



March for Meals
Page 2



LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING

BRIDGE

Lake County's premier news source for healthy aging and contemporary living since 1972

January/February/March 2024 • Vol. LI, No. 1

**Join in the fun at a
CoA Lunch Place**

Page 7

**Senior Center
Updates**

Pages 10–11

**\$150,000 grant
awarded to CoA**

Page 17

**SAVE
—THE—
DATE!**

SPECIAL EVENTS

March for Meals
March 16, 2024
(See page 2)

**Community
Champions Week**
March 18–22, 2024
(See page 8)

**Free Health
Screenings**
April 23, 2024
(See page 9)

**Medicare
Open Enrollment**
January 1–March 31
(See page 13)

Eleanor B. Garfield Mentor's second First Lady

President James A. Garfield and his wife, Lucretia, are among the most famous names in Lake County. However, there is another Garfield who is also a highly regarded figure in our history. She shares the same last name – not through DNA but through marriage – and also displayed her own brand of smarts, ambition, and a bold vision, that has had an impact on the city of Mentor to this day.

History of a dynamo

Eleanor Borton was born in 1899, the daughter of a Cleveland stockbroker. In the 1920s, she embraced the flapper craze; she enjoyed jazz music, dancing, exhibited a zest for life, and was a well-known and admired Cleveland socialite.

She served as the muse for Edward “Ned” Jordan, owner of Cleveland’s own Jordan Motor Company. At a country club function, she mentioned to him that she needed a car, but that they were all “too drab, too dark, too big, or too small,” thus inspiring the design of the Playboy Roadster in which she spirited around town.

Eleanor attended prestigious Brown University. After graduation, she returned to the area and married the president’s grandson, Rudolph H. Garfield, in 1925. The couple raised two children before her husband unexpectedly died at the age 47.

Throughout her lifetime, Eleanor was described as brilliant, pretty, energetic, ambitious, and a “girl of action.” The death of her husband seemed to moti-



vate her even more. She soon opened up her own furniture refinishing business and became a member of the Men-

See **GARFIELD** on page 4

Lake County Senior Services Levy

Did you know Lake County has a senior services property tax levy? Authorized by the Ohio Revised Code, the levy is reserved for the purpose of providing or maintaining senior citizens services or facilities.

Levies have become a popular way to supplement federal funds that have been outpaced by the growing population of older adults, as well as demand for programming and supportive services. In fact, 74 of Ohio’s 88 counties have tax levies that provide various services to support older adults.

“Lake County has one of the fastest growing populations of older adults in Ohio,” said Commission President John R. Hamercheck. “The senior services levy provides crucial dollars to ensure older adults are able to meet their basic needs, improve their health and wellness, reduce isolation, and remain living at home.”

Lake County’s senior services levy

Commissioners Corner



John Hamercheck



John Plecnik



Richard Regovich

generates approximately \$4.5 million annually for senior programs across the county. These funds are allocated by the Board of Lake County Commissioners to various government and non-profit agencies serving older adults. Currently funding is awarded to nine area senior centers, the Lake County Council on Aging, Western Reserve Community Development Corporation for home repairs and modifications, Adult Protective Services, and the Volunteer Guardian Program at Lifeline, Inc. Additionally, the levy provides free Laketrans Dial-a-Ride transportation to and from any Lake County

senior center. Funding is provided to Project Hope for the Homeless for the Senior Hope House and the Lake County Volunteer Network, housed at the board of commissioners.

“The senior levy is a fulfillment of our promise to take care of each other and ensure we can all have the chance to age in place and live independently at home as long as possible,” said Commissioner John Plecnik.

“We appreciate the support of the senior levy by the residents of Lake County,” said Commissioner Richard J. Regovich. “Without the levy, we would not be able to provide the variety of services available to older adults.”

For more information on the services provided with support from the senior services levy, contact Alyea Barajas, senior services manager, at 440-350-2748 or alyea.barajas@lakecountyohio.gov.

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March for Meals 2024 steps off on Saturday, March 16!

Register at march4meals.org

The Council on Aging will present Lake County's 18th edition of March for Meals on Saturday, March 16, 2024 from 8–10 am at the Great Lakes Mall in Mentor. March for Meals raises awareness and funds for the Council on Aging's nutrition programs for Lake County seniors and is part of a national campaign for Meals on Wheels America.

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 Council on Aging needs the community to take part in the fundraiser to help support an evergrowing number of seniors reaching out for nutritional support. Home-delivered meal services not only provide a nutritious meal, but also a friendly visit and safety check by one of the agency's dedicated meal delivery volunteers.

Raffle baskets!

Beginning in mid-February, individuals will have the opportunity to purchase tickets at march4meals.org to win any one or more of a number of valuable raffle baskets. Then on Saturday morning, March 16, the online winners will be drawn, along with a number of additional baskets drawn live at the mall!

The indoor event will begin with registration at 8 am followed by the walk kickoff at about 8:45 am. The walk route is a one-mile indoor loop, but walkers can walk as far as they are able during the event. In addition to camaraderie and walking for a great cause, participants will enjoy morning coffee, a goodie bag, an opportunity to try for additional raffle baskets, grand

opening celebration with local artist Dante Citraro singing the national anthem, the Lake Catholic High School Drum Corps and fun musical entertainment by DJ Jesse Webb.

Commemorative T-shirts will also be available for prepurchase by going to march4meals.org and completing the online entry form.

Experience the fun of having your own walk team!

The success of March for Meals depends on the support of our individual and team walkers who decide they want to make a difference in the lives of Lake County seniors. Teams can be made up of friends, family, coworkers and neighbors, and can set fundraising goals to build excitement for the event. To register as a team or as an individual, simply complete the fillable online entry at march4meals.org. Pledges for walk teams may also be made directly online this year!

We need sponsors to support the effort!

The Council on Aging is actively looking for sponsors of the 2024 event. When you become a sponsor, you play an important role in supporting these meal programs while promoting your business and raising your profile as a community leader. Please complete the fillable sponsor entry form online at march4meals.org.

All dollars raised through March for Meals benefit Lake County meal programs for local seniors. However you decide to help us on Saturday morning, March 16, your efforts will equal more awareness and funds to help put an end to senior food insecurity. Please join us!

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LAKETRAN

Lake County Council on Aging



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Welcome from the CEO

With the start of the new year, I wish you the best of health, happiness and prosperity for 2024! A new year brings new energy, goals, hope, and often we start making new plans and resolutions. The Council on Aging itself is always looking to the future for new ideas to strengthen our capabilities in meeting the ever increasing needs of our aging population. Our goal is to continue to be recognized as the primary, trusted, senior services provider in Lake County.

I want to take a moment to look back on 2023 and thank all those who have contributed to our success over the past 12 months. I am filled with gratitude for the heartfelt work our incredible staff puts forth every day of the year helping so many people, families and caregivers. I am also grateful for an outstanding board of trustees that give their time to ensure that the Council on Aging’s resources are used wisely and the organization is well-governed, and consistently support me in my role as CEO. I'm thankful for the dedicated volunteers that join our staff daily in all levels of work. I'm thankful for the many individual donors, organizations and business supporters that provide financial resources to the agency. Finally, I thank you. Whether you have volunteered, attended an event, made a donation, or participated in one of our programs, you are an important part of our 51 year legacy.

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 March 16 at the Great Lakes Mall.

Please visit us at www.lcco.org and “friend” us on our Facebook page at Lake County Council on Aging! I’m sure you will find this information useful and beneficial. On behalf of the Council on Aging staff and the seniors we serve, I wish you and your loved ones a happy and successful 2024!

Kind regards,

Joseph R. Tomsick
CEO, Lake County Council on Aging

Features

March for Meals event is March 16	2
Help raise money for Meals on Wheels	
Free health screenings on April 23	9
Learn your numbers & take control of your health	
Senior center updates	10–11
What's happening at your local center	
COA annual meeting	14
Awards presented to local seniors	
Tax time	16
Be sure to gather your tax documentation	
\$150,000 grant awarded to COA	16
Paves way for technology transformation	

Departments

Community Services	
Social workers making a difference	6
Nutrition	
Inclement weather cancellations	7
Join us for lunch at a Lunch Place location	7
New Mentor nutrition site	8
Community Champions week	8
ADRC	
Lake County warming centers	9
Save money on heating bills with HEAP	13
Options counseling	13
Medicare open enrollment	13
Homemaker Services	
Crafty Valentine's Day projects for seniors	12
In-Home Services	
Aging in place	12
Volunteer Services	
Volunteer this year!	15
Your Well-Being	
University Hospitals Lake West	18
Sheriff's Corner	20
Where the word "cop" came from	
Senior Scams	20
Tips to dodge lottery scams	
Salute to Centenarians	23
Honoring local residents who turn 100 – or older!	

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 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

www.lcco.org



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Garfield from page 1

tor Girl Scout Council. When she learned the local Episcopal church didn't have enough money for a steeple, she obtained a real estate license, sold three homes, and paid for the steeple out of her commissions.

First Lady of Mentor

Garfield ran for mayor in 1952. The two men she ran against argued that they were more qualified. As it related to politics, that may have been true, but it didn't stop her from running a vigorous and successful campaign. Mentor's first, and only, female mayor served just one term, but her boundless energy and ambitious nature proved to be a great asset for our community.

She forged a reputation for getting the job done and has been referred to as our "industrial strength mayor" as well as the "iron lady" for her tough stance on issues concerning what was at the time, Ohio's fastest growing county.

Hands-on doesn't even begin to describe her involvement in the community.

Once, she hid in the bushes of

the Old Newell Estate (which later became Garfield Park) with Mentor's police chief during a stakeout to gather evidence to break up an illegal gambling operation.

She also petitioned (although some would say, strong armed) then-governor C. William O'Neill to relocate the Lakeland Freeway (SR-2) to accommodate an industrial park along Tyler Boulevard between SR-306 and SR-615. Ray Dawson, longtime Mentor builder/developer and planning commission member, helped her with that cause, as well as other endeavors.

This industrial corridor served as the foundation for Mentor's economic growth and stability over the decades and was vital in funding the range of city services and facilities that Mentorites enjoy today.

