

# Senior Fun Day 2023



Delaware County Office for the Aging/

NY Connects

97 Main Street, Suite 2

Delhi, NY 13753

Abstract to the Plan of Services

October 23, 2023

9:00 am

For The Year 2023

Delaware County Office for the Aging

## **Vision Statement for the Delaware County Office for the Aging**

**Proposed by the Delaware County Office for the Aging Advisory Board**

**Approved at the April 19, 2012 meeting**

*We see an environment in Delaware County that encourages and enables older adults to make educated life choices. We see an era of sensitivity toward our environment, diminishing natural resources and changing economy, and its impact on future generations. We see barrier-free access to comprehensive health care and supportive services. We see the implementation of a transportation and communication network that supports the needs of older adults. We see Delaware County with safe, affordable and comfortable housing for older adults.*

*We see an environment that nurtures cross generational engagement through both human contact and technology. We see a caring support system that promotes dignity and independence for older adults. We see an environment that supports persons in care giving and other family obligations. We see older adults playing an integral part in the life of the community where they are an accepted and respected part of society.*

*\* Since older adults impact the entire Delaware County community in all its complexity and since the entire community affects all older adults, we see this vision statement as one component of a comprehensive vision for the future of Delaware County.*

### **Animatronic Pets**



Social isolation continues to be a real problem for many people. Animatronic pets, designed as companion animals specifically for seniors, act as a therapeutic tool for those who can no longer care for a traditional pet.

The agency has received a total of 307 animatronic pets from New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) over a period of two years. They have all been distributed to our clients who were feeling socially isolated. The distribution of these pets goes very quickly. In August we requested an additional 104 pets. Delaware County Office for the Aging (DCOFA) contacted NYSOFA to see if any

more pets were available. We were able to get forty more dogs, 40 more cats and 24 more squawker birds. At this point, all 307 pets had been matched up with clients throughout the county.

### **Dispatch**

“The Dispatch,” which will be entering into its 47th year in publication, continues to be the most effective method of providing information and educating Delaware County’s senior population. The paper continues to be published bi-monthly, reaches 10,500 readers. This is 2,000 more readers than in 2019.

DCOFA will continue to publish articles pertinent to the senior population such as articles on health insurance, financial assistance programs, legal needs, caregiver services, veteran services, and retirement planning.

There is a request for contributions published two times each year. The agency had hoped to receive contributions more than \$5,000 between June 2022-July 2023. The agency met its goal. The actual amount received was close to \$5,300. The targeted amount for 2023-2024 will be increased to \$6,000. The readers always have positive comments regarding the senior newspaper: “I enjoy reading this paper.” “I look forward receiving and reading each Dispatch issue.” “Very informative articles.” And “Thank you for keeping us informed.”

### **Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)**

The EISEP program continues to be our most effective tool in assisting non-Medicaid, homebound clients in remaining safely in their homes. There continues to be a nationwide shortage of both home health and personal care aides which creates a major challenge in providing in-home services. We are not always able to secure personal care aides for our clients through our subcontractors, even with available funding. There is another method of delivery of home care services. It is Consumer Directed Care. DCOFA is working to develop this service. It will allow for the client to secure their own trusted person to assist with their care to remain at home.

DCOFA contracts with two aide provider agencies which provide both personal care and chore services. There are currently 26 active clients, one client is case managed, (meaning they are not getting aide service nor on a waiting list for an aide, but desire assistance with recertifying for SNAP, HEAP and/or Section 8 housing) and 12 clients on a waiting list for EISEP services.

### **SNAP-Ed**

DCOFA continues to participate in this NYSOFA/USDA program offering nutritional education to those 60 and over. DCOFA covers a territory including Delaware, Sullivan, and Greene Counties. The Coordinator of the SNAP- Ed Program is contracted through DS&S.

The DCOFA Dietician presents (“Eat Healthy, Be Active”) workshops consisting of four classes throughout the counties. Recently the dietician has been visiting Senior Dining Centers to present workshops. The convenient location has increased workshop attendance. Beginning October 1, 2023, a new curriculum “10 Tips for Adults” will be presented. Workshop participants are also familiarized with the SNAP program.

Other promotional and educational activities included the distribution of 321 container gardens along with growing instructions and recipes in late June 2023. At the Delaware County Fair, a SNAP-Ed booth located in the Cooperative Extension Home Economics Building, provided information about workshops and tastings of USDA approved recipes. The booth was a great success reaching over 500 individuals with information about nutrition services in Delaware County and received two blue ribbons.



