



**Award ceremony is October 22**

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LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING

# BRIDGE

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

October | November | December 2025 • Vol. LII, No. 4

**Lake Humane Society  
volunteers shine**

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for volunteer service**

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**The power of  
planned giving**

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**SAVE  
-THE-  
DATE!**

## SPECIAL EVENTS

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Caregiver Forum**

October 29  
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**Subaru Share  
The Love Event**

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January 2026  
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## Lake County's place in the semiquincentennial

Where local stories meet a 250-year celebration

When America celebrates its 250th birthday on July 4, 2026, the spotlight won't only shine on Washington, D.C.—small communities nationwide will share their vital stories. Lake County, Ohio, is one of those places. While Ohio wasn't yet a state during the Revolution, many of the county's early settlers were Revolutionary War veterans. Their graves and stories connect our region directly to the nation's founding.

Local organizations are already preparing to bring those stories to life. The Lake County History Center is planning trolley tours, exhibitions, and educational programming tied to the America250 initiative. These events will not only highlight Revolutionary-era connections but later civic milestones like women's suffrage and other local contributions—amplified

by partnerships with state and national America250 efforts.

A remarkable number of Revolutionary War veterans eventually settled in the Western Reserve. After the war, the federal government and several states granted land in Ohio to veterans as partial payment for their service. Many accepted that offer, migrated west, and helped build new communities. In Lake County alone, 117 Revolutionary War veterans have been documented as being buried here and the project is ongoing.

These graves represent more than names etched in stone—they are the stories of men who fought distant battles and later crossed the frontier to shape the new nation. Much of that research has been preserved: in 1902, the New Connecticut Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution



The gravesite of John Abel (1756–1836)  
at the Perry Township Cemetery

(DAR) published detailed biographies of these veterans buried in Lake Coun-

See *REVOLUTIONARY* on page 4

## Lake County Volunteer Network

Connecting older adults to meaningful service • Volunteers and participants wanted

Are you 55 or older and looking for new ways to stay active, meet people, and give back to your community? The Lake County Volunteer Network (LCVN) is here to connect you with opportunities that match your interests, skills, and schedule.

LCVN is more than just a way to spend time, it's a chance to make a difference. Whether you're interested in supporting local nonprofits, helping older adults remain independent, or lending a hand at community events, there's a place for you.

### Commissioners Corner



Morris Beverage III



John Plecnik



Richard Regovich

### Why volunteer with LCVN?

- **Variety of opportunities:** From one-time projects to ongoing roles, volunteers can choose assignments that fit their lifestyle and passions.
- **One-stop shop to volunteering:**

LCVN simplifies the process by acting as a central hub, matching older adults with meaningful volunteer roles and handling the connections with agencies, so there's no need for multiple phone calls or emails.

- **Community connections:** Build friendships with like-minded individuals while giving back.
- **Special incentives:** Volunteers enjoy extra benefits, including:
  - ♦ Supplemental insurance for peace of mind while serving.

See *VOLUNTEER NETWORK* on page 4

# Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program

Use your \$50 benefit by November 30



The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) helps low-income seniors access locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs. Eligible participants receive a \$50 benefit to use at participating farmers' markets and roadside stands. Although the last day to apply for the 2025 season is September 30, 2025, please use this as a reminder to use your \$50 benefit, if you have not already done so! The \$50 benefit expires after November 30, 2025.

If you have any questions about the SFMNP, please call the Lake County Council on Aging at (440) 205-8111.

**The most current list of Lake County farmers markets going into the fall months:**

**Rainbow Farms**  
2464 Townline Rd., Madison  
10 a.m.–5 p.m., Mon.–Sat.  
(Summer/fall hours:  
June through Thanksgiving)

**West Orchards**  
3034 N. Ridge Rd., Perry  
9 a.m.–5 p.m., Tue.–Sun.  
(Summer/fall hours:  
June through December)

**Willoughby Outdoor Market**  
City Hall Parking Lot,  
Downtown Willoughby  
8 a.m.–noon, Saturdays  
(Open May through October)  
Participating vendor- Rainbow Farms

# Consider a year-end gift to the Lake County Council on Aging

Since 1972, the Lake County Council on Aging has been dedicated to helping older adults maintain their independence through essential programs like Meals on Wheels, social work support, homemaker assistance, and grocery shopping services. Today, as the needs of Lake County residents continue to grow, these services are more vital than ever.

Last year, volunteers donated 36,993 hours of service in a number of areas including nutrition where the agency served 245,975 meals to seniors across the county, a 12% increase over the previous year! Our staff provided countless hours of case management, information and assistance to older adults who were facing isolation and loneliness. Through it all, we have been able to take the lead in the delivery of critical services that can help older adults continue enjoying a long and healthy life.

Below you will find our year-end

donation form. We kindly encourage you to take a few moments to complete the information and return the form along with your contribution. Your support plays a vital role in helping us meet the growing needs of our senior population. As more older adults in Lake County face challenges related to aging, your gift enables us to continue providing essential services—like nutritious meals, in-home support, and social work assistance—that help them live with dignity and independence.

Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who need it most.

You can also visit the Lake County Council on Aging website at [www.lccoa.org](http://www.lccoa.org) and click the “donate now” button to make an immediate online donation. Your contribution, no matter how big or small, will help. The Council on Aging and the Lake County residents we serve, thank you for your support!

## Clip and mail this form to:

Lake County Council on Aging, 8520 East Avenue, Mentor, Ohio 44060

## 2025 ANNUAL APPEAL

### I want to help Lake County's older adults!

Please accept my year-end gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am making my donation by:

- ☐ Check or Money Order  
(Make payable to: Lake County Council on Aging)
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- ☐ Credit card: Please charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to my:  
(circle one) Mastercard Visa American Express Discover

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV code: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: (as you wish to be acknowledged) \_\_\_\_\_

Company name: (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

You may also click the **DONATE NOW** button at [www.lccoa.org](http://www.lccoa.org) to make an instant online donation.

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Welcome from the CEO

As we turn the corner into the last quarter of the year, I welcome you to this latest edition of Bridge. Time has flown, and as we look back on 2025, we’re very proud of all the ways the Council on Aging has served seniors, caregivers, and families here in Lake County.

Since 1972, the Council on Aging has supported older residents with programs and services that can help them live their lives with dignity and independence. From helping individuals find the right resources, to delivering nutritious meals, to providing social work services — we’re truly grateful to be part of your journey.

Our recent pancake fundraiser for the Lake County Senior Services Levy was a tremendous success and I am thankful for the generous turn-out shown by our community. The levy is the primary funding source that helps support programs like Meals on Wheels, nonmedical in-home care, and homemaker services. It also funds a variety of programs at senior centers, home maintenance projects, Adult Protective Services and so much more. Your continued support of the levy over the years has helped ensure vital services for our seniors will continue.

You may notice something a little different in this issue of Bridge. Our pages are now slightly shorter than before due to changes in the news-print industry. While the size has been adjusted, the content remains the same — filled with the stories, resources, and information you count on. This change allows us to continue bringing you Bridge without interruption, and we’re excited to keep sharing each issue with you in its new format.

As we approach the end of the year, I kindly ask you to consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Lake County Council on Aging. We are counting on you to help us sustain critical programs and to continue the mission we have served for over 53 years. For your convenience, we have included a donation form in this issue of Bridge on pages 2 and 27.

In closing, I am thankful for all our employees, clients, volunteers, the board of trustees and the many community organizations we partner with throughout the year. Wishing you a joyful and fulfilling holiday season, and a new year filled with health, happiness, and hope.

Joseph R. Tomsick

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Holiday Office Hours:

The Lake County Council on Aging and all of the nutrition sites will be closed on the following days:

- Monday, October 13, 2025: Columbus Day
- Tuesday, November 11, 2025: Veterans Day
- Thursday, November 27, 2025, and Friday, November 28, 2025: Thanksgiving
- Wednesday, December 24, 2025, and Thursday, December 25, 2025: Christmas
- Thursday, January 1, 2026 : New Years Day

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.lcoa.org



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Council on Aging

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Contact us by email through our website.

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**Volunteer network** from page 1

- ♦ Free Laketran Dial-a-Ride transportation to and from your volunteer assignment.
- ♦ Invitations to exclusive gatherings and special events throughout the year.

“Volunteering not only helps our community, it enriches the lives of those who serve,” said Richard J. Regovich, commission president. “The Lake County Volunteer Network is designed to make it easy for older adults to get involved, stay active, and know that their contributions are valued.”

The Lake County Commissioners also recognize the vital role this program plays in strengthening the community.

“Our older adults have a lifetime of skills, knowledge, and compassion to share,” said Commissioner John T. Plecnik “Through the Lake County Volunteer Network, they’re able to use those gifts in ways that truly change lives across our county.”

Commissioner Morris W. Bever-

age III added, “This program not only supports local organizations, it brings people together. The impact of our volunteers is felt in a variety of nonprofit agencies and beyond, helping to create a stronger, more connected Lake County.”

If you’ve been thinking about giving your time and talents, now is the perfect moment to start. The Lake County Volunteer Network makes it simple to connect with opportunities that matter.

**Get started today**

To learn more or to sign up, contact the Lake County Volunteer Network at (440) 350-5360, email [cristen.kane@lakecountyohio.gov](mailto:cristen.kane@lakecountyohio.gov), or scan the QR code to link to our website.



**Revolutionary** from page 1

ty—a vital resource for genealogists and writers.

Here are a few of those local patriots whose stories bring history close to home:

**John Abel (1756–1836)**

Abel lived long enough to see America grow and move westward. As noted in the DAR compilation, he died in Perry Township at about 80 years old. His life bridged the founding era and early frontier, helping establish communities in the Western Reserve.

**Silas Antisdell (1749–1817)**

Born in Norwich, Connecticut, Antisdell served in the Revolution and later settled in what became Lake County. His story reflects the many veterans who relocated to Ohio following the war.

**Jabez Carter (1752–1836)**

Carter, noted for his service in the Revolution, spent his later years in the Kirtland area. Stories like his remind us that Revolutionary veterans helped shape every corner of the county, from its eastern suburbs to the shores of Lake Erie.

