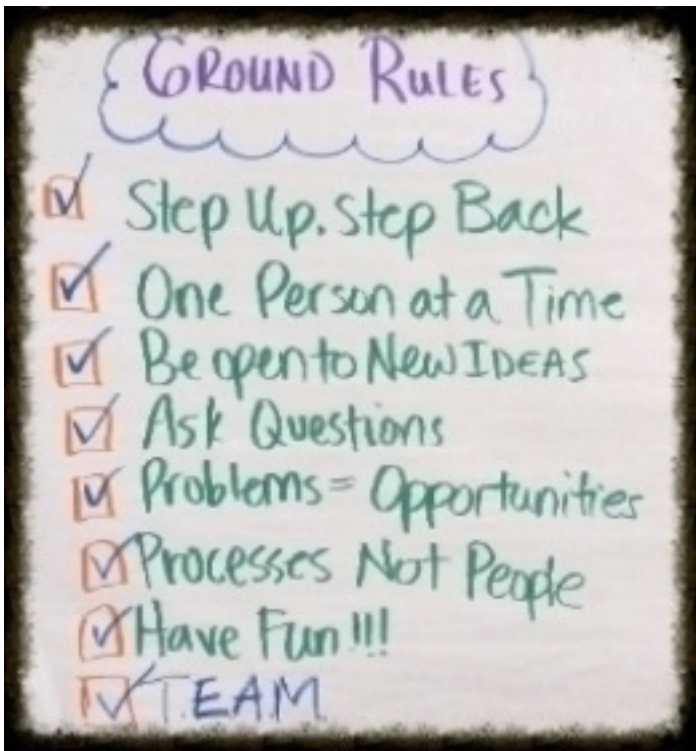




Self-Directed Volunteer Teams make n4a Guidelines Work.

Reports on Five Active Projects



The previous PAFC Newsletter (September 29) described the step-by-step process, from the inception of five projects devised by Priority Groups in Health and Wellness, Housing, Mobility and Access, and Culture of Aging, to their implementation by multi-skilled volunteers working together in self-directed teams. Here are the updates:

Culture of Aging

The Culture of Aging Priority Committee, having set their objectives and strategies, identified two projects for immediate implementation that were geared to promote and educate the community with the overarching goal of celebrating aging.

One Culture of Aging SDVT initiative, reported in the September 29 PAFC Newsletter, was to host a “candidate forum to provide an opportunity to educate and question candidates regarding aging issues in Larimer County.” The Candidates Forum SDVT is on schedule to host a nonpartisan political forum for seniors in the newly renovated Fort Collins Senior Center, between 4-7 pm, on October 28, 2014. Seven candidates have confirmed their participation: four running for the State Legislature from two local districts as well as three running for Larimer County Commissioner. We anticipate about 130 seniors will engage directly with candidates, and many more will be able to read about the Forum and/or view presentations and Q&A on video. During the past week, from organizations such as the Larimer County Office on Aging, the PAFC Steering Committee, and other interested parties in Fort Collins and Loveland, the team has solicited and received questions on senior-centric issues with which to brief candidates before October 28. In just under three weeks, the SDVT will complete all marketing, logistical and program management preparation for a successful Candidates Forum.

The event, including a light dinner, is complimentary. Seating is limited and requires advanced registration for admission tickets.

Register at: <http://col.st/E295u> or Tel. 970-498-7751.
For more information go to: <http://tinyurl.com/lafu743>
LIKE us on FACEBOOK at: <https://www.facebook.com/partnershipforagefriendlycommunities>

submitted by Myles Crane

The second Culture of Aging SDVT initiative was to obtain a commitment from the local newspaper, *The Coloradoan*, to publish monthly articles by local seniors “to highlight their experience of growing older in Larimer County. “ A Communication Team with writing experience and an appreciation of the power of personal stories to

illustrate a broader theme or issue, met and wrote some sample articles. In the process of discussing them, the team realized a need to identify a purpose and theme that will tie the articles together yet provide a variety of perspectives on the experience of aging. To that end the team has determined that the articles need to address life experiences that are common across generations -- e.g. marriage, friendship, meaning and purpose -- but described from a senior's point of view. They are now in the process of identifying specific topics and writers who can personally speak to them.

