

SENIOR Advocate

A Quarterly Publication Dedicated to the Well-Being of Oakland County Seniors

Spring 2004

Volume 2, Issue 1

Welcome to the (Senior) Community!



Senior Center Staff preparing lunches.

The Waterford Senior Center, a division of the Waterford School District, recently celebrated its 31st year of service to the community. The center provides a wide variety of programs and services to over 2,200 members, in addition to an even higher number of seniors who are not members of the center. Services and programs include recreational activities, infor-

mation and referral, health and support services, transportation, nutrition programs and educational opportunities. The center is proud to host one of the few adult day service programs in the county.

In November of 2001, the Waterford Senior Center received national accreditation from the National Institute of Senior

Continued on p. 3

CONTENTS

Page 2

Editor's Column

Page 3

Brown Bag Lecture Series

Page 4

Jr. League Chorus
Aging Well Means Staying Healthy

Page 5

Spotlight on Services
Senior Citizens Advisory Council

Page 6

Senior Spotlight

Page 7

Oakland County Works for You
Schemes, Scams & Swindles
Caregiver Corner

Page 8

Contact Information

Oakland County Woman Becomes First Official Centenarian

Pearl Franklin made Oakland County history recently when she was honored with Oakland County's first official Centenarian Award. Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson personally presented the award to Mrs. Franklin at a grand birthday celebration. The event was held at her residence, the Oakland County Medical Care Facility, and was attended by several generations of her family including siblings, children, and grandchildren as well as fellow residents and staff. Also on hand were Dr. Tom Gordon, director of Oakland County Human Services, and George Miller, manager of Oakland County Health Division, and employees of Oakland County Health Division.



L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County Executive, Pearl Franklin and Dr. Tom Gordon, Director of Human Services

Pearl was one of seven children born on a farm in Oklahoma and has survived all of her siblings and her husband. During her lifetime she raised five children who have rewarded her with 20 grand-children as well as 40 great grandchildren. She is beloved by many family and friends.

Mrs. Franklin joins an ever-growing group of Americans who have reached the age of 100 and become role models for longevity. If you have a friend or family member who will be turning 100 years of age and would like to recognize them with an Oakland County Centenarian Award simply e-mail Lynn Alexander at alexanderl@co.oakland.mi.us or call her at (248) 858-0213.

Senior Business

In each of our editions we honor businesses which have senior-friendly policies and/or customer service. We welcome suggestions from our readers for future recognition. In this edition, we are pleased to recognize three companies:

- **Republic Bank in Ann Arbor**, for its Pathfinders Club. Customers 50+ years in age enjoy group trips as well as special discounts, products focused on their specific needs, and extra customer service.
- **Newman's Own**, known for its premiere pasta sauces and salad dressings, has launched a foundation specifically for senior programs. This is a relatively new concept in the foundation community.
- **IAMS**, the pet food company, for partnering with the Eden Alternative (known for creating quality of life in nursing homes and other long term care settings) to study the impact of pet ownership on the effectiveness of vaccines in the older adult population.

This recognition in no way assumes an exhaustive roster of senior friendly companies, nor do we recommend them to customers. This is simply meant to draw attention to senior friendly actions on the part of businesses and to encourage others to do the same.

From the Editor

Spring is known as a time of renewal. The much anticipated warm weather can spark us to become more active. Now is a good time to "Count Your Steps". Our County Executive, Brooks Patterson, has launched such a program with children in the elementary grades. As a grandparent, you can walk with your grandchildren and accomplish two goals at once...being a good role model as well as becoming more physically active yourself.



Most of us are aware of the great health risk heart disease plays in the lives of men. However, in a recent conversation with the American Heart Association, I learned some startling statistics about women, especially older women. Most women think breast cancer is the #1 killer of women. Yet coronary heart disease and stroke are the #1 and #3 killers of women over age 25. One in five females in the U.S. have some form of cardiovascular disease. Older women, in particular, are at risk since heart disease rates in women after menopause are 2-3 times those of women the same age before menopause.

