



Ionia County Commission on Aging
115 Hudson Street
Ionia, MI 48846
Phone: 616-527-5365
Toll Free: 888-527-5365

February, 2012 Newsletter

Time for Tax Season

Homestead Property Tax Credit and Home Heating Credit

the Ionia County Commission on Aging will be offering clinics for older adults. We will prepare Homestead Property Tax Credit Claims and Home Heating Credit Claims.

You will need to bring this information with you: 2011 Social Security 1099 Statement, any 2011 amounts for pension, wages, interest, or other income. Amount you paid for Health Insurance (do not include Medicare Part B, or Part D premiums). 2011 Summer and Winter Tax Receipts or 2011 Monthly Rent (and name and address of Landlord). 2011 cost to heat your home. This information is printed on the December Consumers Bill

Commission on Aging staff will be available at the following locations to assist with these forms:

Crosswinds Manor Apts
901 N Bridge St., Belding

February 23rd from 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Oak Hill Apartments
647 Crawford St., Ionia

February 21st from 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Belding Housing Commission:
41 Belhaven St., Belding

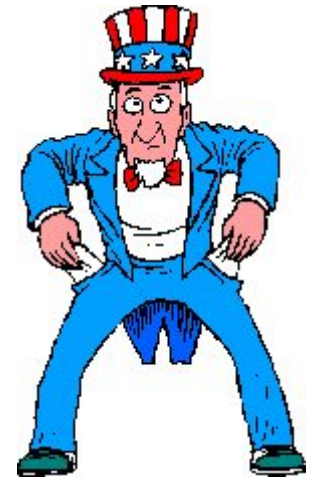
February 14th from 1:00–4:00 p.m.
March 20th from 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Ionia Housing Commission
667 Union St., Ionia

March 6th from 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Bear Creek Villa (residents only)
179 E Ferney, Clarksville

March 8th from 1:00–4:00 p.m.



Portland area residents call the Portland Senior Center at 517-647-4004

Lake Odessa, Lyons, Muir, Pewamo and Saranac residents call Wilma Earls at the Ionia Commission on Aging, 616-527-5365 or toll free 888-527-5365.

Income Tax Assistance

Help in filing Federal, Michigan and City Income Tax will again be available at the Ionia County Commission on Aging. The AARP Tax Counselors have been instructed in both Federal and Michigan Tax Returns. To make an appointment, please phone the Ionia County Commission on Aging at 616-527-5365 or toll free 888-527-5365.

Just to let you know—if you receive Food Stamps (Bridge Card), you can use them to donate for your meals. Please contact Lisa at Commission on Aging Office for assistance.

December, 2011 Memorials were received in memory of:

Brian Brauer

Gerald Blow

Mike Coulson

Our 2012 Memorial Tree at the Ionia County Commission on Aging will be decorated with ornaments in memory of all those listed throughout the year.

Schedule for 2012 Free Travelogue at the Ionia Theater each Thursday at 9:30 a.m.

Table with 4 columns: Date, Title, Date, Title. Rows include: Feb 2 Appalachians, Feb 9 Somewhere in Time, Mar 1 Big Bend National Park, Apr 12 Jamestown Rediscovered, Apr 19 Wonders of the Pacific Coast, Apr 26 Return to Steam Trains, May 3 Yellowstone Nat'l Park, May 10 Mackinaw Island, May 17 Africa, the Serengeti, May 24 Thru the Dunes of Nebraska, May 31 Amish, June 7 Middle East, June 14 Sherman Hill (Battle of Trains), June 21 Bryce & Zion Nat'l Parks, June 28 The Miniature White House.

Ionia County Commission on Aging 2012 Goals

WE received funds from Federal, State, Senior Millage, Purchase of Service Agreements, Fund Raising, and Client Donations. Local Community Support (client contributions, fund raising and senior millage) make up 67% of our budget.

Table with 4 columns: Goal/Progress/Needed, Fund Raising, Client Contributions, Amount. Rows: 2012 Goals, 2012 Progress, Balance Needed.

Thanks again for all your help—your donations help us provide more meals and other services.

The Ionia County Commission on Aging is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of services on the basis of color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.A. If you feel you are being denied participation in or being denied benefits of the services provided by the Ionia County Commission on Aging, or otherwise being discriminated against because of your race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, you may contact our office at

Lynette Seiler, Administrator
Title VI Coordinator, Ionia County Commission On Aging
115 Hudson Street
Ionia, MI 48846
616-527-5365 616-527-5955 (fax)
lseiler@ioniacounty.org www.ioniacounty.org

