



## The Grapevine

VOLUME 3, SUMMER 2025



### Interested in Learning More About COASL Services?

Are you curious about the programs and services offered by the Council on Aging of St. Lucie (COASL)? Whether you are looking for information on social activities, nutritious food programs, in-home care, or our Adult Day Care services, the COASL Consumer Services Department is here to help.

Our team is available to answer your questions about the daily on-site congregate meal program, Meals on Wheels, in-home support, and much more. We also work closely with seniors and their caregivers to understand individual needs and provide appropriate referrals.

In addition, Consumer Services administers the Emergency Home Energy Assistance for the Elderly Program (EHEAP). This program offers help with past-due electric bills for households in St. Lucie County with at least one resident aged 60 or older who meets income eligibility requirements. Please note: EHEAP assistance is based on available funding.

If you are or know a senior or caregiver who is low-income, homebound, or simply in need of a little extra support, we encourage you to reach out. Contact COASL's Consumer Services Department at 772-336-8608 (ext. 101) to learn more about how we can assist.

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

#### **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**

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Stay connected with us on social media!



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Darrell Drummond

This month marks a profoundly meaningful milestone for me: 30 years of service with the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc. As I reflect on the past three decades, I am filled with gratitude for the people, the purpose, and the progress we have made together.

When I first began this journey in 1995, I could never have imagined the countless stories, challenges, and triumphs that would shape the years to come. What I did know then, and still believe with all my heart, is that aging with dignity is a right, not a privilege. That belief continues to fuel everything we do.

Given that I recognize that I, too, am aging and will at some point need assistance from others, I am reminded that as we age, the ability to remain completely independent reduces over time. With that being said, services provided by the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc. allow seniors to remain independent in their homes to live out their golden years.

Over these 30 years, I have been fortunate to work with many organizations throughout the years, currently serving as the President of the Florida Association of Aging Service Providers, past President of the Community Care for the Elderly Coalition of Florida, and St. Lucie County Chamber of Commerce, allowing senior needs to be kept at the forefront of decisions made on the local, state and federal level.

Throughout this journey, there are many people I have to thank along the way. To the staff: thank you for your tireless commitment, heart, and professionalism. To the board: thank you for your guidance and trust.

To the volunteers: thank you for giving your time so generously.

To the funders and financial contributors: thank you for making all of our successes attainable.

And to our clients and families: thank you for allowing us to be part of your journey. Your strength inspires us every day.

As we look ahead, I am more hopeful than ever. The needs of our aging population continue to grow, and so must our commitment to meeting them with creativity, compassion, and community support.

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Congratulations on 30 years of service!



# YOU ARE INVITED TO DANCING THRU THE DECADES FUNDRAISER

**Saturday, September 13, 2025 at 6:00 pm**

**Historical Downtown Fort Pierce  
500 Orange Ave. Fort Pierce, FL**

**Step back in time and relive  
the magic of your favorite decade!**

**Tickets: \$150**






For more information, please contact us at 772-579-7885  
for sponsorship opportunities or scan the QR code

## Sponsorship Opportunity - Dancing Thru the Decades

### 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 four.

### Uptown Funk - \$500

- Your business promoted across all event social media channels.
- Quarter-Page promotion of your business in our quarterly newsletter.
- Dinner and beverage tickets seats two.





## Celebrating Health, Wellness, and Community



On May 5, 2025, COASL hosted The Art of Health and Wellness, a fun and informative event for our clients and community members. Attendees enjoyed connecting with local vendors and received helpful tips on living a healthier, happier life. The event was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate healthy living and community connection.



Later in the month, in honor of Memorial Day, our Nutrition Program Manager hosted a special summer barbecue at our Port St. Lucie location for the amazing clients we serve! A heartfelt thank you to Jackson Drugs and United Against Poverty, Inc., St. Lucie, for generously sponsoring this event; your support made it all possible!







