



the
volencenter

Community

Fall 2024



Together We Make Community Happen.



Our History

In 1968, the South County Neighborhood Center at Boca Raton first opened its doors. The Center started out staffed solely by volunteers and established itself as a community based non-profit organization serving individuals in poverty-stricken situations. The Center received its certification as a not-for-profit corporation and soon after became a recipient of United Way funding. Financial donations and supplies poured in from the community to help support and sustain the Center. Over the years it became evident that the needs of seniors were largely overlooked, and seniors needed an organization in the community dedicated to providing critical programs and support services which would allow them to age, at home, independently in the community. In 1976, the Center narrowed its focus to helping the older adults in the community and through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Volen, in 1983, the Mae Volen Senior Center was established.



The Volens had first become interested in the Center when Mrs. Volen, Mae, was volunteering. Her love for the seniors and her concern for their well-being was evident when she asked her husband, Ben, to purchase the very first vehicle for the Center so that frail elders could get to and from doctor appointments and other life sustaining destinations, as her birthday present. Ben was happy to oblige, and the transportation program became one of the key programs that the Center has continued to provide to the public and has linked thousands of older adults to crucial services throughout the community. Today the transportation program has a fleet of over 30 vehicles and provides approximately 80,000 rides per year to the older adults of South Palm Beach County.

In 1986, the Center moved to a larger building that was made



possible through another generous donation from Ben and Mae Volen and it became known as the Mae Volen Senior Center. The Center houses the Life Enrichment program, more commonly referred to as a senior center, serving thousands of active older adults each year and provides activities ranging from exercise classes, weekly outings, art, and educational classes as well as bingo, holiday parties and entertainment.

Over the next 40+ years, the Center continued a steady uphill of growth taking on many new programs and services to serve older adults. These services include senior dining sites serving no cost hot, nutritious meals Monday through Friday in various locations in southern Palm

Beach County; care management services to help one remain comfortably in their own home through assistance with bathing, cleaning, meal prep, shopping and supervision; meals delivered to the home, adult day care for those with Alzheimer's and other cognitive impairments as well as physical disabilities, and much, much more!



Recently, the Center added an intergenerational program promoting the interaction of young children and older adults, through a partnership with the Fuller Center. A child day care center is operated on-site with almost daily opportu-

nities for interaction between the preschoolers and the seniors. Evidence based programming demonstrates the benefits of these enriching interactions for both generations and we are seeing and experiencing that magic right before our eyes each and every day.

Over the past 50 years, the Center has come to be known lovingly in the community as The Volen Center and the staff has grown from a group of unpaid volunteers to over 75 paid employees and over 150 volunteers! The annual budget was sustained solely by private funding and goods and services donated by volunteers in the early days. Today, the annual budget has grown to \$10 million due to private and public funding as well as donations.

Today you can see the trademark Volen buses and vans throughout the South Palm Beach County roadways with brightly displayed services on each of our vehicles. From adult day care services to senior dining sites, to weekly field trips and fun with kids, the Center has seen so much growth in its long history, yet we realize that there is so much yet to come and more work to be done. The Volen Center's long history of quality service delivery has rooted it deeply in the community as a trusted resource for seniors and their loved ones and families, not only for today's older adults, but for those yet to come. With continued support from the community and individuals, the Volen Center will continue to serve the needs of future seniors for many more years.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Center Main Phone Number: 561-395-8920

Transportation: Ext. 5

Adult Day Care: Ext. 289

Life Enrichment: Ext. 224

Congregate Dining Program: Ext. 287



Elizabeth Lugo, *President/CEO*

Okay, I admit it. I love my job. I love the fact that there are no two days alike, that each day has its own special challenges, that every single day is different from one another.

There are increasingly critical challenges that must be met — finding funding to support services, making sure the right of seniors and their families to have access to care are protected, finding ways to meet changing and ever-growing needs. There is nothing easy about meeting the challenges we must face; some days the struggle seems overwhelming. However, loving what I do and loving the people I work with makes facing those challenges worth it.

I look forward to facing these challenges with my team and exploring what new opportunities we can bring to the Center and the senior community.

Together We Make Community Happen.





Get to know us...



Jared Policano
Chief Operating Officer



Elizabeth Schlacher
Chief Administrative Officer



Ita May Hill
Chief Financial Officer



Barb Svec
Administrative Assistant



April Davidson
Life Enrichment Supervisor



Yaris Alvarez
Transportation Supervisor



Kim Lovito, RN
Director of Adult Care



Joe Lovino
Building Coordinator



John Sawdon
Outreach Coordinator



Ana De Silva
Programs Supervisor



You Can Stay Sharp

by Jared Policano, Chief Operating Officer

Older adults sometimes notice changes in thinking - misplacing keys, difficulty coming up with the right word in conversations, and forgetting where you put your glasses. But how do you tell if these changes are a normal part of aging or if they may be an indication of bigger health problems?

