

The Scoop



April 2019

Oconee County Senior Center
3500B Hog Mountain
Watkinsville, GA 30677
(706) 769-3979

Open Monday through Friday
8 am to 4 pm

Find us at www.oconeecounty.com!

Look for us on Facebook!



Welcome to the Scoop newsletter. Our goal is to provide Oconee County Seniors with the most up to date information to help with their daily lives.

Oconee County Senior Center Mission:
To positively impact our community by creating opportunities for healthy aging through social engagement, physical activity and well-being, civic involvement, creativity, and lifelong learning.

Oconee County Senior Center Goal:
To give all our members a sense of belonging, providing them with programs that contribute to their well-being, and helping to keep them healthy, happy and informed.



Important Announcements

Chronic Disease Self-Management Workshop: This free class will be held once a week for six weeks beginning Wednesday, April 24th at 1:15 pm. Participants will receive a free book and cd to help with the class. Please sign up by Wednesday, April 17th.

Pen Pal Luncheon: On Friday, March 26th, the Senior Center's pen pals will visit to play bingo and have lunch. Please be sure to attend so you can meet your special pal.

Phone Numbers for Seniors

Aging Resource Connection – 706-583-2546

Athens Community Council on Aging: Alzheimers Day Health and Respite Service – 706-549-4850

Legal Services Program – 706-369-7147

Georgia Cares (Medicare Info) – 706-549-4850 or 1-866-552-4464

April Senior Center Activities & Presentations

Diabetes Prevention presentation – Wednesday, April 3rd at 10:30 am.

Performance by Jason Power: On Wednesday, April 10th, at 10:30 am.

Tai Chi – Wednesday, April 17th at 10:30 am

Music with Amanda – Wednesday, April 24th at 10:45 am

Upcoming Area Events

Oconee County Farmers Market – Each Saturday, beginning April 13th, you can purchase locally-grown fruits, vegetables, meats, edible grains, nuts, berries, plants, and other locally-made items in Downtown Watkinsville. The farmers market is open each Saturday through November.

Super Spring Saturdays – beginning April 20th – During spring strawberry season, **Washington Farms** offers four Saturdays where you can come out and enjoy a nice spring day on the back of the farm! The strawberry fields will be open for picking as usual, and there will also be some farm activities, on the back of the farm, open for lots of family fun! There will be limited concessions available including kettle corn, cotton candy, hand-squeezed lemonade, homemade strawberry ice cream, hotdogs, chips, and drinks.

“The beautiful spring came; and when Nature resumes her loveliness, the human soul is apt to revive also.”
– Harriet Ann Jacobs



Weekly Schedule

Mondays

Bridge	9:00 am
Exercise with Betsy	10:00 am
Line Dancing	11:00 am
Bridge/Mahjong	12:30 pm

Tuesdays

Senior Fit	8:30 am
Arts/Crafts Class	10:15 am
Chair Zumba	10:45 am
Canasta/Games	1:00 pm

Wednesdays

Chair Yoga	8:30 am
Texas Hold'em Poker	9:00 am
Bridge	9:00 am
Bridge/Mahjong	12:30 pm

Thursdays

Senior Fit	8:30 am
Bridge	9:00 am
Chair Zumba	10:45 am
Computer Class	1:00 pm

Fridays

Bridge	9:00 am
Bingo	11:00 am
Canasta/Games	12:30 pm

First Mondays

Wellness Group	12:30 pm
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First Wednesdays

Quilts for Kids	10:00 am
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Third Wednesdays

Tai Chi	10:30 am
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Fourth Wednesdays

Music with Amanda	10:30 am
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Stay Fit & Healthy

The Oconee County Senior Center offers a variety of exercise programs:

Exercise with Betsy – Mondays at 10:00 am

Line Dancing – Mondays at 11:00 am

Senior Fit – Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 am. Class size limited to 35.

Chair Zumba – Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:30 am

Chair Yoga – Wednesdays at 8:30 am

"Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's Party!'"
— Robin Williams



The Senior Center needs your help!

- Senior Center membership – Please encourage your friends, neighbors and family to visit the Senior Center. They will find friendship, activity and fun.
- Meals on Wheels – The Oconee County Senior Center is always in need of volunteers to deliver meals to the homebound. Please call Angela at 706-769-3979 for information.



At your service . . .

