

NCSCA News Winter 2021

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Happy New Year!! I am sure you, like me are happy to see 2020 behind us and are looking forward to a new year with a fresh start. Although it is still too early to tell when things will return to full operating status for most senior centers across the state, it appears there are some positive things happening with the vaccine rollout.

I want to thank each of you for all of your hard work and efforts to keep our older adults as active, engaged and positive as can be during this whole pandemic. You have all done so many amazing things over the past ten months and I am impressed but truly not surprised. Senior Center staffers are the most resilient, creative, energetic and enthusiastic people I know. We can and will do it all no matter what it takes to keep things going. You are amazing!!!

You have kept your seniors in the loop by finding new ways to provide services. You have encouraged them and cheered them on through this pandemic. Don't let up and don't stop now. They need us now more than ever and we have to continue to do what we do to keep them healthy, active, strong, independent and optimistic.

Remember, to take care of yourselves too. Continue to support, encourage, and reach out to each other if you need anything. We are all in this together and are better together.

I look forward to the day we are all fully open and operational and being able to spend time with our community members.

Again, thank you for being the amazing people you are. What you do makes a huge difference in the lives of so many. Never forget that.

Take care and be safe,

Sandy





North Carolina Senior Center Alliance 2021 Annual Ann Johnson Senior Center of the Year Award Winner: Pitt County Council on Aging

(Actual Award Submission)

The Council on Aging (COA) is a private, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization providing programs, services, and resources to older adults, across Pitt County. Our mission is to enhance the quality of life for adults by providing access to a wide range of services, programs and resources that promote healthy living and independence. We operate with a mostly part-time staff of 18 dedicated individuals and more than 200 volunteers across our community which includes five Senior Wellness Centers. Through programs like Meals on Wheels, Congregate Nutrition, Information & Referral, Falls Prevention, and Medicare Counseling, to name a few, we are leading the way for senior services in our community, even in the face of challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic.



This year has been particularly challenging for our Senior Wellness
Centers as well as our community. All of our Senior Centers had to shut down immediately on March 16, 2020, which left many of our seniors alone and confused as to what was happening. The 'shelter at home' order further isolated seniors who were already homebound and forced those able to get out, to stay at home. Obtaining healthy food,

socialization that prevents depression and further deteriorating health concerns became the priority for so many of our seniors. Additionally, our home delivered meals waiting list continued to grow beyond the "normal" trend. To provide some relief for those on our waiting list, the COA partnered with Great Harvest Bread Company to create the "Adopt a Senior" program. For a \$40 donation, community members could provide a grocery bag for a senior with a week's worth of groceries. With the help of IBX Media, talking about it on their radio show, enough money was raised to provide more than 600 bags of groceries! Once a week, for five weeks, volunteers met at Great Harvest Bread, to help us distribute 150 grocery bags each week to homebound seniors on our home delivered meals waiting list. These are seniors who may not otherwise have been served during this time or the foreseeable future.

Another way we helped to combat hunger, for the people on the waiting list, was to partner with the Community East Foundation to provide more than 1,000 shelf stable meals to some of the neediest people on our waiting list during the pandemic.



Even through the challenges of COVID-19, our Senior Wellness Centers have remained staffed to serve our community. Senior Wellness Center Managers have been able to offer curbside pickup for congregate members, manage Meals on Wheels delivery volunteers and make weekly phone calls to check on members who opted to stay home. Other agency staff have remained dedicated to providing information and referral on the phone to help seniors and families locate much needed resources. Not even a pandemic could stop our amazing staff and volunteers from serving the seniors in our community. This awesome group of individuals worked every minute of the pandemic, not from the comfort of their own homes, but in the office as an essential worker in the fight against the virus.

COVID-19 sent a lot of our volunteers home because most are over 60, but our community stepped up and we added more than 150 new volunteers from March until June allowing us to continue to deliver meals to 325 people on 28 routes across our county. Additionally, local farmers and business owners helped us provide fresh produce, bread, and bagels to our Meals on Wheels clients during this time. As a result, we have gained many new volunteers who never considered volunteering before the pandemic and are now committed servants in our community. Plus, we have created many new relationships with businesses and members of our community that will last long after the pandemic subsides.