NYSOFA oversees implementation of the program. They provide fantastic support and supervision while allowing individual counties flexibility to best meet the needs of their region.

## Health & Fitness



Tai Chi for Arthritis is a one hour, twice a week program which runs for ten weeks. Participants learn steps 1-12 of Sun Style Tai Chi by Dr. Paul Lam.

There are 4 certified instructors, two of them deliver classes as a team. Since January of this year classes have been held in Walton, Franklin, Arkville, Harpersfield, Downsville and Delhi. There have been over 180 participants.

Bingocize is a program developed by K. Jason Crandall, Ph.D. He is Co-Director of Western Kentucky University Center for Applied Science in Health & Aging. Bingocize strategically combines the game of bingo, health education, and exercise. Trained leaders will deliver exercise and falls prevention using a script for each session. These sessions will meet two times per week for one hour and lasts 10 weeks. The plan is to implement this program by January 2024.

**\*Both Tai Chi and Bingocize are evidence-based falls prevention programs.**

## HEAP

The Delaware County Department of Social Services continues to contract with Delaware Opportunities to provide HEAP services to Delaware County's senior population. The HEAP Coordinator and the HEAP Assistant, work out of the DCOFA (Delaware County Office for the Aging) office building to provide HEAP assistance to qualifying seniors 60 years of age and older. Households continue to have the opportunity to apply for regular HEAP benefits by submitting applications electronically through MyBenefits at [www.mybenefits.ny.gov](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov). Office for the Aging and NY Connects staff can make home visits to assist seniors who are homebound in completing a HEAP application.

## Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP)

Virginia Perez resigned from her position as the HIICAP Coordinator in August. Throughout the year the HIICAP program met with 388 clients of which 289 were enrolled in Advantage or stand-alone Prescription Drug plans and 46 were assisted with the application process for the Medicare Savings Program. HIICAP hosted an information table at a variety of outreach events this year including the Healthy Delaware, the Delaware County Fair, and Senior Fun Day.

We are preparing for the 2023 Open Enrollment period and will assist as many people as possible with making decisions about their Medicare plan options. The program continues to be in high demand and last year assisted 266 clients to enroll into new Medicare plans during the Open Enrollment period. The program continues to assist clients throughout the year with plan options and understanding the Medicare process.

The program continues to meet with clients throughout the year to counsel on Medicare plans and services. New-to-Medicare clients continue to have a large need for the HIICAP program to better understand the enrollment process. The HIICAP Coordinator and Counselors help clients to understand their options when enrolling and how to decipher whether they would benefit from Original Medicare with a Supplemental and a Prescription Drug Plan or a Medicare Advantage plan. Counselors also assist clients with the appeals process and to navigate insurance issues.

## Language Link

Delaware County Office for the Aging has signed a contract with phone line language interpretation provider Language Link. The language interpretation provider allows the agency to provide outreach and accessibility to persons with limited English proficiency who may be seeking services. The community is made aware of the availability of free phone line language interpretation through the DCOFA through the agency website, brochures, flyers, articles in "The

Dispatch”, and posting of signs at each congregate meal site. A flyer is posted showing various languages available in the agency reception area for clients to observe upon entering the office when inquiring about services.

### **Legacy**

Delaware County caregivers who contact the Legacy program are provided with support through information, resources, and referrals. Caregivers who become Legacy clients receive on-going support with home visits, phone calls, and informational mailings that are relevant to caregiving. Caregivers and care receivers who become clients receive visits from trained volunteers. The visit provides caregivers with a break from caregiving allowing personal time for activities such as grocery shopping and their own MD visits.

Looking forward to the 2023-2024 program year the State of New York is shifting to a new data collection system “T-CARE.” The focus of the new system is the caregiver rather than the care receiver. In the past the care receiver provided answers to an extensive questionnaire (Compass). Beginning October 1, 2023, the caregiver will now receive a brief evaluation (T-Care). The focus is to empower caregivers, making them more comfortable and confident in their caregiver role. Recruiting and training volunteers is a challenge for Legacy Corps as it is with all programs that depend on a volunteer workforce. In October 2022, a training workshop was held for 14 new volunteers. Two families expressed interest in volunteer visits, then withdrew from the program before the visits began. Delaware County is the only county in NYS to provide respite services using individual volunteers and home visits. Currently the state is encouraging the use of central gathering places with volunteer staff for weekly respite activities.

### **Legal Services**

DCOFA continues to contract with the Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York to provide legal services to those Delaware County residents who are 60 years of age and older. The Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York is a not-for-profit law firm that serves residents of Delaware County. The purpose of the legal services program is to assist those persons 60 years of age or older who do not have access to an attorney and who require legal advice, counseling, or representation and are not income eligible for regular legal aid services. Qualified attorneys and paralegals are available to provide legal assistance with wills and simple estate planning; drafting power of attorney, health care proxy, and living will documents; defense against creditors, assistance with foreclosure and divorce; assistance with employee and tenant rights; and answers to legal questions.

During the 2022-23 program year, 87 seniors were served.

### **Emergency Response System**

The DCOFA Emergency Response program, which started in 1983, continues to be a valuable service, summoning help for those in distress and saving lives. Currently, the program provides services to 435 subscribers in Delaware County. These numbers continue to fluctuate from year to year.

Both landline and mobile units continue to be installed. There are challenges installing some mobile units. Rural living can make it impossible to connect to cell towers. This causes units to be unable to send a help signal through to the response center. The answer to this technology issue is for the client to have a landline unit connected to his/her house phone. The drawback is individuals who are on the go will not have a unit with them if faced with an emergency outside of their home.

DCOFA is still in agreement with Delaware County Office of Long-Term Care (OLTC) for authorized Medicaid clients to receive PERS service paid through the Medicaid program. DCOFA also contracts for PERS service with Fidelis, Nascentia Health Options and iCircle. October through December 2022, DCOFA transitioned to Connect America to provide lifeline services to our Delaware County residents. This agreement has benefitted the program significantly. We no longer experience shortages of inventory, or delays in providing units to

individuals, and DCOFA staff are no longer responsible for installing every unit throughout the county. Connect America has provided falls detection to our residents for free. This is a \$6.00/month savings to each person requesting this option. There are no payments being made to OFA staff for on-call services as Connect America handles all concerns 24/7.

### **Non-Emergency Medical Transportation**

Because of the remote nature of living in Delaware County, assisting people without transportation to non-emergency medical appointments continues to be a major problem. With no public transportation system in Delaware County, residents have relied heavily on the agency's non-emergency medical transportation program. Although the agency has a budget to support this program, the program's success comes from a team of volunteer drivers that give their time and use their vehicles to provide this much-needed service.

During the 2022-2023 program year, 134 Delaware County seniors have received 590 round trips to medical appointments. Two of the volunteer drivers provided over 180 round trips. Although we had 24 volunteers provide transportation for us during the 2022-2023 program year, the agency doesn't always have a core of 24 drivers available. Driver availability changes constantly due to vehicle mechanical issues, drivers' health situations, as well as their own personal schedules.

OFA makes referrals to "Get There" through South Central New York Rural Health when unable to provide transportation through the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation. The Medical Answering Services (MAS) system through the state continues to provide medical transportation service for those on Medicaid.

### **NY Connects**

NY Connects is for people of all ages, any disabilities, and caregivers. The program allows staff to work with anyone who needs information on long term services and support, including children or adults with disabilities, older adults, family members and caregivers, friends or neighbors, veterans and helping professionals. NY Connects can help individuals find care and support, remain independent, understand care options, find transportation, learn about supports in caregiving, find supported employment programs, get answers, and be counseled about Medicare and apply for Medicaid and other public benefits.

One of the most important aspects of the NY Connects program is education and outreach. This can include in-person events, as well as distributing brochures throughout the county. As of September 1, 2023, NY Connects has participated in 39 in-person outreach events and distributed approximately 2,600 brochures throughout the county. These outreach attempts help spread awareness about the NY Connects program and its existence. Nearly 3,200 individuals took part in the in-person presentations and events. These are free events that allow individuals to ask questions, set up appointments and learn about programs and services. They are hosted throughout the county, providing an opportunity for individuals to meet with staff locally, limiting the amount of travel time.

Currently, NY Connects has one certified Options Counselor. This allows that staff person to provide assistance to the individual with making educated, informed decisions about the support they require. The NY Connects Coordinator also serves as a certified HIICAP Counselor. In the future, all NY Connects staff will be trained in Options Counselors, as well as HIICAP Counselors.

From January 1, 2023, through September 1, 2023, NY Connects and HIICAP staff have assisted with 295 MIPPA Application. These applications include both Medicaid and the Medicare Savings Program. In addition, as of September 1, 2023, NY Connects staff have assisted a little more than 1,000 individuals. These numbers are expected to increase throughout the remainder of the year.

