



2018 Coping with Dementia **ANNUAL REPORT**



During 2018, Coping with Dementia LLC (hereinafter referred to as Coping) increased Alzheimer's awareness speaking engagements by 29 percent, improved its financial support to the Alzheimer's Family Organization by 20 percent, developed new training curricula in response to a stronger demand for professional caregiver and first responder training, and helped launch a new non-profit organization dedicated to dementia education.



Debbie Selsavage often lightens the mood about a tough topic with bubbles at the beginning of a presentation.

Alzheimer's Awareness

Coping with Dementia President Debbie Selsavage spoke 76 times to a total audience of 2,051 individuals on the topic of Alzheimer's Awareness. This was a 13.6 percent increase over speaking engagements, and a 29 percent increase over

Right: More than a quarter-million learned about dementia through the Great Americans Alzheimer's Awareness photo exhibit.

2017 in total audience. During the last two years, Coping has responded to an average of six requests per month to speak on Alzheimer's and dementia, reaching a total audience of more than 3,600 individuals.

The Great Americans Alzheimer's Awareness Photo Exhibit, introduced during the Citrus County Aware for Alzheimer's Walk in October of 2017, completed a tour of Citrus libraries, appeared for one-month showings at libraries in Brooksville and Lady Lake, Florida, and is being scheduled for Marion County libraries in the coming year. Created by Coping and sponsored by Walgreens Pharmacy in Inverness, the traveling exhibit has been seen by more than a quarter-million viewers. It has been donated to the Alzheimer's Family Organization, but its travel and appearance is still managed by Coping as an in-kind service to the AFO. It was publicized internationally through a feature in the Positive Approach to Care online newsletter.

Coping took its message of Alzheimer's Awareness to a younger



audience in 2018, providing a script to the popular Citrus County elementary school video show "To the Max," where puppets Max and Maxine presented a message of understanding, love, and compassion to school children who may be experiencing dementia in their families. The video is available on YouTube.

Citrus County school children were also invited to participate in the Shoe Your Support shoe decorating competition conducted in conjunction with Citrus County Walk Aware for Alzheimer's 2018. The winning shoes will tour Citrus County libraries throughout 2019.

Ms. Selsavage also continued to provide monthly columns to the Citrus County Chronicle and to Senior Voice. Her column entitled "Until there is a cure, there is care" was republished in the Positive Approach to Care international e-newsletter.

Coping also publishes its own monthly e-newsletter which experienced a 50 percent growth in distribution during the past 12 months, reaching a year-end circulation of 3,700!

Family Caregiver Education and Training

Coping's popular ABC of Dementia workshop, which is provided free of charge to non-profit organizations, including churches, was conducted on 35 occasions where 1,318 individuals were trained in the philosophy and techniques of person-centered compassionate care. This represented a 12.9 percent increase in



Ms. Selsavage and partner Ed Youngblood demonstrate techniques of approach, voice, and touch at an ABC of Dementia workshop.

participants over 2017, bringing the two-year total of people trained to 2,490!

Coping has continued to use its workshops and speaking engagements to help Find-M Friends distribute its Out of Harm's Way human scent preservation kits to protect individuals with dementia who may wander and become lost. It is estimated that upwards of 10,000 scent kits have now been distributed throughout Citrus and neighboring counties.

In January, Coping hosted its fourth annual day-long conference for family caregivers, with sponsorship from Meridien Research. These events, which feature three to five speakers and information from more than 20 resource partners, consistently draw participation of 150 to 200 family and friends of individuals living with dementia.

Ms. Selsavage also appeared on radio and television shows in Citrus, Hernando, and Pinellas counties.

Training for Professionals



Coping teamed up with the AFO and the Citrus County Sheriff's Office to host a Summit to Protect and Serve our Seniors.

During 2018, Coping experienced a strong demand for Alzheimer's Awareness and caregiver training for professionals, including professional caregivers and first responders.

In April, Coping offered a workshop to volunteers of CERT, the Citrus County Emergency Response Team. This event captured the attention of law enforcement personnel, and in May, Coping and the Alzheimer's Family Organization co-sponsored a Summit to Protect and Serve our Seniors, hosted by Citrus County Sheriff Mike Prendergast. The day-long event, which included training on how to interpret behaviors

and communicate with individuals living with dementia, drew law enforcement attendees from six west-central Florida counties.

After speaking at a conference in Gainesville hosted by the University of Florida Memory Disorder Clinic at Shands in May, Ms. Selsavage was invited to return in June to conduct in-service training for physical, occupational, and recreational therapists.

An event similar to the Sheriff's Summit was conducted for emergency medical first responders in August, co-sponsored by the Alzheimer's Family Organization and hosted by Nature Coast EMS in Lecanto. Again, participants were drawn from outside Citrus County.

