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## Event Calendar

### Message from Mark



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of Macomb Matters, our employee newsletter. I'd like to begin my note with a message of gratitude for Macomb County employees that have responded to COVID-19. Our team of highly trained individuals has been on the ground for weeks making sure our communities receive the support they need to get through these unprecedented times. I am proud of everything they have accomplished and pleased to share a brief update on the projects completed in this newsletter. Below, under the Employee

Accolades section, you will find a graphic and a video highlighting some of the work that's been done. You'll also find several feature articles that profile our teams on the front lines. I am beyond impressed with all of these efforts and grateful to have such a willing and dedicated workforce. Thank you for all that you do for our community.

Take care everyone,

**Mark**

### Employee Focus



#### Health Department addresses COVID-19 concerns from the community

Macomb County declared its first case of COVID-19 on March 13, 2020. In the six weeks that followed, the county's COVID-19 Helpline received 5,400 calls from residents concerned about coronavirus testing, symptoms and

exposure. A team of highly-trained and dedicated public health professionals responded.

"We established the Helpline to provide a local resource staffed by public health nurses that could give timely and reliable information on COVID-19 to the citizens of Macomb County," said William Ridella, director/health officer of the Macomb County Health Department.



## MSUE: Septic Systems 101 During Stay at Home

Tuesday, May 5; 3-4:30 p.m.

Zoom Webinar

More details [here](#)



## MSUE: Eco-Friendly Landscaping for Water Quality

Thursday, May 14; 3-5 p.m.

Zoom Webinar

More details [here](#)

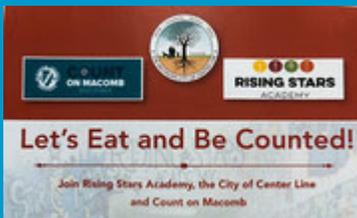


## Drive-Thru Free Dinner for the Census

Tuesday, May 5; 5 p.m.

Jimmy Johns Field

[Learn more.](#)



“It started with eight nurses and one nurse leader,” said Cheryl Woods, division director for Family Health Services. “As we expanded the number of individuals working the phones, we made sure to include at least 50 percent of staff who had experience with the Helpline so they could mentor the new workers. All told, we’ve trained approximately 40 employees to answer calls, including social workers and other professional staff.”

Woods, a registered nurse who has been with the county for 15 years, is helping lead the Health Department’s COVID-19 response. Her background and experience give her a unique perspective.

“Being part of the Macomb County Hepatitis A response, the H1N1 outbreak response and the emergency preparedness training that the Health Department routinely takes part in have all helped to prepare us for COVID,” she said. “Both the Hepatitis A and H1N1 response involved vaccination strategies, which makes those responses somewhat different from this situation, where no vaccine is currently available. However, the basic need and ability to provide educational messaging to the public, quickly redeploy and train staff for responsibilities outside of their normal duties and maintain effective communication internally are all critical in an emergency and are strategies that the Health Department is proficient at achieving. We are very good at being flexible in emerging situations and adjusting to what the priority is at hand.”

Establishing the Macomb County COVID-19 Helpline was one of the department’s main priorities after the state of Michigan announced its first coronavirus case. Kristen Venadam, a field nurse for Family Health Services, has been helping lead the phone bank since it came online.

“When we started, we were getting 300 calls per day from people concerned about COVID-19, symptoms and testing,” she said. “They were scared. So sometimes the caller just needed someone to listen, someone to offer reassurance and help. Our nurse team is trained to do just that. We have de-escalation training which teaches empathy and customer service training that helps us find solutions and offer assistance with any type of request. Like when we take calls from individuals who don’t speak English, we reach out to our telelanguage service and host conference calls with the caller, a translator and a nurse. We really do our best to meet everyone’s needs.”

The Helpline is currently seeing a decrease in its volume of calls. Today the team receives about 100 per day, but there are spikes when new executive orders are released from the state and when guidance changes.

“We do our best to stay positive,” Venadam said. “Though sometimes the calls hit close to home, especially when we speak with individuals who have lost loved ones to the virus...you find yourself tearing up. But we also receive a lot of messages of gratitude. So it feels like we are making a difference.”

For Health Department leaders, responding to COVID-19 remains a top concern. But they must also maintain other essential functions.