There is no doubt, that Eleanor Garfield changed the face of Mentor, Ohio. She played an essential role in the development of property in the community as well as the consolidation of the Mentor Village and Township school districts. She also played a pivotal role in creating the park that is now named in her honor.



Eleanor B. Garfield Park

What was known as the Newell Estate was a 65-acre property located a block west of Lawnfield. The estate originally served as a summer resort for John Newell (brother of Helen Newell Garfield, wife of Garfield's second son, James R.). The family sold the property in the 1940s. It was eventually abandoned by subsequent owners and the home (located where the swimming pool is today), fell into disrepair before being destroyed in a fire. The old carriage house still stands and is used by the City's parks department.

A citizens group, led in part by Eleanor, directed the charge to raise funds to purchase the property for the establishment of a private community park. The result of their efforts became Mentor Recreation Park.

The city of Mentor purchased the park in 1980 and renamed it in Eleanor's honor. Her grace and wry sense of humor cut through while accepting the honor. "I'm alive and get to see my name on a park," she quipped, "Usually they do this type of thing once you are dead."

Today, Garfield Park is one of Mentor's most utilized public spaces with an outdoor pool, play-



Eleanor B. Garfield led the way in planning the industrial area along Tyler Boulevard.

ground, baseball/softball diamonds, basketball court, picnic pavilion, five-acre fishing pond, soccer fields, lighted tennis courts, barrier-free restrooms, and a wildlife area.

After retiring to South Carolina in her later years, Eleanor B. Garfield moved back to northeast Ohio in 1991 to be closer to family. She died on June 30, 1994 at the age of 95 and is buried near her husband in Mentor Municipal Cemetery.

She was a colorful, driven, innovative, and effective leader in a time when it was considered a man's world and her impact on our community is felt to this day.

—Article by Deanna Adams

—Historical photos courtesy of Cleveland Public Library

—Originally published in the 2020 Mentor City Magazine



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To leave a bequest is to make a permanent statement of your values. It is by this act of charity that the world will remember what you cared about and what you stood for. If providing for seniors matters to you, consider a gift to the Lake County Council on Aging in your estate plans. Call Kip Jochum at 440-205-8111, ext. 257 to get started today.

REGISTER FOR MARCH FOR MEALS

March4Meals.org

RSM Events Presents 2024 Dinner Show Series



Kenny & Dolly Country Legends Tribute

Direct from Vegas & Branson, Dave Karl and Wendy T perform your favorite hits like: Islands In The Stream, You Can't Make Old Friends, Lady, I Will Always Love You, Through The Years, 9 To 5, She Believes In Me, and more!!!

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

LaMalfa
5783 Heisley Road, Mentor
Credit card bar available

Tickets

Lunch & Show 12:00 pm..... \$70.00
Dinner & Show 6:30 pm \$70.00
Show Only 1 pm or 7:30 pm..... \$55.00



Garth Brooks & Trisha Yearwood Tribute

Direct from Vegas & Branson, Shawn Gerhard and Amy Pelton recreate a Garth & Trisha concert and perform their greatest hits like: Friends In Low Places, The Dance, If Tomorrow Never Comes, Like We Never Had a Broken Heart, She's In Love With The Boy, That's What I Like About You, and more!!!

Thursday, April 25, 2024

Williams On The Lake
787 Lafayette Road, Medina
Cash bar available

Tickets

Lunch & Show 12:00 pm..... \$70.00
Dinner & Show 6:30 pm \$70.00
Show Only 1 pm or 7:30 pm..... \$55.00



Elton John & Billy Joel Tribute

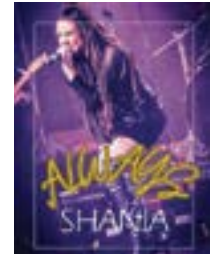
The music of Elton John like: Candle In The Wind, Rocket Man, Crocodile Rock, Can You Feel The Love Tonight. The music of Billy Joel like: Piano Man, Uptown Girl, You May Be Right, My Life, all in one show! Caesars Palace, Walt Disney World, and The Hard Rock Casino are just a few of the places Walt Wise has headlined with this tribute.

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Williams On The Lake
787 Lafayette Road, Medina
Cash bar available

Tickets

Lunch & Show 12:00 pm..... \$65.00
Dinner & Show 6:30 pm \$65.00
Show Only 1 pm or 7:30 pm..... \$50.00



Always Shania Shania Twain Tribute

#1 Hits like: From This Moment On, Man I Feel Like A Woman, You're Still The One, That Don't Impress Me Much! Direct from Toronto, Michelle Truman brings you her tribute to the queen of country pop!

Thursday, May 16, 2024

LaMalfa
5783 Heisley Road, Mentor
Credit card bar available

Tickets

Lunch & Show 12:00 pm..... \$70.00
Dinner & Show 6:30 pm \$70.00
Show Only 1 pm or 7:30 pm..... \$55.00



Phase 5 Motown Revue

Performing hits by Motown artists like: The Temptations, The Four Tops, Smokey, Robinson, The Contours and more! The choreography, the costumes and tight harmonies you know and love....a must-see show!!

Thursday, June 20, 2024

LaMalfa
5783 Heisley Road, Mentor
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Friday, June 21, 2024

Williams On The Lake
787 Lafayette Road, Medina
Cash bar available

Tickets for both locations

Lunch & Show 12:00 pm..... \$72.00
Dinner & Show 6:30 pm \$72.00
Show Only 1 pm or 7:30 pm..... \$56.00



Lights Out Frankie Vallie Tribute

Back By Popular Demand! Lights Out performs: Sherry, Rag Doll, Walk Like A Man, Big Girls Don't Cry, Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You! Relive magical moments with their "Journey Thru Musical Time" tribute!

Wednesday, July 24, 2024

LaMalfa
5783 Heisley Road, Mentor
Credit card bar available

Thursday, July 25, 2024

Williams On The Lake
787 Lafayette Road, Medina
Cash bar available

Tickets for both locations

Lunch & Show 12:00 pm..... \$72.00
Dinner & Show 6:30 pm \$72.00
Show Only 1 pm or 7:30 pm..... \$56.00



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 selling out shows with their unique blend of country & pop music.

Wednesday, August 21, 2024

Williams On The Lake
787 Lafayette Road, Medina
Cash bar available

Tickets

Lunch & Show 12:00 pm..... \$65.00
Dinner & Show 6:30 pm \$65.00
Show Only 1 pm or 7:30 pm..... \$50.00



Tony Bennett Tribute

Join us for an unforgettable evening as Steve Leeds pays homage to the legendary Tony Bennett. In this tribute show, listen to the timeless classics and memorable hits that have made Tony Bennett an icon in the world of music. Steve's smooth vocals and charming stage presence captures the essence of Tony Bennett's signature style.

Thursday, August 22, 2024

LaMalfa
5783 Heisley Road, Mentor
Credit card bar available

Tickets

Lunch & Show 12:00 pm..... \$70.00
Dinner & Show 6:30 pm \$70.00
Show Only 1 pm or 7:30 pm..... \$55.00

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Volunteers deliver holiday meals to homebound seniors

A record number of delicious holiday meals were delivered across Lake County on both Thanksgiving and Christmas days last year. Dozens of volunteers took time out of their holidays to deliver a hot meal and some seasonal joy to a few hundred seniors who would otherwise spent the holidays alone. The meals were prepared in partnership between University Hospitals and the Lake County Council on Aging. Staff and volunteers met at both UH Tripoint Medical Center and UH Lake West Medical Center to pick up meals for delivery to area senior citizens who are homebound.

"With the help of our volunteers, we delivered hundreds of meals to seniors who had nowhere else to be on Thanksgiving nor Christmas day," said Ann Marie Armario, volunteer and community engagement specialist for the Council on Aging.

"This was one of the record years, likely due to the fact that there are more seniors in the area and a greater need," said Armario. The meals were delivered along



Zara Colon was one of dozens of volunteers helping out with holiday meal delivery.

with a handcrafted holiday card also made by volunteers. "It's just a really special and personalized way to show our seniors that they're appreciated and that we care about them."

The Council on Aging is extremely grateful for all the volunteers who gave of their time and talent to bring joy to Lake County seniors this holiday season. Thank you for your kindness and making the holiday special!

For more information on becoming a volunteer, contact Ann Marie Armario at 440-701-4660, or email her at Aarmario@Lcco.org

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Social workers making a difference for Lake County

By Tim Rieder, Social Work Manager, Lake County Council on Aging

The Lake County Council on Aging has a dedicated team of licensed professional social workers who can help seniors in our local community become connected with the assistance needed for them to achieve an optimal, self-defined quality of life. The social workers will conduct in-home visits to help assess and identify areas of need based on one's current situation related to physical, cognitive, emotional, and functional limitations. The Council on Aging has services that the social worker can refer to in order for the senior to manage life in their home given their current limitations. The social workers also have a vast knowledge of community resources available that they can help a senior access with the goal to improve their overall well-being and safety in their home. The social work team remains available to the senior and their support system to ensure services are meeting the care needs for that individual and to coordinate any further assistance.

In addition, the Lake County Council on Aging has a community outreach social worker. The community outreach social worker is available to provide education on various services and community resources for seniors at public facilities such as senior centers, libraries, and churches just to name a few. Information and education

is provided through public presentations or individual meetings. Various topics and current issues that seniors are encountering today may also be discussed during these presentations. The community outreach social worker collaborates closely with other community organizations to ensure seniors are knowledgeable on what resources are available to them. If you are interested in setting up a presentation, please contact the Lake County Council on Aging at 440-205-8111.

March is National Social Work Month and is an appropriate time to recognize social workers for the impact they have on our society. The Lake County Council on Aging extends its appreciation to the outstanding team of social workers at our agency and all those social workers in the community who make a difference in the lives of the senior population in Lake County.

SALUTING OUR COUNCIL ON AGING SOCIAL WORK TEAM

Timothy Rieder, LISW-S,
Social Work Manager

Fran Beale, LSW

Connie Brocone, LSW

LaShonda Chillous, LSW

Cristina Cognati, LSW

Kim Rae, LSW

Beth Swain, LSW

Saluting our OSHIIP volunteers

During last year's Medicare open enrollment period from October 15 through December 7, 2023, four volunteers through the Lake County Council on Aging helped 95 seniors 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).

