

G R O W I N G **BOLDER**



Guide to *FLORIDA LIFESTYLE*

GROWING **BOLDER**

Guide to

FLORIDA Lifestyle

PRESENTED BY



MEDICARE

Your local Blue Cross Blue Shield

Did you move from a cold and cloudy climate to enjoy retirement in the Sunshine State? Are you a Florida resident moving to a new home after downsizing or to be closer to the water? Whatever motivated your move, Growing Bolder is here to help you enjoy “What’s Next.”

Thanks to advances in healthcare, and individual commitments to healthy lifestyles, the years after age 65 offer a new and exciting chapter of life and active longevity. Florida isn’t a place to grow older, it’s a place to grow bolder. The Growing Bolder mindset is about passion and possibility, creativity and connection, fun and fitness at every level.

Only Florida Blue Medicare Advantage includes Growing Bolder inspiration and educational tools incorporated right into your plan information.

- ▶ Complete Medicare resource platform
- ▶ Lower healthcare costs
- ▶ Help to keep you at your healthiest
- ▶ Recover faster and more fully from illness or injury

**WE MAKE MEDICARE EASY, SO THAT YOU CAN HAVE FUN
GROWING BOLDER IN FLORIDA!**

Did you know that you can make changes to your Medicare plan when you move?

This is an opportunity to change your plan or add supplemental insurance during the 60 days after you move. Otherwise, you’ll be able to make changes during the Annual Enrollment Period beginning in October.

Moving Checklist

Your healthcare providers and insurance company need your new address to prevent disruptions to your care or coverage. Remember to transfer your auto-fill prescriptions to a pharmacy near your new residence.

GROWING BOLDER IN FLORIDA

- 6 RUNNING WITH A PURPOSE
- 8 WALKING ON WATER
- 30 THE CHALLENGE OF AGING IN PLACE

THINGS TO DO

- 16 FLORIDA ADVENTURES
- 20 FLORIDA DOG PARKS
- 22 GO TAKE A HIKE ALONG FLORIDA’S
PRISTINE TRAILS
- 24 KAYAKING FLORIDA
- 26 BEST ICE CREAM IN FLORIDA
- 28 ROMANTIC FLORIDA

FLORIDA HISTORY

- 7 ON THE ROAD
- 10 MOTHER NATURE
- 13 CAT TALE
- 18 DID YOU KNOW?

HOME TIPS & DIY

- 5 TO MAXIMIZE, MINIMIZE

RESOURCES

- 12 FLORIDA RESOURCES
- 14 MEDICARE RESOURCES





64&

Make
Medicare an
opportunity
to live
BOLDER.

SO MUCH
MORE!

Go to growingbolder.com/Medicare
to download your free, easy to
understand guide to Medicare

To speak to a representative
call 1-844-396-2579.

TO MAXIMIZE, *Minimize*

Lighten the load of a lifetime

Bill Shafer

More is better. It's a philosophy that we've all grown up with and have learned to accept. More stylish clothing, more expensive cars, more exotic trips.

But as we age, it becomes apparent that more is often worse. More trips to the buffet leave us heavier and less healthy. Materialism—the accumulation of stuff—is ultimately unfulfilling and is a trigger for a variety of stresses.

We love to save. We're inherently collectors. By the time we get to midlife or beyond, our homes are so jam-packed with things we don't need that just thinking about what to do with it all can be overwhelming.

In fact, that's one of the most-cited reasons empty nesters hesitate to move. It's just too much work.

But living in an environment of clutter has detrimental effects. Clutter creates stress, can be socially isolating and can make it difficult to get things done.

This has resulted in the growth of a lifestyle philosophy called "functional minimalism," which requires that you take a more mindful approach to the things you save and the things you buy.

The crux of functional minimalism is this: Just have things that you truly value. Keep what matters to you, and get rid of the rest.

Ciji Ware, a *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling author, broadcaster, speaker and journalist, understands how liberating it can be to cut through the clutter.

She refers to herself as a recovering clutterbug, and her book, *Rightsizing Your Life*, offers tips on how to overcome the emotional attachments that can often stop the decluttering process in its tracks.

"There are many reasons why we hang on to so much stuff," she says. "But what we need to understand is how good it can feel to unload the burden of dealing with so many unnecessary things."

Ware believes clutter weighs us down, like a ball and

chain. Going through our closets, drawers and garages and disposing of the excess offers the same benefits as going on a successful diet. We feel better, have more energy and a brighter outlook.

Although it may sound easy enough to do, in fact it isn't. It can be overwhelming just figuring out where to begin. Ware recommends choosing an area that bothers you the most.

Are your dresser drawers so full that they're difficult to open? Does your car sit in the driveway because the garage is full of stuff?

Once you choose an area, you need to be prepared to make some tough decisions. Ware says one way to stay on track and keep the process moving is to have two containers: one for trash, and another for items you'd like to consider further.

That way, instead of agonizing over whether to keep it or toss it, you can relegate it to the "not sure" pile and keep charging forward.

Ware says clothes closets are the most difficult areas to declutter. She recommends inviting a friend over to go through them with you. Lean on your friend for objective opinions on what you should get rid of.

Rightsizing or minimizing isn't just about deciding what to throw out. It's about adopting a different way of looking at your lifestyle. It requires that you purposely decide what's worth having, and why something is worth keeping.

It's about asking yourself, what do I really need to be happy?

We probably should have realized long ago that what we were taught was wrong. More is not better. Having more simply does not lead to happiness or fulfillment.

But having less can.



Running With a Purpose

Diane Travis runs like she lives

Doris Bloodsworth

There's an unmistakable determination about Diane Travis. It's how she trains every day, not just for one sport, but for two. Travis is a champion duathlete, a demanding sport that requires running, biking and running again. Without a break. Travis just brought home the gold medal in the national championships for women 65-69 years of age and won the silver medal at the world championship in Spain.

Passion and purpose fueled one successful career after another, from her days as an executive at Johnson & Johnson to an innovator in the telecom business to becoming a savvy Realtor, first at Stirling Sotheby's International Realty before founding her own agency in Clermont, Florida.

It's how she ran a successful campaign for city council in Clermont, known as the "Choice of Champions."

Travis is one of Florida's most powerful advocates for bicycle safety, leading the annual Ride of Silence, part of a worldwide tradition to honor those who were killed while riding bicycles on public roads.

OUTDOOR ATHLETICS

You don't have to be a triathlete to enjoy outdoor activities. Taking a walk in nature with a close friend is the best thing you can do for your physical and mental health, according to research by Dr. Sanjay Gupta. It's simple, holistic and sure to make you feel good.



On the Road To Reinvention

Celebrating over 50 years of Kerouac

Bob Kealing



Jack Kerouac has been gone longer than he lived. In fact, 2019 marked 50 years since the writer known as the "King of the Beats" died a lonely drunkard's death. It was October 22, 1969 in St. Petersburg, Florida. He was 47.

