

Volun-PEER Newsletter

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Winter, 2023/2024

A Publication of the Schuylkill County Ombudsman Program:

Dedicated to PEERs and Volunteers

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Did you know?

- * The word "Winter" comes from an old Germanic word meaning "Time of Water".
- * Raccoons store food instead of hibernating.
- * The coldest temperature ever recorded at ground level on Earth was -89.2 degrees Celsius or -192.56 Fahrenheit.

2024 PA Aging Network Volunteer Conference

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging is holding its 2024 Aging Network Volunteer Conference on April 2, 3, and 4, 2024 at The Wind Creek Bethlehem in Bethlehem, PA. This in-person event will allow volunteers, staff, and volunteer coordinators to gather as we thank our great volunteers for their selfless giving of time and talent for the well-being of our residents.

The conference begins on April 2 with Registration and time to browse the Resource Tables and to mingle with Exhibitors from 12 noon to 1:30 pm. Welcome Remarks will be delivered from 1:30 pm to 2:00 pm. A presentation on Under-

standing Emotional Intelligence / Self Care will be offered from 2 pm to 3:15 pm followed by an afternoon break.

Legal Document Basics for Older Adults takes place from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm. We round out Day 1 with a reception from 4:30 pm to 6 pm.

Day 2 begins with breakfast followed by sessions on Reframing Aging, Dementia Friends PA, Falls Prevention, and Networking Activity. The day concludes with a Volunteer Recognition Dinner.

Day 3 starts with breakfast, a session on Aging our



Way - PA, and a presentation by Ms. Senior Pennsylvania. A Volunteer Recruitment Panel Discussion and Keynote will bring the conference to its conclusion. Closing remarks will be delivered and box lunches will be available to all participants.

There is **NO COST FOR VOLUNTEERS**. Contact Eileen if interested in attending.

Training Calendar



Volunteers are invited and encouraged to participate in on-line training modules offered by the **PA Department of Aging, Consumer Voice, Learning Management System (LMS)** as well as Network Meetings.

All Certified Ombudsmen (Staff and Volunteers) are required to log 18 hours of continuing education for each federal fiscal year (Oct. 1 through Sept. 30).

The next **Network Meeting** will be held virtually

on February 15, 2024.

PA Aging Network Volunteer Conference April 2, 3, and 4, 2024 at Wind Creek, Bethlehem.

PEER Meetings will resume as soon as we can gather safely.

Fun Facts About Leap Year, 2024

Leap Year occurs every four years - well, almost.

It takes the earth about 365.242189 days to circle once around the sun. However, the Gregorian calendar we rely on has only 365 days, so if we didn't add an extra day to our shortest month about every four years, we would lose almost 6 hours every year. After a century, our calendar would be off by



24 days.

Julius Caesar introduced the first leap year in 46 BC, but his Julian calendar had only one rule - the year had to be divisible by 4. That created too many leap years. The math was tweaked more than 1,500 years later by Pope Gregory

XIII.

Caesar's concept wasn't bad, but his

math was off a little. As a result, there's a leap year every year that is divisible by 4, but to qualify, century years (those ending in "00") must also be divisible by 400. So the year 2000 was a leap year, while 1700, 1800, and 1900 were not.

According to tradition, women may propose to men on February 29.

People born on February 29 are called "leapers" or "leaplings".

Local musician Jimmy Dorsey was born on February 29, 1904.

Happy Leap Day & Leap Year!

Chicken Corn Soup

A Pennsylvania Dutch recipe ideal for a cold winter's night courtesy of "Taste of Home".

INGREDIENTS:

1 medium onion, chopped; 2 celery ribs, chopped; 1 cup shredded carrots; 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts, cubed; 3 chicken bouillon cubes; 1 teaspoon salt; 1/4 teaspoon pepper; 12 cups water; 2 cups uncooked

egg noodles; 2 cans (14-3/4 ounces each) cream-style corn; 1/4 cup butter; Optional: Celery leaves and coarsely ground pepper

DIRECTIONS:

Place first 8 ingredients in a Dutch oven; bring slowly to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, until chicken is no longer pink and vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes.

Stir in noodles, corn, and butter. Cook, uncovered, until noodles are tender, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. If desired, top with celery leaves and pepper.



Why is Easter So Early in 2024???

Easter is a Christian holiday that is always on the first Sunday after the first ecclesiastical full moon that follows the spring equinox. However the ecclesiastical full moon is not calculated in the same way as the astronomical full moon, and this can cause Easter to shift out of sync with the Gregorian calendar.

