

Upcoming Events

<https://www.narcog.org/news-meetings-events/meetings-events>

Limestone County Career Fair

DATE: March 5

LOCATION: Decatur, AL

Morgan County Senior Dance

DATE: March 12

LOCATION: Hartselle, AL

Lawrence County Job Fair

DATE: April 29

LOCATION: Moulton, AL

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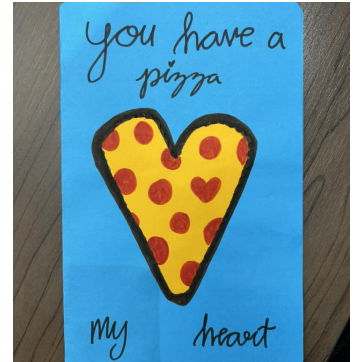
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Spreading Love, One Card at a Time



February is often celebrated as the month of love, but love extends far beyond romantic relationships. This year, NARCOG partnered with several schools across the region to bring joy to residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities through heartfelt, handmade cards.

For many of these residents, small gestures can make a big impact. A simple card filled with kind words and colorful drawings can brighten their day, reminding them they are cared for and val-

ued. These thoughtful creations connect generations, bringing warmth and happiness to those who need it most.

As NARCOG Ombudsman Tiffany Prince was leaving a facility after delivering the cards, she was stopped by a resident's sister. She shared how much the residents look forward to receiving these special notes from children. For some who rarely receive visitors, these cards serve as a touching reminder that they are loved and remembered.

We are incredibly grateful to the following schools and organizations for helping us spread kindness: Cullman High School, Decatur High School, Decatur Middle School, Hatton Elementary School, Mental Health Center of North Central Alabama, and West Decatur Elementary School.

Your generosity and thoughtfulness made a world of difference in the lives of these residents. Thank you for sharing the love!

Protect Yourself: Annual Fraud Summit

Did you know that elder fraud is on the rise, costing older adults billions of dollars each year? Scammers are getting smarter, and it's more important than ever to stay informed and protect yourself from fraud and identity theft. That's why NARCOG is hosting its Annual Fraud Summit, an event designed to empower older adults with the knowledge and tools to recognize scams and avoid becoming a victim.

This year's summit will feature an expert panel including representatives from Alabama Senior Medicare Patrol, the Better Business Bureau, and the Alabama Securities Commission.

The event will take place at the Moulton Senior Center on April 11, from 10 AM to noon. Plus, attendees will enjoy a complimentary lunch while connecting with others in the community. Seats are limited, so don't wait! If you or someone you know could benefit from this important event, RSVP today by calling Julie Campbell at 256-355-4515, ext. 245.



Robby Cantrell | Executive Director

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Moulton Parking and Pedestrian Facilities Study

The NARCOG planning staff is currently working on the Downtown Moulton Parking and Pedestrian Facilities Study, a key initiative under our FY2025 Work Program for the Rural Planning Organization (RPO). This study will focus on evaluating and enhancing parking and pedestrian infrastructure in Downtown Moulton, particularly around the historic courthouse square.

We will begin by examining existing conditions, including land use, historic districts and buildings, and planned improvements. This comprehensive anal-

ysis will identify the current state of parking and pedestrian facilities, and provide recommendations to improve connectivity, safety, and the overall pedestrian experience. Ensuring compliance with ADA standards will also be a major focus to make the area accessible to all residents and visitors.

Additionally, we will explore long-term considerations for shared parking, pervious parking surfaces, street edges, infill opportunities, pocket parks, and streetscape enhancements to improve the overall urban de-

sign. These recommendations aim to make downtown Moulton more accessible, walkable, and vibrant, while also preserving its historic charm.

The goal of the study is to provide the City of Moulton and Lawrence County with a tool to guide future decisions about downtown development. The study is expected to be completed by the end of summer, offering actionable recommendations for a thriving downtown.

Planning Department Events and Deadlines

March 9, 2025 - March 12, 2025

2025 NADO (National Association of Development Organizations) & DDAA (Development District Association of Appalachian) Washington Conference

March 29, 2025 - April 1, 2025

American Planning Association (APA) National Conference

Be a Voice for Residents: Ombudsman Volunteers

At NARCOG, we believe everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, especially those living in long-term care facilities. Our Regional Ombudsman works to protect residents' rights, ensuring they receive fair treatment and quality care.

Ombudsmen play a vital role by listening to residents' concerns, visiting facilities to check on conditions, helping families navigate care decisions, and ensuring residents get the needed services. They also help educate the public about residents' rights

and work to improve laws and policies that affect long-term care.

