



THE SCOOP



Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging
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Volume I ~ Spring 2014 Edition

Community Phone Numbers

AAA Office: 570-495-2395

AAA Toll Free: 1-877-622-2251

After Hours: (Crisis Line) 1-855-313-4387

Pace-Pacenet: 1-800-225-7223

North'd Co. Veteran's Affairs: 570-988-4213

Rabbittransit: 1-800-479-2626

Social Security Admin: 1-866-593-3796

Agency Website: www.ncaging.org



Happy Spring!

*from
Patricia Rumberger, Administrator,
Karen Leonovich, Deputy Administrator
And the entire staff of the
Northumberland County
Area Agency on Aging*



Pennsylvania Department of Aging Celebrates 35 Years of Service to Older Pennsylvanians

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging was created through legislation and signed into law by Governor Milton Shapp to provide older adults with programs and services that would enrich their quality of life.

The department begins a year-long celebration of its service to improve the quality of life of older Pennsylvanians by empowering diverse communities, the family and the individual.

"Proudly serving Pennsylvania for 35 years."

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If you would like this newsletter E-mailed to you, please give your E-mail address to your Senior Action Center or call our office at (570) 495-2395 and ask to be put on our newsletter E-mail list.

Alzheimer's Support Group Meetings

The Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging in conjunction with Geisinger-Shamokin Area Community Hospital has meetings on the second Wednesday of every month at 6:30 PM in the hospital cafeteria.

The support group engages a guest speaker to provide information on aspects of caregiving at every meeting. The presentations provide knowledge, encouragement and positive strategies for dealing with caregiving duties.

One does not have to be a caregiver to attend the support meetings; those who are interested in obtaining information about Alzheimer's disease are welcome.

If you have any questions regarding the support group or Alzheimer's disease, please contact the Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging at **570-495-2395**. Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging is a member of the South Central Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.

Meeting dates are:

April 9, 2014

May 14, 2014

June 11, 2014

13 Aging Myths That We Love To Prove Wrong

From Miley Cyrus telling a 50-something Matt Lauer he's "definitely not sexual" to your kids quipping you're likely experiencing a "senior moment" every time you forget something, the many misconceptions about aging run the gamut from the ridiculous to the downright offensive. And what's more is that there's plenty of evidence to prove the negative naysayers wrong. In fact, a 2009 survey found the older people get, the younger they often feel. Another survey found that nearly half of boomers play video games. And sorry kids, studies show plenty of seniors are still sexing it up.

We asked seniors which misconceptions they can't stand to hear. These are their responses:

Continued:

- 1) "That we are suddenly unable to understand anything, and must be talked to like young children! And who gave you permission to call me 'sweetheart'?"
- 2) "That all of a sudden I'm going to turn into a Goody-Goody and be shocked by foul language, wardrobe malfunctions, etc. Hey! Been there. Done that. Grow up, you young people! I have!"
- 3) "That we can't do things; understand technology, run a marathon, learn something new."
- 4) "That I will lecture kids on the superiority of the music of my generation. I think many of us forget that our generation's music struck a balance between sparkling and that's just awful. I like a lot of what I hear and I'm glad I haven't tuned out."
- 5) "That you must turn into a grandparent who only cooks and coos; I think my adult kids wish I would be feeble so they might look better to their children and I would just be a forgetful and generous old biddy. Not gonna happen!"
- 6) "That you are diminished somehow, physically, socially, emotionally, once you hit senior status."
- 7) "That aging is shameful. I am finally comfortable with me. I like my gray hair and my independence. I realize what is important and cut out the BS."
- 8) "I hate being defined by my past only, as if I have no present or future."
- 9) "That we, the aged folks, don't have a say in the way the country is changing."
- 10) "That people are thinking I can't change and am not open to it."
- 11) "That it's not fun to age. We become part of the past....everything is blah, blah, blah."
- 12) "That we stopped craving adventure."
- 13) "That seniors just sit and aren't active. Poppycock!"

Taken from an article dated 1/13/14 in The Huffington Post

FILLING YOUR GROCERY CART CAN BE A SNAP!