In May, we created a written "Return to Work Action Plan" to address how our agency would begin to reopen our Senior Wellness Centers. In July, we began a slow, methodical approach to reopening centers beginning with the Greenville Center opening just three days a week, for limited hours, with limited numbers of seniors. With safety protocols in place, including encouraging the use of masks, social distancing and good personal hygiene, our Senior Wellness Center has been able, once again, to provide senior center programs. It is our intention to be a model for other programs reopening in our region.



(continued)



During this time, we began to introduce in person, as well as virtual community programs. In-person programs like Walk with Ease allowed seniors to get together to exercise while practicing safe social distancing. Virtual exercise programs gave seniors who were not ready to meet in person an

opportunity to get up and move in the comfort of their home. Sadly, over 90% of our seniors do not have access to the internet, or own a computer or tablet making it extremely difficult for them to participate in virtual programs. This was very challenging and reinforced the need to begin to reopen our Senior Wellness Centers and provide in-person programs.

The COA has sounded the alarm about what isolation among seniors, during COVID-19, has caused and the repercussions. We have participated in regular meetings via Zoom with local government, other nonprofit agencies and community members to continue to push for the safe and slow reopening of in-person opportunities for our seniors. In the meantime, we have sought additional funding to feed people on our waiting list. We have asked the community to donate puzzles, word search books and hygiene kits to be distributed to our seniors. All of this was done to curb the depression and isolation among seniors in our community. We constantly looked for ways to engage seniors, mentally, spiritually, physically, and emotionally. Asking community members to write notes of encouragement to our homebound seniors was an incredible way to engage not only our seniors but also our community members, the note writers. Since April, we have received and distributed more than 1,200 notes of encouragement. The feedback we have received from those receiving the notes, as well as those writing the notes, has been overwhelmingly positive. While a call to a senior is a great thing, it is during the isolated hours, long past the call when seniors need something tangible to lift their spirits. The notes gave them that encouragement at 2:00 in the morning or 5:00 in the afternoon.

Finally, to increase communication with our seniors, volunteers and the community, our Executive Director started a VLOG on Friday mornings at 10:00 through Facebook live to talk about how we are all dealing with the current challenges. It has been well received and gives those who are unable to get out a chance to see us. It is also an opportunity to remind our seniors we are working hard for them, a chance to encourage our volunteers in their work and an opportunity for the community to tune in and learn more about who we are and what we do. The VLOG connects with many seniors' family who do have access to the internet, and they have been able to share information that we otherwise would not have been able to share with our seniors.

The Council on Aging's Senior Wellness Centers are leading the way in our community providing top notch services and resources for seniors. By creating new partnerships, bringing on new volunteers, and find new ways to get the word out regarding the needs of seniors during the challenges of COVID-19, we are proving that we are the focal point for aging in our community.





Pitt County Council on Aging
2021 Ann Johnson Senior Center of the Year Award Winner
(Pictured: Richard Zeck, Executive Director, Pitt County Council on Aging)

Congratulations from
The North Carolina Senior Center Alliance



NCAOA/NCSCA Membership Renewal

Become a contributing member of one of the state's leading professional associations in the aging field. Your NCAOA membership benefits will easily surpass the cost of annual dues, and include:

- Advocacy The NCAOA employs a Lobbyist that works daily to promote legislative priorities such as increased HCCBG and other funding sources for Senior Centers. More often than not, lobbyists are the difference in revenue streams coming to the aging field or being routed elsewhere.
- Training The NCAOA offers Aging Boot Camps and an Annual Conference featuring leading professionals in the aging field. You receive an instant discount with your active membership.
- Partnerships Your NCAOA membership comes with a complimentary membership to the North Carolina Senior Center Alliance.
- Award Opportunities Member only opportunities to receive one of the NCAOA Excellence in the Field of Aging Awards.
- Marketing and Communication Our members receive electronic updates and newsletters with urgent advocacy and legislative updates and more.

