



Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange Rappahannock Counties, VA

November 22, 2023

Dear Friend,

Perhaps you have noticed “DEMENTIA FRIENDLY” decals in the windows of restaurants and businesses in one or more of our 5 counties? What on earth does this mean, you may ask? A Dementia Friendly business is one that is welcoming to people living with dementia and their friends and family. It is important to understand the signs and symptoms of the disease to be able to respond in a friendly and welcoming way.

A few years ago, I was approached by a gentleman who had recently relocated to Culpeper from Florida. While living in Florida, he and his wife unexpectedly became the primary caregivers for his uncle who had been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. The gentleman recognized an opportunity for businesses and restaurants to better understand what his uncle was going through. His goal was to ensure a welcoming and friendly experience for his uncle as they went out and about in their community.

This gentleman, John Beck, ended up providing informational sessions and raising awareness to countless businesses in his community. When he and his wife relocated to Culpeper, he wanted to continue this mission. I could not help but be moved by John’s passion. We partnered with the Culpeper Chamber of Commerce and worked with a representative from the state to designate Aging Together as the Dementia Friendly Partner representing our 5-county region, with John as one of our lead training volunteers.

To date, John has trained over 50 businesses in Culpeper alone. The initiative has since launched in Fauquier with plans to expand to Madison, Orange and Rappahannock as well.

This is just one example of the work of Aging Together. We see a gap in services or a need in the community, and we work to help find a solution.

Each year, we strive to increase our reach and to build initiatives in response to this kind of need. But we do need help. We approach you once a year with our annual appeal and ask for your financial support when you are considering your end-of-year donations. Aging Together knows that that when we work together and build on strong partnerships, we have amazing impact. On behalf of our Staff and Board of Directors, we appreciate your consideration and wish you and yours well during the holiday season.

Sincerely,

Ellen Phipps, Executive Director

Ray Parks (Encompass Community Supports), Board Chair