Featuring:  60 is the New 40

plus... Walk Your Way to Fitness
District 6 Award Winners
## Calendar of Events

### February
- **28** District 5 Basketball Tournament
  - Location: Alex City, AL

### March
- **4** District V Meeting in Tuskegee
- **13-15** State Basketball Tournament
  - Location: Homewood, AL

### April
- **28-29** 2015 Creative Camp

### June
- **3** District V Meeting in Union Springs

### September
- **2** District V Meeting in Auburn
- **23** 2015 ARPA Amazing Games
  - Location: Lagoon Park, Montgomery, AL

### November
- **2-4** 2015 LEAD

### December
- **2** District V Meeting in Opelika

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The Alabamian is the official publication of the Alabama Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA), an affiliate of the National Recreation and Park Association. The magazine is published by the Alabama Recreation and Parks Association, Inc. as a service to its membership. Submissions of parks and recreation-related articles are welcomed. Opinions expressed in signed articles are those of the authors and not necessarily those of ARPA. Comments/responses should be sent to:

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Hello 2015!!!! What an honor it is to be able to serve the members of ARPA as the President. I am excited about the year and what it will have to offer. I feel as though I have so much to learn from each of you. Being back and active with ARPA is truly a great feeling.

As I stated at conference, you have to be willing to invest in things that are important to you. You will only get out of something what you are willing to put into it. I hope that you will join me as I invest in our association.

Remember...everyone has a voice - but you have to be willing to speak. Everyone has an idea - but you have to be willing to share. Everyone has an effort - but you have to be willing to give it. Everyone has a talent - but you have to be willing to use it. Everyone has a contribution - what’s yours?

If everyone gives just a little bit of their voice, ideas, efforts, talents....if everyone contributes...there is no telling what we could accomplish. Can you give just a little bit more? Whatever it is that you have...can you do just a little bit more for ARPA?

I am willing to give more to make my ARPA the best that it has ever been. Will you join me?

Recreationally,

Janis Burns
2015 APRA President

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If you would like to be published in a future issue of The Alabamian Magazine, please send your article and any graphics to the State Office at mcoleman@arpaonline.org. The deadline for consideration in the spring issue is April 1st.

Please call 334-279-9160 with any questions.
With a theme of “60 is the new 40” and a recent birthday putting me one year closer to that magic mark, it may be time to review current lifestyles and maybe lend a few suggestions to make that 40 even lower and more fun and productive.

As we age, our bodies, attitudes and challenges change. Some of which are entertaining to others I’m sure, like me trying to get up off the floor after playing with my 18 month old niece. Those movements have changed drastically since my 20’s. With that being said, we should all take care to move our bodies daily. Whether you enroll in exercise class, go for a lunchtime stroll or just make a point to do a few chair exercises sitting at your desk, some form of activity will maintain some flexibility and stamina. This becomes more important as our lives become more sedentary and stresses of the job increase.

Mentally we want to keep ourselves sharp as well. Having always enjoyed brain teasing games, I really enjoy the game Sudoku. It has a logical approach and involves numbers, so it’s right up my alley. Research indicates that doing mind games like this helps keep us sharp and aids with memory. (And Lord knows I need all the help I can get there) You may not care for Sudoku, but crosswords, daily jumbles and other puzzles can be found in daily newspapers or online. Maybe you could drop in on the Senior Center in your town and introduce some of these to your patrons.

Last, but certainly not least, our attitude seems to change with age. Hopefully, as in my case, it changes for the better. I find myself being more patient in certain instances than I was in my youth. This really helps you as you go about your day. Being able to control your emotions and be accommodating in our profession is essential. This goes a long way to creating an environment of great customer service that we all should strive for.

Maybe these few words have made you think about bettering yourself in the New Year. It’s easy to make those resolutions, but more complicated to maintain them for a long period of time. Let’s all strive to be better physically, mentally and emotionally in 2015. As we push toward 60 make sure you feel no more than 40.

Michael Coleman
ARPA Executive Director

ARPA is on facebook. Join the Group!

- Keep up with members
- Follow ARPA events
- Share ideas
- Send your feedback
Walk Your Way to Fitness

By Harold L. Rainwater, M.S.

Harold Rainwater is a professor of physical education and recreation at Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky. He holds a master’s degree in physical education and is a certified senior personal trainer through the American Senior Fitness Association.

