



## Outstanding Senior Citizens Honored in 2021

July 26, 2021

Outstanding people reside in every one of our nine counties, and Council/Coalition on Aging in our region selected Outstanding Senior Citizens in recognition of Older Americans Month (OAM) and their contributions within our communities. OAM offers opportunities to hear from, support, and celebrate our nation's older adults. The 2021 theme of *Communities of Strength* recognizes the important role older adults play in fostering the connection and engagement that build strong, resilient communities.

The following individuals were selected as Outstanding Senior Citizens in their counties in gratitude for their continued giving to their neighbors, communities, and families. Darke County selected two individuals for the award.



### Champaign County

**Diedre Koik** is a problem solver with a dedication to serving her community. One of Diedre's passions is to serve Champaign County residents through LifeCare Alliance. LifeCare Alliance provides meals to individuals who are low-income, at risk for malnutrition, and/or may have physical limitations to receive food. Diedre volunteers to help individuals receive nutritional meals that helps them live healthy lives.

Diedre was born in Chicago but has lived in Champaign County for the last 35 years. Diedre has worked as a Real Estate Broker with Roost Real Estate Company in Urbana since she graduated from Skidmore College in 1973. When not working, she likes to ride horseback and raise hunting dogs.



## Clark County

**Dick Hatfield** has demonstrated a lifelong passion and enthusiasm for his community. He has served two terms on the Board of Directors of the Springfield Arts Council and has served as Director of Lectors at St. Raphael Catholic Church since 1997. Dick is known in Clark County for his knowledge of the history of downtown Springfield and his talent as a DJ and emcee.

Dick worked at Crowell-Collier Publishing, served in the Air Force National Guard, and Army National Guard before beginning his career with Benjamin Steele. He has been married to his wife Kathy for 55 years and is a proud parent and grandfather to three sons and four beautiful grandchildren.



## Darke County

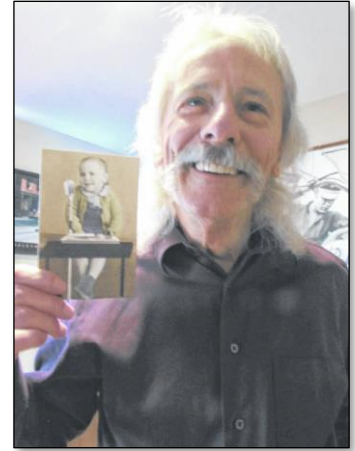
**Michael Brown** is well known for his contribution to the community through his loving therapy dogs who have over 1,500 documented visits to the residents at the area nursing homes and hospice locations. Mike's therapy dogs have earned five national awards including the highest national award that can be given - the distinguished award. Other awards received include national awards given by Therapy Dogs International, certificates of Merit from the City Mayor, United States Congress, and United States Senate. Mike continues to spend his energy putting smiles on faces through his therapy dogs.



Mike graduated from Greenville High School in 1979. After high school, Michael worked at Corning Glass Works for 25 years. Mike and his wife Susan have been married for 37 years. They enjoy spending time with their one son and one granddaughter.

## **Darke County**

**Tom Everhart** was selected because he spreads joy to his community through music. He developed his love for music when only 11 years old, going on to graduate from Tri-Village High School in 1962 before working for Mercury Records. He afterward returned to Tri-Village High School as disc jockey for its proms, and for the past five years has volunteered his time playing music at the Greenville Veterans of Foreign Wars post every Monday. Tom's love for music can be felt in all his work and his love for music brightens community member's lives.



## **Greene County**

**Lee Snell** is a Jamestown resident who spends his energy supporting and improving the lives of his Greene County neighbors of all ages. He is a family man, farmer, neighbor, volunteer, and community servant. Lee served on the Greene County Educational Service Center governing board. He is passionate about education and providing access to the tools and resources for the betterment of all generations throughout his community. Lee also spent many years as the Ross Township's Fiscal Officer where, in addition to his mandated responsibilities and working closely with the township trustees, he promotes the right for residents to see how their taxes are being spent.



Lee and his wife Opal celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in 2020 and enjoy their four children and 13 grandchildren.



## Logan County

**Betty Hunt** is a lifelong resident of Logan County. She is known for her hard work, kindness, and hospitality that can be shown through in all of her work. Betty volunteers at the American Red Cross located at the First United Methodist Church in Bellefontaine and is described as the “backbone” of the volunteer program. It is said that she takes the time to truly get to know the people she volunteers with and for. Betty is an individual who exemplifies “Communities of Strength” by creating an environment where everyone feels comfortable in.



Betty was the fourth sibling out of eight children and grew up on a family farm. Growing up on a farm, she has been a hard worker from a young age. Her work career began at Detroit Aluminum and Brass where she stayed for 42 years, then worked at Hi-Point Storage for 20 years.



## Miami County

**Ruth Reinhard** likes to stay active in her retirement years, recognizing the important role that older adults play in fostering connection and engagement that builds strong communities. Ruth volunteers at *The Clothesline* in Tipp City, St. John's Catholic Church, and Tipp City Seniors. Ruth has played an important role in Tipp City Seniors. From 2016-2018 she served as president of Tipp City Seniors. When the new location for the center opened, Ruth played a large part in the planning process in addition to signing the building loan for the new center.

Ruth was celebrated as the Outstanding Senior Citizen in Miami County in mid-July when her five children were in town to celebrate their mother.





## Montgomery County

**Debra Walling** is a dedicated community member in Dayton. She was nominated by Quiana Bickham of Dakota Center for her volunteer work at the Center. Debra exemplifies an Outstanding Senior Citizen through her attributes of caring for others, being respectful of others, and being a trustworthy individual. Debra's leadership skills, personal character, and her love of helping others are a few of Debra's qualities that people identify. As a teenager, Debra began volunteering at a nursing home in her hometown of Painesville, Ohio.

Her career began when she joined Deepwood Foundation where she worked with people of all ages living with developmental disabilities. She then began working as a home healthcare aid where she worked with older adults. Debra works diligently to make a difference in the community she loves to call home.

*No photo was available for the newsletter.*



## Shelby County

**Kathy Bray** encourages older adults to live a healthy lifestyle by moving, and she exemplifies its benefits through her own example of regularly participating in shuffleboard, line dancing, and pickleball. She volunteers for the Senior Center of Sidney-Shelby County leading classes including Moove N Groove, chair exercise, and chair yoga. Kathy's welcoming and encouraging personality is said to have increased attendance at the Center's activities. She also serves as chairperson for the meal provided at the Shelby County Fair's Senior Day, organizing volunteers to assemble approximately 500 lunches each year.

Kathy worked for the City of Sidney for many years, first as a part-time mower for the cemetery, then the sanitation department for 20 years, before working with the underground utilities department. Kathy says she loved working for the city because she was able to learn and experience what a great group of people work for the city.



The Preble County Council on Aging did not select an Outstanding Senior Citizen this year.

