

Walkers raise funds for Meals on Wheels

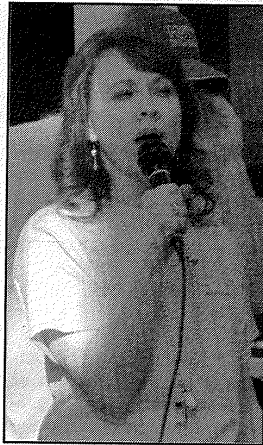
Volunteers needed to deliver meals to seniors

BY BUD MARTELLO
Gazette Newspapers

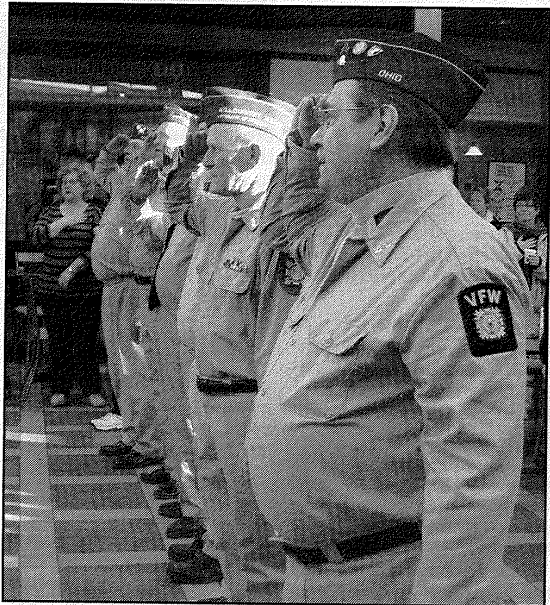
MENTOR - The Great Lakes Mall was abuzz with hundreds of Lake County citizens preparing to hike around the interior of the mall to show their support for the Lake County Council on Aging's Meals on Wheels program March 9.

All funds raised at the eighth annual March for Meals stay local and are used to support six nutrition sites in Lake County serving Meals on Wheels to homebound seniors as well as the meals provided at their Senior Café lunch sites.

"Because of the governmental budget cuts at all levels, the effort to raise funds by this walk is all the more critical. We support Senior Cafes at Wickliffe, Eastlake, Kirtland, Mentor, Madison and Painesville-Fairport Harbor. We are so gratified to see so many turn out for this walk," Mary Beth Grablovic, administrator of the Lake County Council on Aging, said. "There are 225 people pre-registered and



Lorie Stevic-Rust, chair of the LCCoA board welcomes the crowd and thanks them for their participation at the Meals on Wheels fund-raiser.



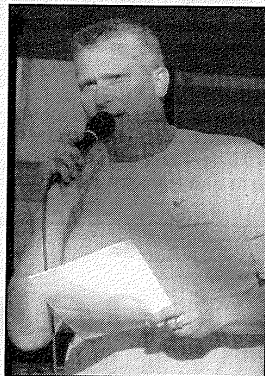
Willoughby Hills VFW Post 4358 presents the colors at the Lake County Council on Aging March for Meals.

that doesn't count the walk-ups at the door. This is shaping up to be our best event yet."

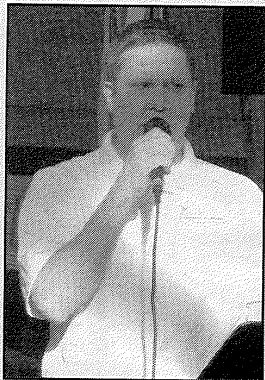
Joe Tomsick, CEO of the LCCOA, welcomed the crowd and thanked them for their efforts.

"Right now our need for volunteer drivers is great. We have routes available in every one of our centers especially Kirtland right now.

Our volunteers are the backbone of our effort. In addition to delivering what many seniors have as their only decent meal of the day, drivers can also just sit and visit with them, or maybe play cards just spend some time



Cameron Swagerman of Spirit Media and board member, greets the crowd.