As an individual ages, the brain's volume shrinks causing some of the nerve cells in the brain to lose connections. Slowing of blood flow in the brain can also occur in old age. These changes lead to different cognitive function in people as they get older. Though lapses in memory from time to time are very common, significant memory loss is not a normal part of aging. If you or a loved one is experiencing memory loss and other cognitive symptoms that interfere with normal activities and relationships, it is important to speak with your doctor.

Some tips for staying mentally sharp as you age are:

- Controlling cholesterol and high blood pressure can reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke, which contributes to the development of certain types of dementia.
- Do not smoke or drink excessively as these are both seen as putting you at increased risk for dementia.
- Exercise regularly to help maintain blood flow to the brain and reduce risk for conditions such as high blood pressure.

- Eat a healthy diet. Consume plenty of vegetables and fatty fish while staying away from saturated fats. People with better diets are thought to have fewer cognitive risks.
- Stimulate the brain and continue to learn. Mental stimulation throughout life is important for brain health. Keep your mind active by increasing your level of social interaction, learning new skills, playing challenging games, and doing activities that require an engaged mind. Social and intellectual interaction will lead to better cognitive function.





Fun Florida Facts | The Sunshine State

1 Florida is the southernmost point in the USA. Technically Hawaii is the southern most state in the country, however, continentally, geographically, Florida is the southernmost point.

2 The oldest inhabited city in the country resides in Florida. About 41 miles south of Jacksonville, St. Augustine stands as the oldest city in the US. Settled by Spaniards in 1565, the city is home to a 17th-century fortress.

3 Florida has the longest coastline in the continental US. The state has 825 miles of accessible beaches to locals and tourists alike.

4 Florida is the only state that borders the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean.

5 The Sunshine State has the lowest highest natural point. In other words, if you stand in Britton Hill, at 345 ft. above sea level, you're still in the lowest high point of any other state.

6 Florida has more than 7,700 lakes. Minnesota should be nervous!

7 Everglades National Park in South Florida is the only place in the world where alligators and crocodiles co-exist in the same ecosystem.

8 Walt Disney World Resort is the most visited and biggest resort in the world.

9 Florida produces more than 70% of the country's oranges. You could call it the capital of vitamin C.

10 The world's first scheduled passenger flight occurred in Florida. It happened on January 1, 1914, and the plane flew from St. Petersburg and Tampa.

11 NASA launched its first communication satellite from Florida. Called Echo 1, scientists launched the satellite from Cape Canaveral into the planet's orbit on August 12th, 1960.

12 Greater Miami is the only metropolitan area in the country with two national parks. Miami is home to Everglades National Park and Biscayne National Park.

13 Orlando is the country's amusement park capital. No other amusement park destination gets as many visitors as Orlando.

14 Florida is a massive melting pot. The state's architecture, cuisine, and culture have been molded by Native American, Hispanic, African American, and European influences.

15 Whenever you're in Florida, you're never more than 60 miles from the nearest body of water.



Adult Day Care, The Respite Refuge

by Kim Lovito, RN, Director of Adult Day Care

Caring for aging loved ones can be a challenging journey, and in the hustle and bustle of daily life, finding the right balance between work, family, and caregiving responsibilities can be overwhelming. That's where The Volen Center Adult Day Care program steps in, offering a wealth of support and respite for both clients and caregivers.

Our Day Care provides a supportive environment for older adults who require assistance and supervision during the day. Our program has evolved beyond traditional stereotypes and offers a diverse range of services tailored to meet the needs of participants and caregivers.

Participation in the program offers a variety of benefits, including social interaction, mental stimulation, exercise, and emotional support. The program offers a structured environment that promotes cognitive ability, physical exercise, and socialization. Trained staff and healthcare professionals ensure participants receive the necessary care, including health monitoring and prescribed medications if needed. This professional support allows older adults to maintain a level of independence while they are in a safe secure environment.

Day Care also offers huge benefits to caregivers. The most significant advantage for caregivers is respite, allowing them time to attend to personal tasks, run errands, or simply recharge. This respite is essential for preventing caregiver burnout. Caregivers

often face the challenge of navigating the complexities of healthcare and aging, as well. Our program offers access to experienced professionals who can provide guidance, answer questions and offer emotional support.

