

# The Community Actioneer

GARRETT COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION

Written by and for our Employees

## The Spice of Life



Dedicated staff prepares Meals on Wheels for delivery to the elderly and homebound (L-R) Rocky Ford, Barbara Stemple, Freda Meadows, Bertha Thayer and Sheila Ford

delivery to the frail elderly and homebound. Drivers place the food trays in insulated delivery bags and set off to deliver the food.

When not preparing or serving food, the kitchen helpers are cleaning the work areas, equipment, utensils, dishes and silverware. Clean as you go is their motto.

Every week, the Mary Browning Senior Center serves about 130 lunches in the congregate meal program, about 425 Meals on Wheels to frail and homebound people, and about 125 lunches to seniors at the Mountain Glade Adult Day Center.

Sheila works in coordination with kitchen helpers, a nutritionist, senior center staff, drivers, volunteers, and AAA administrative staff. She uses three food service warehouses to order inventory and insure she always gets the highest quality food at the lowest price. When the truck delivers the food, Sheila is there to unload it and to stock the shelves. She provides data to AAA administration so they may accurately report to the agencies that fund them; and plans fundraising events for the senior center to raise money and to raise the public's awareness of reduced Federal and state-wide funding to the Aging programs.



Sheila Ford

At the end of the day, surrounded by favorite cookbooks and nutritional guidelines, Sheila Ford quietly sips coffee and contemplates next week's menu.

Sheila and her husband Jim reside in Oakland; they have two sons, Brandon and Jim Bob.

By Marguerite Hayhurst

First to arrive at 6:00 am, Sheila Ford, the Kitchen Manager, begins the day by setting up appliances and reviewing the day's menu. The kitchen helper staff arrives soon after, Margie Holland, Bertha Thayer, Barbara Stemple, and Freda Meadows. The women have over 67 years of combined experience; this organized team runs like a well-oiled machine. Together they cook a

wide range of foods from soups and salads to entrees, side dishes and desserts. Sheila and staff combine their culinary skills with their knowledge of food to prepare the large quantities of nutritionally balanced food required each day.

In the center of the well-stocked commercial kitchen, the stainless steel food prep tables compete with skillets hanging from a pot rack mingling with an assortment of spatulas in all sizes, spoons for stirring, serving, draining, and ladling. A magnetic strip fastened to the wall holds knives like little soldiers at the ready – every kind imaginable: bread knife, chef's knife, cleaver, filet, paring knife, sharpening steel, carver, steak knives and utility knives.

Teeming with activity, the kitchen staff rhythmically tackles one job after another to create today's well-balanced lunch meal (meatloaf, broccoli, stewed tomatoes, bread, salad and fruit cup). They assemble the ingredients and cooking utensils, and begin slicing, chopping, grating, measuring, and weighing. Industrial size meatloaf pans are slid into the hot oven. Broccoli is steamed; individual slices of whole wheat bread are wrapped, and fruit cups are filled. Next, the staff portions and packages the hot food for

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A smiling face is half the meal

- Latvian Proverb

## Meals on Wheels Program

By Marguerite Hayhurst

*Fact: Millions of seniors nationwide go hungry every day.* Some seniors don't have the capacity to cook for themselves or are too frail or disabled to drive to the market for food. Many do not have the money to buy groceries and others still have no transportation to get to a congregate meal site.

In Garrett County, the Meals on Wheels program provides one hot meal per day to the ever-growing aging population. Many rely on family and friends to provide other daily and weekend meals. Bev Carvell, Nutrition Services Coordinator, says "the reality is though, for too many seniors this is the only meal they eat every day, and the brief interaction with the driver delivering the meal is the only person they see on a daily basis." Needless to say, the Meals on

Wheels drivers become quite attached to the seniors they deliver meals to.

Carvell coordinates volunteers to deliver a meal to the elderly or frail homebound persons in your town on Thanksgiving Day and/or Christmas Day, as Meals on Wheels will not be operating those days.

Duane Yoder described a recent trend called "flat funding" where Meals on Wheels funds remain the same or are reduced in spite of variables such as growing aging population and increased costs associated with providing meals like higher food prices and skyrocketing gasoline costs. Over the past few years, the county was able to increase its funding to our Aging programs to make up for the Federal and State flat funding.



Bertha Thayer packages daily Meals on Wheels lunches



Rocky Ford delivers Meals on Wheels and receives a heart-warming hug

## Customer Service

Customer Service is the ability to provide a service in the way it has been promised; it is about treating others as you would like to be treated yourself.

