

Age-Friendly Festival – October 28

The Age-Friendly Festival will be a celebration of lifelong well-being in our region. This community event aspires to connect people of all ages. Individuals and exhibitors from businesses, government, nonprofits, and the media will share information on a variety of topics that optimize community assets and enhance quality of life. The Festival will feature exhibits, education, experiences, and entertainment highlighting Arts & Culture, Health & Wellness, and Livability Options. There will be free, live entertainment and food for purchase throughout the day.

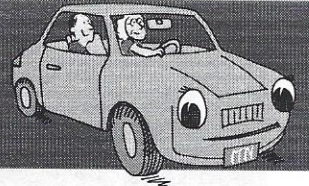
The Age-Friendly Festival will take place on Saturday, October 28 from 9 am to 4 pm at the Sarasota Fairgrounds and is presented by The Patterson Foundation as a gift to the community. ITN SunCoast will provide free rides to the Festival for any of our members.

South Sarasota County Advisory Council **Your Help is Needed!**

In response to the increasing number of rides being requested from Venice, Nokomis, Englewood and North Port, we are looking for people to serve on ITN SunCoast's new South Sarasota County Advisory Council. The Advisory Council will meet twice a year for 2 to 3 hours and will serve as a sounding board for the ITN staff and our Board of Directors. Our existing Advisory Council has been meeting in Sarasota over the past two years and been very valuable to us. The new Advisory Council will meet in South Sarasota County. If you are interested in learning more, call Arthur at 941-364-7530.

Connect2Affect.Org from AARP

AARP has launched a major initiative to look at social connectedness among older adults and to end social isolation. Their web site, connect2affect.org, is an excellent source of information on the research they have conducted, finding help and volunteer opportunities. The web site also includes a self-assessment: Is Isolation Affecting Me? Check it out and let us know what you think.



Record Month at ITN SunCoast

In August, we set a new ITN SunCoast record for the most rides we provided in one month. Our members received 1401 rides that easily eclipsed the previous record of 1268 set this past March. At this rate we will easily surpass providing over 15,000 rides in 2017. This clearly shows that our service is needed and appreciated and we are providing an increasing number of rides in Venice, North Port, and Bradenton. Hats off to Rich and Dana in our office for managing the delivery of these rides and to our great group of volunteer and paid drivers!!

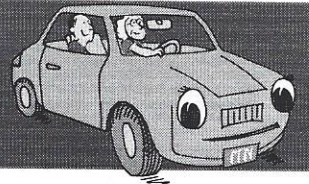
Save the Date – December 5th **2nd Annual Community Awareness Luncheon**

On December 5 at The Meadows Country Club, we will be holding our 2nd Annual Community Awareness Luncheon. Our theme this year is “Ending Social Isolation” and our keynote speaker is Dr. Richard Luker. Rich, a social psychologist and researcher, has been studying American life for more than 25 years, most notably regarding trends in positive aging and vitality. While best known for his creation of the ESPN Sports Poll in 1994, his research on American community resulted in the book “Simple Community,” which reveals how important community is in keeping older adults engaged and feeling vital. The luncheon program will also include recognition of our 2017 Volunteer of the Year and an ITN SunCoast update. More information on the luncheon coming soon.

We are looking for individual and business sponsors for the luncheon. So, please let us know if you or someone you know might be interested. Thank you!

FL Department of Transportation Research

FYI, the latest research from the Florida Department of Transportation indicates that we are outliving our ability to drive by an increasing margin. The current statistics are that women outlive their ability to drive by 10 years and men by 7 years. That's why ITN SunCoast is here – to support you in living joyful and meaningful lives when driving yourself is not safe or practical.



Let's Go Places! Update

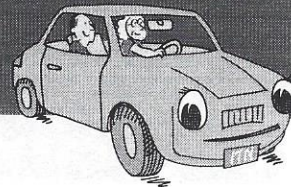
Let's Go Places! popularity continues to grow. The number of individuals going on Let's Go Places! rides is increasing and we expect the pace to pick up in the fall. We continue to make adjustments to the program as we get comments and suggestions from people who use the service. Please continue to let us know what you think of Let's Go Places! and let us know where you want to go! Also, please review the calendar of activities for the next month that is included with this newsletter and share the calendar with a friend. Remember, you do not need to be an ITN SunCoast member to get a Let's Go Places! ride.

Looking for Donors for Magnetic Signs

In response to comments made by a number of our riders, we are in the process of raising the funds needed to purchase two kinds of magnetic signs. Refrigerator magnets with our office and emergency phone numbers will make it easier for our members to contact us. Magnetic signs that say ITN SunCoast will be placed on the sides of our drivers' cars to make it easier for our riders to identify their rides. We need to raise \$350 to purchase the refrigerator magnets and \$725 for the magnetic signs for the cars. Please contact us if you are able to help!

Watch for Our Volunteer Driver Recruitment Campaign

One of our biggest challenges is finding more volunteer drivers. This is especially the situation as the increase in ride requests we receive continues to grow rapidly. We are extremely grateful to the **Venice Gondolier Sun** for running our community service write-up requesting volunteer drivers over the past few months. We got more new volunteer drivers in the Venice area during this period than we have in well over a year. While more volunteer drivers are still needed in the Venice/North Port areas, our efforts are now focused on recruiting more volunteer drivers in the Sarasota and Bradenton areas. Toward that end, beginning soon we will be running ads in the Sarasota, Siesta Key and East County Observers hoping for similar results to what we experienced in the Venice area. Please look for the ad and share it with friends and family members who might be willing to give a little of their time as a volunteer driver. Thank you!



Friendly Reminders

- ITN SunCoast office hours are 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, Monday thru Friday and may be reached by calling 941-364-7530. If you call us after 2 pm, we will get back to you the following day. In case of an emergency after hours or on the weekend, call 941-928-6506.
- You may request a ride for any reason, on any day of the week including weekends, at any time of the day or night to anywhere within Sarasota and Manatee Counties. Please make your ride request by 1 pm the day before you want a ride.
- For rides you need on Sundays and Mondays, please call in your ride requests by 1 pm the previous Friday. On Friday afternoons, we set the schedules for Saturday, Sunday and Monday rides.
- If the details of a particular ride change after you have called us and made the ride request, please let us know asap and do not wait until you receive the confirmation call. Our ride schedules are pretty set by the time of the confirmation calls so making changes at that time can cause problems for us.
- When you call to make a ride request, please be prepared to give us your pickup and destination addresses and the times when you want to get picked up for both portions of your travels.
- You now have the option of submitting ride requests through email. Requests should be sent to info@itnsuncoast.org.
- You are welcome to have friends join you for rides to wherever you want to go. Your friends do not have to be ITN SunCoast members and there will be an additional charge of \$2.50 per person per ride.
- You may request rides for friends to visit you at your home. In this case, we will charge you, our member, the regular fare for the ride requested and it will be up to you to collect the charge or not from your friend.

Thank you for being a member/supporter of ITN SunCoast!!

Arthur Lerman, Executive Director

Susan Shaw, Executive Assistant

Rich Henderson, Dispatcher

Dana Stewart, Administrative Assistant