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How to start a



seniors' social club

Various changes are associated with aging, and these can be physical, mental and emotional. Though each person manages these changes in their own way, there's no denying that social interaction can benefit people from all walks of life as they navigate their golden years.

The Foundation for Senior Care says socializing can give seniors a sense of purpose, stimulate the mind, relieve boredom, potentially prevent feelings of depression, and give individuals something to look forward to. The senior living center Aston Gardens says socialization provides a significant boost to the cognitive health of older adults, helping to prevent or delay conditions that can affect memory.

Individuals looking to cultivate healthy social interactions may turn to clubs and other groups. If there's a dearth of opportunities, individuals can start and promote their own social club using this useful guideline.

DECIDE ON THE PURPOSE OF THE GROUP

Social clubs can meet and be organized around any number of themes or interests. Social clubs may meet to discuss gardening, crocheting, reading, or other shared hobbies. Friends also may be interested in

doing food and beverage sampling. In such instances, a luncheon social club makes perfect sense.

TURN TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Meeting details can be posted in a community bulletin or on a message board at a local house of worship. However, the internet can be a speedy messenger and help like-minded people figure out how to connect. Facebook groups are one way to organize social clubs, as is the website Meetup.com. The latter is a large online network of offline groups that meet all over the country and the world. The website makes it a snap to organize a local group or find an existing club.

CHECK FOR COMPETITION

Conduct a search of groups already meeting within a 50-mile radius to see if an existing group already meets your criteria. If not, proceed full speed ahead as you establish your own club.

ESTABLISH CONSISTENT TIMES

Most people prefer a schedule so they can plan their days accordingly. Choose a regular meeting time and place to hold the social club; otherwise, it can be confusing to accommodate everyone. Inconsistency also can make it hard to get the club off the ground.

(METRO CREATIVE)

living
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above: Social clubs are a great way for seniors to stay connected and active. When there isn't one that meets a person's interests, it's relatively easy start one from scratch.

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Life-saving equipment *brings comfort*

Senior Center welcomes AED

By **Jason Arndt**
STAFF
WRITER

When Patti McNamee Rosenberg first came to the Burlington Senior Activity as executive director, the absence of an Automatic External Defibrillator was one of the first things she noticed, but city officials worked diligently to acquire this equipment.

“(Burlington Mayor) Jeannie Hefty had been working for about a year to get an AED because we really needed an AED,” said Rosenberg, adding the mayor began the process before she arrived. “It took us a while just because there is a lot of paperwork and they are very expensive.”

After several months of compiling necessary paperwork, and receiving support from Flight For Life, the lifesaving piece of equipment arrived to the Burlington Senior Activity last fall.

Flight for Life, an emergency medical helicopter transport overseeing Racine, Kenosha and Walworth counties with a base at the Burlington Municipal Airport, called the AED a critical life-saving tool in a proclamation issued to the Burlington Senior Activity.

“This equipment will help ensure that the community members who utilize this center have access to lifesaving technology,” Leif Erickson, executive director, wrote in a letter to the Senior Center.

The American Heart Association states on-site AEDs can save previous treatment time, especially before emergency responders arrive to the scene, and carry a proven track record of helping to save lives.

When the care is provided within five to seven minutes,

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



above: Patti McNamee Rosenberg, executive director for Burlington Senior Activity Center, showcases the new AED donated by Flight for Life at the Burlington facility.

left: Senior Center's Kathy Baumeister, who serves as chairperson of the Board of Directors, receives CPR training alongside fellow board member Dick Lodle in January.

JASON ARNDT
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AED • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

including treatment with an AED, survival rates improve dramatically.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, using a defibrillator on a person experiencing a cardiac arrest increases their survival rate by 60%.

"Flight for Life is proud to have been working with the Burlington Community for over 38 years. The opening of our Burlington allows us to serve the people of this community quickly and with excellent critical care," Erickson states in the letter.

COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY

In the most recent newsletter distributed to Senior Center members, Rosenberg said she remains fortunate for the community's support, including Flight for Life, Burlington Fire Chief Alan Babe, Aurora Health Care.

Additionally, Aurora Health Care bolstered support, offering a free CPR class to Senior Center board members and volunteers.

The initial CPR class, Rosenberg said, consisted of about 13 people since there

was a capacity limit.

"The 13 people that were chosen to train are the people who most likely will be here," Rosenberg said.

Rosenberg said she plans on bringing Aurora Health Care back for another CPR training session, which would allow more members to learn about the life-saving technique, as well how to use an AED.

