

## **Annual Report 2009 – Senior and Social Services**

### **COUNCIL ON AGING**

The programs and services are located in the Multi-Service Center The Wareham Council on Aging continues to serve a wide variety of programs, services and activities with a mission of promoting wellness of body, mind and spirit for all persons fifty-five and over. Programs encompass fitness, health, recreation, education, nutrition, trips, services, resources and support.

The Healthy Lifestyle Fair was held for the first time here at the Multi-Service Center. It was held on Saturday June 22, 2009. We had 60 vendors, had several demonstrations and approximately 400 participants. Everyone who attended had a wonderful time.

The Old Colony Elder Services Nutrition Program continues to provide nutritious meals to homebound seniors and staffs our congregate meal site. These two nutrition programs would not be possible without the dedicated drivers who deliver daily meals in all kinds of weather and volunteers who assist at the meal site. Old Colony Elderly Services continues to support this program delivering approximately 80 meals per day, totaling 20,800 meals per year.

We continue to bake for Mug-a-Muffin on Thursdays. Wonderful aromas waft through the building on Wednesdays. Volunteers prepare muffins, scones and fresh fruit in the Café kitchen to serve for Mug N' Muffin each Thursday. The Cranberry Café bustles with conversation, creates community and serves some forty persons.

Sharing the Harvest is a program that provides free produce to over fifty seniors. South Shore Community Action Council partnered with local growers (some organic) to provide healthy, perishable fruits and vegetables during the growing season. The program was funded by the state of Massachusetts.

Ongoing fitness programs include; line and square dancing, senior boot camp, aerobics, and senior tai chi. Games of bridge, whist, bingo, cribbage and pool/darts are scheduled each week along with quilters, mixed media art, watercolor, computer and bread making classes.

New COA programs included Bible Study, American Sign Language, Bereavement and Caregiver Group. Workshops such as Stress Management, Alzheimer's information programs, Nutrition, Homestead and AARP have been scheduled this year.

Our Day Trip to the Cape Cod Canal was a success and everyone that went enjoyed themselves. Our Social and Recreational programs are self-supporting through the Revolving Account.

The Health Clinic is available weekly for blood pressure checks, immunizations and ask a nurse service. Foot care is scheduled monthly. Durable medical equipment is available on loan. Free health insurance counseling is available each week by appointment with a

SHINE counselor and free legal services are available in the center through Southeastern Massachusetts Legal services.

### **Transportation**

Wareham continues to provide Dial-A-Ride transportation services through a contract with GATRA. This curb-to-curb service has provided a total of 10, 598 rides for the first eight months of 2009. Grant funding through Community Development provided the Free Pass Program for low income disabled persons and seniors for the third year. Currently we are unable to provide out of town transportation as we are still waiting for the Out of Town Grant Funding from Community Development. Our transportation and drivers are trained yearly to meet the State, Federal and GATRA regulations and policies.

### **Adult Supportive Day Center**

**The Day Center** provides a safe, structured environment for seniors with mild to moderate memory loss, medical issues needing support, depression, loss or isolation. The program offers friends, meaningful activities and respite for caregivers Monday through Thursday at the Multi-Service Center. Therapeutic and structured activities are designed to promote and enhance the social, physical, and cognitive skills of the participants through gentle exercise, creative activities, educational programs and peer support. This year the group provided the beautiful container garden at the handicap entrance to the Multi-Service Center, participated in baking, art studio, life reminiscence workshops, excessive writing experiences, restaurant trips, picnics, pool games, movies, travelogues, sing-a-longs, field trips and more. Lunch, transportation (in Wareham), and two nutritionally sound snacks are included in the program.

The community care program allows elders to remain in their homes and provides caregivers and families a safe, low cost alternative to assisted living or nursing home placement.

Currently the implementation of the new admission packet, policy manual and marketing materials introduced last year ensures continued provision of excellent quality services to the Wareham area.

### **SOCIAL SERVICES**

The Wareham Social Services continues to serve all citizens regardless of age.

The Social Services offered are: Department of Transitional Assistance, Veterans Services, Homeless, Domestic Violence, Fuel Assistance, SHINE, Meals on Wheels Program, Geriatric Adult Daycare, Educational and Recreational Programs, Medical Referrals, Health Screenings and Clinics.

The Multi-Service Center is the hub of services for the people of Wareham, regardless of age. We host the monthly Human Service Collaborative meetings where service providers throughout our region gather to share information, assess needs, and provide resources for the people of Wareham

Two New Bedford based agencies are available in the Multi-Service Center for Wareham residents, saving energy costs and providing services for persons without access to out of town transportation. On Wednesday afternoons the Department of Transitional Assistance holds bi-weekly office hours and the Social Security Office is open on the third Wednesday of each month. Other available resources located in the Center include Veterans Services, the Disability Office, and the Career Center.

The number of persons seeking fuel assistance significantly increased this year. With the sky rocketing cost of energy, an unprecedented number of applicants are anticipated for the coming fuel season. The Outreach Coordinator is available every day for information, referral and crisis intervention.

The Wareham Council on Aging and Social Services dedicated staff continue to focus on serving Wareham seniors and others in need of assistance despite the challenge of working with a decreased staff. We appreciate the staff office support we receive from the Citizen for Citizens employment training program. Currently they pay for three staff members, two to help in the office and one in our day center. Our staff remains involved in all areas of assistance, (fuel assistance, information and referral and crises intervention). We look forward to working with all the Social Service Agencies to meet the needs of Wareham's residents.

A special word of appreciation goes to those who have faithfully served on the COA Board of Directors.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marcia Griswold  
Director