A Real Fish Story

Kingfishers share love of fishing with kids in the community

First things first. Don’t be deceived by the avian name. The Kingfishers is a fishing club. (Birdwatchers, you’ll have to start your own program.) This co-ed group of anglers—novice to expert—meet for skill development, fun, and information sharing. And, of course, to fish.

The Kingfishers manage a pond in Free Union which they occasionally stock with blue gills and travel to Graves Mountain Lodge in November for trout and Fredericksburg for the spring shad run on the Rappahannock. Fish aren’t the only thing they try to reel in—a big goal is to introduce more youth to the sport.

Longtime member Bill Marley got hooked on fishing (sorry, we should just throw that one back) as a kid in Norfolk. He loves being outdoors, and finds fishing relaxing. “To me, golf was stressful,” he laughs, when asked about his favorite pastime. To encourage people to take up fishing and enjoy its benefits, Bill and other members run fishing clinics for Big Brothers Big Sisters and for Camp Holiday Trails, a traditional camp for children with special health needs.

Continued on page 2
The Kingfishers also co-sponsor Kid’s Fishing Day at Mint Springs Park in Crozet every April with the Thomas Jefferson Chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and Albemarle County Parks and Recreation. The event, promoting cold-water fishery conservation and fishing as a wholesome family activity, typically draws about 100 youngsters.

Contribution to our community and raising environmental awareness as the Kingfishers do is wonderful. So is teaching the patience and skill needed for success. Sometimes, notes Bill, the lure is much simpler. “Nothing beats seeing the look on a child’s face when they catch their first fish.”

The Kingfishers Fishing Club meets the first Wednesday of each month at the Senior Center. New recruits are welcome; the group has equipment you can borrow to give it a try. To learn more, visit seniorcenterinc.org or call the Center.

Do you have a tale to tell?

Inquiring Minds Want to Know

Sharing your stories illustrates the Center’s place in our community

What is your Senior Center story? When did you first visit and why? What keeps you coming back?

If you don’t use the Center yourself, what inspired you to get involved? What do you like most about the work the Senior Center does?

Has the Senior Center made a difference in the life of a friend or loved one? We would love to have you chronicle their experience as well.

Send your Senior Center story of 150 words or less by mail to “My Story, Senior Center, 1180 Pepsi Place, Charlottesville, VA 22901” or by email to mystery@seniorcenterinc.org. Include your full name and contact information. Let us know if you would prefer to remain anonymous. We will add all the stories to our archive. Some of them will be featured in Center publications like this newsletter.
Want to get benefits from head to toe?

**Align Yourself with Line Dancing**

*One of the best activities for total body wellness is also tons of fun!*

Donni doesn’t see herself as a senior, but she came to the Center for line dancing and fell in love with it. It’s great exercise for her body and her mind. When she’s concentrating on the moves and memorizing the steps, she can’t think about anything else. “You can let go of your problems and forget your worries.”

When they lived in northern Virginia, Donni and Geral Long often enjoyed line dancing with friends. After moving to Charlottesville, they got busy and never got back into it. So two years ago when Geral asked Donni what she wanted for Christmas, she wanted to go dancing! Christmas morning he gave her a card with a gift certificate for line dancing at the Center.

Donni says instructor Dot Cagley—a volunteer—is both meticulous and welcoming. She gives new dancers special attention, teaching them the basics then gradually challenging them with more complicated patterns. She offers modifications for high or low impact and brings in a range of music from oldies to salsa to Barry Manilow to current country rock. Dot keeps them dancing for hours; even so, Donni says she would keep going all night if she could!

You don’t need a partner—most people come on their own. Steps are performed in unison by the group. You don’t have to wear cowboy boots—hiking boots, loafers, and sneakers all work fine as dancing shoes. Just show up to move and enjoy a great group.

Over the years, Donni has joined gyms and tried different types of classes. She always ends up dropping them. She wouldn’t think of dropping line dancing at the Senior Center; it’s just that much fun. She and Geral come every week. She says he refuses to miss a single class.

Great reasons for you to try dancing? It provides the heart-healthy benefits of aerobic exercise, the emotional benefits of social activity, and the cognitive benefits of using your noggin. It improves muscle tone and balance. Line dancers can cover around five miles of ground in one session. And, hey, there’s music!

