," said Gross, "but I also enjoy visiting with my volunteers!"

Council on Aging's Meals on Wheels program would not be possible without its loyal volunteers. Almost 60 volunteer drivers deliver meals to clients in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties weekly. Not only are these volunteers assisting in providing nutrition for local seniors, but they also provide a level of socialization that these seniors may not get otherwise. "My little ladies who deliver my meals are absolutely precious," bragged Gross. "Whenever they are going to be on vacation, they call me and let me know. I can tell that they really care about me and that means a lot."

Gross is one of many clients positively impacted by Council on Aging's Meals on Wheels program. The program complies with nutrition standards, provides socialization, and convenience for local seniors. Meal options are also available for special dietary needs. Meals on Wheels is a government-funded program and an assessment is required.

Council on Aging of West Florida also offers home-delivered meal service to meet the short or long term needs of those who do not qualify for government-funded meals. If you or a loved one is interested or wants more information on the Meals on Wheels program, call Council on Aging at (850) 432-1475. COA

Legal Guidance for Issues on Aging

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REVIVING YOUR GARDEN AFTER THE WINTER

“Whenever a harsh freeze is predicted, one should be prepared to take the right precautions to make sure nothing is damaged.”



Participants of The Retreat, Council on Aging's adult day health care center, enjoying a trip to Bellingrath Gardens

Gardening is a popular activity along the Gulf Coast thanks to our temperate climate and plentiful rainfall. However, the past few winters have had unusually cold, even freezing temperatures. The ability to keep your garden healthy and vibrant during these times is a struggle. If there was one place close to home that knows the ins and outs about maintaining healthy plants year-round, it would be Bellingrath Gardens.

Bellingrath Gardens is located in Theodore, Ala. Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bellingrath began construction of this Gulf Coast jewel in 1935. Since then, it has become a popular tourist attraction for people across the country. The Gardens are home to more than a thousand different species of plants throughout 65 acres of land.

Dr. William Barrick, executive director of Bellingrath Gardens, provided some important tips on how to make sure your garden makes it through the winter and how to revive it once the harsh weather has passed.

Dr. Barrick suggested that you start with choosing plants that are known to handle the temperatures we have all year. "Do your homework and invest in plants that are adapted to



hardiness zone eight," Dr. Barrick said. "Hollies, camellias, azaleas, crepe myrtles, and hydrangeas are examples of plants that can handle what the weather throws at us." Most gardening centers have plants labeled for which hardiness level they grow best.

Another suggestion for reviving your garden is to prune your plants. Pruning is a gardening practice that involves removal of parts of plants like branches and roots in order to create new growth.

"Pruning for cold damage can be a tricky issue due to the unpredictability of our weather along the Gulf Coast," Dr. Barrick said. "My recommendation is to wait until mid-March when all danger of frost has passed." He also added that disposing of damaged foliage from herbaceous plants is another good idea, and they will most likely grow back when the soil warms up in the spring.

Whenever a harsh freeze is predicted, one should be prepared to take the right precautions to make sure nothing is damaged.

"When we know that temperature will go down to mid-teens, we cover small flowering annuals with frost cloth, pine straw or plastic," Dr. Barrick said. These materials can be purchased at your local garden center.

"Become educated and learn from amateur and professional gardeners to see what is adaptable to your area," Dr. Barrick said.

Gardening is all about trial and error. In time, and with the right amount of patience, you can become a gardening expert. COA



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SPRING

Arts & Culture

By Emily Echevarria

As spring sets in and brings some of the most temperate weather of the year in Northwest Florida, many in the community jump at the chance to spend time outdoors. Area arts and cultural organizations offer ample opportunity to do just that, with an array of festivals, outdoor concerts and other al fresco fun filling the calendar. These events focus on everything from great music to delicious food, and are the perfect places to pursue a particular interest or just have a reason to get out for a stroll.