Volunteers Rita McNeal, Pat Kohut, Lynn Manteuffel and Amy Mc-

Ginnis all donated their time and expertise by providing information to resolve Medicare, Medicaid, and secondary health insurance questions, saving approximately \$19,000 in out-of-pocket costs for Lake County seniors. On behalf of the Lake County Council on Aging and the Aging and Disability Resource Center, we would like to thank each volunteer for their time, knowledge and compassion. We truly appreciate each of you!

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REGISTER FOR MARCH FOR MEALS
March4Meals.org

Inclement weather and emergency cancellation

Meals on Wheels delivery and Lunch Place sites

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

The Lake County Council on Aging is committed to providing nutrition services to seniors through our Meals on Wheels (MOW) home delivery and our senior center Lunch Places located in the Madison, Wickliffe, Willowick senior centers and the Painesville Extended Housing building. In preparation for the winter season, this is a great time to share a reminder about our closing policy. The policy encompasses all potential barriers to serving meals, including weather and emergency conditions such as no power, no water, equipment failure, a communicable disease outbreak or any community emergency or senior center closing.

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 MOW delivery period in the late morning hours between 10:30 am and noon and the lunch service at 11:30 am to noon. Ensuring MOW delivery and Lunch Place service can be provided safely for all is our priority.

Emergency closure information will be available on TV channels 3 and 5, their websites, and the LCCOA website. Every attempt will be made to notify all home-delivered and scheduled congregate Lunch Place clients of the closure. Closure information will also be available by phone at the five nutrition sites (the number of the menu) 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 chicken, fruit cups, canned vegetables, packaged nuts, granola or cereal bars, peanut butter and crackers, bottled water, juice boxes, and protein bars or beverages and a flashlight with replacement batteries. 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- to 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 sign-up form to complete and return. If you didn't receive the form or are unsure please contact your LCCOA kitchen, phone number is on your menu, 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.

Since 1972, the Lake County Council on Aging has provided services that help older adults remain independent with programs such as Meals on Wheels, social work services, homemaker and "grocery shopper." Please consider a tax-deductible donation by calling our office at 440-205-8111, or visiting our website at www.lccoa.org. Thank you!



The Lunch Place

Join us for food and fun in 2024!

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

Seniors, age 60 and older, are invited to join us for lunch at the Lunch Place locations across Lake County.

The Lunch Place offers a place to meet with friends and make new friends, to experience the programs at the senior center, to learn new things, and have fun while enjoying a delicious lunch that only requires a reservation.

Lunch Places offer a senior dining program provided by Lake County Council on Aging's nutrition program. Every day, Monday through Friday, a delicious and nutritious lunch is served to seniors in a lunch room setting. The menu is created by a registered dietician from the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging. All meals meet one-third of daily nutritional values and are lower in sodium (averaging 500 mg of sodium and not exceeding 1100 mg of sodium). Enjoy popular meals like stuffed cabbage, lasagna, Salisbury steak, chicken cordon bleu, Swedish meatballs, stuffed peppers, chicken alfredo and more for a voluntary suggested donation of \$1.50.

Kick off the new year by joining us for lunch and learning what the senior center activities are in 2024.

Review the menu available by visiting or calling a Lunch Place location or www.lccoa.org/menu. Sign up for one or all days to dine with us by calling the Lunch Place location you wish to dine at.

Lunch Place locations include:

Madison Lunch Place

Madison Senior Center
2938 Hubbard Road, Madison
Lunch is served at noon.

Call Glynnis at 440-428-7002 or email MadisonNutrition@Lccoa.org to make your reservation for lunch.

Painesville Lunch Place

Painesville Extended
Housing Building

270 E. Main Street, Painesville
Lunch is served at 11:30 am.

Call Pattie and Barb at 440-354-6700 or email Nutrition@Lccoa.org to make your reservation.

Wickliffe Lunch Place

Wickliffe Senior Center
900 Worden Road, Wickliffe
Lunch is served at 11:30 am.

Call Joe or Dee at 440-373-5017 or email WickliffeNutrition@Lccoa.org to make your reservation.

Willowick/Eastlake Lunch Place

Willowick Senior Center
321 E. 314th Street, Willowick
Lunch is served at 11:30 am.

Call Renee and Gina at 440-946-8822 or email EastlakeNutrition@Lccoa.org to make your reservation.

2024 is a great year to join us at the Lunch Place for food and fun! We can't wait to meet you.

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Council on Aging announces new location for Mentor nutrition site

COA partners with LCBDD

On December 11, 2023, the Mentor nutrition site began Meals on Wheels service from the new home of Mentor nutrition at the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD), Deepwood location. The move from the prior location at Mentor Plains United Methodist Church allowed the Lake County Council on Aging to achieve goals that contribute to an improved service for the seniors receiving meals and for the volunteers delivering meals. One of the primary goals was to secure a more central Mentor location since this site serves 200 meals daily to the seniors in the areas of Kirtland, north Willoughby, west Concord and all of Mentor including the Headlands area. A more central location ensures the fastest meal delivery service.

Our volunteers are excited that this new location has no steps! Steps at the former location created a challenge for the delivery of food



Volunteers Chris Veneri, Dave Henschel and Trish Pitzer assist staff member Susan Fende at the new Mentor kitchen.

from Greater Cleveland Food Bank and for the volunteers carrying heavy delivery bags.

The Lake County Council on Aging is very appreciative to LCBDD Superintendent Elfie Roman and LCBDD board president Judge Larry Allen and board members for this new partnership and a great opportunity to provide an optimal Meals on Wheels service to seniors.

Community Champions Week

March 18 – March 22, 2024

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

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."

Lake County Council on Aging hosts two events in March in support of Meals on Wheels services. One is the annual fund-raising event, March for Meals on Saturday, March 16 at the Great Lakes Mall, see article in Bridge on page 2. Another observance during March for Meals on Wheels is Community Champions Week during the third week of March. We look forward to inviting members from the community to experience our nutrition programs. From Monday, March 18 through Friday March 22, 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 preparing and packing meals at nutrition sites, delivering meals with a seasoned volunteer, serving meals to Lunch Place guests, and raising awareness of the important impact of Meals on Wheels. Community champions will experience the joy of serving seniors in Lake County firsthand.

Each day, one of the Council

on Aging's nutrition sites will be featured:

Mentor

Monday, March 18

Painesville

Tuesday, March 19

Madison

Wednesday, March 20

Willowick

Thursday, March 21

Wickliffe

Friday, March 22

Celebrated in many different ways across the country, the experience is a great opportunity for community leaders and members to interact with the senior community we serve, meet the generous volunteers who provide the service to the senior, 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 helped 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 with us and make a difference in the life of a Lake County senior.

"Senior food insecurity, loneliness and isolation continues to be prevalent amongst seniors in Lake County," 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. If the senior is not home for their meal, action is taken to ensure the senior is safe and not in need of medical care. 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 llewellyn@lccoa.org or 440-205-8111 ext. 241 to secure an opportunity to be a champion for seniors. Please join us in serving seniors.

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Lake County warming centers

By Jackie Oliverio, Manager, Aging and Disability Resource Center,
Lake County Council on Aging

Warming centers are available for residents in need of a place to stay warm during severe weather temperatures. Hours and days may be extended under extreme conditions and some locations may close if they have special holiday hours, or if there is no power. It is advised to call before heading out. Also, it is possible additional facilities may be designated during off hours — please call 2-1-1 for information on other warming center locations.

Frigid facts – During times of extreme cold, it is better to dress in thin layers rather than one thick layer — a base layer for removing moisture, a mid-layer to keep you warm, and an outer layer to protect you from the elements. Also, when possible wear mittens instead of gloves — gloves separate your fingers and make them colder faster.

Lastly, be a good neighbor and check on yours — especially the elderly!

Center	Address	Contact Phone	Hours
Concord Community Center	7671 Auburn Rd.	(440) 639-4652	Mon-Fri 8 am–4:30 pm
Eastlake Senior Center	600 E. 349th St.	(440) 975-4268	Mon-Fri 8 am–3:30 pm
Grand River City Hall	205 Singer Ave.	(440) 352-1287 or (440) 352-9133	Call ahead first.
Madison Senior Center	2938 Hubbard Rd.	(440) 428-6664	Mon-Fri 8 am–4 pm
Mentor Senior Center	8484 Munson Rd.	(440) 974-5725	Mon, Wed 8 am–8 pm Tues, Thur, Fri 8 am–5 pm \$5 hot lunch available daily 11:30 am–12:15 pm
Mentor-on-the-Lake City Hall	5860 Andrews Rd.	(440) 257-7216 or (440) 257-7234 (after 5 pm)	Community Room Open 24 hours (no amenities except restroom)
Painesville Township Hall	55 Nye Rd.	(440) 352-1443	Mon-Fri 8 am–4:30 pm
Wickliffe Senior Center	900 Worden Rd.	(440) 373-5015	Mon-Thur 8 am–4 pm and 5–9 pm Fri 8 am–2 pm
Willoughby Senior Center	36939 Ridge Rd.	(440) 951-2832	Mon-Thurs: 8:00am – 8:00pm Fri 8:00am - 4:30pm Sat 8:00am – noon
Willowick Community Center	321 E. 314th St.	(440) 585-5112	Call ahead first.

Radio Show for Lake County Seniors!

Tune into “Our Aging World”

Listen to the Council on Aging’s radio show every Saturday afternoon from 2–3 pm on both 1330 AM and 101.5 FM. Chief Executive Officer 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.



Free health screenings at Council on Aging on April 23

Learn your numbers and take control of your health

The Council on Aging along with University Hospitals Lake Health will conduct a free health fair on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 between 10 am– 4 pm. The event will be held in Mentor at the Lake County Council on Aging Office, 8520 East Avenue, and the screenings will take only about 5–20 minutes to complete. Participants will receive personalized information about indicators that can help determine the risk of developing chronic health conditions, empowering you to take control of your health.

