



Active Aging Week was presented at four Parc Communities in Atlanta, Georgia. The flyer from the week at the Buckhead location shows a number of activities every day (see page 42). A health fair is a popular kickoff event, and a major dance is appearing on more schedules

Set your goals for Active Aging Week 2009

Focus on your goals to guide the planning process for September's annual health promotion event

The goal is simple for Active Aging Week, an annual health promotion event promoted by the International Council

on Active Aging®: Give as many older adults as possible the means to experience wellness activities and exercise in a safe, friendly and fun atmosphere. ICAA accomplishes that goal through you, our colleagues who plan and host the week's events.

Whether a single presentation or class or a week filled with activities, your work introduces older adults and their families to the concepts of active aging. Because so many of you have hosted Active Aging Week, each year thousands of older adults find opportunities to stay engaged in life through the dimensions of wellness (physical, spiritual, cognitive/intellectual, social, emotional, professional/vocational).

This year Active Aging Week is being held from Monday, September 21, through Sunday, September 27. Autumn may seem far away, but as veteran event planners know, it's closer than you think!

Goals guide planning

As you begin your planning process, it's a good time to step back and consider what you are trying to achieve. What immediately comes to mind are the desires to create excitement, get people to try different things and have fun. These are valuable parts of the experience. But what are the specific goals that you can work towards?

If you take the time to really think about what you want to occur because of Active Aging Week, it will help you and your planning team focus on the activities and messages that will achieve those objectives. Specific goals also help you decide on the number and kind of events that have meaning for participants and don't overload your capacity to produce quality programming.

From the health promotion viewpoint, goals could be:

- **Changing behaviors.** People change what they are doing after participating. A change can be simple, like doing one stretch in the morning or trying a new recipe (with less salt and fat, of course) or joining a walking club.

- **Raising awareness.** People know what is available and why it is valuable. If they are in the contemplation stage of change, a goal may be to inform them about how they can take action. Health fairs are examples of working with community partners to raise awareness of services that might support a healthy lifestyle.

From the programming point of view, goals could be:

- **Attracting X number of new participants.** This could mean people who have never visited your location or events, as well as that person who faithfully meets with the canasta club and tries a yoga class.
- **Attracting X number of regulars.** There is nothing like a special week to help regulars stay motivated. They may welcome the chance to help plan the activities and volunteer as leaders and hosts.
- **Reaching an overall participation goal (new and regular participants).** A total attendance goal will help explain what you are trying to achieve to potential partners and sponsors. In addition, it will help you estimate how many chairs, servings or pieces of equipment you need.
- **Attracting X number of people to visit your location.** You may want to introduce more older adults to your facility and services. Keep in mind that people will need transportation to arrive at your location or the location of an Active Aging Week event in a park or mall.
- **Offering X number of new activities.** Time for a change! Active Aging Week is an opportunity to roll out new classes and clubs, and see how well they are received.

Health promotion and programming goals are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they are so closely intertwined that you probably will achieve both at the same time.

Your goals will serve as a kind of GPS (global positioning system) device. You still want participants to get excited about the week, try different things and have fun. And, in the spirit of the educational nature of Active Aging Week, you can have the presentations, classes, walks, refreshments, handouts and games that will help achieve your goals.

For example, if a goal is to attract regulars to new activities, perhaps an incentive program or bring-a-friend promotion will help. If a goal is to change behaviors, partner a dietitian with a chef to show how to add more vegetables to a diet and, at the end of the demonstration, launch a healthy cooking club. If a goal is to bring in new people, then transportation to interesting activities will be a must. Conversely, if transportation is an issue, bring active aging to the people. Form community partnerships with a tai chi instructor or SilverSneakers® leader who will bring the program to the place where older adults hang out.

Another advantage of setting specific goals is that you can figure out how you will measure your success—by collecting participants' comments and evaluations, stationing a person to count those who attend, or following up in a couple weeks to find out who did, in fact, put down the salt shaker.

Planning tips from veteran hosts

The professionals who host Active Aging Week are a great source of knowledge for the planning stages. After last year's campaign, hosts told ICAA what they would do differently in 2009. These veteran hosts said they would:

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- Start planning much earlier.
- Use sign-up sheets to better estimate how many chairs and other items are needed.
- Establish marketing deadlines four to five months in advance.
- Solicit donations and sponsorships earlier, so contacts have time to process the request through a corporate headquarters.
- Partner with a local company that can help attract more participants.
- Plan a regional event, such as a walk or tai chi class, that occurs in many places at the same time to attract media attention and sponsorships.
- Offer transportation from local seniors centers and churches to events at a retirement community.
- Make the facility more visible from the street using signage, color and balloons.
- Focus on the most popular 2008 activities and plan from them.
- Begin promoting the week earlier.
- Submit more than one press release to the local media to promote the events.