**Joel Holcomb (1760–1847)**

Holcomb enlisted as a young man in Granby, Connecticut, and lived long enough to see Lake County’s towns become established communities. His life reflects the full arc from colonial militia to fledgling pioneer.

These biographies do more than fill a column—they connect readers to specific places: a gravestone, a churchyard, a pioneer homestead—

where the Revolutionary story continued long after the Treaty of Paris. That local, human scale—kids tracing a name in a cemetery, a teacher reading a short biography, or a display at the history center with a face beside an old map—often resonates most deeply.

As America approaches its semiquincentennial, Lake County’s Revolutionary roots are not just nostalgic footnotes—they are living threads in our shared story. By preserving these graves, telling these stories, and centering local voices, we’re staking Lake County’s place in America’s 250-year narrative, ensuring that when the nation celebrates, it honors the everyday patriots who helped build it.



The grave site of Joel Holcomb (1756–1836) at the Paine Road Cemetery in LeRoy Township.



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## HOMEMAKER PROGRAM



## Smart cleaning goals for seniors in 2026 with the Homemaker Program

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

As 2026 approaches, many of us will once again set goals for a healthier, happier year. For seniors, those goals often center on maintaining independence, staying connected to loved ones, and living with purpose. Setting clear, achievable steps makes those aspirations easier to reach.

One of the best tools for setting goals is the S.M.A.R.T. method—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely—which is used by businesses when setting goals.

Let's use this approach for 2026 and see how it applies to our Homemaker Program and the support it offers seniors.

### **S**pecific – Securing a clean and healthy environment.

A focused service plan ensures essential areas of the home are cared for, such as:

- Vacuuming and dusting the main living area and primary bedroom
- Sanitizing the main bathroom floor, commode, sink, tub and shower
- Disinfecting the kitchen floor, counters, cabinets & appliances

### **M**easurable – Maintaining the cleanliness of the home.

Scheduled visits provide dependable support that:

- Reinforces the cleaning seniors already do themselves
- Covers the harder-to-manage tasks like tubs and showers
- Promotes a healthier, germ-free living space

### **A**chievable – Accepting age-appropriate limitations

With a little extra help, seniors can safely maintain their homes:

- Homemakers lend a reliable helping hand
- Risk of falls or injuries from overexertion is reduced
- Homes remain safe, comfortable, and hazard-free

### **R**elaxant – Relaxation and peace of mind.

Homemaker services directly support healthy aging in place by:

- Allowing more time for self-care and personal activities
- Reducing stress and loneliness with a friendly, familiar visit
- Offering families reassurance their loved one's home is cared for

### **T**imely – Twice-monthly dependable service.

A set schedule provides consistency that:

- Gives seniors a routine they can plan around
- Clearly defines which tasks will be covered each visit
- Provides regular attention to areas most difficult to manage alone

The Council on Aging Homemaker Program is a SMART way to help seniors maintain independence and safety at home, with light housekeeping support that can make all the difference. Let this program be your partner for a healthy, safe, and peaceful 2026.

For more info, call the Council on Aging at (440) 205-8111.

## Help support Bridge Become a Bridge Patron!



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**AMANDA'S  
FAMILY  
HEARING**

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

### Make a difference in the life of a senior Volunteer with the Council on Aging

By Denise Powell, Volunteer & Community Engagement Specialist,  
Lake County Council on Aging

At the Lake County Council on Aging, our mission is simple but powerful: to help older adults live their best life—on their own terms. That mission comes alive every day because of volunteers who share their time, energy, and compassion.

As our community ages and the need for services grows, volunteers are more important than ever. From delivering Meals on Wheels to visiting with a homebound neighbor, from helping in the kitchen to shopping for groceries, every act of service makes a real and lasting difference.

No task is too small. Sometimes an hour of your time means a hot meal, a friendly smile, or the reassurance that someone cares. Our seniors feel that kindness—and so do our volunteers.

If you're looking for a meaningful way to give back, we invite you to join us.

Many opportunities require just a couple of hours a month, and your contribution will be valued beyond measure.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Denise Powell, volunteer & community engagement specialist at (440) 701-4660, (440) 205-8111 or email [dpowell@lccoa.org](mailto:dpowell@lccoa.org). A fillable volunteer application is also available online at [www.lccoa.org](http://www.lccoa.org).



### Hearts That Serve

In quiet halls and weathered homes,  
Where time has etched its gentle poems,  
You bring the warmth, the care, the light—  
A steady hand, a heart so bright.  
With every meal and kind hello,  
You help our cherished elders know  
They're not forgotten, not alone—  
You make each place feel more like home.  
A simple ride, a shared warm smile,  
You go that extra, thoughtful mile.  
You listen close, you lift with grace—  
You bring the world into their space.  
Though thanks can never quite convey  
The joy you bring day after day,  
Please know your work, so freely given,  
Is deeply felt—and truly driven.  
So, here's our heartfelt, loud applause,  
For all you do, and just because—  
You've touched more lives than you may see,  
With kindness, hope, and dignity.

*To the volunteers of the Lake County Council on Aging*

# LAKETRAN SAME DAY SERVICE



## Rides ON DEMAND

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Download the App or  
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**Dial-a-Ride now operating Sundays**  
7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

## LAKE COUNTY'S SENIORS ON THE GO



### FREE SENIOR DIAL-A-RIDE TRANSPORTATION

✓ Laketransit and the Lake County Board of Commissioners now provide Lake County senior citizens, 60 years and older, free Laketransit Dial-a-Ride transportation in Lake County. Dial-a-Ride reservations can be scheduled by calling Laketransit 1-12 days in advance or online with Laketransit's Request-a-Ride.

#### DESTINATIONS INCLUDE:

Senior Centers  
Fitness Centers  
Parks  
Libraries

Grocery Stores  
Food Pantries  
Pharmacies  
Farmers' Markets

Beauty Salons  
Barber Shops

 **Reservations or Info:**  
440-354-6100



# Senior safety in winter weather

By Denise Powell, Volunteer & Community Engagement Specialist, Lake County Council on Aging

Staying safe and healthy takes a little extra care as we get older—especially during challenging seasons like winter. From keeping cozy at home to avoiding slips outdoors and making smart choices on the road, a few simple precautions can make all the difference. The following tips are designed to help seniors—and those who love them—stay comfortable, confident, and protected every day.

## At Home

### 1. Keep warm indoors

- ◆ Set thermostat to at least 68°F (20°C).
- ◆ Wear layers even indoors (sweaters, socks, blankets).
- ◆ Close off unused rooms and block drafts under doors.

### 2. Preventing carbon monoxide poisoning

- ◆ Install carbon monoxide detectors near bedrooms.
- ◆ Never use ovens or grills to heat the home.
- ◆ Have heating systems and chimneys inspected annually.

### 3. Stock up

- ◆ Keep at least a week's worth of food, water, and medications.
- ◆ Include flashlights, batteries, and a backup heat source.

## Driving Safety

### 1. Avoid driving in snow or ice

- ◆ Take advantage of Lake County's public transportation provider, Laketrans, during the winter months to avoid unnecessary vehicle travel on your own. They offer many types of transportation opportunities, including Dial-a-Rides, door to door service, medical transit to Cleveland hospitals and their new Ride on Demand service, providing same-day service requests. Call them at (440) 354-6100, or use their online reservation option 'Request-a-Ride' at <https://portal.laketrans.com>.

- ◆ Use services like grocery delivery or Amazon for tangible items.

### 2. Preparing your vehicle

- ◆ Keep the gas tank at least half full.
- ◆ Store a winter emergency kit (blanket, snacks, water, flashlight, etc.)

## Social & Emergency Support

### 1. Check-ins

- ◆ Register to join the Lake County Phone Pal Program, to receive twice weekly calls from vetted volunteers. Build friendships, share stories and feel connected. Call (440) 350-2020 or fill out a quick form at [www.lakecountyohio.gov/senior-services/268-2/phone-pal-program/](http://www.lakecountyohio.gov/senior-services/268-2/phone-pal-program/)
- ◆ Arrange for regular calls or visits from family, friends, or neighbors.

### 2. Community services

- ◆ Contact Lake County's most trusted resource provider of senior services, the Lake County Council on Aging, for services such as Meals on Wheels, congregate lunch locations, homemaker services, nonmedical in-home care, Pet Meals on Wheels, grocery shopping assistance, and friendly visitors. Call (440) 205-8111 or see a full list of services at [www.lcco.org](http://www.lcco.org).
- ◆ Look into keeping active both socially and physically at one of Lake County's nine senior centers. Get a no-fee ride there on Dial-a-Ride, provided to seniors through the Lake County Senior Services Levy.

### 3. Emergency contacts

- ◆ Keep a printed list near your landline, or on your smartphone, as well as a hardcopy in your wallet, and share it with family, neighbors and close friends.



## Outdoors & Walking Safety

### 1. Avoid icy surfaces

- ◆ Walk slowly and use handrails where possible.
- ◆ Wear nonslip boots or shoes with good traction.
- ◆ Sprinkle sand or salt on walkways.

### 2. Assistive devices

- ◆ Use canes or walkers with ice tips if needed.
- ◆ Consider a personal emergency response device.

### 3. Visibility

- ◆ Wear bright or reflective clothing when outside.
- ◆ Limit outings to daylight hours.



## Clothing Tips

- ◆ Dress in layers: base layer (thermal), middle (sweater), outer (waterproof coat).
- ◆ Wear hats, scarves, gloves, and thermal socks.
- ◆ Cover the mouth and nose in cold air to protect lungs.

## Health Precautions

### 1. Watch for hypothermia

- ◆ Signs: confusion, slowed speech, shivering, drowsiness.
- ◆ Seek immediate medical help if suspected.

### 2. Stay active indoors

- ◆ Gentle stretching, walking around the house, or chair exercises to promote circulation.

### 3. Check medications

- ◆ Some meds can increase sensitivity to cold. Ask your doctor or pharmacist.

## EXPERIENCE SOLAR in Lake County!

A's and O's farm of Mentor proudly supports the American Solar Energy Society solar tour October 3, 4, 5. Learn how we have combined sustainable energy with sustainable agriculture!

Blueberry, Pawpaw (pictured), other fruiting trees and shrubs.