Health screenings offered that

day will measure cholesterol, blood sugar, body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, stroke, and bone density. Participants can also receive advice regarding avoiding falls from UH Lake West’s multidisciplinary trauma team. Falls are a leading cause of injury death in adults 65 and older. No appointments are needed. The health screenings will be available for Lake County seniors, aged 60 and over, and their caregivers from 9:30 am–4 pm.

For more info you may call UH Lake Health at 440-313-2030.



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**

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Stay active at your local senior center!

Eastlake Senior Center

600 East 349th Street

(440) 975-4268

Grace Giangiacomo, director

Welcome 2024 and to all our members, welcome back to the center. Hope you all relaxed during the holidays. This is the time to check the back of your membership card to see what month you are set to renew. Also, as a member make sure you have the new key card to swipe when you come in. Please check in the office the next time you are here.

We would like to get your email, if you have one, so that we can periodically send out messages about what is going on here. We are looking forward to a new year with an expanded trip itinerary. If anyone has anything they would like to see or do, let Kerri or Grace know.

As the new year begins, remember to take care of yourself! Are you a member of the exercise room? If not, now is the time to sign up and use the wonderful equipment we have. In the coming months, you can look forward to some museum trips as well as the ethnic lunches that are set up for the next three months. Make sure to stop by and see what we are all about!

Check out our monthly newsletters at www.eastlakeohio.com.

Fairport Senior Center

1380 East St., Fairport Harbor

(440) 354-3674

Chris Yano, director

As we begin the new year we are looking forward to new classes, lots of trips and keeping our seniors active throughout the year.

We have many day trips planned for 2024 and overnight trips too.

Our AARP tax specialist will begin taking appointments on January 3. We are offering tax preparation on Fridays starting on February 2 until April 12. We are also offering taxes to working seniors on

SENIOR CENTER *UPDATES*

January/February/March 2024

Saturdays starting February 3 until April 6. If you would like more information, please call the center at 440-354-3674. We will be happy to mail a newsletter with all of our classes.

Until then stay safe this winter and hope to see you soon.

Kirtland Senior Center

7900 Euclid-Chardon Road

(440) 256-4711

Teresa Szary, coordinator

When the coldness and darkness descend, what better place to brighten your spirits than your local senior center? We are fortunate to have so many opportunities within Lake County to come together as friends and become family. A special thank you in this new year to all those who make these centers both accessible and possible.

The outdoor pickleball courts are hibernating for the winter - you know it's that time of year when everyone comes inside to get those games in! Except for our hiking club, who still brave the trail even in those snowy months. From exercise classes to bus trips to meals

to gatherings, there is always something going on in Kirtland.

Everyone is welcome to join us — give us a call or check out our website for more details. Our monthly newsletter is chockful of words like chockful, and is available online or at the center.

A happy, healthy 2024 to you and your family! Stay warm and safe, and we hope to see you soon.

Madison Senior Center

2938 Hubbard Road

(440) 428-6664

Carol Billetter, director

Welcome winter. It's a great time to come inside and explore your local senior center for activities and programs that may interest you. The Madison Senior Center has just added a massage therapist to our schedule on Mondays. She practices Swedish massage which incorporates various techniques for a therapeutic effect for muscles and circulation and is very knowledgeable about accommodating the senior population in her half- and hour-long sessions. Chair yoga has also been added to the calen-

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SENIOR CENTER *UPDATES*

January/February/March 2024



dar on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 9:30 am. Learn to elongate your muscles and provide yourself better range of motion and balance.

Madison Senior Center goals for 2024 include nutritional programming with healthy eating programs, a focus on senior menu's, lifestyle, budget, congregate lunch and cooking classes. Additionally mental health programming will include educational opportunities and possibly support groups for bereavement, Alzheimer's, dementia, depression and loneliness.

Nutritious meals are also served at our center by the Lake County Council on Aging Monday thru Friday!

Mentor Senior Center

**8484 Munson Road
(440) 974-5725**

Renee Ochaya, director

The Mentor Senior Center is the largest senior center in Lake County and offers hundreds of programs and activities to our members. Affordable memberships are available to all Lake County residents 55+. You can take advantage of home-made hot lunches, day & overnight trips, fitness classes, a well-appointed fitness center, groups & clubs, art classes, games & cards, and so much more...including Silver Sneakers!

2024 membership registration begins January 2!

Mentor residents are \$10 and nonresidents are \$15.

For complete details on all our programs, check out our website at www.mentorseniorcenter.com.

Perry Senior Center

**2800 Perry Park Road
(440) 259-3772**

Christine Znidarsic, director

Welcome 2024!!

The Perry Senior Center is home away from home for Lake County residents that are 55 years of age or older. Our membership runs January – December of each calendar year. The annual fee is \$12 and includes the use of our fitness room, which is open every weekday and several evenings.

Please call 440-259-3772 for our complete schedule of activities or check us out online at www.perryseniorcenter.net. SAVE THE DATE: Friday, May 3 is our second

annual Casino Night. You will not want to miss this exciting event.

Wickliffe Senior Center

**900 Worden Road
(440) 373-5015**

Gerri Hubbell, director

Think about making it your New Year's resolution to join a local senior center in Lake County! All of our centers offer so many fun activities! To join the Wickliffe Senior Center, the annual cost is only \$10 for Wickliffe residents and \$15 for non-Wickliffe residents. Members must be at least 55 years of age.

The Wickliffe Senior Center offers chair yoga, senior exercise, line dancing, senior art, pinochle, Wii bowling, "Vets & Friends" social group, monthly themed bingo, holiday parties, special events and more! We have a fitness room, billiards room, library, puzzle table, bocce ball court and nutritious meals served at our center by the Lake County Council on Aging Monday-Friday!

For more information about the senior programs or to register for lunch, please call 440-373-5015.

Our hours are Monday through Thursday 8 am – 4 pm, and Friday 8 am – 2 pm. Please keep in touch with us for more information by visiting www.cityofwickliffe.com/recreation/seniors, or like and follow our Facebook page "City of Wickliffe Community Center."

Willoughby Senior Center

**36939 Ridge Road
(440) 951-2832**

Amy Cesa, manager

Happy New Year 2024 from the Willoughby Senior Center! A new year, a new you. Why not stop in for a tour of our new facility and see what we have to offer? There is a walking track, fitness center, library, computers and much more including pickleball!

In addition to regular business hours of M-F 8 am-4:30 pm, the Willoughby Senior Center is open on Saturdays from 8 am-noon for members to get on the track or in the library or fitness center. The center is open Monday through Thursday for extended hours until 8:30 pm. Stop in as we are taking new member registrations and activity registrations at this time.

Are you looking to travel? With our passenger buses, members enjoy mystery trips, trips to the theatre, casinos and shopping — there is something for everyone. Everyone age 55 and older is welcome to join. \$12 per year for Willoughby residents and \$18 for non-Willoughby residents.

Get 2024 going in the right direction and find yourself active at the Willoughby Senior Center. Find us on Facebook at "Willoughby Senior Center."

Willowick Senior Center

**321 E. 314th Street
(440) 585-5112**

Doreen Nevulis, coordinator

As we start off 2024 we will continue with our classes; yoga, exercise, line dancing, morning solo exercise and Tai Chi. Also come join us for ceramics, art class, paint pouring, crochet, as well as bingo, pinochle, bridge and LCR.

We would also like you to join us for our in house Willoughby-s, a singing group that loves to sing, and our book club if you like to read,

join them for great conversations.

Be sure to check out our monthly newsletter. The Willowick Senior Center we will be celebrating our 50th anniversary of the opening of the center. There will be some kind of celebration each month of 2024. In April there will be a celebration at Regovich catering and in June the center will have an open house to showcase our center along with the opening of a time capsule, that has been here for 20 years. Can't wait to see what's in it. All the information will be available in our newsletters and we will keep you posted.

Center hours: Monday-Thursday 8 am- 4 pm, Friday 8 am – noon. Get the latest information on our 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.

We are always accepting new members, join us and see what we have to offer. Residents are \$12 per year and nonresidents are \$15.



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IN-HOME SERVICES

Aging in place

By Danielle Phillips, Director of In-Home Services
Lake County Council on Aging

If you are considering long-term care options for yourself or a loved one, chances are you have spent plenty of time looking into many options and may feel overwhelmed by the process. The Lake County Council on Aging can assist you in exploring your options.

One option is nonmedical home care. This is a short- or long-term possibility for care that is provided to a senior in the comfort and safety of their home. This service does not involve medical or skilled nursing services. Instead, it is intended to help provide support for physical or lifestyle needs that may impact activities of daily living. It includes things like assistance or supervision with bathing, basic nail and skin care, oral hygiene, light housekeeping, laundry, changing bed linens and planning and preparing meals. In addition to this support, nonmedical services enables seniors to stay socially connected to a support network which can help reduce depression



and anxiety and improve overall quality of life for the senior.

Many studies have shown that the majority of older adults would prefer to age in place by staying home as long as possible as they get older. Home care is a great way to fulfill those wishes while still getting needed practical support.

The Lake County Council on Aging contracts with local home health agencies to provide nonmedical home care services to eligible seniors through a program funded by the Board of Lake County Commissioners.

For information on the Non-Medical In-Home Care Program and other long-term care options, contact the Lake County Council on Aging at 440-205-8111.

Crafty Valentine's Day projects for seniors

By Patricia Wem, Homemaker Program Manager,
Lake County Council on Aging

"Crafting your heart out makes room for your soul to grow."

~Unknown

Growing old is not the death of our creativity. Seniors can benefit physically, mentally and even socially from crafting. All you need are the right materials, imagination, and patience.

The older we get the more love has filled our hearts and souls for those that are dear to us. Sometimes we just can't find the words to say it, and wish there was another way to express our sentiments in a way that would last forever!

How about enjoying "craft sessions" with your senior and express that love through some handmade crafts. Crafts can reduce stress, stimulate the senses, eliminate boredom, strengthen a sense of identity, and improve memory all while allowing loved ones to reconnect in a sentimental way.

Valentine's Day will be here shortly and is a great way for our aging loved one to make something from their heart to their loved ones' hearts.

To get started, here are a few suggestions with minimal cost, but maximum return — straight from the heart!

