

### Upcoming Events

NARCOG Board Meeting  
**DATE:** April. 27 at 10 a.m.  
**LOCATION:** NARCOG Board Room - Decatur

Caregivers Connect  
**DATE:** April 20 at 10:30 a.m.  
**LOCATION:** NARCOG Board Room - Decatur  
**DATE:** April 27 at 10:30 a.m.  
**LOCATION:** Nesmith Park Apartments - Cullman

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#### ON THE WEB

[www.narco.org](http://www.narco.org)

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[facebook.com/narcoal](https://facebook.com/narcoal)

## NARCOG hosting Older Americans Month events

The month of May is a time to celebrate older Americans.

The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) is planning to do its part.

NARCOG has two Older Americans Month events planned. The first is scheduled for May 4 at Ingalls Harbor in Decatur, and the second is on May 20 at the Hanceville Civic

Center.

Both events are scheduled to begin at 9 a.m., and conclude after lunch is served at noon.

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### Nutrition Program



## Celebrating a new center

Lt. Governor Ainsworth  
ADSS, ADECA leaders  
visit Hanceville facility

Kenneth Nail did not hide his enthusiasm.

For good reason. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the previous two years have been

challenging, but that did not deter the Hanceville mayor from a project he viewed as essential to the community.

Despite numerous obstacles created by the pandemic, the City of Hanceville completed the construction of a new senior and nutrition center.

The new Hanceville Senior Cen-

ter, which is located adjacent to the city's C.W. Day Park, celebrated its grand opening in early April. Several local and state government leaders, including Lieutenant Governor Will Ainsworth and Senator Garlan Gudger, were in attendance for the ceremony.

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## Grant program helps with home modifications

For those living on a limited income, any expenses that fall outside of the normal cost of living can cause issues.

Especially if those expenses bring a bill that reaches into four

digits.

Unfortunately, many who need home modifications due to health conditions often lack resources to meet their needs.

The North Central Alabama Re-

gional Council of Governments (NARCOG) is attempting to ease these burdens for some residents who live in Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan counties.

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# NARCOG offers new BINGO-cize health program

As warmer weather moves into the Region, more people are focused on improving their personal health and well-being.

For seniors who are interested in creating a better quality of life, reducing pain and inflammation, increasing social interaction, improving joint function, increasing muscular strength, or just increasing their overall quality of life, the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) Area Agency on Aging has programs that can help.

That includes one new program.

In April, NARCOG introduced its new BINGO-cize program.

BINGO-cize is an evidence-based program that combines Bingo — and prizes — with exercise that works to strengthen muscles and teach fall prevention.

NARCOG currently offers BIN-



GO-cize at Nesmith Apartments in Cullman and Presbyterian Towers in Decatur, but the program's coordinator, Stephanie King, plans to eventually offer the program at more locations.

NARCOG also offers Arthritis Foundation Exercise Classes at different

locations in the Region.

The exercise programs offered in these classes can be done either sitting or standing, and participants use exercise bands and light weights.

NARCOG's exercise programs typically last six to eight weeks, and

meet once to two times a week, for an average of 45 minutes to an hour.

Individuals interested in attending a class, hosting a class with a senior group, or becoming certified to teach a class, should contact Stephanie King at 256-355-4515. All classes are free.

## FROM PAGE 1: Hanceville

"Hanceville, along with all of Cullman County, is seeing a lot of growth, and that's exciting," Ainsworth said. "I am proud of what is happening here. The citizens here in Hanceville should be proud."

Nail agreed.

"This is a project that is near and dear to my heart," the Hanceville mayor said. "Our seniors are a vital part of our community, so this was a project that we were going to see through to the end, no matter what.

"Now we're getting an opportunity to celebrate the opening of this wonderful facility. We're extremely grateful, and excited, to have this beautiful facility open and running."

The City of Hanceville began its two-year journey to build a new senior center in May 2020, just a couple of months after the COVID-19 pandemic began to impact the country.

Because of the pandemic's impact on the economy, the cost



of building materials increased, forcing the city to adjust.

"Unfortunately, we were not able to build as large of a facility as we initially planned," Nail said. "There were a few things we had to cut, but through a lot of hard work and dedication, we were able to overcome some obstacles and built this wonderful facility."