“Our roles at the Health Department have expanded massively,” Woods said. “Right now, about 80 percent of our time is centered around COVID. That other 20 percent sees us operating essential services and keeping our finger on the pulse of so many other health-related issues.”

## Drive-Thru Free Lunch for the Census

Saturday, May 9; 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Rising Stars Academy  
23855 Lawrence Ave, Center  
Line, MI, 48015  
[Learn more.](#)

## Blog Log

[Let's cheers to supporting local breweries and wineries](#)

[No better time than now to fill out your census form](#)

[Food resources available during COVID-19](#)

## News Nook

[Macomb County Health Department urges county residents to answer the phone](#)

[Macomb County Health Department 'doing detective work' amid COVID-19](#)

[These Wheels keep rolling in Macomb County, despite COVID-19](#)

Do you have comments or suggestions for Macomb Matters? Please send them to [maria.zardis@macombgov.org](mailto:maria.zardis@macombgov.org)



For instance, in her role as a field nurse, Venadam is responsible for a caseload of new mothers and their babies.

“Currently I spend four days a week working in the COVID-19 Helpline, but I still have about 40 families that I’m working with,” she said. “Normally I would do home visits to check in and make sure their babies

are healthy. But right now, we are monitoring their status through regular phone calls, Facetime and Zoom.”

Managing COVID-19 alongside some of the department’s normal activities requires balance, strategy and expertise. But passion and dedication to the public health profession also play a role.

“I believe public health initiatives can affect the well-being of individuals, families, communities and populations for generations to come,” Woods said. “I want our community to know that people in the public health profession have their best interests in mind. We try and ensure their safety through prevention. And we try to alleviate fear and anxiety by distributing accurate information. This is our career and it’s why we go to work every day.”

In the months ahead, reporting to work at the Health Department will involve continued action around COVID-19. This includes the Helpline remaining operational and coronavirus reporting shared regularly. Woods and the response team are therefore advocating for ongoing safety measures.

“The most important thing the public should be doing to stay safe is to follow the direction provided in the Governor’s executive order,” she said. “Stay home, practice social distancing, wash your hands often and avoid touching your face.”

For more information on COVID-19 visit [www.macombgov.org](http://www.macombgov.org).

*If you are concerned about COVID-19 or have mild symptoms, please do not call 911 and do not visit the Macomb County Health Department to be tested for COVID-19. Please contact your health care provider. For more information, visit [macombgov.org/covid19](http://macombgov.org/covid19) or call the COVID-19 Helpline at 586-463-3750. The Helpline is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday. If you need further assistance, contact the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Hotline which is open seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. at 888-535-6136. You can also send an email to [COVID19@michigan.gov](mailto:COVID19@michigan.gov).*

## Employee Accolades

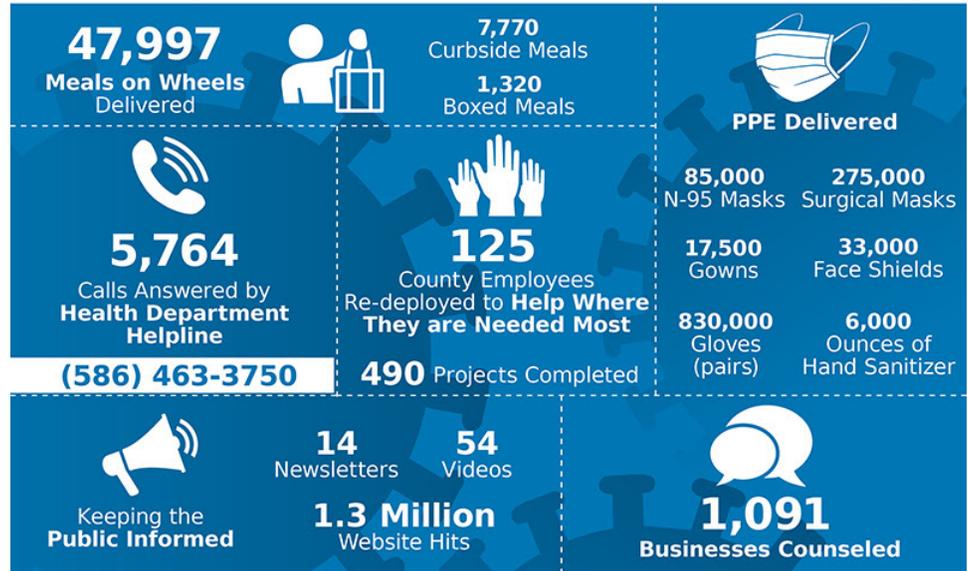
### COVID-19 Response

Macomb County leaders and personnel have been on the ground responding to the COVID-19 crisis since mid-March. To celebrate all we have accomplished, we

created the below graphic and this employee [video](#). Thank you Team Macomb for your dedication and your ongoing work in our community!

