

BROOKLYN SENIOR CENTER
2020 ANNUAL REPORT



January 21, 2021

Mayor Katherine Gallagher
Members of Brooklyn City Council
Brooklyn, Ohio 44144

Dear Mayor Gallagher and Brooklyn City Council Members:

The following is the 2020 annual report for the Brooklyn Senior Center.

This report contains information regarding the staff, senior advisory council, volunteers and members. Due to the unprecedented year of 2020 with the Covid-19 global pandemic, the actual figures for the in-person activities are only through March 11, 2020. That was the date we officially announced the closing of our building. Virtual and outreach programs did continue for the remainder of the year, as well as transportation services, snow removal, and homebound meals. In addition, we added more well check calls, grocery shopping for shut ins, and automated calls to announce drive up activities and important information. We also provided groceries for some of our more food insecure seniors.

As we look back on 2020 it has been one of the most challenging years for the senior center and our senior members to say the least. We Continued with our services the best we could and our first priority was to serve the senior community by providing information and services to assist them during this time of covid-19.

Although our doors were closed our phone lines have remained open Monday through Friday - 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Many seniors expressed how thankful they were to be able to call us even if it was just to talk and feel connected. We were happy to keep the lines of communications open to give assistance when needed. It was so valuable to remain working and be there to check up on those of them that live alone or needed more help at this unprecedented time.

As we prepare for the opening of our center we are working on a cohesive plan that would ensure the utmost safety for our seniors. This plan which will most probably take place in phases, will be designed to start out on a small scale and be adaptable to whatever regulations arise. We will strive to provide the senior services our residents have come to expect and enjoy but we may need to do things in a slightly different way. We will offer some new activities where we can have fun and at the same time maintain social distancing and other measures to comply with regulations. We are hopeful that with vaccines now beginning to be administered to seniors we will once again be able to open up our doors in the near future.

Finally, I do want to recognize and thank Kathy and Ed for your hard work and dedication. I know I speak for all three of us in saying that we sure hope 2021 will be a better year and we can on open up our doors to all of our wonderful seniors.

Sincerely,

Karen Fratto
Coordinator
BROOKLYN SENIOR CENTER
CITY OF BROOKLYN, OHIO

STAFF

- 1 Coordinator
- 1 Assistant Coordinator (Local Union 1099)
- 1 Van Driver / Laborer (Local Union 860)
- 1 Independent Contractor Ceramics Instructor – (up to Twenty-Four hours per week)
- 1 Independent Contractor Part-time cook – (up to Twenty-Four hours per week)

ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board of seven adults, over 55, appointed at large representing various senior citizen groups in the community. The Senior Center Advisory Board meets on a monthly basis to discuss, as needed, any upcoming programs or activities. They also share any positive and/or negative comments (suggestions) from members in the organization.

VOLUNTEER AREAS

- Aerobics
- Chair Yoga
- Chair Volleyball
- Bingo
- Blood Pressure Program
- Men and Women Bocce Ball Committees
- Ceramics
- Corn Hole
- Crafts for Corner Store
- Health and Hearing Screenings
- Income Tax Scheduling
- Indoor Garage Sale
- Library
- Meal Delivery
- OHSHIP
- Quilting
- Reception Desk
- Special Event
- Sports - Tournaments
- Senior Advisory Board
- Weekly Meals Crew (Thursday, Luncheon & Tuesday, Soup & Sandwich)

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS: 35

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER HOURS through March 11, 2020 = 1,031