If you have questions about whether your membership is due in August or January- please use the email below to receive confirmation for when you should renew. If you not yet a member of the North Carolina Association on

Aging or the North Carolina Senior Center Alliance- this is a wonderful time to begin! I can't think of a time when we have needed to ban together and pool resources, ideas, and information more than we need to do so now! Being of a member of these groups gives you access to many free resources and networking opportunities. In addition, there are leadership opportunities (which you know helps you in SCOPE), and even grant or award opportunities. For more information about the benefits of membership- check out the websites listed below; and to register or renew please use the link below:

Registration/Renewal:

https://events.r2o.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg? oeidk=ao7eh79hjf725dc5de6&oseq=&c=&ch=

NCAOA:

https://ncaoa.us/

NCSCA:

https://ncscalliance.com/about

Submitted by: Billie Jo Lister, Vice-Chair (D), 828-265-8090 ext. 895 or

email: billie.lister@watgov.org



Vaccination Information



Thank you for all that you are doing to support North Carolina's response to COVID-19.

A tested, safe and effective vaccine will be available to all who want it, but supplies are currently limited and will continue to be for the next few months. To save lives and slow the spread of COVID-19, independent state and federal public health advisory committees recommend first protecting health care workers caring for patients with COVID-19, people who are at the highest risk of being hospitalized or dying, and those at high risk of exposure to COVID-19

Based on new federal recommendations issued last week by the CDC Prevention's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the Department has updated and simplified the vaccine prioritization plan.

North Carolina's updated phases include:

- Current Phase Phase 1a: Health care workers fighting COVID-19 & Long-Term Care staff and residents.
- Phase 1b (to begin in early January): Adults 75 years or older and frontline essential workers
- Phase 2: Adults at high risk for exposure and at increased risk of severe illness.
- Phase 3: Students
- Phase 4: Everyone who wants a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination.

Because currently there is not enough vaccine for everyone to be vaccinated at the same time, NCDHHS will open the next phase of vaccinations (1b) in groups, starting only with persons above the age of 75 in order to best manage vaccine dose availability.

All vaccine providers are expected to ensure that vaccine is equitably administered within each group. NCDHHS has a specific focus on building trust with historically marginalized populations. Longstanding and continuing racial and ethnic injustices in our health care system contribute to lack of trust in vaccines. The Department is partnering with trusted leaders and organizations to provide accurate information about the vaccine.

In addition, we are regularly updating the web page. Continue to check the Vaccines page on the website for more information and resources as they are available: yourspotyourshot.nc.gov. The page is also available in Spanish: yourspotyourshot.nc.gov.





NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

12 Days of Christmas for Elderly and Disabled

Dare County Center Staff enjoyed playing Santa just before Christmas. Thanks to the donations and support of our seniors and disabled community members 52 older adults received bags full of items that are necessary for everyday living, a few entertainment goodies as well as warm blankets! In addition, Albemarle Commission Area Agency on Aging and the Beach Food Bank donated shelf stable meals for our seniors. What a gift it is to have so many community members willing to donate to help their neighbors!



Submitted by: Katherine Irby, (R), Marketing, Dare



Drive-thru?

...We Got It!

Each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday the Hamlet Senior Center, located in Richmond County, sets up shop at the front entrance to better serve our participants. On each of these days lunch is being served in our drive thru service. We also use this system to distribute monthly newsletters, sell Ensure, pass out & collect information for local programs such as LIEAP, SNAP, and Medicare. Our drive thru service allows participants to stay in the warmth and safety of their car and receive fast and friendly service from our great staff.



Featured on the left are Eva Greene and Ronald Nicholson working the front entrance of the center (bundled up and in masks!)

Facebook is vital source for getting information out quickly to participants. Posts provide key COVID updates, virtual programs being offered by the center, and items of interest such as easy at home crafting projects, movie previews, self meditation guides and much, much more.

Pictured on the right, Sarah Locklear, Director, is working on scheduling Facebook Posts in an effort to keep Richmond County seniors in the know!







