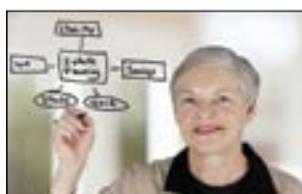




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Lake County woman sparkles as she helps clean up her town

By Deanna Adams

Gayle Pritchard has a motto: “You have to make life fun.”

That she does, despite suffering from multiple sclerosis, an affliction she’s had for nearly 20 years. She gets around, thanks to her motorized wheelchair (red by request), an appropriate model given her penchant for decorating her ride—as well as herself.

Wherever she goes, the 76-year-old makes sure she sparkles in a number of glittery outfits, and always with a showy hat. “I collect a lot of fun, sparkly hats,” she says as she piles them all on top of her head in animated demonstration.

Her penchant for all things bling has earned her a nickname, “Sparkle.” “The kids at McDonald’s started calling me that, so I guess it’s my name now,” she

says. “I stop there almost every day to get their sweet tea. They have the best.”

Sparkle is well-known in her community of Mentor-on-the-Lake. She brings many smiles to people who spot her as she travels down Andrews Road in her power chair. “I do get some strange looks sometimes, but mostly people wave and I wave back.”

She makes daily trips around town in her various sparkly get-ups, and she is no fair weather rider. She travels be it rain or shine, wind or cold, because it “gets me out.” If it’s raining, she’s proud to get out her oversized “Proud to Be an American” umbrella.

But her daily excursions are much more than a mere joy ride. This lady is on a mission. On her outings, she brings along empty bags, waste basket, and her “reach grabber” (a long rod with



“Sparkle” dresses for every occasion. Every patriotic holiday, including voting day, she likes to dress up as Uncle Sam.

handle and “jaws” to grab out-of-reach objects) to collect any litter she encounters along her way. And she always finds something. The items can be as big as large coffee cups or as small as plastic wrappers from cigarette packs. Nowadays, of course, she often finds

See SPARKLE on page 4

Commissioners vote for 25% discount on water and sewer bills for low income senior citizens

In an effort to assist low-income senior citizens with utility costs, the Board of Lake County Commissioners and the Department of Utilities established a program to provide a 25% discount on water and sewer bills to all qualifying senior citizens. Commissioner John Plecnik proposed the senior discount and it was unanimously adopted by the board in November 2021.

John Hamercheck, president of the Lake County Board of Commissioners said, “This program for a 25% discount on water and sewer bills for seniors in need, will make a very big difference in our local community. Lake County is a family, and we care deeply about our seniors.”

Although Lake County utility customers already pay some of the lowest rates in northeast Ohio, the discount comes at the right time. With rising

Commissioners Corner



John Hamercheck



John Plecnik



Ron Young

fuel prices, increasing costs on many consumer goods and growing home energy expenses, routine utility bills can be challenging for senior citizens on fixed or low incomes.

Like most programs that offer financial assistance, customers who have water and sewer services provided by the Lake County Utilities Department will need to satisfy three eligibility requirements. The applicant must be 65 years of age or older, must own and occupy the property, and must meet the income qualifier established by the

Ohio Homestead Exemption. In 2021, the household income threshold is \$34,200.

Residents can contact the billing & customer service office at 440-350-2070 to have an enrollment form mailed.

Mental health issues in older adults

Mental health issues can and do impact all age groups. Among older adults the most prevalent mental health problem is depression.

Depression is a serious, treatable illness. Untreated depression can mean intolerable emotional pain which can lead to thoughts of suicide. Why don’t more older adults get treatment? Steadfast reliance on primary care physician

See COMMISSIONERS on page 4

The Lake County Council on Aging

Celebrating 50 golden years helping Lake County seniors

Since 1972, the Lake County Council on Aging has provided programs and services that help older adults maintain their independence with programs such as home-delivered and congregate meals, homemaker, “friendly visitor” and “grocery shopper” programs, and case management services. Today, the agency’s services remain as critical as ever, serving a growing number of Lake County residents.

“Our golden 50th anniversary is certainly worthy of a true celebration,” said Joe Tomsick, CEO of the Council on Aging. “As we reflect on this milestone, it is important to remember and thank our staff, board members, volunteers and stakeholders who over the years have shared our passion to support Lake County residents as they age. Together we continue to write a truly remarkable story of success.”

For 50 years, the Council on Aging, in partnership with many county agencies, independent organizations and hundreds of dedicated volunteers, has helped guide seniors, their families and caregivers to opportunities that enhance their lives and allow them to live safely and independently in their own homes.

To mark this golden anniversary, the board of trustees of the Lake County Council on Aging has arranged three community events for 2022. One of the events will bring former board members



together during the spring, a second event will celebrate our community with a summer picnic at SNPJ Farm in Kirtland, and the third event is our 50th anniversary gala set for the fall. These events give the Council on Aging the opportunity to thank those who have lent a hand over the years and share success stories of senior adults living independently in their homes while aging successfully, thanks to the resources available through the organization, its staff and volunteers.

Summer community party and dance

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, July 17 for an afternoon of music, food and fun at the SNPJ Farm at 10946 Heath Road. Gates will open at 1 p.m. with dinners and sandwiches available, a full bar and music for dancing from 3–7 p.m. The Council on Aging is grateful for the support of the SNPJ Farm board. Proceeds will benefit the Lake County Council on Aging.

50th grand gala celebration

The golden anniversary gala will be held during the fall of 2022, to coincide with timing of the agency's founding in 1972. Event proceeds will support the Lake County Council on Aging. This elegant evening will include a plated dinner, silent auction and opportunities to support the Council on Aging. Details will be forthcoming regarding reservations and sponsorships.

“The senior residents of Lake County are an amazing resource to our community in so many ways. They have made invaluable contributions to our social fabric, have helped to build strong neighborhoods, and many contribute thousands of hours each year volunteering to make our county a better place to live,” said John Thomas, president of the board of trustees. “It is important to celebrate this milestone with everyone whose lives have been touched by the Lake County Council on Aging.”

Leaving a Legacy

If providing for seniors matters to you, consider a gift to the Lake County Council on Aging. A bequest — a provision in your will designating assets to the agency — doesn't impact your finances today and makes a world of difference in seniors' lives tomorrow. Find out more by contacting Kip Jochum at 440-205-8111.

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Welcome from the CEO

50 Amazing Years!

The Lake County Council on Aging is excited to begin the year-long celebration of its golden anniversary culminating with a gala event this fall! As we celebrate 50 years of serving the seniors of Lake County, I would like to thank all of the staff, board members and volunteers who have been part of our amazing story since 1972. Because of your efforts, older adults in Lake County are better able to age with dignity and independence in the setting of their choice.

To our clients, friends, neighbors and community partners – I thank you for coming on this journey with us. Serving you has been our privilege and I want to personally thank you for letting us be part of your story – just as you have been such an important part of ours. Shortly after the agency was founded, it began publishing this newspaper to offer information pertinent to Lake County seniors, their loved ones and caregivers. To this day, we work hard to give our readers topics that provide information and resources, and promote all aspects of healthy, valued, and creative aging. We are grateful for your support of the Senior Services Levy which in part has made the delivery of the paper to all senior households possible.

Your generosity has also brought us a great distance in the march against senior hunger and I am grateful for the continued support we receive from our community. One of our premium events each year is “March For Meals” and I hope that we can count on you to join us! We are planning a month-long online basket fundraiser and an in-person event on April 2 at the Great Lakes Mall. Please see how you can get involved with March for Meals on page 8 of this issue of Bridge. A registration form appears on page 22.

With the dawning of a new year, we are excited to celebrate our 50th golden anniversary with you and are planning events and promotions. I encourage you to visit our website at www.lcco.org and “friend” us on our Facebook page at Lake County Council on Aging to stay in touch!

Sincerely,

Joseph R. Tomsick
CEO, Lake County Council on Aging

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Mission Statement

The Lake County Council on Aging provides aging adults and their support system with services and opportunities that enable them to achieve an optimal, self-defined quality of life.

The Council on Aging maintains a policy of equal opportunity in matters of program, contracting or employment regardless of national origin, sex, race, handicap, politics, religion, color or age.

Lake County Council on Aging
8520 East Avenue, Mentor, Ohio 44060
Open Monday through Friday 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

www.lcco.org



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Sparkle from page 1

discarded masks and plastic gloves. Whatever she doesn't spot on the way to the store, she's sure to find on the way back, as she covers both sides of the street.

"I also make sure to collect aluminum," she says, "I even have my neighbors saving me their cans to recycle." She adds that she's been doing it for many years, and has the proclamations to prove it. She received her first award for "distinguished service" in 2004, from the city of Willoughby Hills, where she lived at the time. "I didn't know anything about it until I was invited to a city council meeting and they surprised me with the plaque." Other awards include a special resolution of gratitude from her hometown of Willowick in 2005, and a 2012 citizen of the year award from Mentor-on-the-Lake, which she received soon after becoming a resident there.



Pritchard has always lived in Lake County. She graduated from Eastlake North High School, raised her three children in Willowick, and has always worked close by—from being a waitress at Big Boy restaurant in Mentor, to selling Tupperware to staying home with her kids, to working as an accountant at Reliance Electric and Progressive Insurance. The only thing that's ever stopped her was a divorce and ongoing symptoms from MS, which forced some changes in her life. As her condition progressed, she willingly surrendered her driver's license when she realized she almost caused a serious accident due to her gradual bouts with memory loss.