Scrapbooking

Seniors love this because it allows them to recapture their memories, reminds them of who they were, and tells a story that can be passed down for generations to come.

All you need is a table and chair with developed photographs from the past, and other memorabilia or important items that can fit in a scrapbook, like tickets, a document, a letter or pamphlets. Have a glue gun, some glitter, and other decorative appliques to make each page sparkle.

Scrapbooking keeps senior citizens sharp by allowing them to recall important nostalgic moments that helped shape who they are and helps them identify family members by face.

"Scrapbooking isn't about scraps of paper and photos. Scrapbooking is about scraps of life — yours and those special to you." ~Rebecca Sower

Popsicle stick snowflakes

These snowflakes are an easy project. Simply arrange your popsicle sticks (you will need a minimum of six to make a simple asterisk shape) and decorate.

Beyond arranging your popsicle sticks and gluing them down, it makes each snowflake special with your use of glitter, paint, perhaps a photo with your senior and the intended loved one to receive the snowflake, etc.

"People are like snowflakes. Everyone is special and unique in their own way" ~ Unknown

Making jewelry

This project allows seniors to make a cute necklace or bracelet for their grandchildren or perhaps great-grandchildren using beads that can be easy to see and brightly colored. Just in time for that special Valentine present!

Purchase beads with large letters and by simply running string through the holes of the beads and sealing the ends together with a glue gun, a personalized necklace or bracelet is hand designed with love from the heart.

"It all started with one little bead." ~Unknown author

Homemaker Program

Our seniors sometimes need a little help around the house, especially after a day of "crafting creativity." Let Council on Aging "crafty" homemakers provide light housekeeping consisting of vacuuming and dusting of main living area, sanitizing the kitchen and disinfecting the master bath twice a month. The cost of the services is done on a sliding fee schedule. Please call the Council on Aging at 440-205-8111 and request more information on our Homemaker Program. Our homemakers will keep their homes sparkling, just like their crafty creations!!

Another reason to craft, comes from this quote by unknown author: *"What do you mean crafting isn't exercise?"*

If you are like me, if I am moving, I'm exercising!

Happy crafting and Happy Valentine's Day to you all!

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Options counseling

Guidance for life changes

By Jackie Oliverio, Manager,

Aging and Disability Resource Center, Lake County Council on Aging

The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) at the Lake County Council on Aging provides information and resources for those facing challenges from aging or disability. There may be a time when you or someone you know is facing more complex challenges, some of which can be life changing and require ongoing support to ensure the needs are met. Options counseling is available as a **free** service offered through the ADRC which works with you, your family members or caregivers to develop a person-centered care plan regarding long-term care options.

Our agency's options counselor will provide you with unbiased information on both public and private programs and promote awareness of community-based service options. Options counseling can help you weigh the pros and cons of each decision and help you develop a plan if additional supports and services are needed. You will be provided with valuable tools, professional guidance

and resources to help you identify the next steps when it comes to planning long-term care. Options counseling appointments are offered at the Lake County Council on Aging office in Mentor, your home, a community setting or a health care facility.

Whether you prefer to age in place in the community or look into long-term care facilities, such as an assisted living or nursing home, these decisions are not always easy and the process can be overwhelming. Sometimes these decisions have to be made quickly; while others want to explore what options could be available to them down the road. Options counseling will help you navigate one or both options, consider your personal preferences and unique circumstances, as well as the projected costs.

Please contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center at the Lake Council on Aging at 440-205-8111 for more information about how options counseling can help you.

Medicare Advantage open enrollment

January 1 – March 31, 2024

Medicare's annual fall open enrollment period may have ended in December 2023, but did you know from January 1 through March 31 each year there is an open enrollment period for those specifically on Medicare advantage plans? This open enrollment period applies to those who:

- Currently have a Medicare advantage plan and are considering switching to a different advantage plan, with or without drug coverage.
- Currently have a Medicare advantage plan and are considering switching to original Medicare.

Despite the many Medicare advantage plan advertisements out there making it look like your choice should be easy, for many, finding the best advantage plan can be overwhelming and confusing. Do you have questions about what is right for you? We can



help! Our benefits specialist at the Lake County Council on Aging is available to go over 2024 Medicare advantage plans with you during this time. By taking advantage of this **free** appointment and sitting down with our benefits specialist, you will be provided with unbiased information about your advantage plan options.

During the appointment you may also be screened for Extra Help and Medicare Savings programs, or other state and federal-funded benefits such as Medicaid or SNAP.

Please call 440-205-8111 to
schedule an appointment today!

Apply for HEAP

Save money this winter

By Jackie Oliverio, Manager,

Aging and Disability Resource Center, Lake County Council on Aging



Winter is here, which means the temperatures have dropped and the heating bills are going up! The Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) offers programs such as the Home Energy Assistance Program, known as HEAP, to assist Ohioans with paying their utility bills during these cooler months. HEAP provides a one-time annual benefit/credit to your main heating source account.

To be eligible for HEAP, the total gross annual household income must fall below \$25,515 (175% of the federal poverty level) for a household of one or \$34,510 for a household of two. The gross income (before deductions) is counted for all household members, and includes income from wages, interest, annuities, pensions, Social Security (minus Medicare premiums), retirement, employment disability, public assistance, Supplement Security Income (SSI), alimony, child support, unemployment benefits, Worker's Compensation, utility allowances and any other indirect income. According to the ODSA, all persons who share a common kitchen and bath are considered members of the same household and must apply on one application.

The application process is rela-

tively easy, and the Lake County Council on Aging is available to help you to apply for HEAP. You will need to bring:

- Photo ID
- Social Security card for each member of the household
- Proof of income for each member of the household
- A copy of your most recent heating/utility bill

Staff will help you complete the application, make copies of the required documents, and mail the application to the Lifeline, Inc. Energy Assistance Office. The Council on Aging staff member will also follow up on your application to ensure that it was processed and the credit/benefit was issued. In the event that more assistance is needed, say you are homebound; our benefits specialist offers home visits to assist you with the application process. Although appointments are not required, they are strongly encouraged so we can guarantee a staff member's availability.

It is important to note that if you have a shut-off notice, or if your service has already been shut off, you **MUST** contact Lifeline, Inc. Energy Assistance Office for assistance as the Council on Aging is not able to assist in these circumstances. The Lifeline, Inc. appointment hotline is 440-381-8230, or you can reach their office at 440 350-9160.

Call the Lake County Council on Aging at 440-205-8111 for more information or to schedule an appointment.



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Council on Aging celebrates seniors at annual meeting

In October, the board of trustees of the Lake County Council on Aging hosted its 2023 annual meeting and awards presentation at the Pine Ridge Country Club in Willoughby.

President of the board of trustees, John Thomas, presented the 2023 Ruth A. Densmore Senior Advocate Award to the late **Joann Bentley**. Joann was a legacy donor to the Council on Aging, who silently helped others financially and contributed greatly to dozens of organizations. A selfless and kind human being to all, Joann was an advocate for senior citizens, especially those older adults with serious disabilities. She often reached out to others less fortunate and offered help, financial resources, grief counseling and anonymous contributions to help pay for medical and utility expenses. She told her closest friends years ago that Council on Aging would be remembered in her estate for the work

the agency does in helping so many less fortunate.

Since 1994, the Lake County Senior Citizens Hall of Fame has honored individuals who at age 60 or older have had significant impact on the community through their employment, civic or volunteer activities. The following individuals were inducted for 2023 at the annual meeting:

- **Donald** and the late **Karen Densmore** have dedicated themselves to making the world a better place, helping countless people through their varied volunteer efforts and many leadership roles in their community.
- **Judy McCracken** has shown an endless amount of vitality when it comes to helping anyone in need, gathering people into a community, organizing them, and improving their lives.

- The late **William Snow** (posthumous award) is best remembered for his many years dedicated to the betterment of the city of Mentor and the overall Lake County community and his recognition as Citizen of the Year in 2000 by the Mentor Area Chamber of Commerce.

The final recognition presented at the meeting included the Helping Hands Award which is an honor given directly from nominations of employees of the Council on Aging, to recognize a community partner or individual who goes above and beyond in assisting seniors, or the agency, in its mission.

The first 2023 recipient was **Nicole Cook** of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank for her support of the agency and her commitment to serving our senior community. On a daily basis, Nicole demonstrates she is committed to providing nutritional support to seniors and excellent

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service and is always ready to help whenever issues arise, like emergency weather closures, order changes and delivery challenges.

The second “Helping Hand Award” was presented to **Tom Brodnick** from Gloria Jean's Coffee for his dedication to the Lake County community and his support of the Lake County Council on Aging. For close to 16 years, Tom and his staff at Gloria Jean's have offered free morning coffee to the hundreds of participants during the agency's annual “March for Meals” events. His gift of delicious coffee is a generous gesture and Tom's commitment to his business and our community is truly commendable.

Jessica Humphrey from Family Pride of Northeast Ohio was honored for her collaboration with social workers to help meet clients' needs. Jessica shares the mission of the Lake County Council on Aging by helping seniors maintain independence, improve their mental and physical well-being, and offer supports and assistance where needed, oftentimes having to work around limitations and roadblocks so often seen by seniors.

Finally, **Don Schutz** was recognized for his willingness to lend a helping hand moving heavy items at the Council on Aging offices along with the assistance of his football players. Individuals like Don, who are always ready to step up and assist when needed, play a crucial role in the success of organizations like the Council on Aging.



Project Hope for the Homeless continues to serve homeless seniors

From 2020 to 2022, Project Hope for the Homeless has seen an 83% increase in the number of seniors who stayed at Project Hope for the Homeless.

Through September 2023, Project Hope for the Homeless has served 25 homeless seniors, providing 1,207 individual nights of shelter care.

Additionally, seven seniors have stayed in Hope House, the organization's transitional home for seniors, for 697 combined nights of shelter.

This three-unit transitional housing program is supported by the Lake County Senior Services Levy. It began in 2019 for homeless seniors ages 62 and older. 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 our guests with an increased level of care to help keep them safe from inclement weather and other challenges our older population faces,” said John Hutchison, community engagement director. “Around 90% of our seniors transition to a permanent housing situation.”

