

**Washtenaw County Blueprint for Aging
Year 3 Initiative Progress
May and June 2008**

Aging in Place Initiative

- *Community Volunteers Pilot Project:* Having developed a structure for organizing information gathered and lessons learned in the pilot, the workgroup continued to collaborate on refining the manual, *Organizing Community Volunteers to Enhance Aging-Friendly Neighborhoods*.
- *Transportation Voucher Pilot Project:* Work group members collected data via phone interviews with service providers and directors of programs serving seniors (lifelong learning programs, senior centers, and medical clinics) to better understand the role transportation plays in community members' ability to attend services and appointments. Survey results indicate transportation as a barrier to attendance and showed a high level of interest among providers to participate in phase II. The workgroup began determination of parameters of next phase of the pilot. Staff worked with University of Michigan School of Social Work interns to develop a project evaluation plan.
- *Neighborhood Organization Support-Village Model, etc* – Blueprint staff person newly assigned to the Village Model Workgroup was invited to and attended a board meeting of the Dexter-Miller Co-op Village Model. BFA staff receives regular reports from this group and has provided information and strategies regarding recruitment/outreach. BFA has received a request for support from the Lohr Road Village, which is rapidly organizing to serve seniors in that neighborhood.

Senior Leadership Initiative

- *Senior Advocates of Washtenaw (SAW)*-BFA supported SAW and AAA 1B in holding the Senior Michiganians' Day Rally event in Washtenaw County on June 2. Along with local legislators, Senator Liz Brater, Representative Rebekah Warren, Washtenaw County Commissioner Barbara Bergman, and SAW leader, LuAnne Bullock, BFA partners Carolyn Hastings of the Housing Bureau and Darlene Racz from Turner Geriatric Clinic were members of a panel highlighting strengths and challenges of the Advocacy Position Recommendation submitted by AAA1-B. Tina Abate Marzolf introduced the platform. Jim McGuire set the stage for citizen participation in advocating for its adoption.
- *Senior Advocates of Washtenaw (SAW)*– At SAW's June 23 Washtenaw County Commissioners Candidates Forum. All candidates were invited to attend this event and speak to how they would address aging issues. BFA director presented Blueprint findings on Washtenaw County's projected increase in older adults and BFA strategic initiatives for long term health and service needs. Ira Lax of AADL moderated the panel of candidates.

Technology Innovation Initiative

Volunteer Washtenaw...Your Day, Your Way

BFA held working meetings with our volunteer technology expert, Larry Cohn, and a web designer to create a website, VolunteerWashtenaw.org, that targets recruitment of community members 50 years of age and older for volunteer opportunities in partner programs that help older adults age in place. Through the website calendar, community members will be able to find one-time or short-term

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opportunities, choose an opportunity, and link to an volunteer coordinator for event sign-up. Plans are in progress for launching the site in early fall.

Foundation Building Initiative

United Way Board Retreat

BFA director spoke to the United Way of Washtenaw County board about the history, purpose and objectives of the Blueprint for Aging at their annual retreat. This was an important opportunity to share the BFA commitment to systems level change and how closely our strategic plan aligns with the new United Way approach to funding distribution. Jill also expressed our appreciation for the opportunity to lead the UW Aging in Place initiative.

Core Leadership Team Meeting and Committees

Numerous workgroup, individual meetings with key informants and BFA Core Leadership Team met in June to discuss progress of Blueprint role in designating 2008 United Way enhancement funds for distribution to agency programs serving older adults. BFA director will present the final plan to the CLT at its July meeting and will submit the plan to the United Way on July 14. Workgroup meetings were held as needed. Progress to be reported at July CLT meeting.

Community Awareness, Education and Events

Local Movie Opening [Young@Heart](#)

The Blueprint for Aging hosted an opening night reception for the film *Young @ Heart* on Friday evening, May 2. Over 100 community members and agency personnel enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and popcorn while networking and socializing before the film. *Young @ Heart* has won awards for its inspiring story of a Massachusetts choral group whose participants average age is 80. Their renditions of pop, blues and punk rock songs are exhilarating, and the behind scenes story of the group is interesting, funny and poignant.

Presentation to Washtenaw County Commissioners

On May 21, BFA director attended the Washtenaw County Commissioners meeting with State Commissioner, Ken Rau from Brighton and Office of Services to the Aging Field Representative Dan Doezema in order to present Washtenaw County with the Elder Friendly Community for a Lifetime award. Washtenaw County's award was presented on the basis of the Blueprint for Aging community assessment and strategic plan. Special features cited were the wide range of information sources used in the assessment, the significant number of concerned citizens involved in the project, the development of the analysis to the next stage that incorporates long range planning, recognition of the scope of the needs of older adults with depression and mental illness, and endorsement by the Human Services Collaborative Body.

Meeting with Senior and Recreation Center Directors

Staff met with directors to review draft BFA website pages that will contain a senior activity center directory that will include name, location, a map, and contact information for Washtenaw County senior and Community Center. The site will also host a shared calendar for the community to see one-time events offered at centers throughout the county. Webpage will also contain information to assist directors in grant writing endeavors

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BFA Branding and Publicity

E-newsletter, Rethink Aging

Our May edition highlighted Washtenaw County's Senior Michiganians Day Rally, the Blueprint's promotional buttons (including the latest addition, "Age or Die") and the [Young@Heart](#) reception. Catholic Social Services technical support staff taught new newsletter editor how to create the web-based newsletter and made improvements that simplify the process.

Blueprint for Aging Webpage

Please visit the BFA website, <http://www.BlueprintForAging.org> to see our new BFA events page, virtual *Aging with Attitude* exhibit tour, meeting calendar, and event pictures. We are currently developing a page that will highlight Washtenaw County senior centers and their activities. This will also function as an information resource for Senior Center Directors in their efforts to support their programming and obtain funding.

BFA Logo and artwork

Staff met with artist Bill Burgard to review artwork designs for new BFA aging with attitude branding and logo.

BFA Collaborative Efforts and Initiatives

- *UM Matthai Botanical Gardens* - BFA is partnering with Matthai to host a two-session community discussion on Earth and Family Friendly Funeral and Burial Options initiatives. Attendees will learn about alternatives to conventional funeral and burial practices that can maximize family involvement and minimize environmental impact.
- *RSVP of Washtenaw* - Blueprint staff participated in the 35th Annual RSVP Volunteer Recognition Luncheon to honor older volunteers, including those in partner agencies. Former CLT member Ed Marsh was Master of Ceremony; Blueprint director congratulated volunteers on their contributions to Washtenaw County.
- *Turner Senior Resource Clinic* - Following an shared programming initiative set at Blueprint for Aging-sponsored Day of Dialogue for Senior and Community Centers in February, TSRC expanded its request to the Rislov Foundation for music therapy and was awarded a grant to expand the program sites to include all Washtenaw County senior centers, TSRC Silver Club, and the CSS Adult Day Program.

Grant Management

Weinberg Foundation

BFA and partners - Area Agency on Aging A 1-B, Neighborhood Senior Services, Jewish Community Center, Catholic Social Services, and Turner Geriatric Services have submitted a letter of intent (a condensed proposal) to the Weinberg Foundation to apply for a three-year grant to provide services in support of family and informal caregivers. Notification will be given in August to those partnerships that are chosen to submit a full proposal in October.

RWJF and Community Partnerships for Older Adults (CPFOA)

- Staff submitted second Year End Program Report and Bibliography

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- BFA staff participated in a telephone conference (June 23) with other RWJF funded partnerships on the issue of Sustaining the Work: Partnerships vs. Projects