Community Action asks clients to fill out and return Customer Service Survey cards when they receive or apply for services. Below are some actual quotes from our customers:

- ♥ Everyone is so nice, it is a joy to go in and be with them
- ♥ Very nice people, always helpful
- ♥ Extremely understanding; helpful and patient
- ♥ Answered all my questions
- ♥ Truly a blessing, helping people with low income
- ♥ Thank you

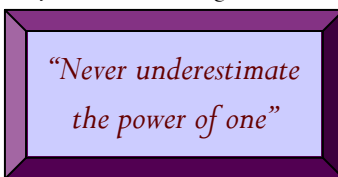
## Community Service and Volunteering at the Senior Center

By Marguerite Hayhurst

"Never underestimate the power of one person making a difference in the community they serve", says Sheila Ford on the subject of volunteers. She coordinates the work of volunteer and community service workers who contribute their time at the Mary Browning Senior Center.

Ford added "During the holidays or if we are having a fundraiser, students ask if they can help and earn Community Service Learning Hours at the same time. I

don't ever turn anyone away." Helping out at a senior center is just one of many volunteer opportunities available for high school students to earn their required 40 hours of Community Service Learning Hours.



Occasionally, GC courts order persons to perform community service, such as to help with the cleaning and upkeep of the kitchen. Sheila coordinates the

work for the volunteers, makes up a list of jobs to be done and supervises the volunteers. She says "It has been a learning experience as well as helpful to have extra hands in the kitchen to help with all the jobs that need to be done daily."

Sheila and others at the Mary Browning Senior Center make a concerted effort to inspire volunteers to further action.

## Who Cares?

*You do.* And you show you care through your friendly words, by organizing special events, by going the extra mile, by lifting their spirits, and by volunteering your time. You care when you step up to the plate, when you give of yourself every day, when you show heartfelt compassion to those you serve who are grappling with tough challenges. Who cares? You do, and for goodness sake, it shows.

"We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand."

— Randy Pausch



from *The Last Lecture*

## Older Adults Waiver Program

By Kitty Stuart

The goal of the **Older Adults Waiver (OAW)** program is to enable older adults to remain in a community setting even though their advanced age or disability would warrant placement in a nursing home. The Waiver allows services that would ordinarily be delivered exclusively in a nursing home to be provided to eligible persons in their own homes or in an assisted living facility. Eligibility criteria include being at least 50 years old, income that does not exceed 300% of the SSI level per month, and assets of approximately \$2,000 (excluding a home and one vehicle), and participants must have care needs that would warrant being in a

nursing home as determined by a state agency assessment.

Covered services under the program include: placement and maintenance in an assisted living facility; personal care services in the individuals home; environmental assessment and adaptations; assistive devices such as wheelchairs, walkers, bedside commodes, bed rails, hospital bed; behavior consultation services; respite services; personal emergency response system; home-delivered meals; dietitian services; family and consumer training; and medical adult day care.

Kitty Stuart is the Case Manager for the Older Adults Waiver. If you have any questions regarding OAW, call extension 138.

## Area Agency on Aging

By Marguerite Hayhurst

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is a very busy department that provides many critical programs and services.

Adina Brode, Director, reports that AAA interacts heavily with other departments, such as Transportation to coordinate Meals on Wheels, medical transport of clients, transportation to and from senior centers for congregate meals and to and from Flowery Vale Health and Fitness Center.

AAA coordinates with the Community & Emergency Services department to ensure eligible seniors receive essential services, such as fuel assistance and emergency food assistance.

In future publications, this newsletter will highlight the myriad of AAA's programs, including Senior Information and Assistance, Support Services (social, recreational, educational opportunities and legal assistance), the telephone reinsurance program, volunteer and employment opportunities, in-home services, Assistance with Respite Care, the Guardianship Program, Ombudsman and the five senior centers and community buildings across the county: Friendsville Community Building, Grantsville Senior Center, Kitzmiller Community Building, Mary Browning Senior Center and the Swanton Community Building.

## Senior Care and National Family Caregiver Support Programs

By Leonard Terry

The Senior Care Program is a state funded program offering in-home services to seniors 65 and over enabling them to remain independent in their homes. Services include: Personal Care, Chore, Adult Day Care, Medications, Medical Supplies and assistive devices.

To be eligible, a person must be 65 or older, a resident of Garrett County and require assistance with bathing, dressing, chores and have a medical condition or are at risk of nursing home placement.

