

# Office for the Aging News

Niagara County Office for the Aging

111 Main Street, Suite 101, Lockport, N.Y. 14094

438-4020

[www.niagaracounty.com/ofa](http://www.niagaracounty.com/ofa)

May – June 2007

---

## Director's Column

For 44 years, our nation has paused to honor older Americans during May. During this special month, the ongoing contributions of our older citizens are highlighted with a national proclamation issued by the President of the United States, and activities and events planned in communities across America. Be on the lookout for things happening in May in Niagara County!

The theme for Older Americans Month 2007 is "Older Americans: Making Choices for a Healthier Future." This theme encourages us to think differently about health and long term care, and work together to rebalance and modernize our current systems so that we may adequately plan for and address the needs of current and future generations. Older persons are entitled to live lives of dignity and independence, and the Niagara County Office for the Aging is here to help. Call us at 438-4020 for information and assistance.

And allow us to extend a "Thank You!" to everyone who completed and returned our Needs Assessment that was part of last month's newsletter. The response has been strong, and we will still be happy to receive more. By giving us your input we can be sure to focus our efforts on the right things.

Thank you.

Chris Richbart  
Director



## Call for nominations for 2007 Senior of the Year!

The recipient of this year's Niagara County OFA Senior Citizen of the Year Award has yet to be chosen. The Award will be made on May 1st, so please send your nominations to our office before April 27<sup>th</sup> to be considered. A nomination form is included on page 9 of this newsletter.



**Save the Date:**  
**Thursday June 7, 2007**  
**Niagara County**  
**Senior Walk in the Park**

Keep this date open and join us for the SWIP/Resource and Health Fair at the John Duke Center on June 7<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 12 PM. There will be refreshments, entertainment, warm up activities, a choice of three walks and a raffle. For more information call 297-9324.



### Honey-Molasses Chicken Drumsticks

Drum up the compliments at your next party with our delectable Honey Molasses Drumsticks. Perfect finger food and you can make them up to 2 days ahead.

- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon molasses
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 6 chicken drumsticks, skinned
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoons freshly ground black pepper

1. Combine first 7 ingredients, stirring with a whisk.
2. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Sprinkle the chicken with salt and pepper. Add chicken to pan, browning on all sides. Add honey mixture to pan, turning chicken to coat. Cover and cook chicken 15 minutes or until chicken is done, turning chicken every 5 minutes. Uncover and cook 1 minute or until mixture is thick and a mahogany color, and chicken is well coated. Remove from heat; cool 15 minutes. Cover and chill. Yield 6 servings. (serving size: 1 drumstick; calories 180; fat 7.2 g.)

***Words that soak into your ears are  
 whispered – not yelled.***

## Health and Nutrition Update



### Safe Fresh Produce in Restaurants

#### Produce Safety is a Farm to Table Issue

Produce is gaining increased attention for its contribution to a healthful diet and its expanding presence on restaurant menus. Over the past several months, however, produce has received a great deal of public attention due to recent food borne illness outbreaks.

Harmful bacteria that may be in the soil or water where produce grows may come in contact with the fruits and vegetables and contaminate them. Or, fresh produce may become contaminated after it is harvested, possibly during preparation or storage.

Produce poses special food safety challenges that other foods don't. Because fresh produce is often consumed uncooked in its raw state, everyone handling the produce (from field to fork) must prevent cross-contamination from raw or undercooked meats, used cutting boards, and even dirty hands that may be carrying bacteria.

Safe produce, whether it be in the field or on a stand or in a salad bar in a restaurant can only be assured if there are effective multiple overlapping controls in place. Restaurants have limited control tools within the establishment. It is critical that produce not be heavily contaminated prior to the restaurant and properly protected within the restaurant.

The main control method currently used by the majority of operations is vigorous washing and rinsing of the produce. Although this method may not always be fail proof, microbiological contamination can be reduced by washing.

We encourage you to ask the following questions: *where does your produce come from, how do you handle it, do employees wear gloves when handling fresh produce?*

It is important to remember that the rate of food borne incidents in this country has declined; illnesses related to E. coli declining approximately 29 percent over the last decade, according to the Center for Disease Control.



