



THE SCOOP



Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging
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Volume I ~ Summer 2013 Edition

Community Phone Numbers

Administrator's Corner

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



We are happy to once again have a newsletter available for the residents of Northumberland County.

"The Scoop" was named by the Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging staff and will be published four (4) times a year. It will be made available on the new Area Agency on Aging Website (www.ncaging.org), at all nine (9) Senior Action Centers, via E-mail and given to all Meals on Wheels consumers.

"The Scoop" will be an informal publication. Our intent is to use this newsletter to inform consumers of aging issues and various programs that the Pennsylvania Department of Aging offers through the aging network. We will have information available to help seniors age in place, with useful information, tips and numerous resources for seniors to be able to make good decisions for their future.

We hope you enjoy the new Area Agency on Aging Newsletter.

Patricia Rumberger, Administrator
Karen Leonovich, Deputy Administrator

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Important Information

Beginning Sept 21, 2013, it will become mandatory that all customers within the (570) Area Code will have to dial the area code along with the 7 digit phone number.

Pennsylvania Farmers Market Nutrition Program Vouchers available for Northumberland County Senior Citizens

The Northumberland County Board of Commissioners, in cooperation with the Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging and the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, is pleased to announce the Farmers Market Nutrition Program.

The program sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, is offering eligible senior citizens who reside in Northumberland County an opportunity to obtain \$20.00 in vouchers to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables from participating farm markets.

Northumberland County residents who are age 60 or older, (including those who will reach their 60th birthday by December 31, 2013); and who meet the gross income guidelines may apply. All income must be taken into consideration which includes Social Security, Black Lung, SSI, and all pensions.

* The official income guidelines for this year's program are as follows:

- 1 person - \$21,257**
- 2 people - \$28,694**
- 3 people - \$36,131**
- 4 people - \$43, 568**

Proof of age/residency is necessary, and proof of income is self-declared. Senior citizens must sign the designated register when they receive the vouchers and eligible senior citizens may receive the vouchers only once per calendar year. Proxy forms are available for home bound consumers. The proxy form must be signed by the consumer requesting vouchers and also by the person (who is the proxy) delivering the vouchers. The form is then returned to the Senior Action Center before vouchers will be distributed.



Vouchers will be distributed by the Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging on a first come basis until September 30, 2013 or until the supply is exhausted. Vouchers are redeemable June 1, 2013 through November 30, 2013.

Vouchers are available daily at all nine (9) Senior Action Centers from 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM.

Please contact your local Senior Action Center for any other details regarding the Farmer Market Vouchers. Vouchers are only available Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Elysburg Senior Action Center.

Alzheimer Support Meetings

The Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging in conjunction with Geisinger-Shamokin Area Community Hospital has monthly 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 all aspects of care giving at every meeting. The presentations provide knowledge, encouragement and positive strategies for dealing with caregiving duties.

One does not have to be a care giver 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:**
- August 14, 2013**
 - September 11, 2013**
 - October 9, 2013**

SENIOR ACTION CENTER ACTIVITIES

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

Herndon Senior Action Center
570-758-1570

Pinochle

Every 1st Monday of the month card party 6:00 PM.

Every 4th Thursday of the month card party 1:00 PM.

August 30 - Friday End of summer picnic 12:00pm to 3:00pm



Elysburg Senior Action Center
570-672-2438

Open three days a week, call for info:
570-672-2438

August 17 - Chinese Auction 1:00 to 4:00 PM.

September 3- Pizza Party and a Movie.

Mt. Carmel Senior Action Center
570-339-4457

July 30 - Mt Carmel is going to the Marina in Sunbury with Kulpmont and Shamokin centers. Rain date is August 6.

Northumberland Senior Action Center
570-473-9373

July 22 - Center Meal will be BBQ Spare Ribs, Potato Salad, Broccoli Salad, Fruit Salad and Dessert The cost is \$5.00 and we eat at 11:30 You must sign up by July 17th.

July 25 - Card Party at 12:00 with refreshments Anyone Welcome

August 15 - Center Meal will be Fish, Mac & Cheese, 3 Bean Salad, Oatmeal Cake The cost is \$5.00 and we eat at 11:30. You must sign up by Aug. 8th

August 29- Card Party at 12:00 Refreshments available. Anyone Welcome

September 16 - Center Meal will be Chicken from Giant, Baked Corn, Potato Salad and a Dessert. The cost is \$5.00 and we eat at 11:30. You must sign up by Thursday, Sept.12th.

September 18 - Free Blood Pressure/Sugar 9:30-11:00 You must fast to have your Blood Sugar taken.