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), the new name for the Food Stamp Program, can help you eat right when money's tight. SNAP helps people with a low or fixed income buy nutritious food. SNAP benefits are not cash. They come on an electronic EBT card that you use like a bank card to buy food. Income limits for the program have been raised, effective October 1, 2013. Asset limits apply

New Income Limits as of October 1, 2013

People in Household	Gross Monthly Income	Gross Monthly Income*
1	\$1533	\$1916
2	\$2069	\$2586
3	\$2605 (Net 1628)	**
4	\$3141 (Net 1963)	**
5	\$3677 (Net 2298)	**

*The income limits in this column are for the households that have an elderly (60+) or disabled household member.

** For households of three or more people, your income also needs to be below a Net income limit. Net income is calculated by subtracting certain applicable expenses from the Gross Monthly Income.

If you are interested in finding out if you qualify for SNAP/Food Stamp Program, please contact Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc. CSO, Inc. can screen you over the phone or in person to help you find out if you qualify for food stamps and help you complete an application for food stamps. This application can be done over the phone or in person at almost any location. They will provide support throughout the entire process of applying for food stamps. CSO, Inc. is available to answer questions, help sort out problems, help gather paperwork and help in any other way needed to make the process of applying as simple as possible.

To apply for SNAP or find out more information, please contact CSO, Inc.

Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.
"A Community Action Agency"

2 East Arch Street
Shamokin, PA 17872
(570) 644-6575 Ext. 125

1000 Market Street
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
(570) 412-2830

Call toll free: 1-866-944-9518 - Ask for Melissa!

How APPRISE Can Help With Medicare

The Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging **APPRISE** Program is teaming up to make sure that those who have Medicare know about the Extra Help and the Medicare Savings Program.

Low Income Subsidy/Extra Help

Extra Help can help you lower your prescription co-pays and premiums and cover the cost of the "donut hole" (coverage gap).

Qualifications are:

If you are **single** and have a total **monthly** income of less than \$1313 for full subsidy or \$1459 for partial subsidy and less than \$13,440 in resources.

If you are **married** and have a total **monthly** income of less than \$1770 for full subsidy or \$1966 for partial subsidy and less than \$26,860 in resources.

Medicare Savings Program

Can help you with the payment of your Part B premium and possibly with the payment of your Medicare Part A and Part B Co-pay.

Qualifications are:

If you are **single** and have a total **monthly** income between \$973-\$1313 and you have less than \$7160 in resources.

If you are **married** and have a total **monthly** income between \$1311-\$1770 and you have less than \$10,750 in resources.

For help applying for these programs, please call **570-495-2395** for assistance from an **APPRISE** Counselor.

Help With Housing Costs

Contact: Area Agency on Aging or local Senior Center for assistance.

Property Tax and Rent Rebate Program Pa Dept. of Revenue:

www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/property_tax__rent_rebate_program
or

www.revenue.state.pa.us-Click on "Forms and Publications".

Automated information helpline:

1-888-PA TAXES (1-800-728-2937)

To find your nearest Revenue office location:

1-888-222-9190

TTY users: 1-800-447-3020

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

COMPASS:

www.COMPASS.state.pa.us

Pa Public Utility Commission-Energy Assistance:

www.puc.state.pa.us/general/consumer_ed/energy_assistance_tips.aspx

Subsidized Housing for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities:

PHAs in Pennsylvania

www.hud.gov

North'd Co. Housing Authority: 570-742-8797

Sunbury Housing Authority: 570-286-8563

Shamokin Housing Authority: 570-644-0431

Weatherization Assistance Program DCED - Local Weatherization Agencies by County:

www.newpa.com/find-and-apply-for-funding/funding-and-program-finder/weatherization-assistance-program

North'd County Weatherization: 570-644-4471

Home Modification Programs Access Home Modification Program Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA)

www.phfa.org

Harrisburg Office 717-780-3800

Rural Development Loan/Grant Program Rural Development 504 Loan/Grant Home Repair Program:

www.rurdev.usda.gov/ga/trh504.htm

Lycoming Office: 570-433-3006 ext #4

Keystone Renovate and Repair Loan Program (R&R)

Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA):

1-800-822-1174

www.phfa.org

SEDA-Council of Governments: 1-800-326-9310

PAHousingSearch.com

www.pahousingsearch.com



Help With Food Costs

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

COMPASS Online Application:

www.COMPASS.state.pa.us and click on "Apply for Benefits:."

Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

US Dept. of Agriculture - SFMNP

www.agriculture.state.pa.us and click on Farmer's Market Program.

The PA Department of Agriculture:

717-772-2693

Note: Farmer's Market Vouchers will be available June 2, 2014

Congregate Meals

For a list of senior community centers in PA:

www.paseniorcentercenters.org

SENIOR ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

All Center Hours are 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Elysburg Senior Action Center
570-672-2438

Elysburg Center is open Mon - Wed - Fri

April

- 4 Members meeting at 12:00 noon. Also "Make Your Own Sundae".
- 9 Volunteer Tea.
- 16 Blood pressure and blood sugar 9:30-10:30.
- 22 Earth Day.
- 23 Program on "Balance and Gait" 11:00 AM.
- 30 Sight Services vision screening.

May

- 2 Members meeting at 12:00 noon.
- 14 Open house. Bring a friend and introduce them to our center.
- 22 Blood pressure and blood sugar 10:00-11:00.
- 28 Hoagies.

June

- 6 Members meeting 12:00 noon.
- 18 Blood pressure and blood sugar 9:00-10:30.
- 19 Trip to Red Lobster.
- 25 Indoor picnic.
- Monday:** Pokeno at 11:30.
- Wednesday:** Bingo at 12:00 noon.
- Friday:** Crafts at 9:30.
- Mon. and Wed:** Healthy Steps at 8:30. Royal Rummy at 10:30.



April 9 is Volunteer Recognition Day!

Volunteer! It's a great way to put your skills and life experience to work for your community.

It's also a great way to meet new people.

Herndon Senior Action Center
570-758-1570

Monday and Wednesday: 9:45 Senior exercise class and 12:30 Nickel bingo.

Thursday: 9:30 Bible study with Jane Sweppen-hiser.

1st Monday of the month, 6:00 PM, evening card party, pinochle

4th Thursday of the month, 1:00 card party, pinochle

With Herndon center's April newsletter you will receive a Marianna Hoagie and Pizza fundraiser order sheet, Orders are due April 16th and pick up will be April 25th

If you don't receive a order sheet and you would like to order any, please call the center.

April

- 2 Members meeting 1:30.
- 4 Anniversary banquet 12:00. Hickory Corners Hall, cost \$12.00. Entertainment Tonya & Marge.
- 9 Volunteer tea 10:00.
- 14 Sunbury hospital will check blood pressure and blood sugar, 9:30 to 11:00.
- 15 Members breakfast 9:00.
- 17 Birthday party 1:00.
- 22 Earth Day celebration.

May

- 7 Members meeting. 1:30.
- 12 Faith Lutheran pre-school visit. 10:00 to 12:00.
- 15 Birthday party. 1:00 entertainment, Maus Brothers Band.
- 20 Members Breakfast 9:00.

June

- 4 Members meeting.
- 11 Knoebels AAA senior picnic.
- 17 Members breakfast 9:00.
- 19 Birthday party. 1:00. Entertainment by Hannah and Tyler Schade.

Kulpmont Senior Action Center
570-373-1112

Every Mon., 5:30 to 6:30, God's Chuckwagon, Mobile Soup Kitchen is in the municipal parking lot behind the Kulpmont SAC.

2nd Tues. of the month, movie and refreshments.

1st and 3rd Weds. of the month, 10:00 to 11:30, Pat Worhach "How to make crafts with plastic canvas."

2nd and 4th Weds. of the month, 10:00 to 11:30, quilting with Catherine McGann.

April

1 Free blood pressure and blood sugar 9:30 to 10:30; must fast to have blood sugar taken. Bible study 12:30.

8 Bake a cake and make Jell-O molds. 10:00.

9 Volunteer tea 12:30 refreshments served.

14 Dying Easter eggs 10:00

22 Earth Day and pizza party 12:00. Cost \$5.00. Activities are planned.

May

6 Bible study 12:30.

8 Mother's Day dinner 12:00. Menu and cost will be announced.

23 Memorial Day picnic 12:00. Cost \$5.00

28 VNA is checking blood pressure and blood sugar 9:30 to 10:30. You must fast to have your blood sugar taken.

June

3 Free blood pressure and blood sugar check 9:30-10:30; must fast for blood sugar. Bible study 12:30.

10 Member's breakfast 9:00. Serving breakfast sandwiches. Cost \$2.00.

18 Make your own Sundae. Cost \$2.00

26 Hoagie party, 12:00. Cost \$5.00. This will be a fund raiser.



Farmer's market vouchers will be available June 2, 2014. Contact your Senior action center for more information.

