

## In addition to a new name, the center is also merging with the Longboat Key Center for Healthy Living and searching for a new home.

by: [Katie Johns](#) Staff Writer

Although its mission is to enhance the quality of life for local seniors, Aging in Paradise Resource Center is taking steps to enhance itself as an organization.

In a nutshell, the name Aging in Paradise Resource Center is too long, Executive Director Suzy Brenner said.

“But the other thing is that we’re getting a lot of people, even in their 80s and 90s that assumed our services weren’t for them because they’re not old,” she said.

From now on, Aging in Paradise Resource Center will be known as The Paradise Center.



Left to right: Ken Newmark of the CFHL Board, Suzy Brenner Executive Director of The Paradise Center, Alan Sprintz of the CFHL Board, Carol Peschel, Dick Pelton & Barbara Koetsier of The Paradise Center Advisory Board.

Along with the new name, The Paradise Center has a new partner and is actively seeking a new home. The center currently resides on the second floor of the Longboat Island Chapel. However, the center is outgrowing its space, and acting under a religious institution’s nonprofit status has limitations, Brenner said.

“We are forever indebted to the Longboat Island Chapel for realizing our community’s need for a senior resource center and creating Aging in Paradise,” said a statement from Brenner handed out at an Aug. 16 sponsors-only event. “But as the chapel grows and ARC expands, the time is right for both organizations to move forward independently.”

Where The Paradise Center resides now isn’t an ideal location for people to find easily. “Even though we have a pretty large audience, every week I talk to someone that has never heard of us or doesn’t know where we are, or assumes that you have to be a member of the Chapel to use our programs, or something like that,” Brenner said.

To secure a new location, the center will launch a capital campaign. The dream, Brenner said, is to occupy the space where Northern Trust Bank was on Bay Isles Road across from the Longboat Library.

The Paradise Center will partner and merge with the Longboat Key Center for Healthy Living, which is the nonprofit organization credited with bringing the medical center, with support from the Longboat Key Foundation, to the Centre Shops.

“We’re going to be operating under their nonprofit status basically, but we’re going to be separate,” Brenner said. “We’ll have separate boards and separate finances, and we’ll basically be one of their programs.”

Longboat Key Center for Healthy Living President Jack Rozance said he and other board members spent time understanding what The Paradise Center offered and found its health and wellness focus aligned with their mission.

“It just seemed like a great way to work in greater synergy and, again, it’s for the health and wellness of citizens and residents of Longboat Key,” Rozance said.