Now is the time, as spring takes hold, to become more active and start on the path to a healthier life. When it comes to your grandchildren, don't just talk with them, WALK WITH THEM! Oakland County has some excellent parks to visit. Your grandchildren would really enjoy an outing like this. Senior Citizen Permits (age 62+) are available at a reduced rate of \$23 for the entire season. Parks and Recreation also has a number of excellent activity programs for seniors as well as nature center programs which would be ideal as an intergenerational activity. For more information, call Oakland County Parks & Recreation at 1-888-OCPARKS or check out the Oakland County Website at www.co.oakland.mi.us.

Lynn Alexander

SENIOR Advocate

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Office of Media & Communications
for Lynne Alexander, Senior Advocate
Oakland County Executive Office Building
1200 North Telegraph Road
Pontiac, MI 48341-0409
Phone: (248) 858-0213
email: alexanderl@co.oakland.mi.us

Editor: Lynn Alexander
Design/Production: Michael Zack
Contributors: Sally Swayne
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Would you like to be on the mailing list to receive the Senior Advocate?

E-mail slevak@co.oakland.mi.us or call Lynne Alexander at (248) 858-0213, or write to us at:

1200 N. Telegraph Rd.
Pontiac, MI 48341-9742

We welcome and encourage you to send us your articles, photographs, suggestions and comments.

Brown Bag Lecture Series Fall/Winter 2003

Presented by the Oakland County Office of Arts, Culture & Film

The Brown Bag Lecture Series is sponsored by the Oakland County Office of Arts, Culture & Film. The presentations are from noon to 1:00 p.m. in the Oakland County Auditorium, located in Building 49 West. Please bring your lunch. Coffee and tea will be served. All lectures are FREE and registration is not required.

The Oakland County Office of Arts, Culture & Film serves to enhance, strengthen and promote the arts and cultural life in Oakland County through advocacy, promotion, funding, and programming initiatives. Call (248) 858-0415 or visit www.artsoakland.com for more information.

March 18, 2004

Phoenix Mill Museum

Commissioner Lyn Bankes, Cultural Advocate

Formerly a parts plant for the Ford Model T, Phoenix Mill was the first-ever all-female factory and the first one where women made the same wage as men. The history-making factory has been converted into a museum honoring women who were pioneers in the auto industry. Commissioner Bankes is the director of the project and quotes that "the museum will tell the story of the role women played in the auto industry and in World War II".

April 15, 2004

David McCarron, Appraiser

Originally from Boston, David McCarron is a senior appraiser and auctioneer for the PBS special series, Antiques Roadshow. His resume of more than 20 years' experience includes employment at Eldred's, Sotheby's and other auction houses in the eastern and midwestern United States. He currently works at the Frank Boos Gallery in Bloomfield Hills.

May 20, 2004

A "Firm Persuasion"-The making of a Potter in 21st Century Michigan

John Glick, Artist

Having his work included in the collections of 14 museums, 13 university art collections and numerous private and corporations, including Oakland County, has made John Glick a popular name in Michigan. Since 1964 he has been a professional studio artist working in clay combining "complex and painterly expressions". John lectures nationally and internationally and is a much sought after workshop leader. His lecture will prove to be just as interesting as his art.

June 17, 2004

Ann and Rob Burns, Musicians

Annie and Rob Burns play lively tunes on their extensive collection of replicas of Renaissance instruments, and relate music to the culture of the people who lived in the time of Shakespeare and Leonardo da Vinci. Their music brings the Renaissance alive and will delight those interested in History, Music, English, Literature and Social Studies.

Continued from p. 1

Centers (NISC), a division of the National Council on Aging. The center was the 51st in the country and is one of only five (5) in the state to receive this honor. The other Michigan centers to be accredited include Clinton Township, Troy, Portage and Holland.



Exercise class - one of the many activities offered.

