

# *Marion Senior Sentinel*

A MARION SENIOR SERVICES PUBLICATION

May 2021 • Volume 4 • Issue 5



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# FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Welcome to May! This month is an important one to us. It is “Older Americans Month,” which celebrates the importance of our oldest citizens. This year’s theme is “Communities of Strength,” emphasizing and highlighting how older adults have built resilience and strength over their lives through personal successes, failures, joys and difficulties. With this theme, I honestly can not think of a better community than our own.

May is also, very importantly, Mental Health Awareness Month. Historically as an agency, we have not outwardly discussed our efforts in this area, even though we perform them daily. That is changing. In an effort to continue to break the stigma that has long persisted with regards to mental health issues and the awareness thereof, MSS is currently in the process of developing and implementing processes that directly assist with and advocate on behalf of our clients that face mental health hurdles. Mental health is important, its issues are treatable, and having appropriate services and treatment versus not having them can be a crucial difference between whether or not a senior has well-rounded happiness in their life. Because mental health is essential to overall health and wellbeing, it must be recognized and treated in all Americans, including older americans, with the same urgency as physical health. We recognize this urgency and are working hard to supply services that meet the demand. We’ll be announcing and launching our efforts in this area sometime this year, so please stay tuned for updates.

This month also brings the return of our annual art exhibit at the Brick City Center for the Arts, “The Art of Aging.” This special event is a collaborative effort between us and Marion Cultural Alliance that celebrates aging through art, stories and education. Whether one willingly admits this or not, celebrating another birthday can be daunting, especially as your age’s number continues to climb; we, however, believe that these higher numbers are a blessing that not everyone lives long enough to enjoy and, as such, should be cherished and celebrated. Through a collection of photographs, paintings, and other forms of artwork by MCA member artists older than 55, we see aging, in a rather unique way, through the eyes of those experiencing it first-hand. Large-scale photography by local photographer, Ralph Demilio, will spotlight some of our community’s seniors being served by MSS and form the centerpiece of the exhibit. A handful of socially-distanced lectures in accordance with CDC guidelines will take place throughout the month, and I encourage you to attend if you’re able and wish to do so.

As you can see, being an “Older American” has its highs and lows, its delights and tribulations. Whether facing aging’s process or dealing with mental health problems (especially in an isolated time such as the current COVID-19 pandemic), becoming and being older isn’t always easy. But that’s why we exist: To help make things easier and help our seniors maintain their comfort and independence for as long as possible.

With that said, I invite you to join us in encouraging people of all ages to celebrate their communities and members thereof, so that, together, we can nurture our collective strength; to look at aging as a gift and not a curse; to see maintaining positive mental health as important a requirement as eating a healthy diet and getting enough sleep. Not just this month, but every month. When we all work together, things are better. Let’s continue on that path of getting better and better. Let’s continue to put the ‘unity’ in community!



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Martinez". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer Martinez  
*Executive Director*



# Marion Senior Services

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Jennifer Martinez *Executive Director*

Julie Forehand *Compliance Officer*  
 Tamara Grant-Powell *Accounting Manager*  
 Melissa Hames *Senior Case Manager*  
 Cassandra Jackson *Community Care Director*  
 Briana Kelley, Ph.D *Human Services Counselor*  
 Angela Kinsler *Meals Coordinator*  
 Ken McKelvy *Transit Safety Manager*  
 Herman Schulz *Transit Safety Manager*  
 Donna Tackett *Human Resources Director*  
 Glenda Thomas *Outreach Manager*  
 Laura Villafane *OAA S & A Coordinator*  
 Tom Wilder *Transit Director*  
 Jamie Williams *Marketing & Fund Development Coordinator*  
 Karen Williams *Transit Trip Manager*  
 Patty Yoder *Finance Director*

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*Mission: To support the elderly, disabled, and disadvantaged residents of Marion County and their families with dignity, respect, and compassion to maintain independent living status.*

### *How We Help*

Our elderly and disabled clients hope to remain in their homes as long as possible. To help maintain their independent living status, MSS provides for their physical and emotional well-being by offering the following support services: Adult Day Care, Caregiver Support, Case Management, Congregate Dining, Emergency Alert Response, Homemaker Assistance, Meals on Wheels, Personal Care, Respite Care and Transportation. Some of these services require a fee, based on income levels.