Fitness experts now feel that good old walking can be as valuable an aerobic exercise as jogging, swimming, or biking. In fact, walking may be the best form of exercise you can undertake. Walking is the oldest form of exercise known to man. Seventy seven million Americans regularly walk for fitness and pleasure, reaping the following benefits:

- Enhanced weight loss
- Increased energy
- Improved fitness level
- Decreased stress and tension
- Improved muscle tone
- Increased ability to perform daily activities
- Decreased risk of age related disease
- Improved cardiovascular health

The popularity of walking as a fitness activity is growing. Walking is low risk, easy to start, and it is pretty hard to hurt yourself. Runners and with three to four times their body weight every time their feet hit the ground. Walkers, by contrast, land with only one and one_half times their body weight. Walking exercises muscles all over your body, and it is actually one of the best exercises for healthy feet. Walking is great exercise for people who are in terrific shape, and it’s just as good for people in lousy shape. Virtually every cardiac rehabilitation program in America bases its exercise regimen on walking.

Get Ready

A walking program is simple to start. All you need are comfortable clothes and shoes. Layer loose clothing, keeping in mind that exercise elevates the body’s temperature. Shoes specifically designed for walking are best. Look for these eight features when purchasing walking shoes:

1. Uppers of a high quality, breathable materials, such as leather.
2. Comfortable padded heel collar.
3. Firm heel counter (that cups the heel) to provide stability for the entire foot and leg.
4. Heel should be held in shoe, well cushioned and supported, somewhat higher than rest of the foot.
5. Entire sole should be designed to absorb shock.
6. Substantial arch supports.
7. A rocker profile sole enhances a smooth heel-to-toe motion.
8. The toe box should allow ample room and toes should not be tight against any part of the shoe.

Every workout should begin with a gently active warm-up and a few simple stretches. Although walking primarily works the major muscles of the legs, don’t forget to stretch your back, shoulders, and arms. This will help loosen up any tension you may have and make your walk more enjoyable as well as more effective.

Walking is one fitness activity that allows you numerous options. Once you have reached a point at which you can walk a few miles with relative ease, you can start to vary the intensity. At this stage, you might want to evaluate your aerobic or cardiorespiratory fitness level by walking one mile as fast as you can.

**Design a Personal Walking Program**

Consult with your physician before beginning any exercise program. Set a time schedule that you can keep. Design your walking program according to your fitness level:

**Beginner**

Walk short distances. Begin by trying a mile stroll and increase the duration each time by 2 to 5 minutes. Forget about speed. Focus on good posture, keeping your head lifted and shoulders relaxed. Swing your arms naturally and breathe deeply. If you can’t catch your breath, slow down or avoid inclines and hills.

**Intermediate**

If you are in this category you can walk your way to fitness by exercising continuously for 30 minutes. Be sure you can talk while walking. If you can’t converse, you are walking too fast. Walk briskly, but don’t overdo it — speed is not your focus.

**Advanced**

If you reach this category, you should be able to walk 30 to 60 minutes comfortably. You can concentrate on lengthening your stride or increasing your speed. Consider adding hills or inclines.

**Stay Motivated**

Keep in mind that there are many good reasons to walk:
- It will make you feel great and give you power and strength!
- It lowers blood pressure and medical bills.
- Walking may be even better than fiber for your digestive system.
- It will help you let go of tension and stress.
- You don’t have to pay a membership fee to walk.
- You don’t have to read instructions or assemble equipment.
- You don’t have to keep score.
- You can check out your neighbors’ yards and houses without their being suspicious.
- When you walk you can watch the sun rise or set.
- You can walk away from past mistakes and walk toward new goals!

Reprinted from Mature Fitness (formerly published as the Senior Fitness Bulletin) by permission of the American Senior Fitness Association (888) 689-6791
The Madison Senior Center in Madison, AL (D-2) offers a variety of classes and socials for local seniors. Believing a healthy senior is a happy senior, the Big Green Bus from Huntsville Hospital visits monthly providing health screenings and the Madison Fire and Rescue Squad performs weekly blood pressure screenings. Seniors stay fit through weekly exercise classes: Balance One Fitness, Water Aerobics, Zumba Gold, and daily line dancing classes. To develop the mind as well as the body, classes are offered in watercolors, ceramics, oil painting, clay, Spanish and computer technology. Seniors enjoy trips to the Farmer’s Market and participate in the Madison Street Festival, Masters Games, Madison Derby Days, Madison Business Expo, Huntsville/Madison County Senior Expo and Spring Fling.
Most adults who were in the working class had a routine; a purpose to get out of bed each day. They went to their jobs where they had responsibilities and socialized with co-workers which helped create self-satisfaction after a day of hard work. After retirement, their normal work cycle is broken; they lose contact with friends and colleagues and often fall into the trap of isolation. This can lead to bouts of depression and other health problems due to lack of movement and motivation.