Merry Howard	Senior Center Director	mhoward@oconee.ga.us
Allison Burns	Assistant Director	aburns@oconee.ga.us
Angela Helwig	Aging Services Coordinator	ahelwig@oconee.ga.us
Mary Ann Hall	Food Service Manager	mhall@oconee.ga.us
Marge McKee	Senior Activities Aide	mmckee@oconee.ga.us
Pat Anderson	Front Desk Receptionist	panderson@oconee.ga.us
Shirley Finch	Food Service Aide	
Russell Ruggieri	Transportation Services Aide	
Randy Randall	Transportation Services Aide	
Kathy Shanks	Transportation Services Aide	

Oconee County Welcome Center



(706) 769-5197 | 21 North Main Street,
Watkinsville, GA 30677

The Oconee County Welcome Center is located in Downtown Watkinsville, and is staffed with tourism leaders and volunteers to assist you during your time in Oconee

County. The Welcome Center provides welcome packets, hosts and plans group tours, offers relocation information, and assists with special events. Start your journey at the Welcome Center for day trip ideas, personalized itineraries, and information on the wonderful attractions, restaurants, and lodging options in our community.

www.visitoconee.com

April is National Volunteer Month

In the United States, volunteerism is instilled at a young age. In many parts of the country, it is the cornerstone of summer vacation or woven into after school programs. Most organizations in small towns, rural counties and the largest cities would not function without volunteers. In some families, the baton of volunteerism is handed down generation after generation. Rural fire and ambulance departments remain staffed due to the efforts of volunteers. The underprivileged receive much needed medical care thanks to volunteers. Long overdue repairs and upgrades are made to a senior women's home thanks to an organization's annual call for donations and skilled workers. A woman answers a call on a suicide hotline because she cared enough to give up a few hours to train and listen to someone desperate and alone. A team sets up tables at a soup kitchen every week. Another group delivers meals to men and women who can no longer cook for themselves. Boys and girls sell ice cream sandwiches during a fair to raise money for a homeless shelter. Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes. They pick a cause and make a difference in someone's life. Sometimes the difference is a drop in the bucket. Other times it creates a tidal wave of change. From the

Did you know . . .

- Americans spend \$1.9 billion on Easter candy? That's the second biggest candy holiday after Halloween.
- "The White House Easter Egg Roll" event has been celebrated by the President of the United States and their families since 1878 when Rutherford B. Hayes was President?
- Egg dyes were once made out of natural items such as onion peels, tree bark, flower petals, and juices?
- Americans buy more than 700 million marshmallow Peeps during Easter? This makes Peeps the most popular non-chocolate Easter candy.
- Americans consume more than 16 million jelly beans during this holiday. That is enough jelly beans to circle the globe not once, not twice, but three times.

Up for Discussion

What's your favorite flower?



"If you've never been thrilled to the very edges of your soul by a flower in spring bloom, maybe your soul has never been in bloom." — Audra Foveo



anonymous volunteers who donate their resources to those whose efforts are part of larger national organizations like 4-H, Boy and Girl Scouts of America, or American Red Cross or a local grassroots group, their missions provide valuable support to communities in times of need.

HOW TO OBSERVE

Thank a volunteer. Volunteer! Many volunteers will tell you it is a rewarding experience. You don't have to have a ton of time. Do you have a special talent or skill that may benefit a charity or organization? Offer your services or ask how you can be of help. Use #NationalVolunteerMonth to share on social media.

HISTORY

April became National Volunteer Month as part of President George H. W. Bush's 1000 Points of Light campaign in 1991. www.nationaldaycalendar.com

Unexpected Benefits of Volunteering

Many journals and reports have studied the benefits of volunteering in recent years. They find that volunteering is one of the best things you can do for yourself and the world. Why? Because we want to make an impact on others. But we are also caring for ourselves and our immediate social networks.

Builds Community – According to the Corporation for National & Community Service, you strengthen your community and your social network when you volunteer. You make connections with the people you are helping, and you cultivate friendships with other volunteers.

Ends Loneliness – The Campaign to End Loneliness says that close to 45 percent of people in the US and the UK admit to feeling lonely. On top of that, one in ten adults reports that they have no close friends. Loneliness and social isolation are two of the most severe epidemics in the world today. The simplest way to reverse this? Volunteer!

Increases Socializing - Socially, the benefits of volunteering show up quickly and have long-term effects. Social interaction improves mental and physical health, according to Psychology Today. The benefits of consistent socializing include better brain function and lower risk for depression and anxiety. You also improve your immune system.

