



## The Grapevine

# WELCOME SPRING

VOLUME 3, SPRING 2025

**Providing  
Services to  
Seniors in  
St. Lucie County  
since 1973!**

The Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc. (COASL) has been serving the senior community of St. Lucie County since 1973. COASL started out with a small group of volunteers providing hot, daily meals to the seniors. Over the past 52 years we have expanded to provide many services including Meals on Wheels (home delivered meals), congregate meal site and activity center, adult day care, respite care, homemaking and personal care assistance, case management and outreach and consumer services.

COASL believes that it is our responsibility to the seniors of our community to be sure they receive the assistance they deserve in order to be able to live independently, maintain their health, and remain active in our community.

It is extremely important that we are work together to prioritize funding and resources to continue providing essential services to our seniors.

### Mission

The mission of the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc. is to seek, develop, coordinate and administer community-based programs and in-home services for senior persons of St. Lucie County and adjoining areas.

### COASL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### CEO/President

Darrell J. Drummond

#### Chairman

Andre Hawkins

#### Vice Chairman

Padrick Pinkney

#### Directors

Linda Bartz

Arnold Gaines

Paula Lewis

Erin Lowry

David Pickett

Daniel Sharkey

Stay connected with us on social media!



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Rogelio (Roje) Gonzalez

On January 3, 2025, Rogelio (Roje) A. Gonzalez celebrated 30 years of dedicated service with the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc. Community Transit. His journey began in 1995 as a Transit Office Manager, and over the years, he has played a role in the expansion and evolution of public transportation in St. Lucie County.

Rogelio's career has grown alongside the transit system. From its early days as a small operation, the system expanded to include additional facilities, an increased fleet, and, in 2002, the launch of the first Fixed Route Service. His leadership contributed to streamlining operations and ensuring continued service through challenges, including the 2019 pandemic and subsequent transitions in transportation management.

Beyond his professional achievements, Rogelio has been an active member of the St. Lucie County community for nearly 50 years. He has volunteered as a Special Olympics swimming coach, served on multiple local boards, and currently acts as President of the Fort Pierce Sportfishing Club. His passion for sports fishing, camping, traveling, and cooking for large gatherings highlights his deep-rooted commitment to both his work and his community.

As he marks this milestone, Rogelio remains dedicated to serving the residents of St. Lucie County and looks forward to the future of public transit in the region.

Congratulations on 30 years of service!



# *WE ♥ OUR VOLUNTEERS*

## **April is National Volunteer Appreciation Month!**

We would not be able to do what we do for the seniors in our community without the dedication of our amazing volunteers.

As of today, we have over 30 active volunteers helping with Meals on Wheels, social activities, fundraising, and clerical duties. They are all giving their time and energy to make a difference in the lives of the seniors living in St. Lucie County.

# ***THANK YOU!***

## Employee Appreciation

On behalf of the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc., we would like to thank all our employees for their hard work and dedication to our organization and the clients we serve. Your passion and commitment make a lasting impact in our community, and we are truly grateful for everything you do.

Each day, you go above and beyond to support our mission, ensuring that our seniors receive the care, respect, and compassion they deserve. Whether you're providing direct services, working behind the scenes, or supporting operations, your contributions are the backbone of COASL. Your kindness, professionalism, and dedication inspire us all.

As a token of our appreciation, we are giving gifts to our team. This is a small way to show how much we value each of you and the incredible work you do every day.

We recognize that it takes a team to create meaningful change, and we are honored to have such a dedicated group of individuals making a difference. Thank you for your unwavering commitment—you are the heart of COASL!





## YOU ARE INVITED TO... THE ART OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

MAY 5, 2025

9:00AM TO 1:00PM

COUNCIL ON AGING OF ST. LUCIE, INC.  
2501 SW BAYSHORE BLVD. PORT ST. LUCIE



A vibrant celebration of Health, Wellness and Community. From eating the right food, vitamin supplement tips to the perfect exercise routine, Find the best path to a healthier and happier you. Blood Pressure, Lung, Skin Cancer Screenings, FREE Fresh Produce, Activities, Hurricane Preparedness and more





Council on Aging  
of St. Lucie, Inc.

# SAVE THE DATE

# CELEBRATING THE ERAS

**50's 60's 70's 80's 90's 2000's**  
**Dinner & Dancing, Dance Competition and 50/50 Raffle**

Step back in time and relive the magic of each decade!  
Saturday, September 13, 2025 at 6:00 pm

Historical Downtown Fort Pierce  
500 Orange Ave. Fort Pierce FL

## Sponsorship Opportunity - Celebrating the Eras

### Hippest Trip in America - \$10,000

- Visibility Logo placement and company name on event materials, including exclusive stage banner.
- Speaking Opportunities Inclusion as a VIP speaker or the chance to present your brand during the event.
- Dedicated Email Blasts pre-event and post-event emails sent to the attendee list.
- Exhibit Space Premium booth location at the event, with the option to distribute your branded materials.
- Your business promoted across all event social media channels, including dedicated posts highlighting your brand.
- Newsletter full page promoting your business in our quarterly newsletter.
- Exclusive Dinner Table seats eight.