### *Cómo Ayudamos*

Nuestros clientes mayores y discapacitados esperan permanecer en sus hogares el mayor tiempo posible. Para ayudar a mantener su estado de vida independiente, MSS proporciona su bienestar físico y emocional ofreciendo los siguientes servicios de soporte: Guardería para adultos, Apoyo del cuidador, Gestión de casos, Sitios de Comidas Congregables, Respuesta de alerta de emergencia, Asistencia para ama de casa, Comidas a domicilio, Cuidado personal, Cuidado de relevo, Transporte. Algunos de estos servicios requieren una tarifa, según los niveles de ingresos.

Marion Senior Services is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation funded through the: Department of Children and Families, Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged, Florida Department of Elder Affairs, Florida Department of Transportation, Marion County Board of County Commissioners, United Way of Marion County, and various contributions from the community. Registration No. CH 919

## *Congregate Dining Clubs*

### **LOCATIONS**

Doors open at 9:00a.  
Meals are served at Noon

#### **Bellevue**

Bellevue Church of Christ  
12355 S. Hwy 441

#### **Forest**

St. Josephs of the Forest  
Catholic Church  
17301 E Hwy 40

#### **Marion Oaks**

Community Center  
294 Marion Oaks Lane

#### **Ocala**

Marion Café  
1101 SW 20<sup>th</sup> Court

#### **Dunnellon**

Seventh-Day Adventist Church  
7620 US 41



Marion Senior Services' (MSS) social congregate meal program gives mobile older adults an opportunity to interact and enjoy activities and a hot, nutritious meal with others. Diners have a chance to meet new people and share interests – in fact, many do, on a regular basis! Served at lunchtime Monday through Friday at several locations throughout Marion County, all meals meet the highest nutrition standards for seniors and are served in a friendly dining room atmosphere.

**How much do meals cost?** Clients receive meals at no cost. Donations are encouraged to help MSS continue to provide this service.

#### **How does someone qualify?**

Participants must be age 60 and older, and able to participate without assistance.

#### **How do I get signed up?**

Call the MSS Meals Department at **352-620-3438** for more information or to make a reservation.

**Drive-Thru Meal Pick-up Now Available  
in Anthony Area!  
Call for more information**

**Due to COVID-19**  
Congregate Dining Clubs Closed Until  
Further Notice

mca  
marion cultural alliance

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THE ART OF AGING:

# Resurgence

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16-0405

# Have You Heard of Uniper?

Uniper, huh? It might be an odd name (pronounced You-Na-Purr), but it's an awesome concept that you should try! Uniper is a cross-platform service that enables older adults to connect and engage with healthcare professionals, access live and interactive health and wellness programs, and communicate with family and friends. The goal of Uniper is to help the isolated and at-risk population remain mentally and physically active and healthy, even if the normal rhythm of their lives are disrupted (such as during the COVID-19 pandemic). So how do you get started using Uniper? It's simple: Reach out to us **either via email at [bkelly@marionseniorservices.org](mailto:bkelly@marionseniorservices.org) or by calling (352) 620-3501**. Marion Senior Services will connect you with our partner who will provide you with a FREE Uniper device that you plug into your "smart" TV.

We've developed an ongoing "**Lunch & Learn**" series that will happen biweekly on Thursdays at 11 a.m. using Zoom. These are all **FREE**, and everyone is welcome to attend! Eventually, we will transition the "Lunch & Learn" series from Zoom to Uniper, but first we need everyone who is interested to obtain their FREE Uniper device.

Here are the "Lunch & Learns" we are doing in May:

**May 6, 11 a.m. – Exploring Our Trigger Words**

**May 20, 11 a.m. – Coffee Chat: COVID Reflection and Discussion**

To attend, it's incredibly simple: Just go to this web address: **<http://bit.ly/MSSuniper>** (must capitalize "MSS"). We can't wait to see and interact with you via Uniper!