Yet, despite it all, she maintains a positive attitude, claiming a bit of "Peter Pan syndrome," that keeps her young at heart. Her small one-bedroom apartment is filled with playful items that make her joyful, like her singing stuffed bears, decorative (as in sparkly) throw pillows, and wall hangings with sayings such as, "Leave a little Sparkle Wherever You Go." She also keeps a Post-it note for visitors on her door that reads: "Be The Reason Someone Smiles Today."

Pritchard is now getting ready for her next adventure. She'll soon be moving to an assisted living facility in Wickliffe. "The Council on Aging has been so helpful," she says. "They helped me with my application and are always there if I need anything at all." She adds that she will dearly miss the small village where she's lived for 11 years. "It's an amazing community, where kids can ride their bikes, and I can move about and feel very safe."

But no matter where she lives, Gayle Pritchard is sure to make new friends with her special brand of sparkle while doing her part in keeping her city litter free.

"People ask me why I do this," she says as she retrieves an empty aluminum pop can abandoned in the grass. "I just tell them, 'Well, I want a nice, clean place to live in, don't you?'"

Commissioners from page 1

can be a factor. Depression symptoms can be missed by primary care doctors due to the focus on physical issues as we age. And when a primary care doctor does diagnose and refer, many older adults don't follow through. Other factors can include the reluctance of older adults to talk about their emotions and/or a lack of familiarity about available help resources.

Depression symptoms can include fatigue, sadness, unintentional weight gain or loss, increased use of alcohol or other substances, and/or sleep issues. If you or someone you care about is showing signs of depression there's help available. If the situation is urgent call the Lake County Crisis Hotline at 440-953-8255. If there's no urgency, contact the Lake County Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board's Compass Line at 440-350-2000.

Established by Ohio statute, the ADAMHS Board is responsible for evaluating, planning, funding, and monitoring services to help Lake County residents who are dealing with a mental illness and/or addiction.

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Meals on Wheels America salutes Council on Aging for Sharing the Love

Community gathers food for 5th annual "blizzard bag" promotion

By Linda Llewellyn, Director of Community Services, Lake County Council on Aging

In December, the Council on Aging participated in the annual Subaru Share the Love event as a member of Meals on Wheels America – one of four national Share the Love partners supported through the promotion.

The annual Blizzard Bag Food Drive and promotion is our largest community effort to share the love. The bags are being distributed to Meals on Wheels recipients for those times when storms or other events will prevent a meal from being delivered by a Council on Aging volunteer this winter.

The Council on Aging teamed up with our community partners at the Lake County senior centers, Laketran, the Lake County General Health District, and the local Subaru dealerships—Adventure Subaru in Painesville and Ganley Subaru in Wickliffe—to collect nonperishable food items which were placed in emergency “blizzard bags.” By creating this Blizzard Bag Food Drive, the Council on Aging will earn points toward the 2021 Subaru Share the Love event and will re-



ceive a share of the donation raised by Ohio Subaru dealers.

The Council on Aging is grateful to our community partners and everyone who donated food for the blizzard bags for helping share the love.

“We are thankful to Meals on Wheels America and Subaru for all their past support of our efforts,” said Joe Tomsick, Council on Aging CEO. “For the fifth year, thanks to the generous donations we received from community members, we were able to ensure that clients will have food on hand in the event that winter weather prevents the home delivery of their meal.”

Cleveland-style polka party virtual event

A tuneful tribute to polka music, Wednesday, February 23, 2022

The Lake County Council on Aging invites you to join a lively online presentation celebrating America’s good-time music, the Cleveland-style polka.

Cleveland is recognized as Polkatown USA with countless bands and dances that get you hopping to the polka beat. The Cleveland-style polka is the bouncy American ballroom music that emerged from the city’s Slovenian and ethnic neighborhoods and became a national sensation after World War II. The happy sound features the accordion and is based on Slovenian melodies brought to the U.S. a century ago. Cleveland’s own Frank Yankovic, America’s Polka King, scored million-selling hits and inspired generations of performers.

You’re invited to sign on to a free virtual event on Wednesday,

February 23, 2022, aired live from the National Cleveland Style Polka Hall of Fame at 7:00 p.m. Host Joe Valencic, Polka Hall of Fame founding trustee and historian, shares stories about the local polka scene past and present. Joe Tomsick, Lake County Council on Aging CEO, an award-winning accordionist and band leader, demonstrates how Cleveland-Style Polka blends old world tunes with jazz, country and pop music. You’ll delight to the all-time favorites he plays on some of the unique accordions from his collection. There’s an opportunity for online questions and your memories as well.

To register for the online event, please email jmuscatello@lcco.org or call 440-205-8111, ext. 223. You will be emailed a link to sign onto the presentation on Wednesday, February 23.



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**Eastlake Senior Center
600 East 349th Street**

Grace Giangiaco, director

The new year is here! 2022 will be our first full year since the opening of our new center back in September, 2021. A lot has happened since the opening, including the renovation of our restrooms which are now handicapped accessible. Our exercise and yoga programs are in full swing with Diane Nicholes and Chuck Lehman. We are also working with Laketran to start our trips again.

Our membership sign up is going on now. For those of you that already have a membership card, check the back of your card to see what month you are set to renew. For example, if January is your month, then please plan on renewing during January.

Lake County senior center updates

January / February / March 2022

This membership will allow the use of the center, all trips and activities. Come see what we are all about. Eastlake residents will pay \$4 and nonresidents will pay \$8. The only thing extra is fee the exercise room, which is a \$20 membership fee for the year. Anyone up for renewal in the exercise room can also renew beginning in January. Check the back of your card as well to see the month you should renew.

Here's to a new year of welcomed friendship and good health.

**Fairport Senior Center
1380 East Street in Fairport**

Chris Yano, director

The Fairport Senior Center has been busy! We are in the process of planning overnight trips for 2022, plus lots of day trips. All of our exercise programs are ongoing and we look forward to adding some new ones in the new year.

If you would like more information regarding our center, our programs or membership, please stop or call 440-354-3674. We al-

ways look forward to meeting new friends!

**Kirtland Senior Center
7900 Euclid-Chardon Road
Teresa Szary, coordinator**

The reality of life in the "City of Faith and Beauty" means that we are liberally blanketed in snow throughout the winter months. Please remember that when the Kirtland schools are closed, our center is as well to ensure the safety of all.

Inside, we invite all members to stay active and keep warm through exercise classes offered, free coffee and Panera Bread, monthly lunches, and a myriad other activities open to everyone. Keep your mind sharp as we also begin offering free monthly-themed trivia!

We are so excited to be partnering with the Kirtland Schools these next few months – keep an eye out on our newsletter (available at www.kirtlandcommunity.com) for some new exciting opportunities. We will also be focusing on education as we team up with Kirtland

fire to offer AED training, and with Kirtland police as we welcome our new Chief McCallister.

A special welcome to all of our new members. Be sure to stop in and meet us if you have any questions about the Kirtland Senior Center!

As always, feel free to contact us at any time at 440-256-4711 or at communitycenter@kirtlandohio.com.

**Madison Senior Center
2938 Hubbard Road**

Carol Billetter, director

Welcome 2022! As we begin a new year, we continue to add new classes and fun activities. Join us for Silver Sneakers, Tai chi, yoga, line dancing, trivia, jewelry, or make an appointment to see the attorney or podiatrist if needed. As we continue to open we kindly ask that you arrive for scheduled events/classes/lunch or recreation only 10 minutes early. We hope to continue adding classes and activities into the new year!

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Senior centers from page 6

Monday through Friday and provided through the Lake County Council on Aging. Lunch reservations must be made one week in advance; and we ask that you are seated for lunch in the dining area by 11:45 a.m. each day.

Current guidelines for our center are posted at each doorway and in the newsletter. These new adjustments are for the safety of our patrons, the staff, volunteers and any visitors to the center.

Mentor Senior Center **8484 Munson Road** **Renee Ochaya, director**

The Mentor Senior Center is back in action, with lots of great activities to keep our seniors healthy and active. We welcome our seniors and open our doors Monday–Friday at 8:00 a.m.. We are open until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and until 8:00 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Check out the seated ellipticals treadmills in the fitness center or register for one of our great fitness classes such as low impact aerobics, stability, yoga, Silver Sneakers Classic or EnerChi. Use your creative talents in an art class such as ceramics, woodcarving or quilting. Games and cards more your thing? We have bridge, bingo, pinochle, Wii bowling and many different card groups. Do you like to explore? Join us for our Historic Churches trip in Cleveland, our incredibly popular mystery trip or expand your horizons to Rhode Island or New York City. Our special celebration luncheons are back in force with delectable food and outstanding entertainment.

Membership renewal begins January 3 and registration for 2022 trips begins January 13.

Check out our website www.mentorseniorcenter.com and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/mentorseniorcenter/> for updates on program offerings.

Perry Senior Center **2800 Perry Park Road** **Christine Znidarsic, director** Call 440-259-3772 for updates.

Wickliffe Senior Center **900 Worden Road** **Gerri Hubbell, director**

Happy New Year to one and all! The following classes and activities have returned: chair yoga, beginning tap, advanced tap, senior exercise, line dancing, bocce ball,

knitting and crocheting, senior art, Reiki, and monthly bingo! Our fitness room is open and has been quite busy and our library, puzzle table and billiards room are open.

How about considering a membership to the Wickliffe Senior Center this year? Wickliffe residents pay only \$5 for a year, and nonresidents only \$10. And anyone over the age of 90, no matter where they live, is free!

We have a wonderful (not to mention delicious) daily lunch program at the center through the Lake County Council on Aging. Registration and reservations are required. Please call Joe or Dee for details at 440-373-5017.

