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A Community #ForAllAges

September 2022



Florida Conference on Aging

Florida Conference on Aging 2022 Recap

By Sue Berger, Sarasota County's Aging System Policy Coordinator

I recently attended the 2022 Florida Conference on Aging, presented by the Florida Council on Aging, the Florida Association of Aging Services Providers, and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs. This was my first in-person conference since 2019, and it did not disappoint.

Ron Hetrick, vice president of Lightcast Enterprise and author of *The*



Beep – Autonomous Mobility Solutions

[Beep](#) is a leader in the deployment of autonomous vehicles. Driverless vehicles sound very sci-fi, but they are here and operational throughout Florida, and the community of Lake Nona is a pioneer in this endeavor.

Lake Nona is a 17-square-mile community within the city limits of Orlando and has a population of 64,000 people. The city touts itself as "A Community of and for the Future," where aspirations and realities merge.

Demographic Drought, was the opening session speaker." He provided an insightful look at trends affecting the current labor market, including the accelerated retirement of baby boomers, fewer younger people participating in the labor market, and the effects of COVID.

Four sessions focused on Livable Communities. There were additional tracks on dementia and memory disorder, fighting Ageism, connecting older adults and nature, falls prevention, caregiver solutions, and how we can move forward from the pandemic to address social isolation and loneliness.

I was fortunate to get into the track on the REACH program. This standout sessions was created to educate attendees about improving emergency response for those with dementia.

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Falls Prevention Awareness Week



Each year, The National Council on Aging provides [information and tools to bring awareness to Falls Prevention Awareness Week](#).

This year's theme is **Strengthening Community Connections in Falls Prevention**.

***Information from the National Council on Aging**

The Move Nona fleet is the country's largest and longest-running single-site fleet. Safety and reliability are key focal points in the planning and deployment of these vehicles. The system has five routes with eight shuttles connecting to ten key destinations. Shuttles are ADA accessible with tie-downs for wheelchairs and are equipped with seatbelts and an emergency kit. A 'Shuttle Specialist' is onboard to ensure a smooth experience. In addition, the command center is constantly monitoring each shuttle and can easily communicate with the attendant.

Beep ensures that communities are educated about the service before deployment, with special attention to training emergency responders on how to interact with the vehicle in an emergency and includes hands-on instruction on how to operate the vehicle manually if the need arises.

What an exciting time for age-friendly communities to be on the cutting edge embracing this new technology.

Celebrating National Senior Center Month



As we continue to emerge from the COVID pandemic, we realize more than ever the importance of the connections offered at senior centers. Now is the perfect time to promote and support all they offer. While senior centers are considered a place for recreation and fun, they enrich lives, provide access to resources, offer health and wellness opportunities, and

- Falls are the number one cause of injury and fatal injuries among older adults.
- Every 11 seconds, an older adult is treated in the emergency room from a fall
- Every 19 minutes, an older adult dies from a fall
- Each year, more than \$50 billion is spent on the direct medical costs related to fall injuries (78% paid by Medicare and Medicaid)
- Even falls without injury can cause fear of falling, leading to physical decline, depression, and social isolation
- Falls are the leading cause of traumatic brain injuries and account for over 95% of all hip fractures.

The National Council on Aging offers resources for older adults on various health and wellness topics, including falls. [The Falls Free Checkup](#) is a quick 2-minute assessment that helps you evaluate your fall risk with a printable summary that can be shared with your physician.

[Learn More](#)

support lifelong learning. The [National Council on Aging](#) has chosen the perfect theme for this year's recognition, **Strengthening Community Connections**.

Senior centers rely heavily on community partnerships and volunteers to provide programs and services, and many are also [Older Americans Act](#) nutrition sites. Many of today's senior centers serve a 40+ year age span, so they have diverse programming to meet the needs of multiple generations, cultures, and degrees of physical abilities.

September is the perfect time to take a tour and [learn more about all the wonderful programs and services available at senior centers in your community](#).

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To share news or information, contact the editor at ssternberg@thepattersonfoundation.org.



The Patterson Foundation | 2 N. Tamiami Trail, Suite 206, Sarasota, FL 34236

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