SERVICES AVAILABLE AT THE SENIOR CENTER

*** Note: All indoor services were cancelled on 03/11/2020 due to covid-19**

- Absentee Voter Applications
- AARP Safe Driver Course
- AARP no cost Tax Service – suspended 3-11-2020
- Blood Pressure Screenings
- Blood Sugar Screenings
- Cholesterol Screenings
- Computers Available
- Coupon Exchange
- Current Books and Magazines on Health, Travel, Hobbies and Fiction
- Food Distribution for those in need
- Energy Assistance Applications
- Flu and Pneumonia Shots
- Grocery Shopping for Seniors
- Golden Buckeye Applications
- Hearing Screening
- Homestead Exemption and H.E.A.P. forms
- Information on Home Health Care, Assisted Living, Nursing Rehab Facilities
- Information on Senior Transportation
- Large-type Reading Material in our Library
- Meals for the Homebound Program
- Medicare Assistance
- Post Office on Wheels once a month
- Power of Attorney and Living Will Forms
- Referrals for In Home Health Care
- Referrals for In Home Alert Systems such as Life Alert
- Resume Help
- Shredding
- Snow Removal
- Social Security and Medicare Handbooks
- Social Work Information and Referral Service
- Speakers on Health and Other Current Self-Help Topics
- Transportation - Senior Center Bus and Car for Medical or Vital Shopping needs for shut ins
- Trips for recreational purposes
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Well Check phone calls
- Wheelchairs, Walkers, and Canes are available for loaning
- Xerox Copies (.10¢ per copy)

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE CENTER

***Note: All indoor activities were suspended on 03/11/2020 due to covid-19**

- Afternoon Films
- Art Classes
- Bingo
- Bocce Ball (Men and Women's Leagues)
- Book Review
- Card Games
- Ceramics
- Chair Aerobics and Low Impact Aerobics
- Chair Yoga
- Chair Volleyball
- Corn Hole Coed Teams
- Corner Store Crafts
- Drive Up events
- Dominoes
- Exercise
- Flower Arranging
- Indoor Garage Sales – Canceled for Sept 2020
- Ping Pong
- Pool Playing
- Post Office-on-Wheels
- Hands on Demonstrations – food or crafts
- OSHIP Consulting for Medicare Open Enrollment
- Quilting
- Special Events (Dances, Women's Tea, Picnic's)
- Senior Olympics
- Sewing
- Speakers on Various Topics
- Shuffle Board
- Television and VCR or DVD free rentals
- Trips – Local Day Excursions
- Virtual Bingo
- Virtual Activities
- Walking Program
- Weekly Luncheon Meal on Tuesday and Thursday
- Wii Bowling and other sports games

HOMEBOUND MEAL PROGRAM

The 2020 Homebound Meals Program is an ongoing weekday program. This meal delivery program is offered to qualifying Brooklyn homebound residents. We were happy to keep it going in 2020 despite the pandemic. We made some minor adjustments to the way the volunteers and staff delivered and interacted with the homebound seniors. We no longer entered the home or had close contact with the recipients. Delivery was to their door and always at a six feet distance. All assessments were done over the phone and the picking up of meals at Senior Citizen Resources was done while adhering to strict social distancing and sanitary regulations. All meals were processed and packed in individually wrapped containers.

Meals are intended for persons over 60, not able to leave their home due to chronic illness, inability to drive, or inability to prepare meals safely for themselves. It is not intended to be a substitute for family care; therefore, it is for persons who have NO family living in the home or locally. There is sometimes a waiting list and all applicants are screened to see if they meet the qualifications. This meal is prepared by the kitchen of the Senior Citizen Resource Center, located at 3100 Devonshire Rd, Cleveland, Ohio. It is a government subsidized program and also funded in part by proceeds in the form of donations by the receiving residents. The recipient of the meals, or his/her family, decides on a donation amount. The suggested donation is \$1.00 per day and it is optional. The donation goes directly to Senior Citizen Resources in an envelope they provide the recipients once a week.

The meal consists of a hot dinner, a fresh piece of fruit, a milk and piece of bread or a roll. Some days it can be a cold sandwich type meal, but mostly it is a hot meal. It is delivered Monday through Friday, between 10 a.m. and noon.

Kathy Messeri oversees the Homebound Meal Program for the City of Brooklyn and works along with Senior Citizens Resources to ensure things run smoothly. There are five volunteers that deliver the meals five days of the week, each taking a day with an alternate as back-up and Kathy Messeri as an additional back-up driver. We are always looking to recruit volunteers that have a heart to deliver the meals to our residents in need. It is a very rewarding program. All volunteers are run through a back-round check.

A big thank you to all of our dedicated volunteers who deliver the meals and take pride in helping our homebound seniors.

TOTAL Homebound Meals Delivered in 2020:

1778

SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM

This year of 2020 due to Covid-19 and our building being closed to the public, it was decided by the mayor and city council prior to the September 2020 sign ups not to charge any resident that paid for the service in 2019 / 2020. Those that were active in 2019/2020 were sent a letter letting them know it was being offered to them FREE in 2020/2021. All that was required was for them to call the Senior Center to let us know if they planned to continue in the 2020/2021 program. We kept last year's bright pink window sign to make it easy for those who held onto it, limiting the number of them that needed to pick up a new sign.

Snow removal sign-up were held for any NEW applicants in the month of September and late sign ups were done well into December. The cost for new sign up to the program is:

\$40.00 per person/household. And late fee was \$15

An income guideline instituted for all "new" applicants remained the same Ordinance #2000-52

Guidelines are as follows:

\$36,300 maximum income for one person in the household;

\$41,500 maximum income for two person households;

\$46,650 maximum income for three person households.

If a resident is unable to come into the Senior Center because of illness, provisions are made for a "house-call" Anyone signing up after the initial registration time will be subject to a late fee of \$15.00, unless previous arrangements were made.

CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING CITY SNOW REMOVAL SERVICE

- Resident and all other occupants of your household must be 65 years of age or older;
- Residents meet income guidelines per Ordinance #2009-60 (listed above)
- Resident must own the single family home they live in;
- Current property Tax Bill must be presented;
- The driveway must be solid, no grass strip or gravel down the center of the driveway;
- Resident must agree to release the City, its servants, agents, and employees from any liability arising out of the removal of snow from their driveway.

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS THAT RECEIVED THIS SERVICE in winter of 2019/2020 = 280

PRIVATE SNOW AND GRASS SERVICE

The Senior Center can provide the names of people who plow snow and cut grass. We supply the names of contractors but all fees are charged by contractors and **must** be pre-arranged between contractor and the resident.

ATTENDANCE 2020

We ask participants to sign in when they enter the building at our My Senior Center kiosk located at our front desk. This program helps us to track number of people coming in and the usage of the various programs. It is not foolproof as many of our seniors do forget to swipe their card. Membership with the key fob card is free for all residents 55 + and non-residents pay \$12 a year for membership.

Residents & Non-Resident Members visits to the Senior Center thru 3/11/2020 = 1,085

NEWSLETTER

Brooklyn senior residents received the Winter copy of our newsletter, "Active Brooklyn". This newsletter is a combined Recreation Center and Senior Center newsletter with the senior portion of it called "55+" which now is mailed to every Brooklyn household. After the pandemic hit we focused on the Brooklyn City Newsletter and our Automated phone calls through My Senior Center to be our main source of getting out information to our senior residents. Since no inside activities took place, it would have been futile to do a newsletter with so very little to report.

INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

Income tax assistance is provided by AARP and offered to all seniors regardless of income. We started this service on February 1st and were stopped abruptly due to Covid-19 on March 11th. Volunteers were here Mondays and Wednesdays to provide this **free** tax service. It is made available to all age groups, but primarily services are for seniors. Electronic filing is also offered. It is a great service to the seniors. Unfortunately, we were informed by AARP in December that the service for 2021 would be suspended due to Covid-19.

Taxes prepared in 2020 – 102 – down from the over 300 prepared in past years due to covid-19

HEALTH SCREENINGS

The Center continues to offer a variety of health screenings as they are made available by different Health organizations: Lutheran Hospital, UH Parma Hospital, Metro Health Center, Lifeline Screening Inc., and L.A. Christner Hearing Inc. Some of the screenings are free and others have a fee. We actively pursue as many free or low cost screenings as possible.