The Wickliffe Senior Program hours are Monday–Thursday 8 a.m.–4 p.m. And on Fridays 8 a.m.–2 p.m.

Please don't hesitate to call us with questions at 440-373-5015. And if you are not currently a member, and are interested, ask for Gerri and she will set you up for a visit and tour!

Willowick Senior Center **321 E. 314th Street**

Doreen Nevulis, coordinator

Happy New Year! As we start off 2022 we will continue with our classes: line dancing, yoga, exercise, morning movers, ceramics, art classes, book club, bridge and pinochle.

Don't forget we have the attorney, Debbie Loughner LLC, every 2nd Monday of the month and Dr. Waxman the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

Trips will be slow during the winter months, but we will be adding some in-house events to keep you warm, (presentations, chair volleyball, movies, etc)

Our membership drive for 2022 will be in mid January, so stay tune for more details.

Center hours:

Mon. – Thur. • 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Fri. • 8 a.m. – noon

To get the latest information on our senior center and upcoming programs and events, please check the website www.cityofwillowick.com. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at dnevilis@cityofwillowick.com.

Willoughby Senior Center **36939 Ridge Road** **Amy Skolny, manager**

The Willoughby Senior Center would like to wish you a Happy

New Year! Welcome 2022.

Our program coordinators, Becky and Jayme, have lined up some exciting adventures for you to enjoy such as: The Home and Garden Show, tickets to Jesus Christ, Superstar and Pretty Woman at Playhouse Square in the first quarter of the year. Are you looking for a little mayhem in the new year? Sign up as Backstage Productions presents "How Sweet It Is," a one night murder mystery event on Wednesday, February 9.

What else is in store this winter,

you may ask? Check out our Reiki offerings, monthly bingo parties, Red Hat activities, hot chocolate and trivia event, learn to play euchre event, book club, exercise classes, indoor walking track, fitness center and so much more. We are gearing up for a fantastic year and welcome you to see what's new.

If you'd like more information on becoming a Willoughby Senior Center member, please call us at 440-951-2832 or visit us online at www.willoughbyohio.com.

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H.E.L.P.

Health Equipment Lending Program

By **Shawnda Lockridge**, Aging and Disability Resource Center Manager,
Lake County Council on Aging

The Council on Aging accepts donations of clean, gently used medical equipment through our Health Equipment Lending Program (H.E.L.P.) All donated medical equipment is checked for safety, cleaned and sanitized, and then lent out to seniors in need in Lake County.

We recently made significant changes to the program and would like to share them with you.

Access to equipment:

- To access equipment, a new “release of liability and waiver form” must be signed by the individual that is using the equipment (not necessarily the person picking up the equipment).
- If the person who needs the equipment is not present, a release of liability and waiver form can be attained for the person that needs the equipment to sign and return.
- The release of liability and waiver form is posted on our website, www.lcco.org, under the H.E.L.P. (Health Equipment Lending Program). You can print the form and bring the signed form in with you.

Donations:

- All equipment for donation will be subject to inspection. The equipment will not be accepted by the agency that is not in good working order. You will be asked to take the equipment back with you. We cannot dispose of equipment for you.



- Equipment with rust or unstable hinges will not be accepted.
- No wheelchairs with cracks in the seats.
- No open boxes or bags of Depend or other hygiene items.
- No urinals.
- If you have a large donation please call the agency before you come in to setup a time for the staff to inspect the equipment.
- We no longer accept gel pads for wheelchairs.
- No toilet seats with hinges.

When you make a donation, a receipt is available by asking the receptionist. We welcome donations Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m., but please note that because of limited storage space, we ask that you call us first when bringing large donations. You are welcome to pick up equipment on Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

This program is tremendously helpful to the Lake County community and to continue helping people the agency had to restructure the program to ensure its longevity. We thank the community in advance for donations that keep the program active at the agency.

March for Meals '22 will be the best of both worlds!

Annual fundraiser set to go virtual and return to Great Lakes Mall

The Mall Walk is back! The Lake County Council on Aging is bringing the community the best of both worlds this year as the agency culminates a month long virtual March for Meals celebration with a live event at Great Lakes Mall on Saturday, April 2, 2022. Beginning on March 1, the Council on Aging will kick off its annual “March For Meals” event with online baskets and virtual programs all geared to raise dollars for the agency’s nutrition program. Then on Saturday morning, April 2, the live event takes place!

This Lake County event will be one of hundreds of local programs across the country that reaches out to their communities to build the support for Meals on Wheels. The agency needs the community to take part in the fundraiser to help support an ever growing number of seniors reaching out for nutritional support.

“We often use the phrase ‘More than a Meal’ when talking about the home delivered meal program,” said Council on Aging Board President John Thomas. “These daily meals are of course the nutritional part, but the visit by one of our incredible volunteers can sometimes play a more critical role. They provide a friendly greeting and a baseline safety check on seniors who can be frail and at risk. It is an important way to socially reconnect with our home-bound seniors.”

Nationally presented by Meals on Wheels America, the annual March for Meals events commemorate the historic day in March 1972 when President Richard Nixon signed into law a measure that established a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older. Since 2002, Meals On Wheels programs from across the country have joined forces for the annual awareness campaign to garner the financial support needed to fill the gap between the seniors served and those still in need.

Through the Meals on Wheels home delivered meal program, hundreds of seniors in Lake County who live alone and are in need of food receive nutritional meals delivered right to their homes.

“March for Meals will be a month-long celebration, designed to rally the Lake County area



around the vulnerable seniors who rely on this much-needed service”, said Joe Tomsick, CEO of the Council on Aging. “We partner with community and civic organizations, businesses, public officials, and all concerned citizens to address the need of food insecurity in the fastest growing segment of the population in America.”

On Saturday morning, April 2 the agency will bring back its super event at Great Lakes Mall. The indoor event begins with registration at 8:00 a.m., followed by the walk kickoff at 8:45 a.m. The walk route is a one-mile indoor loop. Participants can join individually or as part of a walk team. In addition to camaraderie and walking for a great cause, participants will receive a continental breakfast, a goodie bag and musical entertainment. Business sponsorships are available at a number of varying levels.

To participate, just fill out the entry form on page 22 of this issue of Bridge and return it to the Lake County Council on Aging at 8520 East Avenue, Mentor, Ohio 44060. You may also register at www.lcco.org.

This is a wonderful way for friends, veterans groups, churches and families to support the seniors of Lake County. Basket drawings will take place at the Mall during the walk.

The Lake County Council on Aging relies heavily on the support of donations, volunteers and corporate sponsorships in its fight against hunger in Lake County. “We are so thankful for our network of volunteers, donors and corporate sponsors for their generosity over the years and especially during the past few months,” said Tomsick.

To become a sponsor, donate or learn more about March for Meals 2022, please visit march4meals.org for updates.



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2022 Dinner Show Series



The Diamond Project

Back by popular demand!

Winners of the Cleveland Hot List Best Band Award! They are dedicated to performing a true replication of the musical styling of a live Neil Diamond concert.

They strive to incorporate the excitement and energy only a live show can provide!

Thursday, April 21, 2022
Michaud's, Strongsville

Friday, April 22, 2022
LaMalfa, Mentor

Tickets for both locations!

Lunch & Show: Noon	\$65.00
Dinner & Show: 6:30pm	\$65.00
Show Only: 1pm or 7:30pm	\$50.00



Phase 5 Motown Revue

Performing hits from Motown artists like The Temptations, The Four Tops, Smokey Robinson, The Contours and more. These five very talented vocalists combine tight harmonies along with smooth choreography and vintage costumes. Their incredible energy has crowds clapping and singing. Voted the #1 R & B Vocal Group in Detroit!

Thursday, May 19, 2022
Michaud's, Strongsville

Friday, May 20, 2022
LaMalfa, Mentor

Tickets for both locations!

Lunch & Show: Noon	\$70.00
Dinner & Show: 6:30pm	\$70.00
Show Only: 1pm or 7:30pm	\$55.00



Elvis Tribute

Walt Sanders & The Cadillac Band have been performing since 1993. Being a true fan of Elvis, he has developed his impersonation into a genuine tribute respected by those Elvis himself worked with, such as Ray Walker (The Jordanaires): "Walt is as sincere as I remember Elvis being and works at his craft the same."

Thursday June, 16, 2022
Villa Croatia, Eastlake

Friday, June 17, 2022
Michaud's, Strongsville

Tickets for both locations!

Lunch & Show: Noon	\$70.00
Dinner & Show: 6:30pm	\$70.00
Show Only: 1pm or 7:30pm	\$55.00



The Gatlin Show

Darryl Gatlin achieved major success in Nashville with albums on Sony/Epic, and a Billboard Top 40 Hit with "No Sir". Seen on CMA, TNN and received ACM award nominations. Andrea performed on national & international stages. Together they have been entertaining Country Music fans at events from Florida to Ohio.

Thursday, July 14, 2022
Michaud's, Strongsville

Friday, July 15, 2022
Villa Croatia, Eastlake

Tickets for both locations!

Lunch & Show: Noon	\$65.00
Dinner & Show: 6:30pm	\$65.00
Show Only: 1pm or 7:30pm	\$50.00



Lights Out!

Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons

Back by popular demand! Returning from their national tour to perform their tribute to Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons. Taking audiences on a musical journey through time with the evolution of rock and roll in the 1950s, to the free flowing sounds of the 1970s!

Thursday, August 18, 2022
LaMalfa, Mentor

Friday, August 19, 2022
Michaud's, Strongsville

Tickets for both locations!