Many also have volunteer opportunities for people that want to get engaged with attendees by manning a booth and handing out information or selling merchandise. Whether you're looking to have a fun day out, entertain visiting family or get involved with a local organization, the coming season is the perfect time to explore the many offerings. Mark your calendars now for the forthcoming slew of festivals, concerts and cultural events.

Gallery Nights

March 20, April 17, May 22

Downtown Pensacola comes alive on Gallery Night, held on the third Friday of the month (except in May when it falls on the fourth Friday). Spring is the perfect time to explore downtown and the many artistic offerings of the community at galleries like Artel, Blue Morning Gallery, CCP Gallery, Quayside Gallery and the Pensacola Museum of Art. Besides those bastions of creativity, participating businesses throughout downtown host artists

Gallery Night



and musicians, and artists and vendors line the street in front of Seville Quarter along Government Street. Gallery Nights often include extra surprises like aerialists performing in the street, interactive art installations or flash mobs that take over the streets. The main event lasts from 5 pm to 9 pm, but Palafox and Government remain closed to vehicular traffic until midnight.

Info: downtownpensacola.com

Gulf Breeze Celebrates the Arts

Gulf Breeze Celebrates the Arts March 28-29

Just a short jaunt over the Pensacola Bay Bridge will bring you to Gulf Breeze Celebrates the Arts Festival, held at Gulf Breeze High School. The outdoor art extravaganza is a juried show where participants compete for \$7,000 in prizes, and attendees reap the benefits of the display with the opportunity to peruse and shop the many booths. More than 140 artists will be showing works of art including jewelry, textiles, ceramics, graphic art, mixed media and more. The weekend will also include performances and live music from acts like Sweet Prospect, the McGuire's Pipe Band and the Southeastern Teen Shakespeare Company. There will also be student artwork on display, activities for children and plenty of food options. Money raised from Gulf Breeze Celebrates the Arts goes toward providing student art scholarships as well as donations to local school art programs.

Info: gulfbreezearts.org

St. Christopher's Concerts Thursdays; April 9-May 28

The lawn of St. Christopher's Church at 3200 N. 12th Avenue in East Hill serves as the perfect backdrop for this evening concert series held on Thursdays throughout the early spring. This free event invites guests to enjoy live music from some well known local and regional bands ranging from country to blues to pop while relaxing on the wide green space adjacent the church. Attendees are invited to bring out lawn chairs and blankets and



either bring a picnic or purchase hot dogs, popcorn, sodas, water, ice cream, sandwiches, cookies and more at the event's concession stand. Christopher's Concerts are a great way to celebrate the extra hour of sun during temperate spring evenings outdoors with music, dancing and fellowship.

Info: scpen.org/christophers-concerts

32nd Annual Pensacola JazzFest April 11-12

Jazz lovers flock to this annual celebration of America's original music style. This event held in Seville Square brings together jazz lovers of all ages. There's even a Jazz Jam for Kids held at 2 pm both days in the children's area with free kazoos and harmonicas. Attendees are encouraged to bring blankets or chairs and relax in the park while enjoying the sounds of local school ensembles as well as regional and national talent playing everything from big band to Dixieland styles. The laidback fest is a must for local music lovers.

Info: jazzpensacola.com



Bands on the Beach

at 7 pm as the sun sets, plenty of attendees show up earlier to get a good spot and set up a relaxing picnic. Musical acts will include favorites from past seasons as well as popular newer musicians and regional bands playing original songs and new renderings of popular pieces.

Info:

eveningsinoldesevillesquare.com

Bands on the Beach

Tuesdays; April 7-October 27

Bands on the Beach is a festive free concert series set against the beautiful backdrop of Casino Beach. Held at the Gulfside Pavilion from April through October every Tuesday evening from 7pm to 9 pm, the musical stylings range from rhythm and blues to rock n' roll to yesterday's hits and everything in between. Attendees are welcome to pack a beach chair or blanket and make themselves cozy in the white sands to enjoy the concert. A picnic or refreshing beverage may also be in order, but remember that glass is not allowed on the beach.

