



Assistance. Advocacy. Answers on Aging.

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.
F-32, URG, P.O. Box 500
Rio Grande, Ohio 45674-0500
(800) 582-7277, TTY (888) 270-1550

www.aaa7.org

THE AGING NETWORK

Pamela K. Matura, Executive Director
April 2005



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Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton Counties
"Services Rendered On A Non-Discriminatory Basis"

Directors Report



Governor Taft's proposed budget has now left the Ohio House and is being deliberated in the Ohio Senate. Thus, we are once again in state budget mode where we become concerned about budget cuts, funding, and trying to do more with less.

- **June** – A Conference Committee reconciles differences in the House and Senate version of the bill. The Governor may sign, veto, and sign it with line-item vetoes. Vetoes are sent back to the House and Senate. A three-fifths majority of both the House and Senate is required to override a veto.
- **July** – The new Operating Budget begins on July 1.

Governor Taft has offered his 2006-2007 budget to the legislature for debate while battling a \$5 billion structural deficit and proposing a new tax structure. There is much discussion, lobbying, debating, and advocating going on in Columbus with the legislators.

The following is the *Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (O4A)* position on the PASSPORT budget. (All Ohio Area Agencies on Aging are members of this organization.)

Most Ohioans who need long-term care want to remain living in their homes. PASSPORT allows Ohioans to remain in their own homes and receive services for one fourth the cost of long-term care in a nursing facility. Even though PASSPORT, the Medicaid nursing facility diversion program, *saves considerable Ohio taxpayer dollars* and provides services in the long-term care setting preferred by Ohio's older adults, the Governor's budget may force thousands of older Ohioans into the most costly care of nursing facilities.

To illustrate how the process works, below is the timeline for the state budget:

- **January** - The process of the state budget begins with the Governor outlining budget proposals during his State of the State Address.
- **February** - The Governor releases summaries of the budget proposal to the General Assembly and the public. The proposal is then introduced as an Executive Budget bill in the Ohio House of Representatives.
- **February and March** - The House holds hearings, makes amendments, and passes its version of the bill.
- **April and May** - The House version of the budget is introduced in the Senate. The Senate hold hearings, makes amendments, and passes its version of the bill.

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ARC TECHNOLOGY PROJECT UNDERWAY

The Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. (AAA7) received a technology grant award through the Appalachian Regional Commission to initiate an Aging Network Technology Enhancement Project.

Due to the impoverished economic area and capacity deficit for 22 service providers throughout the ten-county district of Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton, AAA7 determined that the investment to obtain Citrix software will enhance the small businesses to meet their data collection and submission requirement. These providers receive Older American Act funding through AAA7 to provide services to senior citizens.

On a monthly basis, the providers must transmit, in a digital format, client and service data for reporting and payment purposes. The current network provides \$1,869,619 of service to over 6100 clients. The implementation of the Citrix system will provide an effective and efficient electronic technology system to meet the demands of the data collection.

"We are extremely excited to have completed a highly successful pilot in Ross County and are looking forward to full implementation throughout our entire ten-county district," states Nina R. Keller, AAA7 assistant director and project manager. "This would not have been possible without the support of the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission."

The Appalachian Regional Commission funds projects that meet its established goals. The Aging Network Technology Enhancement Project will assist Appalachian communities in having the physical infrastructure necessary for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life.

AAA7 Executive Director, Pamela K. Matura, believes this initiative will make a significant improvement by increasing the capacity of the service providers. "For the small businesses in Appalachia, technology advancements are rare. We are pleased that ARC recognized our service providers' impact on economic development and as importantly, understands that giving us the tools to

expedite data collection allows more time to commit in directly serving our senior citizens."

For information about the services and programs available through the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc., visit the website at www.aaa7.org or call 800-582-7277.

DATES TO REMEMBER
Older Americans Month – May

Senior Citizens Day -
Theme: "Celebrate Long Term Living"
May 17, 2005 - Events held around the state

AAA7 23rd Annual Senior Citizens Art Show, Essay/
Poetry Contest – May 23-June 3, 2005
"Meet the Artist Tea" - Friday, June 3, 2005
1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. - Everyone Invited

AAA7 Photo Contest- Deadline extended to May 6

AAA7 Appreciation Brunch
Wednesday, June 29, 2005

Ohio State Fair - August 3-14, 2005
Senior Day will be August 10, 2005
per Ohio Expo
ODA's only involvement is on Senior Day

AAA7 Senior EXPO – Friday - September 9, 2005

Directors Report

(Continued from first page)

Presently, the Governor's budget does not fully fund PASSPORT. Without sufficient funds, waiting lists for PASSPORT home care will develop. In fact, based on the Governor's proposed budget, approximately 220 older adults throughout Ohio will be placed on a waiting list for PASSPORT home care services *each month*, beginning this July. From the waiting list, many will be forced to give up their homes and go into an expensive nursing facility, because some of them do not have family support or resources to wait for a PASSPORT slot to become available. This will cost Ohio taxpayer *more dollars* that would not be necessary.

Eligibility for Medicaid funded nursing facility care and PASSPORT home care are the same, but the difference is nursing facility care is an entitlement through the Medicaid program and qualified older adults cannot be turned away or placed on waiting lists. Therefore, some who want to stay at home will be forced into nursing facilities instead of waiting up to several months for PASSPORT home care.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING DISTRICT 7, INC. AND HOLZER MEDICAL CENTER COLLABORATED TO PRESENT - "TIME IS RUNNING OUT FOR \$600 TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR PRESCRIPTIONS"



Pictured: Suzanne Shelpman, Grants Development Specialist Project Director for Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.; Jay Tatum, Chaplain for Holzer Medical Center; and Teresa Waller, Assessor/Case Manager for Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. hosted a workshop at Holzer Medical Center.

The Area Agency on Aging District 7 received a grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Administration on Aging, and a campaign has been in full swing throughout District 7 counties: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton to inform seniors about the Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Card program.

As part of the outreach, the Area Agency on Aging District 7 and Holzer Medical Center collaborated and provided a workshop for professionals in Gallia County. The training demonstrated how to help assist senior citizens to apply for a Medicare Prescription Drug Card and for the \$600 transitional assistance monies.

Suzanne Shelpman, AAA7 project director, said "We are concerned that seniors, who did not enroll for a drug discount card before December 31st, and meet the income eligibility, have less than three months to apply for the full \$600. After March 31st the \$600 is prorated and they will lose dollars." She continued to say, "It is important to enroll as many seniors as possible before March 31st so they will receive the maximum benefit."

JOINT CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY ON AGING AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON THE AGING

Executive Director Pamela K. Matura presented a workshop titled "Memorandum of Understanding between Ohio Department of Aging and Ohio Department of MRDD: A Model Work Plan" at the Joint Conference of the American Society on Aging and the National Council on the Aging in Philadelphia, PA.

The workshop showed how the dramatic growth of older adults with developmental disabilities will have a significant impact on resources. This increase will call for new relationships and collaborations to assure that appropriate and meaningful services are provided to a population that will live well into their 80s. The session outlined a vision to serve this population with the combined effort, knowledge, and direction of the Ohio Department of Aging and the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation Developmental Disabilities.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING UNVEILS WEBSITE

The 2005 White House Conference on Aging has officially unveiled its website at www.whoca.gov. This website provides information regarding planning and progress of the 2005

conference which will take place October 23-26 in Washington, D.C. The mission of the White House Conference



on Aging is to make policy recommendations to Congress and the President, and to assist the private and public sectors in promoting dignity, health, independence, and economic security of current and future generations of older Americans.



Older Americans Month May 2005

Celebrate Long-Term Living!

Older Americans Month History of Older Americans Month

When Older Americans Month was established in 1963, only 17 million living Americans had reached their 65th birthdays. About a third of older Americans lived in poverty and there were few programs to meet their needs. Interest in older Americans and their concerns was growing, however. In April of 1963, President John F. Kennedy's meeting with the National Council of Senior Citizens served as a prelude to designating May as "Senior Citizens Month."

Thanks to President Jimmy Carter's 1980 designation, what was once called Senior Citizens Month, is now called "Older Americans Month," and has become a tradition.

Historically, Older Americans Month has been a time to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country, in particular those who defended our country. Every President since JFK has issued a formal proclamation during or before the month of May asking that the entire nation pay tribute in some way to older persons in their communities. Older Americans Month is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs and other such activities.

Administration on Aging to Celebrate Older Americans Month in May

Our nation is in the midst of a boom in the aging population. Older people are living longer and staying healthier and more active much later in life. In 2011 the first wave of the 78 million baby boom generation turns 65. The 2005 Older Americans Month theme, "Celebrate Long-Term Living" was selected by the Administration on Aging (AoA) to recognize and honor the valuable contributions of older persons to their communities as they age.

For more information about all services and programs offered by the Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc., call 800-582-7277 or visit the website at www.aaa7.org.

The Ombudsman program can handle your concerns about areas such as elder abuse, client care, consumer rights, etc. For more information, call 1-800-582-7277.

For information about Ohio Medicaid programs or to report suspected Medicaid fraud, you may call the Ohio Medicaid Fraud Hotline at 1-800-324-8680.

CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT OHIO'S FUTURE

Many signs were shown at the rally.



Overview of the group before the rally started.



John Stultz and Harold Walker



John Stultz, Harold Walker, and Rev. and Mr. Dawson. Rev. Dawson is on the AAA7 Advisory Council.



Harold Walker, Executive Director of O4A, Jane Taylor and John Stultz.

John Stultz and Harold Walker, members of the Area Agency on Aging District 7's Legislative Committee, traveled to Columbus to show support for the rally sponsored by the "Campaign to Protect Ohio's Future Organization." This coalition of over 370 health, human services, primary and secondary education and higher education organizations, calls on Ohio Legislators to protect Ohio's most vulnerable citizens by restoring or adequately funding vital services through a responsible budget that has - as its primary priority - meeting basic human needs and providing sufficient funds to invest in Ohio's future.

John and Harold were 2 of over 3,000 people attending the rally.

BREAKFAST WITH OUR LEGISLATORS

Each year the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging hosts a "Breakfast with Your Legislators" giving attendees the opportunity to advocate and educate their legislators on programs and services critical to older adults. This event was held in the Ohio Statehouse with thirty-four legislators in attendance.



Rep. Clyde Evans and AAA7 Executive Director Pamela K. Matura



AAA7 Board of Trustee Harold Walker, AAA7 Executive Director Pamela K. Matura and Rep. David Daniels



Senator Tom Niehaus and AAA7 Executive Director Pamela K. Matura



Pictured above talking with Rep. David Daniels are: John Stultz, Ross County AAA7 Board of Trustee member; Paul Thurman, Ross County AAA7 Advisory Council member; Dave Litteral, Scioto County PASSPORT provider for AAA7 and AAA8; Harold Walker, Highland County AAA7 Board of Trustee; and AAA7 Executive Director Pamela K. Matura.

Board of Trustees

Alice Ward, President (Pike County); **Jane Ann Burns**, Vice President (Vinton County); **Andy Graham**, Secretary/Treasurer (Jackson County); **Ana Maria Mendieta** (Gallia County); **Dale Mullens** (Scioto County); **David Schug** (Lawrence County); **John Stultz** (Ross County); **Robert Boldman** (Adams County); **Scott Hinsch** (Jackson County); **Sherri Rutherford** (Ross County); **Harold Walker**, Ex Officio (Highland County)

A COMPARISON OF THE OAAAA LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM AND THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

Recognizing that independence, dignity and choice are strongly held values by all Americans, the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (OAAAA) has a long-standing commitment to a comprehensive system of services that provides older adults with access to the most appropriate services in the setting of their choice.

Many adults with disabilities do not fully comprehend the array of long-term care choices that are available. Nursing home placement for eligible adults with disabilities continues to be the only long-term care entitlement through Medicaid. High quality nursing facility care continues to be a critical part of the long-term care system, but the system needs to re-direct funds to community-based care.