Health care workers speak on various topics of interest to seniors as well as community residents. For the first two months of the year residents attended the various lectures and took advantage of the screenings listed below:

Bone Density	Hearing Screening
Blood Sugar	Life Line Screening suspended due to covid-19
Cholesterol	Flu Shots suspended due to covid-19

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

- UH Parma Hospital comes once a month on the first Thursdays from 9:30a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
- The Brooklyn Paramedics screen the third and fourth Thursday of the month.
- Brooklyn Pointe sends a nurse once a month on 2nd Tuesday of the month
- With our building being closed due to covid-19 we did communicate to our resident members that our fire station would take walk ins of any resident wanting to check their blood pressure during daytime hours as long as they were not all out on an emergency

TUESDAY SOUP & SANDWICH

On Tuesdays, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., soup and sandwich is available for **\$3.50**. This is the meal right before our bingo game. During the summer months, cold salads and sandwiches are served. In the winter we switch over to hot and healthy soups. This menu is planned for two months at a time. In 2020 we served **208 meals**.

THURSDAY LUNCHEONS

The Senior Center offers a luncheon on Thursdays. The cost of this full course meal is **\$6.00**. This menu is also planned for two months at a time. In 2020 **245 meals on Thursday were served**.

TRANSPORTATION WITH THE SENIOR VAN – A new way of doing it 2020

Door-to- door transportation is provided to Brooklyn residents who are 55 years of age or older who do not drive. Also included are handicapped or disabled persons, regardless of age. Due to the Pandemic we had to limit the number of riders that could be socially distanced by 6 feet. We had a maximum of only 4 riders per trip and special precautions were taken such as requiring that all wear a mask and screening of riders to ensure no one was exhibiting any Covid symptoms. We also invested in the Victory Sani Sprayer to use on our van and in our building. This high powered spray gun uses a disinfectant that kills Covid 19 in the air and on surfaces.

We limited our shopping trips to once a week per rider. We kept our medical appointments the same. The van is in service Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Service is provided for medical appointments, shopping, personal errands and when there is a return to activities at the Senior Center or Recreation Center. Most do pay the *Suggested donation* of \$1.00 but if they are unable to pay we do not request it. Our numbers once again reflect the downturn due to Covid-19.

TRANSPORTATION cont.

PASSENGER CLASSIFICATIONS:

TRIP PURPOSES:

Elderly – Ambulatory	1138	Medical (3 days a week)	171
Elderly – Non-ambulatory	20	Shopping (3 days a week)	341
Other		Senior Center	33
TOTAL	1,158	Recreation Center	0
		Home	571
		Other	42
		TOTAL	1,158

2020 Totals

PASSENGER TRIPS: 1,158

Transportation DONATIONS: \$1,137

REINVENTING OUR SERVICES DURING THE PANDEMIC of 2020

With our building closed and seniors unable to gather together socially we tried to come up with some virtual activities and drive up activities that would keep them somewhat engaged. Most of our older seniors do not have computers or smart phones so that presented our biggest challenge. The automated phone call messages were the best way to reach all resident members in our database. These calls kept them informed with pertinent information on the status of covid-19 and such things as scams to be watchful of and upcoming drive up or virtual activities that they could participate in.

Drive Up Activities 2020

Starting with the nicer weather in April we did several drive up activities and had a very nice level of participation. Thanks to Mayor Gallagher for letting us offer these activities at no cost to our members. We also had ice cream provided by Brooklyn Pointe for our July event.

Here are the drive-up activities and number of residents who attended them:

- April Spring Activity / snack bag pick up 134
- May Hot Dog sack lunch drive up 208
- June Mac n Cheese sack lunch 152
- July Ice Cream Social at a distance 200
- September PB&J sack lunch 145
- Oct. Cup of Soup sack lunch 153
- Nov. Volunteer Appreciation Awards 35
- December Christmas Cookie n Goodies drive up 171

Virtual BINGO

In the fall we started doing a “Virtual Bingo” game that residents can play either on their computer, lap tops, tablets or even on their telephones both cell and land lines by calling into a conference call number. We had prizes for all winners and goodie bags with all supplies and some snack items for them to enjoy while they played. They simply logged in or called in to play. Our supporting sponsor on this was Devoted Health. We partnered with them and Roy from Devoted Health made it a very fun activity for our residents. It proved to be a big success and we will continue with this into 2021. We have coupled it with a basket raffle as well. It was been a nice addition for the folks that our missing the interaction and social aspect of our center.