Lunch & Show: Noon	\$70.00
Dinner & Show: 6:30pm	\$70.00
Show Only: 1pm or 7:30pm	\$55.00



Rat Pack & More

Vegas-Style comes to Ohio! Enjoy timeless music like Frank's "Fly me to the Moon", Sammy's "I've Gotta Be Me" and Dino's "That's Amore". Also celebrating the music of Bobby Darin, Nat King Cole, Tony Bennett, Ray Charles plus some other wonderful surprises! Grab a martini and enjoy the show!

Thursday, September 15, 2022
Michaud's, Strongsville

Friday, September 16, 2022
LaMalfa, Mentor

Tickets for both locations!

Lunch & Show: Noon	\$65.00
Dinner & Show: 6:30pm	\$65.00
Show Only: 1pm or 7:30pm	\$50.00

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Thanks be to God

Disenfranchised grief

Allowing supportive grief without judgement

By **Danielle Phillips**, Director of Social Services,
Lake County Council on Aging

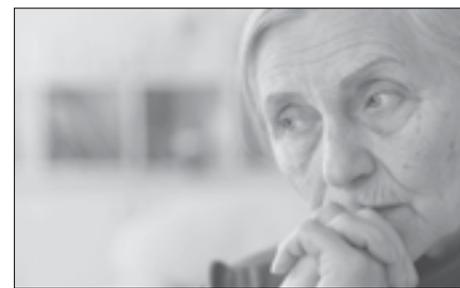
We all experience loss. Loss comes in many forms and affects different people in very different ways. Though largely unspoken, society has rules about who can be grieved and judgments are made about how sad we should be and for how long based on a number of factors. They include things like the relationship we had with the person who died, their age when they passed and the way they died—sudden or expected. Rules are applied not only to who we are allowed to grieve but also what we are allowed to grieve.

Society at large generally shows empathy for the loss of a loved one and provides support and compassion for the duration of time it is believed appropriate for the specific situation. What if the grief lasts longer than the “appropriate” time? Or what if the loss stems from a place where grief is not understood or accepted by others? The truth is, every single day people are struggling with hidden grief that is not being acknowledged.

Dr. Kenneth Doka, a professor at the Graduate School of New Rochelle, began a research study on grief that is not acknowledged. His early research was based on grieving ex-spouses. He found that this type of loss can produce the type of grief that is not socially recognized, not openly supported and not well understood. He found that individuals in this situation were experiencing significant loss but were not receiving the support others would normally receive when experiencing loss. Dr. Koda believed this meant people were literally not being given the right to grieve.

Dr. Koda first coined the phrase disenfranchised grief to describe the kind of grief that presents itself when individuals are not allowed to publicly mourn, openly acknowledge, or receive social support for grief they experience. Today, there are over 64 examples of disenfranchised grief that include multiple variations of loss, some of which are not related to dying.

Examples of disenfranchised grief include the death of an ex-partner, same sex partner, a neighbor, a friend or an abuser. It could include losing a living person to



dementia, addiction, mental illness or family conflict. It could include the moving to a new community, not being able to work anymore, a health decline or loss of independence. It could be losing your faith community or even losing your pet. Each of these losses lead to significant life transition.

Disenfranchised grief can happen any time a person's loss is not acknowledged or is minimized by those closest to them. This creates a real problem for the griever. They may begin to feel that their grief is inappropriate, invalid or unacceptable in some way. Not only do they have to struggle with the loss, but they have to make the choice to defend the depths of their sadness to those around them or internalize it.

The Family Health Psychiatric & Health Counseling Center outlines four characteristics for successful grief resolution to promote healing in people struggling with disenfranchised grief. They include:

- Accepting the reality of the loss.
- Experiencing the pain of grief and all the emotions that follow.
- Adjusting to the new environment without the person or situation.
- Withdrawing emotional energy and reinvesting it into a new relationship or situation.

It is important for those who are observing a person's grief from the outside to remember, when we withhold affirmation of a person's grief, memory of a relationship, the importance of the loss, the needs of the griever do not simply go away. Rather, it causes bereaved individuals to cut off sources of support, forcing them to suppress their grief which may cause their problems to magnify. We may not always understand or even agree with every situation that causes grief for another person, but we can pause and show kindness and compassion in order to help someone else along the way.

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Connect with the Council on Aging

Want to receive news and announcements about senior services, programs, resources and information? It's easy... just visit our homepage at www.lccoa.org and complete the "Signup for our Newsletter" contact form.

Visit www.lccoa.org and stay connected!

Community Champions Week March 14–18, 2022

March is the month when Meals on Wheels programs across the country reach out to their communities and build support that will enable them to serve America's seniors all year long. The March for Meals campaign gives the businesses, organizations, governments and volunteers who contribute so generously in their communities an opportunity to support homebound seniors in a variety of ways to make America stronger and healthier.

"The month of March is a fitting time to not only celebrate the successful history of Meals on Wheels, but also bring us together to support a solution that will strengthen communities into the future," said Ellie Hollander, president and CEO of Meals on Wheels America. "With 12,000 Americans turning 60 each day, now is the time to invest in these vital programs so that we can provide every senior in need with the nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks that will enable them to live healthier and independent in their own homes."

One observance during March for Meals is Community Champions Week which has not taken place since 2019 due to the pandemic. The CoA is hopeful that they will be able to provide safe, enriching and rewarding experiences for this year's event. From Monday, March 14 through Friday March 18, Lake County public officials, agency directors, business and industry leaders, local celebrities, and other interested parties will participate in a countywide event to show support for our community's senior citizens by delivering meals with a seasoned volunteer, packing delivery bags at nutrition sites, serving meals to Lunch Place guests, and raising awareness of the important impact of Meals on Wheels.

Each day one of the Council on Aging's nutrition sites will be featured:



Monday, March 14 • Painesville
Tuesday, March 15 • Willowick
Wednesday, March 16 • Wickliffe
Thursday, March 17 • Madison
Friday, March 18 • Mentor

Celebrated in many different ways across the country, the experience is a great opportunity for these leaders to meet our volunteers, interact with the senior community we serve, and see firsthand the value of the Council on Aging's nutrition program. Over the years, this event has helped the agency to engage powerful figures in our community, earn media attention and help raise public awareness for the nutritional and social needs of seniors. In addition this event gives businesses and individuals an opportunity to take a close look at our programs and determine if they would like to volunteer in any capacity.

"Senior hunger and isolation is prevalent in Lake County and has only increased due to COVID-19 concerns," said Linda Llewellyn, community services director for the Council on Aging. "For many seniors, our volunteers deliver the only meal seniors will eat all day and their visit with the volunteer could be the only personal interaction they have. It is truly giving the gift of health and well-being for seniors."

Public officials, business and industry leaders, faith community representatives, police and fire, fraternal organizations and any others who may be interested in participating in Community Champions Week should contact lllewellyn@lcco.org or 440-205-8111 ext. 241.

Council on Aging wins \$1,000 CVS grant

The Council on Aging is pleased to announce we are a recipient of the CVS Health Foundation Volunteer Challenge Grant. CVS designed the program to recognize the volunteer and fundraising efforts of their colleagues while also supporting the organizations they support. We greatly appreciate this recognition.

Volunteers deliver holiday meals to homebound seniors

By Ann Marie Armaro, Volunteer & Community Engagement Specialist,
Lake County Council on Aging

Lake County Council on Aging has delivered holiday meals to seniors on Thanksgiving and Christmas morning for over 30 years. This year dozens of volunteers took time out of their holidays to deliver a hot meal and some joy to over 125 seniors each holiday. The meals were prepared in partnership with University Hospital's Lake County hospitals. On Thanksgiving and Christmas morning Lake County Council on Aging staff and volunteers meet at Tripoint Medical Center and Lake West Medical Center to pick up meals for delivery. Our homebound seniors enjoyed these delicious meals along with a hand crafted card also made by volunteers. This year we had many groups of volunteers and individual volunteers who spent hours making beautiful cards in their homes to be delivered with the holiday meals.

Thanksgiving and Christmas volunteering has become an event that volunteers look forward to each year. The card making volunteers

swing into gear a month or two before the holiday and put their creative energy to work making one of a kind special cards and gifts. School students, church groups, Girl Scouts, women's groups and friends all get in on the action. The volunteers, who deliver, often deliver on both holidays and a growing number of volunteers even deliver year after year. They sign up early and look forward to this rewarding day of service. The only sad part is that we have to decline a few volunteers participation because all of our openings have been filled. Soon, we may have to hold a lottery so that we can share this joyful service opportunity with new volunteers.

We are extremely grateful for all our volunteers who gave of their time and talent to bring joy to our seniors this holiday season! Thank you for your kindness and making the holiday special!

To volunteer, contact Ann Marie Armaro at 440-205-8111 ext. 228 or Aarmaro@Lcco.org.



Council on Aging CEO Joe Tomsick along with his wife Lisa, and Wickliffe Nutrition Site coordinator Joe Greene, volunteering on Thanksgiving morning.

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Inclement weather and emergency cancellation

Meals on Wheels delivery and Lunch Place site

By **Linda Llewellyn**, Director of Community Services,
Lake County Council on Aging

The Lake County Council on Aging changed our inclement weather policy to better serve our home-delivered meal clients and our senior center Lunch Place guests several years ago. This time of year is a great time to share a reminder. The policy encompasses all potential barriers to serving meals, including emergency conditions such as no power, no water, equipment failure, a communicable disease outbreak or any community emergency.