BINGO!

At the East Bend Senior Center we have played Bingo on our front porch since April. The seniors look forward to our phone calls to chat and let them know the days we are going to play the next round. We have 2 different groups due to COVID restrictions.

So far, it works!

Submitted by: Rhonda Beavers, (G), East Bend Senior Center



In December, the Macon County Crawford Senior Center hosted a Holiday Drive Through for our older adults. Planning for the Holidays began in September as the center would not be open (due to COVID-19 restrictions) for participants during the Holiday time. On December 17, three iconic Holiday movie scenes were staged: The Grinch, The Christmas Story and Charlie Brown Christmas. Staff painted and built the backdrops for each scene and came up with costumes in order to present one memorable scene from each movie. Participants drove around the center, which was lighted with hundreds of lights that highlighted familiar faces in each scene. They saw the staff

dressed as the Grinch, Little Ralphy-in his pink bunny suit, along with many Peanuts characters. The grand finale included Santa and Mrs. Clause handing out stockings safely outside of the participant's car. The center saw over 120 folks drive though that evening. The elves kept up with the event on Facebook Live for those who could not come out.







Submitted by: Kim Crawford, (A), Macon County Crawford Senior Center





Davidson County Senior Services challenges citizens to be good neighbors

Davidson County, NC – In an effort to combat social isolation and loneliness in older adults, Davidson County Senior Services is excited to introduce the Like a Good Neighbor Campaign.

Aging providers across the nation faced a challenge in 2020 like none before. The COVID-19 pandemic forced agencies to shut their doors and redefine programming for older adults. In response to this new normal, Davidson County Senior Services promptly developed a plan to revise service delivery and fight social isolation. Weekly frozen meals are now delivered to Meals on Wheels and congregate meal clients and senior center programming is virtual. Services are expanded to include grocery shopping, medication pickup and emergency meal delivery. However, the lack of daily personal contact has left many senior adults lonely, missing the connections of family and friends. As a result, Davidson County Senior Services developed a toolkit that includes activities to engage and resources to help lonely older adults feel connected again.

"Evidence shows that social isolation and loneliness are independent risk factors for premature mortality. Connecting socially is a significant protective factor. The Good Neighbor Campaign demonstrates how, as a community, we can reach out and offer support to individuals in need of socialization", states Thessia Everhart-Roberts, Senior Services Director.



The Gifts That Keep On Giving



"Tis better to give than to receive." That's always been the saying but seeing the faces of the Randolph Senior Adults Association Meals On Wheels recipients receive their Stockings of Care this holiday season was reason to think otherwise!

The senior holiday gift project began several years ago when employees at RSAA decided to start collecting donated personal care items to give to the Meals On Wheels recipients at Christmas as a way of getting necessity items to them while bringing a little extra joy. Many of these folks live

alone and are unable to get out to a store or some lack the money to purchase the simple necessities such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste and tooth brushes, even toilet paper. Toilet paper?

Enter "2020". The past year has obviously been one of the most challenging for our seniors. Isolation, loneliness, and the fear of contracting the deadly Covid-19 virus took its toll on most everyone, however, seniors have really struggled with these specific effects. On top of that, many necessity personal

care items have been at times very hard to find, so it was even more important this holiday season for us at RSAA to deliver the Christmas gifts and make them extra special!

Over the past couple of years, the Christmas gift program for Meals On Wheels recipients has evolved into the "Stockings of Care" project. Thanks to a talented group of sewing ladies headed by Gwen Wright, the seniors now receive their gifts in beautifully hand-made Christmas stockings. This past season the community really got behind this project. There have been more seniors in need, and we were able to deliver more stockings with useful and thoughtful gift items than ever before. Plenty of socks for all recipients were provided by Kayser-Roth Hosiery. Also, thanks to Zooland Civitan Club, we were able to include plush warm blankets for each recipient.