The NISC accreditation program began in 1998 as an effort to promote formal, national quality controls and standards for the nation's 16,000 senior centers. The National Senior Center Accreditation Board bases the five-year accreditation on an intensive self-evaluation process, peer review, an on-site visit, adherence to standards and guidelines which are set by NISC, and a recommendation to accredit. Achieving national accreditation confirms that the center uses best practices and offers quality programming and services to the community, which can ultimately result in many more community members becoming involved.

If you are interested in more information regarding national accreditation for your center, please feel free to call the Waterford Senior Center or any of the other locations listed above. All will be happy to answer your questions or provide additional information regarding the process.

Received from Lannette Amon

Jr. League Chorus

By: Maggie Allesee

On Tuesday afternoons throughout the school year, approximately 20 women meet to rehearse and entertain. Of course, you'd expect a chorus to rehearse and entertain. But the fact that we perform primarily in nursing homes and for retired people in churches and senior citizen centers means our mission is so much greater.

The lives of elderly folk are often difficult due to loneliness, poor health, disabilities and neglect. The Jr. League Chorus has seen it all. So... our mission? To bring a little joy into their lives! By singing a 20-30 minute program of all kinds of songs we evoke happy memories and inspire warm feelings.

We follow with a sing-a-long, during which time we encourage them to participate by singing, clapping, dancing and often sharing a story. Many patients just need a hand to hold. Some smile or sing along to the delight of staff members who have not seen such a response in weeks. What a thrill for us!



The Jr. League Chorus performing Christmas carols

We never go away without knowing we have brightened someone's day. Our volunteer efforts are truly rewarded. We are good friends; and being able to combine our friendship with a love of music and take it "on the road" as a group is very special.

Throughout the years we have provided programs for Birmingham Newcomers, Birmingham's Bi-Centennial Celebration, our own Jr. League meetings and benefits, Salvation Army and Christmas community affairs. Our main focus continues to be the elderly to whom we bring love, friendly faces, and a potpourri of music - the most magical communicator amongst all ages.

For more info call Ginny O'Brien at (248) 642-2392.

Aging Well Means Staying Healthy

By: Jennifer Bouck, Public Health Educator

Many factors influence healthy aging-family history, social and physical environments and individual coping skills. Oakland County Health Division offers prevention services and resources that improve the health, well-being and quality of life for older adults, their caregivers and families.

One of the Health Division's resources include experienced public health nurses that provide individual and family services and community education in a variety of settings. Older adults are referred for public health nursing services due to repeated hospitalizations or emergency room visits. Nurses provide home visits or telephone consultation to assess individual needs and to teach about health and safety when family, environmental or social situations may hamper recovery and provide community resource information to assist in meeting their needs. Public health nurses visit senior centers, assisted living facilities and other community sites. They provide health promotion and disease prevention programs consisting of a wide range of topics including stress management, using medication wisely, caregiver issues, and healthy aging. Public health nursing also administers Flu shots at senior and community centers in the fall.

Age-related changes may affect the way an older person responds to alcohol, tobacco or to various medications. This can exacerbate health problems including hypertension, depression or malnutrition. The Oakland County Office of Substance Abuse Services educates older adults regarding these risk factors, the prevention of use/misuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and provides referrals for substance abuse treatment and other support services. Many of these educational sessions are offered in adult housing sites, churches and senior centers.

Eating well is important at any age. For some older adults, however, eating balanced, nutritious meals and getting enough of the essential nutrients can be a real challenge. To support the nutritional needs of the older adult, the Health Division's Nutrition Services unit offers nutrition counseling and referrals for food assistance and other nutrition services for older adults and their caregivers.