Join the **FREE** tour and experience renewable energy powering homes, businesses, parks, buses, and cars. Over a dozen **LOCAL** sites at: [www.nationalsolartour.org](http://www.nationalsolartour.org)

**Farm Info: 440-257-2673**  
**Solar Tour Bus Reservations: 440-231-0842**



## A few recent notes of appreciation written to the Council on Aging staff.

Beth,

I can't thank you enough for all your help and insight. I can't begin to express how valuable it's been to get a better understanding of the landscape in Cleveland and the resources here. You are such a blessing!

~Karen

Social work and homemaker team,

Thank you immensely for all that you do for dad. You have likely observed his dementia is progressively deteriorating, yet he is resolute in his desire to remain in his home for as long as possible. Your invaluable services are instrumental in facilitating this wish.

~Andy



Pat,

Thank you for sending me La Tonya. I appreciate all that she does helping me with things around the apartment that I just cant get to anymore.

~Kathy

Dear Council on Aging,

Thank you so much to all of you but especially the Meals on Wheels volunteers, in every sense of the word, you are lifesavers!

~Steve

## NUTRITION SERVICES

### Brown bag surprise

Bringing smiles with Meals on Wheels

By Linda Llewellyn

Director of Community Services,  
Lake County Council on Aging

The Lake County Council on Aging delivers more than just nutritious food through its Meals on Wheels program. Thanks to a creative idea from Progressive employee Kelly Ricotta, seniors are now receiving their meals in decorated brown bags—complete with cheerful drawings, uplifting messages, and even a few jokes.

Ricotta suggested the project as a team-building activity, and it quickly became a hit. Her group decorated the first batch of 800 bags—enough for every home-delivered meal in Lake County for one day. Volunteers reported that seniors were thrilled. “It instantly put a smile on their face,” one driver said.

Since then, additional Progressive teams have joined in, adding their own touches to the bags. One group even wrote lighthearted jokes to spark laughter along with lunch.



Meals on Wheels provides daily nourishment and a vital wellness check for seniors who are homebound. With the help of community partners like Progressive, those deliveries are now sprinkled with extra joy.

The Council on Aging is grateful to Ricotta and her colleagues—including Maggie Hall, Brian Dubasik, Patricia Woodruff, and Nancy—for making mealtime brighter across Lake County.

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



If you are age 60 or older and are looking for companionship and healthy, nutritious food, then schedule time to eat a meal with a friend or come and make new friends at your local Lunch Place.

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

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

### The Lunch Place at Madison

Lunch starts: noon  
Madison Senior Center  
2938 Hubbard Road  
Phone: (440) 428-7002

### The Lunch Place at Wickliffe

Lunch starts: 11:30 am  
Wickliffe Senior Center  
900 Worden Road  
Phone: (440) 373-5017

### The Lunch Place at Painesville

Lunch starts: 11:30 am  
Extended Housing Building  
270 East Main St. – Lower Level  
Phone: (440) 354-6700

### The Lunch Place at Willowick

Lunch starts: 11:30 am  
Willowick Senior Center  
321 East 314th Street  
Phone: (440) 946-8822

## NUTRITION SERVICES

## Pet Meals on Wheels Helping seniors and their pets

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

When the Lake County Council on Aging launched its Pet Meals on Wheels (Pet MOW) program in 2021, it found the perfect partner in Lake Humane Society, an organization dedicated to animal welfare and preventing cruelty. Just as the Council supports seniors and their quality of life, Lake Humane Society is committed to the well-being of pets. Together, they've built a collaboration that helps both.

### How the program works

The Council on Aging's Pet MOW program provides seniors with a monthly supplemental supply of pet food, along with support for veterinary care, grooming, and even treats and supplies. Funding from Meals on Wheels America and a recent grant from the Osborne Foundation make this possible. Today, the program serves about 150 pets each month.

Still, demand often exceeds what grants can cover. That's where Auggie's Pet Food Pantry at Lake Humane Society steps in. The pantry provides additional food to ensure no senior has to choose between their own nutrition and their pet's.

### Volunteers make it happen

Behind the scenes, a dedicated team of Lake Humane Society volunteers — Cindy, Ian, Scott, Linda, Cynthia, Roberta, and Anthony — bag, label, and deliver pet food to the Council on Aging. From there, Council volunteers add make sure every senior receives the right food for their cats or dogs.

### Why it matters

Auggie's Pet Food Pantry is open to all Lake County residents in need, regardless of income. As shelter manager Allison Kager explains, "In the past, we've seen people surrender their pets because they couldn't afford basic care. Auggie's Pantry helps solve this



issue by keeping pets and people together."

For seniors who are homebound, Pet MOW ensures those same benefits reach their doorstep, supporting both their health and the companionship their pets provide.

### Get involved

Together, the Council on Aging and Lake Humane Society are making a real difference for seniors and their beloved pets. To support their efforts, consider donating, volunteering, or spreading the word—because when seniors and pets thrive, the whole community benefits.

### Lake County Council on Aging

[www.lccoa.org](http://www.lccoa.org)  
(440) 205-8111

### Lake Humane Society

[www.lakehumane.org](http://www.lakehumane.org)  
(440) 951-6122

### About the Lake Humane Society

LHS was founded in a small home in Perry Township, Ohio in November of 1937 by a group of determined animal lovers who wanted to see a higher standard of care for companion animals in Lake County, Ohio.

The Lake Humane Society strives to protect animals and build connections between pets and people through advocacy and education. Our small, yet mighty team works alongside our devoted volunteers in order to provide love and care to 1,200 pets annually.

We have been dedicated to the protection and care of homeless, abandoned and unwanted animals since 1937.

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## Celebrating 100 years of life and service

### Honoring volunteer Mike Bonelli

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

The Lake County Council on Aging recently hosted a very special celebration at its Painesville nutrition site: the 100th birthday of longtime volunteer Mike Bonelli.

Family, friends, fellow volunteers, and community leaders gathered on August 8 to honor Mike's remarkable milestone and his six years of dedicated service. Among those in attendance were Lake County Commissioner John Plecnik, Painesville City Council President Jim Fodor, Fairport Mayor Tim Manross, and representatives from Congressman Dave Joyce's and Representative Dan Troy's offices.

"Mike's 100th birthday is not just a celebration of longevity—it's a celebration of his enduring spirit," said Linda Llewellyn, director of community services at the Council

Mike will serve as the "celebrity keg tapper" at Hofbrauhaus Cleveland on Wednesday, Nov. 5, as the restaurant honors the Council on Aging.

on Aging. "He brings an energy and enthusiasm to our meal program that inspires everyone around him."

Known for his friendly smile, upbeat attitude, and willingness to help wherever needed, Mike continues to volunteer each week at the Painesville site, brightening the day for staff and fellow volunteers alike.

Even WJW Fox 8 News came out to cover the festivities, highlighting Mike's inspiring story for viewers across northeast Ohio.

At 100 years young, Mike Bonelli remains a shining example of how volunteering brings purpose, connection, and happiness to both giver and receiver.

## Vial of Life

Emergency preparedness  
in a pouch

The Vial of Life is an emergency-preparedness program offered by the Lake County Council on Aging. This program consists of a small kit that is designed to speak for you when you can't speak for yourself.

This kit includes the senior's medical information, which can assist emergency personnel in administering the proper medical treatment. A red, magnetized pouch is placed on the individual's refrigerator, where first responders can readily locate the information.

For more information and to request a Vial of Life for yourself or a loved one, call the Lake County Council on Aging at (440) 205-8111.



## Finding joy and connection during the holidays

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

The year has flown by once again, and the holiday season is quickly approaching. While this time of year is filled with joy for many, it can also be difficult—especially for older adults coping with health challenges, loss, or feelings of isolation. The good news is that small, meaningful activities can make the season brighter.

Spending time with family and friends, reminiscing, or sharing stories can spark warm memories and connection. Simple traditions like decorating the home, displaying cherished keepsakes, or baking holiday treats help create a festive atmosphere. Even a drive or stroll to admire neighborhood lights can literally brighten spirits.

For those who are able, giving back can be another source of joy. Opportunities abound through the

Lake County Council on Aging, from friendly visitor volunteers who bring companionship to home-bound seniors to Meals on Wheels drivers who deliver not only a hot meal but also a cheerful hello. Volunteering offers a chance to share kindness while strengthening community bonds.

Seniors who are more home-bound aren't alone, either. The Council on Aging provides a variety of in-home services and can connect older adults with community resources to support them through the season and beyond.

This holiday season, take time to connect, give, and receive. Whether through family traditions, helping others, or leaning on available resources, there are many ways to find meaning and spread holiday cheer.

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



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## Apply for HEAP

### Help with high heating bills

In northeast Ohio, it is the time of year for cooler temperatures, colorful leaves, cozy blankets, and family gatherings. This time of year also brings the start of higher heating bills. The Ohio Department of Development and the Lake County Council on Aging want to remind Ohioans that assistance is available to help with their home energy bills. The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) provides a one-time annual benefit/credit to your main heating source account and helps Ohioans at or below 175% of the federal poverty guidelines pay their heating bills.

The application process is easy, and the Lake County Council on Aging can help you apply. Individuals will need to have copies of the following documents to include with their application:

- Most recent utility bills.
- A list of all household members (including birth dates and Social Security numbers).

- Proof of income for the past 30 days for all household members (12 months for certain income types).
- Proof of U.S. citizenship or legal residency for all household members.
- Proof of disability (if applicable).

HEAP benefits are applied to an individual's energy bill after January 1. If you need immediate assistance with your energy bills or have received a shut-off notice, please contact your local energy assistance provider, Lifeline, Inc., at (440) 354-2148.

The last day to apply for the regular HEAP benefit is May 30, 2026.

For more information or assistance with applying for a HEAP benefit, contact the Lake County Council on Aging at (440) 205-8111. Appointments are strongly encouraged to guarantee a staff member's availability.



## Medicare open enrollment

### Review plan options for 2026

If you are on Medicare, this is the time to review your plan as Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage plans change yearly. You could miss out on big savings if you do not review your coverage annually. Understanding your Medicare options can be overwhelming, but you don't have to do it alone—we are here to help!