You do not quit playing because you grow old; you grow old because you quit playing.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Milton Senior Action Center
570-742-9435

Mon: Pinochle at 12:30

Wed: Tripoley at 10:00, Nickel bingo at 12:30

Thurs: Bible study at 12:30. Rummikub at 12:30

Fri: Nickel bingo at 9:30 and Penny poker 12:30

Games, Puzzles, and Wii Daily.

April

2 Blood pressure. 11:45.

7 Members meeting. 11:00

8 Crafts. 9:00. \$3.00

9 Volunteer Tea. 10:30

14 Fun bingo. 10:00

16 Birthday party. 12:00

17 Easter party. 9:30

22 Earth Day celebration. 10:30

24 Pop corn & movie. 9:00

28 Breakfast. 9:00. \$5.00

29 Nickel bingo. 5:30-8:00 PM

May

5 Members meeting. 11:00

7 Blood pressure. 11:45

13 Crafts 9:00. \$3.00

14 Ice cream sundaes. 12:00 \$2.00

15 Fun bingo. 10:00

21 Birthday party. 12:00

23 Memorial Day picnic. 11:00

27 Nickel bingo. 5:30-8:00

29 Pop corn & movie. 9:00

June

2 Members meeting. 11:00

4 Blood pressure. 11:45

10 Crafts 9:00. \$3.00

11 Knoebels picnic.

18 Birthday party. 12:00

19 Fun bingo. 10:00

24 Nickel bingo. 5:30-8:00

25 Ice cream sundaes. 12:00. \$2.00

26 Pop corn & movie. 9:00

Mt. Carmel Senior Action Center
570-339-4457

April

- 3** Cosmetology trip to Vo-Tech, 11:30. Manicures, pedicures, facials, etc...
- 9** Volunteer tea.
- 11** Center closed due to church function.
- 15** Easter celebration with Winnie the Pooh Daycare, 10:00
- 22** Earth Day festivities.
- 24** Trip to the Susquehanna Valley Mall. 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- 30** Trip to Herndon center for Caesar salad demonstration... 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM

May

- 1** Cosmetology Trip
- 8** Mom & Pop's brunch at Mattucci's
- 20** Center closed for primary election
- 22** Spring Fling. 5:30 to 8:30. Dinner and a DJ. Call the center to make reservations

June

- 11** Picnic at Knoebel's.
- 18** Indoor picnic. 12 :00
- 19 & 20** Center closed for church function

Mondays: God's Chuckwagon on 4th St. between Apple and Maple, 4PM to 6PM.

2nd Tuesday: CSFP Food Program.

2nd Thursday: Book Club. 10:30.

Monday & Friday: Pokeno at 1:00.

Tuesday: Unlucky 7's. 12:30.

Tuesday and Thursday: Pinochle. 12:15.

Wednesday: Bingo. 1 :00.

Members' Meeting, the first Wednesday of every month, 1:00 PM.



Don't forget Mom
on
May 11, 2014

Northumberland Senior Action Center
570-473-9373

Mondays: Cards, Wii, crafts. Bingo at 12:15.

Tuesdays: Cards, Wii, chorus, 9:30, penny poker at 12:15.

Wednesdays: Cards, Wii, Bible study, 9:30, exercise 10:30. Bingo at 12:15.

Thursdays: Cards, Wii games at 9:00. Penny poker at 12:15.

Fridays: Cards, Wii. Nickel bingo at 12:15.

April

3 Candy making class, 9:30.

9 Volunteer Day. pizza, salad, dessert. Entertainment at 10:30 by Bruce Weaver & Friends.

10 Trip to North'd Co. Area Career & Technology to get your hair, nails, etc. done, 11:30-2:00.

14 Pinochle card party 4:30, food available to buy.

17 Speaker 10:00 on Easter. Meal \$5.00, ham, sweet potatoes, corn, creamed lettuce and cake.

22 Earth Day.

23 Mohegan Sun trip

24 Card party 12:00

29 \$5.00 Breakfast 9:00, sausage, scrambled eggs, bacon, toast, home fries, orange juice.