Joe Tomsick CEO of the Lake County Council on Aging thanks everyone for their participation in the March for Meals event March at the Great Lakes Mall.



Mary Beth Grablovic and Lauren Mac Laren of the Lake County Council on Aging were responsible for the planning and execution of the March for Meals walk March 9 at Great Lakes Mall.

PHOTOS BY BUD MARTELLO

with our seniors," Tomsick said. "Our seniors wait for that knock on the door for the only interaction that senior may have during the day. Our volunteers are also trained to keep an eye out for the condition of the seniors they visit. We need more volunteers."

To become one a volunteer contact Lauren MacLaren, volunteer specialist at (440) 205-8111.

Joe Bradac of Painesville was the honorary chair of

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the March for Meals kick-off. Bradac, a U.S. Navy Vietnam veteran said, "We really need more volunteers; and the more donations we get the better job we can do buying meals for our seniors."

Bradac was selected by Tomsick, who met him through the polka events at the Slovenian Workman's Home where Tomsick's polka band entertained.

After Tomsick welcomed the walkers and thanked them for their outpouring of support, Cameron Swagerman of WELW took the stage.

"Before we even started today, we had over 220 walkers registered, and have raised over \$13,000. Lake County Council on Aging delivers 577

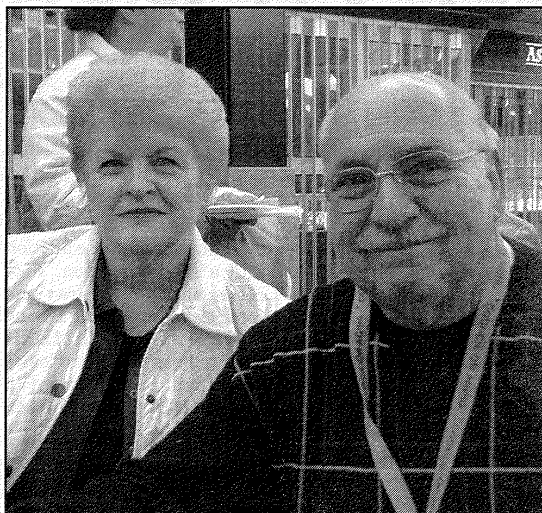
meals a day or over 20,000 a year," Swagerman said.

The Dream Team quartet sang "God Bless America" a cappella, and then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of the National Anthem. The Willoughby Hills VFW post 4358 presented the colors during the anthem.

Lorie Stevic-Rust, president of the LCCOA Board, also welcomed the crowd.

"We thank you all for coming and making it possible for us to continue to pursue our mission to protect and serve the seniors of Lake County," he said.

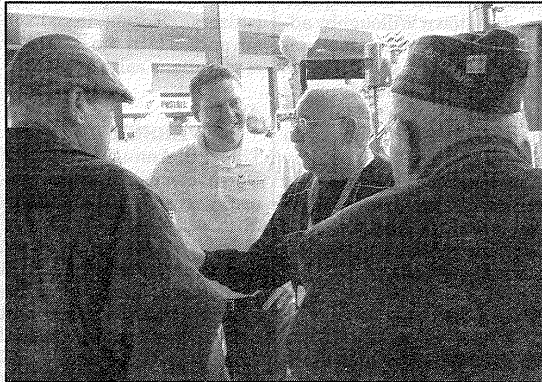
For more information on LCCoA visit their website at www.lcco.org or call (440) 205-8111.



Joe Bradac, with his wife Mary Jean, is the honorary chair of the eighth annual March for Meals for the Lake County Council on Aging.



The Dream Team quartet leads the crowd in "God Bless America" and the National Anthem at March for Meals March 9 at Great Lakes Mall.



Joe Tomsick, CEO of the Lake County Council on Aging and honorary chair Joe Bradac meet the VFW color guard.

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