Medicare's open enrollment period begins on October 15 and ends December 7. This is your opportunity to review your Medicare coverage and make changes for 2026. The Council on Aging has trained Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP) volunteers available to help. We will help you review your current coverage, look at plan options for 2026, and provide you with unbiased information. Call the Council on Aging at (440) 205-8111 to schedule a one-on-one appointment with a certified OSHIIP volunteer. Please note that appointments are required during Open Enrollment.

In addition to free one-on-one counseling, the Lake County Council on Aging will offer Medicare

Check-Up presentations throughout the county. These presentations will provide an overview of Medicare, including expected changes and plan options for 2026.

Presentations are free and open to the public, but registration is required.

Please contact the respective site to register.

### Medicare Check-Up Presentations

Wednesday, October 1 • noon  
Perry Senior Center  
2800 Perry Park Road  
(440) 259-3772

Monday, October 13 • 6 p.m.  
Mentor Public Library  
(M-O-T-L branch)  
5642 Andrews Road  
(440) 257-2512

Wednesday, October 15 • 10 a.m.  
Wickliffe Public Library  
1713 Lincoln Road  
(440) 944-6010

Monday, October 20 • 6:30 p.m.  
Morley Library  
184 Phelps Street  
(440) 352-3383

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# Are you ready for winter?

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

As the winter months approach, we are reminded that severe weather could strike at any time and the key to remaining comfortable until conditions improve is to be prepared. Whether the emergency is due to extreme cold, high winds, excessive snow or freezing rain, the roads may be impassable, or homes may be without water or electricity for extended periods of time. Residents may have no option but to stay in their homes. Caregivers and family may be prevented from providing their usual assistance.

Most people know that they should keep an emergency food supply, but don't necessarily take the steps to create one. Preparing emergency food supply doesn't have to involve buying a lot of unfamiliar or costly foods. It's about having a plan.

The type of items that should be stored in case of emergency need to be items that sustain you until help arrives or you are able to venture out for food and water. Items high in protein, in containers that can be easily opened with a pull top or a hand can opener, are ready-to-eat and items that you enjoy eating.

Shelf-stable food items should be stored off the floor in clean, dry, dark places away from any source of moisture. Foods will maintain quality longer if extreme changes in temperature and expo-

sure to light are avoided. Placing your emergency food supply in a 10-gallon plastic storage container with a lid works best. Be sure to include a hand operated can opener, a flashlight, and extra batteries, and a first-aid kit. A transistor battery-operated radio is also helpful.

## What to stock in your emergency food supply

- Three-day food supply for each member of the household.
- Water - Water is ESSENTIAL! A plastic gallon bottle of water for each person each day. At least three gallons per person.
- High protein items – peanut butter, nuts, trail mix, beef jerky, meat sticks, protein bars or powder, tuna, canned meats, peanut butter or cheese crackers, canned chili, or stew.
- Ready-to-eat items – peanut butter, tuna, canned meats, canned fruits or applesauce, canned vegetables, protein bars or powder, juice, nonperishable pasteurized milk, canned chili or stew, canned soups, prepared pasta, fruit snacks, pudding cups, cereal, breakfast bars, no-refrigeration needed juice, and oatmeal.

Check expiration dates and rotate food every six months.

In addition to the above nonperishable food items, there are some fruits and vegetables that do not re-

quire refrigeration. They are items that are not refrigerated in the grocery store. If you have them on hand, they can become an instant addition to the three-day emergency supply but watch for spoilage – they will not last forever.

## Do not stock these items ahead of time with other non-perishable, shelf-stable items.

- Fruits that do not require refrigeration – apples, bananas, grapefruits, oranges, peaches, plums, grapes (2–3), and blueberries (2–3).
- Vegetables that do not require refrigeration – shelf life of 2–7 days - avocados, bell peppers (5–7), broccoli (2–4), carrots, cucumbers (2–4), onions, tomatoes, and zucchini (2–4).
- Bread and wraps do not require refrigeration – shelf life up to a



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week – watch for spoilage.

Having an emergency food supply ready for any emergency will give you peace of mind and keep you safe when an unexpected snowstorm or emergency occurs.

## “In The Bag” sale to benefit University Hospitals

The Auxiliary of University Hospitals is sponsoring an In The Bag fundraising sale with proceeds to benefit the auxiliary.

The public can shop for authentic branded designer handbags, luggage, briefcases, backpacks, small leather goods for men and women all at 40% to 70% off department store prices in the lobbies from

7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the following dates and locations:

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## “Our Aging World” radio show

The Lake County Council on Aging produces a weekly educational radio program, entitled “Our Aging World.”

Every week, our community radio show offers a platform to discuss the challenges seniors can face and the help that is available to address their needs. We share vital resources, from healthcare tips to local support services, helping older adults navigate their daily lives.

The show fosters a sense of

connection, reducing isolation by letting seniors know they’re not alone. With guest speakers and expert advice, we empower listeners to make informed decisions, stay active, and stay engaged.

Hosted by Council on Aging CEO, Joe Tomsick, the one hour broadcast is aired in-kind over Integrity Radio, WINT, 1330AM and 101.5FM. An online airing of the show is available at [tunein.com](http://tunein.com).



## Register now for the 2025 Lake County Caregiver Forum



The Lake County Caregiver Forum returns on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, at the Holiday Inn Cleveland Northeast–Mentor. This free event is designed for family caregivers of older adults and will feature expert speakers, practical resources, and opportunities to connect with local agencies.

Caregiving can be overwhelming,

but you don’t have to do it alone. Join us for a day of information, encouragement, and support.

Registration is now open and space is limited to 200 attendees. Secure your spot at [lakecountyohio.gov/senior-services/lake-county-caregiver-forum](http://lakecountyohio.gov/senior-services/lake-county-caregiver-forum), or simply scan the above QR code to register.

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For over 50 years the Lake County Council on Aging has been working to fulfill its mission to provide aging adults and their support system with services and opportunities that enable them to achieve an optimal, self-defined, quality of life. Charitable gifts are key to allowing us to make this happen. Planned gifts promote long-term funding and provide us with the stability needed to plan for the future and sustain our vital services.

#### How does planned giving benefit you?

##### Carries on your values and beliefs

Including the Council on Aging in your legacy planning is a way to leave a lasting testament to your values and carries on the ideals and beliefs you hold dear.

#### Planned gifts don’t affect your daily financial life

A planned gift ensures your wishes are carried out, but it does not affect your daily financial life. Traditionally, legacy gifts are made through wills and trusts with the help of professional advisors. They can also come from life insurance policies, real estate or property, retirement assets, and equities and stocks.

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Many planned gifts offer tax benefits which can help optimize how your assets are distributed. Charitable gifts can also be exempt from estate taxes, allowing more of your wealth to go directly to the causes you care about.

#### No cost to set up - planned giving is easy and simple

A planned gift is simple to set up and we have professional partners that can assist you with it, at no cost to you. It doesn’t require you to have an attorney, but we welcome the opportunity to work with you with any support system you require.

Contact Christopher Jochum at (440) 205-8111 or [cjochum@lccoa.org](mailto:cjochum@lccoa.org) to explore the many possibilities that are available.



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# Senior Hall of Fame Awards • October 22, 2025

Jerry Merhar and Kip Molenaar to be honored

On Wednesday, October 22, 2025 the Lake County Council on Aging will present the following awards in several categories, recognizing individuals and organizations for excellence in community engagement and support of the Lake County senior community.

## Lake County Senior Citizens Hall of Fame Award

Since 1994, the Lake County Senior Citizens Hall of Fame Award has honored individuals who at age 60 or older have had significant impact on the community through their employment, civic or volunteer activities.



### Kip Molenaar

For over two decades, Kip Molenaar dedicated countless hours to championing the well-being of older adults in our community through his steadfast support of the local senior services levy. Serving as treasurer for 26 years, he generously volunteered his financial expertise, ensuring every dollar was managed with care, precision, and purpose.

Respected for his intellectual strength, honesty, and quiet wit, Kip approached his work with grace, dignity, and deep respect for the seniors he served. His presence was always marked by thoughtful leadership and a steady commitment to doing what was right. His fiscal prudence helped guide the levy through years of successful renewals and sustainable growth, ensuring critical services remained available for those who needed them most.

Beyond his work with senior services, he also turned his focus toward future generations. With a heart for students facing financial hardship, he worked to establish an endowment fund for scholarships at Lakeland, helping ensure that no student would be denied the opportunity of education due to cost.

Kip stepped down from his role this year but leaves a legacy of compassion, service, and integrity.



### Jerry Merhar

In his 60s, when many begin to slow down, Jerry Merhar joined the Lake County Fair Board and went on to serve over 15 years as director for Western Lake County. With strong leadership skills and a passion for community, Jerry brought new energy and vision to the role.

He reimagined the “Voice of the Fair” by creating a volunteer corps of announcers from county, city, and township governments. This initiative not only added excitement to the fair experience but also strengthened relationships with local officials, helping secure critical funding for major fairground improvements.

Jerry also championed inclusion through the creation of Latino Culture Day, which has drawn tens of thousands of new attendees. One of his proudest achievements is expanding Senior Day at the Fair, in partnership with the Lake County Council on Aging. Over 500 seniors now enjoy a day of organized activities and connection each year.

At the 2025 fair, Jerry was honored for his service and announced his decision to step down. His legacy of vision, inclusion, and dedication will continue to shape the fair for years to come.

*AWARDS continued on page 17*

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Trail cart tours are available for \$40/hour for one cart or \$80/hour for two carts. To schedule a custom tour, call 440-358-7275.

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## Lake County Council on Aging Helping Hands Award

Since 1994, the Council on Aging has presented the Helping Hands Award to recognize a community partner or individual who goes above and beyond in assisting seniors or the agency, in fulfilling our mission.

## Alliance for Working Together

While the Alliance for Working Together (AWT) is primarily dedicated to promoting careers in manufacturing time and again, AWT has stepped up to assist the Lake County Council on Aging (COA) in meaningful and impactful ways.

One of the most valued contributions has been AWT's generous provision of storage space. As the COA prepares for the distribution of winter ready shelf-stable food for seniors, AWT offers the agency ample space to house dozens of crates prior to delivery—helping ensure that vulnerable seniors receive the nutrition they need.