### Signs Found in Kitchens

1. A messy kitchen is a happy kitchen and this kitchen is delirious.
2. No husband has ever been shot while doing the dishes.
3. A husband is someone who takes out the trash and gives the impression he just cleaned the whole house.
4. If we are what we eat, then I'm easy, fast, and cheap.
5. A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.
6. A clean house is a sign of a misspent life.
7. Help keep the kitchen clean – eat out.
8. My next house will have no kitchen – just vending machines.

### Information and Assistance – Call 438-4020

The Office for the Aging Information and Assistance staff are available at many locations across the county on a regular basis. They visit all of the senior centers and nutrition sites, and are available at some large club meetings and special events. If a home visit is needed an appointment can be made and someone will come to the home. To find out how to contact the Information and Assistance worker serving your area or schedule a home visit call Susan Christian at 438-4023 at the Office for the Aging.

Most Information & Assistance workers work part time. Call the Office of the Aging at 438-4020 for their schedules. They are located at the following sites: John Duke Center, North Tonawanda Senior Center, Bishop Gibbons, St. John's AME, Family Resource Center, Niagara Towers, LaSalle Nutrition, Summitview Senior Housing, Sanborn Seniors at Sanborn Fire Hall, Wheatfield Seniors, Lewiston Seniors, Wilson Seniors (Fire Hall) , Barker Fire Hall, Lockport Senior Center, Gasport Seniors, Newfane Seniors (Faith Luth. Church), Olcott Fire Hall. Information and Assistance workers also visit others sites in the county.

Questions regarding health insurance can be answered by Information and Assistance staff at the locations mentioned above.

***Remember silence is sometimes the best answer.***

## Reminder

Call for appointments – OFA 716-438-4020. We know many folks like to drop by the office when they have a question or a concern. However, we would appreciate it if you would call to set up an appointment if possible. In this way it allows us to better prepare for your visit in getting the necessary paperwork or records pulled together. Further, it allows us to estimate the time necessary for the particular reason for your visit. That way we can give you the fullest attention to the matter and not be rushed by the clock. Therefore, it's always best to call and make an appointment so that we can give you the time and attention to serve you better.



## Welcome to MyMedicare.gov

Welcome to Medicare's free, Secure online service for accessing your Medicare information. As a registered user of MyMedicare.gov, you will have access to personalized information regarding your Medicare benefits and services. You may use MyMedicare.gov to:

- View claim status (excluding Part D claims)
- Order a duplicate Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or replacement Medicare card
- View eligibility, entitlement and preventive services information
- View enrollment information

- including prescription drug plans
- View or modify your drug list and pharmacy information
- View Address of record with Medicare and Part B deductible status
- Access online forms, publications and messages sent to you by CMS.

In order to use this service, you must be a registered user. To register, log onto **[mymedicare.gov](http://mymedicare.gov)**



## W.R.A.P.

Related to HEAP is WRAP, which stands for **Weatherization Referral, Assistance and Packaging** program. If a person is eligible for HEAP and is 60 or older, they are eligible for WRAP. WRAP staff help people who are homeowners assess needs for home repairs or modifications that will improve the safety and habitability of their homes. Home visits are made as part of the assessment. Information and advice is offered on what types of repairs or modifications should be made, and referrals are made to a variety of places including the NIACAP Weatherization program.

There is only a very limited amount of money available to help fund needed work for those most in need. Our local program requires that persons who receive any funding must have their homeowner's taxes paid, have no other source of funding, and be unable to pay back loans. Call for more information.



### Preserving History

Every quilt tells a story about its maker, its recipient and its time in

History. Quilts are a means of touching our past as well as reaching into the future.

Women quilt for a variety of reasons. Quilters are “nurturers by nature” who turn to quilting as a means of artistic expression. They celebrate birth, marriage, bon voyage (off to college, changing jobs, moving to a new home, etc). They commemorate a life, a struggle with disease, homage to a parent. They make quilts to thank teachers, raise money for charitable causes or to donate to folks in need. Quilters create an heirloom as a means of reaching out to future generations of their families.