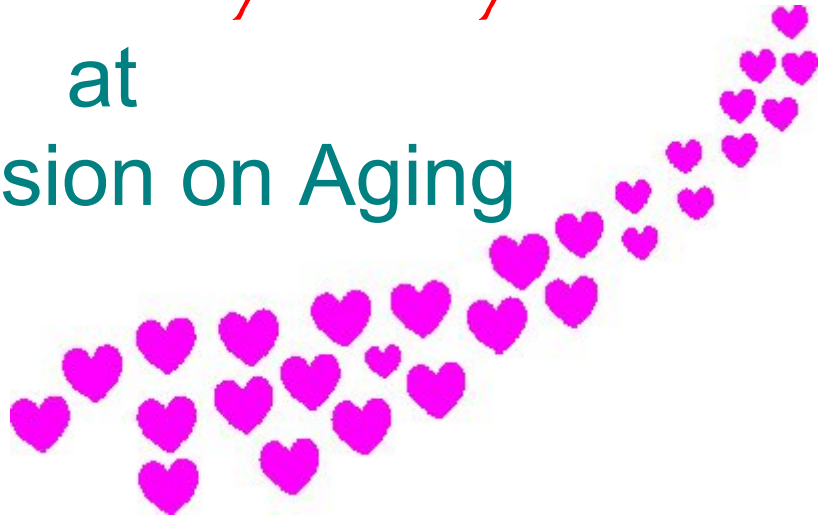


Valentine's Day Party

at Commission on Aging

Menu:

Pulled BBQ Pork
Cheesy Potatoes
Winter Blend
Sour Dough Roll
Cherry Pie



Clarksville: Wednesday February 8, 2012
Belding, Ionia, Lake Odessa, Portland, Saranac: Thursday
February 9, 2012
Lunch is served at 12:00 p.m.

RSVP by February 7th by calling 616-527-5365 or toll free
888-527-5365

Soup Supper to Go 2012

Proceeds benefit the Ionia County Commission on Aging Transportation Program

1. One quart of soup: choice of . . . Bean & Ham, Potato w/Ham, or Chicken Noodle
2. One loaf of fresh baked bread: choice of . . . white or wheat
3. Cost: \$12.00

2011 dollars from Soup Supper helped to provide:

- * 9,058 miles of transportation
 - * for medical, dental, personal, vision, shopping
- Homebound senior citizens are grateful!



To order call:

616-527-5365 or toll free 888-527-5365 by Friday, February 25th

Soup Supper will be available for pick up (or delivery)

from 11:00-4:00 on March 1st or 2nd





Senior Nutrition & Health NEWS

Calcium

It's well known that calcium is needed for bones to grow. In fact most of the calcium in our bodies is found in the bones. Even after bones have stopped growing, calcium is needed. A very small but vital amount of calcium is found in the blood. Calcium helps blood to clot and muscles to squeeze and relax. It's even needed to keep the heart beating at a steady rate.

Adults need three to four servings of calcium daily. Common calcium servings include:

- * 1 cup milk
- * 1 cup yogurt
- * 1 ½ ounces cheese
- * 1 ¾ cups cottage cheese
- * 2 cups ice cream

In some people the sugar in milk (called lactose) doesn't break down in the stomach. Gas, cramps, bloating, or an upset stomach can result. Some people with this problem are able to consume small amounts of a dairy product, such as milk, yogurt (with active cultures), or a hard cheese such as cheddar. Cooked dairy products, such as yogurt and cheese, may not cause symptoms because heat breaks down the lactose.

People who can't eat any dairy foods without symptoms can take a special tablet before eating dairy products. Find tablets in a drug or grocery store. Special drops can be added to milk to break down the sugar, or lactose-reduced milk can be purchased at the store.

For a free copy of the brochures listed below, call your local National Dairy Council, visit www.nationaldairycouncil.org or write to:

National Dairy Council
10255 W. Higgins Road, Suite 900
Rosemont, IL 60018-5616

Test Your Calcium IQ
Calcium for Mature Adults 51 & Older
Taking the Pressure Off High Blood Pressure

Vegetable–Cheese Soup

What You Need:

- ½ cup celery, chopped
- ¼ cup flour
- ½ cup carrots, chopped
- 3 cups skim milk
- ¼ cup onions, chopped
- Pepper to taste
- 1 cup potatoes, chopped
- 4 ounces shredded cheddar cheese
- ¼ cup margarine

How to Fix:

1. Boil vegetables 5 to 10 minutes in ¾ cup water until tender. Don't drain.
2. Melt margarine in medium pan. Slowly stir in flour. Let mixture cook over medium heat about 1 minute. Remove from heat.
3. Slowly stir in milk. Cook over medium heat until sauce thickens. Add vegetables.
4. Remove from heat. Stir in cheese until melted. Other vegetables can be used for this soup, such as broccoli or turnips. Serves 6 (95 calories and 8 grams fat in 1 cup serving)

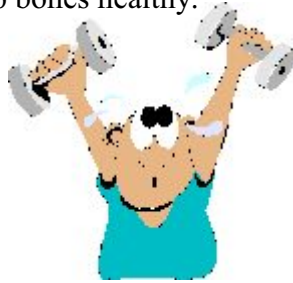


Weight-Bearing Exercise

Exercise at any age helps to improve strength, balance, and coordination. Exercise is also important for maintaining calcium absorption. Exercise that puts weight on bones, such as walking and bicycling, increases calcium absorption and can help keep bones strong. Exercise must be weight-bearing to keep bones healthy.