Beyond logistics, AWT is also an educational ally. The organization collaborates with COA on staff trainings and community programming. In the past year alone, this partnership brought two significant initiatives to Lake County seniors: a Tech Experience Day, aimed at increasing digital confidence and literacy, and a Financial Exploitation Awareness Training to help protect seniors from scams and fraud.

The Council on Aging honors AWT's dedication to community impact!

## Lake Catholic High School Drumline

The Lake Catholic High School Drumline, the powerful percussion section of the Cougar Pride Marching Band, brings more than just rhythm—they bring energy, spirit, and heart to every performance. For over 12 years, these dedicated young musicians have been a vital part of the Council on Aging's March for Meals event at Great Lakes Mall.

Each spring, the drumline stu-

dents volunteer their time—and wake up extra early on a Saturday morning—to kick off this important fundraiser with an electrifying performance. Their booming beats and synchronized rhythms echo through the corridors of the mall, filling the space with joy and excitement, and setting the tone for a successful day of community support.

Their presence doesn't just signal the start of the walk; it inspires participants, uplifts the crowd, and creates an unforgettable experience for all who attend. The students' commitment, talent, and generosity exemplify the very best of youth leadership and service.

The Council on Aging is deeply grateful to the Lake Catholic Drumline for sharing their time and their gifts with our community year after year. You are truly the heartbeat of the March for Meals!

## Lake County Mobile Food Pantry



A Special Recognition Award will be given to the partners of the Lake County Mobile Food Pantry. Established during the pandemic, this project ended in September of this year. The MFP was a collaborative program providing free, fresh produce to low-income seniors in Lake County, through weekly distributions at various locations. Laketrans provided a converted bus to serve as the mobile pantry, while partners Lifeline, the Board of Lake County Commissioners, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank and the Council on Aging handled reservations, distribution and support.

Join us for this important event by making your reservation online at [www.lccoa.org](http://www.lccoa.org) through Eventbrite. Tickets to the annual meeting and awards presentation are \$45 per person. For further information, please contact Linda Shaffer at (440) 205-8111, ext. 223.



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## Stay active, connected, and involved

### Volunteer with United Way Lake County

For many older adults, volunteering is more than lending a helping hand—it's a way to stay engaged, meet new people, and continue making a difference. Giving your time can boost energy, sharpen the mind, and ease feelings of loneliness, all while adding purpose to daily life.

Volunteering also opens the door to new friendships and meaningful connections. Whether working alongside peers or collaborating with younger generations, seniors bring valuable skills and wisdom that strengthen our entire community.

United Way Lake County offers many ways to get involved, from helping with event preparation, volunteering at events, preparing mailings to sorting donated items. Opportunities are flexible and tailored to all abilities, making it easy to find the right fit.

Your time and talents can brighten lives—and enrich your own. If you'd like to learn more about volunteering with United Way Lake County, visit [uwlc.org/volunteer](http://uwlc.org/volunteer), email [jmyser@uwlc.org](mailto:jmyser@uwlc.org), or call (440) 639-1286.

# 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.

### Martha (Marty) Springer

100 years old • Born September 25, 1925

### Mary McKown

100 years old • Born November 5, 1925

## 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](http://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.



Follow the Council on Aging on Facebook!



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## Veterans' Benefits Luncheon

For Honorably Discharged Veterans

**Wednesday, November 5, 2025 11:00 am**  
**Monreal Srnick Funeral Home**  
**35400 Curtis Blvd., Eastlake**

This **FREE** event includes lunch and is presented by **Monreal Funeral Home of Eastlake** to help Veterans better understand VA Burial Benefits and what is available to them.

### Featured Speakers:

A representative from the  
Department of Veterans Affairs

*Shannon Stih-Zaun -*  
Advance Planning Specialist



**Call MONREAL FUNERAL HOME by November 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**to Confirm Your Attendance: 440-951-1220**

## Christmas in July brings holiday spirit to Senior Day at the Lake County Fair

The Lake County Council on Aging welcomed hundreds of seniors to the Lake County Fair on July 25 for a festive “Christmas in July” celebration. The holiday-themed event was filled with joy, music, games, and a warm sense of community.

Local dignitaries and sponsors joined in the fun to greet attendees. Representing University Hospitals was Dr. Robyn Strosaker, president and chief operating officer of UH Lake West, TriPoint, and Beachwood medical centers. Kerry Jonke, manager of customer experience at Laketran, also stopped by on behalf of the Senior Day sponsor.

The program featured lively holiday music, themed games with DJ Jesse Webb, and a crowd-favorite bingo session called by Commissioner John Plecnik and Judge Mike DeLeone, returning to lead the fun.

Later, a hearty lunch and plenty of cold water were served to more than 350 seniors by the hardworking staff and volunteers of the Council on Aging. Entertainment by the Decibells brought smiles all around, and the day’s biggest surprise came when Santa Claus himself arrived—taking a break from his Hawaiian summer vacation to spread holiday cheer.

The Lake County Council on Aging extends its gratitude to the many volunteers, as well as to the Lake County Fair Board and staff, for helping make Senior Day such a memorable and beloved annual tradition.

## Share the love and support seniors this holiday season

The Lake County Council on Aging is proud to again take part in Subaru’s Share the Love event as a member of Meals on Wheels America. From November 2025 through January 2026, Subaru of America will donate \$250 for every new Subaru purchased or leased to one of four national charities. By choosing Meals on Wheels America, your gift helps support programs like Meals on Wheels in Lake County.

Locally, Adventure Subaru in Painesville, Ganley Subaru in Wickliffe, and all Lake County senior centers will host the annual Blizzard Bag Food Drive from mid-November to mid-December. Blizzard bags provide a 2- to 3-day supply of shelf-stable food for seniors in case severe weather disrupts regular meal deliveries.

Community members can join the effort by donating nonperishable items high in protein and easy to open—such as peanut butter, canned tuna or chicken, soup, chili, vegetables, fruit, or protein bars. Following last year’s success, the Council on Aging is again setting a special goal: to col-



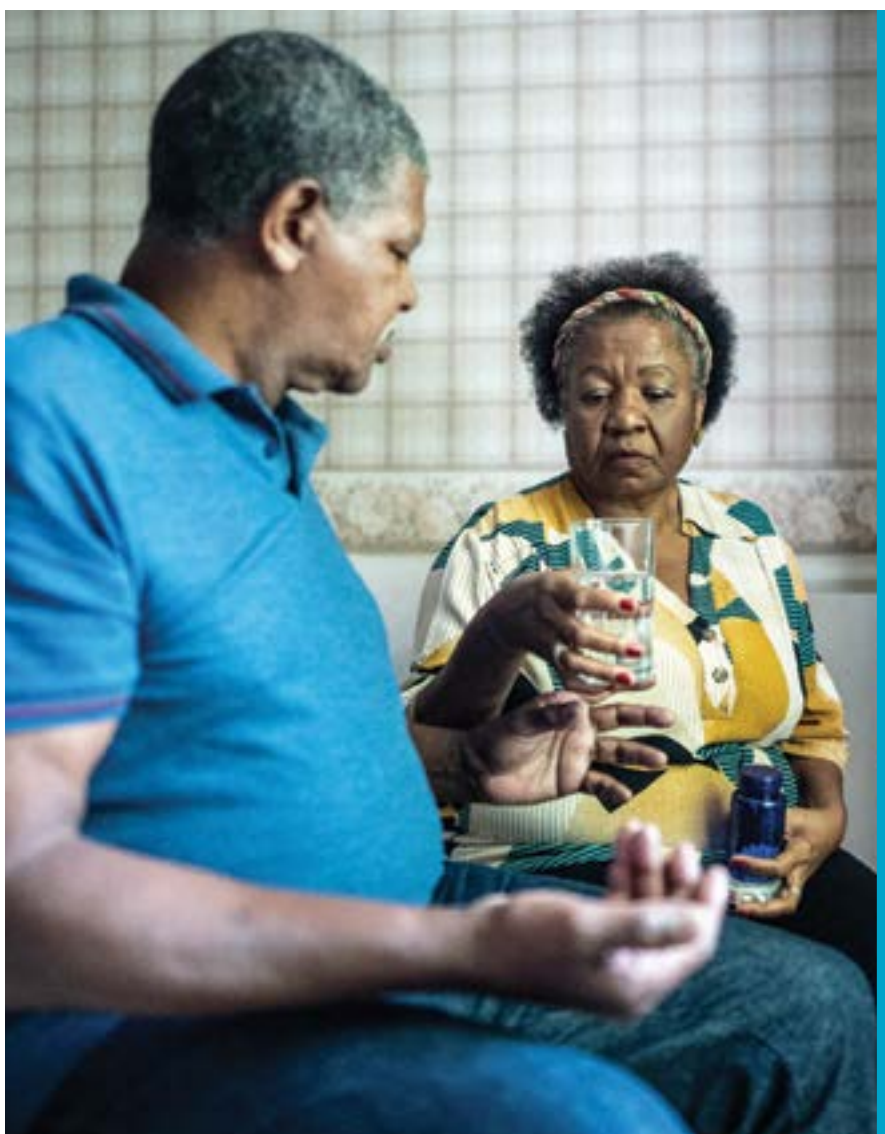
lect 250 jars of peanut butter, a versatile staple that seniors can enjoy for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

“We are thankful to Meals on Wheels America and Subaru for their ongoing support,” said Joe Tomsick, Council on Aging CEO. “For the ninth year, the generosity of our community will ensure that clients have food on hand when winter weather prevents a meal delivery.”

The Council on Aging also recently received a \$3,000 grant from Meals on Wheels America in recognition of its creative blizzard bag project during last year’s Share the Love event.

Look for more details on food drive collection sites beginning in mid-October at [www.lccoa.org](http://www.lccoa.org) or by calling (440) 205-8111, ext. 241 or 243.

This holiday season, Subaru and the Council on Aging invite you to share the love—and make a difference for seniors right here in Lake County.



