



**AgeWise** with Bob Horrocks

Whether you have an older family member, an older friend or neighbor or an older co-worker or employee, the aging of our population is, and will have, an impact on all of us. This column is intended to provide a potpourri of interesting, up-to-date information that you will find useful and relevant to your busy life. This regular column will focus on events, products, legislation, services, people and opportunities relevant to our local older population and their families.

**Local H1N1 clinic planned for seniors**

The State of Ohio has released the H1N1 vaccine for the general population beginning today, Dec. 14. The Delaware General Health District is planning a free H1N1 clinic just for older adults in the near future. Advanced registration via the Internet or over the telephone is required. For the most up-to-date information and to register, visit [delawarehealth.org](http://delawarehealth.org) or call 740-368-1700.

**Stay warm this winter**

If the cost of home heating has your spirits as low as the temperature outside, you may want to look into the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). Income eligibility has been raised this year, so if you were not eligible in the past you may be eligible now. HEAP is designed to help those living on a limited income to cope with the high cost of home heating. For a single individual the income limit is \$21,660, and for a family of two the income limit is \$29,140. For larger families the income limit is increased by \$7,480 per person. If your utilities have been shut off or are in danger of being terminated, ask about Emergency HEAP. Locally, HEAP is administered by the Delaware, Madison and Union Community Action Agency. Their local office is located at 149 N. Sandusky St. 740-369-3184. Applications are also available at the Council for Older Adults.

**Volunteers live longer and better**

Most people who volunteer will tell you that their volunteer service is very rewarding. I often hear from volunteers at the Council for Older Adults that they feel they receive more from the experience than they give. Now, a recent review of research in this area by the Corporation for National and Community Service takes this notion even further by concluding that volunteering provides individual health benefits in addition to the commonly acknowledged social benefits. According to multiple research studies, there is a strong relationship between volunteering and health. The report notes that, "those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer." In addition, the authors found that older volunteers are the most likely to receive greater benefits from volunteering, "... because they are more

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Courtesy Council for Older Adults

Rose Swisher (left) and Marilyn Mansell (right) load up their car to begin their weekly route delivering lunch to seniors. The pair volunteers for Delaware County's Council for Older Adults (COA), which sponsors a Meals on Wheels program for homebound seniors over the age of 60 residing in Delaware County.

**Local pair gives warm meals to seniors**

By JESSICA MILLER  
Gazette intern

Rose Swisher and Marilyn Mansell are among those that have been donating their time since 2007 to deliver food to those who are unable to prepare meals for themselves.

The pair volunteers for Delaware County's Council for Older Adults (COA), which sponsors a Meals on Wheels program for homebound seniors over the age of 60 residing in Delaware County.

The program offers a hot balanced lunch delivered by trained volunteer drivers five days a week, with frozen week-end meals delivered on Friday.

**Get Involved**

What are you doing for your lunch hour? How about donating some time to deliver warm meals to seniors? For more information about becoming a volunteer driver call 800-994-2255, stop by the Council for Older Adults at 800 Cheshire Road in Delaware or visit [growingolder.org](http://growingolder.org).

Swisher, a Powell resident, said that her mother and brother received meals and she likes to "give back" her time every Tuesday.

For Swisher and Mansell it is something "fun to do together."

They agree that it is "gratifying" to know that the clients are fed and have a warm meal that the two volunteers bring.

Mansell, a Delaware resident, said that she and Swisher have been friends since the '80s when their husbands met.

"They (the seniors) are the most grateful people in the world," Mansell said.

Swisher said that it is easier to deliver meals with a friend so you have company and if someone cannot participate, the other person can still deliver.

"It is a nice way to spend time with someone," Mansell said. "The time goes by so much easier."

Mansell said that she normally drives. They both get to COA around 10:30 a.m. to pack the meals needed that day. They leave before 11 a.m. and deliver until

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# Students forge bonds with 'adopted' seniors

WILLIAM ROLLER  
Associated Press

YUMA, Ariz. — Despite the glitter of gift wrapping, some Christmas gifts do not last until Easter. But when a person gives the gift of friendship, it can last a lifetime.

Students from the Arizona Virtual Academy (AZVA), led by teacher Jena Kugel, adopted about a dozen senior citizens Dec. 8, with the help of the First Christian Church in the Foothills, where many of the adults are members.