Easter, 2024, will fall 10 days earlier than Easter, 2023 because of the lu-

nar cycle.

Today, although the Gregorian calendar is the international civil calendar, it's still not used at all churches.

The Orthodox Church follows the Julian calendar, so Orthodox Easter falls a bit later. In 2024, it is celebrated on May 5.

In 2025, both Churches will celebrate Easter on April 20.



Volunteer Opportunities

The following Homes and Centers have openings for a caring volunteer:

NURSING HOMES:

Broad Mountain, Green Valley Nursing, Greenwood Center for Nursing (formerly Hometown Nursing), Orwigsburg Center, Ridgeview, Rosewood, Schuylkill Center, Seton Manor, Shenandoah Manor, and St Luke's University Health Network Long-Term

Care Unit.

PERSONAL CARE:

Heritage Mills (Tower City), Providence Place (Pottsville and Pine Grove campuses), The Birches at Shenandoah Manor.

ASSISTED LIVING:

Luther Ridge at Seider's Hill



ADULT DAY LIVING:

Eldergarden

LIFE CENTER:

LIFE Geisinger at Miner's Loft

Free training is provided.

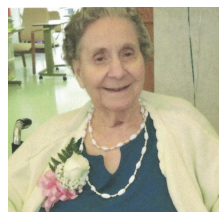
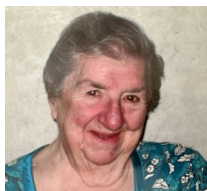
Contact Eileen for further details.

The Passing of Two PEERs

The PEER Program regrettably announces the passing of two of our members.

June Jackson, a PEER at Seton Manor, passed away October 23, 2023 at the Center.

June graduated from PEER Training February 23, 2016 and was a member of her home's Resident Council until her health began to fail.



Melba Nagle, also a PEER at Seton Manor, passed away December 1, 2023.

Melba graduated with June on February 23, 2016. She was known for her quick wit, and her ability to make people laugh. She never took herself too seriously!

We will miss both of these fine ladies and will keep them in our memories!

El Nino Winter

El Nino is a naturally occurring climate pattern associated with the warming of the ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, which significantly influence the weather patterns, ocean conditions, and marine fisheries worldwide.

El Nino occurs on average every two to seven years, and episodes



typically last nine to twelve months. El Nino has its greatest impact on winter weather.

El Nino usually brings milder weather to the Northern United

States and wetter weather to the Southern States.

Climate records of El Nino go back millions of years with evidence of the cycle found in ice cores, deep sea muds, coral, caes, and tree rings.

El Nino means the Little Boy, or Christ Child, in Spanish, and was noticed in the 1600s by Spanish fisherman. It was so named because it occurred around Christmas time.

Winter, 2023-2024



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**Ombudsman services are provided
by MidPenn Legal Services under a
contract with the Schuylkill County
Office of Senior Services.**

**The program is monitored by the
Pennsylvania Department of Aging.**

An End Can Be a New Beginning

When I was a kid, we would always put a broom next to the front door on New Year's Eve. My Uncle told us it was to “sweep out the old year”. To this day, I do the same.

I was never a big fan of New Year's Eve. In my mind it was a way of looking back on all the failures of the past year. It didn't help that my Dad passed away on New Year's Eve, 2001.

I still remember that day as if it were yesterday. It was a perfect Monday morning. I was at work and had just completed the last payroll of the year when my Mom called to say my Dad went into cardiac arrest. He had been in the hospital for the past two weeks, though not for anything heart related. To this day, we still do not know why he died.

We gathered at my Mom's house that

evening when one of her childhood friends appeared at the front door. Nellie stood there with the largest lasagna any of us had ever seen. She was a fabulous cook and this was one of her specialty items. It was exactly the comfort our family needed at that difficult time.



Of greater import, Nellie had just buried her adult son a week prior. She set aside her own grief to help us deal with ours.

Making the transition from life in the

community to life in a long-term care community can seem like an end. The end of decision-making, the end of independence, the end of living.

However, with the care of a great volunteer, the new life in a new home can be just that - a NEW life!

Just like sweeping out the “old” and sweeping in the “new”, the volunteer can help the resident to set aside their angst, their hesitation, their own grief to make their home comfortable, familiar, and to become an active member of this new community.

As we approach 2024, I would like to wish you all a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year. Thank you to our Volunteers and PEERs for helping create new beginnings all year long!

Eileen