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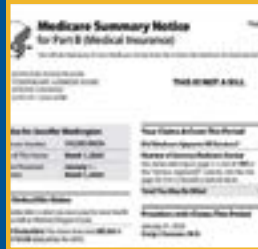


### Here's what to do:



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- Review your Medicare Summary Notices or log in to [www.mymedicare.gov](http://www.mymedicare.gov) to check for claims of unwanted braces.
- Call the **Ohio Senior Medicare Patrol**. We can help check your account for suspicious activity.



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Supported by the ACL, U.S. Dept of HHS, as part of a \$949,633 financial assistance award.

## Getting around is getting easier with Laketran

This year, Laketran has launched several new services designed to keep seniors engaged in the community, reduce isolation, and make every day travel easier. From same-day rides to expanded weekend hours, these programs are here to help you stay connected.



### Seniors on the Go

Free rides for ages 60+

Through a partnership with the Lake County Commissioners, the new Seniors on the Go program provides free Dial-a-Ride trips for residents 60 and older. Seniors can schedule rides to grocery stores, pharmacies, food pantries, salons, barbers, parks, senior centers, and libraries. The program helps older adults maintain their independence and access the essentials that support a healthy, active lifestyle.

### Rides on Demand

Same-day ride share service  
Need a ride today? Laketran's new Rides on Demand service works much like rideshare, allowing you to book same-day trips through the Rides on Demand app or by phone at (440) 354-6100. This flexible option is perfect for errands, last-minute appointments, or spontaneous social plans. Seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities ride for just \$3.50 anywhere in Lake County.

### Sunday Dial-a-Ride

Laketran has expanded Dial-a-Ride service to Sundays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and is now operating Saturdays from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. These extended hours give resi-

dents more opportunities to attend church, visit family, shop, or enjoy community activities without needing to rely on others for a ride.

### Free rides for voting and veterans

Laketran also continues its special community programs. The Vote & Ride program provides free transportation for early voting at the Lake County Board of Elections or to the polls on Election Day on Dial-a-Ride or Local Routes. In addition, all veterans ride free on all Laketran services the week of November 9 as a way to honor their service.

"Reliable, affordable transportation helps our seniors and people with disabilities stay independent and socially connected," shared Laketran CEO Ben Capelle. "These new programs are about making life easier and ensuring no one feels like they can't get out of their home and be part of the community."

With the holidays approaching, Laketran bus passes make the perfect gift for someone who relies on Laketran — or could benefit from a little extra independence.

For more info or to schedule your ride, call (440) 354-6100 or visit [www.laketran.com](http://www.laketran.com).

## Handbell Christmas concert

The Decibells handbell choir presents "A Happy Handbell Christmas" on December 6 from 4–5:30 p.m. The concert will be held at Harvey High School in Painesville. This is a free, family-friendly concert including popular and traditional Christmas songs played on a five-octave set of handbells. Special vocal guest Taylor Mortensen will be featured on "The Twelve Days After Christmas," the follow up to the "Twelve Days of Christmas." A Christmas cookie bake sale will take place while supplies last.

The choir recently purchased the Schulmerich handbells and are looking forward to celebrating the holidays with you!

# New property tax prepayment option helps Lake County seniors

Managing property taxes on a fixed income can be stressful, but the Lake County Treasurer's Office has introduced a new program to make budgeting easier. Seniors can now make monthly pre-payments toward their property taxes instead of facing one large lump-sum bill.

While auto-pay won't return until August 2026, participants can set up self-pay options. The treasurer's office will calculate a monthly amount for you, and payments can be made by:

- Mailing a check (include your parcel number in the memo line).
- Using online bill pay through your bank (parcel number = account number).

"This program helps seniors take control of their finances without the stress of last-minute scrambling," said Treasurer Michael Zuren. "Enrollment in monthly prepayments has increased by 69% in the past year."

To learn more, contact the treasurer's office at (440) 350-2516 or [treasurer@lakecountyohio.gov](mailto:treasurer@lakecountyohio.gov).

In addition, seniors are invited to an informative session on December 2 at 1 p.m. at the Lake County Council on Aging offices in Mentor. The treasurer's office will share resources on property tax prepayment, financial planning, and other programs to support older adults.

## Pancakes for a Purpose

On Sunday, Sept. 14, the Lake County Senior Services Levy committee hosted a pancake breakfast fundraiser at the Fairport Senior Center and would like to thank all those who attended. Close to 150 guests enjoyed a delicious, hot breakfast and the chance to win any one of over 20 baskets, each valued at over \$50.

Deep appreciation to all the sponsors and raffle donors of the event including Top Sponsor, the Western Reserve Development Corporation, University Hospitals, Lifeline, the Ecumenical Shelter Network of Lake County, United Way Lake County, Schraff Thomas Law, PRP & Associates (Tax, Accounting, and Business Advisors), Long Term Care Ombudsman, Lake Geauga Habitat for Humanity, Comfort Keepers, Taylor Made Home Care, Lakeland Community College, Daniel P. Seink Co., Ltd., The Helicopter Daughter, Health Insurance for You, Cornerstone Caregiving and Morris Chiropractic.

The Senior Services Levy committee works to raise funds to support the Lake County Senior Services Levy, which has been operating since 1992. These fundraising events help market the levy campaigns to keep these vital programs that support our seniors.



# Volunteers celebrated at Lake County Captains game

Nearly 200 dedicated community volunteers were recognized with a game ticket and a stadium-style lunch in appreciation of their invaluable service. Set against the backdrop of America's favorite pastime and a perfectly blue sky, the event honored those who together have donated thousands of hours supporting older adults through local nonprofits, senior service agencies, schools, and civic organizations. Attendees enjoyed a memorable afternoon filled with tributes, game-day excitement, and community spirit.

"These are the unsung heroes of our community," said Council on Aging CEO Joe Tomsick. "Their compassion and commitment have touched countless lives, and today is just a small way of saying thank you for the big difference they make."

Local leaders and staff joined in to show their support, underscoring how much these volunteers mean to the community.

The Council on Aging also extends its gratitude to the city of Eastlake for providing free parking and to Laketrans for shuttle service that made the day easier for guests.

If you've ever thought about volunteering, now is a wonderful time to start. Whether it's lending a hand with errands, offering companionship, or supporting local programs, your time can make a lasting difference in the life of a senior. To learn more about opportunities with the Council on Aging, please contact Denise Powell at (440) 205-8111, or email her at [dpowell@lccoa.org](mailto:dpowell@lccoa.org).



Even "The Bug" had fun with our volunteers!

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# SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS

October | November | December 2025



Seniors enjoying a fun and active game of pickleball at the Fairport Senior Center.

## **Eastlake Senior Center**

**600 East 349th Street  
(440) 975-4268**

**Grace Giangiacomo, director**

After one of the hottest summers in recent memory, the crisp mornings and cool evenings of sweater weather have finally arrived. And while we're ready to embrace fall, summer gave us plenty to smile about! From our annual trip to the Islands (yes, we soaked up the fun at Put-In-Bay!) to cheering

the Guardians to an extra-innings victory, and wrapping it all up with a Hawaiian luau under the pavilion—it was a season packed with adventure.

Now it's time to trade flip-flops for apple cider. We kicked off the fall season with a trip to Berlin and Walnut Creek to sip cider that warmed us from the inside out (though we'll be reaching for hot chocolate soon enough). If you're looking for something new to try

as the days get shorter, come give diamond dot painting a whirl—it's fun, relaxing, and no actual painting required!

The "BER" months are always packed with celebrations. October brings our Halloween party, where the costumes are always a treat. November rolls in with the ever-popular Turkey Bowl, and December caps the year with our Christmas party at Manakiki. While we've retired our fall and holiday boutiques, our raffle baskets are still a highlight—stop by in November and December to check them out. No membership required!

## **Fairport Senior Center**

**1380 East St., Fairport Harbor  
(440) 354-3674**

**Chris Yano, director**

We are pleased to announce the launch of our Senior Caregiver Program for individuals aged 55 and over, beginning on October 3 at 1 PM. This program addresses the challenges of balancing caregiving responsibilities with self-care, specifically for caregivers of individuals over the age of 60. Key topics include managing medical needs, accessing resources, navigating relationship changes, stress management, and more. To register for this 12-week program, please contact Lisa Demeter at (440) 623-0698.

Additionally, please be aware that there have been significant changes to Medicare for 2026. We encourage you to review your plans in preparation for the Medicare open enrollment period, which runs from October 15 to December 7, 2025. Our OSHIIP volunteer, Lorna Curtiss, is available to assist you with your options by appointment every Wednesday.

Furthermore, Vesna from HAAS Healthcare Solutions will be available for consultations starting October 17, with appointments on Fridays. Please call to schedule your session.

We invite you to join us for our

craft and basket raffle on November 1, from 10 a.m.–3 p.m. Tickets for the gift baskets will be available for purchase at a rate of 10 for \$5, and tickets for the stained glass window will be \$5 each, starting October 27.

## **Kirtland Senior Center**

**7900 Euclid-Chardon Road  
(440) 256-4711**

**Julia DeWolf, coordinator**

As the temperature outside cools, there's no better place to warm up with coffee and friends than your local senior center. If fall is your favorite time to be outside, come join our hiking club as they take the trails to view the beautiful fall colors.

Our variety of exercise classes — cardio drumming, aerobics, yoga, balance, chair volleyball, tai chi, line dancing — offer an opportunity for everyone to keep moving and visiting with friends.

2026 membership is now open, and everyone is welcome to join. For more information call us at (440) 256-4711 or visit us online at [kirtlandcommunity.com](http://kirtlandcommunity.com).

A quick reminder to check WJW Fox 8 News for any weather-related closings.

Everyone in Kirtland wishes you a joyous holiday season and we hope to see you at the center soon!

## **Madison Senior Center**

**2938 Hubbard Road  
440-428-6664**

**Carol Billetter, Director**

It's the season for all things apples and pumpkins, and we're ready to celebrate. Mark your calendar for the Madison Senior Center Craft Show, Basket Raffle, and Holiday Tree Auction on Saturday, October 25 from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Browse unique handmade crafts from local vendors, pick up something sweet at the bake sale, and stay for lunch—available for purchase right at the center.

In November, join us for a toe-tapping good time! On Tuesday, November 18 at 1 p.m., Don

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# SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS

October | November | December 2025

Densmore will be here leading a sing-along. With his accordion and a stack of familiar tunes, it's sure to get everyone smiling. Songbooks will be provided, so just bring your voice and your spirit!