It is very important to know that we no longer automatically close our nutrition sites when the area schools close. We make our own determination to close one or more sites independent of school district closures, based on weather forecasts or other conditions for the Meals on Wheels (MOW) delivery period in the late morning hours between 10:30 a.m. and noon.

Emergency closure information will be available on TV channels 3 and 5, their websites, and the LCCOA website. It is important for clients and families to know which kitchen prepares meals for delivery, because there may be times when some, but not all kitchens will be closed. This information is located in your welcome packet and on the monthly menu along with the phone number. Closure information will also be available by phone at the five nutrition sites and the LCCOA main office at 440-205-8111. Please look out for your family and neighbors and let them know if you see that there will be no MOW delivery for the day, or that the Lunch Place locations will not be serving a meal.

To prepare for emergencies when meals cannot be delivered, Lunch

Place dining rooms will be closed, or when conditions do not permit grocery shopping, we have advised Lake County seniors to stock a pantry with basic, easily opened shelf stable food items and water.

In the event of a power failure, for example, a can of pasta and a vegetable with a pull top can be opened and eaten at room temperature during a power failure. It may not be the tastiest meal, but food can be eaten in this manner, in an emergency. It is recommended to keep some of the following items in your cupboard: ready-to-eat canned soup, stew or pasta; tuna or salmon; fruit cups, canned vegetables, packaged nuts, granola or cereal bars, peanut butter and crackers, bottled water, juice boxes, and meal replacement bars or beverages. It is important to remember to occasionally eat these items and replace them with fresh to assure quality when they are consumed.

Blizzard bags which provide a two-three day supply of these items will be provided to home-delivered meal clients by request for those who are unable to provide these emergency provisions for themselves. If you are a Meals on Wheels client you will have received a signup form to complete and return. If you didn't receive the form or are unsure please contact your LCCOA kitchen with your request.

Stocking an emergency food pantry is important for all residents in Lake County. Having food and water on hand for emergencies is critical. Remember in northeast Ohio, we live by the "depending on the weather" motto.



Friday, February 18 • 6 pm
Lake Effect Ball
St. Noel Banquet Center
35200 Chardon Road, Willoughby Hills

Saturday, March 19 • Noon
**32nd Annual Women's
History Month Luncheon**
Lake County History Center
415 Riverside Drive, Painesville Township

(440) 639-2945
www.LakeHistory.org



The Lake County Council on Aging continues many essential services throughout the pandemic, including delivering nutritious meals to the county's most vulnerable seniors. Donations will help us replenish food supplies, subsidize personnel, and enable tech-based efforts to check in on isolated elderly recipients.

Please consider a tax-deductible donation by calling our office at (440) 205-8111, or visiting our website at www.lcco.org. Thank you!

Ring in 2022 with some new housecleaning tips!

By Patricia J. Wem, Homemaker Manager, Lake County Council on Aging

New Year's resolution for seniors—to continue decking the halls for many years to come in their own home! Memories of Christmas past with wide eyed children and grandchildren opening presents and ringing in the New Year with hope and anticipation of the new year live on, but also comes the reality that those halls are getting harder for them to clean.

Seniors face the challenge of maintaining their independence even within the confines of their own homes. Taking care of the home they raised their families in is the ultimate self satisfaction one takes with pride in their house, but when back pain, swollen joints, and overall loss of mobility inhibits them from doing menial tasks, the loss of physical capabilities can further increase depression and anxiety among seniors.

So here are a few tricks to repurpose household goods into new cleaning tools and modalities for them to use on their own to keep their homes clean and safe:

Have an old broom? – Secure

with a large rubber band a rag at base of broom and catch the base-board dust before they grow into dust bunnies!

Have a lint roller sitting in the drawer? – From the comfort of your recliner, roll it over lamp shades to collect that unsightly dust!

Have spills in refrigerator?– Line shelves with press-n-seal sheets and pull them off as you need to!

Have difficulty reaching high spaces? – Use stackable bins placed on countertops for easy access to canned goods!

Here at Lake County Council on Aging our goal is to keep our seniors in their homes for as long as possible because there truly is no place like home.

If you know of a senior that needs a little extra assistance with their cleaning needs, please feel free to call us at 440-205-8111 and ask for more information regarding our Homemaker Services Program and we would be happy to give our seniors a helping hand with basic cleaning needs.

Kindness might be the best medicine for isolation

By Kristi Ballinger

Social Work Manager, Lake County Council on Aging

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to isolation in older adults has escalated. Clients have reported how difficult it has been to be distanced from family and friends. They are hungry for conversations and interactions have taken on new significance.

Loneliness in older adults has become a significant public health concern. It comes with its own health risks—weaker immune systems, heart disease, high blood pressure, anxiety, depression and higher risk for dementia.

Major life events such as loss of spouse, retirement, or serious health condition can lead to increased isolation. The pandemic has only exacerbated this issue.

One possible answer to this ongoing concern is the simple act of kindness. Studies have shown that kindness can boost our immune system by reducing stress hormones like cortisol. Although we may be physically apart, we don't have to

be alone. Simple acts of kindness can help us feel connected and reduce the negative effects of loneliness. Kindness has been shown to increase self-esteem, empathy and compassion as well as decrease blood pressure and cortisol levels.

Examples of this include phone calls, cards or letters to those you know who may be without social supports. Make it a point to check in with them on a regular basis to let them know someone is thinking of them. Share stories of fun or lighthearted news. Reminisce about fond memories you may share.

If able, see that their essential needs are being taken care of such as food, medication, transportation, yard work or taking trash to the curb.

If we are able to make a concerted effort in engaging in acts of kindness, we may see an improvement in the lives of others as well as health benefits for ourselves.

East Avenue office renovations

The main office of the Lake County Council on Aging on East Avenue in Mentor has been undergoing a face lift over the past year. Visitors are now welcomed into a larger lobby and new reception office, and the renovations have included the design of a volunteer work center. The agency is grateful to Brian Rogers and CT Consultants for their assistance overseeing the project. We thank the RCF Group for their generous donation and installation of work station partitions in our new volunteer center.



Our newly remodeled foyer.

The Council would also like to give special recognition to longtime volunteer Steve Fried for his expert assistance with assembling office furniture.

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Thank you to our Community Partners:



What you need to know about Medicare wellness visits

By University Hospitals

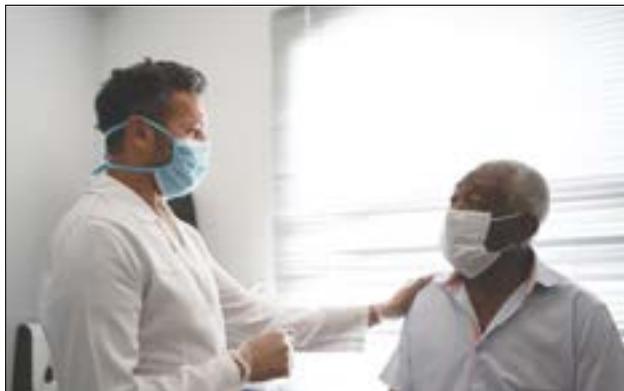
Did you know that if you receive Medicare, you are eligible for a no-cost annual wellness visit? Medicare annual wellness visits focus on health promotion and disease prevention, which is key to living a long, healthy life.

What is a Medicare wellness visit?

The Medicare wellness visit is a covered visit that allows your health care provider to dedicate time for a health risk assessment and prevention/ screening strategies. During this visit, your health care provider will go over your health risks, prevention and screenings only – giving your provider the time needed to make sure all of your immunizations, cancer screenings and personal screenings based on risk are discussed and scheduled.

Your physician will conduct a health risk assessment and create a five to 10-year personalized health plan that promotes health and prevents disease. The visits give you the opportunity to ask questions and get in-depth information.

The Medicare wellness visit is not a comprehensive physical exam. But if you have a certain Medicare Advantage Plan, you can schedule a physical exam and a wellness visit for the same appointment with your provider



Who Is eligible?

People who are age 65 and older with Medicare insurance are eligible for the Medicare annual wellness visit, as are people who are younger than age 65 with disabilities with Medicare insurance.

There are three type of wellness visits:

- The initial preventive physical exam (IPPE)—made within 12 months of your Medicare enrollment
- The initial annual wellness visit – these take place 11 full calendar months since the IPPE or if you’ve never had an IPPE and you’ve had Medicare coverage for more than 12 months.
- Subsequent annual wellness visits – these take place 11 full calendar months since the last annual wellness visit.

It’s important to ask to schedule an annual

wellness visit when you make your appointment. That way, you can make sure Medicare covers the visit as a preventive service.

However, if your visit identifies other needed services or you request that your physician address other acute health issues during the visit, cost-sharing may be necessary. Be sure to discuss any questions with your physician’s office in advance of your visit.

What to expect during the annual wellness visit

Your health care provider will do these things at your visit:

- Review your blood pressure, heart rate, height, weight and body mass index (BMI).
- Review your current health problems, as well as your medical, surgical, family and social histories.
- Review your current medications.
- Conduct a health risk assessment.
- Provide nutrition counseling.
- Discuss an exercise plan to fit your lifestyle.
- Discuss smoking cessation and arrange for counseling if needed.
- Discuss fall prevention.
- Discuss advance care planning.
- Discuss preventive screenings recommended by evidence-based practice guidelines that

See *WELLNESS VISITS* on page 15



FIRST MONTH'S RENT AND UTILITY DEPOSIT PROGRAM

- Must have some form of income coming into the household
- For people moving to a new unit
- Helps low to moderate-income households by paying first month's rent and utility deposits

FAIR HOUSING RESOURCE CENTER

STAR PROGRAM

SHORT-TERM SENIOR SUBSIDY PROGRAM

- Provides a rental subsidy for up to 6 months
- Tenant must be at least 62 years of age or older, qualify as low to moderate-income, currently have some form of income being brought into the household, and must demonstrate a need for assistance.
- FHRC will pay up to 70% of a tenant's rent

Help is Available

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www.fhrc.org

Protect yourself from carbon monoxide poisoning

By Lake County
General Health District

As we move into colder weather, Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) is reminding everyone to protect themselves from sources of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning that are more commonly in use this time of year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) more than 400 Americans die from unintentional CO poisoning each year. It is also reported that each year more than 20,000 Americans visit the emergency room, and more than 4,000 Americans are hospitalized due to CO poisoning.

