

## **Seneca Towns Engaging People for Solutions (STEPS) mini-grants for health promotion projects have been awarded in Covert, Lodi, Ovid and Romulus!**

Caption (in green) to accompany a pic of Paulette Likoudis

There may be snow on the ground, but STEPS grant recipient Paulette Likoudis is moving forward with plans to build a community garden on Main Street in the Village of Lodi. The garden will be on property where the Lodi Library plans to construct a new building.

The purpose of these neighborhood-based projects is to bring people together to promote health and well-being. Local residents design and carry out small scale projects that take advantage of the resources of the community. Residents in any of the four STEPS towns are invited to participate in any of the projects.

**The Garden – A Place Where The Community Can Grow** will soon begin on Main Street in Lodi. The project, led by Paulette Likoudis and Paul Batman, will include raised beds with flowers and vegetables for the neighborhood. Over the next few months, the garden will take shape with the help of area residents who can offer supplies, labor, their skills and their encouragement. Paulette says, “My hope is that the garden will help residents take pride in their community and spark their interest in other positive projects.”

**Covert Community Trail: A Day of Connection & Celebration** is the brainchild of Carrie Holcomb and Melissa Madden. They are planning a day of tours of local businesses and community organizations around the Town of Covert. They hope that residents of Covert and nearby towns will come out to learn more about the services offered right in the neighborhood. Businesses can also take the opportunity for networking. The end goal is to promote the local economy and community development. There will also be a community picnic. Carrie and Melissa hope to make this an annual event.

**The Berry Fun Run at the Ovid Strawberry Festival** will be on the morning of June 21 according to Priscilla Smalser and Deborah Bush. They are planning a 5K walk / run for children and adults, in hopes of encouraging residents of Ovid and neighboring towns to increase their physical activity levels. Volunteers will be needed the morning of the event, so there is an opportunity for people of all ages and physical levels to participate.

**The Romulus Community Garden** will be spearheaded by Pastor Joy Novak and George Bassett. The group project will be a garden to grow and harvest fresh vegetables in raised beds on the site south of the Presbyterian Church in Romulus. You may have seen flyers in the area about an organizational meeting that has taken place already, as the group is wasting no time in getting started. The core group is looking for lots of community volunteers who want to help and/or learn about planting and harvesting vegetables for themselves and others. This is a non-denominational project.

The STEPS Steering Committee and staff are proud of the mini-grant recipients and believe these projects are a great start in improving the social, economic, and physical health of our southern Seneca County community, working together on projects they believe in. In fact, the Lodi and Romulus groups are already looking for ways to collaborate!

For more information, call the STEPS office at 607-403-0069. Please join us at our next Community Conversation on April 21 at 6:00pm in the Papa Bear building in Ovid.