## Years of Dedication



At the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, we are proud to honor four employees who have each dedicated 25+ years to serving our community. Their passion, resilience, and care embody everything COASL stands for. Here are their stories:

### **Jean Toussaint – Community Transit**

Jean began his journey with COASL in 1998, shortly after receiving his CDL license. He was eager to start working and found the opportunity he was looking for here. The company's mission holds deep meaning for him -- he enjoys watching the organization grow and thrive. His favorite part of the job is the clients; he finds joy in their company and says they are what drives him. One of his favorite memories is from the early years when staff picnics were a regular event, helping build strong relationships. Jean credits the people he started with, many of whom he still stays in touch with, for making his journey so fulfilling.

### **Lorraine Morris – Case Manager**

Lorraine joined COASL out of a passion for working with the elderly. For her, the mission is about empowering seniors to live independently and safely at home. Since starting, she has witnessed the growth of St. Lucie County and a rising need for services. She cherishes the time spent interacting with clients, calling it the most rewarding part of her job. One of her most meaningful memories was during the height of COVID-19 when, despite the challenges, she was still able to brighten seniors' days with a smile. Lorraine feels fortunate to have worked alongside dedicated colleagues who share her commitment to the agency and its mission.

### **Israel Ruiz – Case Manager**

Israel's path to COASL started in the early '90s while working in Medicaid outreach. For Israel, COASL's mission mirrors his lifelong calling -- helping people in need. Over the years, he has seen the agency evolve through expanded services and stronger community partnerships. What he values most is being able to uplift the elderly population and help improve their quality of life. He recalls powerful moments, like helping a homeless senior find safe housing and assisting a grandmother raising her grandchildren in securing a new home through the SHIP Program. Israel credits his mother for instilling in him the values of compassion and hard work.

### **Carmel Duplan – CNA**

Carmel joined COASL because she wanted to work with seniors and help others. The mission resonates with her because it gives families peace of mind while providing their loved ones with a safe and joyful environment. She has seen COASL grow significantly, now serving more clients and offering a wider range of programs. Her favorite part of the job is leading engaging, fun activities for the clients and seeing the happiness it brings to them every day. One highlight of her time here was a gala held in the bingo hall for staff and their families -- a night filled with good food, laughter, and connection. Carmel says her love for the job and the clients is what keeps her motivated and passionate each day.

Thank you, Jean, Lorraine, Israel, and Carmel, for 25+ incredible years of service, dedication, and heart! Your contributions have made a lasting impact in our community.

## Recurring Activities

### Port St. Lucie Campus

#### **Bridge Club**

Tuesdays | 12 PM – 3 PM

Love a good strategy game? Meet fellow seniors and enjoy an engaging game of bridge.

#### **Bingo & Fun**

Wednesdays | 12 PM – 3 PM

Our most popular event! Come play bingo, win prizes, and enjoy pizza, snacks, and drinks available for purchase.

Bingo just costs \$11 for 16 games and \$21 for unlimited games. And you win cash prizes!

#### **Free Computer Class**

Thursdays | 9 AM – 11 AM

Want to sharpen your tech skills? Join our free weekly class and gain confidence using your devices.

#### **Ceramics & Art Classes**

Ceramics: Thursdays | 12:30 PM – 3 PM

(\$5/class plus the cost of the art piece)

Acrylic Art: Fridays | 10 AM – 1 PM

(\$2/class plus the cost of the art piece)

Tap into your creativity! All experience levels are welcome.

### Fort Pierce Campus

#### **Bingo Fridays**

Fridays | 12 PM – 1 PM

End your week with some friendly competition and prizes.

A great way to connect and have fun.

#### **Art with Dr. Pinkie Hendley**

Second Tuesday of Each Month

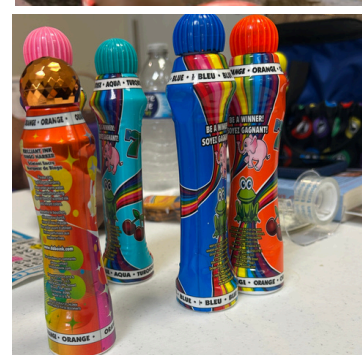
A unique monthly session full of creativity and good company.