During research for my book, *Kerouac in Florida, Where the Road Ends*, I remember speaking with his emergency room nurse Anne Houston. "It was one of those situations where you didn't know how we could possibly make it," she recounted. Despite a record number of transfusions, Kerouac's liver shut down—and that proved to be the end of the road.

Early on, Kerouac's sad ending permeated anything I'd heard about his time in Florida. To historians, Florida was where Kerouac went to die. Through the course of my research, I found a far different narrative. In 1996, a friend commented that he'd read on the back of a book jacket that Kerouac had also lived in Orlando.

Infected with wanderlust and curiosity, 23 years ago I decided to explore Kerouac's road-less-traveled in my own backyard. It was serendipity that Kerouac's first book of letters had been published at the same time. The volume contained correspondence Kerouac had written at his sister's house in pre-tourist-mecca Orlando.

His visit there in December, 1956, marked a crucial turning point. "I have another week here of mad typing and working on FOUR different manuscripts that'll make us rich," Kerouac wrote to girlfriend Helen Weaver.

After years of laboring in obscurity, the nomadic 34-year-old nobody from Lowell, Massachusetts was making final edits to *On the Road*, the novel widely regarded as an American classic. His letters included a return address on Yates Street in the northwest Orlando neighborhood of College Park. After that, the trail on Kerouac's life in Orlando went cold.

I found out Kerouac returned to Orlando in the summer of 1957, renting a place not far from his sister's house. No one—not the locals, not old editions of the local newspaper, not even the Kerouac biographies of the day—had any mention of exactly where that rental was.

Sometimes as a researcher, you have to throw caution to the wind. That's what I did when I cold-called the executor of Jack Kerouac's estate, his brother-in-law, John Sampas.

Sampas, brother of Kerouac's last wife Stella, was listed in the Lowell, Massachusetts, phone book and even took my call. I explained that I was looking for the Orlando apartment that Kerouac rented during this important stage in his career.

"Jack kept a list of every place he ever lived. I have it right here on the wall," Sampas said to my astonishment. "Let's see, 1957... that would be 1418-and-a-half Clouser Street." (He pronounced it "Cloiser").

Soon after, I ventured out to a single-story, wood-frame home about four blocks from his sister's house in College Park. In July 1957, Kerouac paid \$45 a month to rent the small apartment on the home's back side. It was all he had. The small back door stood open and squirrels were running in and out. I approached cautiously and knocked.

From the darkened space inside the back-porch hovel, a friendly voice invited me in. "My neighbor Rose McCray met him while he was living here," said Carol Ney, a 70ish retired antiques dealer reclining on a small sofa bed and smoking a long, brown cigarette. "He told her he was waiting for his novel to be published. As soon as it came out he would send her a copy."

Carol confirmed that this tiny back-porch apartment, which merited only a "one-half" mailing address, was indeed historic. It was where Jack Kerouac was living when his novel *On the Road* was published.

"Would you like to see it?" she asked.

"See what?" I said.

From behind the sofa bed Carol pulled out a book sealed in a plastic bag and handed it to me. Out from the bag I pulled an inscribed first-edition of *On the Road*. "To Mrs. McCray, my good neighbor, Jack Kerouac."

It was a breathtaking, unforgettable moment and a crucial turning point in research for my book. In the march of years since this historic find, many amazing things have occurred. This little house in northwest Orlando is now a national literary landmark.

As we reach a half-century since Kerouac's death, those of us who reside in his home-away-from-home in the Sunshine State can say with certainty: Jack Kerouac came to Florida and lived.

WALKING ON WATER

Lifelong friends still barefoot waterski

Bill Shafer

One way to live life to the fullest is to keep looking forward; but as the years roll by, sometimes it's easier to just look back. What's past can be comforting and reassuring. What's ahead can be uncertain and intimidating.

Living in the past can be the beginning of the end. Living in the future can be full of opportunity, possibility and excitement. So how do you resist the lure of looking back and instead turn towards tomorrow? It starts by having good friends and new adventures.

For over 40 years as a surgeon, work has been Dr. Theodore Eisenstat's life. He seldom had any free time. Now 76, he's semi-retired and has more time than he knows what to do with.

"It was a real adjustment," he said. "I could see how easy it would be to just slide into complacency, not do anything and disengage from life."

He said he's seen it with his patients many times. When they retired, he would notice some transition from being active, energetic and engaged to sedentary, purposeless and apathetic. In some cases, even their health would suffer. It became clear to Eisenstat that they needed a prescription — not for medicine, but for socialization.

Friendships are important for your mental wellbeing, and there are physical health benefits as well. According to the American Geriatric Society, people who are socially involved have a 50% chance of outliving those who are alone. Studies have found that dementia is 150% times more common in those who consider themselves lonely.

FIND YOUR TRIBE

Make a list of friends you want to connect with, even if you've been separated by distance or time. Call, mail a card, or plan a video chat to tell them what they mean to you.



Being active socially has been shown to reduce stress, which lowers blood pressure and the risk of heart disease. People with strong friendships seem to recover more quickly from illness. According to the "Journal of the American Geriatric Society," people who are surrounded by friends are less likely to suffer from depression.

Eisenstat found his social connection with a group for which he never had much time when he was a full-time surgeon. They came together over an unusual shared interest: barefoot waterskiing.

"You know, the crazy thing is, we met in Florida at (barefoot skiing legend) Banana George's tournament," recalls Fred Steinbaum. "I said, 'Where are you from?' He said, 'New Jersey,' and I couldn't believe it."

They called themselves the Barefoot Jersey Boys; and in addition to Eisenstat and retired medical oncologist Steinbaum, 77, the group includes medical school Dean Marty Levine, 64, and retired railroad worker Dan "Sparky" Wicks, 61. Together, they began planning annual getaways to Florida where they could ski all day every day. It was there they added Don Simon, 79, of Ocklawaha, Florida; Ron Coonse, 64; Mark Donahue, 54, from Indiana; Jon DeBelic, 55 of Wisconsin and Wayne King, 58, from Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Over the years they became friends and got together whenever they could, anywhere they could put their bare feet on water. At first, it was all about the skiing. But soon it became clear that their friendships were just as important.

"Having each other means a great deal, because there are a lot of days you don't feel like getting out of bed," Levine

said. "But when you know the guys are counting on you to be there at 5:30 a.m., you show up; and boom, you've just spent the whole day on the water."

Watching them spend the day at the lake is like watching teenagers. They are constantly teasing each other, talking smack and boasting of their accomplishments. Most noticeable is all the smiling and laughing that never seems to stop. The physical workout that comes from the rigorous sport of barefoot skiing seems to them to be an unexpected benefit.

"I don't go to the gym," Wicks said. "This is not about trying to stay in shape as we get older. We don't think about getting older, we're just doing what we love."

There are risks when water skiing, and the Barefoot Jersey Boys have had their share of injuries; but it's having each other, socialization, that helps them heal.

