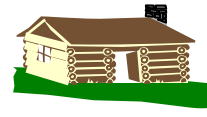


Chester County Department of Aging Services



No place like home?



Volume 1, Issue 2

April 2009

Director's Corner

Wanda Stonebraker

Director, Chester County Department of Aging Services

Hello again. I don't know about you but I am definitely ready for spring. I welcome the long days, the warmer weather and even the rain, since it isn't the white stuff. When I see the flowers beginning to grow, the trees getting their leaves and hear the play of children outdoors I am reminded this is a time of renewal and growth for all of us.

Part of the reason I returned to Pennsylvania nine years ago was due to my mother. She was having some health problems and although I have three siblings who lived close I wanted to be closer as well. Her health continued to deteriorate; she was having difficulty with walking. She moved in with one of my sisters, her health continued to decline and she began to receive services from the Department of Aging. During that time my mother fell and broke her hip, fell and broke her wrist and fell and broke her wrist again.

It was at that point my mother came to live with me. My siblings and I agreed she would not be able to live on her own again. Mother continued to receive in home care, physical and occupational therapy. As she began to improve, her need for independence came

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Property Tax Rebate

Kelly Miehle

Supervisor, Information and Assistance

If you haven't yet applied for the 2008 Pennsylvania Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program, now is the time!

Never heard of it? Through the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, Pennsylvanians over the age of 65, widows and widowers age 50 and older and people with disabilities age 18 and older may be entitled to money paid through property ownership or rent. Expansion of the program in 2007 provides relief for more seniors now than ever before!

The income eligibility table is as follows:

Homeowners now receive:

<u>Income</u>	<u>Maximum Rebate</u>
\$0 to \$8,000	\$650
\$8,001 to \$15,000	\$500
\$15,001 to \$18,000	\$300
\$18,001 to \$35,000	\$250

Renters now receive:

<u>Income</u>	<u>Maximum Rebate</u>
\$0 to \$8,000	\$650
\$8,001 to \$15,000	\$500

The deadline to apply for a rebate on property taxes or rent paid in 2008 is June 30, 2009.

If you think you might qualify and need assistance with the application, or to obtain an application, please contact the Chester County Department of Aging Services at 610-344-6350.

Applications are also available at your local senior center or can be mailed to you by calling the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue directly at 1-888-728-2937.

Those with internet access can obtain the form online at www.revenue.state.pa.us. Click on the 'Individual Taxpayers' link in the upper left hand corner, and then on 'Property Tax/Rent Rebate Information' under the heading of Tax Information and Assistance. ■

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The Department of Aging Services is funded by the Chester County Board of Commissioners, Pennsylvania Department of Aging, and private contributions.



Chester County Commissioners
Terence Farrell
Carol Aichele
Kathi Cozzone

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back. After two years my mother moved into her own apartment and is more content than she has been in several years. She is living within a couple of miles from another sister who checks on her regularly.

I'm not very happy about her living on her own but I realize that is my issue, not hers. She is capable of deciding her future and willingly accepts the risks of living by herself. Mother is now able to do her own care without assistance and has rediscovered her sense of humor. My siblings and I are available to help her with the things she cannot do, like rearranging the furniture, four times in the last two years, carrying her groceries and taking her shopping.

I share this with you because I believe my mother represents the renewal and growth we all share. Sometimes we don't recognize it or find it scary and we miss the opportunities life presents to us. I encourage all of us to look for and embrace these opportunities. Have a wonderful spring. ■

As always, I welcome any comments or feedback you may have about our newsletter. You can reach me via email at wstonebraker@chesco.org.

Program Spotlight! Assessment – Gateway to Services

Carol Harkins
Supervisor, Assessment Unit

A visit from one of the professional staff of the assessment unit is often a personal introduction to the Chester County Department of Aging and the services it provides. An assessment is a formal process to gather information needed determine the consumers' needs and ultimately assist them in accessing services. Our assessors, Colleen Kelly, Valerie Marshall, Pat Richardson and Andrea Walker, assemble the information, make a recommendation for the level of care needed by the consumer and explain the programs through which services may be offered. The assessor follows the process from the beginning to the point where a care manager steps in to develop a care plan and implement the actual services. The types of services available to consumers who qualify include personal care, emergency response systems, adult day care and home support. Currently, this team of assessors processes approximately 130 assessments each month.

Once a referral for services is made to the department an assessor will contact the consumer or family and make an appointment to come to their home to gather information regarding health issues, ability to care for oneself and the current system of support in the community. Assessors also need to obtain financial information that determines whether consumers qualify for a particular program. The assessor completes their written report that in many cases this is reviewed by a Registered Nurse who certifies that the level of need is correct. If the consumer qualifies for a program, he or she is assigned to a care manager who works with the consumer for the length of time that services are needed.

Our assessors also visit nursing facilities and personal care boarding homes to assess consumers and determine whether they need the level of care provided by each type of facility. A physician must also certify that a consumer needs to have this level of care. These assessments are a requirement to apply for funding through Medical Assistance.

The Department of Aging also assesses people under the age of 60 with certain disabilities who are in need of placement in a nursing facility or community services. These assessments are then forwarded to the appropriate agency that will provide services to the consumer.