The word *earlier* is consistently used by hosts. You can jump-start planning by using the worksheets prepared by ICAA. These worksheets are posted on the ICAA website in Microsoft Word format, so you can add and subtract actions for your individual needs (see "Planning resources" below).

Older adults and staff are key resources

When you set your goals and plan your event, include the older adults you are trying to reach. Who better knows what activities will have meaning for their

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ACTIVE AGING
ACTIVE AGING week 2008
Parc Communities, Atlanta's Exclusive Host!

Health Fair

PARC AT BUCKHEAD
Thursday, September 25, — 10am - 2pm

FREE Health Seminars:

1. 10-10:30am
Media Room
Hearing Loss and Quality of Life. Is There A Connection?
Dr. Helena Solodar - Audiological Consultants of Atlanta
2. 10:30-11am
Large Private Dining Room
Healthy Living Cooking Class
Sysco - Executive Chef
3. 11-11:45am
Media Room
How Our Body Ages
Dr. Johnathan Flacker - Emory HealthCare
4. 11:45am-12:15pm
Fitness Center
Tai Chi Class for Senior Adults
Dave Hilburn - Recognized Tai Chi Master
5. 12:12-30pm
Large Private Dining Room
Nutrition For Healthy Aging
Sysco Dietitian, Allison
6. 12:30-1pm
Fitness Center
Wii Demonstration
7. 1-1:45pm
Media Room
A New You in 90 Days
Sherri Dantzig and Joseph Boyer - Nikken

Seminar RSVP by Monday, Sept. 22: 404.214.6100

Exhibits and Information:

- Piedmont Hospital screenings
- Sierra Therapies - physical therapy
- Center for the Visually Impaired
- Nikken Wellness products
- ParcCare
- Senior Services of North Fulton
- Dental services
- Ageless Remedies
- Medical and Diabetic supplies
- Walgreens
- AARP
- Jewelry & Accessories
- And much more!

FREE Preventative Screenings:

- Blood pressure
- Blood sugar
- Blood cholesterol
- Audiological hearing screenings
- Chair massages
- Balance and stability testing with the Biodex Balance System
- And more complimentary screenings

Senior Prom
PARC AT BUCKHEAD
Friday, September 26, 6:30 - 8:30pm

Join our celebration of Active Aging Week with our "All That Jazz" Senior Prom! Enjoy music and dancing with "The Modernaires" - 17 piece orchestra.

- Vote and Crown the King and Queen of the Prom!
- Dress code - black tie optional
- Heavy appetizers served
- No charge to attend
- Valet service provided

Raffle proceeds benefit: The American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Three Mile Walk

RSVP by Monday, September 22: 404.214.6100

PARC COMMUNITIES

www.parccommunities.com

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ACTIVE AGING
ACTIVE AGING week 2008
Parc Communities, Atlanta's Exclusive Host!

Parc Communities Daily Events

SEPTEMBER 21-26, 2008

Parc Alpharetta, 770.346.9011

Sunday, Sept. 21	1-5pm	Senior Art Show and Sale
Tuesday, Sept. 23	12noon	Lunch-n-Learn, United Health Care presents: "Medicare & Medicare D 101"
Wednesday, Sept. 24	4-6pm	Wine Tasting
Thursday, Sept. 25	4-6pm	Baked Good and Recipe Sale and Silent Auction
Friday, Sept. 26	10am-2pm	Health Fair at Parc at Buckhead - RSVP: 404.214.6100
	6:30-8:30pm	Senior Prom at Parc at Buckhead - RSVP: 404.214.6100

Parc at Buckhead, 404.442.2700

Sunday, Sept. 22	10am	Strength and Balance
Monday, Sept. 23	10:30am	Water Aerobics
Tuesday, Sept. 24	11am	Functional Fitness
Wednesday, Sept. 25	10am-2pm	Health Fair - RSVP: 404.214.6100
Thursday, Sept. 26	6:30-8:30pm	Senior Prom - RSVP: 404.214.6100

