



Updates from Kathy

Greetings all! I have much news to share as things have been quite busy over the initial month of [Age-Friendly Sarasota \(AFS\)](#)!

On May 6, the Board of County Commissioners officially proclaimed the day "Age-Friendly Sarasota Day" underscoring Sarasota County Government's commitment to enhance age-friendliness across the [Eight Domains of Livability](#).

On May 7, I presented about Age-Friendly Sarasota (AFS) at the Florida Council on Aging's Innovations Summit: The Pulse of Aging. There was enormous interest about our efforts. Participants throughout the state are interested in hearing about our project and how they can pursue the designation, and more importantly, greater age-friendliness in their own communities. Of course, though we have only just begun, we are pleased to share and lead the state via our processes and the blueprint we create in our own community.

As we reflect about the work that lies ahead, and our efforts to fruition thus far, we fully realize that we would not be the state's first [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) age-friendly community without the support of all of you - our amazing community of people, businesses, organizations and providers across the continuum who wholeheartedly support our efforts.

- Kathy Black, Age-Friendly Sarasota Initiative Consultant



Age-Friendly Innovation

Domain Spotlight: Employment

For decades now, retirement has been synonymous with Florida. And Sarasota County has one of the state's largest percentage of residents who are "aging in the sunshine" - with more than half of us over age 50! Information revealed by AARP at the Innovations Summit countered some of the "myths" associated with aging. For example, did you know that Florida retirees are a "boon" to our economy? Our collective income from Social Security alone is associated with the creation of almost three-quarters of a million jobs - which is more employment than Florida's tourism industry!

We also account for more than half of the state's consumer spending! And, as noted in the Sarasota Herald-Tribune's [recent front-page story by Barbara Peters](#), aging boomers are reinventing their lives and careers throughout our community. In fact, the fastest group of entrepreneurs are people age 50 and older!

As noted in my blog, [A look at age-friendly employment](#), employment remains an important source of income for many of us who either want or need to continue working. People age 50 and older bring much to the workplace, and employers benefit in multiple ways that will enhance their bottom line.

The entire world is embracing employment across the lifespan. The global network of age-friendly communities has included numerous businesses and governmental organizations that provide best practices for employers concerning workers age 50+ around the globe. AARP has recognized these industry leaders for their outstanding vision and commitment in building a forward-looking workplace. Examples here include Lam Soon Edible Oils in Malaysia which utilizes older workers as subject matter experts. In the UK, Marks & Spencer offer a partial retirement scheme that allows workers to draw pension benefits while continuing to work part time.

Celebrating Age-Friendly Sarasota

Domain Spotlight: Employment

While Sarasota County just embarked on officially becoming an age-friendly community this year, there are several businesses, organizations and community members who are already doing important work related to improving our community for all age levels. Below are two examples.

Age-friendly employment efforts in Sarasota include [Rewired](#), which aims to connect Boomers looking for professional opportunity with employers in the region and helps everyone from retirees looking for jobs to retired CEOs looking to consult with local companies. To read more about Rewired in SRQ Magazine, click [here](#).

Additional employment opportunities include [Employment Resources for Seniors](#), sponsored by Suncoast Jobs, to aid job-seekers throughout the region. Their mission is to help seniors re-enter the workforce and to secure gainful employment. Persons interested in discussing and creating employment strategies for Boomers and post-retirement can participate in a [Work Matters](#) subgroup of the Stakeholders in Aging Consortium, which meets the second Friday of the month from 8:30 - 10:00 am at the Sarasota County Department of Health on Ringling Blvd.

Did You Know...

- 70% of adults age 50 and older plan to continue working beyond traditional retirement age.
- 30% of Boomers have started their own business.
- 50% want to work at something that benefits their communities and provides meaning and purpose.
- 40% want more flexibility with job hours such as part-time assignments.
- 35% want to use their skills in a different way.

* Source: [Encore Careers, Tampa](#).

Get Involved

Take our survey!

You can take our survey by clicking [here](#), or visiting the [Age-Friendly Sarasota website](#).

The survey will take at least 20-30 minutes or more - so please allot enough time. **Be sure to click "DONE" at the end!**

The survey will also be available at [Sarasota County Libraries](#).

Remember Sarasotans age 50 and older, we need to hear from you in order to collectively, create greater age-friendliness throughout our community!

Click [here](#) to read a Herald-Tribune article in which Kathy Silverberg writes about taking the survey.

What people are saying about the survey:

"It really made me think about my future and start talking with my spouse and kids."

"The questions really get at what we need to know about as a community. I can't wait to hear about the results."

Other ways to get Involved: There will be many ways to get involved with Age-Friendly Sarasota. Our project will benefit from your involvement in a variety of capacities, both big and small, throughout our initial baseline efforts.

Save-the-Date: July 16! Plan to attend our informational session to learn more about several ways to get involved. Please check our [Facebook page](#) or July newsletter for more details.

Website: visit [agefriendly Sarasota.org](#) frequently to stay up-to-date on our efforts.

Social Media: Follow Age-Friendly Sarasota on [Facebook](#).

Join the global age-friendly conversation on Twitter using [#AgeFriendly](#).



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