You’re invited to …

**Celebrate at the Grand Gala 2016: Havana Nights**

*Annual “destination” fundraising gala goes to Cuba in 2016!*

February 27, the Boar’s Head Inn Pavilion will come alive with the flavors of the Caribbean, the rhythm of dancing feet, and the swinging sounds of Big Ray and The Kool Kats.

Last year’s Grand Gala was a blast. Thanks to generous sponsors, advertisers, guests, and volunteers, it also provided funding for 10% of the Center’s annual operating expenses.

Want to join the fun in 2016? Here’s how:

- **Sponsor a table.** Levels include “Conga Line” $10,000; “Salsa Star” $7,500; “Rumba Rhythm” $5,000; and “Cha-cha-cha” $2,500. Your sponsorship of any level will include a table for 10 and significantly benefit the Senior Center.

- **Advertise your business or group, send a message to a friend, or honor your favorite senior.** The Grand Gala’s event program is a great vehicle.

- **Purchase a “Danzón” ticket.** A limited number of tickets, $175 per person, go on sale in January.

- **Purchase raffle tickets.** Raffle tickets go on sale in January for some great Cuba and travel-themed gift packages. Drawings will be held at the event but you don’t have to be present to win.

Find out more at seniorcenterinc.org/grand-gala2016. Interested in sponsorships or program advertising? Contact Kirstin Fritz at 434.974.7756 or kirstin@seniorcenterinc.org.

**Thank you to all of our community sponsors, especially our 2016 “Mambo Kings” presenting sponsor Virginia National Bank!**

Did you know that year’s gala anticipates the exciting and educational Center-organized voyage to Cuba in October 2016? Visit the Travel Office or seniorcenterinc.org for details.
Survey Says …

Highlights from our most recent member survey

Survey respondents reported a high level of satisfaction in their involvement in the Senior Center, evidenced both by their intention to renew their memberships (98%) and their positive feedback about results from program participation.

“What was your primary reason for joining the Senior Center?”

Almost every response included a social aspect: To meet people. To socialize. To connect with people and have fun. That’s good news, because social interaction boosts physical and mental health! Many were activity or program oriented: To stay active. To play in the band. To volunteer. To learn. To try new things. To travel. To play chess. To exercise. Equally good, as these pursuits boost cognitive ability, creativity, sense of purpose, and more.

“The primary benefit I get from Center participation or what I enjoy the most is …”


Because they participated in Center activities …

- 89% have developed a more positive outlook on life
- 92% say their mind is stimulated by our programs
- 78% feel more connected to the community
- 74% have found a strong support system at the Center
- 73% feel better physically

For more details, contact membership coordinator Susan Watts at 434.974.7756 or susan@seniorcenterinc.org.

Proof Positive Programs

Evidence-based programs (EVBs) can save older adults from chronic disease and falls

This fall the Senior Center piloted two evidence-based programs: Better Bones & Balance and, in partnership with JABA, Stanford’s Chronic Disease Self-Management. These rigorously-researched and nationally-recognized programs provide documented, positive health benefits, so you can be confident they work.

Older adults who participate in EVBs can improve quality of life, increase or maintain independence, and reduce disability and pain. Participants take before and after surveys to track their progress. We look forward to seeing the positive changes they experience and hope to offer more of these programs soon!

A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns about Falls

Don’t let fear restrict your activities—falls and fear of falling are controllable! This program emphasizes practical strategies to reduce fall risk factors and increase activity levels, including environmental changes and exercise to increase strength and balance.

Thank you to the Genan Foundation for making it possible for the Senior Center to offer Matter of Balance to our community.

Note: A second Chronic Disease Self-Management workshop is tentatively scheduled to start mid-February. Check our website and weekly e-news for updates.

Our e-newsletter, “It’s Happening at the Senior Center,” goes out every Wednesday. Sign up from any page on our website or call the welcome desk to get the latest news delivered to your inbox.

HEALTHY AGING never gets old

1180 Pepsi Place | Charlottesville, VA 22901
434.974.7756 | SeniorCenterInc.org
www.facebook.com/seniorcenterinc

Philanthropy: Kirstin Fritz, x112, kirstin@seniorcenterinc.org
Volunteering: Kimberly Haynes, x119, kimberly@seniorcenterinc.org
Membership: Susan Watts, x100, susan@seniorcenterinc.org
Programs: Jennifer Ayers, x111, jennifer@seniorcenterinc.org