SCF offers program for boomers

By NICK WILLIAMS

MANATEE — After eight years of retirement, Sue Ellen Addicott felt a void in a life. Though she enjoyed traveling, afternoon lunches and playing bridge, it wasn’t as fulfilling as she’d hoped.

In 2007, Addicott learned of a program through the State College of Florida’s Small Business Development Center while serving as a member of the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce. The program offers mentoring sessions for anyone looking to create and maintain their own business.

Now, Addicott, 65, operates Senior Moves, which assists senior citizens moving from their homes into a nursing facility. The concept derived from her personal experience with her mother.

“I knew I needed to find something meaningful and I didn't want to work for anybody else,” Addicott said.

For years, the college’s Corporate and Community Development Division has offered year-round noncredit classes in workforce training, professional development, personal enrichment and driving safety through workshops, seminars, online classes and on-site training programs at area businesses. The Small Business Development Center has become a hub for information, training and counseling services for new and existing businesses.

The division offers courses at the Bradenton and Lakewood Ranch campuses. In the past two years, more than 700 people age 55 and older have participated in noncredit courses, according to SCF spokesperson Jessica Klipa.

“For many, it’s turning a dream into a reality,” said Daisy Vulovich, associate vice president of Corporate and Community Development.

Other programs include a computer learning course done in partnership with Microsoft Corp. The course “My PC Series” is a continuing education program designed to support baby boomers and other adult learners who want to learn new computer skills for home or work, and even create slide shows.

The Traffic Safety program is a course that helps drivers 55 and older in Florida maintain their safe and defensive driving skills, obtain auto insurance discounts and understand their abilities and learn techniques to compensate for changes. The program also provides defensive driving training for court-ordered seniors.

There are also recreational classes and language classes, which teach French, Italian and Spanish.

“They are more oriented toward travel and survival than use in the workplace,” Vulovich said.

The recreational classes are meant to expand hobbies such as scuba diving and dancing.

For more information contact the Corporate and Community Development Division at the Bradenton campus at 941-752-5203 or Lakewood Ranch at 941-363-7000.
Sue Ellen Addicott of Senior Moves laughs with client Dee VanHoogstraten as they look over the floor plan of Dee’s soon-to-be-new apartment. Addicott’s business helps seniors move from their homes to assisted living facilities.
Brenda Cosby works taping boxes in a client's living room for Senior Moves, a business owned by Sue Ellen Addicott that helps seniors move from their homes to assisted living facilities and helps clients with the boxing, organizing, downsizing and setting up in the new place so their transition is as easy as possible. Photos by TIFFANY TOMPKINS-CONDIE/Bradenton Herald