To pay for the project, Hanceville acquired a \$250,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), with the City of Hanceville using matching funds to cover most of the remaining expenses.

In addition, Cullman-Jefferson

Gas assisted with the project by purchasing the facility's water heaters and a fireplace, while Louisiana Pacific provided the OSB for the building. The Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS) also provided \$15,000 to purchase tables and appliances.

"What an incredible accomplishment for Hanceville," ADSS Commissioner Jean Brown said. "This is one of the most beautiful seniors that I have visited. Seniors were not meant to be alone. God created us for fellowship with one another, and this facility is a great place to share fellowship."

ADECA Director Kenneth Boswell agreed.

"This is an extremely nice facility for the seniors here in Hanceville," Boswell said. "Seeing this project through, during a time when the pandemic was creating so many other obstacles, is a pretty incredible accomplishment."

# Engaging area youth to assist with older adults

Fumbling through a pile of clothes, a group of Decatur High School students tried to locate a pair of jeans that was tucked beneath other items on the table.

For most, simply locating a pair of jeans was a challenge.

And even for those who completed this first step, what came next was nearly impossible.

The task?

Find a pair of jeans and put a belt through the loops.

While this might not sound difficult, for those with dementia, accomplishing what once were simple tasks can be extremely challenging.

In March, students at Decatur High School received hands-on experience with the challenges incurred by those who have dementia by participating in Virtual Dementia Training with the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments' (NARCOG) Alabama CARES Program.

NARCOG representatives visited Decatur High School twice in March to work with students enrolled in health courses.

"It was a really good experience



for the students," NARCOG Alabama CARES Coordinator Dana Dobson said. "They got first-hand experience with how dementia impacts someone's daily life.

"The students were responsive, and overall, it was a really good experience."

Virtual Dementia Training is not new at NARCOG, but educational training typically has been conducted with law enforcement agencies and first responders.

NARCOG, however, now plans to see if more schools would be interested in this educational opportunity for their students and faculty.

"Moving forward, that's something I would really like to do," Dobson said. "If nothing else, it helps give young people a better understanding of what a relative, or someone they know, who has dementia is experiencing"

Offering Virtual Dementia Training to high school students is not

the only way NARCOG is attempting to connect young people with helping older adults.

In February, NARCOG partnered with elementary schools throughout Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan counties to create Valentine's Cards for their local senior centers and assisted living facilities. The NARCOG Area Agency on Aging collected more than 500 cards that were distributed throughout the Region.

## FROM PAGE 1: Events

"Our primary goal with these events is to create a fun opportunity for the older adults in our communities," NARCOG Outreach Coordinator Justin Graves said. "Both events are going to be a

day of fellowship and fun, with the primary focus being that the older adults in attendance have a good time."

For the event at Ingalls Harbor, NARCOG is using a Hawaiian Luau

Party theme. There will be games, music and door prizes, with barbecue being served for lunch at the event's conclusion.

At the Hanceville event, there will be a gospel music singing,

along with games, door prizes and lunch.

All older adults who live in the NARCOG Region of Cullman, Lawrence and Morgan counties are invited to participate.

## FROM PAGE 1: Modifications

Through a \$15,000 home modification grant from the Alabama Department of Senior Services, NARCOG is helping build wheelchair ramps, and assist with other essential home modifications, in the Region.

Using these grant funds, NARCOG helped build a wheelchair ramp in March at a residence in Decatur, and the Area Agency on Aging will

assist with the construction of two more ramps, scheduled in April.

To be eligible for home modification assistance with funds available through the ADSS grant, candidates must be 60 or older and live in the NARCOG Region.

Because the cost of building materials has increased during the past two years, unfortunately, the amount of homes that can receive

assistance from this grant is limited to a small number.

Building materials for a single wheelchair ramp currently range from \$1,500-\$2,000.

While there are not many grants available to help assist with home modifications, the NARCOG Foundation is a possible avenue for assistance.

The NARCOG Foundation is a

501(c)(3) non-profit that provides assistance to older adult or disabled clients to meet the unmet needs of other programs and services. One-hundred percent of the funds donated are used for client assistance.

For more information on contributions to the NARCOG Foundation, visit us online at [www.narco.org/impact/impact-giving](http://www.narco.org/impact/impact-giving).