September 26 - Card Party at 12:00 Refreshments available. Anyone Welcome

Trips:

August 21 - Hollywood Casino

September 11 - Allenbury Resort "Patsy Kline"

October 1- 4 - New Hampshire

If you would like this newsletter E-mailed to you, please give your E-mail address to your Senior Action Center.

Sunbury Senior Action Center
570-286-1820

July 25 - National Chili Dog day 11:30; with entertainment by Popcorn Cinema Road Show at 12:30.

July 29 - Celebrating National Lasagna Day 11:30; with Price Is Right Game after meal.

August 7 - Representative Linda Culver Question/Answer Session 9:00-11:00

August 12 - Birthday Party and entertainment by Bruce Weaver and friends 12:30

August 15 - National Relaxation Day; come enjoy a day of pampering and relaxing. Several activities planned including Shear Expression will be doing nails, YMCA Yoga, Focus Health on Relieving stress and more!

Milton Senior Action Center
570-742-9435

August 6 – Fish Fry - Contact center for details.

September 3 - Labor Day Picnic - Contact center for details.

October – Anniversary - Contact center for details.

Trevorton Senior Action Center
570-797-1996

July 22 & 23 - Making pierogies starting at 8:00 AM cost \$7.00 a dozen.

July 29 -Members Breakfast Monday the 29th serving at 8:30 AM.

August 15 - Potato Cake Batter Sale, starting at 8:30 AM. Cost \$6.00 a quart.

August 16 - Monthly Members Birthday Party, serving at 5:00 PM.

August 26 - Members Breakfast, serving at 8:30 AM.

September - Monthly Members Birthday Party, serving at 5:00 PM.

September 30 - Members Breakfast, serving at 8:30 AM.

Shamokin Senior Action Center
570-644-0772

July 25 - Indoor Picnic at 11:00. Cost 6.00. Sausage Hoagie, pasta salad, many sides, dessert. Bingo will follow at 12:30. Deadline to sign up July 19. Must pay when you sign up.

July 30 - Picnic at Marina. (Rain date Aug. 6.) with Kulpmont & Mt Carmel SAC's. Deadline to sign up July 19. Lunch \$5.00. If using transportation, \$2.00. Must pay when you sign up.

Aug. 16. - Bingo at 12:30.

Aug. 22 - Indoor Picnic at 11:00. Cost \$6.00. Hamburger & Hot Dog. With salad different sides. Dessert. Deadline to sign up is August 16. Must pay when you sign up.

Sept 19 - Shamokin & CT SAC will celebrate their 44th Anniversary at the Wayside Inn. Dinner served 6:00. Deadline to sign up Sept 13. Vic Boris will provide entertainment. Transportation available.

Low Impact Yoga and Aerobics every Monday & Thursday starting at 9:30.

Looking for pinochle players who would like to pay cards Mon. through Fri. They start playing cards at 8:30.

For more information on these events, please call the Shamokin & CT SAC

Kulpmont Senior Action Center
570-373-1112

July 30 - Trip to the Marina with Shamokin and Mt. Carmel SAC. We will be having lunch and lots of fun activities. Rainedate is Tues August 6th.

August 29 - We will be having our Labor Day picnic at 12:00.

September 26 - Pizza Party 12:00

Announcement!

Aug. 8 - Thursday, 1:00 to 3:30 Dauna Backey from *Family Home Medical* will be at the Kulpmont SAC doing the Chronic Disease Self Management Program. This is a six (6) week course to teach you how to manage your Chronic Disease through your lifestyle. Please call the Kulpmont Center for more information. **(570-373-1112)**

Property Tax Rent Rebate Deadline Extended

The deadline to apply for the state's 2012 Property Tax/Rent Rebate program is being extended from June 30 to Dec. 31.

Eligible participants can receive a rebate of up to \$650 based on their rent or property taxes paid in 2012. The program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians who are 65 years or older, widows and widowers 50 years or older, and those 18 years or older with permanent disabilities.

Income eligibility limits are set at the following levels, excluding 50 percent of Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, and Railroad Retirement Tier 1 benefits:

• **\$0 to \$8,000**, maximum \$650 rebate (homeowners and renters).

• **\$8,001 to \$15,000**, maximum \$500 rebate (homeowners and renters).

• **\$15,001 to \$18,000**, maximum \$300 rebate (homeowners only).

• **\$18,001 to \$35,000**, maximum \$250 rebate (homeowners only).

Residents are reminded to provide all the necessary income, property tax or rental information required to process claims quickly and accurately.