"When you do get hurt, there's only one thing on your mind," explains Eisenstat. "How fast can I get back on the water? What do I have to do, and how soon can we get started?"

There's something about being around friends that washes the age away. Still, they all know the clock is ticking; but while they can, they're having so much fun, and staying in such good shape, that they don't have time to worry.

"I don't think about my age, and I don't think I'll ever stop," Steinbaum said. "I know there's a chance I'm going to die on the lake, and that's fine. I'll be doing what I love and surrounded by my friends."

Mother NATURE



Marjory Stoneman Douglas was the patron saint of Florida's Everglades, a diminutive activist with a booming elocution whose presence at a public hearing put fear in the hearts of those who would damage her beloved watershed.

Her 1947 book, *Everglades: River of Grass*, taught the world to love this unique freshwater ecosystem, but it was her environmental crusade in the late twentieth century to save the Everglades that aroused public attention and pushed politicians to protect them.

That she didn't become an activist until she was 79 is remarkable but unsurprising — many female conservationists find their voices in middle age when their energies can be turned toward saving wildlife and fighting pollution.

Rachel Carson was 55 when her groundbreaking book, *Silent Spring*, was published in 1962, spurring the modern environmental movement. Minerva Hoyt was 70 when her beloved California desert became Joshua Tree National Monument, now a national park.

Douglas' life span of 108 years enabled her to become a major force in American environmentalism, rallying citizens to save a precious natural resource that once was considered a scourge to developers' dreams of "progress." Hers is an example of the power of one person to make change—and the fact that it is never too late to get started.

"There are no other Everglades in the world," Douglas declared in the first line of her book, published a month before the dedication of Everglades National Park, now recognized as a World Heritage Site.

With that, she began a long, eloquent description of this wilderness area, describing its geology, ecology and the history of native people as well as European settlement in south Florida. It sold out by the next month, immediately going into additional printing. It remains in print today.

Douglas, a journalist, had a successful writing career

in coming decades, but it wasn't until 1969 that her life took a new turn when she was challenged to get involved in saving the Everglades, then threatened by development, pollution and a scheme to put a jetport in its heart.

It was, she wrote in her 1987 autobiography, *Marjory Stoneman Douglas: Voice of the River*, a new life chapter that "promised to become a reason for things, a central force in my existence at the beginning of my 80th year. Perhaps it had taken me that long to figure out exactly what I was able to contribute, and for me to marshal my forces."

And it all began with a trip to a food mart.

Douglas was aware of the fledgling 1960s environmental movement in Florida, but considered herself a "sympathetic bystander." Then one night in 1969, she stopped to buy cat food and ran into a young woman who was fighting the proposed jetport with activist Joe Browder. Douglas recounted:

"I said, 'I think you and Joe are doing great work. It's wonderful.'" She looked me square in the eye and said, 'Yeah, what are you doing?' 'Oh me?' I said. 'I wrote the book.'"

"'That's not enough,' she countered. 'We need people to help us.' To get out of the conversation, I casually mumbled some platitude like, 'I'll do whatever I can.'"

Browder knocked on her door the next day, asking Douglas to publicly denounce the project. When Douglas replied that such a message would be more effective coming from an organization, she got a new push from Browder: Why didn't she start an organization?

"So, there I was, stuck with a challenge that began as a polite rejoinder in the grocery-store line," she wrote.

After a trip to the jetport site, Douglas was sparked to opposition. While sitting at a book-signing table in November 1969 she talked to Michael Chenoweth, a friend from sailing events. What would he think about an organization, perhaps to be called The Friends of Everglades?

Chenoweth answered by handing Douglas a dollar bill. Douglas recalled: "Now I had not only the idea of an organization to contend with, but also one member and an endowment." And she had a new role as an environmental leader.

The Friends of the Everglades (FOE) became an important grassroots advocacy group that today draws members from across the state.

Author Michael Grunwald writes that Douglas used her "moral authority as the grandmother of the Glades" to press her points, knowing that no one can be rude to "this poor little old woman." But she could be rude to them. In her later years, Douglas' authority and power were evident—politicians from all parties sought her endorsement, and her opinion about pending Everglades legislation held great sway.

By the time of her death in 1998, Douglas had secured her place in history. Through her book and FOE, she left an indelible print on the state's consciousness and on its literal and political landscape.

A year earlier, her name was placed on the Everglades Wilderness Area; it also is found on a Miami elementary school, a state building housing an environmental protection agency and on an education center on Key Biscayne that she helped secure.

More importantly, she inspired future generations of activists to take up her mantle. Her name now also is intertwined in the crusade of the students of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, the site of a February 2018 school shooting that ended 17 lives.

She would be proud of the campaign by teenaged survivors who are challenging the establishment to change gun laws.

"[Douglas] was the matriarch of conservation in Florida and among the giants of conservation in the history of this country," says Clay Henderson, executive director of Stetson University's Institute for Water and Environmental Resilience.

"She lived to see restoration of the Everglades rise to the top of the national agenda," he continues. "Her success was a factor of her sense of history, her ability to communicate effectively and her focus on a single problem over a long period of time. She was the embodiment of the great lure of conservation: that one person can make a difference."

EXPLORE THE
EVERGLADES
FOR YOURSELF



Go to floridastateparks.org
to see all there is to do in this
South Florida National Park.











FLORIDA RESOURCES

BROUGHT TO YOU BY: **Florida Blue**  **MEDICARE**
Your local Blue Cross Blue Shield

This handy list of links and resources will help you get settled into Florida fast!

USEFUL LINKS:

-  **Florida Department of Health**
floridahealth.gov
-  **Florida Emergency Management**
floridadisaster.org/info
-  **Florida State Parks & Recreation**
floridastateparks.org
-  **Things in Florida to See & Do**
visitflorida.com
-  **Florida Travel Information**
stateofflorida.com/travel-information
-  **Florida Facts & Figures**
stateofflorida.com/facts
-  **Florida History**
history.com/topics/us-states/florida
-  **Florida Suspicious Activity Report**
sar.fdle.state.fl.us

Mark Your Calendar for Hurricane Season

June 1 - Nov 30
Be prepared and make a plan! Read up on hurricanes and how to protect yourself and your property.
floridadisaster.org/hazards/hurricanes

REMEMBER!

Within the first few weeks after moving to Florida, you'll also need to ensure the following:

- ✓ Update your Driver's License or identification card, and register your vehicle in the state of Florida:
flhsmv.gov
- ✓ Register to vote in Florida:
registertovoteflorida.gov
- ✓ Update your new address with the post office
usa.gov/post-office
- ✓ Update your address with the IRS
irs.gov/forms-instructions
- ✓ Update your address with the Social Security Administration
ssa.gov/myaccount
- ✓ Also make sure to update your address with your insurance providers, your bank and credit card companies, and any other online or individual service providers
- ✓ And—if you're a pet owner, make sure your pets are registered in your new county!

CAT Tale

The Wild, Weird Battle to Save the Florida Panther

The panther ran as fast as it could. The dogs gave chase, plowing through the underbrush, howling with delight. This was what they were bred to do, to sniff out and chase down big cats like this one. Their master, the tall man in the cowboy hat, would be pleased.

The female panther they pursued was a scrawny thing, seriously underweight. It wasn't strong enough to keep the chase going long. Finally it leaped onto a tree trunk and clawed its way up onto a branch, then stopped to look down.

The dogs circled the trunk, their eyes trained on their quarry up above, breathing heavily. Then the cat heard more noises approaching — a group of humans, all but one of them men.

One of the men climbed partway up the tree with a gun, then raised it, and fired. The cat flinched. A dart hit it in the leg and everything went dark.

Then the cat was falling.

When it hit the ground, it didn't move again. One of the men, and then the lone woman, bent over it. They put their lips on the panther's hairy mouth, blowing their breath into its lungs, trying to revive it with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

They were too late.

The most important Florida panther that ever lived is the one that's in a glass case in the R.A. Gray Building in downtown Tallahassee. It's just a couple of floors up from a towering mastodon skeleton on display in the Florida State Museum.

Tallahassee is not the place you'd ever expect to see a panther. It's too far north, for one thing. Plus it's Florida's state capital, its seat of government. That means that instead of cypress trees and wild palms and thick stands of



palmetto, you've got lots of marble office buildings and sidewalks and pavement and parking garages.

The museum is low-key but impressive, what with the mastodon skeleton and other displays about Florida history. But all that's downstairs. To see the panther, you've got to ride the elevator up to the State Archives, where it stands alone outside the entrance.

The first time I saw it, I thought it was a statue. Not a very good statue, mind you. It looked like one made by an enthusiastic but unskilled amateur working with inferior materials. Not until later did I realize that this had been an actual panther, a seventy-pound female that once prowled South Florida's swamps and forests, its shoulders rolling like the waves on the ocean, its tail twitching restlessly, its topaz eyes stretched wide to detect any movement in the surrounding darkness.

Now it was stuffed and mounted, its limbs stiff, its eyes glass.

Adapted from Cat Tale @ 2020 by Craig Pittman, used with permission by Hanover Square Press/HarperCollins.

fotoguy22/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Medicare Resources

5 Important Points to Understand about Medicare

- 1

We all want to live, longer, healthier and more active lives!
- 2

But let's be honest.
No matter how healthy our lifestyle choices are, we will all experience health setbacks as we age.
- 3

Health care is better than ever...that's great news!
But it's also more expensive than ever and that's not going to change.
- 4

We all need great health insurance and have to understand what Medicare does and does not cover and what additional coverage options are available:
Medicare Part A, Part B, Part C, Part D
- 5

What plan is best for you?
What makes one plan better than another?
We believe that the most important differentiator in the entire industry is access to Growing Bolder's complete Medicare resource platform. It's designed to help lower your health care costs, help keep you at your healthiest, and help you recover quicker and more fully from sickness or injury.



Who can get Medicare and how do you enroll?

You must meet one of the following requirements to be eligible for Medicare.

- ▶ You are age 65 or older, a U.S. citizen or a permanent U.S. resident and have lived in the U.S. continuously for five years prior to applying.
- ▶ You are younger than 65 with a qualifying disability.
- ▶ You are any age with a diagnosis of end-stage renal disease or ALS.

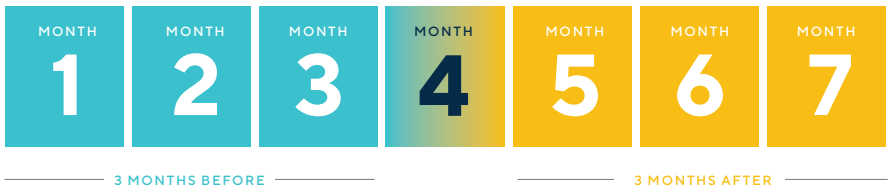
Created in 1965, Medicare started with just two parts — Part A and Part B — which are explained on page 18. Later on, additional parts — Part C and Part D — were added as the needs of Medicare beneficiaries changed.

When can I enroll?

INITIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD (IEP)

When you become eligible for Medicare, you can enroll in Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage or Prescription Drug plan during the 7 month period surrounding your 65th birthday. Which includes the month of your birthday and the three months before and after the month of your birthday.

The month you turn 65



Special Enrollment Period

If you've recently moved, you may qualify to enroll in or switch Medicare Advantage plans. **Hurry—you only have 60 days to consider which plan is right for you.**

ANNUAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD (AEP)

Every year, from October 15 through December 7, you can switch, drop or join the Medicare Advantage, Medicare Supplement or Medicare Prescription Drug Plan of your choosing. You can also enroll in Original Medicare. Your plan selection becomes effective January 1 of the following year.

OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD (OEP)

OEP runs January 1 through March 31. During this period, if you are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan, you are allowed to make a one-time election to go to another MA plan or to Original Medicare. If you enroll in Original Medicare, you may also purchase a Medicare Supplement and/or a Prescription Drug Plan.

Note: This is not a guaranteed-issue enrollment period for Medicare Supplement plans.

AEP begins



OEP begins



DID YOU KNOW
THAT YOU CAN MAKE
CHANGES TO YOUR PLAN
WHEN YOU MOVE?

FLORIDA ADVENTURES

Growing Bolder

Florida and adventure are synonymous, depending on your comfort level. We won't include the big theme parks because they're too obvious, but we will include experiences that may not be on everyone's radar screen.

You can swim with manatees or take a dark plunge into the Blue Springs, where the only sound you will hear is the breath you take in and out of your regulator.

No need to wrestle with an alligator, but you will wrestle with so many enticing choices to satisfy your adventurous spirit.

Take the plunge at Blue Springs

📍 **Orange City** | 🌐 floridastateparks.org

Located about an hour east of Orlando, Blue Springs State Park has a wonderful view of manatees during the cold weather months. It also has something more appealing for scuba divers -- taking a deep plunge in the cave at the springs, which discharges around 100 million gallons of 72-degree water daily. It's not a dive for newbies or anyone with a touch of claustrophobia.

The maximum depth is 111-120ft/34-37m, and the average visibility is 91-100ft/28-30m. The deeper you go, the darker it gets. You can snorkel as well but it's obviously a different experience.

There are significant safety restrictions in place, including proof of certification and a mandatory dive buddy.

Please note that the spring run at Blue Spring State Park is closed to all water activities for manatee season until March 31.

Under the Sea

📍 **Key Largo** | 🌐 jul.com

Ever thought what it would be like to live in an aquarium?

Grab your scuba gear and head on down to Key Largo, home to Jules' Undersea Lodge, one of the world's only underwater hotels. How's this for a dramatic check-in? You can scuba dive to your room.

It's only 30-feet deep, so it's an easy plunge for divers.

"I felt like an 8-year-old coming up from the moon-pool and emerging into the undersea pressurized habitat complete with WiFi," wrote one reviewer.

They even offer underwater pizza and warm meatball sub deliveries.

So kick back and enjoy the quintessential room with a view.

Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum

📍 **Key West** | 🌐 hemingwayhome.com

Ok, maybe you need to dial it down a bit? (see above).

Take a stroll back in time at the Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum in Key West. You not only come to gather more info on one of the greatest American writers of all-time (Ernest Hemingway). You come for the cats. Lots of them.

According to the home and museum site, "The cats about the home and grounds are descendants of the cats [Hemingway] kept while he lived in the house, including many extra-toed."

There are between 40-50 polydactyl (six-toed) cats on the property.

Hemingway house was built in 1851, with Hemingway taking ownership in 1931. He wrote in this space for a decade.

Go Gators

📍 **Orlando** | 🌐 gatorland.com

OK, you may want to file this one under "cheesy," but oh what fun. You don't have to wrestle an alligator because Gatorland lets the pros do it.

Gatorland -- a 110-acre theme park in Central Florida -- is home to thousands of alligators and crocodiles and does offer a bit of a thrill ride: a zip line attraction that lets you fly above the alligators and crocs.

They include giant white alligators at the White Gator Swamp, which features two of only 12 leucistic alligators known to exist in the world today.

Swim with the Manatees

📍 **Crystal River** | 🌐 discovercrystalriverfl.com

Florida has two sweet spots when it comes to swimming with manatees, including the Blue Springs. But the better half is on the Crystal River. Make sure to go when it's cool (January through March) and you will be treated to the world's largest population of endangered manatees along King's Bay Wildlife Refuge.

The area abounds with guided tour operators, including those offering snorkeling tours.

Besides the manatees, you will encounter a rich estuary filled with birds, fish and wildlife.

And it's a one-of-a-kind adventure: Those two spots are the only places you can legally swim with manatees in Florida.

Light up the waters

📍 **Mosquito Bay** | 🌐 adayawaykayaktours.com

"You Can Paddle Through Florida's Bioluminescent Waters in a See-through Kayak," reads a headline in Travel + Leisure.

Do we need to say more? That should cover it, but here are the details:

This experience along Florida's Space Coast is seasonal (summer months only) offers kayakers and paddleboarders the chance to see waters come alive in bright glowing colors.

The word "bioluminescence" -- the biochemical emission of light by living organisms such as fireflies and deep-sea fishes -- is simply referred to as "nature's glow sticks."

The best spots include the Banana River, the Indian River, and Mosquito Lagoon. Added bonuses may include spotting dolphins, manatees and views of the Kennedy Space Center.

Most tours range from one hour to an hour and a half. Several companies run Bioluminescent tours in the area.

Drivers, start your engines

📍 **Daytona Beach** | 🌐 nascarracingexperience.com

So you want to be a Speed Racer?

You can experience the exhilarating rush of speed along Daytona International Speedway's tri-oval with the Richard Petty Driving Experience.

Although The King won't be there himself to guide you through, qualified professionals are there to take you through every step if you want to get behind the wheel. There are less "exhilarating" options if you simply sign up for a ride-along.

Either way you'll get a live look at the famed 2.5-mile tri-oval speedway with 31 degrees of banking in the turns.

You can rev up a 600-pound stock car to go as fast as 145 miles per hour.

#SpeedRush. Buckle up.



GREETINGS FROM THE SUNSHINE STATE

Did you know?

- Approximately 1,000 people move into Florida each day. (It's the place to be!)
- Growing Bolder is the media company that is rebranding aging and providing the inspiration and resources to make the rest of your life the best of your life, headquartered in Orlando.
- Florida accounts for about 40% of the world's orange supply.
- Florida has over 1200 golf courses, more than any other state.
- Walt Disney World Resort is located in Florida in the city of Orlando, and is the largest resort in the world—with an annual attendance of over 58 million people annually!
- Key West has the highest average temperature in the entire United States. Need a drink to beat the heat? It also holds more bars per capita than any other town in the entire country.
- Florida is the flattest overall of all 50 states, and also has the lowest high point.
- Beach lovers, rejoice—you are never more than 60 miles from the ocean in Florida.
- Suntan lotion, Gatorade, the first modern day PC, and ATMs all first originated in Florida.
- Florida possesses the only living coral barrier reef in any state.
- In terms of geographic area, Jacksonville is the largest city in the entire country.
- There is an estimated 2 trillion dollars worth of lost treasure within 60 miles of Florida's coastline.



ORANGE
BLOSSOM

STATE FLOWER



MOCKINGBIRD

STATE BIRD



FLORIDA
PANTHER

STATE ANIMAL



SABAL PALM

STATE TREE

Dog lovers *ReToice!*

Paws up on Florida's dog parks

Must. Love. Dogs.

Need we say more? They are family. Upwards of 63 million households in the United States own at least one dog, with the overall number of dogs owned pushing 90 million.

Those numbers are rough estimates, but it's obvious that plenty of people like a face-lick along with a cup of coffee in the morning. So what to do when your furry friend gives you a look that says, "I want to play, Dad" or "Let's have some fun, Mom."

We got this. Check out some of the best dog parks in Florida that offer green or sandy spaces to co-mingle with new furry friends and plenty of places for dogs to do their business (please remember those poop bags).

And an important cautionary note: dog parks can be a great experience. But they can also be traumatic if dogs get aggressive and out of control. Be aware of your dog's disposition with other dogs and respect the space around you.



Lake Baldwin Park

📍 Winter Park

Welcome to 23.16-acres of pet paradise. Formerly known as Fleet Peeples Park, this is one of only two Orlando city parks that features a sandy beach.

Amenities include two pavilions, more than two dozen picnic tables, benches, a dock, boat ramp and a restroom. "From the exercise trail through the double-gated entries, this dog park focuses on good clean access and safe fun," wrote a reviewer on tripadvisor.com.

"The parking is nicely shaded by old oaks, there are drinking stations, beach lake access, and a cleaning stand at the main exit to get the worst of the sand or mud off. There are acres of mixed terrain for dogs to run and socialize in, with limited seating for humans when you wear down from the high energy level." It's a dog's life for sure!

Fort De Soto Park

📍 Tierra Verde

What's not to like about 1,100 acres along the Gulf of Mexico shoreline, bracketed by mangroves, wetlands, and hardwood forests?

Located just south of Tampa and St. Petersburg, Fort De Soto Park was named America's Top Beach by Trip Advisor in 2009. It features 300 yards of beach for swimming and off-leash play. Amenities include doggie water fountains, water hoses and a concession stand.

"This park was a great find!," wrote a reviewer on bringfido.com. "Beautiful area with mostly friendly people and animals. The fenced areas are a good size, the dog wash is a nice bonus."

A bonus for nature lovers: the park's natural ecosystems feature more than 328 species of birds.