Info: visitpensacolabeach.com

Aside from the array of crawfish prepared in a variety of ways, there's also a plethora of other seafood and terrestrial fare, as well as an always impressive lineup of live music. Tickets are \$5 for a day or \$10 for a weekend pass and free for children under 12, making it a top weekend event for your appetite as well as your wallet.

Info: fiestaoffiveflags.org

Evenings in Olde Seville Square


Thursdays; May 14-July 30

The popular, free concert series Evenings in Olde Seville Square draws thousands to the park on warm Thursday nights throughout the summer months. A variety of bands are showcased, and while the concerts kick off

Art in the Park

May 16-17

Hosted by the premier arts organization in the city, the Pensacola Museum of Art, the 13th Annual Art in the Park is a juried art show featuring the work of more than 100 regional and national artists competing for prizes. An array of media will be on display, from paintings to jewelry to pottery and much more. The family-friendly event is the perfect opportunity for an inspiring spring stroll through Seville Square to admire the culture and creative offerings of these select artists.

Info: pensacolamuseum.org 

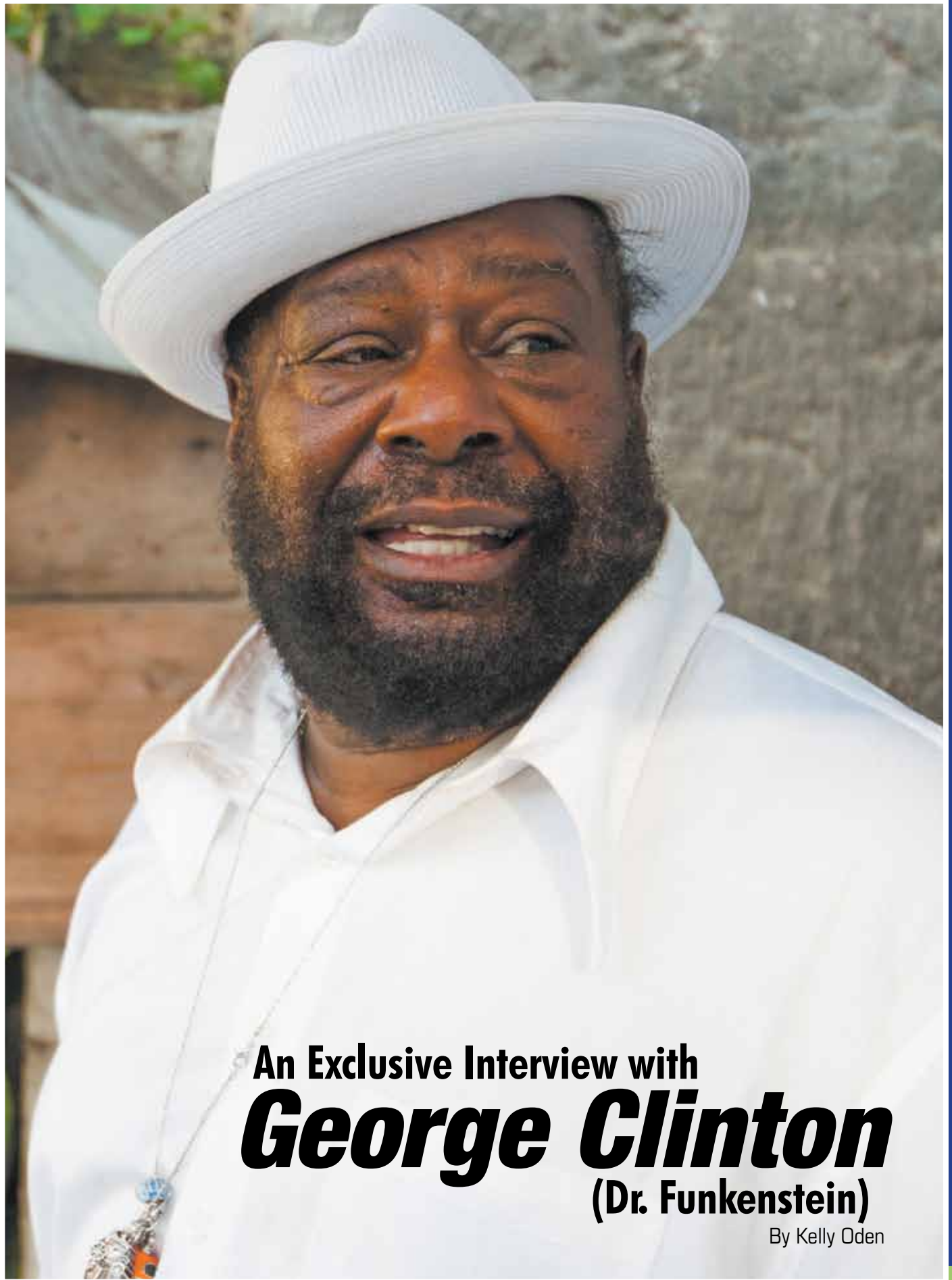
Crawfish Festival

May 1-3

The Fiesta of Five Flags organizes the annual Pensacola Crawfish Festival and the celebration of local seafood and Cajun flair is now in its 31st year. It's one of the largest crawfish boils in the Southeast, with over 16,000 pounds of the critters getting spiced and boiled to perfection, much to the delight of the thousands of attendees to this unofficial kickoff of summer in the panhandle.

Crawfish Festival





An Exclusive Interview with
George Clinton
(Dr. Funkenstein)

By Kelly Oden

In his recent memoir, *Brothas Be, Yo Like George, Ain't That Funkin' Kinda Hard on You?: A Memoir*, George Clinton talks about his more than four-decade long wild ride in the music business. The book touches on everything from his musical inspirations, his early experimentation with his funky musical style to his battle with drug use and his ongoing legal battles with the music industry.