## MACOMB COUNTY RESPONSE TO COVID-19

March 9 - April 23, 2020



## New Hires/Retirees

Click [here](#) for a list of New Hires/Retirees

## Meet the Department

### Emergency Management and Communications

For the past several weeks, the Macomb County Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) has been on the front lines of the COVID-19 response. Working alongside the Health Department, the Office of the County Executive and a variety of other areas, the OEMC is using its expertise and training to guide the county through these unprecedented times.

As background, the OEMC's mission is to support and enhance county preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery capabilities by facilitating and coordinating activities and resources for first responders and citizens. They execute that mission through planning, communications (which includes public information/public education), training, exercises and resource management. For instance, during this COVID-19 crisis, OEMC is procuring and managing a supply of personal protective equipment (PPE). As of early April, they shared that the county had an inventory of 220,000 surgical masks, 49,000 N95 masks, 5,000 face shields and 1,740 personal-sized bottles of hand sanitizer. That's over 300,000 items that were either bought or donated. And the OEMC will help distribute it all to county employees, first responders, health care workers, nursing homes and residences.

Outside of the COVID-19 response, the OEMC works on a variety of initiatives that ensure the safety and wellbeing of our community. For example, in August 2019, they [executed](#) a full-scale active assailant training exercise at three local high schools with the support of more than 200 police, fire, EMS and hospital personnel

and 250 school staff and students. They also recently launched a Community Emergency Preparedness Workbook to assist those who live and work in Macomb County in preparing for natural and man-made disasters. A digital copy of that guide can be found [here](#).

Together, this work and the work being done around COVID-19 show that the Office of Emergency Management and Communications is a valuable resource for Macomb County - one that we can all rely on in a time of need.



## Healthstyles

### Virtual Entertainment

As we continue to practice social distancing and self-quarantining to help curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus, we wanted to take an opportunity to remind you of the many available avenues for entertainment and engagement available at your fingertips with the right technology. Healthstyles is therefore pleased to provide these resources through Ulliance. Click [here](#) to learn more.

## Macomb County workers ensure delivery of Meals on Wheels to seniors in need



When COVID-19 hit the state of Michigan, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer took action to limit its spread with a 'Stay Home, Stay Safe' order. However, essential services had to continue to ensure the health and safety of the public. And in Macomb County, one of those services was Meals on Wheels, a program that delivers warm

meals five days a week to 1,700 homebound, low-income individuals over the age of 60.

"Meals on Wheels is serving our most vulnerable population every day," said Nicole Urban, program manager for the Macomb County Office of Senior Services. "These individuals have limited mobility and are likely in the high-risk category when it comes to COVID-19. So our participants have been very thankful for the continued meal service during this crisis."

The Meals on Wheels program operates through Macomb Community Action and its Office of Senior Services, which among other things, provides nutritional assistance for older individuals through Dining Senior Style, Senior Project Fresh Coupons and the Ensure Plus Program.

When the stay home order was announced, some of these efforts were put on hold so resources and staff from across Macomb Community Action could be directed to Meals on Wheels. These workers were quickly trained and deployed to replace the team of public volunteers that regularly handled the delivery of food to Meals on Wheels participants.

Jennifer Paupert and Jill Glinski, who both work for Dining Senior Style, were a part of that transition.

“Our last day serving meals with Dining Senior Style was March 17,” Paupert said. “On March 18, we began working with Meals on Wheels.”

Together, the pair manage a delivery route with more than 105 meal drop offs, five days a week. Their day starts at 7:45 a.m. when they meet at a county facility to pick up their detail sheet and their delivery truck. They then drive to Variety Food Services in Warren to load the day’s well-rounded meal. For example, on Tuesday, April 21, the menu was a tuna salad sandwich, pasta salad, broccoli cheese soup, crackers, an apple and milk.



