

Inspiring wellness through Active Aging Week®



Host organizations and participants share the positive message of Active Aging Week through life experiences that promote wellness

A life well lived: It's a hope we all cherish. Every September, Active Aging Week® illuminates that hope by highlighting our ability to live well throughout the life span and celebrating aging. Organizations, professionals, older adults and supporters of all ages come together in the last week of September to share—and be inspired by—a week

of positive life experiences and *can do* spirit.

In communities, organizations and neighborhoods, local hosts provide fun, (mostly) free activities and events that promote wellness in any or all of life's dimensions. Offerings primarily target adults ages 50+. Participants are invited to explore these opportunities in a friendly, safe, supportive environment in the hope that they may try new things and perhaps find an activity that engages them—which, in turn, might motivate

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Active Aging Week 2017 included a boat ride for participants at Brittany Pointe Estates in Lansdale, Pennsylvania. Image courtesy of Acts Retirement-Life Communities



Get involved!

Observance: Active Aging Week® 2018

Theme: Inspiring wellness

Dates: September 23–29, 2018

Connect with Active Aging Week:
<http://www.activeagingweek.com>,
<https://www.facebook.com/ActiveAgingWeek>, #activeagingweek

Campaign toolkit (most resources and materials are already available on website):

- logos, posters, T-shirt designs, certificates, PowerPoint presentations, calendar announcements, fact sheets, and social media tools (campaign hashtag #activeagingweek)
- case studies, planning worksheets, campaign program examples from past years, and planning guide examples, including “How to get the most out of your involvement in Active Aging Week”
- theme days resources from national sponsors, with resources focused on multidimensional wellness, aquatic dance, and physical activity and nutrition for falls prevention
- how-to webinars on creating a comprehensive promotional plan to gain attention for offerings, and including theme days in the schedule

Host registration: <http://www.activeagingweek.com/aaw-hostsites.php>

Post-campaign host reports and photos: Send to info@icaa.cc (please compress image files)



In 2017, healthy appetizers followed an Active Aging Week presentation on how to stay strong and active at Kisco's La Posada community in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. Image courtesy of Kisco Senior Living

them to adopt (or advance) a lifestyle of healthy, active aging. Participation also reinforces the core message of Active Aging Week: It is possible to live a full, vital and productive life at any age.

While host organizations develop and deliver their own customized Active Aging Week events at the local level, the International Council on Active Aging® (ICAA) leads the annual campaign with the support of national sponsors. Active Aging Week debuted in 2003 as a platform for ICAA members and allies to recognize and celebrate the achievements of their older residents, members, citizens and customers. Host organizations, sponsors and supporters in North America and beyond have reached millions of older adults with their efforts to date.

In 2018, Active Aging Week will take place September 23–29. If you are not yet on board, why not plan to host events this year? Free promotional ma-

terials and resources such as planning tools are available to help on the campaign's website (see “Get involved!” on this page for information).

Tips for a successful week

Among other ways in which the Active Aging Week national campaign supports local hosts, a new theme provides a hook each year for marketing and promoting local activities. “Inspiring wellness,” the 2018 theme, emphasizes that wellness inspires those who embrace it as a way of life. The theme also encourages hosts to inspire wellness by providing experiences that may motivate older adults to set out on a wellness journey.

So what will help you craft a successful Active Aging Week? Over the years host organizers have shared numerous tips, which among others, include the following:

- Assemble a steering committee, if possible, to create a plan of action and

customize it around the year's theme. An action plan will help in meeting local or national goals for the week and beyond. (In an Active Aging Week best practice, Kerby Centre in Calgary, Canada, turned its annual campaign participation into a successful yearlong initiative; read the article on pages 98–101 to learn how.)

- Target a customized campaign to be relevant to the chosen audience, whether internal or external.
- Seek out and partner with individuals and/or groups, sponsors and associates who have a passion for active aging and who will want to support these efforts.

Host organizations have the opportunity to reach a broader audience with Active Aging Week. Augmenting more traditional channels, social media is an agile avenue for notifying people about activities; sharing highlights and photos of events; recognizing volunteers and partners; and communicating the campaign's spirit—and use of these tools has definitely increased among Active Aging Week hosts. To learn what some hosts shared for last year's campaign, turn to pages 95–97.

In addition, social media plays a role in one of the three ways to use the “power of many” suggested in the sidebar on page 94. Additional suggestions and resources are available online to help you get the most out of your campaign participation (refer to “Get involved!” on page 92 for details).