Affectionately known to his legions of fans as Dr. Funkenstein and The Father of Funk, Clinton was born in Kannapolis, North Carolina and grew up in Plainfield, New Jersey. During his teen years Clinton formed a *doo-wop* group inspired by Frankie Lymon & the Teenagers called The Parliaments, while straightening hair at a barber salon in Plainfield.

After moving to Detroit in the 1960s Clinton

was a staff songwriter for Motown. His band Parliament had a major hit single, *(I Wanna) Testify* in 1967. The Parliaments eventually found success under the names Parliament and Funkadelic in the 1970s. These two bands combined the elements of musicians such as Jimi Hendrix, Sly and the Family Stone, Cream and James Brown. Clinton and Parliament-Funkadelic dominated music during the 1970s with over 40 R&B hit singles (including three number ones) and three platinum albums.

And he hasn't stopped since. Throughout the 80s, 90s and through today, Clinton has recorded, produced and collaborated with some of the finest musicians of the times. *Coming of Age* was fortunate to speak with Clinton in anticipation of his Pensacola concert on April 30 at Vinyl Music Hall.



COA: Hello, Mr. Clinton. Thanks for talking with me today. As you know, Council on Aging of West Florida is based in Pensacola, Florida not too far from where you live in Tallahassee. So my first question is—what brought you to Tallahassee?

GC: I've been there for about 17 years. It started off with the courts fighting for the copyrights to my music. So the copyright fight took me out of my farm in Michigan, and I came down to Florida. We rehearsed with Scott Carswell, who owned the Moon in Tallahassee, for the Lollapalooza tour. After we went out on that tour we came back and I moved out to Monticello. I moved out of Monticello in 2001 and into Tallahassee. I've been there ever since.

COA: I'm going to go back a little ways and talk to you about your beginnings. You've talked a lot about how you started off singing doo-wop in your barber shop, but I wanted to ask you a little bit about your childhood. What was your boyhood like?