Our Day Care serves as an invaluable resource, offering a refuge of care, engagement, and support for both clients and caregivers. We not only care for you, but we also care about you.

**Schedule your
FREE tour today!
561.395.8920 Ext. 289.**





Take The Right Steps To Avoid Falls

A simple fall can be life-changing for an older adult. As we age, sight, hearing, muscle strength, coordination, and reflexes change. Heart disease and diabetes can affect balance, circulation, the nervous system, and many medications can cause dizziness. These and many more things can lead to falling. Adding to this is the fact that bones are thin and can break more easily, making even a simple fall serious.

It is important for aging adults to take the right steps to avoid falls and take care of your overall health and well-being. Here are some suggestions to lower the risk of falling:

- Talk with your doctor and plan an exercise program that is right for you. Regular exercise helps keep you strong and improves muscle tone. It also helps keep your joints, tendons, and ligaments flexible. Mild weight-bearing exercise — such as walking, climbing stairs — may even slow bone loss from osteoporosis.
- Have your vision and hearing tested often. Even small changes in sight and hearing can make you less stable. So, for example, if your doctor orders new eyeglasses, take time to get used to them, and always wear them when you should or, if you need a hearing aid, be sure they fit well.
- Find out about the possible side effects of medicines you take. Some could affect your coordination or balance.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink; even a small amount can affect your balance and reflexes.



- Always stand up slowly after eating, lying down, or resting. Getting up too quickly can cause your blood pressure to drop, which can make you feel faint.

- Use a cane, walking stick, or

walker to help you feel steadier when you walk. This is very important when you're walking in areas you don't know well or in places where the walkways are uneven.

- Hold the handrails when you use the stairs. If you must carry something while you're going up or down, hold it in one hand and use the handrail with the other.
- Purchase a home monitoring system service. If a fall in the home occurs, the button can be pushed, and emergency medical teams can be sent out.

It is also important to make the home safe to prevent falls. All stairways, hallways, and pathways should remain clear with good lighting and light switches at the top and bottom of the stairwells. Also, ensure that all carpets are firmly fixed to the floor to avoid tripping on them. Slip strips for tile and wood can be purchased to ensure safety of surfaces that can become slick. Bathrooms should have grab bars near the toilet and both inside and outside of the shower or tub. Non-skid mats should be placed on all surfaces that can get wet. It is also important to ensure that all cords and low furniture are not in high-traffic areas.

INDOOR

FLEA MARKET

& Craft Fair

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Free Admission • Free Parking**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2024
9:00 AM TO 1:00 PM**

For more information on our Flea Market event and/or to become a vendor,
please contact us at 561.395.8920 ext. 224 or 272


the
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**1515 West Palmetto Park Road
Boca Raton, Florida 33486**





The Importance of Having Fun... at Any Age

by April Davidson, Life Enrichment Supervisor

There is no age limit on having a good time. In fact, several studies have found that older adults who say they enjoy their lives have better health and display slower decline in physical function.

Having fun and being playful releases endorphins that create a sense of wellbeing — opening the brain to new ideas. Having fun can also create a sense of community and belonging — increasing socialization and combatting loneliness. Having fun creates hope and optimism. Having fun can also increase your immune system and improve your physical health.

At the Volen Center, we have a “fun culture” and a social environment with programs and activities designed to encourage our clients and members to interact, socialize and enjoy life. Last summer, we held a senior carnival — an event that tapped into nostalgia, bringing back fond memories.

**Come tour our Center
and learn about our programs and services.**

**Schedule your tour today!
Contact us at 561.395.8920 Ext. 205.**





Individual and Corporate Volunteers Provide Invaluable Service

by John Sawdon, Outreach Coordinator

Our slogan at the Volen Center is “Together, We Make Community Happen.” It is our volunteers who make this possible, providing over 9,000 hours per year in valuable services to our seniors. That translates into \$207,000 in savings for the extra staff that would be needed to handle the many tasks they perform.

In the many years I have been working with the Volen Center volunteers, I have come to know many of them as part of our Center family because they are here so much helping us out.

Our volunteers handle our bingo, discussion groups, trivia, music, arts and crafts, poker, and bridge card games, serve lunch at our meal sites, provide pet therapy, and provide needed

extra hands at our adult day care. We also use “bus buddies” with outings to local area attractions and encourage volunteers to offer new ideas for programs.

Not only do we have individuals who volunteer their time, the community gets involved as well. At many of our events here, we have enjoyed help from various organizations like NCCI Corp., Boca Raton Police Department, Blue Green Corp., The RN Network, Sororities from FAU, ADT Security, and Comcast.