Early in the year, the Nature Coast YMCA and the Citrus Cultural Alliance teamed up to create a monthly event



Staff at Osprey Lodge in Tavares received training through Coping's new Culture of Compassionate Care curriculum.

called Art from the Heart, which provides social interaction featuring art and music for individuals living

with dementia and their caregivers. Coping provided training in dementia awareness and communication to the artists and musicians selected to facilitate the program.

Professional caregiver training also included providing training to a high standard of person-centered compassionate care at Grand Living at Citrus Hills, Always There in Citrus Springs, and Osprey Lodge in Tavares.



Coping provided an in-service for professional therapists at the University of Florida, Shands, in Gainesville.

Curriculum Development

With the emerging demand to train professional caregivers, Coping developed two new workshops to provide training based on the Positive Approach to Care of Teepa Snow, Validation Therapy by Naomi Feil, and Ms. Selsavage's own experience as an administrator of a deficiency-free assisted living community that practiced Person-Centered Compassionate Care.



Coping introduced training for a Culture of Compassionate Care.

To meet this demand, two new training curricula were developed entitled 3C and 3Cplus. "3C" refers to a "Culture of Compassionate Care."

Promoting a Dementia Friendly Community

Because Coping is a for-profit company that is ineligible for tax-exempt grants and donations, it was announced late in 2017 that a new Citrus County-based non-profit corporation would be created. This was achieved by late summer 2018 with the formation of Dementia Education, Inc. Ms. Selsavage and Coping with Dementia Marketing and Communications Director Ed Youngblood both serve on its board of directors, with Mr. Youngblood as its president. By year-end, the new non-profit had completed its first project: "A Handbook for Dementia Friendly Congregations," developed to facilitate the work of the more than 25 churches in and around Citrus County



Ms. Selsavage was invited to be the keynote speaker at the roll-out for a new Dementia Friendly Community initiative in Martin County, Florida.

that have been certified Dementia Friendly.

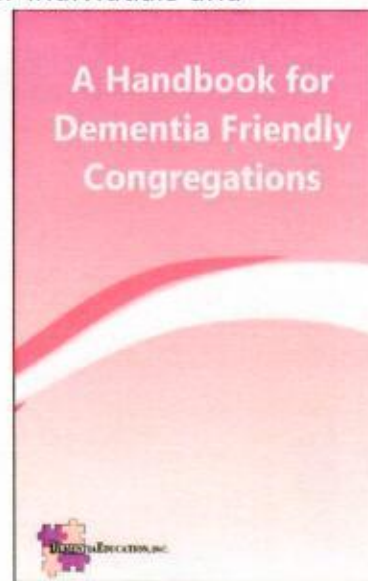
Late in the year, Mr. Youngblood also agreed to take charge of the communications functions of Citrus County Dementia Friendly America. The work of DFA, Coping, and Dementia Education are so compatible, it was agreed that a closer coordination of information would be beneficial for all. Coping personnel now administer four Facebook pages in support of specific aspects of its mission. These are Coping with Dementia LLC, Citrus County Aware for Alzheimer's, Citrus County Dementia Friendly America, and Dementia Education, Inc.

Supporting the Alzheimer's Family Organization

A great deal of Coping's services are provided on a voluntary basis to the Alzheimer's Family Organization, including Ms. Selsavage's current

service as Board President of the AFO, a regional non-profit based in Spring Hill, Florida. Prior to 2017, the AFO did not have a major fund-raising event in Citrus County, so Coping agreed to become the principal organizer of a walk entitled Citrus County Walk Aware for Alzheimer's. In its first year, the Walk became the second-largest fund raiser for the AFO.

Citrus County Walk Aware for Alzheimer's, conducted in Floral City on October 20th, improved on its inaugural year performance by 20 percent! With \$30,101.43 generated with an expense ratio of only eight percent, the event was able to donate \$27,659.27 to the AFO! Many parties deserve recognition for this success including Citrus County Continuity of Care and other individuals and companies that provided both funding and more than \$11,000 in in-kind services and support, enabling expenses to be kept very low.



In cooperation with the new non-profit Dementia Education, Inc. Coping will provide copies of *A Handbook for Dementia Friendly Congregations* to each church certified Dementia Friendly.

For the second consecutive year, the Citrus Board of County Commissioners designated the week leading up to the Walk as Citrus County Aware for Alzheimer's Week, and this year the Inverness City Council issued a similar proclamation of support.

Ms. Selsavage also facilitates two caregiver support group meetings a month on behalf of the AFO, and provides a column for its quarterly newsletter.