Physical activity relieves stress, reduces body fat and the effects of heart disease, and has many other health benefits. Being involved in group exercise and other group activities also allows senior adults to make new friends and socialize, and reap health benefits at the same time.

The creation of the Aquadome Recreation Center’s Lunch Bunch Club seeks to break the cycle of isolation and inactivity. The Club has a month’s worth of activities for older adults who meet throughout the week for exercise, food, fun and fellowship.

At least once per month, the group will venture away from the Aquadome Recreation Center for a day trip or to try a new restaurant. Other activities include arts and crafts, games, nutrition, concerts, seminars, potluck, BINGO, and a ladies movie night (with guy-oriented movies soon to begin). This group also takes a few overnight trips throughout the year.

There is no cost to be a member of the Lunch Bunch Club; however, individuals are responsible for all costs associated with scheduled activities, such as crafts and outings. There are many activities that are 100% free or have a small fee to cover expenses.

Dothan Teams Compete in the World Series

Dothan Leisure Services had two teams compete for the World Series in Baseball and Softball. Please join us in congratulating them for all their hard work and dedication.

On August 2-6, 2014, the 2014 Dothan National Jr. Dixie Boys Baseball Team came in 3rd at the World Series Championship in Bossier City, LA. The team was coached by Shawn McCorkel, Lance Shepard, Mark Kinney, and Mark Young.

On July 25, 2014, the 2014 Dothan American Dixie Angels Softball Team came in 2nd at the X-Play World Series in Atoka, TN. The team was coached by Keith Turner, Robert Thagard, and Wayne Roden.
Our baby boomer generation is on the move!

From attending various lecture series such as “Maintaining your Memory” and “Managing Multiple Meds” to delving into their creative side with “Wreath Making” and “Dulcimer Jamming” our seniors do it all. Attendance in our Zumba Gold and other exercise classes have continued to increase throughout the year, showing that our seniors are very intentional when it comes mind and body health. Our Songbirds 25 member choral ensemble never disappoints when traveling to perform for other seniors; lifting the spirits of each person in attendance. Speaking of traveling, our seniors have taken a few local historic tours as well as Savannah and New Orleans. In recent months, we have hosted a “Health Expo” and “Thrills and Chills” Halloween happening as well as Veterans Day Celebration and Iron Bowl Bash. There is never a dull moment at the Hoover Senior Center. We have exchanged our rocking chairs for dancing shoes!
Opelika - “Recycled Teenagers” Visit Germany

The Opelika Parks and Recreation “Recycled Teenagers” are always on the move, but this past month this lively group of seniors traveled more than 4,700 miles to take a Christmas cruise through Germany and Austria.

After flying in to Wurzburg, Germany, they traveled to Nuremberg to board their ship and depart for a week-long tour of the very best Christmas Markets in southern Germany and Austria. Traveling down the Danube, they made stops at Regensburg and Passau before crossing over into Austria to experience Emmersdorf, Melk and Vienna.

The Recycled Teenagers were thrilled to discover that every room had an entire wall of windows so they could see all of the beautiful churches, castles and scenic winter landscapes along the riverside.

“The only bad view was when we were traveling through the locks,” said Valeri White, director of the Sportsplex Adult Activity Center and chaperone for this unruly group. “We went through 23 locks and you had this huge view of a concrete wall that you could reach out your window and touch. It was unnerving.”

However, every morning when they woke up they were in a different Christmas market where they could take city tours, palace tours, castle tours and eat at authentic German restaurants.

“One of the group’s favorites was touring the Melk Abbey where they still have practicing monks,” said White. “We saw the largest cathedral organ in the world at the St. Stephens Cathedral in Passau and learned to yodel from a guy with an accordion at a restaurant in Vienna. It was really neat to see them experience these different cultures together and have such a fun time.”

Each city along the route is also known for a different Gluhwein, a hot spiced wine, and of course they had to try them all. They all came in special commemorative cups made of glass, ceramic and even clay. They were all different shapes and sizes, one even coming in the shape of a boot.

Collecting all of these cups and other souvenirs made everyone thankful that they were on a boat.

“The boat was the way to go,” said White. “There was no packing and unpacking or moving from hotel to hotel. Their luggage always gets heavier as we go, so it was nice to not have to load and unload at every city.”