OAAAA Supports	The Governor's Budget
✓ Fully funding programs like PASSPORT (GRF 490-403) PASSPORT needs 842 slots for monthly enrollments in FY 2006 and 885 slots in FY 2007	✓ Funds PASSPORT insufficiently with a shortfall of \$29.7 million (GRF) ✓ The Governor's Budget proposes 625 monthly enrollments in FY 2006 and FY 2007
✓ Developing an assisted living medicaid waiver so adults with disabilities can receive long-term care while residing in a home-like setting	✓ Authorizes the creation of an assisted living Medicaid waiver administered by the Department of Aging for 1,800 Medicaid consumers in a nursing facility or in a Medicaid waiver program
✓ Ensuring viable consumer choice in home and community-based services by having PASSPORT rates keep pace with inflation and by having higher reimbursement rates for providers willing to serve "hard to serve" clients	✓ No increases in PASSPORT provider rates are included ✓ The Department of Aging will certify providers of community-based services

Low-income older adults often lack resources to pay for necessities. These older adults often use their limited resources until they qualify for Medicaid, a process that costs greater taxpayer dollars and restricts the independence of older adults more than providing preventative and supportive services.

OAAAA Supports	The Governor's Budget
✓ Adding \$4 million to Senior Community Services (GRF 490-411) for home delivered meals	✓ No change in funding
✓ Removing the current enrollment freeze on the Residential State Supplement program (GRF 490-412) and restoring the program to 2,800 slots	✓ No change in funding ✓ The Department of Aging will transfer sufficient funds to the Department of Mental Health to make benefit payments for all recipients who are less than 60 years of age in the program by FY 2007
✓ Raise the asset level for PASSPORT eligibility	
✓ Raise the asset level for PASSPORT eligibility	✓ No change to the asset level

PAMELA K. MATURA NAMED CHAIR OF THE APPALACHIAN TASK FORCE

Pamela K. Matura, Executive Director of the Area Agency on Aging, District 7 has been elected as the new Chair of the Appalachian Task Force. This group is made up of over 100 agencies in Ohio's 29 Appalachian counties.

Ohio's Appalachian Legislative Delegation and the Governor's Office on Appalachia work closely with this task force in determining the needs of the region's various infrastructures, for example, economic development, local government, health, education, social services, etc. Ms. Matura, along with the directors of the local development districts, addressed attendees at the March 8, 2005 Appalachian Legislative Reception held at the Hyatt on Capitol Square in Columbus. The sponsors were Buckeye Hills-Hocking Valley Regional Development District, Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association, Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission, Ohio Rural Development Partnership, and the Ohio Appalachian Task Force. Ms. Matura described the task force's activities and its future plans to meet with the legislative delegation representatives, Senator Joy Padgett and Ohio House Representative, Charlie Wilson about regional issues. A task force information sharing session had been held earlier in the day with staff from the Governor's Office on Appalachia.

ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

Executive Director Pamela Matura attended the April 10-11, 2005 Annual Legislative Briefing of the National Association of the Area Agencies on Aging, held at the Russell Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C. Areas emphasized during this particular annual session were as follows: "Critical Issues for the Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act," "What Changes are in Store for the Medicaid Program," "Next Steps on Medicare Modernization Efforts: Implementation of the New Prescription Drug Benefit," "What Proposals are Being Considered to Address the Future of Social Security," and "Advocacy—How To Get Our Message Heard."

Visits to our District's members of Congress were also made by staff from Ohio's Area Agencies on Aging. Plans were made at these visits to also meet with staff from the Congressional District Offices around Ohio.

UNIVERSITY OF RIO GRANDE'S FIFTH ANNUAL INTERGENERATIONAL DANCE

The Fifth Annual Intergenerational Dance was held April 1 on the University of Rio Grande's campus. Each year the attendance has grown and this year there were 102 people. The oldest attendee was 87 years young and the youngest was 2. This event was sponsored by the Social Work Student Council and the Macro Class.

The dance was advertised throughout the area by radio, newspapers, and posting flyers in various senior centers inviting anyone who would like to come and have fun. With a "Country Western" theme going on, all had a great time.

Twenty-four door prizes were distributed. Two lucky individuals won grand prizes for their part in the Karaoke contest. At this fifth event there were three senior citizens from the University of Rio Grande meal site who have attended all five Intergenerational Dances.

