



Strategic Planning: Then and Again

By Judy Zimmerman Herr, Board President

In 2016, the Lancaster Downtowners Board embarked on an exercise in strategic planning. As we looked at who we were and what we were able to do, the Board realized that we were at a crossroads: we needed to make some changes if Downtowners was to continue to grow and thrive.



Now, five years later, we are in the final year of the five-year strategic plan we developed at that time. At our meeting last week, the Board spent some time reflecting on that first strategic plan, and noting the steps outlined there that we have accomplished.

They include:

- hiring Melissa as Executive Director (which we all agreed was the best move we've ever made!)
- moving much of our internal membership information and communication into an online database
- establishing a Fundraising Committee to strengthen our resource base (including developing sponsorships and grant applications, and involvement in the ExtraGive)
- establishing a Communications Committee to oversee the Newsletter, social media presence and other PR functions
- strengthening our partnership with Landis Communities to include office space and HR support
- strengthening our ability to resource members with information and an updated vendor list
- continuing to offer assistance via Just One Call and a varied selection of programs and social events

We also, of course, noted that when we developed the 2017-2021 strategic plan, we had no idea how our lives would be disrupted by the pandemic of the past year. But the work we had done to build some of these systems has greatly enhanced our ability to weather it.

Now, the Board is embarking on a new round of strategic planning, looking forward to what Downtowners may look like in another five years. As we do so, we value feedback from our members. In the next couple of months, members can expect to hear more from us about how to share your ideas and thoughts: what do you appreciate about Lancaster Downtowners, and how should we build and strengthen for the future?

So watch for a chance to offer feedback – and be thinking about how Downtowners can grow and become even more useful to our members and our wider community!

Program Highlights

[Pauline Zimmerman's Memoir: A Conversation](#): 3/18 @ 7pm

[How COVID-19 Impacted the Funeral Industry](#): 4/6 @ 7pm

[Public Works in Lancaster: Conversation with Stephen Campbell](#): 4/15 @ 7pm



Check the [Event Calendar](#) for Walking Group, Book Clubs, and Koffee Klatch gatherings.

[You can now view videos of previous presentations on the website.](#)

Recently added topics include: Silent Strokes, Scam Protection, and the Carlisle Indian Industrial School

COVID-19 FORUM



Join us to find out how Covid-19 impacted Charles E. Snyder Funeral Homes and spurred Innovation.

April 6th.....7:00pm.....Via Zoom

Chad Snyder will share his experience for the first 12 months during the Pandemic.

VigR Session: But Not the Animals!
Philadelphia's Vegetarian Traditions
March 24th at 6pm

Hosted by Friends Life Care, a virtual cooking class that explores the first published vegetarian cookbook - recipes from 1812!

[Register Here - Free to Downtowners](#)

No Longer Alone Family Support Group
Sunday, March 28, 3-5pm

"Self-Care" by Janelle Bitikofer, author of Streetlights: Empowering Christians to Respond to Mental Illness and Addictions

[Join Zoom Meeting Here](#)

Who are we?...REALLY

By Andy Berfond

Tasked with helping to rewrite the Downtowners mission and vision statements, the PR/Marketing Committee had a spirited discussion about the descriptive words that might define us.

We even consulted one of the most recognized names in the history of words, the Merriam Webster Online Dictionary. We learned something interesting, as the definition of senior citizen, which is almost always attached to our generations, offered some other alternate descriptive words, some not so flattering.

While many of us are proud to be aging gracefully, actively aging or young at heart, we wondered how others might perceive us, and how we might think of ourselves. So, we took a survey. About half of our members weighed in on the subject and the overwhelming majority said older adult is preferred, followed by senior and senior citizen.

There were also some other interesting choices of words to suggest who we are...like **Perennial** or **Ancient**, **Seasoned Citizen** or **Aging Teenager**.

On the lighter side, have you ever gone into a book store and passed by the young adult section looking for the old adult section? Is a young adult a “junior citizen” if an older adult is a “senior citizen”? Would the “junior citizen” be entitled to the same kind of “senior citizen” discount at the buffet? Is there an equivalent membership card for young adults like the AARP Card for older adults? When you think about it, the generations are truly fascinating in many ways.