### Both Campuses

#### **Live Music with Ricki & Dave**

Once a month at each location.

Sing along to beloved hits from the past and present. A guaranteed good time!







Council on Aging  
of St. Lucie, Inc.

**CALL US TODAY**  
**772-336-8608**

**Congregate Meal Sites**  
**Adult Day Center**  
**(Transportation)**  
**In Home Care**  
**Social Activities**  
**Meals on Wheels**  
**Case Management**

**\*\*Call 772-464-7433 to learn more about Transportation Services\*\***

***Your Trusted Resource for Senior Care Services***



**SPONSOR A SENIOR**  
**GIVE HOPE. GIVE INDEPENDENCE.**



Council on Aging  
of St. Lucie, Inc.

**YOUR SUPPORT CAN KEEP A SENIOR INDEPENDENT & THRIVING!**

- » **Nutritious Meals (Meals on Wheels)**
- » **Safe Transportation to medical appointments & essential errands**
- » **Adult Day Center Services for social engagement & care**
- » **Home Assistance to maintain independence**

**Join Us in Ensuring No Senior is Left Behind**

**Every Dollar Counts – Make an Impact Today!**

- » **\$341 /Month = One Month of Meals for a Senior**
- » **\$70 /Round Trip = Provides Transportation for One Senior Citizen**
- » **\$690 /Month = Home Care Support for a Senior in Need**



**MORE INFO**  
**WWW.COASL.COM**  
**772-336-8608**

## A Message from Bob Driscoll, Transit Director/VP

In a few months, I will celebrate nine years with Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc. All of the “hats” I have worn during this time have all primarily dealt with the various facets of our transportation program. As the Transit Director, I have been able to see the role of transportation in the various programs offered by COASL, and the role this service plays in the independence that our Seniors want and deserve to maintain.

I have had the opportunity to interact with many of our clients, including the group in Fort Pierce that I affectionately call the “1505 Ladies”(aka “The Golden Girls”). Ms. Bea, Ms. Donnie, Ms. Fannie, Ms. Mary, Ms. Bettye, Ms. Ollie, Ms. Mae Ethel, Ms. Robbie, and Ms. Bernice are all active seniors who enjoy the socialization and meals at our facility. The 1505 Ladies always bring a smile to our days, and we appreciate them. It is through the interaction with the 1505 Ladies that I understand the full spectrum of our role in their lives.

Recently, we have seen how current socio-economic issues have been affecting seniors. Over the course of one day, we had several seniors seeking assistance due to homelessness and other concerns. One senior was homeless, caring for her disabled adult daughter. Our staff was able to direct these individuals to services that might offer help. But this highlighted the needs that our seniors face: food insecurities, homelessness, health and mental wellness concerns.

While attending meetings where other non-profit agencies are present, the realization comes that “we are all chasing the same \$\$\$”! Sadly, the care for our seniors is not always at the top of the list. Fundraisers that are featuring children or animals are often more successful than those for seniors or the homeless. When you add the plight of many of our veterans, the task can often seem daunting.

As a “young” senior myself, seeing the positives that COASL’s programs bring into the lives of the so many, I strongly urge our Community Partners to help us meet the needs of the Seniors of St. Lucie County. Grant money only covers a part of the need. Join our “Adopt a Senior” program. Come “Twist and Shout” with us at our “Dancing through the Decades” gala on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Be a Corporate Sponsor. Help in a small way, help in a large way!

## Our Seniors cared for us... Now it is their turn!!

On May 18<sup>th</sup>, we lost Betty Morgan; she will be greatly missed by us.



### 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:**  
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Area Agency on Aging  
 PALM BEACH/TREASURE COAST, INC.



Department of  
**ELDER AFFAIRS**  
 STATE OF FLORIDA

