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A Community #ForAllAges

January 2022



### Age-Friendly Action Plan 2022-2025

Sarasota's County has just received the AARP certification for the Age-Friendly Action Plan 2022-2025. The plan details goals, objectives, and strategies developed from community assessment and input. Age-Friendly Sarasota continues the journey during this second 5-year cycle with great pride in our many accomplishments and anticipation for collective possibilities.



### Older Driver Safety Awareness

Aging can impact our ability to be safe behind the wheel, and many people feel driving is central to their independence. [The Safe Mobility for Life Coalition](#) offered by the [Florida Department of Transportation](#) promotes the importance of mobility independence – to safely get to and from the places we need and want to go with or without a car.

We all have a responsibility to start the conversation about safe driving as we age, learn about age-related changes that impact our driving skills, and address concerns shared by those who may need to retire from driving.

With the right resources, Floridians can continue to practice safe driving skills while exploring transportation options that will keep them independent and active in their communities beyond the

## View the Age-Friendly Sarasota Action Plan

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[UF/IFAS Extension and Sustainability](#) partners with [Sarasota County](#), the [University of Florida](#), and the [United States Department of Agriculture](#) to provide a wealth of information through classes, workshops, neighborhood consultations, educational programs, newsletters, digital publications, and speakers bureau. These valuable programs and resources help people, businesses, and neighborhoods throughout Sarasota County solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future. [Access the 2020 impacts brochure](#) and read more about all the wonderful opportunities.

UF/IFAS Extension and Sustainability offers many no-cost educational programs available both in-person and online, and there are several offerings in the new year that focus specifically on the older adult population.

[Upcoming Events](#)

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driver's seat.

Transportation is critical to social and civic participation and to access needed resources like food and medical services. It often comes up as a challenge for communities during the formation of age-friendly goals, strategies, and action steps.

For more information on building your personalized transportation plan, visit Florida's Guide to Safe Mobility.

[Build Your Personalized Transportation Plan](#)

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**Legislation Awareness:**

**The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Replaces The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB)**

[Digital Access for All](#) is working to help build awareness about the [Affordable Connectivity Program](#) (ACP), a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program that replaced the [Emergency Broadband Benefit Program](#). ACP is a long-term benefit that will help to lower the cost of broadband service for eligible households struggling to afford internet service.

[Learn More](#)

*continue scrolling*

# Life is BETTER — WITH — Friends

**UPLIFT**  
Florida Network

## **Finding Friendship**

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

Early in the pandemic, I connected with the daughter of a local couple. They live in Sarasota, and their daughter lives in New York. She had challenges navigating her parent's care from far away and sought help through the [Age-Friendly website](#). Through community resources, her parents received support, and all worked out well for them.

My reason for telling the story lies in the friendship I developed with the couple's daughter. Over the past two years, I have regularly communicated with her through email and phone calls. We developed a long-distance friendship beyond the needs of mom and dad. We check in on each other to see how things are going, and of course, we still check in on mom and dad.

The friendship started with a need but developed into something more meaningful – an outlet for conversation, a friend to listen to when things weren't going as planned, and a human connection with someone who cared.

There is a wonderful program with caring people right in our community who can become that trusted voice on the other end of the line and be that friend to you!

[UPLIFT Florida's CallConnect program](#) connects people through a safe, friendly calling program that matches individuals based on mutual interests. It is a win-win situation, providing a way to alleviate loneliness and offering an opportunity to give back to the community.

These social connections have many benefits, including finding a sense of purpose, increasing self-esteem, expanding social connections, and improving physical and mental health. Regular conversation with a friendly voice can make all the difference.

If you are interested in becoming a telephone friend or feel you might like receiving these calls, **please contact Sue Berger at 941-861-2558 to learn more.**

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