PEACE OF MIND

While the Senior Center is fortunate to not have a significant cardiac episode, according to Rosenberg, many members found the lifesaving tool has increased comfort levels within the facility.

"It makes them feel much safer," Rosenberg said.

Advisory board member Barbara Quick concurred, adding she has a high-risk diagnoses, and welcomes the AED as well as trained volunteers who often use the Senior Center facility.

"I am very comfortable with it. I have COPD, and spend a lot of time here," she said. "With that, I related to know that it is

here and there are people who are trained." Volunteer Phyllis Robers agreed.

"I think it is a good idea," Robers said.

PASSING IT ON

While about a dozen members received CPR training, the exercises can be used outside the facility, according to Rosenberg.

Rosenberg said some members found the training valuable, considering they can bring them home, where they can potentially help their family members.

"I think it is crucial," Rosenberg said.

Rosenberg, who also commended Karen Barker from Aurora Health Care for offering the training, said she looks forward to holding more CPR classes.

The Burlington Senior Activity Center, 587 E. State St., Burlington, offers multiple programs, classes, and activities for people older than 50.

For more information, call 262-716-0329, or visit the center's website at burlingtonseniorcenter.com.

Representatives from Flight for Life medical helicopter presented an automatic external defibrillator to the Burlington Senior Activity Center last fall. The Burlington Fire Department will train senior center members on the use of the life-saving device. Gathered for the presentation were (from left) Barb Lebak, Dr. John Park, Burlington Mayor Jeannie Hefty, BSAC Board Chair Kathy Baumeister, BSAC Executive Director Patricia McNamee Rosenberg, Fire Chief Alan Babe, Flight for Life Director Leif Erickson; Judy Bratz, Scott Rinzel, FFL marketing; Dick Lodle and Jim Luedeke.

ED NADOLSKI FILE PHOTO *Living Senior*

Soothing SOUNDS

“ A sound bath is an immersive, full-bodied mystical experience that uses sound to invite powerful therapeutic and restorative process to nurture mind, body and soul. ”

Kimberly Lempart

Sound baths promote relaxation and more

By **Jason Arndt**

STAFF WRITER

When people experience stress, they often seek a variety of ways to cope, ranging from simple meditations to taking a step back to unwind as well as other methods.

While many people likely try or rely on traditional methods, there is another option – what’s known as a sound bath.

Kimberly Lempart, of Delavan, has been involved in sound baths since she went to her first session two years ago in Lake Geneva.

Since then, she has found the method satisfying, and has regularly held sound bath sessions throughout the area.

“A sound bath is an immersive, full-bodied mystical experience that uses sound to invite powerful therapeutic and restorative process to nurture mind, body and soul,” she said. “Participants simply lie down and relax while I start with an introduction explaining this enchanting 90-minute experience.”

Lempart then guides participants through light breath work with a short meditation before she plays various instruments such as Quartz crystal bowls, Himalayan bowls, shamanic drums, chimes, bells, an ocean drum, seed pods, a Chau gong and a Paiste Chiron planetary gong.

Sound baths, she said, promote deep relaxation, release stuck energy, reduce stress, rejuvenate and help with sleep and fatigue, among other benefits.

“Sounds are used to harmonize, cleanse, release and bring spiritual awareness into a creative, magical space within yourself,” Lempart said. “The sound tools of vibration, which create harmonious resonance in the body, are a way to restore health.”

SOOTHING SOUNDS

Lempart, born in Chicago and raised in Lake Como, graduated from Badger High School and worked in many area factories for most of her life until she encountered addiction.

While she has since recovered, Lempart found meditation, and eventually discovered sound baths about two years ago.

“I fell in love with this beautiful healing modality. I felt a connection to myself, my body and the Universe,” she said.

Lempart attended retreats, where she learned more about sound baths, and later purchased



Kimberly Lempart taps a gong during a sound bath demonstration.

SUBMITTED PHOTO *Living Senior*



left: Lempart uses multiple instruments in sound bath sessions. She said people should come away from a sound healing experience feeling relaxed with some clarity and peace of mind. **above:** Sound bath sessions consist of multiple instruments designed to help participants relax.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS *Living Senior*

items so she could conduct her own sessions.

Since then, she has gradually increased her sound-healing equipment with items including Quartz crystal bowls, Himalayan bowls, shamanic drums, an ocean drum, chimes, bells, seed pods, tuning forks and sacred gongs.

“Every bowl is tuned to different note and there are a wide variety of sizes which can produce different frequencies,” she said. “I also have different mallets for the bowls and gongs which can produce varying sounds and vibrations.”

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Lempart offers sound baths, yoga nidra with gong and restorative yoga with sound healing in the Southern Lakes Newspapers region.