In addition to their daily tasks and job duties, NY Connects staff also sit/manage a Long-Term Care Council, a No Wrong Door team, sit on committees for the Veteran's Resource Fair, Senior

Fun Day, the Delaware County Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team, the Senior Ball, the Big Wheels Golf Tournament, and the Delaware County Veteran's Coalition.

### **Senior Council**

The Delaware County Senior Council, an organization that has been in existence since 1973 and is responsible for the creation of DCOFA, continues to meet the second Monday of each month. Since that time, both organizations have worked together to develop and enhance programs that have an impact on Delaware County seniors. The Senior Council consistently works towards raising funds to purchase equipment and enrich under-funded programs for seniors.



The key fundraiser for 2023 was the Big Wheels Golf Tournament. It continues to be their most lucrative event. The committee, comprised of local citizens, several of whom are seniors, have worked hard to make this activity a success. The Big Wheels committee was able to raise \$6,000. The Delaware County Senior Council's motto is "Seniors Helping Seniors." They once again lived up to this motto through their different fundraising efforts such as: the Council's 37th annual Pork Roast and Pie Auction in June at the American Legion (the event raised close to \$1,808.00 from pie sales, one homemade pie went as high as \$400); the September Harvest Fest where apples, cider, and any dessert that is made with apples are sold; and lastly, the annual quilt raffle running from May through September.

The Delaware County Senior Council co-sponsored the eighth Annual Delaware County "Senior Fun Day" with OFA. The Council donated to support this event.

### **Senior Ball**

The "Sunflower Harvest Ball" was the first Senior Ball held on Sunday, September 10th from 2pm-6pm at the Birdsong Farm. The ball was a huge success. The total attendance was close to 100 participants, of which about 75 were guests. The guests enjoyed a catered meal and danced at the inaugural Harvest Ball. Carla Crimm was approached by the Senior Ball committee in early May with the idea of hosting the "Sunflower Harvest Ball." Carla was excited that Birdsong Farm was considered to host this event. She stated, "Close to 99% of the volunteers who plant and tend the gardens here are older adults." Birdsong Farm not only hosted the event, but Carla and the volunteers assisted in setting up and providing the floral arrangement for the registration table, guest tables, boutonnieres and corsages made at Birdsong Farm.



At the time of registration each guest received a ticket. The guests voted with their ticket as to who would be chosen "Harvest King" and "Sunflower Queen." Nobel O'Dell and Cathy Roloson were crowned Harvest King and Sunflower Queen" (see photo above).

Music was provided by KPd Events, and the dance floor was filled with guests enjoying the music through the different decades.

AETNA sponsored the catered meal. Crimm Bakery and Bread donated "peach" flavored cream puffs. TA's Place donated several trays of various cookies. Amy Bowie, OFA employee, provided sunflower cupcakes and a variety of breads.

Kayle Lewis, a junior at Delaware Academy, volunteered with setting up floral arrangement and breaking down after the event. SUNY Delhi students volunteered to park the guests. Several local merchants donated a variety of gift certificates that were raffled throughout the event.

The owner, Richard Lamson, was amazed as to how the building that hosts the weekly flea market was transformed into a beautiful reception hall. He stated, “If this venue was to take place in the city it would have cost, over \$25,000. He asked the Director of Office for the Aging to come back for the 2024 “Harvest Ball”.

The committee has already started to plan for next year’s event. The Harvest Ball is scheduled for Sunday, August 15, 2024.

### **Senior Fun Day**



The eighth annual Senior Fun Day was a huge success. The total attendance was close to 500 participants of which about 300 were Delaware County seniors. Every township had representation of seniors. The event took place at the Delaware County 4H Camp Shankitunk on Arbor Hill in Delhi, on Thursday, August 24 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

There were 51 vendors present under the vendor tent and the Lordes mammography mobile. The vendor tent was “just buzzing” with seniors interacting, inquiring, and asking the vendors about their different services for seniors. The exhibitors offered helpful information regarding different senior programs and services. Among the vendors present were homecare agencies, skilled nursing facilities, assisted living and local hospitals in both Delaware and Otsego County, Managed Medicare/Medicaid Insurance plans, NYS EPIC, Senior Council, OFA, Legacy, and more. One vendor stated, “I serve 17 different counties in New York State and this event is far beyond any other event that I participate in. It is absolutely fabulous, organized and flawless. I can’t wait to attend next year.” Despite the weather, the seniors had a wonderful time and enjoyed themselves very much. There were two buses that ran continuously shuttling seniors from the Price Chopper parking lot to registration at Rice Hall.