Potential clients are referred to the health department's Adult Evaluation and Review Services (AERS) to determine functional ability and financial eligibility.

There are no fees attached to the

assessment or to service delivery if a client is determined eligible.

A simple phone call either to the health department or to AAA will begin the process. If it is determined through the assessment process that all of the basic criteria such as functional ability, financial eligibility and proof they are at risk, a care plan will be developed and a case manager will be assigned to assist with arranging for services.

The National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) is possible through the Administration on Aging and the Department of Health and Human Services. NFCSP provides assistance to caregivers in five categories: information assistance, education, support, respite care and

supplemental services. Respite care and supplemental services are the primary requested services from this program.

Respite service enables the caregiver to take a much needed break and spend some time alone while a qualified caregiver cares for the family member.

Supplemental services are designed to compliment those that are provided by the caregiver and can include medical supplies, transportation and other items that might be needed on a limited basis.

Two types of caregivers may be eligible for services:

- Family caregivers of individuals 60 and over.

- Grandparents and other relatives age 55 and over that have assumed the care of a child 18 years of age or younger.

To find out if you or a family member is qualified, an assessment must be completed by AERS at the health department.



There is no fee attached to the assessment or for the service.

## GARRETT COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION

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*Photographs by Glenn Tolbert*

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Tax Aide Volunteers Needed

The AARP Tax Aide program is recruiting volunteers to assist residents in preparing 2008 taxes. Tax Aide trains volunteers; they prepare tax returns from February-April, and work out of the MBSC, as well as two outreach locations (Friendsville and Grantsville Senior Centers) over several days in February, March and April. The AARP Tax Aide program has proven to be a success, last year they secured eligible taxpayers an additional \$80,000 in the earned income tax credit. Many taxpayers are unaware that they are entitled to this credit. Contact Jerry Gank at 301-334-1323 [gegank@verizon.net](mailto:gegank@verizon.net) or Roland Bennett at 301-334-4762 [rolandb7@localnet.com](mailto:rolandb7@localnet.com) if you would like to volunteer to prepare tax returns for Tax Aide.

## Welcome!

We extend a warm welcome to our newest employee!

Karen Broadwater, AAA.

We also welcome three new members to our Board of Directors—Norma Bolding, chosen by the Commission on Aging, and Craig Umbel and Dave Moe, both representing private/civic organizations.

### Old World Christmas

Community Action's Old World Christmas Dinner is Friday, December 12 at 5:30pm at the Southern Rescue Squad in Oakland.

Call Tammy Bowman at extension 158 for more info and to RSVP.

*Door prizes, dinner, drawings and FUN!*

*Happy Holidays!*

**GARRETT COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION  
BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITY,  
EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS**

## Community Action Anniversaries

The following employees are celebrating a November or December anniversary for their years of service with Community Action. Thank you for your dedication to serving the community!

- |                        |                |          |                        |                |          |
|------------------------|----------------|----------|------------------------|----------------|----------|
| • Richann Annarelli    | ECD            | 2 years  | • Regina Green         | ECD            | 2 years  |
| • Shari Ashby          | Transportation | 9 years  | • Ruth Hamilton        | ECD            | 4 years  |
| • Nannette Braithwaite | ECD            | 2 years  | • Daniel Hauger        | Codes          | 3 years  |
| • Paula Brinegar       | AAA            | 2 years  | • Sherry Hauser        | ECD            | 6 years  |
| • Kristan Carter       | C&ED           | 1 year   | • Marguerite Hayhurst  | Core           | 2 years  |
| • Ginger Clark         | Housing        | 8 years  | • Patricia Lucas       | ECD            | 4 years  |
| • Kelly DeWitt         | C&ES           | 6years   | • Sue Myers            | ECD            | 8 years  |
| • Carolyn Docherty     | ECD            | 14 years | • David Niner          | Housing        | 6 years  |
| • Denise Fazenbaker    | C&ES           | 8 years  | • Albert K. Paugh, Jr. | Transportation | 10 years |
| • Rocky Ford           | Transportation | 24 years | • Sharon Rowan         | ECD            | 11 years |
| • Sheila Ford          | AAA            | 8 years  | • Donna Schrier        | Core           | 6 years  |
| • Rita Garlitz         | ECD            | 6 years  | • Bonnie Sines         | ECD            | 26 years |
| • Linda Green          | C&ES           | 32 years | • Brandi Smith         | ECD            | 2 years  |
|                        |                |          | • Jessica Yoder        | ECD            | 2 years  |