Jonathan Dickinson State Park

📍 Martin County

Check out K-9 Corner at Tequesta Park, a doggie paradise about a quarter acre inside Jonathan Dickinson State Park, close to the Jupiter Lighthouse.

Your dog can run along the sand, go digging (yeah!) and then roll around in the sand. So be it. Take a blanket to wipe the sandy stuff off and all is good.

The entire park is quite expansive – 45 acres – and leashes are required everywhere else except K-9 corner.

There are plenty of benches and shady areas for humans and doggies to chill, as waste stations and faucets. It is recommended that you bring your own bowl.

Amelia Earhart Bark Park

📍 Hialeah

The coolest feature about this park is that there are separate play areas for big dogs and little dogs.

Located just outside Miami in the city of Hialeah, this 515-acre "Bark Park" features a lush five-acre fenced-in dog park divided into sections. That's a huge plus for dog owners, especially those with smaller breeds who may be fearful of bigger dogs.

Amenities include benches, play equipment, picnic tables and drinking fountains.

Several other activities are available, including The Miami Watersports Complex (MWC) that offers cable wakeboarding, boat wakeboarding wake-surfing, waterskiing, kneeboarding, and paddle boarding.

Bonita Springs Dog Park

📍 Bonita Springs

One size does not fit all with this dog park that encompasses more than six acres. Don't let the small size lead you to misconceptions. Bonita Springs is a big deal.

There are fenced areas for three sizes of dogs: under 25 pounds, 25-50 pounds, and 50+ pounds. Better yet, there is ocean access for your pooch to cool off.

"The beach is absolutely stunningly beautiful and worthy of a visit in its own right," wrote a reviewer on tripadvisor.com. "Beyond that though is the fact that it is a fully dog friendly beach and virtually everyone who uses it brings their dog(s) along. The result is a joyous canine carnival of dogs having the collective time of their life in the sea."

Amenities include a covered pavilion, dog washing station, picnic tables, benches, and an asphalt multi-use path.

Go take a hike along Florida's pristine trails

Growing Bolder

Grab your hiking boots or sneakers. We're going to take a hike. Even without the majestic mountains of some other states, Florida is rich with natural beauty that can be explored with your walking feet. Scenic hikes abound, whether you're in for a few miles or more adventuresome. Here are five of our favorites nestled in the heart of our state parks:



Everglades National Park

📍 **Homestead** | 🌐 nps.gov/ever/index.htm

Where to start in a park that includes 1.5 million acres of subtropical wilderness in South Florida? The park is home to hundreds of animal species, coastal mangroves, sawgrass marshes and pine flatwoods. Many options abound along this expansive park, but one of our favorites is the Anhinga Trail.

This one is short and breezy (0.8 miles total) but it packs a lot to take in as you mosey along: a self-guiding trail winds through a sawgrass marsh that features alligators, turtles, anhingas, herons, egrets and a variety of other birds, especially during the winter.

The abundance of wildlife makes it a must-see.

Little Talbot Island State Park

📍 **Jacksonville** | 🌐 floridastateparks.org

Located in Jacksonville, this gem encompasses a five-mile stretch that includes ancient dunes, pristine beaches and a secluded barrier island.

Your activity options include kayaking, beachcombing, fishing, hiking and surfing. Please note that you are in North Florida, so the beach will be flat, hard packed and grayish in color.

As one reviewer noted, it's a "great place to become one with nature, it's like your own private beach."

Ocala National Forest

📍 **North Central Florida** | 🌐 fs.usda.gov/ocala

Be prepared to consider a long stretch of options. You're looking at 673 miles of land, multiple trails and a whole host of scenic opportunities.

Situated north of Orlando, the area is known for its large sand pine scrub forest. Wanna get wet? Check out the Juniper Springs, Alexander Springs and Salt Springs recreation areas that feature natural pools and canoe runs.

Recommended options include the Francis Trail (7.8 miles). A moderately trafficked loop trail located near DeLand, it features live oaks and cabbage palms. The hike is considered moderate.

Another excellent spot is the Hopkins Prairie, with views including live oaks covered in moss. It is also excellent for birding, with areas occupied by songbirds and wading birds.

Bulow Creek State Park

📍 **Ormond Beach** | 🌐 floridastateparks.org

We're talking expansive. Located north of Ormond Beach, Bulow Creek encompasses nearly 5,600 acres, more than 1,500 of which are submerged lands.

There are seven trails. So where to start? Check out Bulow Woods Loop.

Located near Flagler Beach, this 5.3-mile loop stretch features beautiful wildflowers and appropriate for all skill levels. It features plenty of shade, but also can be wet and humid and buggy. It is considered one of North Florida's most scenic hikes.

Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park (Micanopy)

📍 **Gainesville** | 🌐 www.floridastateparks.org

Located just outside Gainesville, this park is a time-trusted favorite.

You had us at "wild horses," that you can see along some trails, along with buffalo. You'll get the obligatory gator photo op as well.

As a reviewer noted, it offers "breathtaking prairie views reminiscent of the west. We saw white-tailed deer, wild horses, green and brown anole lizards, a ribbon snake, spiders, many species of plants and a variety of unusual and beautiful fungi and lichens."

There's an observation tower as well, so bring those binoculars.

KAYAKING FLORIDA

Leslie Kemp Poole

The paddle dips into the water and worries evaporate, replaced by tranquility. Ahhhhh. This is the gift of kayaking in Florida in the time of COVID-19 — a prescription to ease the mind and soul during a period of uncertainty and frustration. Admittedly, one doesn't need a pandemic as an excuse to head out on a kayak to enjoy the state's marvelous rivers and lakes.

You just need the time and a great destination.

Across the state, there are myriad watery escapes, from clear, spring-fed rivers to brown, tannic-colored streams, to coastal mangrove tunnels to sandy islands that recharge one's spirit and put the "pause" button on a hectic schedule. There may be overhead flights of swallow-tailed kites and roseate spoonbills or splashing otters and lumbering manatees.

Florida offers year-round paddling opportunities with unforgettable experiences best encountered by canoe or kayak. Here are a few scenic suggestions.

Note: Contact sites before heading out because some may be closed periodically or have restricted hours due to health or weather issues.

4 Waterways to Explore This Summer

Dr. Julian G. Bruce St. George Island State Park

📍 [St. George Island](#) | 🌐 floridastateparks.org

Inhale the briny air while paddling along this 22-mile barrier island off Florida's Forgotten Coast near Apalachicola. The park, located at the eastern tip of the island, offers aquamarine waters and white beaches so fine that the sand squeaks. Rent a canoe or kayak at the park's ranger station and paddle leisurely along the calmer bayside north of the island. Be on the lookout for varied bird life, schools of fish and rolling dolphin.

