



Center for Older Adults  
800 Cheshire Road  
Delaware, Ohio 43015

# NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Donna Meyer  
Associate Director of Communications  
(740) 363-6677 or 800-994-2255  
donna@growingolder.org

**This news release can be found and downloaded from the “Press Release” page of the Council for Older Adults web site at [www.growingolder.org](http://www.growingolder.org)**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 15, 2010**

## **SENIOR COMPANIONS URGENTLY NEEDED FOR FRAIL ELDERLY IN DELAWARE COUNTY**

The Senior Companion Program in Delaware County urgently needs volunteers to visit with frail senior citizens for a few hours per week and provide a caring relationship. At least 12 people are waiting for senior companions, said Pat Miley, supervisor of the program and executive director of Connections.

“Our clients are socially isolated, and they need contact with their peers,” said Miley. “We’re looking for caring volunteers who will provide companionship and engage in activities like playing cards, going to lunch, reading, doing puzzles or taking them to the senior center, for example.”

Senior companion volunteers must be at least 55 years of age and able to work at least 15 hours. A companion receives a small stipend, training, insurance and re-imbusement for mileage. A companion must have an individual income of not more than \$1,805 per month, or \$2,324 per month for a two-income family.

Bob Erlandson, 85, is a senior companion volunteer. He visits weekly with four senior citizens. “I find it very interesting and rewarding,” he said. “Several of the men I visit with have Alzheimer’s, and I’m able to work well with them, because my wife had Alzheimer’s, and I took care of her for years. I’m also able to be of service to the caregivers, to give them time to get out and do errands.”

Erlandson enjoys taking people for walks or just sitting down to talk. “I meet all kinds of different people and get to find out about their background and their lives.”

Miley said she has 49 clients in the program, with 12 on the waiting list for companions. They may live alone or with a family member. “Some of these people have had to move from another city to be with their adult children, and they don’t know anyone. They need to form new relationships.”

She noted that senior companions also benefit from the program. “I have one volunteer with severe arthritis, and he says this job gives him a purpose in life; a reason to get out of bed every day.”

The program is funded in part by the Council for Older Adults. “It’s a valuable service, because people are more likely to continue living independently in their own homes, or with family members, if they have regular socialization and contact with the outside world,” said Donna Meyer, associate director of communications for COA, which provides in-home services to older adults.

For information about becoming a senior companion, please call Pat Miley at Connections at 740-363-5000. Connections and Catholic Social Services administer the program.

**The Council for Older Adults of Delaware County is a non-profit local organization responsible for planning, coordinating and developing local services for older adults, their families and caregivers in Delaware County. The Council is the home of SENIOR CHOICES, the local one stop center for information, assistance and in-home services. The Senior Choices program is supported in part through the local senior services levy.**