We're looking for caring volunteers to help support seniors and individuals with disabilities in long-term care settings. Volunteers will receive training—cov-

ered by NARCOG—before getting started. If you're passionate about making a difference and being a voice for others, we'd love to have you on board!

To learn more, reach out to Tiffany Prince at 256-355-4515, ext. 255.

February Anniversaries

Katie Hernandez

Case Manager
2 years of service

Lesli Price

Case Manager
3 years of service

Warren Taylor

Personal Choices Case Manager
9 years of service

Cynthia Smith

Information & Referral Specialist
13 years of service

Annual Older Americans Month Luau

Join us on Wednesday, May 14, at Ingalls Harbor Pavilion in Decatur for a festive celebration honoring individuals 60 and older who live or work in Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan County.

Each May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the nation in recognizing Older Americans Month (OAM)—a time to celebrate the contributions of older adults, highlight aging trends, and reaffirm our commitment to their well-being.

The festivities will begin at 9:30 AM and continue until noon, featuring a delicious lunch, re-

freshing shaved ice, exciting door prizes, and plenty of fun photo opportunities and games. Guests will also enjoy live music from The Cadillacs, a group known for their energetic performances of classic 50s and 60s Doo Wop hits.

This event is made possible entirely through sponsorships, and we are currently seeking organizations interested in supporting this wonderful occasion. Sponsors will have the opportunity to exhibit at the event, making it a great way to connect with local older adults and show support for the community.

For more information about sponsorship opportunities or event details, contact Kylie Bolyard at kbolyard@narcog.org or 256-606-4352.

We look forward to celebrating with you!



The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments, or NARCOG, is your local elected officials and community leaders working together to make your community a better place to live, work, play, and do business. The compassionate team at NARCOG is continuously searching for new ways to positively impact the quality of life for individuals and the vibrancy and livability of communities with the three-county region of Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties.

AGING SERVICES

The Area Agency on Aging is part of a nationwide network of aging services under the direction of the U.S. Administration for Community Living and is funded through the Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS). This partnership with ADSS, working under the authority of the Older Americans Act, is to plan and carry out a comprehensive, coordinated service delivery system to address the needs of people over 60, or persons with disabilities of any age, and help them maintain their independence. Services include:

- In-Home Services
- Prescription Drug Coverage
- Caregiver Support
- Long-Term Care Advocacy
- Senior Legal Assistance
- Senior Employment (55+)
- Food Assistance
- Nutrition Options
- Health Promotion Activities
- Wellness Programs
- Medicare and Medicaid Counseling
- Hospital-to-Home Transitions
- Referral Help and Support Services (any age)
- Fraud Prevention
- Home and Community Based Services

IMPACT GIVING

The NARCOG Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that assists older adults or disabled clients to meet the unmet needs of other programs or services. 100% of the funds or items donated are used for client assistance. The Foundation can help retrofit homes, including wheelchair ramps, steps, handrails, grab bars, purchase AC and heat resources, and provide batteries for a power scooter with monetary donations. Several different types of donations are accepted, including:

- Monetary donations
- Cleaning Supplies
- Personal Hygiene Items
- Canned or Shelf-Stable Food
- Kleenex
- Bath Tissue
- Incontinence Supplies
- Mobility Aids
- Adult Diapers
- Group and Individual Volunteering

PLANNING SERVICES

The NARCOG Planning Department provides community and economic development planning services for our member governments and municipalities. These services support developmental efforts in our three-county region. Services include:

- Comprehensive Planning
- Downtown, Corridor, and Trails Planning
- Grant Technical Assistance and Preparation
- Grant Administration
- Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- Rural Planning Organizations (RPO) - Rural Transportation Planning
- Zoning Ordinances and Maps
- Subdivision Regulations

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The NARCOG Transit Agency operates an urban public transportation system within the Decatur Urban Area. The purpose of this service is to provide mobility opportunities to individuals of all ages and abilities in collaboration with the City of Decatur and the Federal Transit Administration.

- Call 256-580-2088 to schedule a ride at least 24 hours in advance
- Wheelchair-accessible vehicles are available
- Each one-way ride costs \$2
- Connect Cards (prepaid punch cards) can be purchased at the main office or on a transit vehicle for \$20
- Ride Operations are Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 5 PM
- Ride Scheduling is Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 4 PM

BUSINESS LOAN FINANCING

The NARCOG Accelerate Business Growth Fund is a local lending resource to support business start-ups, or expansions that result in job creation, leverage private sector investment, and reduce unemployment in Cullman, Lawrence, or Morgan Counties.

- Traditional or Microloan Funding Options
- Competitive Interest Rates
- Business financing used to purchase or renovate real estate, machinery, equipment, inventory, or working capital
- Business loan requirements must be met for consideration
- Loan amounts from \$10,000 to \$250,000