CO is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if you breathe it. CO is found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by furnaces, water heaters, small gasoline engines, stoves, generators, lanterns, and gas ranges, or by burning charcoal and wood. People and animals in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces with these items can be poisoned and die from breathing in CO.

The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. People who are sleeping or who have been drinking alcohol can die from CO poisoning before they ever have symptoms. If you think you may have CO poisoning, call your doctor right away.

Use the following tips to prevent accidental CO poisoning:

- Have your heating system, water heater, and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician each year.



- Have at least one working CO detector. Check the detector's batteries twice annually, at the same time smoke detector batteries are checked. If the detector sounds, leave your home immediately, and call 911. Also, check the end of life date on the detector, as it may need to be replaced.
- Seek medical attention if you think you have CO poisoning, and are feeling dizzy, lightheaded or nauseous.
- Do NOT use generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning products inside a home, basement, garage, camper, or even outside near an open window. This is especially important to remember during a power outage.
- Do NOT warm up, or run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the garage door open. Make sure to shut off vehicles when parking in a garage.
- Do NOT burn anything in a stove or fireplace that is not vented.
- Do NOT heat your house with a gas oven.

If you have questions about CO poisoning, call LCGHD at 440-350-2543 or visit their website at <https://www.lcghd.org>.

Wellness visits from page 14

are indicated for you based upon your age, risk factors and family history.

How to prepare for a wellness visit

Bring these items to your visit:

- Immunization records.
- List of current prescribed medicines, supplements and over-the-counter medicines.
- List of your patient care team –

any specialists you see for care.

- List of your questions.

In addition, be prepared to review your family medical history.

At University Hospitals, we believe that good health starts with great primary care. To schedule an appointment with a UH primary care physician or to find a doctor visit UHhospitals.org/Doctors or call 440-901-5999.



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Estate planning during the pandemic

By Shannon M. Cianciola, Esq.,
VP, Council on Aging Board of Trustees

During this unprecedented time, one of the major concerns my clients have dealt with is the lack of estate planning when needed. Not only is your last will and testament important, as it lays out your wishes of what will happen to your assets upon your death, but equally vital is a health care power of attorney and durable power of attorney for finances.

A **health care power of attorney** is a document that you can sign which states who you would like to make health care decisions for you if you are unable to make them on your own. You can also express your wishes regarding care for you in the case that you are deemed permanently unconscious.

A **durable power of attorney** for finances is a document where you appoint a person to help make financial decisions for you.

The **last will and testament** is where you state what should happen to your assets upon your death. This is very important because if you do not intend on leaving your assets to certain family members, you must specifically list out in a document whom you want your estate to go to. This document must be signed by you, and witnessed by two (2) people, to



be valid. I recently had a client who was in the hospital with COVID-19 and had spoken to an attorney to draft a last will and testament, had one drafted (which specifically left out some heirs), but unfortunately never signed the will before his death. Therefore, his entire estate will now go to his son, of whom he intended to disinherit.

Drafting your estate planning documents is of utmost importance, as they not only state whom should be making decisions for you in the case you become incapacitated, but also ensure that your last wishes are followed upon your death.

Legal assistance for eligible individuals over the age of 60 is available thru organizations such as the Legal Aid Society and Pro Seniors. For more information, and for lists of legal resources, please contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center of the Lake County Council on Aging at 440-205-8111.

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Visual impairment, blindness cases in U.S. expected to double over the next 10 years

As the population ages, so does the likelihood of developing various eye diseases including cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetes or stroke-related vision issues. When eye glasses aren't enough Cleveland Sight Center offers rehabilitation programs and services. We help people do the things they want to do in their daily lives.

Cataract

A cataract is a clouding of the internal lens of the eye usually associated with aging. Cataracts, if not addressed, will continue to develop and obscure vision.

Glaucoma

Glaucoma increases pressure in the eye which damages the eye's optic nerve and can result in vision loss and blindness.

Macular degeneration

Macular degeneration or age-related macular degeneration is the progressive loss of the eye's central vision. The faces of family mem-

bers and friends appear blurred and it becomes increasingly difficult to read road signs or standard print.

Diabetes

Diabetes is the number one cause of low vision and blindness among adults.

What you can do

See your optometrist or ophthalmologist annually and primary care physician regularly and take seriously the health concerns your doctor places on managing diabetes to limit possible vision loss. The earlier an eye disease is detected the sooner treatment can be applied to possibly limit the vision loss. Additionally, consider wearing safety glasses to protect your eyes, wear sunglasses with UV-A and UV-B ray protection, wear a hat or visor when outdoors, use blue light filters when using electronic devices, exercise regularly and maintain a healthy diet.

Contact the Cleveland Sight Center at 216-658-4567 for further information.

United Way of Lake County celebrating 100 years

As we ushered in the new year, United Way of Lake County (UWLC) kicked off the celebration of their 100-year anniversary. UWLC has been driving change by responding to our community's most pressing needs for 100 years.

Thanks to their work, no one stands alone. UWLC has made sustainable, positive impact by focusing on education, financial stability, health, and basic needs. Why is their work so important? Because a full 54% of Lake County children enter kindergarten without the sufficient skills to engage in kindergarten-level instruction, nearly 33% of Lake County households struggle to afford basic needs, and we all know that too many of our neighbors live with the stress of being uninsured or underinsured.

UWLC leverages their expertise to ensure donor dollars are maximized to help the most people by helping to fund the most impactful services. Services like the Council on Aging's congregate meal pro-



The Council on Aging receives UWLC support for meals.

gram for seniors, the Lake County Free Clinic's medical and dental programs, Project Hope for the Homeless, The Salvation Army Painesville, and many more.

And you can give to UWLC with confidence because they are committed to accountability and transparency and have received top marks among both GuideStar and Charity Navigator, two well-known and highly respected charity assessment organizations. To contribute, visit uwlc.org/give today or mail a check payable to United Way of Lake County to 9285 Progress Pkwy, Mentor, OH 44060.



The Lake County Council on Aging extends a wholehearted thanks to the many individuals who responded to our appeal for financial support in the fall 2021 edition of Bridge.

Alexander Timperio	Janet Sipols
Anonymous	Jo Cameron
Betty Lanning	Karen Winslow
Betty T. Lieby	Luci Dalton
Chris Larson-McKenzie	Marjorie Knaus
David & Linda Mitchell	Myrna Pearlman
David Kaus	Patricia Sfero
Debbie Lefelhoc	Richard E. Rabe
Diane Collins	Rose Derk
Dominic Yanni	Sam & Renee Kovalak
Donald Malinowski	Samuel T. Cowling
Doug & Barbara Elersich	Shirley Shandle
Edwina C. Grady	Sue Parsons
Harold E. Collins	Susan Fende
Harrison & Ann R. Gleason	

The above represents donations received through December 17, 2021. In the event your gift came in after this date please accept our apologies. You will be recognized in our annual report.

You may contact the agency at 440-205-8111 if you have any questions regarding your donation.



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THOMAS
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Patricia J. Schraff, CELA*

John P. Thomas
Wm. Joseph Baker
Lindsay C. Jones
Tara M. Pavlovcak
Claudia Rose Brown
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(of counsel)
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Start the new year volunteering to help seniors

As we start the new year, we are in need of volunteers to deliver hot meals to seniors in Lake County. It is a good time to renew your spirit by giving time to help others.

Lake County Council on Aging is in need of kitchen assistance and Meals on Wheels drivers at all five of our nutrition sites. Your assistance to prepare and deliver nutritious meals to our seniors is a great need, as many of our seniors are homebound and isolated this winter.

We deliver Meals on Wheels Monday through Friday at our nutrition sites in Wickliffe, Willowick, Mentor, Painesville and

Madison. What better way to warm a senior's day than with a hot meal and some kindness.

We are also looking for volunteer grocery shoppers and friendly callers. Grocery shopping is done twice monthly for clients and friendly calls can be made from your home on weekdays or weekends. Volunteers are also needed to deliver produce boxes and commodity boxes to seniors monthly. We have some great opportunities to fit any schedule. Call today for more information.

Call Ann Marie Armario at 440-205-8111 ext. 228 or email her at Aarmario@Lcco.org.

Radio show for Lake County seniors!

Listen to the Council on Aging's radio show every Saturday afternoon from 2–3 p.m. on both 1330 AM and 101.5 FM. Council on Aging CEO, Joe Tomsick, hosts "Our Aging World" and shares ideas and resources to make your life easier — with tips, tools and resources on topics such

as senior health, housing, finances, Medicare, Social Security, money saving programs, and other issues that affect older adults.



The show is made possible through sponsorships and Integrity Radio. You may also listen live online at tunein.com — search WINT.