Kugel said she wanted to help foster a bond between the two generations because both could gain from the experience, she said.

"It's a win-win situation. The elders get to experience youthful things through the eyes of the children and offer them wonderful insight. And the children are just in awe of the elders," Kugel said.

She said the seniors have so many stories and much wisdom to share. And since the first meeting was such a huge success, their bonds will continue. Kugel said she is already planning similar events each month of the spring.

The day was very special for Irene Hendrickson, who celebrated her 87th birthday at the event. Hendrickson said the adoption was one of the nicest things ever because the children will realize what it is to share life's pleasure.

"This is one of the biggest events that ever happened in my long life," Hendrickson said. "The children here will learn what it means to share, not only with a gift but a part of themselves. And I'm really proud of my 'granddaughter' Marisa."



Associated Press The Sun, William Roller

**Irene Hendrickson blows out candles on her birthday cake as a visiting student looks on in Yuma, Ariz. Students from the Arizona Virtual Academy, led by teacher Jena Kugel, have "adopted" about a dozen senior citizens, including Hendrickson.**

After blowing out the candles on her birthday cake, Hendrickson got acquainted with Arizona Virtual Academy sixth-grader Marisa Alvez, 11. Marisa gave Hendrickson a copy of "Rocking Chair Tales" by John William Smith and a pair of "puppy dog" slippers. Marisa said she thought Hendrickson was a nice person. And Hendrickson taught her what a Rosie-the-Riveter was, because she was one herself. That is how

Hendrickson met her husband, who was a welder at the airplane plant, Marisa said.

"I'll always remember Irene's smile," Marisa said.

Naomi Mulhern, another senior citizen, said it was pretty incredible what the children had done.

"It was priceless for us old folks to have the children here today, and for the kids to think about us instead of themselves was really special. That's what Christmas is all about."

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they are finished around noon. After they are finished they receive a lunch provided to them by the program.

The pair visits 13-15 people each week. They have a certain route so they get to see the same people each week, creating a relationship with them.

Even though they can't stay long, they try and make conversation with each client as they unload his or her food.

Along with bringing the food, they check on the client and make sure they are in good health and doing well. According to Mansell, if the client has a pet, they try and bring a treat for it as well.

Both women enjoy volunteering elsewhere in Delaware County, too.

Swisher volunteers at her church, Common Ground, the local food pantry and a church in Columbus that supports the homeless.

"You get as much as you give," Swisher said.

Mansell said she loves volunteering at her church and Big Walnut Friends Who Share.

Mansell said she and Swisher have been called "angels" by the COA clients who really appreciate their time.

According to Linda Lowe, COA's nutrition program manager, the home-delivery program serves about 375 seniors.

With 40 different routes, many volunteer drivers are needed. Currently, the program has about 325 drivers but many head south for the winter months. Currently, drivers for seven routes and 20 substitutes are needed.

Many people deliver meals in pairs like Swisher and Mansell. Volunteers can deliver as often as they want, with a flexible schedule.

According to Lowe, ideal drivers have a clean driving record and will spend a day training for the process.

Initially, the drivers go through "mission vision and values training," orientation and learn other information about COA in case a client needs another service offered. Among the topics are meal specifics, emergency information, sanitation measures, food temperatures and aging sensitivity training.

There is also periodic refresher training throughout the year.

Drivers are reimbursed for mileage and receive a free lunch the day they volunteer.

Lowe said that the meals are provided on a donation basis. Although no one is denied a meal, suggested donations are \$3.50.

Menus are available online at [growingolder.org](http://growingolder.org). Go to "Nutrition Services," then "Menus."

[newsroom@delgazette.com](mailto:newsroom@delgazette.com)

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likely to face higher incidence of illness or because volunteering provides them with physical and social activity and a sense of purpose at a time when their social roles are changing." According to the report, those who show the most positive health outcomes are those who volunteer at least 100 hours per year. If you are interested in volunteering for a local social service organization, contact our local volunteer center, Connections, at 740-363-5000 and they will provide an array of volunteer options to choose from.