Well Check Calls

We strived to do a number of well check calls every week to make sure our seniors, especially those living alone were doing ok. Many of them were quite down due to having to stay home and not seeing their friends or family. The cold months were the toughest and seemed to drag on. Summer months were better as many came up to the park and meet friends to walk or just to talk. The routine of coming to our center to socialize was a big void for them. We tried to talk with them and cheer them up by sending cards, making phone calls and encouraging them to participate in our drive-up activities or virtual bingo. If they needed additional help we tried our best to supply it to them or point them to those resources that could help. These well check calls also let us know of any other needs out there.

We recruited senior volunteers from the various programs to call their members and check in on them as well. Just a call from a friend can make a world of difference.

Shopping for Seniors

We shopped for any that called us and was in need of groceries and we also had volunteers who gave of their time without cost to shop for seniors that were fearful to go out. Extra shopping was made available on our senior van for any that wanted to shop for themselves but did not drive.

Having food on hand for those in need

We stocked our kitchen pantry with can goods, staple items, and some frozen items with permission from the city administration using city funds and some grant money. We provided it to any senior that might have need of groceries. We also received items from Western Reserve Area on Aging and The Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland for needy seniors at no cost. We also partnered with local food banks and other agencies to ensure that no senior went without food.

PURPOSE OF THE BROOKLYN SENIOR CENTER

- Develop, cultivate and bring together the human resources of the community in assisting senior citizens, and handicapped residents.
- Encourage and work with public and private agencies in establishing facilities and programs in the city that deal with needs, such as social services, nutrition, transportation, exercise, and health awareness.
- Direct and bring together individuals willing to donate their time or services in helping others. This in turn helps them as they feel needed by others and take pride in their service.
- Develop and coordinate social, educational, virtual and wellness programs and service opportunities for senior citizens, which will improve their quality of life.

A LIFELINE FOR OUR SENIOR RESIDENTS

Senior centers are linked to their communities for all the support and services they provide. They are, in large part, reliant on the support of city government, contributors, volunteers, community leaders and others for their continued success.

Senior centers offer a place to go for social activities, trips, volunteer opportunities, health screenings, health and consumer education, creative arts, exercise, wholesome meals, phone support and more.

Senior centers offer services that help their members maintain independence, while also providing opportunities for them to interact with each other and contribute to their communities. Senior centers provide meaningful and valuable activities. Senior centers are helpful in bringing key information to the residents to help them make informed decisions on the many challenges they face as they age and offering help for them to age in place.

THE SENIOR CENTER PHILOSOPHY

- Promote self-worth
- Promote positive image of 55+ adults to the community
- Promote continued learning and mental growth / Promote better health
- Provide needed social interaction
- Provide help for them to remain in their homes
- Provide socialization through virtual programming and drive up activities during covid-19
- Encourage volunteerism and service
- Foster community involvement
- Involve isolated elderly, those who are now facing new challenges in aging and are lonely
- Improve the quality of life by exposure & involvement in creative and cultural arts
- Provide information on services available to seniors and the disabled in light of covid-19

FINANCIAL REPORT 2020 Year End Totals

*Figures reflect the sudden closure of our facility on March 11, 2020

**Also Note the loss in revenue for the snow removal. Snow removal was extended at no cost in 2020 to seniors who had signed up for the program in 2019 due to covid-19

SOCIAL PROGRAMS AND RECEIPTS	2020
Ceramic / Craft Fees	\$ 261.00
Exercise Class Fees	13.00
Corner Store & Greeting Cards	34.25
Luncheon Sales	2,343.50
Coffee Donation	153.94
Pizzelle	21.00
Newsletter	100.00
Food Purchase	2.00
Special Activities	1,379.50
Room Rental	<u>\$ 200.00</u>
SUBTOTAL	\$ 4,508.19

CHARGES AND DONATIONS FOR SERVICE

Bus Transportation	\$1,137.00
Non-Resident Membership	\$ 108.00
Service Fees - Snow Removal- New	\$1,200.00
Late sign-up Fees - Snow Removal	\$ 120.00
Copy Fees	<u>\$ -</u>
SUBTOTAL	\$2,565.00

GRAND TOTAL **\$7,073.19**