In addition to travel conveniences, the boat also had fantastic food. The seniors enjoyed a buffet breakfast, 4-course lunches, 6-course dinners, a dessert buffet, midnight snacks and a 24-7 coffee and tea bar. They reported the only issue was knowing which fork to use.

The Recycled Teenagers have traveled to Mexico, Ireland and tons of cities and trips stateside, but all agreed that this was the best one yet.
Phenix City - CAC provides fellowship, entertainment for bi-city members

Zumba. Line dancing. Ceramics. Rook. Billiards. Picnics. Dances. Music... No matter the need, it is probably fulfilled at Phenix City’s Central Activity Center, which is affectionately known by locals as simply, the CAC.

The CAC is one of the most successful and widely used recreation centers in the area and is primarily geared toward patrons age 50 and above.

“The Central Activity Center is really the hub of activity for the seniors of our community,” said Phenix City Parks and Recreation Director Todd Hughes. “We strive on a daily basis to not only listen to what the community wants, but also to implement those wants into our programs so that the center is an inviting and comfortable place for all of our members to spend their time.”

The Central Activity Center features a huge auditorium with professional-grade stage and accessories, a dining room with full kitchen, and an arts and crafts area that is equipped for high-volume ceramics production. It also features quite a few utility rooms and several meeting rooms that, along with the auditorium and dining room, are all available to rent.

All are welcome inside, but in order to participate in the wide array of programs that are offered, guests must pay the nominal $10 per year fee to become a member. That’s when all the fun begins.

“The programs that are available provide a wide range of interests, education and pleasure to the senior population of this area,” said Jacqueline Smith, a long-time member of the center.

The CAC hosts several different exercise programs as well, including Zumba and Line Dancing classes. Both combine music with fitness and dance to create a fun-filled atmosphere that allows people to have a great time while staying fit. And to top it off, both programs can be adjusted to fit the needs of any age group or skill level.

Moving into the arts, the CAC offers in-depth ceramics and acrylic canvass painting classes and activities, which tend to promote both fellowship and a strong sense of accomplishment for everyone involved.
If you’re more into the performance arts, every week a group of local musicians get together with their stringed instruments to jam out and play whatever they feel like playing, and they call it Let’s Pick. Typically, on any given Thursday evening, you’ll hear a wide mix of anything from country to bluegrass or gospel music at Let’s Pick, and not only is it free to attend, but it’s also open to all ages. The local cable station has even been known to show up and get in on the fun by broadcasting the event on TV throughout the community.

Although the program lineup is strong at CAC, the staff feels as though it’s sometimes necessary to throw a curveball to its members and keep things fresh by putting on other celebratory types of events, like the annual Patriotic Picnic, the Mardi Gras low-country boil, or Breakfast with Santa, with any number of guest DJs or other musical artist performances in between.

The CAC keeps a full schedule of events and programs each day and is open Mondays through Fridays, from 8 am until 5 pm, with accommodations being made for after-hours programs and events. For more information on Phenix City or the Central Activity Center, please call 334-291-4743.

Auburn Parks and Recreation’s 50+ program has added a number of new events and offerings over the last two years thanks, in part, to a new location. In May 2013, the doors to Auburn Parks and Recreation’s newest facility, the Harris Center, were opened. As the home of Auburn Parks and Recreation’s adult 50+ programming and events, the Harris Center is an 8,000+ square foot facility on the campus of the existing Frank Brown Recreation Center and Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center. The Harris Center boasts 50+ programs and events such as the Fit as a Fiddle Lifestyle and Health Fair, weekly fitness classes, a monthly breakfast speaker series, bi-monthly lunch and bingo, a monthly book club, ping pong and Cornhole tournaments, guest lectures, 50+ classes, movie nights, special events, weekly practices for Masters Games events, and a computer café. In addition, the Harris Center serves as a departure place for over 35 unique field trip opportunities for 50+ adults offered throughout the year. Visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks for more information on 50+ programming and events and to sign up to receive our monthly 50+ newsletter.
Enterprise - Senior Center Activities

The Enterprise Senior Center provides a place where our senior community can meet and pursue mutual interests, receive educational and nutritional services, participate in social and recreational activities that will enhance their lives, support and maintain their independence and encourage their continued involvement in and with the community.

We would like to highlight some of the special events and activities that we offer to our seniors:

**Story Telling on October 20, 2014:**
As we age, the memories we have seem not only significant, but more vivid. After all, the older we get, the more experiences we had, and the more stories we have to tell. Our older loved ones are also living, breathing history. They have lived through most of the decades of the twentieth century, have seen and participated in sweeping changes in technology, history, culture, and are in a unique position to offer their memories and interpretations of those changes.