For more information call Oakland County Health Division's Public Health Nursing:

South Oakland County: (248) 424-7090

North Oakland County: (248) 858-1375

West Oakland County: (248) 926-3318

Web Address:

www.co.oakland.mi.us/health/program_service/aging_about.htm

Oakland County Office of Substance Abuse Services:
(248) 858-0001

Oakland County Health Division Nutrition Services:
(248) 424-7056

Senior Citizen Advisory Council

Hello to all of our Senior Advocate readers. This edition I want to share with you a very troubling scam operation and warn all of you to not be taken in. One of my associates reported the following true story:

My husband was called on a Wednesday by "VISA"; and I was called on Thursday by "MasterCard". It worked like this: The person calling said, "This is and I'm calling from the Security and Fraud Department at My badge # is 12460. Your card has been flagged for an unusual purchase pattern; and I'm calling to verify. This would be on yourcard issued byBank. Did you purchase an anti- telemarketing Device for \$497.99 from a marketing company in Arizona?" When we answered "No" he then went into a scam mode to obtain 3 of the numbers on our card stating that those 3 numbers could verify that we were in possession of our card. Those were the numbers he was looking for to gain access to our card.

Fortunately for us, we called the 800 numbers on our cards to verify if he was legitimate. Apparently many customers never do. When we called we were informed that there was no such investigation going on by our card companies and that we had just been scammed. We immediately cancelled our cards to prevent them from using them. If we had not called the 800 number on our cards, they would have had unlimited access to them via the numbers they had retrieved from us.



Sally Swayne, Chairperson
Oakland County Senior Advisory Council

If you receive a call of this nature hang up and report it immediately to your credit card company. This is just the latest scam in an ever-increasing criminal industry. Don't allow yourself to be a target!

Spotlight on Services

Rebuilding Together Impacts Oakland County Communities

Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April*Oakland County preserves and revitalizes houses and communities; assuring that low-income homeowners, particularly those who are elderly and disabled as well as families with children; live in warmth, safety and independence. Our goal is to make a sustainable impact in partnership within the Oakland County community.

WHAT WE DO: Low-income elderly and disabled homeowners and families with children often have no place to turn when the roof begins to leak or the front steps crumble. Our goal is to preserve these homes and neighborhoods and assure a warm, safe and dry home for people in need. Homeownership stabilizes and strengthens communities.

WHOM WE HELP: The number of low-income homeowners increases each year. The current amount of low-income homeowner families is 24 million and is expected to grow to an astonishing 28.5 million by the year 2010. More and more families are placed in the position of choosing between vital necessities such as food or medicine and a roof that does not leak. Many disabled homeowners cannot afford the modifications that allow them to "age in place" and remain in their own homes. Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April*Oakland County works to ensure that as many of those that are in need of what we provide, do not have to make these difficult choices. Individuals and families are referred to us through senior centers, neighborhood associations, churches, community organizations, service groups or by self-referral.

WHEN WE WORK: While some of our 260 affiliates work throughout the year to rehabilitate homes and provide related services to communities, the majority of our focus is on National Rebuilding Day which is typically held the last

Saturday in April. Legions of volunteers come together to rehabilitate homes; homeowners and volunteers work together to preserve and revitalize the communities in which they live.

WHO VOLUNTEERS: Anyone can volunteer! Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April*Oakland County utilizes people with many talents and abilities-from people who can help scrape paint to those who are trained craftsmen. Business executives, students, municipal leaders all pitch in annually across America to help build better communities. Trades people are always in demand and thousands of carpenters, plumbers, electricians, roofers and others with special skills donate their time and effort to our organization.

OUR 2003 LOCAL IMPACT

- 33 houses rehabilitated
- 2,000 volunteers donating their time and skills

OUR 2003 NATIONAL IMPACT

- 8,250 houses and non-profits rehabilitated
- 263,500 donating their time and skills
- Work done in 865 cities and towns across America
- 260 Affiliates in all 50 states
- Delivering \$86 million in market value

OUR NATIONAL CUMMULATIVE IMPACT THROUGH 2003

- 79,200 house and non-profit facilities rehabilitated
- Involving over 2 million volunteers, committing to 21 million hours of volunteer time
- Delivering \$726 million in market value

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April*Oakland County,
PO Box 365, Highland, MI 48357, (248) 889-5450,
www.rebuildingtogether-oaklandcounty.org,
caro918@msn.com, kknight@commercetwp.com,
cemdte@ameritech.net

MARK YOUR CALENDARS
FOR OUR 2004 WORKDAY
SATURDAY, APRIL 24

Senior Spotlight

Frank Singer

It doesn't take long to figure out that Frank Singer is a unique and talented individual. When asked what was the best thing that had ever happened to him, he replied "my series of strokes". After a moment of bewilderment we asked why that was the case; and Frank stated that it was because the situation transformed his life!