Visit www.projecthopeforthehomeless.org to learn more about Project Hope for the Homeless and volunteer opportunities.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteer this year!

By Ann Marie Armaro, Volunteer & Community Engagement

As we start the new year it is a great time to reflect and renew your spirit by giving time to help others. Why not consider becoming a volunteer meals driver for the Lake County Council on Aging? Every day, volunteers deliver close to 700 meals to homebound seniors throughout Lake County. Our drivers not only deliver a hot meal, but they also do a well check or safety check to ensure that seniors are well and have the support they need. Winter weather can contribute to health risks for older adults, like illnesses and higher likelihood of slips or falls. Having Council on Aging meal drivers regularly check on seniors can certainly help address safety concerns.

The Council on Aging is currently looking for volunteers to help the agency in a number of areas including meal delivery and grocery shopping. An increased demand for seniors needing Meals on Wheels means more volunteers are also needed to deliver the meals. Currently the agency

is need of individuals to help in the Painesville, Mentor, Wickliffe and Willowick areas one day each week. What better way to brighten a senior's day than with a hot meal, a smile and some kindness! Meals are delivered Monday through Friday from the five Council on Aging nutrition sites located throughout the county. Volunteers also play a vital role in the preparation of the meals and many of the nutrition sites are in need of individuals to help.

We are also looking for volunteer grocery shoppers. Grocery shopping is done twice monthly for clients and can be done on weekdays or weekends. We also have monthly opportunities to deliver produce or pet food to homebound clients.

Make a New Year's resolution to join our volunteer team! It's an opportunity to give back, learn new skills, and connect with the community. Please contact Ann Marie Armaro today at 440-701-4660 or Aarmaro@Lccoa.org.

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

Community gathers food for 7th annual blizzard bags promotion

In November and 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 is our largest community effort for the Subaru Share the Love event. The bags provide a two–three day supply of shelf-stable food for seniors receiving Meals on Wheels who are unable to stock a winter pantry in preparation for those times when storms or other events will prevent a meal from being delivered by a Council on Aging volunteer.

The Council on Aging teamed up with our community partners at all of the Lake County senior centers 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



special food drive,” the Council on Aging will earn a share of the 2023 Subaru Share the Love event donations 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. Lake County shares the love with seniors.

“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 seventh 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.”

Time to gather your tax documentation

By Paul Pahoresky, Board Member, Lake County Council on Aging

2023 is behind us, but that does not mean that we are done handling matters related to 2023. Turning the page of the calendar to a new year has now initiated a new tax filing season. This means that we should be on the lookout for our tax reporting information as it arrives and make sure that we are properly collecting and retaining this information that we will need when we sit down to prepare the annual tax return.

You should be on the lookout for various tax forms including 1099-SSA from the Social Security Administration, 1099-R for any retirement plan or IRA distributions, as well as 1099-DIV, 1099-INT, and 1099-B for your investment income. Keeping all of these documents that you receive in one folder or envelope will certainly prove beneficial when you actually go to prepare your return. One challenge I often encounter with clients is that they have not received or retained all of the necessary tax documentation.

These income tax forms could begin arriving as soon as mid-January and could take as long as early March or even later to be received. It is important to keep track of these forms and confirm that you have received all of the expected and necessary tax documentation prior to actually filing your returns. It can be very frus-

trating to have to wait to receive all of this information before filing, but it is much easier to wait and file a correct return the first time.

The majority of taxpayers no longer itemize and take the higher standard deduction. However, for those taxpayers that may have incurred significant out of pocket medical expenses for health insurance, copays, prescriptions costs and other medical related expenses it may prove beneficial to take the itemized deduction. In this case the taxpayer will need to collect their documentation for these out-of-pocket medical expenses; any charitable contributions; state, local, and real estate taxes; and any mortgage interest that they may have paid on.

It is important that a taxpayer has a good understanding of all of their various income sources and to make sure that they have received and report all of the information to avoid having to amend the return at a later date or even worse, receiving a notice from the IRS down the road.

Paul Pahoresky is the treasurer of the Lake County Council on aging and the owner of PRP & Associates and can be reached at paul@prpassoc.com. Consult your tax advisor for your specific situation for additional information and guidance on these topics.

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Why giving back through United Way makes a difference

Giving back is a powerful force for positive change, creating a ripple effect of compassion and support. One remarkable avenue for impactful giving is through United Way of Lake County (UWLC), a beacon of community empowerment.

Supporting UWLC is a strategic choice for giving due to the approach they take to fill gaps in need among nonprofit programs so that no one in need stands alone. Their focus on education, health, and financial stability addresses the multifaceted needs of individuals and families through their support of programs that make the greatest impact.

One such program is the Lake County Council on Aging’s Con-

gregate Meals program. UWLC has supported this program for many years and most recently granted \$50,000 in support to help feed seniors in need while providing them with an outlet from loneliness.

When individuals give to UWLC, their contributions join a larger pool of resources, maximizing the impact of each donation. And UWLC works solely in support of the residents of Lake County, which means that your gift stays local.

If you are in a position to give, please consider making a gift to them at uwlc.org/give, or by mailing a check payable to United Way of Lake County to 9285 Progress Pkwy, Mentor, OH 44060.



\$150,000 grant awarded to Council on Aging

Jerome T. Osborne and Georgeanne S. Osborne Charitable Trust gift paves way for technology transformation

The Lake County Council on Aging was awarded a gift of \$150,000 from the Jerome T. Osborne and Georgeanne S. Osborne Charitable Trust. This generous contribution will have a profound impact on the organization and its mission to serve the most vulnerable members of our community by leveraging technology to strengthen the agency's response to the needs of seniors, today and in the future.

Sunny Masters, the administrator of the Osborne Trust, highlighted the lasting legacy of Jerome and Georgeanne Osborne, recognizing their unwavering commitment to supporting nonprofit organizations. The trustees expressed their deep satisfaction with the Council on Aging's outstanding work, services, and programs, especially in assisting individuals in our community who are most in need.

The funds will enable the organization to move forward with its ambitious plans to integrate two

independent psychosocial assessment systems into a single, cohesive program. This project will result in improved efficiency and effectiveness, ultimately enhancing the services provided to the Lake County community. Additionally, a portion of the funds will be used to upgrade the agency's volunteer reporting system to streamline the tracking of service hours.

Council on Aging's CEO, Joe Tomsick, expressed the organization's profound respect and loyalty to the Osborne legacy. He noted that this generous gift signifies a transformative moment for the Council on Aging, with the potential to shape the future of the organization. "The Jerome T. Osborne and Georgeanne S. Osborne Charitable Trust's donation is a testament to their enduring commitment to our community. This grant will be the cornerstone of services to our community for years to come," said Tomsick.

Western Reserve Junior Service League awards grant to Council on Aging

The Lake County Council on Aging main office on East Avenue offers our Health Equipment Lending Program where donated items like gently-used wheelchairs, walkers, bedside commodes and other durable medical equipment are stored, then checked for safety, sanitized, and made available to Lake County seniors and veterans in need, at no cost.

One of the items offered occasionally are incontinence supplies that have been donated by families and nursing homes. These supplies are available to seniors in need, who do not have the financial ability to purchase the incontinence supplies.

The Western Reserve Junior Service League (WRJSL) has granted dollars to supply the Lake County



Council on Aging (LCCoA) with hundreds of these products. The WRJSL has been a great partner to the LCCoA over recent years, especially in grants that are specific to agency security. On behalf of the board of trustees and entire staff, the agency is grateful for the continued support of the WRJSL.

Membership to Western Reserve Junior Service League is open to all women in Lake, Geauga and Ashtabula counties. If you are interested in joining this group of enthusiastic women who are dedicated to strengthening the community, please visit www.wrjsl.org.

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.



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Primary care providers can help manage your chronic disease

By University Hospitals

Your primary care provider's role

When you think of your primary care provider, you may simply think of them as a medical professional who takes care of your common health concerns, perform annual wellness visits and recommend screenings.

At University Hospitals, primary care physicians, physician assistants and certified nurse practitioners can not only help with these areas, but can also play a special role in maintaining your health if you have a chronic disease.

Chronic diseases are health conditions that last a year or more, require ongoing medical attention, and limit daily activities and quality of life. Chronic diseases include, but are not limited to:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic lung disease
- Depression or anxiety
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Stroke

Managing your chronic condition with the help of your primary care provider can improve your quality of life. At the same time, you can reduce your health care costs by preventing or minimizing the effects of a chronic disease.

Through regularly scheduled visits, you and your providers can stay connected, which leads to better, more coordinated care. Your primary care physician, PA or CNP can also can help identify care gaps and monitor your condition between scheduled visits.

Services to help manage your chronic condition

Regular visits with your primary care provider can involve screenings, checkups, monitoring and coordinating treatment, and patient education to help manage your chronic condition.

Screenings: Identifying risk factors through screening can help prevent disease and lessen the severity of illness through early detection.



One of the most effective ways to prevent heart disease and stroke, for example, is scheduling blood pressure screenings.

Checkups: By scheduling regular visits with your primary care provider, you can learn how to manage your chronic disease -- either face-to-face during a traditional doctor's office visit or through a virtual visit. For example, if you have a chronic heart condition, you can check in with your provider to make sure you're properly managing your condition over time.

Coordinating treatment: Having one doctor who knows your medical history well and acts as the coordinator of your care, avoids redundant medical tests and procedures, unnecessary emergency room visits and hospitalizations and medication errors. Your primary care provider can also help you manage your medications, especially if you have multiple chronic conditions.

Patient education: Your primary care provider can help you understand and work toward your target numbers for health measures such as blood pressure, cholesterol and

weight, leading you to better health.

Primary care providers at University Hospitals offer comprehensive, compassionate care for patients of all ages, from newborns to seniors. To learn more, visit [UHHospitals.org/PrimaryCare](https://uhhospitals.org/PrimaryCare).

The following primary care providers are now accepting new patients in the Lake County area. Call one of the locations below to schedule an appointment.