Regardless of what we call ourselves or how others perceive us, to me one thing is very clear and it's something to be proud of. Our years of knowledge and experiences defines us and we have so much to offer anyone who is willing to listen.

So in conclusion, the Downtowners represent a group of one of the most important resources in our society. The age is just a number. What defines us is...well, like that commercial used to say...PRICELESS.



Vaccination Update

When it rains it pours! After what felt like a drought of vaccinations, members of the Downtowners are now well on their way to immunization.

When vaccinations first became available in Lancaster County in January, the Downtowners disseminated an online survey, and then made follow-up calls to all members who didn't respond, to see who wanted a vaccine and if they needed assistance.

When we hoped to have a clinic in late February, 93 Downtowners were signed up. As weather and supply chain issues postponed that opportunity, slowly more and more people were getting vaccines from local and not-as-local pharmacies and health care providers.

Throughout this time, many Downtowners continue to share links to new clinics, give tips about when spots might be open, and develop the sense that Downtowners are in this together. Staff and Just One Call volunteers have provided assistance with registration and transportation to vaccine appointments.

We celebrated each jab in an arm – wherever the vaccine dose came from!

Then, at long last, Lancaster Downtowners had two reserved opportunities to start the COVID-19 vaccine regimen the week of March 8th. Fourteen Downtowners were able to receive their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine at Landis Homes on Thursday, March 11th. Then on Saturday, at a clinic hosted by the South Asian Association of Lancaster, at least 25 more Downtowners received their first dose.

By all accounts the clinics ran smoothly and the volunteers and staff were kind and competent. We are grateful for the strong relationships with our collaborative partner Landis Communities and the other members of our community who helped our organization reserve appointment times.

Our support of one another has paid off. As of today, 89% of Downtowners have been vaccinated!

We have a short list of members who are not yet eligible, out of state, or who are otherwise unable or choosing to not receive the vaccine. Downtowners will maintain connection with those who expect to become medically or age-eligible in the coming weeks and months. **Let the office know at any time if you would like to be on that list for vaccination.** This will be open to new members who join Downtowners as well.





Dolores Parsil, preparing for the Online Auction in early fall 2020

Happy Birthday to these Downtowners throughout the month of April!

Kim van Donk
 Carol L. Eby-Good
 Linda Esbenshade
 Beth Ann Good
 Charles Lane
 Judson McCune
 Angie D. Piel
 Judith C. Rushmore
 Jim Sauder
 Sam Wyman

Small Potatoes

By Dolores Parsil

Shared on March 9, 2021

Yes, it is all so frustrating. I went on the site quickly after receiving Melissa's email. I completed step 1 and received confirmation with the message that I would be notified for setting appointment time, but that hasn't happened yet.

My experience with all of this has been exasperating. I've tried since mid-January. The websites are very difficult. And, how do you even know which listings are current? Waiting a turn in a phone queue took up to an hour, only to get nowhere, and now you're on hold for 10 minutes until the message finally says, oops, no vaccine, try later.

Most people I know who have been successful were able to finagle something: they knew somebody who was giving up a spot, their doctor got them in, one friend's pharmacy called her even though she hadn't even tried, some waited till the end of the day and appeared at a pharmacy to get a shot someone else had not shown up for, they traveled to other counties. Nothing wrong with any of that, and I would have done (and tried to do) the same, but not as lucky, I guess.

Well, I am getting a teeny, tiny glimpse into what it means to be unable to, incapable of being able to, escape from a stressful, hurtful, situation that I have no control over. When I think of those groups of people over the ages who have been enslaved, oppressed, run out of their homelands, or individuals dealing with incurable diseases, the effects of a natural disaster, prejudice because of skin color, religion, sexual orientation, or living in abusive or poverty situations, I remind myself that this is small potatoes.

Maybe we should start a club: the Not Yet Club. You know, misery loves company.

I hope the club can disband soon.

