

# LIFT THE LIVES OF ELDERS

## Reading to Adults with Dementia, 2024

Wisdom Keepers developed a pilot program and documentation on how to set up and execute a reading program for seniors with dementia at Phoenix Senior Living in Braselton. The program promotes social engagement and reduces isolation for Phoenix Senior Living residents, provides a new channel and sense of purpose for program volunteers, and establishes measures and metrics to use in assessing program outcomes. Project ownership was transferred to the Beyond Dementia Coalition for further distribution.

## Improving Long-Term Care Options, 2024

Wisdom Keepers began investigating how to bring innovative skilled nursing to Hall County in 2017, based on a person-centered care model delivered in a small home environment where the Elder defines what is “home.” Despite early optimism about forming local partnerships to bring this model to Hall County, legislative barriers prevented success. In 2021, the team changed focus to educate lawmakers about those barriers and to advocate for legislative changes to improve long-term care across Georgia. They unsuccessfully worked with the Georgia Council on Aging’s Co-Age for three years to introduce legislation to establish a study committee to examine barriers and identify opportunities to expand long-term care options in Georgia. Efforts to achieve change for Georgians continue through Co-Age.

## Beyond Dementia First Responders Virtual Tour, 2023

Fifty-four police, firemen, and EMS personnel participated in the simulated experience of having dementia. Wisdom Keepers chose the material and coordinated the presentations and were rewarded with the First Responders reactions. Some said that you could have two weeks of classroom training and never know what they learned in 8 minutes. Others were certain that the experience would help them when responding to calls that involved people with dementia. The Beyond Dementia Coalition continues to offer the program to newly hired First Responders.

## Beyond Dementia Emergency Kits, 2022

Wisdom Keepers collaborated with the Northeast Georgia Red Cross and Grace Episcopal Church on a pilot program to source, assemble and distribute “Beyond Dementia Emergency Kits” for area seniors. The kit includes vital health and treatment information in English or Spanish using the Wisdom Keeper project “Plan in a Can.” Also included in the bag are a basic Red Cross hygiene kit and items personal to the individual, including glasses, batteries, medicines, clothes, toiletries, pictures, etc., as determined by their caregiver, with a luggage tag giving the senior’s emergency contact information. Other area organizations have distributed the kits using the pilot program’s guidelines.



## Age-Friendly Playgrounds, 2017

Wisdom Keepers became interested in the international trend of “senior playgrounds,” where play equipment is designed for senior adults and disabled users, and which supports range of motion, balance, strength, posture, and more. Playgrounds with this equipment have appeal and become a place where the entire family can gather and play together. Wisdom Keepers shared information with park officials and green space operators across greater Hall County about these spaces. Hall County Parks and Leisure already had this concept on their radar and found the Wisdom Keeper interest encouraging to their efforts and input on equipment and accessibility useful for planning for future development.

## BULLI Data Organization, 2016

Brenau University’s Learning and Leisure Institute (BULLI) is a signature program for the 50+ population of Greater Hall County. Popularity of the program has steadily increased over the years and managing the records of a growing student body was becoming more challenging for the program staff. Wisdom Keepers applied their expertise to create a flexible application to maintain accurate and up-to-date records on each student and provide detailed information and analytical reports on class rosters and participation. Simplifying the administrative burden and generating useful reports helped BULLI staff keep their focus on the continued delivery of quality programs.

## Dignified Transportation for Seniors, 2016

Wisdom Keepers recognized that the growing number of older adults in our community who are no longer able to drive, lacked viable transportation options to remain active, healthy and independent. Wisdom Keepers aimed to develop a transportation model to provide 24/7, door-through-door, arm-in-arm service to serve these Hall County older adults. After researching options, Wisdom Keepers began a multi-year process of forming a Steering Committee, defining the service area, building consensus and support among community residents and officials, establishing a non-profit organization to operate the service, and fundraising to ensure service delivery and sustainability. With great community support, ITNLanier started operations in 2016 and delivered more than 10,500 affordable rides to seniors and vision-impaired residents within Greater Hall County. Wisdom Keepers supported ITNLanier as volunteer drivers and Board members until it ceased operations in 2020 because of COVID-19.

