

# Making Citrus County More Dementia Friendly



Coping with Dementia LLC  
2019 Annual Report

[www.coping.today](http://www.coping.today)



Citrus County Clerk of Courts Angela Vick (left) receives Dementia Friendly certification.

Coping with Dementia LLC was founded late in 2014 and went into operation at the beginning of 2015. Previous Annual Reports, published by the corporation since 2017, provide performance statistics and address strategic development to date.

### Our Fifth Year

Our fifth year of operation has featured uninterrupted growth in both educational and caregiver training activities, geographical expansion in response to demand for caregiver training outside of Citrus County, ongoing curriculum development, sharing and learning through participation at major conferences, additional training and certification; and a continuation of fund-raising and in-kind support to the dementia care community through pro bono service to charitable nonprofit organizations.

While this report will focus on accomplishments during 2019, statistical



information summarizing five years of progress has been included as well.

### Making Citrus a more Dementia Friendly Community

The focus of Coping with Dementia's activity over the past five years has been to make Citrus County a more Dementia Friendly community. This continued during 2019 through speaking engagements and family caregiver workshops, all of which were offered free of charge to churches and other nonprofit organizations.

This effort, however, took on a more "official" quality during 2019 as Citrus County government agencies began to acknowledge, adopt, and train for more Dementia Friendly customer service. While Citrus County Libraries have conducted training in support of a Dementia Friendly environment for several years, this year we saw the Citrus Clerk of Court as well as Citrus County Senior Community Services adopt training for their employees.

This training, in addition to the Board of County Commissioners continuing to support dementia awareness, was a significant step forward in setting Citrus apart from other Florida counties.

For four years, the Citrus County Chronicle has published a column, provided by Coping with Dementia, that promotes Alzheimer's awareness and person-centered compassionate care. Two years ago, we began to provide a similar monthly column to Senior Voice of Citrus County. This year, editorial outreach was extended to a series of magazines published for Citrus and Hernando County gated communities by Best Version Media. We believe this editorial outreach through both print and digital media is a significant factor in making our community more Dementia Friendly.

## Curriculum Development and Certification

In part, it was the interest from Citrus County government agencies that prompted the development of a new curriculum called "Dementia Aware and Care." Like all Coping with Dementia curricula, it

embodies the principles of

Teepa Snow's Positive Approach to Care and Naomi Feil's Validation Therapy. This training provides an intensive presentation designed to be delivered in one hour.

It is designed for

professionals who are not in the business of hands-on dementia care, but who may frequently need to serve individuals living with dementia, and their caregivers.

In an effort to stay apace with leading-edge practices in person-centered compassionate care, Coping with Dementia President Debbie Selsavage and Communications Director Ed Youngblood both received training and certification as Consultants in the Positive Approach to Care during 2019.

## Outreach beyond Citrus County

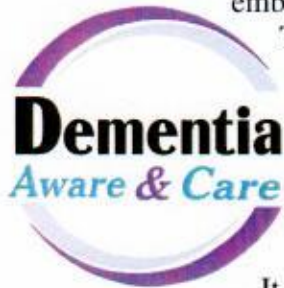
One striking development during 2019 was the significant growth in demand for caregiver training outside of Citrus County. This included demand for both our ABC of Dementia workshop for family caregivers, and our 3-C training for professionals. Whereas the majority (82 percent) of our educational speaking engagements remained within Citrus County, a full 68 percent of our training events took place in surrounding counties, including locations as far north as Tallahassee, as far east as Orlando, and as far south as Bradenton.

After spending more than a year at libraries and other venues in Citrus County, during 2019 the Great Americans Alzheimer's Awareness Photo Exhibit, developed and managed by Coping with Dementia on behalf of the Alzheimer's Family Organization, was moved to libraries in Lake and Hernando Counties. It is estimated that viewership for this educational exhibit is approaching a million people.

## Sharing and Learning

Twice during 2019, Coping with Dementia took its story of the Dementia Friendly qualities of Citrus County to major professional conferences. These included the annual meeting of the Southern Gerontological Society in Panama Beach, Florida in April, and the First International Positive Approach to Care Conference in Cary, North Carolina in November. At the SGS Conference, Coping with Dementia LLC

Seventeen law enforcement agencies responded to an invitation from Citrus County to attend a Senior Summit hosted by the Alzheimer's Family Organization, the Citrus County Sheriff, and Coping with Dementia LLC.



was chosen to present a report on dementia awareness in Citrus County. We were a sponsor at the International PAC Conference, and received many inquiries at our booth about how Citrus County and west-central Florida have achieved positive results toward more Dementia Friendly practices. Coping with Dementia also partnered with the Alzheimer's Family Organization and the Citrus County Sheriff's Office in May to organize a Second Annual Summit to Serve and Protect our Seniors. When initiated in 2018, this event attracted participation by six police agencies. This year, agency participation increased to 17 sheriff's offices and municipal police departments!

### Giving Back

For the third consecutive year, Coping with Dementia organized Citrus County Walk Aware for Alzheimer's® to benefit the Alzheimer's Family Organization. The event raised more than \$22,000, bringing its three-year grand total contribution to the AFO to more than \$74,000!

### Five Year Results

During 2019, Coping with Dementia LLC

Year	Speaking Engagements	Total Speaking Audience	Training Events	Total Trained	Cert. DF
2015	19	690	8	167	16
2016	51	1,309	14	703	11
2017	69	1,605	39	1,142	15
2018	76	2,051	35	1,318	16
2019	67	2,371	55	1,966	21
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>8,026</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>5,296</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Yr. Avg.</b>	<b>56.4</b>	<b>1,605.2</b>	<b>30.2</b>	<b>1,059.2</b>	<b>15.8</b>

conducted 67 educational speaking events to a combined audience of 2,371 individuals, 55 training events for 1,966 caregivers, and certified 21 new organizations as Dementia Friendly.

With continuing growth in every area of activity during 2019, Coping with Dementia has conducted more than 280 educational events to a total of more than 8,000 attendees, and 150 caregiver training events for more than 5,000 caregivers during its five years of service! We have trained and certified more than 75 organizations as Dementia Friendly, which includes 36 churches, 30 businesses, six libraries, five gated communities, and two county government agencies. More detail is presented in the table below.

We are honored that Coping with Dementia President Debbie Selsavage received a nomination for Citrus County Citizen of the Year 2019.



**Debbie Selsavage**

**DEBBIE SELSAVAGE**  
(nominated by Mary Johnson, Linda Bemiss)

As director of Coping with DEMENTIA LLC, she is dedicated to finding a better way to deal with this disease. In a few years she has organized the community resources and brought them to the community through trainings, marketing and forming partnerships with all who could help. She has trained first responders, local restaurants, churches, libraries and the general public on how to deal with these terrible diseases. She also offers Caregiver support groups.