We will be selling peanut butter and coconut eggs for Easter.

May

Center closed May 26 for Memorial Day.

6 \$5.00 Meal: southern fried chicken, baked potato, succotash, creamed cabbage, dessert.

8 Trip to North'd Co. Area Career & Technology to get your hair, nails, etc. done. 11:30-2:00.

9 Hoagies, root beer floats.

12 4:30 Pinochle card party.

15 Making soup..

16 & 17 Rummage sale and food sale.

22 Mohegan Sun trip.

27 \$5.00 meal: baked pork chops, scalloped potatoes, corn, cake.

29 Card party 12:00.

June

9 4:30, Pinochle card party.

11 AAA picnic at Knoebles.

12 Hoagies, root beer floats.

19 Trip to Sight & Sound for "Moses".

24 \$5.00 meal: chicken & waffles, harvard beets, mashed potatoes, dessert.

Plans in the works for sending cards to service men.

Shamokin Senior Action Center
570-644-0772

Mondays: Poker 10:00, crafts 12:30. (Closed May 26 for Memorial Day)

Tuesdays: Walk-a-Mile, 9:30, Bridge, 12:00.

Wednesdays: Bridge lessons 9:30. Wii bowling at 10:00. Pinochle & pokeno 12:30.

Thursdays: Walk-a-Mile 9:30. Wii bowling 10:30. Nickel bingo 12:30.

Fridays: Yoga 9:30, Wii bowling 10:30, Nickel bingo 12:00. (Closed Apr 18-Good Friday & June 13-Flag Day)

Saturday nights: May, June, July cards at 7:00. Doors open 6:00. Cards, puzzles and board games every week day starting at 8:30.

April

6 Breakfast served 9:00. French toast & sausage \$3.00. Members meeting 10:30.

10 Linda Walker will speak at 12:00. Topic: "The Art of Being Nice."

15 Blood pressure check by Family Medical 10:00-11:00.

17 Easter party. Refreshments will be served.

22. Earth Day. Linda Walker will speak at 12:00. "Fun with Earth Day." Seniors will be displaying their projects made with recycled items. Door prizes for presenters. There will be refreshments and give-aways.

May

8 Breakfast at 9:00. Members meeting 10:30.

15 Linda Walker will speak at 12:00. Topic: "Summer Time Skin Care."

19 Movie day 12:00. "A Day in a Life." Refreshments will be served.

22 Indoor picnic at 11:00. Menu will be announced. Picnic food.

29 VNA will be checking blood pressure & blood sugar 9:30 to 10:30

June

5 Breakfast at 9:00. Members meeting 10:30.

11 AAA picnic at Knoebel's. Center will be closed in the afternoon, Staff is working at the picnic.

19 Indoor picnic at 11:00. Menu will be announced.

Sunbury Senior Action Center
570-286-1820

April

8 Volunteer recognition 12:00. Bring a dessert .

9 Trip to Mohegan Sun. Free blood pressure and blood sugar check 9:30 – 11:00.

11 National Submarine Day celebrating with hoagies at 11:30.

14 Hoss's night.

16 Breakfast for lunch, Sausage gravy on biscuits home fries and fruit only \$3.50.

17 National Cheeseball Day.

22 Earth Day. Activities and times to be announced.

23 Trip to Lancaster to "Sight and Sound".

24, 25, 26 HUGE rummage sale, 9:00-3:00.

