

# Meals on Wheels program gets boost

Staff report

The Lake County Council on Aging recently received a \$50,000 grant to support the organization's Meals-On-Wheels program that provides nutritious meals to homebound seniors throughout Lake County.

The presentation was made during the "Senior Day" celebration at the Lake County Fair.

"With these funds, the Council on Aging will be able to continue providing nutritious meals to an ever-growing number of needy, homebound senior citizens," said Joe Tomsick, LCCoA's chief executive officer. "Over the last year we have seen a 20 percent increase in the number of seniors requesting home delivered meals, and yet funding for the program has continued to decrease to the tune of almost a 40 percent reduction since 2011, due in part to major federal cuts."

Last year, with the help of close to 600 community volunteers, LCCoA was able to prepare and deliver 153,564 meals to more than 1,200 individual clients, according to a news release from the organization. An additional 44,534 meals were served to seniors attending the agency's Senior Café sites around

the county.

"The 200,000 senior meals we serve every year would not be possible without the direct support of the Lake County Board of Commissioners and the Senior Advisory Panel, funding from the Senior Service Levy, financial support from United Way of Lake County, and federal and state dollars through the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging," Tomsick said.

The Walmart Foundation is the agency's newest supporter.

"The cornerstone to Walmart and the Walmart Foundation's \$2 billion commitment to fight hunger is supporting local organizations that are making sure people have access to healthy food," said Walmart Human Resources Coordinator Marlene Perez. "We know one in six individuals in Northeastern Ohio live with food insecurity so we are proud to support the Lake County Council on Aging, along with the staff and volunteers who help so many seniors in the area to live better."

The presentation from Walmart to the LCCoA is among 14 grants the State Giving Council is awarding statewide over the next few weeks totaling \$850,000 to fight hunger in Ohio.

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