### Center ski club organizing

A Skiing Club Kick-Off Party is planned from 5 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 15, at the Center for Older Adults. If you are a member of the Center or interested in becoming a member and are interested in skiing, you are invited to attend. This will be an organizational meeting, so if you are interested in participating it is important that you attend or let the Center staff know of your interest in the new club. This will help staff gauge

the interest in this new activity. Plans are to begin skiing at Snow Trails in Mansfield. Other information will be shared at the meeting. If interested call Sandy Miller at 740-369-5133.

### A special gift

Do you have someone in your life who is difficult to shop for? Consider honoring them with a gift of a lasting legacy at the beautiful Center for Older Adults. There are many options now available, from naming a room to purchasing an engraved paver in our Veterans Memorial Garden. Best of all, your tax-deductible gift will provide an on-going benefit to this local nonprofit organization and the older adults it serves. Call 740-363-6677 for details.

### Buckeye Valley High School hosts seniors

Each year around the holidays Buckeye Valley High School students invite senior citizens to their school to enjoy a student concert followed by a lunch served by the students. This year's festivities are scheduled for Friday, Dec. 18. For more information and to make your reservations call 740-363-1349. The concert begins at 10 a.m. and will be followed by

lunch.

### Tree decorating contest

The public is invited to come to the Center for Older Adults to enjoy the many beautiful decorated Christmas trees throughout the building. The trees have been decorated primarily by those who work in the Center, and a friendly competition has been organized. Those enjoying the trees can vote for their favorite with their wallets. Each vote costs a penny, and the tree with the most votes wins the contest. Proceeds from the contest will be used to fund a new improvement in the center.

### And finally ...

Come and enjoy a very special "Going Home Holiday Buffet" this Friday, Dec. 18, at the Center for Older Adults. The menu includes delicious prime rib au jus carved by hand by our chef, paired with our delicious chopped salad, served family style at your table: mixed greens tossed with fresh herbs, walnuts, blue cheese and sliced pears. Also accompanied by baked potatoes, long grain and wild rice, fresh green beans almondine, assorted breads and rolls, desserts, and beverages

including peppermint hot cocoa. The buffet is open to the public at \$10.25 per person; bring your friends and co-workers to this special holiday luncheon. All proceeds will benefit the Meals on Wheels program provided

through the Center for Older Adults.

Bob Horrocks is the executive director of the Council for Older Adults of Delaware County, which is located at the

Center for Older Adults, 800 Cheshire Road, Delaware. He can be reached at [bob@growingolder.org](mailto:bob@growingolder.org). For more information about the council visit [growingolder.org](http://growingolder.org).

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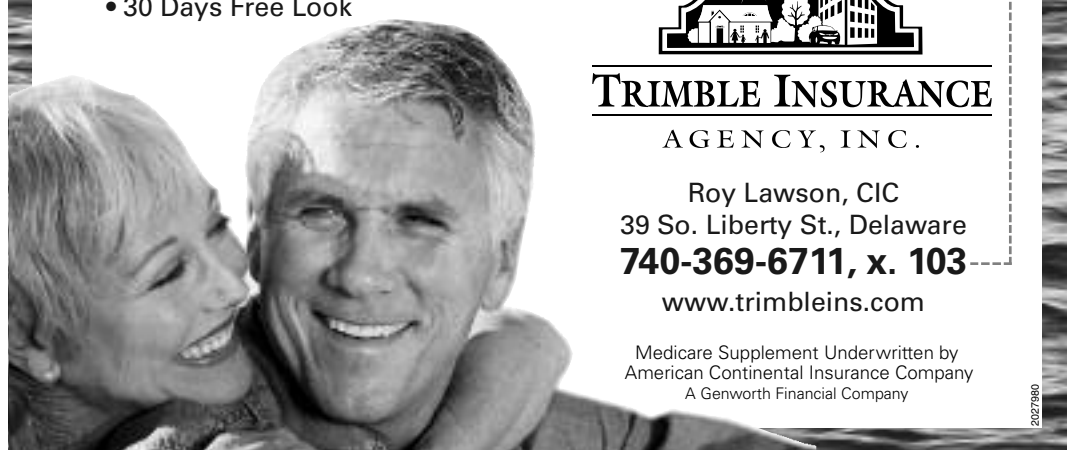


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