GC: You know, I'm driving through North Carolina right now and my childhood was between North Carolina and Virginia up until I was 10 years old. At 10 years old I moved to New Jersey, to Newark. Around 13 I started the singing, you know, the doo-wop. But other than that all I did was think about fishing.

COA: Did you study music in school?

GC: No, I didn't. Other than singing. In Jersey there was a group in every school singing doo-wop.

COA: How old were you when you were first drawn to music, and thought 'I've got to do something musically'?

GC: Twelve. Yeah, my cousin, she lived next door to the group called the Shirelles. And I watched them rehearse, and then we'd go to the Apollo Theater and watch their show along with Little Anthony and Frankie Lymon. I saw all that stuff when it first started.

COA: That must have been pretty exciting for a young boy.

GC: Yes. That's how you get the bug.

COA: You were 18 when you moved to Detroit. Did you have a job lined up or did you just head up there to see what would happen?

GC: We just drove up to see what would happen. And then we ended up writing for Motown. We didn't sign up with them, but we ended up writing. And by the time I was 20 I had a hit record called *I Wanna Testify* with the label that was right down the street from Motown.

COA: So what was that time period like?





GC: That was during the British invasion of rock and roll. So we got caught up with most of those groups. You end up being psychedelic, tripping out with everybody.

COA: And you released your first album there?

GC: Right, first album was Funkadelic.

COA: It's hard to keep track of the timeline. Because you've gone back and forth between Parliament and Funkadelic.

GC: Yeah, when you read my book, there's a timeline back and forth. We just put out a Funkadelic album with 33 songs on it and in about five months we're going to put out a Parliament album.

COA: Tell me about some of your adventures back in the day. You've been pretty open about partying and your drug use.

GC: (Chuckles) Yeah, we did all the drugs, pretty much. The 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s—it was permissible

back then. Well, we took a little advantage of the 80s and 90s, though. That wasn't so permissible.

COA: I understand that you quit doing drugs in order to deal with your legal issues. Is that right?

GC: Yeah, that definitely made me stronger, not having to deal with drugs. That and the fact that they were going to take the music, you know. That let me know I could not be messed up like that. I had to be clear about what I was doing on the business side of it. And once I got a taste of feeling without having to deal with the drugs, I was like, 'Damn, why was I so stubborn and hard-headed?' I was just plain hard-headed before that. I thought because I could make music that was all that mattered. I didn't realize I couldn't pay attention to all the rhetoric that you have to pay attention to when you're in charge of some stuff.

COA: The legal issues with your music are pretty complicated, but the main issue has to do with sampling, right? Many artists have sampled your music and many of them paid to sample your music but then



you never saw the money from the record company? Is that an accurate summary?

GC: That's an accurate summary of it. But it's not something that's accidental. You know, so much, hundreds of millions of dollars and it is organized the way they've done it. So it's not complicated, we got it all mapped out, it's just you got a lot of lawyers and judges and everything else that's involved in it. The whole thing is going to come out really soon.

COA: So I love the title of your book *Brothas Be, Yo Like George, Ain't That Funkin' Kinda Hard on You?* What prompted you to write a book?

GC: Mainly to tell the story of all the copyright stuff, but I knew in order to tell the story and to put out new music I had to give up something first. And I knew the book would be something that would catch people's attention and at the same time the title of the book is the first single off the new album.

COA: I understand your iconic stage machine, the Mothership, is going into the Smithsonian this year?

GC: The Mothership will be unveiled at the Smithsonian in July. It's the new African-American wing at the Smithsonian they just built it in the last three years and they're opening it up in July of this year.

COA: Were you surprised when they asked for it?

GC: Oh, I was flattered. 'Cause they got it right next to the Tuskegee Airmen's plane.

COA: So, you're 73, correct? How are you feeling about aging?

GC: I feel good. I cloned myself (laughs).