UH Lake Health Physician Group Primary Care Mentor Wellness Campus
8655 Market Street
Mentor, OH 44060
440-255-7938

UH Lake Health Physician Group SOM Primary Care
5105 SOM Center, Suite 106
Willoughby, OH 44094
440-953-5740

UH Lake Health Physician Group Willowick Primary Care
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2024 National Kidney Foundation Serving Northern Ohio Drive for Dialysis

Join the NKF Serving Cleveland to raise awareness and funds for kidney patients on dialysis! There are more than 100,000 new patients diagnosed with end-stage renal disease in the U.S. each year. For many of these individuals facing kidney failure, dialysis is a lifeline. Help provide patients in northern Ohio with care packages to brighten their spirits and make the long hours of treatment a little more bearable. Your donation will provide care packages to

patients that include comfort items for dialysis patients such as water bottles, pill cases, coloring books with pencils, kidney stress squeeze toys, NKF resources and more! The goal is to make over 400 care packages in February to disseminate across the northern Ohio region. You can help by visiting <https://support.kidney.org>.

Questions? Contact Maddi Snyder, development manager, at 440-985-0114 or madalynne.snyder@kidney.org.

Seniors' holiday wishes granted

The holiday wishes of 52 seniors were granted through a collaborative effort by Lake County Council on Aging, the Alliance for Working Together Foundation (AWT) and Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging.

Western Reserve's Aging and Disability Resource Center employees sponsored "Santa's Helpers for Seniors." Santa's Helpers provided the wrapped gifts for Lake county seniors who were referred by Council on Aging and partners in the Senior Services Coalition.

"What a wonderful way to share the holiday spirit," said Linda Llewellyn, director of community services at Lake County Council on Aging. "Our social workers, nutrition site coordinators and directors of senior centers have a keen sense of knowing which seniors are alone for the holidays, have extra needs or just need a boost to their spirit." The wishes for 52 Lake county

seniors are being granted by Santa's helpers and delivered to AWT on Tyler Blvd., our Lake County North Pole.

Employees and board members of AWT and Lake County Council on Aging took on the role of Santa helpers and delivered the gifts to the seniors to make their Christmas extra special. The joy on the face of a senior receiving an unexpected gift is truly the spirit of the holiday season.

Lake County Council on Aging extends a huge thank you to Roger Sustar, AWT board of directors treasurer, and Teresa Simons, AWT executive director, for joining in the holiday spirit as the North Pole in Lake County and the many faces of Santa helpers to deliver the gifts and grant seniors' wishes and to Western Reserve Aging and Disability Center employees for making Santa's Helpers for Seniors a reality.

Donate your vehicle to the COA

Seniors across Lake County are finding out that the organization "CARS" makes donating your car easy. Charitable Adult Rides & Services (CARS) takes care of everything from the pickup and sale to sending you the donation receipt and necessary tax documents. CARS is committed to treating every vehicle donor with gratitude and great service while delivering the highest possible returns to our partners.

By donating your unused vehicle, you're not only eliminating the high costs of keeping up the car, like insurance, registration and maintenance, but you're also able to help

the Lake County Council on Aging financially with the sale price of the vehicle! So, maybe it's time to consider letting go of that car. If you're ready, the Lake County Council on Aging is here to help!

To learn more or to get started, call 855-500-7433 (RIDE) or simply submit a secure online donation form at <https://careasy.org/nonprofit/lake-county-council-on-aging>. Our Vehicle Donation Support Team is available seven days a week. Running or not, donations like cars, trucks, boats—and everything in between—have great potential to keep Council on Aging's programs running.

thank you!

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 2023 edition of Bridge.

Anonymous
G.W.
Bill & Jo Campbell
Diane Collins
Susan Fende
Lois Heckman
Dorothy & Karl Hein
Kenneth Hoffacker

Jeanne Hrenko
Marjorie Knaus
Hely Perttu
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Rabe
Alexander Timperio
Clark Waite
James R. Walter
Marianne T. Wiley

The above represents donations received through December 13, 2023. In the event your gift came in after this date, please know that you will be recognized in our annual report.

Stay active all winter long with Laketran

When slushy winter weather hits and days become shorter, many seniors no longer feel comfortable driving. This results in more seniors staying home isolated from the people and events they enjoy. Laketran wants to be a resource to make sure those who choose not to drive are still able to get where they need to go any time of year. Laketran's door-to-door Dial-a-Ride provides nearly a thousand trips around Lake County every day to help seniors remain active by participating in the activities they enjoy!

Laketran has implemented several new programs that makes scheduling and riding Dial-a-Ride even easier.

Book and pay for your Dial-a-Ride reservations online

Laketran offers Request-a-Ride, an online reservation program that gives riders and caregivers access to book, confirm, or cancel Dial-a-Ride reservations anytime. Not only does Request-a-Ride allow customers or their caregivers to manage trips when it is most convenient, but it allows customers to easily verify reservation details with improved accuracy and reduces wait times when calling our customer service call center. Request-a-Ride also provides a real-time map that shows when the bus will arrive to your house.

To get started with Request-a-Ride, Dial-a-Ride customers must call Laketran customer service at 440-354-6100 to get a client ID and password to access their individual account. With that information, reservations can be made online at Laketran website by clicking Request-a-Ride.



Of course, if customers prefer scheduling reservations by phone, a Laketran customer service representative is always here to answer your call!

Automated confirmation calls for Dial-a-Ride

We understand plans change as often as the weather in northeast Ohio. Laketran provides automated confirmation calls for Dial-a-Ride customers. The night prior to the Dial-a-Ride trip customers receive an automated confirmation call confirming the reservation. At the end of the phone call, customers can either confirm or cancel their reservation. When the bus is on its way, customer receive a reminder call so they are ready to board when the bus arrives.

Ride to your senior center free

In partnership with Lake County Board of Commissioners Senior Service levy, Lake County seniors can take Dial-a-Ride free of charge to local senior centers to enjoy activities, meals, and socialization.

Laketran Dial-a-Ride operates Monday through Friday from 5 am – 9 pm and Saturdays from 8 am– 7 pm. Dial-a-Ride can take you anywhere in Lake County and to medical appointments in Cuyahoga County. To get started with Dial-a-Ride today, visit www.laketran.com or call Laketran customer service at 440-354-6100.



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Sheriff's Corner



By Sheriff Frank Leonbruno
Lake County, Ohio

Where does the term “cop” often used to refer to a police officer come from?

There are many theories as to its origin. Some will tell you that it comes from the term “constable on patrol.” Others will tell you that it originated in New York referring to the copper buttons on police officer uniforms. But history tells us neither is true.

Although no one can say with absolute certainty, the word “cop” dates back to Anglo-Saxon times in the 1100s, and was a verb meaning “catch or grab.” It first appears in writing around the 1700s in England as a verb “cop.” In 1846 in the English novel it is used in Swell’s Night Guide where it reads “they count on me the best flag pitcher of all the swallows; I never

gets copped by the Bobbies.” In 1859 the California Police Gazette states in an article on January 22 “He was at last ‘copped’ by officer Nickerson.”

In short, the term “cop” comes from the verb form of “take or seize (i.e. arrest). However, the term “cop” was a derogatory term used for police officers in England. Petty street criminals referred to English Bobbies as “cops,” and police officers found this so derogatory that England made it illegal to use the term “cop” to speak of a police officer.

And now, as Paul Harvey once said, you know the rest of the story.

Lifeline programs help Lake County seniors

Lifeline leads the fight against poverty by empowering community members to achieve self-sufficiency and by improving the quality of life for all residents. Here are just a few of the programs available through them:

Are You OK Program: Are You OK is a safety assurance program for Lake County seniors (60+) who may be isolated or living alone. Seniors can enroll in the program to receive daily automated monitoring calls designed to provide security and ease the concerns that friends and families may have for their loved ones’ safety. Senior citizens wishing to enroll in Are You OK can call Lifeline program coordinator Andrea Johnson at 440-354-2148 ext. 207 or email at andrea@lclifeline.org.

Helping Hands for Seniors Program: The Helping Hands for Seniors Program matches eligible Lake Co. seniors (60+) who reside independently in the community with vetted volunteers who will assist them with daily activities that are essential for their health and safety. Seniors in need of assistance can call Andrea Johnson at 440-354-2148 ext. 207 or email

at andrea@lclifeline.org to see if they qualify and apply.

Kinship Navigator Program: We continue to offer one-on-one navigation and resource connections by appointment, as well as monthly workshops and support groups. Our kinship coordinator, Andrea Johnson, can be reached by calling 2-1-1.

HEAP WCP: The HEAP Winter Crisis Program will begin November 1. Intake appointments can be scheduled by calling 440-381-8230 or visiting <https://app.capappointments.com>. For more information contact our office at 440-350-9160.

VITA Tax Clinics: FREE tax preparation clinics will begin in January 2024. Our clinic schedule will be released in early January and will have daytime, evening and weekend clinic times available. Clinics will be held in Painesville, Perry and Wickliffe, as well as in Newbury and Chardon. Contact 2-1-1 for more information and to schedule tax appointments!

2-1-1: The 2-1-1 hotline is available 24/7 for help in connecting to health and human services programs throughout Lake County.

Essential tips to dodge lottery scams



By Frank A. Suponcic
CPA, CFE, CFF

*Excerpted from Elder Frauds,
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Lottery scams are becoming more common and are often aimed at older adults. The scam usually involves a fake notification that the person has won a large amount of money or a new car. Chances are you did not win. Scammers quickly share that to secure the prize, the recipient must pay an up front processing fee or payment to cover the winning's income taxes.

You just won a lottery. Don't you want to tell the world? No! Scammers emphasize the importance of confidentiality, urging victims not to disclose the exciting news until they have received the prize. By discouraging victims from seeking advice or verification from others, scammers prevent potential intervention that would expose the scam.

From Internet research, including scouring social media, scammers invest time and effort in researching their targets, gathering information about their homes, families, and backgrounds to add credibility to their claims and build rapport with their prey. A convincing scammer could spend an hour on the phone with you if they perceive you as a viable target.

Many lottery scams are operated by organized crime rings, making them particularly dangerous. Scammers employ various tactics to manipulate victims, spending hours on the phone to establish trust, and more importantly, create a sense of urgency. This psychological manipulation is a critical element of their strategy to extract funds from unsuspecting individuals.