### Twist & Shout - \$3,500

- Visibility and Memorabilia: Fun decorated photo booth with your logo placement on Photo prints (photos printed at the event).
- Exclusive to one sponsor.
- Dinner and beverage tickets seats four

### Macarena - \$1,000

- Three personalized shoutouts from our MC to spotlight your brand during the event.
- Your business promoted across all event social media channels.
- Quarter-Page promotion of your business in our quarterly newsletter.
- Dinner and beverage ticket seats one.

### Rock Around the Clock - \$5,000

- Visibility Logo placement and company name on all dinner tables.
- Your company's promotional item (sponsor's responsibility) will be placed at each attendee's seat on the day of the event.
- Your business promoted across all event social media channels, including dedicated posts highlighting your brand.
- Half-page promotion of your business in our quarterly newsletter.
- Dinner and beverage tickets seats six.

### Stayin' Alive - \$2,500

- Your business promoted across all event social media channels, including dedicated posts highlighting your brand.
- Certificate of Appreciation and Recognition at the event.
- Half-page promotion of your business in our quarterly newsletter.
- Dinner and beverage tickets seats two.

### Up Town Funk - \$500

- Your business promoted across all event social media channels.
- Quarter-Page promotion of your business in our quarterly newsletter.

Contact our Public Relations Manager Yvette Cruz for Sponsorship opportunities and group dinner table purchases at 772-579-7885

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## HURRICANE MILTON OUTREACH/RECOVERY EFFORTS

The recovery from Hurricane Milton has been ongoing, with seniors still facing challenges. The Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc. has stepped in to assist hard-hit areas like Spanish Lakes and Savanna Club.

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) has played a vital role in securing crucial funding to address the unmet needs of residents. Thanks to this collaboration, the Council on Aging has been able to provide financial assistance for essential repairs, including roof, carport and window restorations, as well as general home restoration. In addition to the funding, local contractors have generously donated their resources to support the rebuilding efforts.

***TOGETHER, WE ARE  
MAKING A DIFFERENCE!***



## A Message from Darrell J. Drummond, CEO/President

As I approach the end of my professional career, I look in terms of all the planning my wife and I have done to secure our retirement years. A large part of that planning has included the understanding that the promises made by our federal government were secure. We find ourselves dealing with the potential that our Social Security and Medicare may be at risk. The planning we have done makes these two areas a danger for our long term sustainability in retirement. Understand, we reached this position based on planning that we would have the faith and good will of our government.

This represents how I and my wife approach our golden years and it is similar to how the organization I have been a part of for the last forty (40) years has approached our planning and obligation for the non-profit we are associated.

Nonprofits, by definition, are dedicated to providing services for the organization they are created to serve. Our agency has a mission statement which outlines our intent to be a positive influence on our community: "The mission of the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc. is to seek, develop, coordinate and administer home and community based programs and services for senior persons of St. Lucie County and adjoining areas". This commitment suggests that we value and embrace all of the efforts of the community to assist our seniors. I am convinced that all of our member agencies have similar mission statements. The time provided by our volunteers, the funding provided by our donors, the work provided by our employees, all work toward achieving the goal of improving the lives of our seniors. Similar to the concerns that I have with my personal financial planning is the realization that the funding we receive for our nonprofit agencies locally, statewide and federal, all work to make sure we can support and enhance the services for our clients. One of the things that is often taken for granted is that for every dollar we invest in seniors is only one tenth (1/10) of what they have contributed over the lifetime of their work experience. We now find ourselves dealing with the uncertainty of our federal dollars being in place when we need them. This is unacceptable; there must be certainty in our financial future.

Our Board met in Tallahassee last week to discuss the issues affecting our agencies going forward. The potential of losing federal funding for the critical core services we provide was the highlight of our discussions. We are not in a position to neither replace nor create funding that we have always depended upon to service our clients. The services we provide not only assist our seniors, but also provide a safety net for our public funding to maximize the impact of every dollar spent on behalf of our seniors.

I am not looking to take sides regarding partisan politics; we are representatives of the senior network and are only interested in what helps and improves the lives of Florida's seniors. What I am suggesting is a need for us to make sure we advocate and speak loudly to how important it is to address the needs of our seniors if funding is taken away. We are not able, nor is our state government capable of, replacing the federal funding for these critical programs.

For those of you who are a certain age, you will remember from our typing class in high school, the phrase we used to improve our proficiency in typing; this phrase has greater meaning than ever before:

NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL GOOD MEN TO COME TO THE AID OF THEIR COUNTRY.

### Volunteer & Make a Difference!

Looking for a way to give back?  
Join the Council on Aging of St. Lucie,  
and help create real change!  
Your time can make an impact.

#### Why Volunteer With Us?

- Make a direct impact on those in need
- Gain valuable experience & build new skills
- Connect with like-minded, passionate individuals
- Be a force for good in your community

Together, we can make a difference!  
Visit [www.coasl.com](http://www.coasl.com) for more information

### Support the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc.

Your generosity helps seniors live with dignity, independence, and joy!

#### Ways to Donate:

- By Check: Please make your check payable to the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc.
- By Card: Simply scan the QR code to access our secure donation page.

#### Every Donation Makes a Difference!

Your contribution directly supports programs and services that empower local seniors to live independently, stay healthy, and enjoy their golden years! Whether it's a small or large gift, your kindness truly changes lives.

Thank you for your donation!



**Editors:** Laurie Hoy Orlik  
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