These quilts have been woven into the history of our country, community, and families for hundreds of years. The historical relevance of the Underground Railroad quilts that detailed maps and became indicators of safe housing, Friendship quilts that were made for a friend or family member departing to travel across the country or settle down in a new home, Crazy quilts from the Victorian era that document political and social changes, and the simple utilitarian bed covers made to keep the family warm, are irreplaceable testaments to the times during which they were created. Thankfully, many of these quilts have survived the ravages of time.

Your editor has finally reached a time in her life to accomplish a dream and is learning how to quilt. It has been a learning experience not only in the art of quilting but in the history of quilt making and the care of quilts. I never knew you should make a label to be put on each quilt you make or that you should keep a journal to keep a record of all the quilts you’ve made. If you have any quilts that were made for you I hope you treasure them and if you are a quilter keep up the good work of touching our past as well as reaching into the future.

### SMP

Empowering Seniors to Prevent  
 Healthcare Fraud

SMP, formerly known as Operation Restore Trust (ORT), is a partnership between the Federal government and New York State agencies to fight fraud and abuse in Medicare and Medicaid.

SMP encourages beneficiaries to report suspected cases of health care fraud and abuse. It acts to eliminate fraud, waste and abuse through systemic changes and recommendations. Finally, it works with federal, state and local agencies to maximize our resources in fighting fraud.

Medicare and Medicaid lose billions of dollars to fraud every year. Healthcare fraud undermines confidence in the health care system and compromises quality of care – possibly your own or that of your family.

Medicare and Medicaid fraud is a crime. By identifying and reporting it, you’ll play a key role in improving our country’s

health care system, and guaranteeing its solvency.

To report Medicare/Medicaid errors, waste and abuse call:

**1-877-678-4697**

It's easy, it's free and it's here for you!

By comparing your records with your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) you can make sure that the people who are using your account to bill Medicare/Medicaid are doing so accurately.

Simply jot down your appointments on a calendar, compare them to your MSN and report any questionable charges that appear on your MSN. You can also report people or companies that try to intimidate you into buying unneeded or unsolicited medical equipment (like wheelchairs, walkers, etc.) services or drugs and asks for your Medicare number.

Please help maintain the solvency of our nation's health care programs. You can also report questionable practices concerning **Medicare Part D** by calling:

**1-877-678-4697**

### Profound Thoughts

I read recipes the same way I read science fiction. I get to the end and think; well, that's not going to happen.

Doctors can be frustrating. You wait a month and a half for an appointment, and he says, "I wish you'd come to me sooner."



### The Legal Corner

The Office for the Aging has a legal assistance program for anyone 60 and over living in Niagara County. There are no fees, but contributions are accepted. There are many legal topics that our legal program addresses on a regular basis including wills, estate planning, tenant/landlord problems, and consumer fraud. Our lawyer, Gary Billingsley, is available at various locations in the County on a regular basis, including the Office for the Aging office on 111 Main Street in Lockport on Wednesday afternoons. Call the Office for the Aging for his schedule.



### Aging Preparedness

Storms and aging have quite a bit in common. Most of us don't like to think about either of them. We don't want them to happen. But we know they're coming.

Storms are unpredictable and different people can be affected in greatly different ways.

We also know that the consequences of aging are unpredictable. While many age without significant health problems, the aging of others is severely impacted by

chronic problems, heart disease, cancer and dementia. We all know we're going to die someday and that the older we are, the closer that day will be. But we don't know when the end will come.

The good news for both storms and aging is that we can plan ahead and make the consequences more livable and manageable. Even if we are among the unlucky ones who bear the greatest impacts, we can soften the blow.

What about planning for aging? To plan for aging, most people have a financial plan on how they will pay their bills. That's an important start. In addition, each older adult should also put together what we call an "Aging Preparedness Kit." We're talking about tools that can help a person have better control of the future, and obtain results they want.

Your Aging Preparedness Kit should contain the items listed below.

