



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 9, 2005

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**WASHTENAW COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO SPEAK AT NEXT SENIOR
ADVOCATES OF WASHTENAW MEETING**

Ann Arbor, Michigan – How are decisions made within county government? How does the recently approved county budget affect older county residents? How can citizens take a more active role in county government? These are just some of the issues to be discussed by Mr. Robert E. Guenzel, Washtenaw County Administrator, when he addresses the Senior Advocates of Washtenaw (SAW) at their next meeting. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 17th at the Washtenaw County Library Learning Resource Center/Library for the Blind & Physically Disabled, 4135 Washtenaw Avenue, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Doors open at 9 a.m. The meeting is open to the public and light refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Scott Layher at 734.712.3625 or slayher@csswashtenaw.org.

This meeting proceeds a very successful, well attended first meeting of SAW at American House last November at which State Representative Alma Wheeler Smith spoke to a crowd of nearly 80 seniors and advocates about potential changes that consumers can expect within state government regarding long-term care, budget cuts that affect seniors, and the importance of being proactive advocates.

Blueprint for Aging

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“The January meeting is an opportunity to build on the success of SAW’s first meeting and provides a good foundation for the group to move forward,” says Mark Lindke, Director, Washtenaw County Veterans Services and SAW member. “County government is sometimes referred to as the “silent government” as people may be more likely know what happens within their township government. Mr. Guenzel’s presentation will provide people with a better understanding of all that the county government does and how tax payers’ dollars are spent.”

The Senior Advocates of Washtenaw is a coalition of seniors and advocates for senior issues that meets monthly to study policy issues relevant to seniors and make recommendations to public officials and key decision makers in Washtenaw County. The coalition is open to all who are interested in advocating for the interests and concerns of older adults. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more, please contact the Blueprint for Aging.

The Senior Advocates of Washtenaw is part of the Blueprint for Aging, a partnership of consumers, public, private, nonprofit agencies, and funders, who is engaging the county in a strategic planning process. This involves a county-wide discussion and priority-setting of important issues and planning a response to the concerns and expectations of older adults.

The Blueprint for Aging is an integral part of Community Partnerships for Older Adults (CPFOA) – a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, one of 11 projects nationwide selected from a field of 486 applicants to receive a planning grant in 2004. The Blueprint for Aging is endorsed by the Washtenaw County Human Services Community Collaborative and has received major support from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation.

For more information about the Senior Advocates of Washtenaw and the Blueprint for Aging, contact Scott Layher at 734.712.3625 or slayer@csswashtenaw.org.

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