To register for programs or ask questions, call us at (440) 428-6664.

And don't forget—the Madison Senior Center also offers a weekday community lunch program thanks to the Lake County Council on Aging and the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. Join us Monday through Friday at 11:45 a.m. for a nutritious, delicious meal. Reservations are required, so please call (440) 428-7002 to sign up in advance.

## **Mentor Senior Center**

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

**Renee Ochaya, director**

Are you 55 or older and looking to stay active, engaged, and connected? Look no further than the Mentor Senior Center! We offer a variety of fun activities, from fitness classes and social gatherings to educational workshops, travel, and creative pursuits. Make new friends, learn new skills, and enjoy delicious meals—all in a welcoming and supportive environment.

Find unique handmade gifts and support local artists at our Arts and Crafts Sale on Saturday, November 15, from 9 a.m.–3 p.m. (free admission). Take charge of your health at the Community Health Fair on Thursday, October 23, from 9:30–11:15 a.m., offering helpful resources and screenings.

Join us for the 14th Annual Veterans Appreciation Breakfast on Thursday, November 6, from 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Enjoy pancakes, eggs, and sausage—proudly cosponsored by Perkins Pancake House—plus a color guard ceremony and entertainment as we salute our veterans. Veterans attend free; guests are \$11. Reservations required by October 27.

Fall entertainment highlights in-

clude a Vegas-style show with singing sensation Nick Costa, performing classics from Sinatra, Martin, Manilow, Elvis, and more (tickets \$15). On Wednesday, December 3, from 7–8 p.m., enjoy a holiday concert by the 60-piece Hillcrest Concert Band, one of the area's premier community ensembles (tickets \$4).

Stay active, stay connected—your next adventure starts at the Mentor Senior Center!

## **Perry Senior Center**

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

**Tina Witt, director**

Summer may have come to an end but the fun at Perry Senior Center sure hasn't! Aside from our regularly scheduled activities like yoga, line dancing, Zumba, card games, volleyball, crafts and Bingo, we have so many exciting things happening this fall!

We are heading to northern Michigan to visit Mackinac Island with Diamond Tours 10/6-10/11. Get into the spooky spirit on October 15 with the Western Reserve Historical Society as they present "Eliot Ness and the Torso Murders" at 11:45 a.m.

We will host our annual craft fair and chinese auction on October 18! Get a head start on your holiday shopping at one of the 40+ vendors, grab lunch from the concession stand and maybe win a basket or two!

We will round out the month of October with a Halloween potluck and costume party on October 29. November is sure to get you in the holiday spirit! Join us November 10 for "Holiday Baking," the first in a series of cooking classes. Participants will get to choose topics for future classes. We will be heading to the Christmas Connection on Friday November 21. Catch the bus at the center and enjoy the ride to the I-X Center where you can shop all things Christmas and beyond!

## **Wickliffe Senior Center**

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

**Bob Liddy, director**

The Wickliffe Senior Center is ready to fall into some good times as we end 2025!

Our regular free programming offers members sessions in chair yoga, senior exercise, line dancing, Wii bowling, meditation, veteran's groups, senior free dance, and our new senior stretch and balance class! We also present morning/afternoon bingo, arts & crafts club, book club, reader's theater, corn hole, popcorn classic movies and 2–3 bus trips per month (look for Playhouse Square, B.A. Sweeties and Christmas lights trips this autumn). Check out our Facebook page (City of Wickliffe Community Center) for the most up-to-date information.

The Wickliffe Senior Center is also fortunate to have the Lake County Council on Aging Lunch Place on-site to serve delicious and nutritious meals every day, Monday – Friday, at 11:30 a.m.

Finally, we have some exciting special events lined up for the end of the year as well. Keep an eye out for information on our Halloween and Christmas parties (10/24 and 12/11), our inaugural craft show (11/16) and a special performance by the Wickliffe High School Choir (11/25). It's a great time to be a senior in Wickliffe!

Memberships are available to those 55 and older. Cost residents \$10 a year/nonresidents \$15 a year.

Hope to see you soon.

## **Willoughby Senior Center**

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

**Amy Cesa, manager**

What is next for you on your "to-do" list? Why not check it off and check in on the Willoughby Senior Center? This fall we are planning day trips to the theatre, casinos, and mystery lunch & dinner locations.

Call the center for information on our exciting trip to Chicago November 12–14, a quick but "enlightening" holiday adventure.

We'll be celebrating the seasons with another fabulous Halloween party, a "friendsgiving" party and many more holiday events and parties. And don't forget our fitness classes, card groups, craft classes, the fitness center, the air-conditioned walking track, the billiards room and library all available for you to enjoy.

Our newsletter is online [www.willoughbyohio.com](http://www.willoughbyohio.com) or stop in and we'll give you a tour! Annual membership is \$12 for residents and \$18 nonresidents.

## **Willowick Senior Center**

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

**Doreen Nevulis, coordinator**

Our center will be hosting its Annual Health & Wellness Day on Wednesday, October 8, 2025 from 9 a.m. – noon. We will share education information, raise awareness of health risks, demonstrate healthy habits, cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose checks and other senior resources. Stop by and check it out.

Willowick Senior Center's Annual Holiday Boutique will be Saturday, November 8, 2025 from 9 a.m.–2:00 p.m. We will have homemade crafts from our seniors, a variety of vendors, refreshments and a great basket raffle. Get your Christmas shopping done early. If you are interested in becoming a vendor, please contact Doreen @ [dnevilis@cityofwillowick.com](mailto:dnevilis@cityofwillowick.com) or (440) 585-5112.

Our Christmas party will be at Pine Ridge Party Center on Friday, December 12, 2025. Come celebrate with your friends. Details to follow. The center continues with our daily programs and events. Just visit us at [www.cityofwillowick.com](http://www.cityofwillowick.com) or stop in and see what's going on here at the center. Hours are Monday thru Thursday 8 a.m.–4 p.m. and Fridays 8 a.m.–noon.

# Willow Praise Church offers delivered meals on Thanksgiving morning

For over two decades, Willow Praise Church in Willowick has been a beacon of compassion in Lake County, offering free Thanksgiving meals to those in need.

In partnership with the Lake County Council on Aging, the church continues its heartfelt tradition in 2025, ensuring that seniors across the county can enjoy a warm, hearty Thanksgiving meal complete with all the trimmings—and a sweet dessert to top it off.

This annual outreach program is designed to support seniors, the homebound, and others who might otherwise go without a festive meal on Thanksgiving Day. Each meal includes classic holiday favorites, such as turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, vegetables, and a delicious dessert, all prepared with care by dedicated volunteers.

The initiative not only nourishes the body but also fosters a sense of community and gratitude during

the holiday season. Seniors in Lake County have two convenient options to receive their free Thanksgiving meal: delivery to their doorstep or pickup at the church on Thanksgiving morning between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Delivery is especially vital for those who are homebound or lack transportation, ensuring no one is left out of the celebration.

To register for a free meal, seniors or their caregivers can call the church office at (440) 944-5683. Registration is simple and ensures that organizers can plan for the number of meals needed. The church encourages early registration to guarantee a spot.

Led by Pastor Larry Bogenrief, Willow Praise Church has been serving the Willowick community since 1993, with a mission rooted in worship and service to others.

The church is located at 32901 Vine Street in Willowick.

# Council on Aging Annual Meeting and Award Presentation set for October 22

The board of trustees of the Lake County Council on Aging will host its Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation on Wednesday, October 22, at Pine Ridge Country Club located at 30601 Ridge Road in Willoughby. Doors open to the public at 11 a.m. with socializing, and entertainment by musician Don Densmore, a 2023 Hall of Famer. A delicious lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. followed by the program. The event will conclude at approximately 1 p.m.

This year, two individuals will be inducted into the Senior Citizens Hall of Fame: retired Lake County Fair Board Director Jerry Merhar and Kip Molenaar who served as treasurer for the Senior Services Levy for over 26 years. The Lake Catholic High School Drumline and the Alliance for Working To-

gether (AWT) will receive Helping Hands Awards from the Council on Aging.

President of the board of trustees, Shannon Cianciola, will present the 2025 Ruth A. Densmore Senior Advocate Award which annually recognizes a deserving person or organization that has demonstrated a passion for service to seniors and whose actions help support the senior population of Lake County. This year's honoree is the Jerome T. Osborne and Georgeanne S. Osborne Charitable Trust.

Everyone is invited to attend. Reservations can be made online at [www.lccoa.org](http://www.lccoa.org) through Eventbrite. Tickets are \$45 per person.

For further information, please contact Linda Shaffer at the Lake County Council on Aging at (440) 205-8111, ext. 223.

# Osborne Charitable Trust to receive the Ruth Densmore Award

Presentation to be made on October 22

Established in 2012, the Ruth A. Densmore Senior Advocate Award is presented by the Lake County Council on Aging Board of Trustees. The award annually recognizes a deserving person or organization on the basis of support and advocacy community involvement within the county on behalf of the Lake County's senior citizens.

This year's recipient is the Jerome T. Osborne and Georgeanne S. Osborne Charitable Trust. A true entrepreneur, Jerome T. Osborne was a man of vision, foresight and action. He was passionate about his work, his family and his community. With respect and loyalty, the legacy of Jerome and his wife Georgeanne, continues through impactful financial support of qualified charities throughout greater Cleveland.

The trustees of The Jerome T. Osborne and Georgeanne S. Osborne Charitable Trust look for organizations who share their values: enterprising, limitless initiative, good

work resulting in societal rewards, and those organizations who are kind, humble and generous. The Lake County Council on Aging is one example of the multitude of organizations that have been recognized with grant support from the trust. Other organizations have included Extended Housing, Project Hope for the Homeless, Lake Humane Society and the United Way of Lake County.

The Ruth Densmore Senior Advocate Award will be presented at the Lake County Council on Aging Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation on Wednesday, October 22, at Pine Ridge Country Club in Willoughby. Doors open to the public at 11 a.m. with socializing, followed by delicious lunch and a brief program. The event will conclude at approximately 1 p.m.

Reservations can be made online at [www.lccoa.org](http://www.lccoa.org) through Eventbrite. Tickets are \$45 per person.