Connect to the national campaign

Whether downloading posters from the Active Aging Week website or inviting speakers to participate, host organizers dive deeply into their planning for Active Aging Week during the summer months. Now is the time to connect to the national campaign, if you have yet to do so.

ICAA encourages local hosts to register their organizations as official Active Aging Week host sites. When you sign up



At The Wellness Institute in Winnipeg, Canada, Active Aging Day 2017 included group exercise classes, presentations, exhibits, and more. Image courtesy of The Wellness Institute at Seven Oaks General Hospital

as a host site, you add to the participation numbers that will attract media coverage and sponsor support for next year's campaign. The process takes hardly any time. On the campaign website's home page, click “Register host site” on the top menu, then complete the short form that appears. In addition to contact details and type of organization, you will be asked, “How many times have you or your location hosted Active Aging Week?” Fill in the form, and that's it: Your organization is registered.

Host organizers are also urged to share their Active Aging Week experiences with ICAA. Please send a post-event report or comments, along with photographs, to info@icaa.cc. ICAA is keen not only to know what you did, how things went and what challenges you faced, but also to learn what you would do differently next year. *Journal on Active Aging*® staff may also publish excerpts from your reports/comments and accompanying images in articles about the campaign.

Active Aging Week is your platform to showcase the achievements and abilities of adults ages 50 and older. It is also a platform you can use to encourage more positive views about aging and to highlight your organization in your local community. So, in September, get involved! Reach out through your activities and events for Active Aging Week 2018 and inspire wellness. A life well lived is lived well at every age.🌀

Active Aging Week 2018 is sponsored by Abbott Nutrition, Aegis Therapies/EnerG® by Aegis, Domtar and SwimEx.



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Use the 'power of many' to make the most of Active Aging Week



Azalea Trace residents came prepared with sunglasses and hats for their beach walk to celebrate Active Aging Week 2017 in Pensacola, Florida. Image courtesy of Acts Retirement-Life Communities

What activities will you host for Active Aging Week® 2018? Whether you are planning health fairs or educational lectures, art workshops or exercise classes, community walks or zipline adventures, your week's success will come down to one word in the final months—*marketing*.

Now, you might think your marketing team has addressed every aspect. Advertising ready to go. Local media, both online and print, invited to interview you before campaign kickoff to drive awareness. Numerous announcements/articles included in your newsletter. Flyers handed out to residents or members as well as their family members. Social media and email utilized to build interest in the week you have planned. Even tools on the campaign website used to solicit a proclamation that the last week of September is Active Aging Week in your town or city.

What could possibly be missing? The answer is people.

The power of many

If your organization has yet to do so, it's not too late to seek the support of everyone who does business with you, everyone who utilizes your services, and everyone who your organization touches in some way. Reach out and request help. Ask them *all* to "just share" what you will be doing for Active Aging Week with the people they know. They'll then become your campaign ambassadors. This is known as the "ripple effect," a time-tested way of spreading the word.

Here are some suggestions to ensure that people pass along the message you want them to share:

1. Give individuals a social media kit that has one or more images for your Active Aging Week participation and the precise content you would like them to share on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, along with hashtags for your organization and the campaign (#activeagingweek). Ask them to share these things three times a week

over the four weeks leading up to the observance.

2. Ask local merchants to place posters for Active Aging Week in their windows. They, too, can participate by offering campaign specials to draw in business. This will not only be good for their business but also drive campaign recognition and awareness.
3. Ask your local media not just to cover your Active Aging Week activities, but to be your campaign partner as well and write a weeklong series on how being inspired to embrace wellness can change the lives of everyone in your city or town. The media outlet will be part of Active Aging Week and not just report on it—an approach implemented successfully in various cities, including Champaign, Illinois, and Winnipeg, Canada.

It's important also to reassure people that they will not need to spend a lot of time doing these things.

The above suggestions are just three of the many ways you can expand the reach of your Active Aging Week message. Additional marketing recommendations are provided in "How to get the most out of your involvement in Active Aging Week," available in the "Planning your events" section of the online campaign toolkit. Use these tools and ideas to use the power of many and maximize the benefits of Active Aging Week participation.

Reference

Active Aging Week. (n.d.). Campaign toolkit. How to get the most out of your involvement in Active Aging Week. Available at <http://www.activeagingweek.com/resources-organization/getthemost.php>

‘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 12th 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.