Adult Protective Services 24/7 hotline

Lake County Adult Protective Services has continued with our day to day business throughout these trying times. Our 24 hour a day/7 day a week hotline continues to be maintained by social work staff, allowing for the ability to receive referrals at any point in the day. Our building has also opened back up to the public in order to serve the citizens of Lake County.

Case assignments of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, exploitation and supportive services are assigned based on the nature of allegations that have been reported. Our social work staff are meeting with seniors, while practicing recommendations to maintain safe dis-

tances. Our staff are also maintaining phone contact with the seniors throughout the case assignment, as well, to ensure that basic needs are being met and that our seniors have access to available services in the community.

Please contact our hotline at 440-350-4000, press 1, for questions, to report concerns, or to request additional information about the services that we provide. An overview of all of the programs housed at Lake County Department of Job and Family Services, as well as links to area resources, can be found at lakecountyohio.gov, (Home - Job and Family Services).

\$10,000 year-end appeal matched!

The Lake County Council on Aging Board of Trustees is greatly appreciative to all those individuals and families who made year-end contributions to the agency's 2021 appeal. Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, a \$10,000 match was made to the agency. Your support can help make a real difference in the lives of older adults who are facing challenges

that they never expected. The Lake County Council on Aging is a qualified 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, and donations are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

Please consider helping support our efforts by clicking the "donate" button online at www.lcco.org, or mailing your donation to:

8520 East Avenue
Mentor, OH 44060

The National Kidney Foundation sponsors programs for kidney patients

The National Kidney Foundation is the largest nonprofit in the country that is dedicated to the awareness, prevention and treatment of kidney disease.

The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) Serving Northern Ohio will be presenting one in-person and two virtual program opportunities for the kidney patient community.

The in-person program will be held on Sunday, March 13 from 1–4 p.m. at the Holiday Inn South in Independence. The program, called Patient Symposium, invites kidney patients from early stages of kidney disease to dialysis or transplantation and their caregivers to come together, learn, and become empowered. The goal of Patient Symposium is to engage, empower, and educate those af-

ected by kidney disease, including patients, caregivers, organ donors, and healthcare professionals.

This is done through the in-person event as well as two virtual breakout sessions whose topics cover the latest medical advances, financial developments, nutrition essentials, wellness care, primary care prevention, and mental health associated with kidney disease.

The virtual breakout sessions will be the week of March 7 and March 14.

Register to get more details on this program at: <https://sforce.co/3n9fv9u>. If you have any questions or want to learn more, please contact NKF Northern Ohio program manager, Leah Adams, at 440-465-0245 or leah.adams@kidney.org.

Appreciation to OSHIIP volunteers

During the 2021 Medicare open enrollment period, four volunteers from the Council on Aging helped 130 people in person and 50 over the telephone to make informed decisions regarding Medicare benefits by providing free, unbiased information. These volunteers have been trained and certified through the Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP).

Rita McNeal, Pat Kuhout Lynn Manteuffel and Amy Ginnis all donated their time and expertise in providing information to resolve Medicare, Medicaid, and secondary health insurance questions, saving approximately \$4000 out of pocket costs for Lake County seniors. The Aging and Disability Resource Center salutes these dedicated individuals!

Give the Vial of Life in the New Year

The Vial of Life is a program that allows individuals to have medical and family contact information ready in their home for emergency personnel to reference during an emergency.

The kit is used to provide the senior's medical information in the event that the person is not able to speak or remember this information. A red, magnetized pouch is placed on the individual's refrigerator, where first responders are readily able to locate the information.

For more information and to



request a Vial of Life for yourself or a loved one, please call the Lake County Council on Aging at 440-205-8111 and ask for the ADRC.

Grocery shoppers needed to assist seniors

The Grocery Shoppers Program assists seniors by providing shopping and delivery of needed groceries.

Call Ann Marie Armario at 440-205-8111 ext. 228 or email her at Aarmario@lccoa.org.



SAVE THE DATE! March for Meals April 2, 2022

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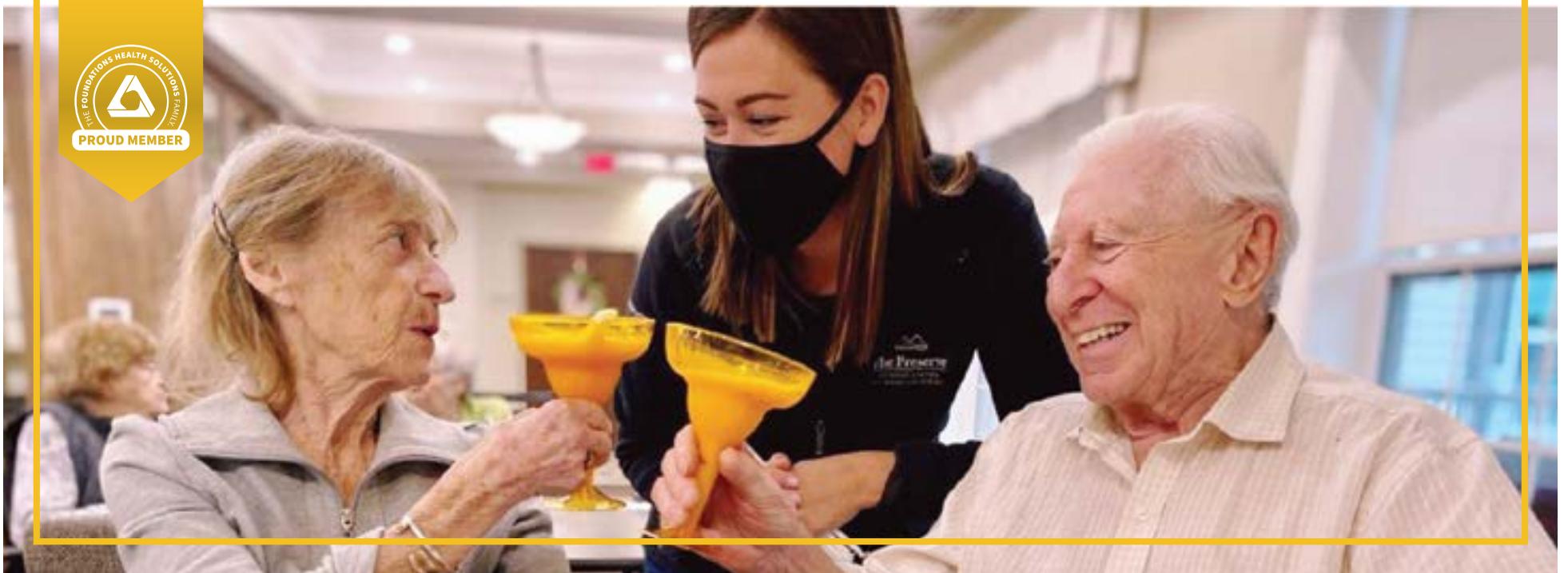
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Lake County state representative named "legislator of the year"

Submitted by WRAAA

The Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging named State Rep. Daniel P. Troy, District 60, as "legislator of the year." He was chosen because of his continued work on improving senior citizen services funding and elder justice issues and his support of the association's budget priorities during the state's budget process.

The CEO of the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging and 2021's new president of Ohio's 12 Area Agencies on Aging (O4A), Dr. E. Douglas Beach gratefully acknowledged Rep. Troy with the award for his actions that enhanced the dignity and quality of life for Ohio's senior citizens.

"Day-to-day living was never without its overwhelming challenges, but with the advent of the pandemic, isolation and critical circumstances multiplied for seniors. Good nutrition, home safety, community programs, transportation, optimal health care access, web-based technology – benefits so many of us take for granted –



Doug Beach, CEO Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging and O4A president, with legislator of the year, Representative Daniel P. Troy.

became, more than ever, critical life-sustaining issues for seniors. Rep. Troy's unfailing commitment to seniors provided them the means, safety and security to live independently in their homes and communities — a right they earned as long-lived contributors to society," said Dr. Beach.

Two of the house bills sponsored by Troy and currently pending in committee include HB 419 and HB 207 which if enacted, would close loopholes within Ohio's mandatory elder abuse reporting laws and expand homestead exemptions for fixed-income seniors, respectively.



Sheriff's Corner

By Sheriff Frank Leonbruno • Lake County, Ohio



Why does the Lake County sheriff's office SWAT team respond to Ashtabula and Geauga counties?

We have been asked this question many times so I want to take a moment to answer.

Most counties, unless they are major cities, do not have full time SWAT teams. The team members work full time on patrol or other units, and only respond as SWAT members when incidents occur. A SWAT activation takes deputies off patrol for that period. Further, such call outs, because they require so many individuals to staff a SWAT team, can be very costly in terms of overtime. Ongoing training further complicates such issues, but it is critical to implement the most professional unit possible in handling such dangerous incidents. Hence, for one agency to carry that burden is difficult.

For this reason, years ago the Lake, Geauga and Ashtabula county sheriffs got together to share resources (deputies who are SWAT trained, equipment, negotiators, and more) in staffing our SWAT team. Equally, police chiefs from areas throughout the three counties agreed to add their personnel in supporting such efforts.

By sharing manpower it reduces the cost for both training and response to incidents. Sharing the cost for vehicles and equipment also lessens the cost to one commu-

nity without lessening the professionalism and training needed to put a well-trained emergency response team into the field on a moments' notice. Further, by being a tri-county (regional) response team qualifies our team for federal grants and funding that other localized teams are not able to receive. This federal funding has enabled us to purchase two armored vehicles, vests, and other equipment without using local dollars.