Parc at Duluth, 770.622.6880

Sunday, Sept. 22	9:30am	Water Aerobics
Monday, Sept. 23	10:45am	Functional Fitness
Tuesday, Sept. 24	10am	Gwinnett Medical Center (with Bayer Diabetes Care) presents: "Know Your Healthy Steps Program"
		Participants receive pedometer and blood Glucose meter
Wednesday, Sept. 25	9:30am	Water Aerobics
Thursday, Sept. 26	10am-2pm	Health Fair at Parc at Buckhead - RSVP: 404.214.6100
	10:45am	Functional Fitness
	6:30-8:30pm	Senior Prom at Parc at Buckhead - RSVP: 404.214.6100

Piedmont, 770.565.8828

Monday, Sept. 22	7-10am	Wellstar Kennestone Hospital: Personal Wellness Profile and Health Screening
		Call 770.956.STAR (7827) to register.
Tuesday, Sept. 23	8:30am	Hinge and Twinge Exercise Class
	3pm	Strength and Balance Class
Wednesday, Sept. 24	11am-4pm	"Ask the Pharmacist" (Bring all of your meds)
	3:15pm	Chair Exercise
Thursday, Sept. 25	3pm	Happy Hour with Bo Chitty
Friday, Sept. 26	10am-2pm	Health Fair at Parc at Buckhead - RSVP: 404.214.6100
	9:30am	Complimentary Tai Chi Class at East Cobb Park
	1pm	For directions call 770.565.8828
	6:30-8:30pm	Senior Prom at Parc at Buckhead - RSVP: 404.214.6100

To join daily exercise classes, please contact interested community.

www.parccommunities.com



peers? Plus, older adults can be your colleagues, too, with skills and ideas honed through lives of work and experience. After hosting Active Aging Week for the first time last year, Katie Williamson, senior sports and wellness coordinator for the City of Kettering in Ohio, commented that “something that made this [2008] event a success was the fact that the participants were extremely involved in the planning process.”

Since you will likely rely on colleagues to help promote the week and participate in the activities, be sure to bring them into the planning process. Staff members can talk about upcoming events, provide transportation, lead activities and join in games. They can also be a big help in setting goals and enabling you to achieve them.

Angela Butler-Hackett, corporate wellness director for Parc Communities in the Atlanta, Georgia, area, credits the staff for the success of Active Aging Week

2008. “Some of our staff were divided into different task forces to plan and implement each event,” she says. “We all worked together well as a team to make the week a huge success.”

Planning resources

To start organizing Active Aging Week 2009, visit the special section on ICAA’s website for support materials in the form of articles, profiles, checklists, marketing and media resources, and handouts. Begin by going to www.icaa.cc/aaw.htm. A link to Active Aging Week campaign materials and tools appears at the bottom of this webpage, while you can navigate to specific resource categories through the left menu.

When you connect to the campaign materials, you’ll see the “Host registration form” at the top of the page. Please complete this form and send it to ICAA. Before and after Active Aging Week, we will email you to find out how your event went and gather information to guide materials for the next year.

Look for the “Planning guides” and “Planning worksheets.” You’ll find information on planning the week, finding partners and marketing, and articles on past events that veteran hosts have said are a great source of ideas. Plus, watch for profiles of successful Active Aging Week events in upcoming issues of *ICAA Functional U*[®], the publication that focuses on exercise and activities for active aging.

By the way, some planners shift the Active Aging Week dates forward or back one day if it better suits their participants or location. That’s fine with us.

Goal forward

When you place goal setting as the first item in your planning agenda, the resulting goals will direct the activities you choose, and the methods you use to bring people to those activities. Just as

Active Aging Week September 21–27, 2009

The International Council on Active Aging’s annual health promotion event is held in the last full week of September. Active Aging Week events are:

- representative of all the dimensions of wellness, with a focus on physical activity
- delivered in a fun, no-pressure atmosphere
- educational
- free to participants, so cost is not a barrier

The organizers at each host site decide what they wish to do. At some locations, it may be a single activity, such as a health fair or a walk. Other hosts plan an activity every day, or on several days during the week. The number and type of activities is up to each host. For more information about Active Aging Week, visit www.icaa.cc/aaw.htm.

important, the goals will help everyone keep moving in the same direction. For example, a great idea is great, but if it does not meet one of the week’s goals, perhaps it should be tried another time. Goals also simplify communication with managers and other departments, because they will instantly understand what you and the planning team want to achieve.

The more organizations participate in Active Aging Week, the more powerful the message we send. Across the United States and Canada, the momentum generated by thousands of organizations hosting thousands more people supports all of those who believe in active aging. ☺

Images courtesy of Parc Communities