

Aging Together Prepares for Age Wave
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Your Aging Together Team has been busy since the Culpeper Community Conversations held on June 23, 2009. As a direct result of the comments and suggestions given that evening, the Culpeper Senior Adult Committee has developed their goals for next year. We will share those with you in an upcoming column.

On Wednesday, August 19th, fifteen staff and partners of Aging Together attended a daylong workshop on Community Organizing. Nancy Giunta, a consultant with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Community Partnerships for Older Adults, led the discussions and practice sessions. After a brief history of how communities change over time (from Boston Tea Party type events to home building boom and changes in technology), we discussed how learning what the community needs and meeting those needs can alter the direction of or add momentum to change.



The first point explored was the rewards of good organization. These benefits include increased knowledge of services, less fragmentation of services, better use of resources, and more celebrations of success. With good organization a larger number of voices mean the messages are heard loud and clear. This is exactly what we needed to hear. The Healthy Culpeper Senior/Adult committee wants to make it easy for Seniors to have their questions heard and answered. We want feedback and collaboration in making change. Less fragmentation and better use of resources is essential if you want the most value for the money and time spent. By the way, pick your own age definition of "Seniors". There is no all-inclusive accurate stereotype of a "Senior".

The morning session had us practicing how to get people and businesses active in the community. We broke out into groups of three and developed approaches to increasing participation from very different segments of the community, i.e. business, church groups, health care, etc. I learned some great new ways to build support for the really popular Tech Time for Senior program.

During the afternoon session each county team or workgroup picked specific goals to accomplish in the next 6-8 weeks and how they would be accomplished. Representatives from Culpeper, Fauquier, Orange, Madison, and Rappahannock were present. It was interesting to hear how each group planned to address its project.



Here in Culpeper our first step is to build a strong and diverse Aging Together team to make positive changes to benefit older folks and to implement the many projects on our workplan. Help us by joining the Healthy Culpeper Senior/Adult Committee and have a role insuring a strong network of supports for Culpeper Seniors.

The Senior Adult Committee meets at the Reformation Lutheran Church on Main Street on the first Thursday of each month at 10AM. Contact Jenny Biche at 825-7615 or by email at jbiche@agingtogether.org to get involved. For more information on Aging Together and senior resources in general check out our website at www.agingtogether.org.