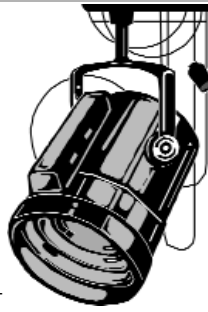
This amazingly positive attitude has been described as: "A stroke at 65, a coronary at 78, and author at 79, and still going strong at 82 with the City of Southfield's Cable Department!"

After Frank's first stroke he was forced to retire as a manufacturer's rep. During his rehab, he discovered Public Access Cable and was hired as a part-time employee to promote the Channel to Southfield residents. Later he was asked to produce a regular program for seniors on the city's Government Channel and has been on the airwaves ever since!

Frank Singer has produced over 200 programs for and about seniors, acting as a writer, producer, and host. He is a published author, thanks to the prodding of his wife Helen and two adult sons, Robert and Steven. His book is refreshingly titled: "Help I Woke Up A Senior Citizen and Don't Know What To Do". It is an information and resource guide for seniors and their children as well as for caregivers. Frank can often be seen at book signings and book discussions within community centers or libraries and, in fact, has been very active in promoting the new Southfield Library.

Many organizations have honored Frank for his countless hours and dedication to quality of life for all residents of Oakland County. Most recently he was honored by Operation Able of Michigan as one of the Top Ten Seniors at their Ability Is Ageless Luncheon. Yet one senses that the greatest honor for Frank is to serve and to live life to the fullest. Oakland County is indeed fortunate to claim Frank Singer as one of us.

If you would like more information on Frank's work you can e-mail him at franksinger@peoplepc or call 1stBooks at 1-800-839-8640.



Oakland County Seniors Can Give Second Chance to Homeless Pets Through New CATS Foster Care Program

Through a soon-to-be-launched program called CATS, Oakland County seniors can do their share to help homeless pets while gaining the warmth and companionship of a furry friend.

CATS - Companion Animals Touching Seniors - is being launched on May 26 at the OPC center in Rochester. Through CATS, Seniors who agree to provide a temporary foster home to a cat or kitten receive everything they need - litter boxes, litter, cat food and medical care - all free of charge. In return, seniors agree to care for the pet while a permanent home can be found.

The program is being sponsored by Oakland County Animal Control Pet Adoption Center, a shelter for abandoned and unwanted pets located on Brown Road near The Palace of Auburn Hills.

"There are hundreds of beautiful cats and kittens waiting for loving homes in Oakland County," said Oakland Pet Adoption Center Executive Director Larry Obrecht. "By participating in the CATS program, seniors get the chance to care for a loving companion while we find the animal a permanent home."

Oakland Pet Adoption Center cats and kittens will visit OPC at the CATS launch May 26. Cat experts of Oakland Pet Adoption Center will also be on hand to talk about why cats make the purr-fect pet for seniors. For more information on the CATS program, call Larry Obrecht at Oakland Pet Adoption Center at 248- 391-4100.



Did you know?

You have a right to appeal if a nursing home informs you that your or your loved one is no longer eligible for Medicare reimbursement. Historically Medicare would pay for the first 100 days of nursing home care after a 3-day hospital stay. Recently constituents have told me that now, if they determine that a person is not "progressing adequately" they must move immediately to a private pay situation. Nursing homes are required to notify you of your right to appeal and provide directions on how to do so. If you have questions contact the State Long Term Care Ombudsman at (866) 485-9393.

Schemes, Scams and Swindles

The Troy Police Department has issued an alert that scam artists are calling residents to raise funds using their organization's name. They would like Oakland County residents to know that the only fundraising that the Troy Police Department conducts is a yearly mailing solicitation. They never call residents seeking a donation.