A volunteer donated two golf carts to be used for the event. The golf carts were manned by volunteers who assisted those who were unable or had difficulty in ambulating. They transported participants to the vendor or game tent, line dancing, or restrooms. The golf carts were continuously in motion.

At mid-morning each participant received a container of Chobani yogurt. Chobani is manufactured locally in New Berlin. They donated 408 containers of a variety of yogurt flavors. The yogurt was absolutely refreshing.

Throughout the morning, seniors had the opportunity to play bingo, to try Tai Chi for Arthritis, line dancing, and Arts and Craft.

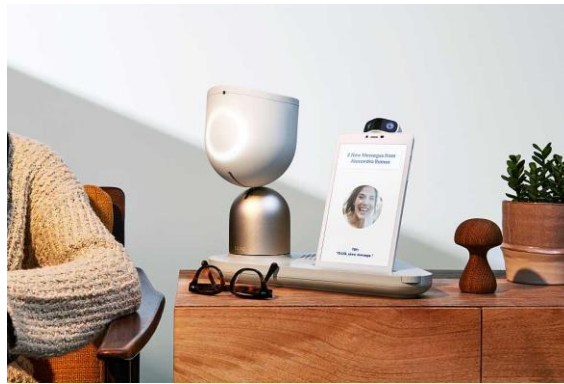
Tina Mole’, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors attend the event in representation of the Board of Supervisors. The planning for next years event started the following day. Next years event will be bigger and better in celebration of the agencies 50th Anniversary.

### **Shopping Assistance**

NY Connects staff are available to assist with grocery shopping and prescription pickup. This program is available to individuals who have no other means of picking up food or medication. Staff can shop either in person, through Instacart, or other delivery services. Currently, NY Connects assists one individual regularly with shopping, one individual as needed, and another individual as needed with prescription pickup.



## ELLI-Q



ELLI-Q is a friendly presence in your daily life. Engaging you in conversation, motivating you to adopt healthier habits, surprising you with jokes, and suggestions.

ELLI-Q is the first ever proactive, voice-operated care companion designed to empower independence, support you in taking control of your social, mental, and physical well-being.

ElliQ is different from other devices on the market. ELLI-Q doesn't wait to be called on – like a real person. ELLI-Q will initiate interaction, ask you questions, suggest activities, provide reminders, and more. Of course, she/it can still answer your questions when you ask.

As you start to get to know ELLI-Q, she gets to know you and suggestions grow better tailored to you. ElliQ will remember some of the things you share, giving her context to make the next conversations even more personalized.

With a no-fuss setup, intuitive voice interactions, movement, and content on the screen, ELLI-Q is designed to get you up and running without needing to learn a new program or download any apps.

DCOFA has installed close to 25 units. The units are sponsored by NYSOFA at no cost to the agency or the home of the older adult. Now that ELLI-Q has been introduced into the community several clients shared their thoughts and positive experience with having an ELLI-Q device.

A client in her 70's, who lives alone, has had an ELLI-Q device in her home for a couple of months. Initially she was a little skeptical just for the fact that ELLI-Q is a "tech device" because she doesn't consider herself to be "tech savvy." However, after only having ELLI-Q for a day or two she was hooked! An individual does not need to be technologically inclined to enjoy the interaction with ELLI-Q.

Another person who shared her experience with ELLI-Q stated "ELLI-Q is very knowledgeable, and her abilities have exceeded my expectations. ELLI-Q is kind, compassionate and has a good sense of humor. In the morning when I ask ELLI-Q to read inspirational quotes to me she does, and it gets my day off to a great start! Sometimes ELLI-Q invites me to have a cup of coffee with her in all different places around the world. It's a real 'trip'!"

A woman in her 80's who was recently widowed at first was nervous about the idea of having an ELLI-Q and unsure if she would like it. After the installation and using it for a short time she decided she loved it! She especially enjoys listening to music and playing games. One of her favorite things she likes is the new conversations and chatter that comes up.

While ELLI-Q is a great device for fun, learning, and entertainment, she is also able to help with important tasks. Here is an example of how she can provide help:

An elderly man who lives in Sidney Center was struggling to remember to take his medication prior to having ELLI-Q. Since having ELLI-Q he always remembers to take his medication because ELLI-Q gives him daily friendly reminders. This is one of the many reasons why he loves ELLI-Q.