Thanks to all of our volunteers and the many organizations and companies for making community happen!

To become a Volen Center volunteer, please contact us at 561.395.8920 Ext. 205.





Community Gratitude

"I would like to commend the staff at the Volen Center. My father-in-law suffered a massive stroke which left him incapable of walking or caring for himself. Our family made the decision to care for him at home, but with that decision came a lot of new responsibilities and an extremely large learning curve. However, with the help of your staff, we have been able to take care of our dad at home and know that he is being taken care of during the day. We are confident that he is loved, respected, and taken care of with dignity... We are truly grateful..."

- Paula H.



"My heartfelt thanks to everyone at the Volen Center. Your services enable me to keep my mother in our house. Through your programs and support she continues to thrive. Your staff is caring and compassionate. Mom is greeted with a smile every day and is given the dignity and respect she deserves."

- Susan G.

"About a year ago, I decided to send my wife to an adult care that had memory care. It was a very difficult time for me as I was very nervous about sending my wife somewhere. The staff has been extremely friendly, passionate and attentive. Now, after many months, my wife enjoys going there and I am confident that the staff is taking good care of my wife..."

- Sheldon Z.

"About two years ago, my husband was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. I began looking for a day care center and decided to try the Volen Center. From the day he started, he enjoyed the Volen Center and looked forward to returning. I find the staff a devoted and caring group of employees. I feel lucky to have found the Volen Center."

- Irma N.





Our Transportation Is A Lifeline for Hundreds of Seniors

by Yaris Alvarez, Transportation Supervisor

Those who are young have many choices for transportation. For seniors, public transportation often becomes their only lifeline to crucial services. That's why affordable transportation is so important to the Volen Center.

We provide more than 80,000 trips annually for seniors to needed destinations, such as medical appointments, pharmacies, grocery stores and more. The Volen Center Community Coach also helps keep seniors socializing and avoid isolation by taking them to salons, Center field trips, luncheons, and other social activities. And, of major importance, the buses take our seniors to our dining sites where they can get a free nutritious, hot meal. For many, it is the only hot meal of their day. These rides are vital to our senior population not only for the obvious medical reasons, and shopping for necessities, but also for their emotional well-being — for our seniors to be able to get out and enjoy the company of others when possible. This free transportation service enables otherwise isolated individuals to maintain a level of independence.



Because we are a nonprofit, we depend greatly on the generosity of the community to keep this service available for seniors. Many cannot afford public transportation, Uber, or cab rides. Through your donation, you are impacting the lives of hundreds of seniors

Schedule your ride today! Call 561.395.8920 Ext. 5.





Planned Giving - Leaving Your Legacy, Be A Hero!

For more than 50 years, The Volen Center has been improving the lives of older adults in our community. We started out as a volunteer-based organization, but thanks to the generosity of supporters like you, we have grown from a small volunteer team to a full-sized staff of more than 75 paid employees and more than 150 volunteers. Your kindness has allowed us to do more than we ever dreamed possible for our community, but we still want to do more for our neighbors. Together, we can continue to build a support network to help our older neighbors and their loved ones stay safely in their homes while they age, and help them stay happy, healthy, and connected to the world. The services we provide for seniors across our community include Transportation, nutritious Home Delivered Meals and other Supportive Geriatric Care in the home, Adult Day Care, and our Life Enrichment program for independent seniors.

Your support and commitment to the Center is bettering the lives of your neighbors — and that is inspiring! Thank you.

**To Leave Your Legacy,
please contact Jared Policano, Chief Operating Officer
at 561.395.8920, Ext. 272.**

"My family started the June Bleiwise Foundation, after my mother passed away. We were so impressed with Liz Lugo and her staff that there was no hesitation as we contributed immediately."

- Chuck Bleiwise



"We have made provision for the Volen Center in our estate planning because of its wide variety of meaningful programs which enhance the daily lives of seniors in our community. The continued growth and vitality of the Volen Center will enrich the quality of life for so many in Palm Beach County."

- Pat and Leo Phillips

The Volen Center is a private 501(c)(3) nonprofit social service agency, headquartered in Boca Raton, Florida. Founded in 1968, the Center offers services for older adults, family caregivers and family members of all ages at locations throughout Southern Palm Beach County.

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Intergenerational Programs

The Volen Center and the Fuller Center partnered together to provide a unique experience for both children and seniors! Weekly, Volen Center seniors and the Fuller Center children come together and do crafts, Legos, have dance parties, and story time! Here is a snapshot of the FUN they have!