Assessment is a valuable service that can make the difference in the quality of a life of many seniors and others with disabilities. ■

MEDICARE 101

The VOLUNTEERS of the State Health Insurance Program - **APPRISE**
Cordially invite you to attend
A FREE UPDATE SESSION
for Chester County Residents

If you will be joining the ranks of Medicare soon, are already in the Medicare system and have questions, or you just want to understand what this Federal program is all about, this session is for you.

Wednesday, May 6 at 6:00 PM
Downingtown Senior Center
or
Tuesday, June 2, at 6:00 PM
West Chester Area Senior Center.

For further information or to reserve a seat, call
Downingtown Sr. Ctr. – 610-269-3939
West Chester Area Sr. Ctr. – 610-431-4242

APPRISE is Pennsylvania's volunteer statewide program of free insurance consultation conducted under the auspices of the Chester County Department of Aging Services.



Seniors Health and Wellness Issues

An easy to use website is now available to assist older adults and their families in learning more about common health issues and wellness information. The website is called, **NIH Senior Health** (<http://nihseniorhealth.gov>). The NIH Senior Health website is sponsored by the National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine.

The website was designed with features including adjustable print and screen contract to assist those with vision impairments. Further the website has a "talking" function that allows the information to be read aloud to the individual.

Medical and Wellness information is explained to individuals in easy to use terms and offers answers to frequently asked general questions. While the website is not designed to provide specific medical advice it provides users with information to better understand common health issues. The website further encourages all older adults to consult with a qualified physician regarding their health concerns for diagnosis and treatment specific to their own situations.

So the next time you are "surfing" the internet, please check out this educational and older adult friendly website. ■

ELDER ABUSE HOTLINE!

1-800-564-7000



Stop Elder Abuse! Abuse can be physical, mental, sexual, or economic.

If you are a victim of abuse or suspect that an older person is being abused,

contact the Chester County Department of Aging Services at the above number.

Someone is available to help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!



27TH ANNUAL CHESTER COUNTY SENIOR GAMES

May 11th- May 28th 2009

Open to all Chester County residents age 50 and over.

Schedule of Events:

BADMINTON TOURNAMENT

Monday, May 11
Phoenixville Area YMCA

SWIMMING EVENTS

Wednesday, May 13
Brandywine YMCA, Coatesville

TRACK & FIELD EVENTS

Wednesday evening, May 13
Downingtown West High School

SENIOR GAMES DAY & HEALTH FAIR

Thursday, May 14
Church Farm School
Bocce, Horseshoes, Softball & Football Throw, Bingo, Frisbee Putting, Darts, Table Tennis, Shuffleboard, Basketball Shoot, LUNCH, Health Fair

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, May 18
Loch Nairn Golf Club
Avondale, PA

BOWLING TOURNAMENT

Tuesday, May 19
Palace Bowling, Downingtown

TENNIS TOURNAMENT

Wednesday, May 27 & Thursday, May 28
Tennis Addiction, Exton

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED
CALL 610-344-6009 for details!

MEET THE STAFF!!

Andrea Walker
Assessor

The Department of Aging, in the hopes of better serving the seniors of Chester County, organizes the staff into teams based on geographic regions. The following team primarily serves the Eastern part of the county.

Supervisor Heidi Carlson, part of the Department since September 1988, oversees the OPTIONS, Family Caregiver Support and Attendant Care Programs. When asked about her favorite part of the job, Heidi responded, "I learn something new every day which I believe is important in life. This job is so personally fulfilling and is part of my life's purpose. It is wonderful to work with committed and caring individuals."

Care Manager Tamika Cowans-Dales is quickly approaching her third anniversary with the Department. Before joining Aging Services, Tamika kept busy going to school and working for an insurance company. Tamika thrives on the new challenges every day brings. Tamika, a classically trained singer, enjoys spending time with her husband, shopping, and singing.

Community Health Nurse Eileen McKie works mostly with consumers in the Waiver program and assists in addressing and monitoring their healthcare issues. She has been at the department for 5 years and worked as an RN for the past 25 years. Eileen enjoys her position and the time spent talking one-on-one to consumers and families about health issues and ways to remain safely in their homes. When not at work, Eileen spends time with her husband and 3 sons at sporting events, movies, or going out to eat.

Care Manager Estelle Logan has been with the Department of Aging for a year. Before coming to Chester County, Estelle worked for the Department of Public Welfare. Estelle enjoys working with her consumers. When not at work, Estelle reports that as a newlywed, she enjoys spending time with her new husband and her daughter.

Assessor Pat Richardson has been with the Department since January 2007. Pat's prior experiences include working as a Program Coordinator for Pakistan Studies at Villanova University and 19 years as a Tupperware manager. Pat reports that meeting with consumers and letting them know CCDAS is here to address their concerns and provide services in their home is the best part of the job. When not at work, Pat is fond of gardening, opera and art appreciation.

Case Manager LaToya White has been with the Department of Aging since July 2008. LaToya, as a Champion of Caring Recipient and a previous Treatment Foster Care Worker, has always been committed to improving her community. LaToya enjoys meeting with consumers and helping the aging population. In her free time, LaToya spends quality time with her daughter, TaLeah. ■



Standing (L-R) Tamika Cowans-Dales, Eileen McKie, Heidi Carlson.
Seated (L-R) Patricia Richardson, Estelle Logan, LaToya White



May 2009 – Older Americans Month!!

A meeting with the National Council of Senior Citizens resulted in President John F. