

**Annual Report
Commission on Aging
2019**

2019 ANNUAL REPORT COMMISSION ON AGING (COA)

Purpose

The purpose of the COA is to advise and assist in the content, administration, and financing of county programs designed to serve the elderly residents of the county; to work with the community to develop awareness and understanding of problems and concerns of the elderly.

Membership

Gail Murdock, Chair, Annmarie Abell, Vice Chair, Dr. Bernice Williams, Linda Fry, Catherine Herndon, Sandra Simmons, Delores Thompson, Keith Schukraft, Omonigho Olumese.

Challenges and Updates

The Commission on Aging (COA) continues to address concerns that were identified in “A Community for a Lifetime” document endorsed by the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County. The following outlines the progress to date.

- **Garvey Replacement:** The COA continues to be involved in the progress of the new building. Several COA members are also members of the Garvey Council and have viewed the final plans, funding options and proposed schedule for the actual start of the replacement. Projected completion date April 2020.
- **Geriatric Practitioners:** St. Mary’s County has grown in its attraction of many services, specialists and technical advance, many that will cover the senior population, none are specific to geriatrics.
- **Realistic Transportation Options:** The following facilities have ongoing STS transportation issues: New Towne Village – STS does not come to the facility on the weekend. Residents must walk into town to catch the bus at what was the old PNC Bank. Victory Woods residents in Lexington Park must ride all the way to Ridge and back to get dropped off at Walmart and adjoining merchants in the Lexington Park shopping center. Cedar Lane continues having STS problems. Chairman Murdock met with the

transportation director to try and resolve the problems encountered at Cedar Lane. It is recommended that the Commissioners of St. Mary's County pursue an interloop bus for the Lexington Park area to rectify this routing problem.

- **Lower Taxes for Seniors:** We continue to monitor the several House Bills in the State Legislature that are relative to seniors. Many seniors took advantage of the Senior Tax-65-10+ other property tax credits.

Membership/Public Promotion: The COA tri-fold brochure outlining the Commission's purpose, activities and challenges, as well as, how to become a member continues to be distributed to all three local libraries and the senior activity centers. The brochure is distributed at all COA functions. The DAHS Director, Lori Jennings-Harris has approved putting an article about the COA meetings in the New Beginning newsletter as an opportunity to spread the word about the COA and as an additional recruitment tool. The committee will be fully staffed as of the January 2020 meeting.

2019 COA Activities

The COA continues its outreach to keep the community informed of new and ongoing issues concerning seniors. To achieve this, members visited senior living and activity sites, attended Tri-County meetings, facilitated presentations developed by the Department of Aging & Human Services (DAHS), invited guest speakers to the meetings and participated on local service and activity committees.

The COA met in open session at several senior living facilities in the county.

The COA, through its Outreach Committee, continues efforts to make the community aware of available programs and services through the Department's "Road Show", a PowerPoint presentation, produced by the DAHS and presented at various locations such as churches and community organizations.

Commission members, along with the Director of DAHS, attended the annual Tri-County Commission on Aging meeting in June 2018 hosted by the Calvert County COA at the Calvert County Senior Center in Prince Frederick Maryland. Chair, Gail Murdock, gave a summary of issues, concerns and accomplishments by the St. Mary's COA.

The members of the COA, proudly and willingly, help individually in other community areas. Some are: Garvey Council, RSVP Advisory Committee, Southern Maryland American Legion, Delicados, local food banks, WARM program, Soup Kitchens, Triad/SALT, all three senior activity centers (Garvey, Loffler, and Northern), AARP tax preparation, St. Mary's County Woman's Club, Inc., National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE), National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Homeless Coalition and the YMCA Committee.

We meet the fourth Monday of the month at 1:00 p.m. We welcome any opportunity to share with you, in more detail, our efforts and invite you and/or others to attend our meetings.

Acknowledgement

The Commission on Aging wishes to thank Ms. Lori Jennings-Harris and her staff at the DAHS for providing a wealth of information and support. Thanks go also to Ms. Mercedes Jones, Senior Administrative Coordinator, for her superb support and assistance.

Respectfully submitted,



Gail Murdock

Chair, St. Mary's County Commission on Aging

Date: 24 January, 2020