

Senior Wishes program gets cooking with Springville resident



Fox Run director of dining services Mark Herle cooks with wish recipient Mary Ann Peters with her new pots and pans granted to her by the Senior Wishes program.

By Max Borsuk
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From experiences of a lifetime to home necessities that need replacing, the Senior Wishes program is helping deserving senior citizens fulfill their wishes. And now, one local resident can say her wish came true.

Mary Ann Peters, who lives at Orchard Senior Living on Waverly Street in Springville, recently got her wish granted for a new set of pots and pans and as an added bonus, was made lunch by Mark Herle, director of dining services at Fox Run of Orchard Park.

"I was so surprised and then I thought this is wonderful and what could I do to return the favor," said Peters.

"She wants to cook for her grandchildren and children and she didn't really have the means to do it," said Mary Wellington of the Senior Wishes Granting Committee. "We wanted to provide her with some good cookware so she can cook for her family and do what she loves,"

Senior Wishes is run by the United Church Home Society, the parent company of Fox Run of Orchard Park and the United Church Manor of West Seneca. The program was started in 2013 and granted their first wish in March of 2014.

According to UCHS, the goal of the program is to honor and recognize the lifelong contributions of seniors and promote their quality of life by granting them a wish that brings them joy. Whether a wish is for a household item like a new air conditioner, helping with travel costs to a family reunion or a hot air balloon ride, the Senior Wishes program helps grant wishes of all kinds to deserving seniors who don't have the means of doing it themselves.

"We were looking for a program that would meet with our mission of serving senior citizens and I did a lot of research on wish granting programs and found there was nothing like this in the Buffalo area," said UCHS Director of Programs and Development Wendy Blackman. "So we decided to tar-

get a program that would grant wishes to low income seniors to help them with something they have always wanted to do or reigniting a passion they used to have when they were younger."

"People feel loved and we are happy to do it," said Wellington. "We are fortunate to be in this position to be able to bring wishes and thank people."

Now that Peters got her wish granted, she hopes other seniors will take notice of this program and try to get their wishes granted as well.

"I think it's wonderful and we have a lot of senior citizens with wishes that can't be fulfilled because of one reason or another," said Peters.

To qualify for the Senior Wish program, recipients must be 65 years and older, a U.S. citizen, must comply with income requirements and must be capable of communicating and experiencing the wish.

For more information on the Senior Wish program or to get an application, visit their web site uchsinc.org or call 508-2121.