At our story telling event (sponsored by the Enterprise Senior Center and Coffee County Extension) we had young and old story tellers that won awards and contests, to entertain our seniors and tickled their “laugh” buds. Musical entertainment was provided by an all-time favorite “Elvis” and the quartet Basis4Him, while the guests enjoyed a tasteful meal. The evening was concluded by the appearance of “Pastor Pugh Hopper” who made the crowds topple over with laughter.

**Halloween Party on October 28, 2014**
“Halloween is for Adults, too”!! Our seniors are not to be underestimated when it comes to “theme” related events. Though short, Halloween is a spooky, fun filled time. Our annual Halloween Party shows that everyone loves to dress up – and what better way to celebrate Halloween then to hide behind a mystery and disguise of a costume.

The local Literary Club provided decorations and a meal for senior members, who participated in the event.

Prizes were awarded in the costume contest and winners included best costume for a man and woman as well as most original costume. Every senior received a gift of either a fruit basket, candy bag, bath & body products or other “treat” during the event. Fun games were played and all seniors had a “Spooktactular” time!
Thanksgiving Lunch on November 25, 2014
“Gobble, Gobble….” Every year, on the fourth Thursday in November, Americans get together for a day of feasting, football and family. While today’s Thanksgiving celebrations would likely be unrecognizable to pilgrims who celebrated the original 1621 harvest meal, it continues to be a day for Americans to come together around the table and celebrate the holiday.

At the Enterprise Senior Center, we celebrate the holiday with our members by joining together to give thanks for the blessings each of us has received the past year, to fellowship and enjoy the “traditional meal” in a group setting, to ensure that every member has the opportunity to have “Thanksgiving”!

Christmas Party on December 23, 2014
Christmas is the time to celebrate the “Birth of Jesus”!

The Enterprise Senior Center celebrates Christmas with their members, by organizing an annual Christmas Lunch, before the center is closed for the holidays. The Auditorium at the Enterprise Civic Center is set up for our members with beautiful decorations adorning the tables - and while our seniors enjoy a tasteful meal - Christmas music fills the air in hope to set the atmosphere for the holiday season to come.

The next day, December 23, 2014, the activities for the year conclude with a Christmas Party at the Senior Center, where each member receives a gift from Santa Claus. “Merry Christmas” and a “Happy New Year”!

Day Trips
Our senior members enjoy excursions that take them away from the their routine at the senior center, such as a day trip to Montgomery to the “Shakespeare Festival”, shopping trips and going “Out to Eat” to local restaurants. We also attend special events organized by other organizations, senior centers, as well as SARCOA’s “Older Americans Day”.

Daily activities
Our seniors enjoy a competitive game of Dominoes, working on an arts or crafts project and/or the use of our exercise equipment. The computer lab with six computers gives them the opportunity to stay in touch with family and friends or search the web for interesting information they can put to good use.

In the afternoon it’s “Wii - Time”! If our seniors used to be active in their younger days, the Wii does wonders in letting them experience games and/or sports they used to do. For example: Wii Ski is a fairly realistic game of hitting the slopes, just as golf provides a realistic exercise of hitting the ball as if you were on the “Green”. Hunting and fishing games feel like the real thing… but our seniors enjoy bowling the most. Bowling....., the sport of throwing a heavy ball down a lane & knocking over pins, has become an easy sport for seniors playing the Wii. The low impact of playing the Wii gives our participants the opportunity to be active in sports without the physical stress of the “real sport”. It also gives them the feeling of accomplishment and competitiveness to boost their self-esteem and show of their skills.

On Tuesdays – in a morning class and an afternoon class – our center members enjoy time with an art teacher to express their creative skills and improve their talent. They rediscover a pleasurable craft by choosing a painting project, regardless of talent, either with oils, acrylics or water colors.

In closing, our seniors are living longer and healthier lives due to improvements in their personal perspective. Today’s seniors understand their bodies better than ever before and realize what keeps them strong and healthy. They know they can achieve amazing things regardless of age and have the ability to complete tasks traditionally reserved for the young!
District 6
Awards Winners

Picture shows award winners (listed left to right).

Grounds Maintenance
Tommy Deon “Sam” Horton (Andalusia)

Maintenance
Chris Chitty (Dothan)

Support Staff
India Hussey (Enterprise)

Professional of the Year
Ron Money (Dothan)