They have developed an "elevator speech" to encourage others' interest in this project:

Many people view aging as a burden rather than a gift. Our goal is that people will better understand and appreciate the experience of growing older. We ask that you pay more attention to embracing and respecting your own aging process.

submitted by Bonnie Shetler

Health and Wellness

One of the strategies of the Health and Wellness Priority Group was to facilitate increased physical activity of older adults by identifying barriers to healthy living in Larimer County. The group developed a focus on removing barriers to walking: walking requires no special equipment or training and, while costing nothing, improves health outcomes. The first action step was to develop a SDVT whose purpose would be to identify barriers to walking in Larimer County. Eventually a report on those barriers will be communicated to the priority group and the larger community as appropriate.

During September and October, the SDVT has been doing research to identify data that has already been gathered by other groups in the county. Team members will review national studies to determine what information is transferable. They will also review current survey tools, with the goal of developing a survey or assessment instrument to be used with individuals in the county. Later, the SDVT will research activities related to walking that are currently in progress in various communities. At our next meeting in early November, the team will review the collected information and decide further steps related to survey development and implementation.

Meanwhile, we have developed an “elevator speech” to communicate our own and solicit others’ interest in this project:

There's a question about walking and health we'd like to find the answer for. Why aren't older adults walking more? Many older adults aren't walking enough to stay healthy. In order to make Larimer County more age-friendly we'd like to increase physical activity by minimizing the barriers to walking. Will you take our survey to help us better understand the barriers?

submitted by Paula Stearns

Housing

The Housing Priority Group has decided to focus on gathering information about available housing options for seniors, options that are missing, and ideas other communities have had that would be applicable in Larimer County. To that end, the Priority Group is working on finding the money and hiring consultants to help with a community scan on housing. There are a number of people in the Priority Housing Group with knowledge that will contribute to this scan and who will be excellent resources as we move forward to figure out how to fill those gaps.

The SDVT was charged to "research best practices of innovative housing options for seniors of all income levels." We have had one meeting during which we each took a concept to research. By the end of November, we plan to have a report on some exciting options including Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), Shared Housing, Co-housing, the Tiny House movement and movements in other countries. At that point we will determine our next steps and whether this group or another will carry those steps forward.

Meanwhile, we have developed an “elevator speech” to describe the problem and call on others to work with us toward solving it:

Seniors in Larimer County have a lack of options for affordable alternative and accessible housing. We want to make sure seniors have safe options that add life satisfaction within the housing communities of their choice. Please join us in learning what options are the best fits for our communities.

submitted by Sue Ballou

Mobility and Access

The Mobility and Access Priority Group has worked with a pre-established Larimer County Senior Transportation Coalition (STC), which had hosted two public forums in March of 2014 on how to improve mobility options for seniors in the county. From those meetings and the n4a February workshop, a broad plan was developed that is now being used by the Mobility and Access Priority Group. By September, the Group had begun an SDVT charged with increasing senior comfort with, and use of, public transportation options.

To meet this charge, the Mobility and Access SDVT decided their action would be to improve travel training programs throughout Larimer County. Last Thursday, October 2, at the Pathways Hospice, the Senior Transportation Coalition held a meeting during which Andrea Liebl, the Transfort/City of Fort Collins Travel Training Coordinator, gave a presentation on Senior Travel Training. Afterward, the STC, the Mobility and Access task team from the Partnership for Age Friendly Communities and interested volunteers discussed how to assist and expand senior travel training in Larimer County.

Their next meeting will be on Thursday, Nov. 6, 10am at Pathways Hospice, 305 Carpenter Road in south Fort Collins, CO (just east of College/287 in between Fort Collins and Loveland).

submitted by Martin Carcasson

Note: Many thanks to Mary Lyons for an excellent comprehensive and timely Final Report for Larimer County to keep our commitment to Stephanie Firestone and the n4a Livable Communities Collaborative. Valuable contributions from that Report to the information in this newsletter are appreciated.