## Are you homebound and need a COVID-19 vaccination?

**I**f you're a senior that has not been vaccinated against COVID-19 yet, we want to help you get your vaccine doses. There are a few options available. One option, for homebound seniors that are not comfortable leaving their home and/or are at a higher risk and extremely vulnerable to the coronavirus, is

that a vaccine can be brought and administered in your own home. The state of Florida has developed strike teams for this very purpose. Seniors and/or their caregivers can sign up (for the senior) to receive a COVID-19 vaccine in their home by sending their request by email to [HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com](mailto:HomeboundVaccine@em.myflorida.com) or by calling 866-779-6121. For those homebound seniors that are comfortable leaving their home, Marion Transit is available to take you to your first and/or second vaccination appointments. To sign up for a transportation appointment, please call Marion Transit at (352) 620-3071. (*Note: You are responsible for coordinating your own vaccination appointment(s) ahead of your Transit appointment.*)



# TRANSIT TRAINING ~~FOR~~ WITH DUMMIES!

Always committed to creating a culture of safety, Marion Transit has recently made the smart decision to use a dummy to enhance their safety training for all current and future transit drivers. The weighted rescue dummy's name is "MT," a homage to Marion Transit's initials, and will be used to provide a more realistic training experience. This will ensure that Marion Transit drivers have been trained to effectively handle real-life emergency experiences if and when they occur.

While emergency evacuations are few and far in between, there are many instances where a bus would need to be evacuated, including: if the bus is on fire or is in danger of catching on fire; if the bus is in the path of other motor vehicles or cannot be moved to a safe position; if the bus is in the path of a train or stuck on any railroad tracks; and, of course, emergencies stemming from natural weather. There are four main ways in which a bus can be evacuated: through the front door, rear emergency door, emergency windows, and an emergency roof hatch.

Each current transit driver has already received hands-on training in properly evacuating MT out through the transit bus' rear emergency door, and all future drivers will receive this training to ensure the utmost safety of all Marion Transit clients and drivers. The training included emergency safety procedures, the location and use of safety equipment, and the different ways in which a driver may need to direct and assist clients to evacuate a bus.



It is real-world training techniques such as this that reflects Marion Transit's long-standing commitment to Marion County's seniors. Marion Transit has been designated by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged as the Marion County Community Transportation Coordinator since 1982. All buses are ADA accessible, with more than 40 paratransit buses making an average of anywhere between 350-450 one-way trips per day. For more information, please call Marion Transit at 352.620.3071 or visit [www.mariontransit.org](http://www.mariontransit.org)

**MARION TRANSIT**



Photo courtesy of Pixabay.com

## EAT WELL, CARE WELL. HEALTHY VISION

### WHAT ARE THE TOP 5 FOODS FOR EYE HEALTH?

One of the top 5 foods for eye health is **kale**. It has a rich source of lutein and zeaxanthin, which is believed to protect eye tissues from sunlight damage and reduce the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. **Sweet potatoes** are also high in vitamin A and beta-carotene. These nutrients prevent dry eyes and night blindness. Try to incorporate other deep orange foods into your diet, like carrots and butternut squash. Liver, milk, and eggs are other great sources of Vitamin A. **Strawberries** contain a large amount of Vitamin C, which is an antioxidant that helps lower your risk of cataracts. Other foods that contain Vitamin C are bell peppers, broccoli, and citrus fruits. **Salmon** can also help alleviate dry eyes through its omega-3 fatty acids. It is recommended we eat fish two to three times per week. Lastly, **green tea** provides antioxidants that can lower the risk of developing cataracts and macular degeneration. Try getting some of these foods into your diet to help promote healthy vision!

#### WEEKLY CHALLENGES

---

DRINK GREEN TEA  
THIS WEEK

---

EAT FISH TWICE THIS  
WEEK

---

TRY ONE OF OUR  
PROVIDED RECIPES,  
WHICH CONTAIN  
LOTS OF VITAMIN A

---

INCORPORATE  
STRAWBERRIES  
INTO A MEAL OR  
SNACK

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
BETA-CAROTENE AND  
VITAMIN A ARE BEST  
ABSORBED WHEN  
EATEN WITH HEALTHY  
FATS, LIKE OLIVE OIL.

