



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

The Newsletter of the Big Canoe® Wellness Collaborative

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Hello Volunteers!

We're quickly nearing the end of this beautiful fall season in Big Canoe . . . and our Volunteer Forum and Reception is fast approaching. Please plan to join us on **Friday, November 1st, at 4:00pm, in the Canoe Lodge**. We're looking forward to hearing from Terrence and Amanda Griggs from the Wellness Center, as well as Liz Scherer, who will show you our brand new website. In addition, our wonderful program coordinators will update you on recent happenings in Meals, Rides, Visits and Info, and you'll have a chance to hear a touching story from one of our clients. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Since this is our final Newsletter for 2019 (hard to believe!), I'd like to give a few "Shout-Outs"!

- First of all, a huge "THANK YOU" to our 138 trained volunteers who give their time and talents so selflessly to help their neighbors in need and who have handled over 1,100 client requests through September, 2019. There would be no Wellness Collaborative without you!
- To Ricky Jordan, Karen, and Pat in Public Safety who generously stepped up and offered to help answer our "hot line" for client calls, once it became necessary to move the line from the Wellness Center. You all have done a fantastic job and have made the changeover very seamless!
- To Steve Panetta and his Wellness Center team who so kindly handled our client requests for nearly four years, while continuing to tend to the constant stream of people coming and going in the Center. Thank you for your tremendous help!
- To our Program Coordinators and Administrator, who go over and above to be sure they are meeting the needs of our clients, all while maintaining strict confidentiality and professionalism. Robyn Bish, Tracy Critchett, Charlotte Johnson, Diane LaCharite, and Laura Larimore -- a heart-felt "THANK YOU" to each of you!
- To our Board, which, to a person, loves the Collaborative and offers their time and support to help in any way. You'll see their names on the edge of this Newsletter, and led by Shiraz Alikhan, they continually come through for all of us, offering their talents and ideas to help make us better. You all are fantastic!

Again, many thanks to you, our volunteers, and I hope to see you at the Forum on November 1st (and, yes, we'll serve wine and light refreshments)!

Linda Ricklef





10755 Big Canoe
Jasper, GA 30143
(706) 268-3334
info@bcwell.org
bigcanoewc@gmail.com

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From our Rides Coordinator . . .

I recently read an article about “How Volunteering Improves Your Health” written by Aetna, Inc. The article cited two items that I believe particularly apply to the Wellness Collaborative.

The first benefit cited was “helps you stay active.” Well, the Rides Program Volunteers have been active for sure. Since January 2019 you have answered the call for rides 126 times. Wow!

Another benefit to your improved health is that volunteering “boosts your mood and gives you purpose.” Volunteers can’t help but receive this boost in mood and purpose as they selflessly give their time, personal resources, and energy in providing transportation to neighbors in need. The Rides Program continues to grow as 21 new volunteer drivers have answered the call for service.

As Coordinator of the Rides Program, I often get messages of appreciation from clients. One in particular has called us “Her Heroes.” I would like to encourage you to come to the Volunteer Forum & Reception on November 1st at 4:00 at the Canoe Lodge and hear about your efforts from a client’s perspective. I promise that you will come away refreshed (with the wine) and reminded (by the story) about why we do what we do.....Neighbors Helping Neighbors!

Thanks for letting me be your Rides Coordinator! I really enjoy this job!

Robyn Bish



From the Board

In September I traveled to Albert Lea, MN to make a long overdue visit to my brother and sister-in-law. Albert Lea is distinguished not just by being home to the mid-west branch of the Flaherty family...it is also the first Blue Zone Community® in the US. That means residents, local civic organizations and business owners are focused on improving well-being for the community. Started in 2009, the Blue Zone Project has successfully lowered rates of obesity, smoking and chronic diseases to create a healthier, happier place to live, work, and play.

What began as a bestselling book, by National Geographic Fellow Dan Buettner, has evolved into a movement helping people to live not just longer, but more healthfully. It grew out of a study where Buettner identified seven locations around the world — Sardinia, Okinawa and Loma Linda, CA are three — where people live long and active lives, often to over 100. He identified three factors that contributed to this -- eating healthfully, getting exercise and engaging socially.

As a result of Albert Lea's efforts Freeborn County moved up in the MN rankings of health by county to 34, from 68 out of 87 counties. The town was ranked third in Realtor.com's "Top 10 most affordable small towns where you would actually want to live." In only one year they projected a 2.9 year increase in the average life span. Additionally, they saw an uptick in visitors to Albert Lea.

The goal of the Healthy Living Committee in Big Canoe is to learn from the experience of Albert Lea and other successful Blue Zone communities. We want to put in place programs to help residents make healthy choices easier. We will continue to host our twice weekly walks...we will focus on healthful meal preparation at home with more healthy tastings and we are planning a series of educational sessions beginning in January. Heart health, diabetes prevention and other topics of importance to residents will be covered. There is a lot we can do to improve not just our longevity but our quality of life. It need not require revolutionary changes...just little adjustments made consistently. The Healthy Living Committee is here to help.

If you would like to be a part of one of our Healthy Living programs, please email christine.flaherty21@gmail.com for more information. We would particularly welcome the involvement of an individual with a nutrition background.

Christine Flaherty

Healthy Living Chair, Board Member



Volunteer Corner

Meet a New WC Volunteer – Beth Durban!

Beth and her husband, Tom, moved fulltime to Big Canoe in November, 2017. Like so many others, she had visited Big Canoe years ago but life subsequently took them away from Georgia. When it was time to retire and begin the search for their retirement home, she said it took just a drive through the gates of Big Canoe to seal it for them. This is where they wanted to enjoy their new life!

Years ago, after the death of her first husband, Beth was left to raise three small children and thought she'd never find someone who would marry a young mother with a family. Thankfully, she met and married Tom Durban and together they had two more children, completing their family with four boys and one girl, all of whom are now grown and on their own in St. Louis, Dallas, and Atlanta.

Prior to moving to Big Canoe, Beth and Tom lived in St Louis, where Beth, an RN, was a parish nurse for 14 years, serving over 3,000 parishioners and school children to promote wellness ... in body, mind, and spirit. Among her many duties, she taught CPR, held health screenings, conducted a grief support group, visited those who were sick, worked with Alzheimer patients, and her favorite – connected and visited with shut-ins. What a perfect background to assist the Wellness Collaborative! Beth has taken four of our client visits so far and hopes to be very busy with the Collaborative. Welcome, Beth, and thank you for volunteering with us!

We're always looking for new WC volunteers. If you meet anyone who, like Beth, is looking for ways to help the Collaborative, please have them email us at bigcanoewc@gmail.com or call us at (706) 268-3334.

Beth Durban



Big Canoe Wellness Collaborative Statistics

Program Activity	2019 YTD	2018 Y/E	Since Inception
Client Service Calls (initiated through BC Info; some requested multiple services)	162	209	618
Services Completed:			
BC Info	24	42	104
BC Meals	134	96	379
BC Rides	121	144	462
BC Visits	52	53	177
Total	331	335	1122

Coming Events

November 1	Volunteer Forum & Reception , 4:00pm - 6:00pm, Canoe Lodge
January 8	Volunteer Training , 1:00pm, Canoe Lodge
Ongoing	Individual Training - Contact: bigcanoewc@gmail.com