“The first drop off location we hit is a senior apartment building,” Paupert said. “Jill is the driver and I’m the jumper, so I run the food up to the recipients.”

Once inside the complex, Paupert loudly knocks on the doors of Meals on Wheels participants and shares a friendly greeting. Upon hearing a response, she leaves the food

and moves on to the next delivery, ensuring quick service and no transmission of germs.

“We wear masks and gloves and have hand sanitizer in our vehicle,” she said. “We also do our best to keep our distance so everyone stays healthy.”

Outside of simply delivering a nutritious meal, Meals on Wheels workers perform a wellness check. If the participant does not answer their door, the worker calls their phone. If they do not pick up, the worker records their information and reports it back to the Office of Senior Services. A call is then placed to a family member or emergency contact who can check in on the individual.

This aspect of meal delivery can save lives, so when Paupert encounters a residence where no one answers, she follows the process and writes a brief report. She then returns to the delivery truck, applies hand sanitizer and with Glinski at the wheel, continues on with the route. “We have a system in place and it works well,” she said. “It feels good to help.”

About 35 county employees are currently following the same schedule as Paupert and Glinski.

“It’s not easy work, given the situation at hand,” Nicole Urban said. “But through dedication and the simple act of showing up, these Macomb County workers are demonstrating that we care about our senior citizens, especially during these uncertain times.”

For many, Meals on Wheels is a lifeline - a service they cannot afford to lose. Program leaders are therefore working diligently to ensure the continuation of deliveries for the foreseeable future.

“Sometimes this vulnerable population can be overlooked, but now more than ever, we must provide for them,” she said. “Our seniors will not be forgotten.”

If you or someone you know would benefit from Meals on Wheels, please contact the Macomb Community Action Office of Senior Services at 586-469-5228 and complete a brief intake over the phone. There is currently a waitlist, but new participants are being added every day. For additional information, click [here](#).

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## Macomb Food Program and the Office of Senior Services ask public for donations to help the community



The spread of COVID-19 has resulted in uncertainty, fear and for many, economic crisis. Layoffs, furloughs and loss of business mean more individuals and families are dealing with food insecurity and perhaps facing the hard choice of paying a bill or buying groceries. No one should have to make that decision, so the Macomb Food Program is working around the

clock to ensure local pantries have the support they need.

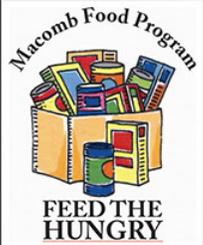
In an average month, the program serves 15,000 individuals and 7,000 families. But this April, it responded to the coronavirus crisis by giving pantries more than 4,500 boxes of shelf stable items so supply can meet demand.

It is likely that the current situation will not improve quickly, and the local community will continue to need help. This is why the Food Program is turning to the public to ask for its support in the global Giving Tuesday Now campaign. Similar to the Giving Tuesday event that follows Thanksgiving and Black Friday, Giving Tuesday Now will ask individuals to donate to causes and initiatives they support. **These are uncertain times, but if you are able, please consider donating to the Macomb Food Program through this effort. Today through May 5, click [here](#) and give any amount you can.**

Outside of the Macomb Food Program and Giving Tuesday Now, other county efforts are also looking to the community to support their work. This includes the Office of Senior Services (OSS) and its Meals on Wheels program, which recently

set up a call center to check in on elderly residents. Several of the seniors asked for help in securing basic essentials for their households, including toilet paper, soap, shampoo, toothpaste and disinfecting wipes. The OSS therefore got to work creating care packages for these individuals.

For help in acquiring supplies, OSS leaders turned to local hotels for donations. Many were experiencing supply chain issues or had guests that included first responders who did not want to return home until COVID-19 conditions improved. Ultimately, the Fraser Motel, Hyatt Place – Detroit/Utica in Utica and the La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndam Detroit Utica in Utica were able to provide supplies. More than 100 care packages were assembled and delivered on April 22, but there are more vulnerable seniors that need help, so the OSS is preparing a second round of basic need care packages. This time, they are asking for the public's help in purchasing supplies. **Again, if you are able and/or interested, please consider donating to this cause under "Senior Basic Needs" [here](#). Even the smallest contribution can make a big difference.**



Now more than ever,  
we are called upon  
to make a difference.