Once the stockings were sewn and all of the items were collected and organized, a small group of employees and volunteers stuffed each stocking with the gift items (including toilet paper!) along with a few holiday treats while "A Charlie Brown Christmas" soundtrack played in the background. It was a fun and rewarding time together stuffing the stockings because we knew these stockings were made and filled with love for our seniors. They were delivered through coordination by our 4 senior centers in December with the Meals On Wheels food boxes.

For some of these recipients, this was their only gift and seeing the light on their faces when handed their stockings was a gift in itself. For those who made the stockings, donated money and gift items, collected and organized items, stuffed the stockings, and for those who personally delivered them to the recipients... we are so thankful.

Submitted by: Kim Allgood, (G), Randolph Senior Adults Association, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Adult Resource & Education Center



Teamwork makes the dream work in Wake Forest!!

The teams of Eastern Wake and Northern Wake Forest Senior Centers have been truly blessed with a team full of creative ideas. Below are a few photos to give you a range of some of what has been done. Talents were pooled together to get it done. There have been drive-thru events for COVID testing, flu shots, food pick-up and there was even a parking lot craft auction!

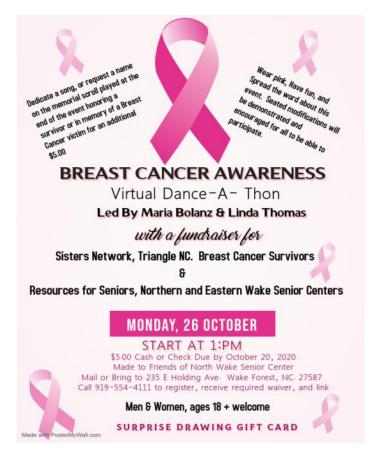
Eastern Wake and Northern Wake Forest Senior Centers have had other fundraisers and Zumba Zoom- a-thons as announced in the breast cancer awareness flyer below. Two thousand dollars was raised; Zumba gold dancers were Zooming from all over the country. What a blast!

Eastern Wake and Northern Wake Forest Senior Centers have high school Zoomers who have assisted our seniors with technology as seen with the grandmother/granddaughter photo.

Assistance has been rendered by phone for the most part but, seen below is a glimpse of how practice makes perfect!







Submitted by: Jennie Griggs (J & K), Eastern Wake & Northern Wake Forest Senior Centers





Many senior centers and meal allocation sites across North Carolina have become very skilled at getting meals to clients any way they can. The picture blow is a great example of one of our drive-thru meal sites at New Hanover Senior Resource Center. Each Monday and Friday they hand out crossword and word search puzzles to Center drive-thru participants.



Submitted by: Shantel Davis, (O), Senior Resource Center, New Hanover County



Want to toot your horn?? Send your Center information to katherine.irby@darenc.com **before March 26, 2021 at 5 PM** in order to be included in the Spring 2021 edition.

Late submissions will not be accepted.



We All Have Lost a Legend: A Tribute to Dorothy Rose Crawford



April 24, 1918 - December 21, 2020

Region A is sad to report the loss of Dorothy Rose Crawford. Ms. Crawford was featured in the NCSCA News Summer 2020 for making a difference at 102 years of age. She was still advocating for our elders by walking in her yard for Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Dorothy was the Senior Tar heel Representative for Region A since 1993. At 100, she was still traveling the 300 + mile trip to Raleigh to represent older adults.

Known across North Carolina for advocating for our older population, Dorothy lived a life of service not just to Macon County and Region A but also the entire state of North Carolina.

During her life, she was instrumental in the creation of dozens of organizations and agencies that serve the most vulnerable citizens. Dorothy was a founding board member for the Southwestern Child Development Commission, involved in leading the charge for mental health reform in North Carolina, served on boards and committees for aging adults across North Carolina, Dorothy was advocating until the end. She was known by all for her motto "you have to keep on keeping on".

Thank you Dorothy Rose, we all should be as wise.



Know Your Committee Members.....Reach Out and Touch Base!!

Your NCSCA Committee Members are here to help YOU thrive. Please feel free to contact any of the members listed in the chart below for any questions you may have or to just to introduce yourself!

North Carolina Senior Center Alliance Committee

Membership Roster

Sandy Pace, Chair (R)	Billie Lister, Vice Chair (D)	Christy Southall, Treasurer (K)
Dare County Senior Center	Membership/Communication	Special Projects Subcommittee
PO Box 1000	Subcommittee Lead	
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2)2.4/).5025	132 Poplar Grove Connector, Suite A	Franklinton, NC 27525
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Term Expires: January 1, 2021	Term Expires: January 1, 2021	Term Expires: January 1, 2021
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Term Expires: January 1, 2021	Term Expires: January 1, 2021	Term Expires: January 1, 2021



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Special Projects Subcommittee		Marketing Subcommittee Lead
McDowell Senior Center		Jo Story Senior Center
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	COMMITTEE MEMBER IF YOU	Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870
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	REGION:	tgoble@roanokerapidsnc.com
		tgobietarounokerapiasne.com
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Marie Faircloth (M)	Nancy Hulbert (J)	(B)
Advocacy Subcommittee	Special Projects Subcommittee	
Sampson County Dept. of Aging		
405 County Complex Rd	Garner Senior Center	PLEASE CONTACT SANDY PACE
Bldg. B, Ste. 104	205 East Garner Road	AT 252-475-5625 OR ANOTHER
Clinton, NC 28328	Garner, NC 27529	
	919-661-6893	COMMITTEE MEMBER IF YOU
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mfaircloth@sampsonnc.com	nhulbert@garnernc.gov	REGION!
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Term Expires. January 1, 2021		
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	,	Newsletter Lead
Rufty-Holmes Senior Center	Havelock Senior Center	
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Salisbury, NC 28144-5692	Havelock, NC 28532	PO BOX 1000
704-216-7715	252-444-6445	Manteo, NC 27954
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<u>an ector wraptymountes.org</u>	gannal@nuverockirc.com	katherine.irby@darenc.com
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Term Expires: January 1, 2021	Term Evnires: January 4, 2024	Term Expires: May 1, 2021
Term Expires. January 1, 2021	Term Expires: January 1, 2021	Term Expires. May 1, 2021
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Volunteer	То	Holn
Volunteer	10	i ieip.



Maynell Harper, Member at Large (K)

Advocacy Committee

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maynell.harper@personseniors.org

Term Expires: May 1, 2021

Member at Large

PLEASE CONTACT SANDY PACE AT 252-475-5625 OR ANOTHER COMMITTEE MEMBER IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SERVE IN YOUR REGION! Morgan Doughtie, Member at Large
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Term Expires: May 1, 2021

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If you are interested in becoming a Committee Member or assisting on a sub-committee please send an email or give a Committee Member a call TODAY!!

EDITOR'S NOTE: North Carolina Senior Center news matters to us. NCSCA newsletters will be sent to the email address that we have on file.

Please submit your news article or other content you would like to share to: Katherine Irby via katherine.irby@darenc.com Microsoft Word is the preferred platform, please do not use PDF. Please DO include photographs (.gif or .jpeg) when possible--everyone loves pictures!

The next deadline is **March 26**, **2021 at 5 p.m.** in order to be included in the Spring 2021 Edition. Late submissions will not be accepted.

When lacking content supplied by our members; we will utilize outside sources to ensure that we continue to build and grow healthy seniors together while nurturing our own NCSCA network though idea sharing, personal and professional updates and any other pertinent news! Thank you!



If you leave home, know your Ws!







@NCDHHS

#StayStrongNC

ATTENTION: Please refer to North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services for the latest mandates, guidelines, and vaccine information.

Like the NC Senior Center Alliance Facebook page



Check out our website www.ncscalliance.com

For more information on the NCSCA visit: www.ncalliance.com or email: ncscalliance@gmail.com or you may contact

NCSCA Chair, Sandy Pace, by calling 252-475-5625 or via email at sandyf@darenc.com

NCSCA NEWSLETTER

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Contributing Author: Sarah Locklear (N), Hamlet Senior

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Contributing Author: Weyland Prebor (C), Special Projects

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Crawford Senior Center

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