

WESLEYLINKS

MAY NEWSLETTER & JUNE MEETING NOTICE

MAY is Older Americans Month, a time to celebrate those 65 and older through ceremonies, events and public recognition. President Kennedy designated May, 1963, as the first Senior Citizens Month, and then in 1980 President Carter changed the name to Older Americans Month. **May is also Stroke Awareness Month and High Blood Pressure Education Month.**

As I read about these various designations, it suddenly popped in to my head on what a difference we could make if somehow we could all plan something collectively on the importance of stroke prevention and controlling high blood pressure and then implement the plan in every community in Cincinnati next May. **MAY 17 IS WORLD HYPERTENSION DAY. What if, on May 17, 2010, we could organize, promote and publicize a joint effort on Stroke Awareness and High Blood Pressure Screenings?? WOW!!**

Our June Meeting will be held at St. James Episcopal Church, 3207 Montana Avenue in Westwood, on Wednesday, June 3 at 12:00 noon, beginning with our pizza luncheon, followed by a short business meeting, followed by our program, **Mark O'Keefe**, who will explain the Navigator for Seniors' Health program through **Tri-Health**. Our hostess will be Marian Riestenberg, and I sincerely hope we can have a record turnout (30 or more) before we adjourn for the summer. As we westsiders do when we have meetings on the east side, hopefully our east side group can arrange car pools from the east side. Between Paul Hillebrand, Jerry Howard, Ken Memke and Eileen Simpson, some or all of that group can create carpools. As a footnote to you four, do you know anyone who attends Mt. Washington Presbyterian Church that you could invite to that meeting? I would love to involve that Church in our WesleyLinks program.

Speaking of Marian Riestenberg, I was never more proud than when I read that Marian was one of ten recipients of the 2009 Florence Nightingale Awards for Nursing for her involvement in the development of the Occupational Medicine Department at Good Samaritan Hospital, as well as several other accomplishments, including parish nurse at St. James. Congratulations, Marian, on this well deserved award.

I should also acknowledge our own **Pat Chaney**, the parish nurse at St. Aloysius Gonzaga, who received the **Outstanding Senior Citizen Award** from the Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio on March 17 for her work in recruiting other retired nurses to assist seniors with transportation and blood pressure checks, setting up informational programs to assist family caregivers, and conducting family caregiver support groups. Congratulations, Pat, on your well deserved award.

As I write about Marian and Pat, I realize I probably wouldn't have met either lady had it not been for our WesleyLinks program. I feel truly blessed in not only knowing them, but meeting and knowing our other 15-20 key members who attend most, if not all of our meetings. **If you never learn anything from our meetings and consider them a waste of time**, you can still benefit when you attend because you will meet people like Marian and Pat, you can gain their expertise, you can ask for their help.

To me, Wesleylinks is a support group, a help group, a network, so that any church who wants to become a member and learn about senior ministries, can learn from other churches and make a new friend along the way. Our meetings should not be about Wesley Community Services, they should be about YOU and other agencies who support the elderly.

NEW BUILDING – Earlier this month Wesley Services Organization, the parent organization of Wesley Community Services and Lincoln Crawford Nursing & Rehabilitation Center, purchased a new, larger building in the Western Hills area that will enable WCS to consolidate all of its operations under one roof, which primarily means that our kitchen will be moved from the Erie Building of Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church to our new building, where it will be right by our major distribution center. No longer will we have to daily transport our meals from Hyde Park to Westwood. Plans call for renovation to begin during the summer.

THIRD OF YEAR RESULTS – Through April, we have delivered 76,807 meals (compared to 83,087 meals in 2008), provided 11,078 specialized transports (compared to 10,526 transports in 2008) and 7,087 hours of home care assistance (compared to 6,835 hours in 2008). No reason to explain the drop in meals-we still have 8 months to catch up.

SPEAKERS' BUREAU – I would like to remind all of you again that I or others from our organization are always willing and able to speak to any of your church groups. I recently spoke to a seniors' group that meets at Mt. Healthy United Methodist Church on April 6 (Monday), new member Jerry Howard from Parkside Christian Church had me speak to an outreach ministry group of the church on Sunday, April 26, and Tuesday, May 12 I spoke to a seniors group at Grace Lutheran Church. On Tuesday, May 19, Mike Ohmer, my assistant, will staff a booth at the Senior Expo at Coney Island, and two days later I will speak to a church group at First Church of God in Corryville. **When may I speak to a group from your Church?**

FUTURE PLANS – I have decided to retire from my position as Director of Development of Wesley Services Organization as of June 26. With my wife's retirement from her teaching position on May 29, my 69th birthday in August and our daughter's expected birth of our first grandchild in November, we expect to be away from Cincinnati for at least a week/month, beginning in June. We purchased a condo in Charlottesville, Virginia in 2005 to be closer to our daughter, who lives in Washington, D.C., and my twin brother, who lives in Williamsburg. My plan is to stay involved in our WesleyLinks program, perhaps create new opportunities to work more collaboratively in health fairs for seniors, as alluded to in an earlier paragraph, speak to church groups when I am in town, and increase the number of churches in our program. This would be a perfect fit for me as I change careers for the third time, but whatever will be will be.

I hope to see as many of you as possible on June 3. Someone will call you to confirm your attendance.

Bill Reusing (5/14/09)