Claimants who already applied for Property Tax/Rent Rebates may check the status of claims online at:

<http://www.doreservices.state.pa.us/Individual/Rebate>

Rebate checks will be mailed out starting July 1 to those who have already submitted applications. As of May 31, the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue had received 506,518 rebate applications.



Protective Services - Elder Abuse

You can help prevent elder abuse before it happens. Family members and close friends are not the only ones in a position to recognize when an older person is at risk of neglect or abuse. Anyone who has contact with an older person may be able to identify signs of abuse.

Many adult children accept the responsibility to care for an older parent or relative without knowing how much time or money will be needed. If you are faced with the decision of caring for an older family member, be sure to examine your own ability to handle the responsibility as well as the impact on other family members.

- Be realistic about what you can do.
- Know your financial resources and what it will cost to care for the person.
- Seek outside help and support groups.
- Look at your home. Can an older or disabled person move around easily?
- Find out if other family members will lend a hand from time to time.

What Is Elder Abuse?

Each year, hundreds of thousands of older persons are abused, neglected and exploited by family members and others. Many victims are frail and vulnerable, cannot help themselves, and depend on others to meet their most basic needs.

Victims of elder abuse can be male or female. Many times he or she is over 75 years old and is dependent upon a spouse, relative or friend for care, food and shelter. The abuser is likely to be a spouse or adult child who lives in the same house and is a caregiver.

What Are the Signs?

Elder abuse can present itself in various forms, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material exploitation, neglect, and self-neglect.

Elder abuse is not always easy to identify. It can often be hidden or disguised.

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Elder Abuse

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- Bruises or broken bones may be blamed on falls when the real cause is pinching or beating.
- Weight loss may be blamed on illness or lack of appetite when the real cause is starvation, neglect or self-neglect.
- Dementia may be blamed on “old age” when the real cause is malnutrition or drug interactions or side effects.
- Besides physical signs, there are other clues that may indicate elder abuse:
- A neighbor may notice that the older person next door never goes outside or never sees visitors.
- A bank teller may find that an older customer, or someone claiming to represent the older person, is withdrawing large sums of money from a savings account without apparent reason.
- An attorney might question why an older person would sign over his or her home to a relative.

Although these circumstances do not always mean elder abuse, it’s important to be aware that elder abuse can occur at anytime to anyone.

How Can You Report Elder Abuse?

If you suspect abuse of an older person age 60 or older, you should report it to your local Area Agency on Aging or call the Department of Aging’s Elder Abuse Hotline - **1-800-490-8505**. You can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Your call will be connected to local Protective Services staff in one of the 52 Area Agencies on Aging that serve all 67 Pennsylvania counties. Even if you are not sure abuse has occurred, but feel you have a reason to be concerned about the older person’s well-being, you should call the hotline or your local Area Agency on Aging. All calls are **confidential**. Unfortunately, many people don’t want to become involved when they suspect elder abuse is occurring. Others, including the victim, are afraid of the abuser. The tragic result is that many cases of suspected elder abuse go unreported, and the abuse continues. You can make a difference!

APPRISE

A State Health Insurance Program offering FREE education and counseling throughout the year for anyone enrolled and/or eligible for Medicare. The Medicare Annual Enrollment Period occurs every year from October 15th to December 7th. This is the time for Medicare beneficiaries to evaluate their coverage, and during this time, can join or switch their current plan.

Original Medicare is divided into two parts. Part A covers hospital costs and has a benefit period deductible of \$1,184. Part B covers the costs of doctors and other health-care providers, has a \$147 annual deductible and, in most cases, a monthly premium of \$104.90. After the deductibles are met, a 20% copay of all costs goes into effect.

Medicare enrollees can elect to enroll in a health plan to cover costs not paid by Original Medicare. There are two choices for obtaining more coverage: Medicare Supplemental (or Medigap) and Medicare Advantage Plans. Both supplemental insurances cover deductibles and copays that Original Medicare does not pay.

A Medigap Policy is accepted in the United States and its Territories by all Providers who accept Medicare assignment. However, a Medigap policy does not have drug coverage. Individuals wanting drug coverage must enroll in a Medicare Part D drug plan. Medicare Supplements are attractive to purchasers because they are standardized plans. You will know what you are going to pay in deductibles and co-pays as directed by your plan. Medicare Supplemental insurances typically have higher monthly premiums than the alternative, a Medicare Advantage Plan, and the monthly premium will increase.