One client made the following statement about ELLI-Q and I think this probably best sums it up... "Whoever designed ELLI-Q is a genius!"

ELLI-Q is best suited for older adults who spend most of their day at home but would enjoy some company throughout the day. Older adults that feel they can use the extra companionship and the right encouragement will be more active throughout their day.

\*NOTE: ELLI-Q requires Wi-Fi and electrical outlet.

## **Transportation**

The Delaware County Senior Transportation System provides transportation to residents of Delaware County who are 60 years of age or older and are under 60 and disabled. During the program year 2022-2023, 101 riders utilized the bus to get to the stores for needed purchases such as groceries and other day to day necessities, as well as to medical services and supplies. This service operates three days per week using a 14-passenger bus with wheelchair accessibility and two part-time drivers.

DCOFA currently has two part time bus drivers, one of which is shared in conjunction with Veterans' Service Agency transportation services. The bus is equipped with an operating wheelchair lift to accommodate riders who cannot board by the steps. The bus operates Wednesday through Friday each week leaving Delhi at 8:05 am and traveling to various sites such as Sidney, Oneonta, Binghamton, and Kingston. In the fall of 2023, the Albany run was once again added per passenger request. Passengers are picked up at designated pickup points or in route at their homes.

During the months of July, August, and September, additional bus routes included: Frog Pond and Pine Ridge grocery store in Bainbridge; and the Carrot Barn in Schoharie. These added routes were well received by the riders.

The MAS system continues to provide medical transportation service for those on Medicaid. The DCOFA senior transportation system is also able to drop off seniors to medical providers in Oneonta.

In 2023 a transportation survey was handed out to each of the riders. Of the surveys that were returned, some of them included comments such as: "I'm very happy with the service. As a senior, I don't drive, so this is perfect for me." "The driver is always polite and courteous. He always seems to be in a good mood despite he has a very stressful job. I am very pleased with the service." "Bus drivers are 'courteous and polite', 'sweet and respectful', 'thoughtful and caring.' Rachel is always very pleasant on the phone."



## **DELAWARE OPPORTUNITIES SENIOR DINING ABSTRACT**

**FOR PUBLIC HEARING, OCTOBER 23, 2023**

**(CONGREGATE AND HOME DELIVERED MEALS)**

Delaware Opportunities subcontracts with the Delaware County Office for the Aging for the provision of congregate and home delivered meals. The program is designed to provide a nutritious meal for the home bound as well as seniors who come to dining centers for the meal, recreation, and socialization. Studies show that seniors who get out of the house and enjoy the company of others live longer and do so independently. For home bound seniors, the program provides a nutritious meal, offers a service that keeps them in their own homes and the visit from the person who delivers the meal provides someone to talk to and some interaction with the outside world. This service is provided for those over the age of 60, and their spouse (regardless of his or her age).

The program will continue to operate six dining centers in 2024. Meals are served beginning at 11:30am each day at group settings in Walton, Sidney, Hancock, Margaretville, Grand Gorge, and Delhi. Although the dining centers are in only 6 of the 19 Delaware County towns, participants come from every municipality. Meals are prepared at each of these sites for distribution to home bound elderly. The delivery of meals is assisted by volunteers who provide meals to more outlying areas.

Between April and October, evening meals are offered in lieu of the lunch meal once per month. The evening meals provide an enhanced menu and entertainment. Locally grown produce is purchased to help support the local agricultural market while providing tasty and nutritious fresh vegetables.

The cost of the program is supported by Federal and State grant funds, contributions from senior citizen participants, and the Delaware County Board of Supervisors. A confidential contribution is solicited at \$3 per meal, although no one is turned away due to the inability to pay. The suggested contribution for evening or special meals rises to \$4 or \$5 due to a more specialized menu. Entertainment is provided on occasion and seniors are encouraged to play Bingo or cards or engage in other activities at the dining centers.

Based on past and pre-COVID trends, we expect to serve in excess of 85,000 meals, essentially the same as we projected and served pre-COVID. Of these meals served, approximately 29% are served at the dining centers and 71% are provided as home delivered meals. These figures include contracts that Delaware Opportunities has with other organizations or agencies.

In addition to funds provided through the Office for the Aging, Delaware Opportunities contracts with Fidelis, Nascentia Health Options, iCircle, Visiting Nurse Services of New York, and Greene County for the delivery of meals to the home bound.

The budget projections for 2024 accurately reflect the increased cost of food, fuel, maintenance, repair and the upkeep of vehicles and equipment.