Do not allow your spirit of generosity to be abused. For any phone solicitation, it is wise to hang up and call the organization to confirm any fundraising requests. Better yet, it is perfectly fine to tell callers that you only respond to mail requests or to ask them to take you off their list. For more information on one of the latest scams read Sally Swayne's column in this edition of the Senior Advocate.

To be registered for the National Do Not Call List, call 1(888) 382-1222 or contact the website at www.donotcall.gov. Recently a federal appeals court upheld the federal government's do-not-call registry

Caregiver Corner

My parents were caregivers for 21 years for all four of my grandparents. I literally grew up in a family-style long term care setting. Thus, I am committed to supporting caregivers across Oakland County. If you are a Caregiver you are not alone. Over 80% of the care given to home-bound individuals is performed by a loved one or other informal Caregiver. Experts tell us that women today will likely spend more time caring for the parents and in-laws than they did raising their children! That's why we have chosen to have a Caregiver corner column in every edition of the Senior Advocate.

As a Caregiver sometimes the hardest, yet most important thing to do, is to take care of yourself. Take some time out to rest and do some activities you enjoy. Spend some time with friends and get out for awhile. It's easy to form a "symbiotic relationship" with your loved one. With this dynamic you become afraid to leave the person and start thinking that no one can take care of your spouse or parent as well as you can. Or you may feel that you are abandoning your loved one even if you leave just for a few hours. Remember that it's also good for your loved one if you get your batteries re-charged once in awhile. If you don't take care of yourself you won't be able to take care of them.

While in my former position as Director of the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging, we held long term care hear-

Oakland County Works for YOU Oakland County Tiger Day

If the start of Spring makes you want to go the ballpark then we have good news for you! Oakland County is teaming up with its Senior Centers, the Detroit Tigers and American House to host Oakland County Senior Days at Comerica Park. A senior friendly environment and discounted tickets, which include refreshments, will be provided. We are also working to provide transportation at a nominal cost. If you would like further information e-mail Lynn Alexander at alexanderl@co.oakland.mi.us or call (248) 858-0213.



The game days included will be on Thursday afternoons, June 10 against the Braves; Thursday July 22 against the Royals; and Thursday September 9 against the Royals.



ings around the entire state. The message that came through loud and clear was the if Caregivers could just get a little time away to work out, go to the hairdresser, or to attend church they could keep going. We utilized tobacco settlement money to make respite care services statewide. Every community now has services available and based upon income may assist you with payment. There are a myriad of Adult Daycare Centers, Respite Care Programs, and Senior Centers to assist you as a Caregiver. Check out the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging Website at: www.miseniors.net or call the Area Agency on Aging at (800) 852-7795.

Lynne Alexander

Contact Information

Oakland Co. Rx Savings Hotline:

(866) 731-7213

Oakland Co. Health Division Services to the Aging Nurses:

South Oakland: (248) 424-7090

North Oakland: (248) 858-1375

West Oakland: (248) 926-3318

Area Agency on Aging:

(800) 852-7795

Oakland Co. Sheriff's Dept.

for free 911 cell phones

(248) 975-9700

Social Security Administration:

(800) 772-1213

Legal Hotline:

(800) 347-5297

Pension Rights Hotline:

(800) 347-5297

Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program

(800) 803-7174

State Long Term Care Ombudsman

(866) 485-9393

Quality of Life Magazine

(248) 593-8090

WEB SITES

Michigan Office of Services to the Aging:

www.miseniors.net

AARP:

www.aarp.org/statepages/mi.html

US Administration on Aging:

<http://www.aoa.dhhs.gov/default.htm>

National Council on Aging:

<http://www.ncoa.org/>

Senior Centers:

For your nearest center check with your city and township offices or your local Chamber of Commerce or access the www.seniors.net website.

L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County Executive
Executive Office Bldg. 34E
1200 N. Telegraph Road
Pontiac, Michigan 48341-0409

