



OCCOA

OTSEGO COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING



Submitted by
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RESEARCH &
VOLUNTEER
COORDINATOR

*We Help.
We Care*

120 Grandview Blvd., Gaylord, Michigan 49735

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THE OCCOA HAS A LONG-STANDING TRADITION OF HOSTING AN ANNUAL MOTHER-DAUGHTER BANQUET

The Otsego County Commission on Aging (OCCOA) has had a long-standing tradition of hosting an annual Mother-Daughter Banquet near Mother's Day to give area residents a venue in which to honor their mothers. OCCOA Executive Director Dona Wishart shared with me, "In the early years of my time at the agency, there was strong leadership for this event from Lucille Boughner and Blanche Montgomery. Their passion for the event and active volunteer leadership was subsequently guided by our friend and OCCOA part-time employee, Muriel Higley."

Wishart shared, "For a number of years, men were found in the Alten Zimmer kitchen on the day of the banquet, stirring up not only a good dinner, but lots of camaraderie and humor." One of those men she fondly remembered was Chuck Rich. She recalled, "He would rally the men together, providing leadership and encouragement. This would often include his sons!"

Wishart reflected, "As the years went on, the event continued to evolve, often including guest speakers and special music." She noted, "The Harmonie Meisters, and quartets from the group, became favorite entertainers for the event." She added, "Another memorable banquet included the participation of Mrs. Senior Michigan! She was a great example of living life to the fullest, believing in oneself, and having some fun along the way."

Wishart noted, "In recent years, our meal program coordinator, Suzanne Bannister, and her staff have added elegance to the meal. Our special events coordinator, Michelle Dunkelberg, has also added elegance to the event through special decorating efforts." She concluded, "I remember one participant, Mae Engel, mentioning to me last year, how the event was such a very special evening out for her."



OCCOA SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR MICHELLE DUNKELBERG

figures in their lives. All men and boys are welcome to attend." The *Men's Night Out* is scheduled from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, June 17th, at the Alpine Alten Zimmer and will include a special meal, entertainment, and guest speaker.

Let us help you honor the special people in your life!

For centuries, many cultures of the world have been celebrating mothers and motherhood in various ways with special days of recognition. Today, many countries have an official day designated as Mother's Day. According to the website, holidayspot.com, in the United States we owe the official establishment of Mother's Day to the dedicated efforts of Anna Jarvis of West Virginia. Anna was inspired to establish Mother's Day by her own mother, Ann Marie Reeves Jarvis, an Appalachian homemaker who worked hard after the American Civil War to reconcile neighbors from the opposing sides. Ann Jarvis was known for establishing Mothers Friendship Clubs and teaching members the basics of nursing and good sanitation. Her efforts are attributed to saving thousands of lives.

The website notes that after Ann Jarvis died on May 9, 1905, Anna missed her mother greatly and reflected that children often failed to appreciate their mothers while they were living. She thus decided to start a campaign to establish a national day of recognition that would honor mothers, living or dead. Her dream came true in 1914, when the United States government officially established the second Sunday of May as Mother's Day. Although, Mother's Day quickly became commercialized, to the great disappointment of Anna Jarvis, the original beautiful intention of the holiday remains – to honor our Mothers.



PARTICIPANTS AT THE 2010 MOTHER-DAUGHTER BANQUET

Bannister and Dunkelberg are currently putting the finishing touches on the plans for this year's banquet, which is scheduled for Friday, May 6th, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the dining room of the Alpine Alten Zimmer. The theme is *Planting the Seeds of Life*. Dunkelberg shared with me, "The OCCOA Mother-Daughter Banquet is open to women of all ages. Our participants usually dress up for the occasion and often come in groups. Sometimes three or four generations of their families are represented in these groups." She added, "We also have women who bring those special older women in their lives who have been like a mother to them."

Dunkelberg emphasized, "We try to make the evening very special. The room will be all decked out with special decorations, and Suzanne and her staff will prepare a special meal that will include dessert." She added, "As in years past, the program will include a guest speaker and musical entertainment. We also plan on having some prize giveaways at the end of the evening to add to the fun and excitement."

Reflecting on past banquets, she noted, "I really looking forward to seeing family and friends getting together and having fun. There are always lots of smiles and laughter on everyone's faces throughout the evening, and sometimes dancing." She added, "This banquet honors and celebrates not only mothers, but grandmothers, too, and the relationships they share with their daughters and granddaughters. It gives them a night out where they can strengthen these special bonds."

Dunkelberg noted that the Mother-Daughter Banquet has been such a popular event that the agency is planning a similar event before Father's Day for the men of the county. She explained, "The theme is *Men's Night Out*. The event is intended to give men an opportunity to celebrate and honor their fathers and grandfathers, as well as any special father figures in their lives. All men and boys are welcome to attend." The *Men's Night Out* is scheduled from 6 to 8 p.m. on Friday, June 17th, at the Alpine Alten Zimmer and will include a special meal, entertainment, and guest speaker.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND THE PLANTING THE SEEDS OF LIFE MOTHER-DAUGHTER BANQUET ON MAY 6TH, OR THE MEN'S NIGHT OUT ON JUNE 17TH, PLEASE CALL THE AGENCY AT 732-1122. RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR BOTH EVENTS AND SEATING IS LIMITED. THE COST IS \$8 FOR ADULTS AND \$4 FOR CHILDREN UNDER 12. PAYMENT IS DUE ONE WEEK PRIOR TO EACH EVENT AND IS NON-REFUNDABLE.

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Fax: 989-731-2739 • occoa@occoaonline.org • Weekdays 8:00 am to Noon and 12:30 to 4:00 pm

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