Wekiwa Springs State Park

📍 [Apopka](#) | 🌐 floridastateparks.org

This is one of the outstanding gems of the state park system and is located just north of Orlando. Get a boat at the concession office and head into the Wekiva River (Wekiva=river, Wekiwa=spring) for brief or hours-long excursions on this beloved, popular waterway. You are likely to see alligators, turtles and wading birds along the way. Afterward, swim and snorkel in the crystalline spring that feeds the river or hike along miles of upland trails. Canoe and kayak rentals are available at the concession, Wekiwa Springs State Park Nature Adventures. For information on rentals and fees, see Nature Adventures at canoewekiva.com or call 407-884-4311.

Everglades National Park

📍 [Homestead](#) | 🌐 nps.gov/ever/index.htm

A great way to experience one of the most biodiverse places on the planet is by water. Everglades National Park is a 1.5 million-acre paradise for paddlers, birders, hikers and fishing enthusiasts who flock here from across the globe. Use one of the park-approved tour guides from the park website and enjoy aquatic exploring that might reveal rare American crocodiles, threatened manatees and countless birds. More than 360 species have been observed in the park.

Weedon Island Preserve

📍 [St. Petersburg](#) | 🌐 weedonislandpreserve.org

This 3,190-acre natural area on Tampa Bay offers an easy escape from urban chaos into a wonderland of salt marshes and wildlife. The park concessionaire offers rentals, but you can bring your own to explore 4 miles of shaded mangrove tunnels (be sure it's high tide) and bay views. Back on shore, enjoy the preserve's cultural and natural history center with exhibits about the local ecosystem and native people that lived here for thousands of years.



BEST *ice cream* SHOPS IN FLORIDA

Growing Bolder



I scream, you scream—ice cream! It qualifies as a comfort food, no doubt, especially in these socially distant times. Florida has plenty of wonderful mom-and-pop places to satisfy your sweet tooth, but here are five of the best scattered throughout the Sunshine State.

Azucar Ice Cream Factory

📍 Miami | 🌐 azucaricecream.com

The Latin flair usually includes something out of the ordinary, so how about cream cheese and guava in an ice cream?

Located in the heart of Little Havana, Azucar has a menu that changes daily but includes standards with quirky names.

Will you have the Willy Cherino (bourbon ice cream with dark cherries)? El Mani Loco (crazy peanut), or the Burn in Hell, Fidel! featuring the shop's homemade chocolate ice cream with a huge kick of cayenne?

Some flavors are seasonal. Some only last a day. Catch 'em while you can.

Kelly's Homemade Ice Cream

📍 Orlando | 🌐 kellyshomemadeicecream.com

If you see a line along Corrine Drive in Orlando's Audubon Park district, chances are there's a sweet tooth connected to it.

The folks at Kelly's Homemade Ice Cream are the best in town. We'll start – and probably can end – with the banana pudding ice cream (we'll pause while you wipe the drool off your face).

The emphasis is homemade, with our sincerest apologies to all the fine folks who offer very good chain ice cream menus. There is something about homemade that captures our taste buds, and Kelly's is the real deal.

They mix up their menu, so every day is a new burst of flavor. Mexican Chocolate, cake batter and cherry vanilla ice cream are among other favorites. They also have dairy-free and sorbet choices.

The store at Corrine is the original one, but they've opened another location on Ferncreek Avenue.

Dairy Joy

📍 Tampa | 🌐 dairyjoytampa.com

Bring your taste buds to this shop on Manhattan Avenue in Tampa, which one reviewer called a "hidden wonderland."

Dairy Joy has been serving the Tampa Bay area since 1958, although it's been under new ownership since December 2018.

Known for its soft serve ice cream and banana splits, Dairy Joy now has a whipped cream machine for milkshakes. The menu now covers an entire spectrum of tasty treats – ice cream, soft serve, sundaes, boat sundaes, snow cones, and shakes.

Fun retro vibe includes a statue of Elvis, thank you very much.

Abracadabra Ice Cream Factory

📍 Kissimmee | 🌐 abracadabraicecream.com

This local gem is famous for its special ingredient: The ice cream is mixed and frozen in nitrogen after you order it.

"The temperature can reach 328 degrees below zero," owners John and Becky Gramley say on their website. "We are able to freeze your custom ice cream creation right before your eyes. Everyone loves the quick little magic show as our 'Magic Clouds' flow across the countertop creating an exciting experience for all."

Favorites include Coquito (Almonds, Cinnamon, Coconut Milk and Nutella) Funky Monkey (Bananas, Nutella and Walnuts), Godfather (Cheesecake, Chocolate Chips and Graham Cracker), and Carebear (Blue Raspberry, Cotton Candy and Gummy Bears).

Bonus: A welcoming family atmosphere includes a bouncy house for kids (for all paying customers).

Pink Pelican Ice Cream Bar

📍 Panama City Beach | 🌐 pinkpelicanpcb.com

You had us at chocolate hurricane (dark chocolate with a chocolate ribbon and dark chocolate flakes). As one satisfied customer said, "It is the stuff of dreams."

That's among the 40 flavors of ice cream offered at Pink Pelican, which include other favorites like mint chip, cookie monster, blackberry, and circus (cotton candy with gummy bears).

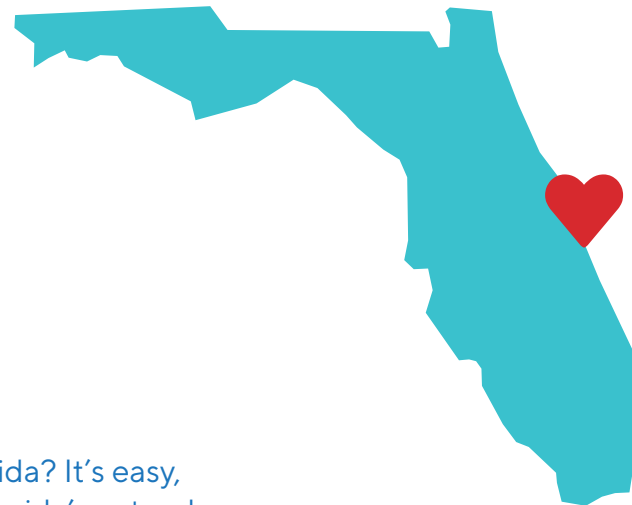
Some of the flavors are rotated seasonally.

Top it off with a Mindsweeper espresso drink, which includes a shot (or two or three ... whatever you choose) of espresso, blended with coffee ice cream and milk.

Romantic Florida

Growing Bolder

Wanna get away for a romantic interlude in Florida? It's easy, despite the logistical restrictions of Covid-19. Florida's natural beauty and beaches provide welcoming pit stops across the state for locals and tourists, so please note these are only five favorites among a list that could span into the hundreds. Just consider it a microcosm of "Romantic Florida."



Little Palm Island Resort & Spa, A Noble House Resort

📍 **Little Torch Key** | 🌐 littlepalmisland.com

Located 27 miles northeast of Key West, this resort offers a cozy romantic interlude for couples who value quality time: no TVs, no Wi-Fi access, no telephones.

The resort is only accessible by seaplane or boat (the latter covered by the 12.5 percent daily resort fee). Accommodations include British West Indies-inspired bungalow suites, vaulted ceilings, plantation shutters, private decks and indoor-outdoor showers.

"This is Thurston Howell III's version of Gilligan's Island," a reviewer wrote on tripadvisor.com.

If you are looking to get away from everyday stress, especially in these pandemic times, check it out.

Be prepared for a bit of sticker shock. Nightly rates can hover in the \$1,800 range and up.

The Don CeSar

📍 **St. Pete Beach** | 🌐 doncesar.com

Known as Florida's "Pink Palace," the iconic Don CeSar was built in 1928 at the tail end of the first Florida boom. F. Scott Fitzgerald was among its early guests.

It's definitely the place for lovebirds, newlyweds, and marriage ceremonies.

It now includes 277 luxurious rooms (and 36 suites), many with stunning views of Gulf beaches or Boca Ciega Bay.

Some of the culinary highlights for guests include the crab cake sandwich at Rowe Bar and The Un-Berrybull cocktail with fresh fruit.

The hotel has undergone some challenges in 2020 with the pandemic and renovations for all the rooms, but the good news is that it's still standing and remains a Florida favorite.

Rates can vary by hundreds of dollars but lower prices hover around \$250 per night.

White Orchid Inn & Spa

📍 **Flagler Beach** | 🌐 whiteorchidinn.com

Although only rated a three-star hotel, we would like to call this one a "hidden gem."

It's a cozy, little enclave, just an eight-minute walk to the Flagler Beach Municipal Pier, but you might want to stay awhile.

White Orchid features two outdoor pools, a full-service spa, and massage/treatment rooms. There are only seven rooms available, some including hot tubs and poster beds.

A two-night stay is required. Low season rates are \$162, with a high season rate of \$289.00.

Port d'Hiver Bed and Breakfast

📍 **Melbourne Beach** | 🌐 portdhiver.com

The Port d'Hiver is set in a 1916 house situated across the street from the beach along the Atlantic Ocean. "Port D'Hiver offers 10 charming rooms and a bougainvillea-filled courtyard that creates a warm, inviting atmosphere," says a review in U.S. News & World Report.

Amenities include afternoon wine reception, an onsite fitness center, outdoor fire pit and a bubbling spa pool in lush tropical landscaping.

It also provides freshly baked cookies all day with light bites. Rooms include poster beds, spa tubs and porches.

Prices fluctuate, with lower pricing around \$290.

The Palms Hotel & Spa

📍 **Miami Beach** | 🌐 thepalmshotel.com

You can't have romance if you don't include the sex and the sizzle of Miami Beach.

"An oceanfront sanctuary in the heart of Miami Beach," the Palms is a quaint boutique hotel with a great beachfront location. Amenities and ambiance include a colonial flair that features a lush tropical garden oasis with secluded relaxation areas. Or as the website touts, "tropical serenity."

Rooms are cozy and high-tech functional with flat-screen TVs, AVEDA toiletries, coffee makers and iPod docks.

Average daily rates are between \$209 and \$473.



The Challenge of Aging in Place

Why it takes a village

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.” — MARGARET J. WHEATLEY

The older we get, the more important social interactions become to our overall health and wellbeing. Even with adequate finances, living alone without a social support circle seriously threatens healthy aging. In fact, low social interaction has the same effect on mortality as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Young people age 16-24 who are neither employed nor in school are classified as “disconnected youth” and deemed high-risk for depression, sickness, violence and suicide. The same is true for disconnected adults. But once we reach our 70s and 80s, social isolation is viewed more as an unfortunate but acceptable fact of life than as a dangerous and preventable situation.

Today, more than 40% of women over age 65 live alone. Consequently, planning where and with whom to retire may be as important as planning for how much it will cost. A retirement home in the mountains may sound appealing. But living in a remote location may mean a life of isolation without an adequate network of friends and the ability to connect with them.

The answer to the question, “Who will I have lunch with?” is a good indicator of the strength of your social network—not the social network of “friends” that you might have online, but friends whom you see face-to-face on a regular basis. These relationships, and the ability to maintain them, are critical to a healthy and active lifestyle.

For companies in the rapidly growing active-adult or age-restricted community-development space, the task is clear and the need is immediate. These communities are no longer places to withdraw and cocoon. They should be viewed as “launchpads to what’s next.”

The top active-adult communities appear to be in an all-out arms race to offer the best amenities—pools, gyms and even sports bars. While these perks are important, planners and developers should increase their focus on programs that help residents gain the skills necessary to pursue and monetize their passions in the years and decades ahead. These programs should provide opportunities for meaningful and exceptional experience. Younger adults might be interested in collecting Depression glass or movie memorabilia, but older adults are interested in collecting experiences.

Adults age 55 and older are among the most entrepreneurial of all. I’ve suggested to several active-adult communities that they create an on-campus business incubator in which experts from the community visit regularly to provide guidance on developing business strategies, writing business plans, raising capital, understanding trademark law and other topics.

Other how-to programs might include monetizing the internet, writing and publishing an e-book, understanding social media, learning Photoshop, joining the gig economy, running a nonprofit from your apartment, promoting a blog and marketing on Facebook. Also intriguing would be, for example, an App of the Week Club or a VR/AR (Virtual Reality/ Augmented Reality) Club. The ideas and the opportunities to create meaningful programs that are true differentiators are everywhere.

I feel the most important program of all is “The Art of Growing Bolder.” Every senior-living community in the world should be offering some kind of framework for changing belief systems, creating a culture of yes and enabling the pursuit of passion and purpose.

Every community has the potential to be a great place to live. But a successful active-adult or senior-living community can’t be isolated from the larger community around it. Seclusion and solitude represent a romanticized vision of retirement that isn’t conducive to health or happiness.

Peaceful isolation is something we should pursue on occasion—but it’s a terrible prescription for long-term daily living. The best active-adult and senior-living communities provide easy access to everything: groceries, entertainment, dining, intergenerational socialization, volunteer opportunities, public transportation, healthcare, banking services and more. It’s all about walkability and connectivity.



The best things
in life aren’t things.



Thomas Barwick via Getty Images

FIND YOUR TRIBE



Finding your tribe means connecting to a group through a shared interest. This makes it easy to feel included and get to meet many new people, because you have at least one thing in common from the start!

FOR MORE DAILY MEMES:

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TV

New season coming to public TV this fall. Check local listings: GrowingBolder.com/TV



Podcast

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Monthly Digital Magazine

Opportunity to receive our monthly digital publication full of inspiration, motivation, tools, and resources.



Live

Watch What's Next, live on Facebook and YouTube every Friday at 10 am ET



Gaming

Twitch users 50+ are the fastest growing community on the platform. Visit our Twitch channel to find your tribe at Twitch.tv/GrowingBolder.

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