28 Trip to Country Cupboard.

30 Trip to Herndon SAC for Culinary arts demonstration.

May

1 Trip to Penn's Peak at Jim Thorpe for Benny Goodman and Peggy Lee music.

5 Spaghetti and meatballs, salad and dessert, \$3.00, 11:30

7 Bingo for prizes, 5:00-7:00 PM, with bbq, chips and cookies for sale.

9 Mothers Day breakfast, 9:00.

12 Birthday party, 1:00, KJ musical entertainment, cake and ice cream after show.

15 National Straw Hat Day.

16 Anniversary banquet 11:30. Bring a \$2 lottery ticket to participate in a game. We will also play Family Feud.

21 Trip to Mattucci's Restaurant.

23 Pizza and ice cream sundaes 11:30.

28 National Hamburger Day, hamburgers and fries 11:30. \$3.50.

30 Covered dish 11:30.

June

4 Trip to Mohegan Sun.

11 Trip to Knoebels for Area Agency on Aging Picnic, we are at Pavillion J.

16 Fathers Day breakfast 9:00.

19 Trip: The Pines, Allentown, "Celebration USA"

23 National Pink Day.

24 Game night 4:00-7:00 PM, ordering pizza.

26 National Chocolate Pudding Day.

27 Covered dish meal.

Trevorton Senior Action Center
570-797-1996

April

- 1-8-15-22-29:** Evening bingo 6:00 PM.
1-2 Making Easter eggs. Available for pick up on April 7.
2 Blood sugar and blood pressure screening by VNA. 9:30 to 10:30.
3 Members Meeting. 12:15.
8-15-29 Line dancing. 1:00.
9 Volunteer Tea. 12:30, theme is Hats and Tea.
10-17-24: Mahjong. 12:30. Always looking for new players.
16 Easter party with an ice cream social to follow. 12:30.
22 Earth Day.
25 Birthday party. 5:00 PM
28 Breakfast. 8:30. Vision screening at 9:30. Evening card party at 7:00 PM.

May

- 1** Members meeting. 12:15.
6-13-20 Line dancing. 1:00.
6-13-20-27 Evening bingo. 6:00.
8-15-22-29 Mahjong. 12:30.
9 Evening card party. 7:00 PM.
12 Mother's Day celebration.
16 Birthday party. 5:00 PM.
21 Open house. Blood pressure and blood sugar screening by SCH. 9:00 to 10:30.
28 National Fitness Day.
30 Baby shower. 12:30. All gifts will go to the Pregnancy Care Center.

June

- 3-10-17-24** Evening bingo. 6:00.
4 Blood sugar and blood pressure screening by VNA. 9:30 to 10:30.
5 Members meeting. 12:15.
11 Picnic at Knoebels Amusement Resort.
12-19-26 Mahjong. 12:30.
13 Evening card party. 7:00 PM.
16 Father's Day celebration.
20 Birthday party. 5:00 PM.
30 Breakfast. 8:30 AM.
30 Evening card party at 7:00 PM.

May is Older Americans Month.
The theme for 2014 is:
"Safe Today, Healthy Tomorrow".

When Older Americans Month was established in 1963, only 17 million living Americans had reached their 65th birthdays. About a third of older Americans lived in poverty and there were few programs to meet their needs. Interest in older Americans and their concerns was growing, however. In April of 1963, President John F. Kennedy's meeting with the National Council of Senior Citizens served as a prelude to designating May as "Senior Citizens Month."

Thanks to President Jimmy Carter's 1980 designation, what was once called Senior Citizens Month, is now called "Older Americans Month," and has become a tradition.

Historically, Older Americans Month has been a time to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country, in particular those who defended our country. Every President since JFK has issued a formal proclamation during or before the month of May asking that the entire nation pay tribute in some way to older persons in their communities. Older Americans Month is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs and other such activities.



k1396896 www.fotosearch.com

The Area Agency on Aging's Senior picnic will be held on Wednesday, June 11 at Knoebel's Grove, Pavillion J.
VNA Health Fair will be at Pavillion Q.
There will be lots of things to do and, of course, lots of good food.

Contact your Senior center for more details.

A look at Family Caregiving

Providing care for a family member in need is an age-old act of kindness, love and loyalty. As life expectancies increase, medical treatments advance, and increasing numbers of people live with chronic illness and disabilities, more and more of us will participate in the caregiving process.

There are many different types of family caregiver situations. You may be taking care of an aging parent or a handicapped spouse. Or perhaps you're caring for a child with a physical or mental illness. But regardless of your particular circumstances, you're facing a challenging new role.

If you're like most family caregivers, you aren't trained for the responsibilities you now face. And you probably never anticipated you'd be in this situation. You may not even live very close to your loved one. At the same time, you love your family member and want to provide the best care you can. The good news is that you don't have to be a nursing expert, a superhero, or a saint in order to be a good caregiver. With the right help and support, you can be a good caregiver without having to sacrifice yourself in the process.