COA: Do you have any particular eating or exercise habits?

GC: I got a real good protein shake that I do and it's been working pretty good. I lost about 80 pounds and have been able to keep it there so I feel good about that.

COA: I understand you are a painter as well?



GC: Yeah, I have my art studio over in Tallahassee. And I do some of the album covers myself. I've been over at the studio ever since 2001.

COA: Do you ever show your work in gallery?

GC: I've done it a couple of times. I was so busy before, but I may do it again now.

COA: Do you have any other hobbies?

GC: Fishing.

COA: Where's your favorite place to go fishing?

GC: All up and down the Gulf, the Suwannee, St. Mark's.

COA: What charities are close to your heart?

GC: Teachers. Our slogan is, "Teachers work harder than you do, no matter what you do." We are trying to put a foundation together now.

COA: You tour a lot. How many days a year are you on the road usually?

GC: About 200. We travel in three Mercedes Sprinters.

COA: So what's your idea of a perfect day?

GC: You wake up (chuckles).

COA: Who are some young artists that you admire that you think have the 'funk'?

GC: Pharell, of course. And Kendrick Lamar.

COA: So what are you working on now? What do you want readers to know about?

GC: I'm working on the new Parliament album, *Medicaid Fraud Dog*. That will be out in August or September.

COA: Well, thanks so much for talking to me. I'm looking forward to your show here in April at Vinyl Music Hall.

GC: Me too. I hope to see you there. Thank you.



News from Council On Aging of West Florida

COA Welcomes New Team Members



Shannon Callahan, Rachel Hudson, Victoria Adams and Velma Franklin

Council on Aging of West Florida is pleased to welcome Shannon Callahan, Velma Franklin, Victoria Adams and Rachel Hudson to our team!

Shannon Callahan graduated from the University of West Florida with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice/forensic studies. She has social service experience working with American Eldercare and as a family support coordinator with Coastal Care Services in Louisiana. Shannon also served in the Louisiana Army National Guard. She will be serving as a case manager for COA.

Velma Franklin, our new foster grandparent supervisor, attended Faulkner State College in Bay Minette, Alabama and Pensacola State College. She previously worked with Arc Gateway. Velma volunteers her time with numerous organizations and serves on the board of directors for several organizations including A Second Chance Development Center, Vera Jackson's Academy of Excellence and A Place to Go. **Victoria Adams** joined our team as the community services supervisor for Santa Rosa County.

Victoria graduated from the University of West Florida with a bachelor's degree in aging studies.

Rachel Hudson is a registered nurse who has previous experience in hospice care as a case manager and floor nurse in an inpatient hospice facility. She has also held the position of assistant director of nursing in a nursing home facility and floor nurse on the oncology floor at West Florida Hospital. Rachel will be serving as a nurse at The Retreat, our adult day health care center. We are excited to have these talented individuals join our team!

Congratulations Carol Spring for 10 Years of Service!



Carol Spring with John B. Clark, President/CEO, Council on Aging of West Florida

At the February board meeting, we celebrated a milestone anniversary for senior dining site manager, Carol Spring. Spring has been working for COA since January 2005 and celebrates 10 years of service with our agency. Spring started as a community services assistant before being elected as a site manager at the Felix Miga Center. In 2012,

she was assigned the task of managing a new site at Grace Assembly of God. Not only did she help find the new location at Grace Assembly, but she also continually spent time recruiting participants, and has built a great rapport with those who attend, creating a family-like atmosphere. Her welcoming, pleasant personality and dedication has built and sustained the meal site at Grace Assembly. Spring is also quick to take on added responsibilities. Her current senior dining site is also a Meals on Wheels pick up hub. She often runs the meal routes herself, which is outside of her normal job duties. We would like to congratulate Carol Spring on her 10-year anniversary and say a HUGE thank you for her admirable service to this community.

Honorees Announced for Annual Rat Pack Reunion



COA announced the 2015 Rat Pack Reunion honorees at our annual holiday party on December 10. The 2015 honorees or "rats" are McGuire Martin, Commissioner Lumon May, Collier Merrill and Charlie Switzer. Mark your calendars for Friday, October 23, 2015 for best Rat Pack Reunion yet. The Rat Pack Reunion is an annual fundraising gala benefitting COA.

Guests are treated to a fine Italian dinner all while listening to the find tunes of Sinatra tribute artist, Tom Tiratto. Join us in roasting and toasting this fine crew in 2015! For more information, email bwelk@coawfla.org.

National Volunteer Week

Council on Aging of West Florida is actively seeking volunteers to help us serve our diverse senior population. We need volunteers of all ages who are willing to serve their time, and have experience and skills to help us carry out our mission. Tasks range from secretarial work, running errands, and doing small home projects. Join in the spirit of service by volunteering during National Volunteer Week, April 12-18 or another time that best fits your schedule.

Volunteer Orientation

Third Thursday of each month
875 Royce Street – Conference Room

March 19 – 5:30 pm

April 16 – 10 am

May 21 – 5:30 pm

For more information, contact Betty McLeroy at (850) 432-1475 or email bmcleroy@coawfla.org.

Day on the Go



Day on the Go is a program of The Retreat, our adult day health care center, for higher functioning participants who can follow directions, have good endurance and are able to attend area attractions and events with limited supervision. Schedules are planned to allow for a full day of activity for the participants as well as extended respite for caregivers. Each *Day on the Go* includes breakfast, exercise time, an outing and lunch. The cost is \$65. For more information, contact Sandie Holtry at (850) 266-2503.

Thank You Baptist Medical Group!



COA TV with Dozer the Therapy Dog

We are grateful for the generous support of Baptist Medical Group, who has agreed to sponsor the production of *Coming of Age* TV for another year! Similar in concept to *Coming of Age* magazine, *Coming of Age* TV also covers a wide variety of senior-related topics. Each 30-minute program consists of interviews with three local experts. New programs are recorded monthly and air on WUWF-TV, Cox Cable Channel 4 (Escambia County) Mondays,

Wednesdays and Fridays at 7 pm and Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 am. For individuals in Santa Rosa County and beyond, each segment from the program is uploaded to youtube.com/coawfla. The channel serves as a resource library for those looking for information relevant to seniors and caregivers. Thank you Baptist Medical Group for helping ensure that our community stays up-to-date with the latest news relevant for seniors and their caregivers!

Congrats Stella Thagouras!



Stella Thagouras

Stella, who serves as COA's executive secretary, was recently awarded a certificate of achievement for completion of the Leadership Development Certification Series through Landrum Companies. This two-year program was designed to enhance leadership competencies and develop more well-rounded leaders within organizations. Courses included conflict management, safety skills, bully and harassment and more. Congratulations, Stella, on this significant accomplishment!



PENSACOLA CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Council on Aging of West Florida office located at 875 Royce Street

Thurs., March 26, 6 pm

Dr. Donna Jacobi will be speaking about dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Thurs., April 30, 6 pm

Elizabeth Fayard from Regency Hospice will be speaking about what hospice care really is.

For more information, please call (850) 432-1475.

GREEK SALAD FUNDRAISER

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

Proceeds benefit client activities at The Retreat, Council on Aging of West Florida's adult day health care center.

\$8 per plate – Greek salad, breadstick and a homemade cookie

FREE DELIVERY available on orders of eight or more to the same location.

Orders must be placed by Friday, May 15.

To place your order, call Sandie Holtry at (850) 266-2503.

2ND ANNUAL ST. PATTY'S DAY CELEBRATION

Tues., March 17, 10 am to 1 pm

Gadsden Street United Methodist Church, 901 E. Gadsden Street

Sponsored by area churches and senior organizations, this event will feature vendors offering opportunities and services that contribute to active, successful aging, and help seniors plan ahead for their futures. Vendors will provide information on educational opportunities, retirement living, travel, Alzheimer's disease, hospice services and much more. The event will also launch the 2nd annual "Senior Adult Series."