#givingtuesdaynow | May 5, 2020

## Perks at Work

Perks at Work is available to Macomb County employees with special offers and programs to help members while at home. We are therefore pleased to offer the new Perks at Work free [Community Online Academy](#), which provides full days of virtual learning/development and health/wellness for kids and adults taught by the highest quality teachers, instructors and speakers.



For [adults](#), there are over 30 live courses every Thursday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. EST. You can enroll in courses such as Leadership in Practice, cooking or boxing.

For [kids](#), live courses also run on Thursdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Kids can learn languages such as Spanish or Sign Language. There are also science and cooking classes available. For the kids, and adults, with extra energy, try the Hip Hop dance class.

We all know it is best to keep busy and learn during this time. So if you can, check out this new opportunity. To find out more, visit [perksatwork.com](http://perksatwork.com). Not a member yet? Go to the website, register for free with your email account and get full access to all available discounts. (Company code: Macombgov78).

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## Providing support by keeping it casual

The impact of COVID-19 has been extensive, even touching the Casual Day Program, which runs through the Board of Commissioners Office.

With fewer county employees working from their traditional offices, funds to support the April and May Casual Day non-profit organizations have decreased. We understand times are uncertain during this pandemic but ask, if possible, for you to consider donating directly to the organizations that were to be supported through your Casual Day funds in April and May.



Those non-profit organizations are:

### **APRIL: The Cassie Hines Shoes Cancer Foundation**

The mission of this nonprofit is to guide young adults with cancer to social programs and services that will help them as they mentally, and physically, battle the disease. The nonprofit is inspired by the story of Cassie Hines who fought cancer with positivity and strength. In her memory, the Cassie Hines Shoes Cancer Foundation seeks to give young adults with cancer access to:

1. [Base2Summit: A 6 day experience in Northern Michigan](#)
2. [Travel expenses to cancer camps and conferences](#)
3. [Age appropriate peer support groups and cancer information](#)
4. [Annual CHSCF Base2Summit Scholarship](#)
5. [Guidance on scholarships and other financial assistance](#)

To learn more about this organization and Cassie's story click [here](#).

### **MAY: Kids Kicking Cancer**

The Kids Kicking Cancer program merges integrative medicine and traditional martial



arts to help children address their illnesses. Specially trained black belt martial artists teach breathing, visualization and relaxation techniques, in addition to martial arts moves, to help empower the children and provide them with a sense of power, peace and purpose. This program is open to all children facing the pain and discomfort of any illness. For more information click [here](#).

### **MAY SPECIAL CASUAL DAY: Macomb Community Drug Courts, Inc.**

This local non-profit organization assists the participants of the Macomb County Drug Court, which often serves as an alternative to an individual serving time in jail

or prison and, typically, focuses on offenders with substance use and/or mental health illnesses.

## 2020 Census

### Macomb County ranks 7th in the nation for response rates

The 2020 census is well underway and with the help of the Count on Macomb campaign, the county is now ranked 7th in the nation for response rates. Over the last several

months, Macomb Community Action worked with several county departments to launch and facilitate the educational campaign. That collaboration paid off, as more than 70 percent of Macomb residents have now filled out their census form. However, the county's goal is to get as close to 100 percent as possible, so if you or someone you know has not yet completed the census form, now is the time to do so!



Please note that the newest phase of the census was just rolled out. For households that have not filled it out online or by phone, a paper questionnaire has been mailed and should be arriving soon. People now have three options to complete their form and can choose whichever best fits their unique situation.

If you choose the paper format, be sure to follow these easy tips to make sure your form is counted:

- To confirm it's legitimate, verify the envelope it came in reads "U.S. Census Bureau" and "U.S. Department of Commerce" (which is the Census Bureau's parent agency)
- When filling it out, use blue or black ink - not pencil
- When finished, return the questionnaire in the envelope provided
- If the return envelope is unavailable, mail the completed questionnaire to -
  - U.S. Census Bureau  
National Processing Center  
1201 E 10th Street  
Jeffersonville, IN 47132

To complete the questionnaire online without the customized census ID provided on the original letter mailed in March, go to the 2020 census website and use the steps below to access it using address verification:

- Visit [my2020census.gov](https://my2020census.gov)
- Hit the "Start Questionnaire" button in the upper right hand corner.
- When you are directed to the login page, instead of entering the ID, go to the link at the bottom of the page labeled "If you do not have a Census ID, click here."
- You will first be directed to the address verification page and once the system is able to identify you, you'll be set up to complete the rest of the survey.