Examples of weight-bearing exercises include:

- * Walking
- * Dancing
- * Aerobics
- * Weight-lifting



Swimming is a good exercise, but it's not weight-bearing. Weight-bearing exercises alone don't keep bones healthy, however, it's also important to eat calcium-rich foods.

Sleep Problems

Getting to sleep and staying asleep is a major problem for many people over the age of 60. Waking more often during the night and earlier in the morning are also common complaints.

Sleep patterns change as a person ages. Everyone has periods of quiet, deep sleep and periods of restless, dream sleep. As people age, the major period of deep sleep becomes shorter and occurs earlier in the night. The restless or shallow sleep periods get longer, and there is an increase in the number of times a person wakes. To help sleeping problems:

- * Stick to a schedule. Get up the same time, even if you don't sleep well the night before.
- * quit smoking, if needed
- * Avoid napping in the late afternoon and evening. Limit naps to 30 to 45 minutes a day.
- * Exercise, but not too near bedtime.
- * Limit alcohol and caffeine. Both may keep you awake.
- * Limit use of sleeping pills. Sleeping pills may disrupt the normal sleep cycle and lead to daytime tiredness.
- * Ask a pharmacist if the drugs you take affect sleep.

Discuss sleeping problems with your health care provider. Medical problems and depression can affect sleep patterns. A person who is depressed may sleep too much, or not enough.

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a disease that causes bones to weaken. Bones become fragile and fracture easily. Many people don't know they have osteoporosis until they fall and break a bone in their hip, wrist, or spine.

There may be an increased risk of osteoporosis if you:

- * Have a family history of osteoporosis.
- * Have a small, thin body frame.
- * Are of Caucasian or Asian ancestry.
- * Are a woman over age 65.
- * Eat a diet low in dairy products.
- * Smoke or drink alcohol excessively.

Osteoporosis occurs most often in women due to decreased estrogen production after menopause.

Osteoporosis is treated by:

- * A diet rich in calcium.
- * Weight-bearing exercises.
- * Drugs that bind to bone surfaces, inhibiting bone loss.
- * Limiting alcohol and not smoking.

Earn (and keep) More Money

By Vonda VanTil,

Social Security Public Affairs Specialist

Vonda VanTil is the public affairs specialist for West Michigan. You can write her c/o Social Security Administration, 3045 Knapp St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525 or via email at vonda.vantil@ssa.gov.



If you receive monthly Social Security or SSI payments, you received a 3.6 percent cost-of-living adjustment beginning with your payment for the month of January, 2012.

For people who receive Social Security retirement benefits, there's more good news. In addition to receiving a little more each month, you may now *earn* more income without offsetting your benefits because the "earnings test" numbers also have gone up.

If you have reached your full retirement age (age 66 for anyone born between 1943 and 1954), the earnings test does not apply and you may earn as much money as you can without any effect on your benefits. However, if you are younger than full retirement age, collecting benefits and still working, we do offset some of your benefit amount after a certain earning limit is met.

For people under full retirement age in 2012, the annual exempt amount is \$14,640, and if you do reach that limit, we withhold \$1 for every \$2 above that limit from your monthly benefit amount. For people who retired early, continue working will obtain full retirement age in 2012, the annual exempt amount is \$38,880 and we will withhold \$1 for every \$3 you earn over the limit from your monthly benefits.

You can learn more about the earnings test and how benefits may be reduced by visiting our website, www.socialsecurity.gov, and searching on the topic *earnings test*.

The Cookbook is Alive and Well

Remember the cookbook started last year? Well, it is not forgotten. We would like to have as many interested people who are interested to submit a recipe they consider healthy. Each meal site is being asked to submit recipes and we will choose one recipe from each site to make on Tuesdays for the sites and Home Delivered meals beginning March!

Each recipe submitted will be added to the collection already submitted for the cookbook. We plan to send the recipe book in this spring. The recipes can be for a main dish, soup or salad, bread or dessert.

Sooooo, let's have some fun and see whose recipe will be picked from each site and what recipe will be considered the ultimate winner. It will be fun to invite your family and friends in for a meal on those Tuesdays/Wednesdays. . .because it will be each of you deciding the ultimate recipe.

Turn all recipes into your site hostess by your Valentine Party. Site hostesses will submit these recipes to me that day.

Thank you!

Lisa Insley, Nutrition Program Director

616-527-5365

linsley@ioniacounty.org



A Special Thank You

The Fit-to-be-Tied Quilt Group deserves a big thank you. During 2011 they provided

- :
- * 199 Quilts
- * 86 Walker Bags
- * 12 Pillow Cases
- * 1 Blanket
- * 37 Raffle items



These items were donated to **many** Ionia County Organizations and I know they have appreciated these gifts of love for their clients.

If you would like to help out, you can stop by the First Christian Church Educational Building at 9:00 a.m. on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month.

If you have material, thread, needles, and/or quilt batting that you would like to donate, these can be brought to the Commission on Aging.

Again thanks to these ladies and also to First Christian Church for the space they have loaned the group.!