For more information please call Gadsden Street United Methodist Church at (850) 433-0014.

Heart Failure and Treatment

Wed., Apr. 1, 11:30 am lunch, noon to 1 pm seminar

Presented by Sumit Verma, M.D., F.A.C.C., Electrophysiology, Cardiology Consultants Andrews Institute Athletic Performance & Research Pavilion, 1040 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Conference Room B

Advances in Spinal Neurosurgery

Thurs., Apr. 9, 11:30 am lunch; noon to 1 pm seminar

Presented by Brett D. Reichwage, M.D., Neurosurgery - Baptist Medical Group Baptist Towers Medical Meeting Rooms, 1717 North E St., Avery Street Entrance

Physical Therapy: Exercise Impact on Cancer

Tues., Apr. 14, 11:30 am lunch; noon to 1 pm seminar

Presented by David E. Mann, M.D., Hematology Oncology Baptist Medical Group Baptist Medical Park, 9400 University Parkway, Azalea Rm.

Atmore Community Hospital: Past, Present and Future

Thurs., Apr. 16, 9 am to 10 am

Presented by Bill Perkins, Administrator, Atmore Community Hospital Atmore Community Hospital, 401 Medical Park Drive, Mayson Auditorium

Osteoporosis: Prevention, Treatment and Management

Wed., May 13, 11:30 am lunch; noon to 1 pm seminar

Presented by Jose Murillo, M.D., Family Medicine, Baptist Medical Group - Cordova Baptist Towers Medical Meeting Rooms, 1717 North E Street, Avery Street Entrance

Common Hand Conditions


Thurs., May 21, 11:30 am lunch; noon to 1 pm seminar

Presented by Alexander Coleman, M.D., Orthopaedic Hand Specialist, Andrews Institute Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine Center Andrews Institute Athletic Performance & Research Pavilion, 1040 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Conference Room B

Lower Back Pain: Causes and Treatment Options

Thurs., May 28, 11:30 am lunch; noon to 1 pm seminar

Presented by Eric M. Shoemaker, D.O., Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Andrews Institute Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine Center Baptist Medical Park, 9400 University Parkway, Azalea Rm.

For more information or to make a reservation please call (850) 469-7897. 

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Council on Aging Holiday Party



Carlette Howell, Larry "Moose" Morris and Jenn Cole



Board Chair Caron Sjöberg, John and Jerre Peacock



DeeDee Davis and Rat Pack Reunion Honoree McGuire Martin



Pamela Hatt and Rachael Cox

Military Recognition Luncheon



President/CEO John B. Clark and Florida District 1 Representative Clay Ingram

United Way of Santa Rosa County Masquerade Ball



President/CEO John B. Clark and Executive Vice President Laura M. Garrett



Andrea Rosenbaum and President/CEO John B. Clark

The Retreat



Krewe of Blues



Dozer the Therapy Dog



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The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is a free, federally funded program that fosters volunteerism among individuals 55 and better. The local RSVP is sponsored by United Way of Escambia County and is focused on uniting our community and leveraging resources to improve lives. For more information, call 444.7124 or email RSVP@unitedwayescambia.org.



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Thank You

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Gifts received from November 21, 2014 through March 2, 2015.

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In honor of John B. Clark
By Dr. Donna Jacobi

In honor of Audrey Grill
By Mr. and Mrs. Bill Triemer

Council on Aging of West Florida is a local independent 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that has served seniors and their families since 1972. Council on Aging of West Florida helps seniors in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties live healthy, safe and independent lives in their own familiar surroundings by providing community-based, in-home programs and services such as Meals on Wheels and Alzheimer's respite care. For more information, call 432-1475 or visit www.coawfla.org.

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