New to family caregiving?

Learn as much as you can about your family member's illness and about how to be a caregiver. The more you know, the less anxiety you'll feel about your new role and the more effective you'll be.

Seek out other caregivers. It helps to know you're not alone. It's comforting to give and receive support from others who understand what you're going through.

Trust your instincts. Remember, you know your family member best. Don't ignore what doctors and specialists tell you, but listen to your gut, too. Encourage your loved one's independence. Caregiving does not mean doing everything for your loved one. Be open to technologies and strategies that allow your family member to be as independent as possible.

Know your limits. Be realistic about how much of your time and yourself you can give. Set clear limits, and communicate those limits to doctors, family members, and other people involved.

Caregiving can trigger a host of difficult emotions, including anger, fear, resentment, guilt, helplessness, and grief. It's important to acknowledge and accept what you're feeling, both good and bad. Don't beat yourself up over your doubts and misgivings. These feelings don't mean that you don't love your family member—they simply mean you're human.

helpguide.org

Take Care of Yourself

Let's face it; being a good caregiver can be challenging. It usually requires a huge commitment of time and resources, and it can take a toll emotionally, physically, and financially. One study by AARP found that caregivers spend 20 hours each week providing care.* The same study, conducted in 2009, estimated 65 million Americans served as unpaid family caregivers.

But when you're caring for others, it's critical that you first take care of yourself. By not doing so, you put yourself at risk of stress, guilt, exhaustion and feelings of inadequacy.

*These caregiver support tips can help you take care of yourself:

- **Recharge Every Day.** Get regular exercise, even just a few minutes several times a day. Exercise promotes energy and well-being. Also, set aside at least a few minutes of quiet time each day, and be sure you're getting enough sleep.
- **Maintain a Healthy Diet.** When you are busy, it is easy to forget to eat healthy foods. When your schedule allows, try to eat meals with friends and family. This may help you will slow down and enjoy the company.
- **See Your Doctor.** By keeping up with your own medical appointments and screenings, you have a better chance of staying healthy. Also, watch for signs of depression, which is very common in family caregivers. Get extra support and professional help if needed.
- **Take a Break.** Recognize stress and take steps to manage it, and lean on friends and family for emotional support. Understand that your need for relaxation increases during periods of caregiving, so remain involved in hobbies and things that you enjoy.

*(AARP caregiving help and advice)



Perfect Prey: Elderly and Sick Targets For Abusive Caregivers

Like millions of Americans, retiree Frances Lowry of Kensington was dependent on Social Security. Each month, Lowry collected a \$145.96 private pension and \$786 in Social Security benefits. She'd worked all her life tending to sick people and took in dozens of foster children. But at 69, she was isolated and vulnerable. Her husband had died, and she was blind and suffering from diabetes and heart problems. Yet she shuddered at the thought of a nursing home. So she turned to the state's so-called "aging waiver program," in which Medicaid payments allotted for nursing-home care can be put toward in-home services. Under the program, funded through the state Department of Public Welfare and administered by the Department of Aging, Lowry could handpick a caregiver. That's when Lowry's nephew, and his girlfriend smelled opportunity. They offered to care for Lowry at their home. Lowry felt comfortable with the arrangement. She'd helped raise her nephew as a kid. The nephew's girlfriend became Lowry's in-home aide, a job that paid an hourly wage of \$10.50 weekdays and \$11.50 on weekends. Lowry gave her nephew permission, along with her debit card, to withdraw money from her bank account to pay for food and necessities. She also agreed to pay for phone, cable and Internet services. In a sense, he became Lowry's off-the-books representative payee. In November 2011, when Lowry moved in with her nephew, and his girlfriend she was fragile, but still able to walk. Over the next eight months, they left Lowry to rot in a bed in the living room of their home near Kensington. A filthy sheet covered her naked body. She gradually succumbed to atrophy and eventually lost the use of her legs while her nephew and his girlfriend drained her bank account. They stole nearly \$7,500, splurging on restaurants, clubs, movies and clothes. They left her for days without food or water. Hordes of roaches crawled around a dirty water basin and nested in Lowry's shoes, according to police documents. As summertime temperatures soared above 100 degrees, Lowry struggled to breathe while she listened to the hum of an air-conditioning unit cooling a bedroom shared by her nephew and his girlfriend. From her bed, she listened to the cackling couple return home with savory take-out.