[Resource Directory](#)

There have been some new additions to the Lancaster Downtowners Resource Directory! There are now two recommender auto repair shops. And, as you plan home repair projects, make sure you take a look at providers other members have found skilled and reliable.

One perk of note: Downtowner Gene Shaw is a contractor and cabinetmaker, and the retired owner of The Wooden Plane.

Over a 40-year+ career restoring old houses and manufacturing custom architectural elements for owners and contractors, Gene garnered a wealth of knowledge that he'd be willing to share. **Before starting a project (updating a kitchen, adding an addition, bathroom, etc) he'd be happy to give advice about possible options.**

If you found a provider on our directory, [click HERE](#) to leave a short (3 answer) review!

Lancaster County Office of Aging - Virtual Connections

There is now a Virtual Senior Center in Lancaster County! [See the calendar](#) for a full schedule -- of note are Ukulele Lessons, Art classes, a number of exercise classes and a Technology Series every Friday at 9am.

Call Lancaster County Office of Aging to enroll-- Debbie Groff 717-299-7979.

Free for Lancaster County Residents Age 55+

Meeting the MultiGenerational Moment

A vibrant, if fledgling, movement to bridge generational divides is underway. This essay series, presented in partnership with [Encore.org](#) and [The Eisner Foundation](#), explores some of the most promising innovations, shining a light on the breakthroughs, lessons, and barriers to both success and scale.

[Overcoming Age Segregation Essay Here](#)

Resource Committee Corner

Tax-Aide: Free Help Preparing 2020 Returns

AARP has several options; still available for drop-off support is a [site in Willow Street](#).

[Click Here for Full Article](#)

After You're Vaccinated:

Two weeks after your second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, a few things in your routine can change! Keep up with the CDC as recommendations shift as we all learn more.

[Learn what to do after you're vaccinated here.](#)

Scam Alert!

Downtowner John Kanagy received a strange email from a friend recently:

"If you get this, please reply. I have a favor I want to ask."

This was an imposter scam! Never reply directly if you get a message like this. If you want to act, reach out to your friend via phone and check-in that way.

[Learn more about scams here.](#)

You've always been independent.

Stay that way as you age in the comfort of your home.



Friends LifeCare®
Your Life • Your Independence • Your Home

Landis 
Communities
Cultivating Life, Together

If staying in your home as you age is your goal, join us to learn how Care Coordination through Friends LifeCare can help.

You are invited to attend a Seminar on Continuing Care at Home.

Landis Communities and Friends Life Care have collaborated to offer flexible and comprehensive long-term care plans, including expert care coordination and financial benefit, for those aged 40-85, living in Lancaster and Lebanon Counties.

Topics will include:

- What options are available to allow you to thrive in your home as long as possible?
- What is the *difference* between long-term care insurance and membership in a Friends Life Care plan?
- How do Medicare, Medicaid, and your current healthcare insurance relate to your long term care needs?



"I love that each member in this program has a person we can talk to anytime. At the end of my first call with my Care Coordinator, I felt like I had made a new friend! What a relief to know that in the future, someone so qualified will be with me to process whatever needs may arise."—Miriam Blank

Read Miriam's story at

<https://www.landiscommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Miriam-Blank-story-FLOURISH-FALL-2020.pdf>

Two sessions offered:

In Person Seminar

Calvin G & Janet C High Learning
& Wellness Center at Landis Homes
1001 East Oregon Rd Lititz, PA 17543

Thur., May 13, 2021
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Online Live Webinar

Tues., April 13, 2021
10:00 am – 11:00 am

RSVP to Joy Albright at
717-381-3599 or reserve at
[FriendsLifeCare.org/Landis/](https://www.FriendsLifeCare.org/Landis/)

Online pre-recorded webinars
are also available.

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Carole M. Kirchner
GRI, CRS, SRS, ASP, Green
REALTOR[®]

Homesale Realty
150 North Pointe Blvd, Lancaster, PA 17601
office 717-560-9100 x3039
cell 717-629-8498 fax 717-569-7943
carole@caroleschoicehomes.com
www.caroleschoicehomes.com