Today our SWAT team is comprised of members from the Lake, Ashtabula and Geauga counties sheriff's offices, Painesville City Police Department, Madison Township Police Department, Middlefield Police Department, Chester Township Police Department, and the Concord Township and Painesville Township fire departments. All of these members are dedicated to bringing the best response to their communities by sharing resources.

This collective approach enables our tri-county area to have the most professional and dedicated SWAT team of experienced officers, negotiators, our paramedics possible for our communities. Consistent training and preparation by this team assists in bringing these types of critical incidents to a peaceful resolution.

Appreciation to the SNPJ Farm board

SNPJ Loyalites Lodge 158 presented the Council on Aging with a donation of \$500 during the agency's holiday luncheon in December. The dollars were raised during a summer polka dance at the SNPJ Farm in Kirtland, and presented by Lodge President Don Srnick and Vice President Greg Volpe. SNPJ is a Slovenian language acronym for the Slovene National Benefit Society, a fraternal benefit organization founded in 1904. The SNPJ Farm at 10946 Heath Road was established in Lake County in 1939

By the way, this summer the Council on Aging will host a dance at the beautiful picnic grounds of the SNPJ Farm on Sunday, July 17. Tickets will be available in



SNPJ Loyalites Lodge 158 President Don Srnick presents a check to the Council on Aging's Jennell Muscatello, Greg Volpe, Don Srnick, Joe Tomsick, Selena Cox, Lynn Manteuffel

advance and at the gate that day as the agency celebrates its 50th anniversary.

More details will follow, but please save the date for a fun-filled afternoon!

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Community-based organizations like the Lake County Council on Aging need your support! Donate today to help us provide vital services like meals to older adults in your neighborhood. Mail your tax-deductible donation to:

Council on Aging
8520 East Avenue
Mentor, Ohio 44060



Lake County Mobile Food Pantry extends distribution to April

The Lake County Mobile Food Pantry provides fresh produce to Lake County seniors for free through a weekly distribution at the Laketrans Mentor Park-n-Ride.

Distributions are Tuesday from 10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. at the Mentor Park-n-Ride at 8650 Market Street.

Lake County seniors, 60 years and older, may register for one pickup per month by calling Lifeline at 2-1-1 or Lake County Council on Aging at 440-205-8111. Preregistration is required for the 75 spots available each week. Participants must certify annual gross household income is at or below \$25,759 for a household of one and \$34,839 for a household of two. Income is self-declared; verification is not required.

“A lot of agencies are reflecting on what things they did differently during the pandemic and what should stay,” shared Laketrans CEO Ben Capelle. “As long as food insecurities exist among our seniors,

we plan to continue this program with the support of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and our local partners. There is no reason seniors in Lake County should go without food.”

Laketrans offers free transportation to the Lake County Mobile Food Pantry distribution. Residents can call Laketrans customer service at 440-354-6100 to arrange transportation to pick up your produce. Reservations for Laketrans’ Dial-a-Ride service can be made 1–12 business days in advance. The Mentor Park-n-Ride is also accessible taking Laketrans’ Route 8, but please be aware produce boxes are between 20–30 pounds.

This program is made possible through a partnership between Laketrans, Board of Lake County Commissioners Senior Services, Lifeline, Lake County Council on Aging, and the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.

There is no distribution on Tuesday, March 29.

Lifeline, Helping People, Changing Lives

COVID Relief Fund: Lifeline, Inc. has funding to assist eligible households financially impacted by COVID-19 with rent or mortgage payments and to prevent utility disconnections. Residents in need can contact Lake County 2-1-1 at 2-1-1 or at 440-639-4420 for more information and to connect with services.

HEAP WCP: The HEAP Winter Crisis Program assists with heating bills and fuel oil and runs through March 31, 2022. Intake appointments can be scheduled by calling 1-440-381-8230 or visiting <https://app.capappointments.com/> For more information contact our office at 440-350-9160.

Volunteer Guardian Program: The VGP continues to actively recruit new volunteer guardians. Those interested in volunteering

can contact our Program Manager, Antoinette Foster, at antoinettef@lclifeline.org.

Kinship Navigator Program: We continue to offer one-on-one navigation and resource connections by appointment for grandparents and other kin raising children not their own. Our Kinship Coordinator can be reached by calling 2-1-1.

VITA Tax Program: Tax clinics will begin at our office in January 2022. Tax preparation appointments will be available in early January by calling 2-1-1.

2-1-1: The 2-1-1 hotline remains fully functional 24/7. We are working hard to keep our resource database as up to date and accurate as possible with agency hours, programs and changes, given the ever-changing environment.

The Lunch Place

Enjoy good food with friends at Lake County Council on Aging meal sites

If you are age 60 or older and are looking for warm companionship and healthy, nutritious food, then schedule time to eat a meal with a friend.

The Lunch Place serves hot lunches five days per week providing 1/3 of the daily-required recommendations of USDA. There is no charge although a suggested voluntary donation of \$1.50 is accepted. A reservation in advance of the meal is also required.

It is never too late to start making positive lifestyle changes. Eating well can help you stay healthy and independent — and look and feel good — in the years to come.

More information about the Lunch Place can be obtained by calling the listed numbers to the right.



The Lunch Place at Madison

2938 Hubbard Road
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Phone: (440) 428-7002
Coordinator: Glynnis Fox

The Lunch Place at Painesville

270 East Main Street
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Phone: (440) 354-6700
Coordinator: Jean Carlton

The Lunch Place at Wickliffe

900 Worden Road
Hours: 8:30am – 1:30pm
Phone: (440) 373-5017
Coordinator: Joe Greene

The Lunch Place at Willowick

321 East 314th Street
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Phone: (440) 946-8822
Coordinator: Renee Sonnie

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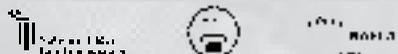
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2022 March for Meals

Saturday, April 2, 2022

Registration Form

**ONLINE Registration at www.lcco.org
or mail in the form below.**

Name: _____

Company Name: _____
(if applicable)

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Select all that apply:

- Individual Walker** (\$15 adults/ \$5 children)
No. of walkers: _____ Adults _____ Children (under12)
- Individual Walker PLUS** (\$25 adults/\$15 children)
Includes commemorative t-shirt
No. of walkers: _____ Adults _____ Children (under12)

Team Name: _____

- I am raising pledges, either online or through personal requests.
- I can't participate, but I'd like to donate \$ _____
- Please contact me about becoming a March for Meals sponsor

Method of Payment

Total Due: \$ _____

Cash \$ _____

Check(s) \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Council on Aging

For secure payment via **PayPal** or **Credit Card**
please register via the March for Meals Registration
page on our website at www.lcco.org

Mail registration form and payment to:

Council on Aging
8520 East Avenue
Mentor, OH 44060
or fax to 440-205-7055

Questions? Call 440-205-8111

Thank you note to city of Mentor

In December, employees from the city of Mentor participated in a silent auction to raise funds for area nonprofits. The Lake County Council on Aging was chosen as one of 10 charitable organizations in Lake County, each receiving \$350. The agency extends its sincere gratitude to all of the city employees who participated in this effort.



Saluting Lake County CENTENARIANS

Congratulations to these residents of Lake County who were recently recognized for having turned at least 100 years of age. They will receive a signed Centenarian Certificate from the Council on Aging.

Bill Boyd, Thompson

101 years old • July 6, 1920

Lillian M. Hardy, Kirtland

100 years old • December 6, 1921

Betty Lou Kreeger, Wickliffe

100 years old • November 28, 1921

Do you know someone turning 100 years old... or older?

Since 2014, the Lake County Council on Aging has been honoring those residents of Lake County who have turned at least 100 years old. If you know of someone marking this milestone birthday or even older, please notify us by going online to our website at www.lccoa.org and using the fillable form. You will receive a beautiful centenarian certificate from the Council on Aging, along with name and birth date recognition in our quarterly newspaper, "Bridge."

You may also drop us a note and include the following:

- Name of honoree
- Your name (as requestor)
- Your mailing address

- Your phone number
- Honoree date of birth
- Relationship to honoree

Send to:

Council on Aging
Centenarian Project
8520 East Avenue
Mentor, Ohio 44060

Privacy policy:

In order to protect the identity of participants from unwanted solicitation or contacts, we will only print the name, city and birth date of the centenarian. All other info you send will be kept confidential and is for use on a centenarian certificate only.

Project Hope for the Homeless

"Hope House" helps seniors

Tonya Abney is certain a 78-year-old former guest would have died in the streets without the shelter, care, and guidance provided by Project Hope for the Homeless.

The man had been homeless for a long portion of his life and was one of the first guests to be served through the organization's senior care program called Hope House. He now lives at Ohio Living Breck-enridge Village in Willoughby.

"He had some ailing medical problems and really needed that extra level of care and we worked with him to get him linked up to services," said Abney, who serves as Project Hope for the Homeless' aftercare coordinator and works with guests who stay at Hope House.

This three-unit transitional housing program is now supported with funds from the Lake County Senior Services levy. It began in 2019 for seniors ages 62 and older who find themselves homeless. These guests receive subsidized or free rent for



up to 90 days and receive 24/7 shelter and case management.

They also receive Meals on Wheels daily, provided by Lake County Council on Aging, along with transportation to/from physician appointments and/or the grocery store. Assistance is provided as needed for laundry, chores or smaller tasks.

"Hope House provides them with shelter all day long to keep them out of the weather," Abney said. "About 90% get into permanent housing and their homelessness is over and they have broken the cycle and are able to sustain it."

Visit www.projecthopeforthehomeless.org for more information.

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or make an appointment at 440-901-1927.

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