Contact Linda Shaffer at (440) 205-8111, ext. 223 for more info.



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L-R Pattie Hibler, Sheilah Vaccarielo, DuWayne Henke, Linda Llewellyn.

# Painesville Senior Organization gives grant to Council on Aging

The Painesville nutrition site received an \$8,000 grant from the Painesville Senior Organization, aka Painesville Senior Center. The grant provides the funding for the purchase of a full-size single-door freezer, commercial food thermometers, electric thermal bags, ice sheets and a commercial anti-fatigue floor mat for the kitchen.

The kitchen of the Painesville nutrition site is home to the Lake County Council on Aging’s home-delivered Meals on Wheels program and the dine-in Lunch Place program for seniors in the Extended Housing Building’s community room at 270 E. Main St.

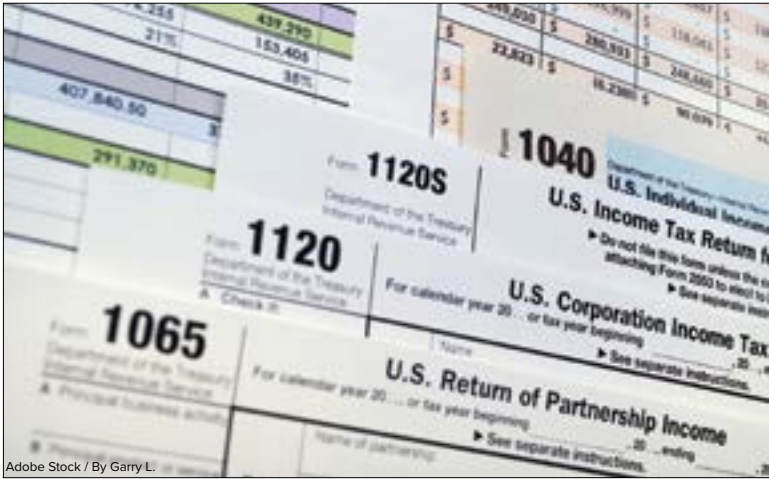
The Painesville kitchen with three part-time employees provides over 200 home-delivered meals and lunch for 10-20 seniors every weekday with the assistance of 16

volunteers daily.

The meals provided by the Painesville kitchen have increased every year since 2019. The increased service created a need for a larger freezer to hold ice sheets for the cold-bag delivery, and more thermal electric bags for the hot meal delivery and more support items in the kitchen to ensure food safety and a great experience for the volunteers.

Linda Llewellyn, director of community services said, “We are thankful to President DuWayne Henke and all the members of the Painesville Senior Organization for this generous donation that will enable the Painesville nutrition program to serve more seniors in Painesville city and surrounding communities. It couldn’t have come at a better time.”

## MONEY MATTERS



## Tax planning can be very helpful

By Paul Pahoresky, Vice President, Council on Aging Board of Trustees

As we move into the final quarter of the year, it’s a good time to think about year-end tax planning. A little attention now can make a big difference come tax time—especially for retirees managing fixed incomes.

Ohio does not tax Social Security benefits and also offers a retirement income credit, which can provide relief at the state level for seniors. However, distributions from pensions, IRAs, and annuities are taxable, so it’s wise to review withholdings and estimated tax payments to avoid surprises, penalties, or interest charges.

If you’ve realized capital gains this year, consider selling underperforming assets to harvest losses and offset some or all of those gains. On the flip side, if you are in a lower tax bracket, recognizing capital gains before year-end could help you lock in favorable tax rates.

For retirees who itemize, it may make sense to “bunch” deductions.

Paying property taxes or making charitable contributions before year-end could help push your deductions over the standard deduction amount and result in meaningful tax savings.

Year-end is also an ideal time to review your estate plan and beneficiary designations. Life changes, and so should your documents. Updating wills, trusts, and beneficiary forms can prevent future complications and ensure your wishes are clearly understood.

A little planning now can go a long way in reducing or eliminating unwelcome surprises at tax time—and provide peace of mind heading into the new year.

*Paul Pahoresky is the managing member of PRP & Associates. He can be reached at (440) 974-1040 x14 or at paul@prpassoc.com. Consult your tax advisor for your specific situation for additional information and guidance on these topics.*

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## Protecting vulnerable, older adults in Lake County

As the days grow shorter and the colder months approach, it's important to remember that many seniors face added challenges during this time of year. Lake County Adult Protective Services strives to safeguard the health, safety, and dignity of vulnerable adults aged 60 and older in our community. Together, we can make a difference by checking in on loved ones and neighbors, staying alert to signs of neglect or abuse, and reaching out when something doesn't seem right. Your care and attention can help ensure that every senior in Lake County feels safe, supported, and valued.

Our confidential 24/7 hotline is available at (440) 350-4000, option 1. Whether you're a family member, neighbor, or service provider, your call could be the crucial step in protecting someone at risk. Our dedicated team of social services workers investigates concerns of maltreatment and connects seniors



with essential resources to support their safety, health, and well-being.

We also offer education and training sessions to raise awareness about elder maltreatment and mandatory reporting requirements. These programs are designed to give individuals and organizations the tools to protect older adults in our community. For more information or to schedule a training, contact Tyler Van Drei, APS supervisor, at (440) 350-4309 or [tyler.vandrei@jfs.ohio.gov](mailto:tyler.vandrei@jfs.ohio.gov).

Together, we can make Lake County a safer, more supportive place for our seniors—this season and throughout the year.

## Project Hope for the Homeless success story

Project Hope for the Homeless is honored to celebrate the success of a senior we recently had the privilege to serve.

In August 2024, a 66-year-old veteran and lifelong Lake County resident came to us in need of shelter, care, and service connections. With the support of our residential specialists, this guest was able to move into transitional housing. Having dedicated a career to caring for people with developmental disabilities, the guest's income made them eligible for this next step.

After leaving Project Hope, guests are eligible for our Aftercare program, led by coordinator Tonya Abney. Aftercare provides wrap-around support including referrals to social services, home visits, monthly workshops, holiday gatherings, and more. With Abney's guidance, this guest connected with Veterans Affairs, secured a housing voucher, and ultimately transitioned into permanent housing. Abney will continue to follow up as needed to help ensure long-term



stability.

When guests move into a new home, they are invited to "shop" at Project Hope's Welcome Home Center, receiving up to \$250 worth of newly purchased household essentials such as bedding, small furniture, kitchen appliances, or vacuum cleaners—items often out of reach otherwise.

It is a true honor to witness someone achieve lasting success through the resources available here in Lake County.

Shelter reservations for those in need are accessible through Lifeline by dialing 2-1-1 or calling (440) 639-4420.

Project Hope for the Homeless also offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities with flexible scheduling.

Visit [projecthopeforthehomeless.org](http://projecthopeforthehomeless.org) to learn more.

## Lifeline: Empowering community members to achieve self-sufficiency

### Are You OK Program

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.

### Helping Hands for Seniors Program

This program matches eligible Lake County 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.

### Kinship Navigator Program

We continue to offer one-on-one navigation and resource connec-

tions by appointment, as well as monthly workshops and support groups.

### 211

The 211 hotline is available 24/7 for help in connecting to health & human services programs throughout Lake County.

### HEAP Winter Crisis

The program offers assistance with your home energy bills. It 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.

For more information on any of these programs, please contact Andrea Johnson at (440) 354-2148 ext. 207, at 211 or at [andreaaj@lclifeline.org](mailto:andreaaj@lclifeline.org).



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# Remembering Fran Beale

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Fran Beale. Fran worked as a licensed social worker for the Lake County Council on Aging since 2016, where she dedicated herself to serving others with unwavering devotion and compassion.

Over the years, she provided invaluable support and guidance to thousands of people, each benefiting from her professionalism, empathy, and tireless commitment to their well-being.

Fran was a respected colleague to many community partners. Her extensive background in Social Work and her steady, loyal presence made her the heart of our team. She will be remembered for her dedication to her family and friends and the meaningful impact she had on the lives of so many people.

Fran will be deeply missed by all of us at the Council on Aging.



## Consider a year-end gift to the Lake County Council on Aging

Since 1972, the Lake County Council on Aging has been dedicated to helping older adults maintain their independence through essential programs like Meals on Wheels, social work support, homemaker assistance, and grocery shopping services. Today, as the needs of Lake County residents continue to grow, these services are more vital than ever.

Below you will find our year-end donation form. We kindly encourage you to take a few moments to complete the information and return the form along with your contribution. Your support plays a vital role in helping us meet the growing needs of our senior population.

Clip and mail this form to:  
Lake County Council on Aging, 8520 East Avenue, Mentor, Ohio 44060

### 2025 ANNUAL APPEAL

I want to help  
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Visit [www.lcco.org](http://www.lcco.org) and click the **DONATE NOW** button.

## Birthright Lake expands services and honors community partners

Birthright Lake, Inc. is now an official milk drop site for the Ohio-Health Mothers' Milk Bank, providing donor breast milk to fragile and premature infants across Ohio and beyond. The Mentor location is the 36th milk drop site in the state.

Screened and approved donors can drop off milk at Birthright, where it's stored in a dedicated freezer—generously funded by Fredon Corporation—before being transported at no cost to the central milk bank in Whitehall, Ohio. There, it's pasteurized and distributed to hospitals and NICUs across North America.

"Our mission has always been rooted in compassion and support," said Janice Silvaroli, executive director of Birthright Lake. "We're asking seniors to help spread the word about the milk donation program at churches, senior centers, or clubs."

Birthright has long supported



mothers with pregnancy resources, baby items, and emotional support, making it a natural partner for the milk bank.

At its recent Bundles of Joy fundraiser on September 14, Birthright honored the Christ Child Society of the Western Reserve for years of dedicated service. The group lovingly prepares layettes—complete with sleepers, onesies, bibs, and books—for newborns supported by Birthright. This year alone, 98 babies have received these gifts of comfort and care.

In recognition, Birthright named its baby bag preparation area "The Christ Child Corner," complete with a commemorative plaque.

To learn more, donate, or volunteer, visit [www.birthrightlake.org](http://www.birthrightlake.org) or call (440) 975-9055.

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