Builds Bonds, Creates Friends – Volunteering creates stronger bonds between friends, family, and coworkers. People build closer relationships, better connections, and more powerful attachments to people when they work together. If you feel the need for deeper connections with other people, try volunteering. You might just live longer and be happier.

Mental Health and Happiness in Volunteers – We all know that helping others makes us happier. We love making someone else's life a little bit easier. However, did you know that those feelings of happiness can prevent and relieve some of our most painful struggles? Studies show that improved mental health is just another of the many benefits of volunteering.

Develops Emotional Stability – Depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, low self-esteem, and even Obsessive Compulsive Disorder have all been helped by volunteering. When people with OCD, PTSD, or anger management issues volunteer, they feel more connected to others. They have an increased sense of purpose. Connection and meaning translate to decreased symptoms and improved social function.

Promotes Longevity – While everyone benefits from a little boost in physical health, long-term volunteers have longer lives, less disease, and better overall health. One report says that people who volunteer over 100 hours a year are some of the healthiest people in the U.S.

Get Oconee County Senior Center News Flashes:

To receive regular information about the newest things happening at the Senior Center, you can sign up for "News Flash."

To sign up for this service, go to www.oconeecounty.com and click on Notify Me button toward the bottom of the home page. Then enter your email address to be signed up. You will receive an email verifying your information. Once you are able to sign in, go to "News Flash" and click on Senior Center.

If you have any questions, or need assistance, please contact Angela Helwig (ahelwig@oconee.ga.us or 706-769-3979).

Getting Enough Fluids

It's important for your body to have plenty of fluids each day. Water helps you digest your food, absorb nutrients, and then get rid of the unused waste. Try these tips for getting enough fluids:

- Try to add liquids throughout the day.
- Take sips from a glass of water, milk, or juice between bites during meals.
- Have a cup of low-fat soup as an afternoon snack.
- Drink a full glass of water if you need to take a pill.
- Have a glass of water before you exercise or go outside to garden or walk, especially on a hot day.
- Remember, water is a good way to add fluids to your daily routine without adding calories.
- Drink fat-free or low-fat milk, or other drinks without added sugars.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so sensibly and in moderation. That means up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks for men.
- Don't stop drinking liquids if you have a urinary control problem. Talk with your doctor about treatment.

Reduces Risk of Alzheimer's – Alzheimer's disease has become a frightening possibility for millions of individuals in the U.S. and globally. However, some research has shown that people who volunteer may be at lower risk of dementia.

Studies from the Journal of Gerontology indicate that social service improves elasticity in the brain. As volunteers age, they may be able to maintain the connections in their brains that often break down in Alzheimer's patients. Any social interaction can help delay or prevent Alzheimer's, and volunteering can be a wonderful way to do that.

Leads to Graceful Aging – Older volunteers benefit the most from getting out of the house, engaging with others, and moving physically. Purpose and collaboration result in mental health improvements and a better outlook on life.

Studies indicate that senior volunteers experience the most physical benefit from their service, possibly because being active and engaged leads to more happiness.

Older people who volunteer often feel younger and chronically ill people may have fewer symptoms and pain. Some research has even found that volunteers may have less heart disease.

Burns That Stubborn Belly Fat – With more people in traditional desk jobs, we live a more sedentary lifestyle than ever before. The risks associated with less daily movement include back pain, disease, obesity, and more stress and mental illness. When we volunteer, even if it is not a physically demanding project, we still get up and get moving.

Walking around a shelter or food bank, playing with kids at the local YMCA, or visiting with elderly patients at a neighborhood nursing home all require that you do more than sitting at a desk or on a couch. You could even choose to volunteer for causes or programs that make you more active, such as with youth sports programs or national parks.

Volunteers live longer and are more likely to take care of themselves in general, including getting vaccinations and keeping their weight under control. Volunteering at something that requires physical energy may be more motivating than just walking around the block.

Volunteering saves lives, both the lives of the people you help and yours. When you invest the time and energy to volunteer, you are investing in yourself just as much as in the causes you support.

Volunteering Adds Fun to Your Years – Volunteering and freely giving your time, energy, and resources to people and causes around the world can create change on a global scale. It is incredible to think that one person's efforts can change the life of someone else somewhere in the world. However, the best part, and often overlooked is that volunteering is just plain fun.

If you are ready to make friends, improve your mental and physical health, and maybe develop new skills along the way, start volunteering. You can change your life and the lives of others when you do. Don't overlook the benefits of volunteering. Embrace them! www.thebalancesmb.com