"I could hear and smell them walk by with food - sandwiches and stuff," Lowry said. "I could hear the bags and them giggling. Yet they walked past me and wouldn't give me anything." When Lowry complained, they threatened to put her out on the street. She grew fearful. They did not allow visitors and limited her phone access.

Under the state's "aging waiver program," a local social worker was assigned to check up on Lowry and help coordinate any health and welfare services she needed. That worker, either did not make the required home visits - or did and chose to do nothing. Lowry said that the worker visited her just once. "She called me on the phone every couple of months - maybe three times," Lowry said. "If she was coming out like she was supposed to, I wouldn't have been in that dirty house with roaches and rats and feces with no clothes." When the worker reached Lowry by phone early on, Lowry said her blindness prevented her from realizing that she was living in filth.

Later, Lowry grew too afraid to tell her anything because her nephew and his girlfriend were within earshot, according to Lowry and the detective. At the time, it was expected the worker and other so-called "service coordinators" would visit clients "on an as-needed basis - an average of once a month to once every six weeks," according to , the agency's president and CEO, speaking generally. "The service coordinator could go as many times as we determined to help that person."

A neighbor, started to bring food to Lowry. Then one afternoon in late July 2012, she and a family friend, who had come over to check on Lowry, called police. When officers arrived, they could smell a stench from the sidewalk. Once inside, they stomped on the floor to shake off cockroaches that crawled up their pants.

In May, the nephew and his girlfriend pleaded guilty to theft, neglect of a care/dependent person and reckless endangerment. A judge sentenced them to five years' probation and ordered them each to pay Lowry about \$3,730 in restitution. The judge barred them from working in the dependent-care industry. Lowry, now 71, has lived with her neighbor since July 2012 when she was rescued. In October, Lowry finally received her first restitution check. The amount: \$12.50 - a little more than the hourly rate that she paid for her care.

Observations on Aging

Do you realize the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we're kids? If you're less than 10 years old, you're so excited about aging you think in fractions. "How old are you?" "I'm four and a half!" You're never thirty-six and half. That's the key. You get into your teens; now, they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number, or even a few ahead. "How old are you?" "I'm gonna be 16!" You could be 13, but hey, you're gonna be 16!

And then, the greatest day of your life. You become 21. Even the words sound like a ceremony. You Become 21.....Yesss!!!! But then you turn 30. Oooh, what happened there? Makes you sound like bad milk.

You BECOME 21, you TURN 30, then you are PUSHING 40. Whoa!! Put on the brakes. It's all slipping away. Before you know it, you REACH 50...and your dreams are gone.

But wait!!! You MAKE it to 60. You didn't think you would! So, you BECOME 21, TURN 30, PUSH 40, REACH 50, and MAKE it to 60. You've built-up so much speed you HIT 70! And it doesn't end there. Into the 90s, you start going backwards; "I was JUST 92."

Then a strange thing happens. If you make it over 100, you become a little kid again. "I'm 100 and a half!"

By: Our Old Friend "Anonymous"



Delicious Tres Leche Cake for Cinco de Mayo

1 yellow cake mix. Bake as directed.

Mix:

- 1 can evaporated milk.
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream.
- 1/2 cup rum (or to taste).

Poke holes in the cake with a fork.
 Pour milk mixture over the cake.
 Let mixture absorb in the refrigerator.

Top with Cool Whip and sprinkle with coconut if desired.

Thank You for your generous donation for the Newsletter:

Robert Sager, Trevorton

We Need Your Help

Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging's goal is to promote the physical, mental, social and emotional well being of older adults to attain or maintain independence and self-care. Your tax-deductible gift provides life-changing help for those among us who are most in need. The names of all contributors will be acknowledged in The Scoop unless anonymity is requested. Donations can also be made in Remembrance.

Donation Coupon

Make your donations payable to **Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging**
 Mail to: Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging 322 N. 2nd St., Sunbury, PA 17801

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