# Sweet Potato Mash

Takes only 25 minutes! This recipe was adapted from <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/sweet-potato-mash-recipe-2105071>

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 sweet potatoes
- 1 ½ tablespoons of butter
- 4 sage leaves
- 2 scallions, chopped
- Salt and Pepper to taste

## DIRECTIONS:

1. Pierce the sweet potatoes with a fork; microwave 8 minutes. Scoop the flesh into a bowl, then mash.
2. Brown the butter in a skillet, then add the sage leaves and fry until crisp; transfer to a plate.
3. Cook the chopped scallions with salt and pepper in the browned butter. Drizzle over the sweet potatoes; top with the sage if desired. Enjoy



Pixabay.com - Photographer: sdneto1

# The Month of May

K G N I W O M S V S D C Y O P I L  
F P W P X X L G H E C B X I J W U  
B Q L R X H W O A S L G S Q H J X  
O A U A Q G W P I D G E C H Q K J  
U G S E N E F X G E Z I I O I J Z  
T N X E R T V X V B S X N U E I D  
D I A S B D I E R R O E C S P Y P  
O K O P S A T N S E D C I E S A G  
O L Q I N E L X G W V Y P C G D C  
R A D X R H Z L I O H L I L A I E  
S W F A B Q Y Y K L Z I N E L L C  
S Q N F B R J L T F S B O A F O Q  
M S S Z V W P I F W P E U N C H S  
Z E F L D L F V A Q O R J I H Z H  
S W O D N I W N E P O T Z N Z V I  
I R P F J O A W I A W Y M G Q U V  
Q R V J O J S U N S H I N E L Q S

baseball

flags

flowerbeds

holiday

housecleaning

liberty

mowing

open windows

outdoors

picnics

planting

showers

sunshine

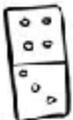
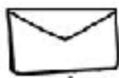
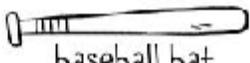
veterans

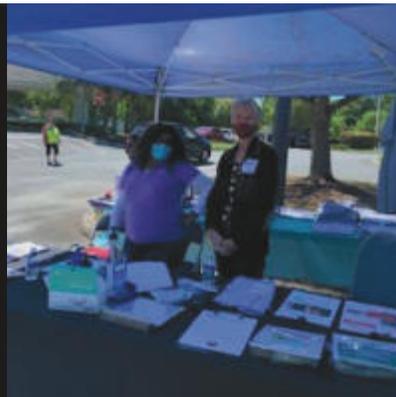
walking

# Three Little Pigs Hidden Objects

Can you find the 15 hidden items?



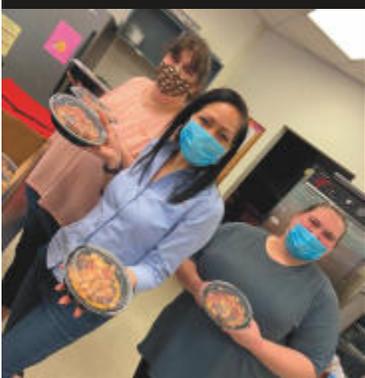
- |   |  |  |  |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| <br>domino   | <br>snail | <br>mountains | <br>boot  | <br>pizza       | <br>ufo   | <br>candle | <br>watch |
| <br>envelope | <br>crown | <br>seahorse  | <br>heart | <br>baseball bat | <br>brush | <br>fish   |  |

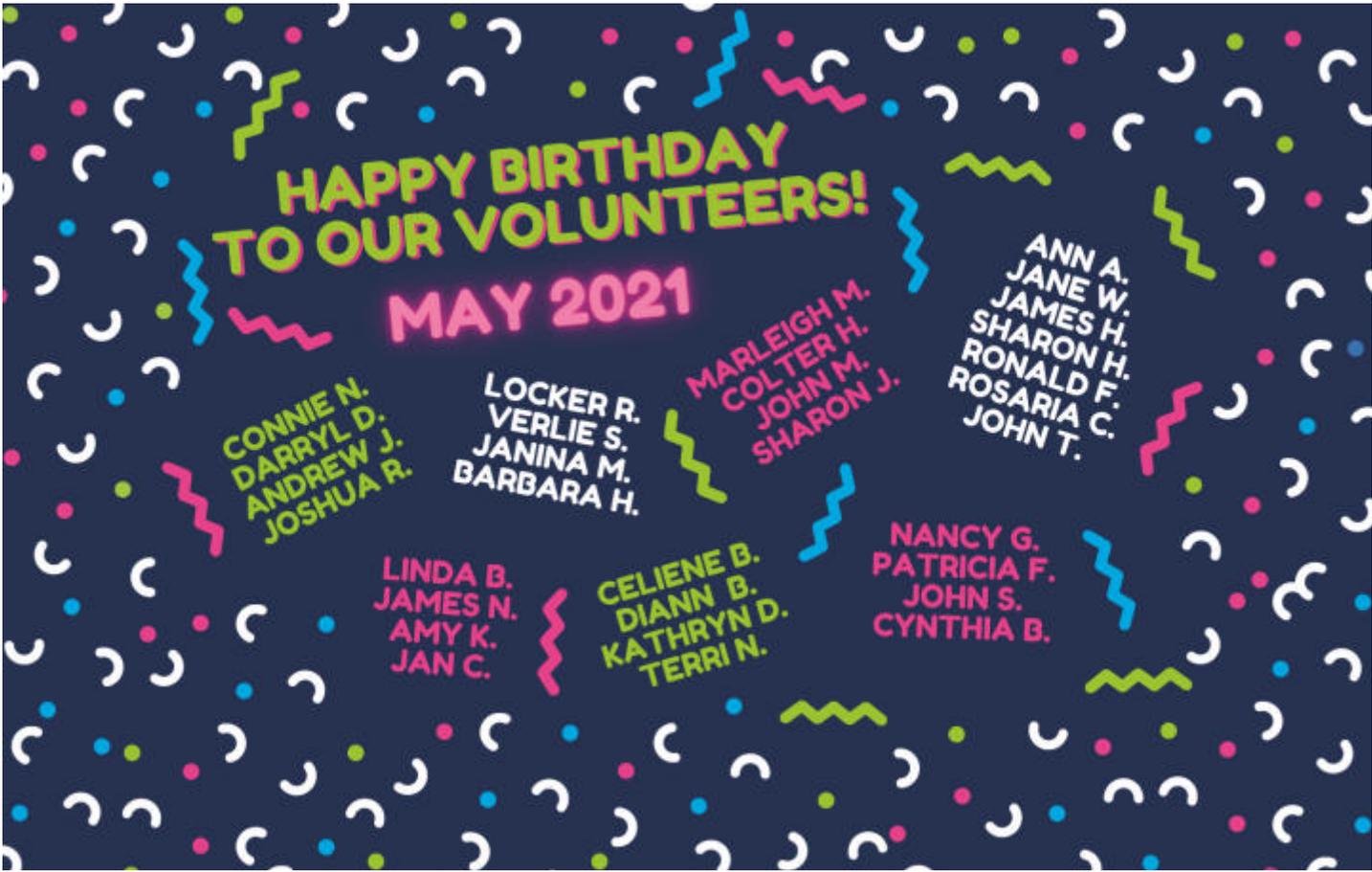


# VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY



In April, Marion Senior Services held its annual Volunteer Appreciation Day. This is where we take the opportunity to collectively recognize our volunteers for their unwavering commitment in helping us help Marion County's seniors in need. Convening a large group of volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic presented an obvious issue, one that was solved by choosing a day/time where we already have a cornucopia of volunteers out and about anyways: our monthly Commodities Supplemental Food Program distribution. It allowed our volunteers to participate in one of our most active volunteer opportunities, network with other volunteers and MSS staff, but also enjoy drawings and giveaways throughout the day. County Line Smokehouse & Spirits catered lunch for our volunteers to keep them nourished with a warm-hearted meal. Sponsors and vendors that participated in the day's proceedings included: Florida Blue, Ocala Fire Rescue, Hiers-Baxley Funeral Services, Good Time Printing, CarePlus, Rising Essence, Mother Amina Bakery, and Seniors vs. Crime (*A Special Project of the Florida Attorney General*). Thanks go out to all them, but also, most importantly, our wonderful volunteers!





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**EXPRESS YOURSELF**  
MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS MONTH

*Communities of*  
**Strength**

**OLDER AMERICANS MONTH**  
COMMUNITIES OF STRENGTH: MAY 2021

ACL.GOV/OAM

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*An event brought to you by the Cancer Alliance of Marion County*

This special Presentation and Discussion is designed especially for you. We also extend the invite to health professionals who wish to further learn and support others in the cancer journey.

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**10:00 AM – 11:30 AM**  
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*Greetings from Florida*

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2021

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## **Marion Senior Services**

1101 Southwest 20th Court | Ocala, Florida | 34471

**Office Hours:** Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. *(Currently closed due to Covid-19 pandemic)*

**Main:** 352.620.3501

**Transportation:** 352.620.3071

**Nutrition:** 352.620.3437

**Website:** [MarionSeniorServices.org](http://MarionSeniorServices.org)



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