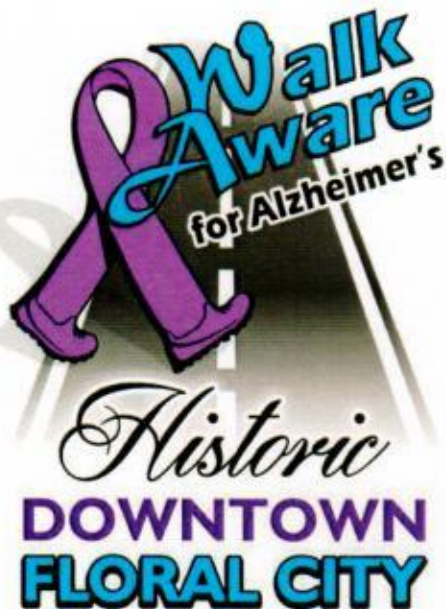


In her capacity as Board President of the Alzheimer's Family Organization, Ms. Selsavage often spoke at AFO Caregiver Education Days throughout eight counties in west-central Florida.

State of Florida. As mentioned above, Ms. Selsavage has been invited to speak in Gainesville by UF Health. In addition, in October, she was invited to be keynote speaker at a kick-off event in Martin County for a new organization called Martin County HUGS (Help, Understanding, Guidance, Safety) whose mission is to create a dementia friendly culture and community.

Coping has also been invited to demonstrate its ABC of Dementia caregiver workshop at the 40th Anniversary Conference of the Southern Gerontological Society in Panama Beach in April, 2019.

Recognition that Citrus County has developed an outstanding program for Alzheimer's Awareness and caregiver training was acknowledged twice this



Citrus County Aware for Alzheimer's has become the AFO's second-largest fund-raising event.

Making Citrus a Model

The work being done for Alzheimer's awareness and dementia caregiver training in Citrus County has caught the attention of communities elsewhere within and outside of the

year in the Citrus County Chronicle; once in an editorial just following the October Walk, then later in the year by Publisher Gerry Mulligan in a column about exceptional features that Citrus County can look upon with pride.

Coping believes that Citrus County has enormous potential to become an internationally-recognized center for dementia care practice, research, and training. Ms. Selsavage states, "While so many others are focusing on a cure – which we certainly hope will happen – our community can become an international model for learning and teaching in the art and science of care."

Goals for 2019

- 1) Focus on increasing training and service to professional caregivers and first responders by 50 percent while maintaining a 15 percent growth in established programs aimed at family caregivers.
- 2) Increase the financial contribution to the Alzheimer's Family Organization from Citrus County Walk Aware by 20 percent.
- 3) Take advantage of all opportunities to promote the concept of Citrus County as a model dementia friendly community and a center for the development of person-centered compassionate care for individuals living with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Citrus building a reputation as dementia friendly

Chances are, you know someone who has been touched by dementia or maybe it has even disrupted your own family. We've come a long way from the days when no one talked about how peculiar Uncle John's behavior was and everyone just tacitly tried to keep him sidelined.

These days, thanks to local organizations like Coping With Dementia LLC and the regional Alzheimer's Family Organization (AFO), Alzheimer's is recognized as a disease, not an embarrassing, not-to-be-mentioned condition. Citrus County has taken the lead in developing a dementia-friendly culture featuring education, understanding, accommodation and compassion. County organizations and individuals have responded in a big way, and there's momentum to keep it going.

For example, last weekend's Walk Aware for Alzheimer's event in Floral City, only in its second year, attracted more than three times as many walkers as the previous one. This year's associated activities included special showings of the "Still Alice" movie as well as the new "Shoe Your Support" shoe decorating contest for school-age and adult contributors. Funds raised for AFO, last year coming in at about \$24,000, will top \$30,000 this year.

Stories abound from caregivers for people with dementia. If you spent time in Floral City during the Walk Aware event, you probably heard dozens of stories from those who have cared for or are caring for spouses, siblings, parents, other relatives or

friends. With Citrus County's older demographic, the incidence of dementia is expected to grow. Everyone should be aware of the disease and how to face it, whether in your own family or at a distance.

This year's Shoe Your Support campaign focused heavily on school-age youngsters, and stressed education and compassion. Many of the more than 60 decorated shoe entries came with stories and dedications to special people in contributors' lives. In Citrus County, we have a large pool of grandparents raising children, so educating young people about dementia is especially important.

Kudos to the businesses and organizations that have already engaged in dementia-friendly training, and to the groups and organizations that support dementia education and availability of resources. Coping with dementia is an ongoing conversation here, and Citrus County has become a recognized model for other communities just beginning the journey. Let's keep the momentum going.

THE ISSUE:

Citrus County has gained a reputation for its dementia-friendly culture.

OUR OPINION:

Keep the momentum going.

Left: On October 23, 2018, the Citrus County Chronicle published an editorial recognizing the county's emerging Dementia Friendly culture.