



## **HART Interfaith, Inc. Offers Assistance at Home**

HART Interfaith, Inc., a Home Assistance Referral Team program in Niagara County, began in 1982. HART provides affordable personal care, assistance with housekeeping and outdoor chores, and companionship to women and men in need of help in maintaining their ability to stay in their homes longer, more comfortably and safer.

As an area of the country with many older and infirm residents, the availability of these services often allows an individual to remain more independent. Sometimes it is the difference between being homebound or able to go out once in a while with professional supervision. It may be that an individual needs help with bathing, preparing and/or serving meals, assistance with medical and personal needs. HART has trained personnel who will give aid as needed. HART's dual purpose is to provide jobs for the unemployed or underemployed in their field of expertise as well as provide referrals for this needed care.

How does HART work? HART is a referral service that links those in need of assistance with qualified persons who can provide care. HART can provide names of people who are available. There is NO fee to HART for the referral, and payment for the care provided is agreed upon between the employer and the caregiver, with guidelines from HART. Caregivers are personnel who have gone through a screening process which includes presenting proof of training, i.e. certified aide, LPN, or extensive experience in non-professional areas. Applicants are also required to provide personal references, police background checks and to have a personal interview. No fees are assessed to caregivers at any time.

Founded by a few members of the first Presbyterian Church in Lewiston in response to a need they identified in the community, it quickly became apparent that the need was, and is, great throughout Niagara County. Although the referral service is no longer affiliated with the church per se, the church does provide free office space in the administrative wing of the building at 505 Cayuga Street in Lewiston.

HART has an active Board of Directors and a small staff. Dedicated volunteers in the office help in taking telephone calls, check references of potential caretakers, do follow-up work, and work on community fundraising activities. HART's operational costs are financed by contributions from friends, churches, businesses, community organizations, grants from foundations and fundraising events which are open to the community.

HART Interfaith is open from 8:00 a.m. to Noon, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. For more information, please call (716) 754 8313.

NY Connects Niagara County can provide information about available personal care and companionship programs in our community. Individuals in need of information regarding NY Connects Niagara County, personal care, companionship or other available long term care services are encouraged to call (716) 438-3030 for assistance.

*Reva-Belle Kramer is a Coordinator for HART Interfaith, Inc. and a member of the Niagara County Long Term Care Advisory Council. The NY Connects column appears in the Union-Sun & Journal the last Saturday of each month. Submissions for topics or agency spotlights for future articles are welcome. To recommend a topic or make a suggestion, call 438-3030 or email [nyconnects@niagaracounty.com](mailto:nyconnects@niagaracounty.com).*