She regularly presents sound baths at Big Foot High School in Walworth, Yoga Hohm in Delavan, Enlightened Living Center in Burlington, Elkhorn’s Eleven11 and at the Honey Creek Collective in East Troy.

“I have quite a few first timers to sound baths and they are always delighted at how wonderful it is,” Lempart said. “Experienced sound journeyers have given me great feedback about my style, diversity and playing abilities. I love to hear about people’s sound journey experiences.”

As for people experiencing a sound bath for the first time, Lempart offered some simple, yet important, suggestions to foster a successful session.

“It is important to be warm and comfortable in a sound bath. I recommend wearing warm, comfy clothes, bring a yoga

mat or pad, blankets, pillows, bolsters, eye masks or chair if you do not lie on the floor,” she said.

“People should expect to come away from a sound healing experience feeling extremely relaxed with some clarity, peace of mind, perhaps a resolve, an answer to a question they didn’t even know they wanted to ask,” she added.

NATIONAL TRENDS

In recent years, sound baths have garnered national attention, including a feature on NBC’s Today Show.

Today Show hosts Hoda Kotb, Jenna Bush Hager and Sheinelle Jones experienced sound baths and gave favorable reviews.

During the feature, Kotb and Bush Hager each explained their session brought them a relaxed state while Jones felt energized.

Dr. Helen Lavretsky, of the University of California–Los Angeles’ department of psychiatry professor in residence, told the Today Show that she believes sound baths – and musical therapy in general – have become popular because of the simplicity and not requiring extensive learning.

“It also has a particular effect on the brain because music or sound healing has a particular vibration,” Lavretsky told TODAY. “It’s just one practice, a very ancient practice, that can be part of the portfolio of tools that lead to stress reduction.”

Lempart said she is not surprised by the growing popularity.

“I think sound baths have become more popular because people are looking inward,

making mental health a priority, and desiring change in themselves and how they react to the world,” Lempart said. “People are ready to heal.”

PAYING IT FORWARD

For Lempart, presenting sound baths serves as a way of giving back, especially since sessions lead to many benefits for people.

“When I started playing sound healing instruments I realized how beneficial this was for me, how much it was helping me and I wanted to share this with others,” she said.

“I want to give back, to bring goodness, wholeness, peace and love into the world. I want to have a positive impact on the world, to connect and bring healing to people,” she added.

While she has regularly held sessions at several locations, Lempart is open to more opportunities including bringing sound baths to other institutions.

She is available for group or personal sound bath sessions in her space or at another venue.

“I would love to bring this to more schools, hospitals, nursing homes and recovery centers as well as yoga studios, retreats, wellness studios, businesses or right into your home,” she said. “This is a wonderful healing modality to offer to yourself, your employees, friends and family. Absolutely everyone can benefit from sound healing.”

Those seeking more information or looking to schedule a sound bath session may contact Lempart at 262-348-6681 or kimberlylempart@gmail.com.

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Many individuals recognize that there's no perfect time to retire. But a few simple strategies can help professionals make the best decision possible.



Tips to pick the right time to retire

Professionals work hard to achieve both short- and long-term goals. Retirement certainly qualifies as a long-term goal, and many people spend decades building and investing in a nest egg that they hope will help them enjoy their golden years to the fullest extent.

The decision regarding when to retire is affected by a host of variables, so what's a good time for one individual may not be ideal for another. However, professionals on the cusp of retirement can consider these tips as they try to pick the right time to retire.

CONSIDER AGE-RELATED BENEFITS

The United States features a government-sponsored retirement income programs and it behooves individuals to familiarize themselves with the rules of those programs so they can maximize their benefits. Age-related rules govern the Social Security benefits program in the United States, where individuals can begin claiming benefits at age 62, though those

benefits will be reduced by 25 percent.

If individuals wait until they're 66 or, in some cases, 67, to claim Social Security benefits, they will receive their full benefits. The Social Security Administration notes that those who can wait until age 70 to claim benefits will receive as much as 132 percent of the monthly benefit they would have received at full retirement age.

These distinctions are significant, especially for people who will be looking to government-sponsored programs to provide significant financial support in retirement. Individuals who won't rely as heavily on such programs may be able to retire earlier.

PAY OFF DEBTS

Carrying debt into retirement can be risky. In general, it's ideal to pay off all debts, including a mortgage and car payment, before retiring. Doing so can provide more financial flexibility and make it easier to manage unforeseen expenses, such as those incurred due to

health problems.