- ✘ Health Care Proxy. In this document, you name trusted family members or friends to take charge of your medical care if you become incapacitated and can't remain in charge. Who should you name? The best person is a person you can communicate with and who
  - Will be available when needed
  - Will be able to ask questions and get good answers from medical professionals
  - Will make the medical care decisions that you would make (whether or not they

agree with you)

- Will be able to "stand up" for you, be your advocate, and deal with others who disagree with what you want

- ✘ A Power of Attorney for financial matters. This is a separate legal document where you name a trusted family member or friend, but this time to help deal with financial matters if you become incapacitated. Who should you name? The person should have good financial skills and, most importantly, should be a person you can trust to manage your finances for your benefit (not theirs). See a qualified attorney for this document.
- ✘ Communication with your helpers. The people you name in your Power of Attorney and Health Care Proxy need to know what you want and care about, so they'll know what to do for you. You need to think about and communicate what you want, and what is important to you. You can do this by just talking, or by writing your thoughts down in your Health Care Proxy or in another document.
- ✘ An Estate Plan. This is the way you spell out what will happen to your assets when you die. The approaches can involve a will, beneficiary naming, joint ownerships, trusts and other tools.
- ✘ A Plan for Your Funeral and Burial. You create this plan, so that when you die, your family and friends will

know what you want to happen.

## Caregivers Corner

### Steps for Caregivers

1. Although I cannot control the disease process, I need to remember I can control many aspects of how it affects me and my relative.
2. I need to take care of myself so that I can continue doing the things that are most important.
3. I need to simplify my lifestyle so that my time and energy are available for things that are really important to me.
4. I need to cultivate the gift of allowing others to help me, because caring for my relative is too big a job to be done by one person.
5. I need to take one day at a time rather than worry about what may or may not happen in the future.
6. I need to structure my day because a consistent schedule makes life easier for me and my relative.
7. I need to have a sense of humor because laughter helps put things in a more positive perspective.
8. I need to remember that my relative is not being "difficult" on purpose; rather, his /her behaviors are distorted by the illness.
9. I need to focus on and enjoy what my relative can still do rather than constantly lament over what is gone.



### Who to call at the Office for the Aging

Do you ever wonder who to ask for when you call the Niagara County Office for the Aging? You can always call our main number, **438-4020**, and ask who can best answer your question, or you can call the same number and ask for one of the people below. Also you can go to our web site at [www.niagaracounty.com/ofa](http://www.niagaracounty.com/ofa).

**Director**, Christopher Richbart 438-4021  
**Information and Assistance Program**, Susan Christian 438-4023

**Health Insurance Counseling (HIICAP)**, Susan Christian 438-4023

**Expanded In-home Service to the Elderly Program (EISEP)**, Tim Sexton 438-4039 or 278-8612

**Legal Services**, Gary Billingsley  
**Home Delivered Meals**, Thomas Chapman 438-4031

**Congregate Meal Program, Nutrition Education and Counseling**, Glenda Reardon 438-4030

**Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)** Lee Puzan 438-4036

**Weatherization, Referral and Packaging (WRAP)**, Lee Puzan 438-4036

**Caregiver Program**, Nancy Smegelsky 438-4033

**Newsletter Editor**, Nancy Smegelsky  
**Senior Van**, Jennifer Schumacher 438-4038



*Christopher A. Richbart*  
*Director*

**NIAGARA COUNTY  
OFFICE FOR THE AGING**  
111 Main Street, Suite 101  
Lockport, NY 14094-3718

(716) 438-4020  
(716) 438-4029 Fax

**2007 Niagara County OFA Senior Citizen of the Year**  
**Award Nomination form**

***(Please complete and return to the Office for the Aging by Friday,  
April 27th)***

***Who is eligible to receive the award?***

Any Niagara County resident aged 60 years or older.

***What are the criteria for the award?***

Outstanding citizenship, as demonstrated by positive acts in service to one's fellow citizens, especially in service directly to one's fellow Niagara County residents.

***Name of nominee:*** \_\_\_\_\_

***Name/telephone number of nominating person or group:***

\_\_\_\_\_

***I/we believe the above named nominee should receive the 2007  
Niagara County OFA Senior Citizen of the Year award because (attach  
additional sheets as needed):***

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_