If neither the paper questionnaire or the online version is preferred, completing it by phone is the third option. To do so, call 844-330-2020 for English or call the number associated with your preferred language from the list provided [here](#) by the U.S. Census Bureau.

No matter how you complete the questionnaire, doing so will have a tremendous impact on the next 10 years in a variety of different ways. Your response will help generate data that will be used to determine federal funding for local health care, education, roads/transit, food assistance, housing and small businesses; representation based on population; and consideration from businesses of all sizes when it comes to what facilities and offerings best fit within the local area.

If you have any additional questions in relation to the 2020 census, please be sure to reference the in-depth information available at [www.2020census.gov](http://www.2020census.gov).

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## Paw Print



### Greetings from Chief Randazzo!

The Coronavirus public health emergency has certainly impacted all of us, and our families, including our pets. These are anxious, unsettling times. One of the better ways to deal with this anxiety is to let go of things we cannot control and take care of the things we can.

Preparing a contingency plan for your pets is one of the things you can control. If you have not already, it is never too soon to develop a plan. Ask yourself: if the worst-case scenario were to happen, and I am unable to care for my pet, who will? And what will the temporary caregivers need in order to do the job right? Your pets are counting on you to have answers.

After you have identified a temporary caregiver, make sure you speak to them about your intentions and get their input. Likewise, give your veterinarian the name and contact information for your pet's temporary caregiver, and let their office know that the appointed caregiver is authorized to make decisions about your pet's health care. On the home front, have plenty of food and extra supplies on hand. Prepare an information packet for the caregiver. It should contain copies of vaccination records, medical history, and the contact information for your veterinarian. There should also be a list of any medications your pet is taking, including the dosages. If your pet is resistant to taking meds, write down the special techniques you use to administer the medication. Let your caregiver know where they can find the packet. You should also advise the caregiver about your pet's habits, food preferences, and behavioral tendencies. If your dog exhibits certain behaviors when stressed or anxious, let the caregiver know what those are, and how you respond to your pet when you see those signs. Finally, make sure your pet is both licensed and chipped. The digital license is especially helpful. It is essential to confirm both the license and chip contact information is up to date and linked to you, with your caregiver's name as an alternate contact.

Another anxiety many pet owners have expressed is fear of infection either to or from their pets. There have been documented cases where animals, including

house pets, have tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19. At this time, disease experts have found no evidence that house pets can spread the virus to humans. It is thought that the animals were infected by their owners, and not the other way around. If you are concerned your pet is ill, contact your veterinarian immediately.

For more information regarding a contingency plan, or about your pet's risk of infection, please visit the [American Medical Veterinary Association](#), the [Center for Disease Control](#), or the [World Health Organization](#).

The situation we find ourselves in seems surreal. During the public health emergency, it is easy to feel helpless. But you are not. The biggest risk to your pets is not having a contingency plan in place in case you are unable to care for them yourself. Hopefully, you will never need to implement your contingency plan, but in these uncertain times, having a plan can bring some peace of mind, and we could all use more of that. Stay home, stay safe, and save lives.

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## Recipe Corner - Carrot Apple Cherry Slaw

### Ingredients

- 1 large sweet apple
- 1 large tart apple
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 10 ounces shredded carrot
- 2/3 cup vanilla yogurt
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 teaspoons rice wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup dried cherries



Core and dice the apples. Place in a large bowl and toss with lemon juice. Add the carrots and combine. In a small bowl, whisk together the yogurt, honey and rice wine vinegar. Pour over the apple carrot mixture and stir to coat. Stir in the cherries and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before serving. Make 8 servings.

**Nutritional Value per serving: Calories 204; Carbohydrates 16.5 grams Protein 0.5 grams; Fat 15 grams; Sodium 119 milligrams**

The Macomb Matters Committee would like to thank the hard-working staff at MSU Extension for their recipe contributions. For more information about the programs MSU Extension offers, please visit <https://msue.macombgov.org/MSUE-Home>.



[www.macombgov.org](http://www.macombgov.org)  
(586) 469-7001