Scammers typically request payment through prepaid debit cards, wire transfers, money orders, or even cash. These methods make it difficult to trace the money once it has been sent, providing scammers some anonymity and reducing the chances of victims recovering their funds.

As difficult as this is to imagine, some victims have taken extreme measures, such as selling their homes and liquidating their assets, to pay the fees and taxes demanded by the scammers to ensure they receive their millions of winnings.

Scammers can work in an organized network, often sharing lists containing victims' names and phone numbers with other fraudsters. This results in an unsuspecting senior citizen receiving a barrage of relentless calls and demands for money. Some victims have reported receiving up to one hundred calls a day. Imagine the corresponding stress and anxiety.

To safeguard yourself against lottery scams, it

is crucial to adopt a skeptical mindset and follow these guidelines:

1. Be cautious: If an offer seems too good to be true, it is. Legitimate lotteries do not require winners to pay fees or taxes up front to claim their prizes.

2. Verify the information: Independently verify any claims by contacting the official organization or lottery involved. Never rely on information provided by the scammers.

3. Protect personal information: Do not share personal information such as your social security number. Scammers will use any personal identifying information secured to target you in the future.

4. Report suspicious activity: If you suspect you have been targeted or have fallen victim to a lottery scam, report the incident to your local law enforcement authority and relevant anti-fraud agency.

Lottery scams are on the rise, and older adults are often the targets. It's easy to be tempted by promises of big payouts, but it's essential to be vigilant and cautious. Remember, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." Legitimate lottery companies will never ask for upfront payments. Protecting personal information, verifying the legitimacy of any win, and reporting any suspicious activity promptly is crucial. In today's scam-ridden world, prudence is more important than luck. Stay safe and stay vigilant.



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Quitting smoking while battling mental health concerns

In the United States, nearly 4.5 million adults over the age of 60 smoke cigarettes, and this population accounts for nearly 70% of all deaths related to smoking. According to NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, living with a mental illness can be difficult, and some people may turn to smoking to cope with symptoms or handle stressful life events. About 18 million people with mental illness currently use tobacco products, and adults with mental illness use cigarettes at higher rates than those without a mental illness.

According to NAMI, individuals impacted by mental health concerns, or a substance use disorder, tend to smoke more cigarettes. Despite only representing 25% of the U.S. adult population, they use 40% of cigarettes sold in the U.S. — smoking two more packs per month than people without a mental health condition. While it may provide interim relief from some related symptoms, smoking is an unhealthy strategy for managing mental illness.

The National Behavioral Health

Network for Tobacco & Cancer Control reports that older adults, especially those diagnosed with behavioral health disorders, are less likely than younger smokers to attempt to quit, but they are much more likely to be successful in the cessation attempts they do make. Some reasons for the lack of quit attempts in the older adult population include, but are not limited to older adults thinking they are too old to try to quit, they do not think that their body can heal from the damage due to the long length of use, and they view smoking as a daily habit that they are comfortable with. This way of thinking needs to change due to the following:

Smoking can make certain health problems worse in older adults, including:

- Diabetes, osteoporosis, and lung problems.
- Behavioral health problems, such as depression and anxiety.
- Issues with memory and concentration.

Older adults who smoke also have a higher risk of:



- Medicines, including those for behavioral health issues, not working the way they should (smoking can affect how some medicines work in your body).
- Poorer relationships with family and social isolation (compared to people who have quit smoking or have never smoked).
- Developing dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

The challenges of quitting....

It is important to remember that smoking cessation beliefs and barriers in older adults can be unique including:

- Lower confidence in their ability to quit, despite higher success rates when attempted.
- Longer history of nicotine addiction.
- Perceptions and challenges around medication and pharmacological supports.
- Unwanted withdrawal symptoms from chronic use.

- Less likely to have received advice and assistance from their physician.
- Underestimation of smoking risks, particularly on other chronic conditions.

If you are interested in quitting, the Ohio Tobacco Quitline is here to help you be successful in your quit journey. This free tobacco cessation program is based on proven strategies that have helped more than 1.5 million people quit tobacco. Throughout the program, professional quit coaches and an online community help to provide the support that you need in order to quit. You will also be connected to additional resources, such as nicotine replacement therapy.

Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) to enroll today!

Submitted by The Lake County General Health District and written in collaboration with NAMI.

Protect Your Loved Ones by Planning for the Years Ahead

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Vial of Life Stay prepared

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 read-



ily 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.



Send it to me!

Sign up for email updates and information from the Lake County Council on Aging. Our emailed newsletter is sent at regular intervals to keep you informed about the latest news, happenings, and updates regarding our agency and the community we serve. Stay connected, engaged and informed! Log onto www.lccoa.org and tap on the "email newsletter" link.

100 YEARS

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.

Frank Albin Sechnick, Willoughby
100 years old • Born November 29, 1923

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 completing the centenarian request form online at lccoa.org. Click on the "programs and services" tab, and look for "centenarian certificate request." 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.

The Cleveland Sight Center

Cleveland Sight Center's (CSC) blog features an interview with clinic manager, Dr. Schloss about why individuals should make an appointment at CSC's clinic.

Why should patients come to Cleveland Sight Center?

A lot of times, individuals feel there's no other avenues for them in regards to their vision. A referral to Cleveland Sight Center connects them with programs and services they didn't know were available to them – restoring their hope.

When should patients come to Cleveland Sight Center?

It doesn't really matter what stage of a disease somebody's in, if they feel like their vision is impacting their daily life, CSC is here for them.

What makes our clinic different?

What we have here is a multi-plan, multiple disciplinary approach. Not only do we have optometrists on staff, we offer vision rehabilitation, case management, employment services, children's services and even have a store on site! Having all that support in one place is unique.

What is the impact of our clinic?

It impacts their lives! Patients are just so happy that we create the space where they can be listened to and heard. Our goal is to help them improve their lives and maintain their independence.

Schedule an appointment by calling 216-791-8118.

Council on Aging offices get into the holiday spirit!

The holidays shined bright at the Council on Aging this past December!

As part of the Council on Aging's United Way of Lake County fundraising campaign, the East Avenue office held a 'Best Door Décor' contest. To say that everyone stepped up would be an understatement! Almost every door was decorated as departments came together with themed décor that literally "decked the halls."

Realtor Chera Ihnat along with the Ihnat Home Team, hosted a holiday networking breakfast and wreath auction benefiting Council on Aging on December 15. Chera and her amazing team arranged over 40 wreaths to be donated for the fundraiser! So many gorgeous wreaths were on display in the weeks leading up to the event, it really brightened everyone's day, staff and visitors alike. Kudos to Chera for hosting such a beautiful event to benefit Council on Aging.

For the 20th year, the Lake County Council on Aging participated in Home Instead Senior Care's



program "Be a Santa to a Senior!" Social Work and Homemaker department staff members along with the Aging and Disability Resource Center referred 63 seniors to the program this year. Seniors created a wish list that went to a giving tree where the public selected and fulfilled the requests. Typical items included bath towels, dust pans, toiletries, stamps and clothing. These are seniors who might otherwise be overlooked during the holidays.

And finally, the agency was also able to brighten the holidays for seniors thanks to Richards Maple Products reaching out to the Lake County Council on Aging to participate in their Giving Tree. Being able to bring joy and happiness to our seniors truly is what the season is all about.

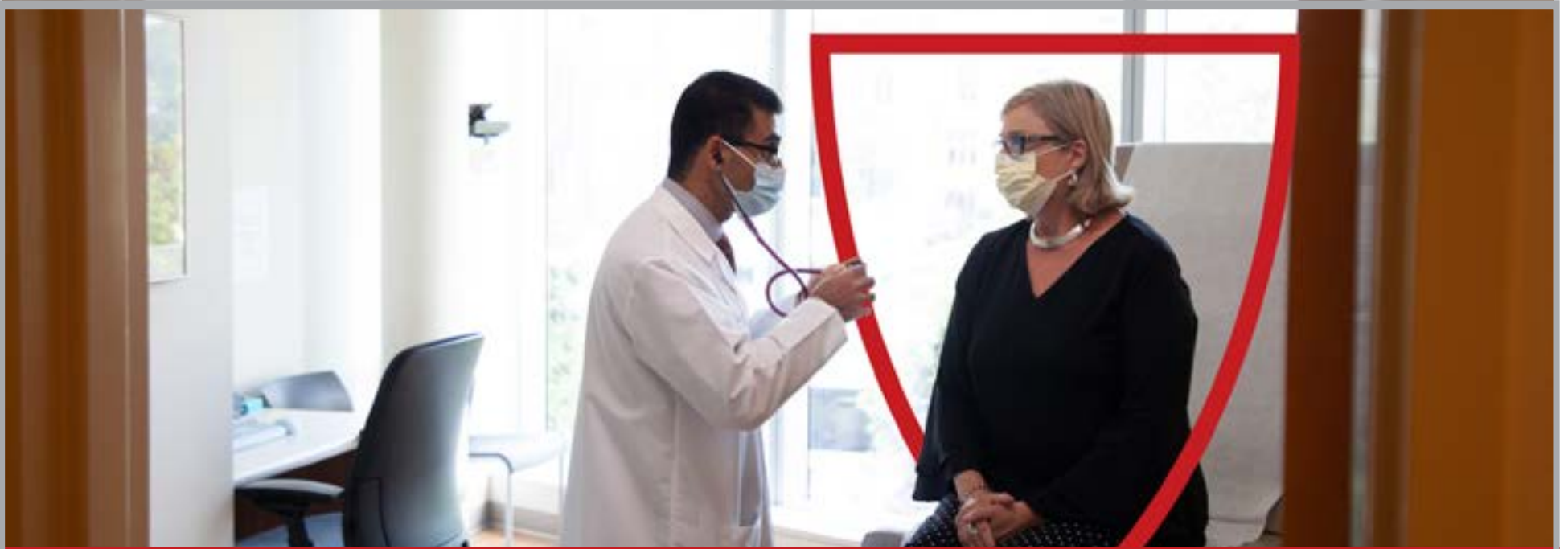
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