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APPRISE

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For example, while a premium may be affordable when a customer is first enrolled at 65 years of age, it may become more costly as the customer ages. If the supplemental plan that is chosen does not include Prescription Drug Coverage, a beneficiary will need to consider a Stand Alone Medicare Part D Plan (PDP).

It is extremely important to have a drug plan comparison completed prior to choosing a Part D plan to ensure that all of your current medications are on the plan formulary, and the monthly premium and drug co-pays are affordable. Some Part D plans have a yearly drug deductible, and most will have co-pays in varying tiers, depending on the prescription.

The second choice, a Medicare Advantage Plan, often has lower premiums but higher out-of-pocket costs. Medicare Advantage plans are insurers' private offerings, covering all the Medicare benefits, filling gaps, and typically include prescription drug coverage. They can also include extra benefits like vision, dental, or free gym memberships. Advantage plans work only in designated networks so make certain a favorite doctor or hospital is included in the plan's network. A potential purchaser of a Medicare Advantage Plan should compare plans carefully, as one company may be very different from the next company.

Many Medicare Advantage Plans have lower monthly premiums, but it is important to note that a plan with a low monthly premium may have very high deductibles. Many times beneficiaries are lured by little to no monthly premiums and end up with very significant out-of-pocket expenses which make the plan very costly.

Programs are available for people with lower incomes who need assistance with paying for Medicare. Low Income Subsidy for Part D is a Federal Assistance program that lowers Part D premiums and prescription co-pays. Medicare Savings Programs are state subsidized programs to help pay Medicare Premiums, deductibles and co-pays. To be eligible for assistance programs, a beneficiary must meet income and resource guidelines.

Contact the Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging **APPRISE** Program for further information [570-495-2395](tel:570-495-2395) or [1-877-622-2251](tel:1-877-622-2251).

Hot Weather Tips

Be aware of days when extreme heat conditions are predicted by paying attention to your local weather forecast.



On hot days, you should:

- Drink plenty of water;
- Avoid long periods in the direct sun or in unventilated rooms;
- Keep air conditioning or fans running;
- Avoid vigorous activity when it is hot and humid;
- Reschedule activities for cooler times of the day;
- Wear light-colored, lightweight, loose-fitting clothing;
- Wear a hat or other head covering when out in the sun;
- Wear appropriate sunscreen protection;
- Take frequent baths or showers and remain in a cool place;

Seniors and Technology

New research has found older adults want to adopt modern technology to help improve their quality of life, despite a huge 'technology gap' .

A pioneering study discovered that despite being branded a generation of 'technophobes' older people are actually happy and eager to embrace new devices and equipment.

The research group has been working closely with a wide range of older adults and health and social care professionals to identify why there is currently a huge gap between developments in technology and the low uptake of people using it in their daily lives.

Extensive research has found that when asked to describe technology they love older adults frequently mentioned mobile, phones, computers and digital cameras. Reasons included that the technology is easy or convenient to use, it enables them to keep doing things that are important to them and meets their needs.

When asked about the equipment they had abandoned, reasons included that the device was cumbersome or did not meet their needs and that the technology was difficult to use.

Research suggests a lack of awareness of what is available and the knowledge of how to access it are two of the main obstacles preventing people using technology. These devices tend to be prescribed in response to specific health and social care needs, for example a pendant alarm issued after a fall or medication reminders given to people with mild memory problems. Some of these items are seen as marking people out as vulnerable.

Technology can play a big part in helping people stay at home and keep doing the things that are important for them to have a good life.

If older people can live independently as long as possible this is good for them, their families and society.

With our aging population it is increasingly important to keep people as well and independent as possible, which includes their mental health. Keeping them in their own homes and out of the hospital is a priority for health and social care providers and technology has a vital role to play.

Research shows that older adults have a thirst for technology that can make their life better. For example, an 83-year old woman who had recently moved into an extra care apartment was very enthusiastic about her *Kindle*, as she could access thousands of books, which she could no longer have physically in her new home.

Volunteers Wanted

The Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging is soliciting your support as we are looking for volunteers for our Long Term Care Ombudsman program.

The program seeks caring individuals interested in making a difference in the lives of our seniors residing in nursing and personal care homes in our area.

As a trained ombudsman, they would make regular visits either weekly or monthly to visit residents, listen to their concerns, help direct them to appropriate parties to self resolution, or if desired, would advocate on their behalf.

We educate them on their right to be treated with dignity and respect, thus improving their quality of care and life.

Training and support provided:

For More information about the Volunteer Ombudsman opportunity in the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

Northumberland County Area Agency on Aging. 1-800 622-2251