CONSIDER LIVING EXPENSES

It goes without saying that a sizable nest egg will be a necessity for anyone hoping to live comfortably in retirement. But the tricky part is figuring just how big a nest egg might need to be. In such instances, individuals can speak with a financial advisor and discuss what their retirement living expenses will be.

Conventional wisdom based on the Consumer Price Index suggests individuals will need to replace between 70 and 80 percent of their pre-retirement income after calling it a career. But even that figure is not set in stone, as rising inflation, such as the rapid spike experienced in 2022, can quickly put retirees in financial jeopardy.

By estimating the expenses they might have in retirement, individuals can begin to see just how close or far away from retirement they may be. Budget for inflation so any spike in living expenses can be easier to manage.

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How seniors can engage with their communities

Though a significant percentage of individuals report desires to retire later in life, many people stop working around the age of 62. The desire for a later retirement may stem from financial concerns or because some people wonder just what they will do when they're no longer working.

Retirement is a time for hardworking individuals to enjoy themselves and their newfound free time. Interacting with the community can keep the brain engaged and foster beneficial social connections. In recognition of the value of staying engaged, the following are a few ways for seniors to become more involved in their communities.

JOIN A CLUB OR GROUP

Identify an activity you find interesting and determine if there is a way to get involved with it in your community. Senior centers or adult activity providers may sponsor local programs.

PARTICIPATE IN WORSHIP

Many older adults find they want to reconnect with their faith at this point in

their lives, even if attending services hadn't been a top priority earlier in life. Reach out to your local house of worship and find out when services take place and which activities they offer.

READ TO CHILDREN

Volunteer your services at the library by reading to youngsters. Interacting with other generations can be inspiring.

FEED THE HUNGRY

Times continue to be challenging for many people who may find it hard to cover their expenses. Soup kitchens and food pantries can be a saving grace for those who might otherwise miss meals. Volunteering some hours at these organizations can do worlds of good and help you make a difference.

BEFRIEND NEIGHBORS

A passing "hi and bye" wave may have been the norm when you were busy working a job. Now that you have free time, you can get to know neighbors better and even take turns hosting get-togethers. Moving to a retirement or active adult

community with others in similar positions may facilitate such friendships.

VOLUNTEER WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Find out ways you can become involved civically. Perhaps you can run in a local school board election or try to become a member of the town council?

HELP OUT AT SCHOOL

Become a substitute teacher or paraprofessional. Many schools are experiencing shortages of qualified staff. You may find your place helping to shape the minds of youngsters by volunteering at schools or taking on part-time jobs in the classroom.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Seniors can be more engaged in their communities, thus strengthening their "social capital," the term scientists often use to describe the strength of their social relationships, and the extent to which people feel physically and emotionally supported by their communities.

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Fun ways for seniors to *stay active*

Physical activity is an important component of overall health. Health experts advise that exercise can increase lean body mass, prevent conditions like diabetes and cardiovascular disease, improve balance, and positively affect mental health/cognition. Exercise also can foster socialization with others, helping people overcome boredom and isolation.

As individuals get older, they may not be able to participate in all of the activities they enjoyed as youths, but that doesn't mean older adults must resign themselves to sedentary lifestyles. There are plenty of entertaining ways to remain physically active that can accommodate any limitations a person may have. Explore these methods for staying active.

EXPLORE SENIOR CENTER OFFERINGS

Community senior centers often fill calendars with a vast array of activities,

some of which can include physical activities. Hikes, walking tours, dances, and other activities all serve as entertaining ways to get out and about while meeting some fitness goals.

GARDEN OR DO YARD WORK

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotions says adults should get 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week. Raking leaves, mowing the lawn, digging in flower beds, trimming bushes, and other outdoor tasks could help a person meet this quota in a way that doesn't seem like exercise at all.

PLAY GAMES WITH GRANDCHILDREN

Little kids may inspire older adults to be more active, as it can be difficult to keep up with those youngsters. Take infants or toddlers for walks or push them in strollers. Attach a child seat or towing carriage to a

bicycle and ride around the neighborhood. Play games that require movement, such as hide-and-seek or Marco Polo in the pool. If it's snowing, have a snowball fight or make a snowman in the yard.

TAKE UP A NEW HOBBY

Find hobbies that incorporate physical activity. Perhaps learning to salsa dance or taking Zumba[®] will be fun?

Pickleball has caught on across the nation. The sport is a mix of tennis, racquetball and badminton that caters to all ages. Joining a bowling team is another way to get active and meet new people.

(METRO CREATIVE)

Physical activity is important at any age. Seniors can explore fun ways to stay in shape and be active to reap all the benefits of exercise.

STOCK PHOTO *Living Senior*

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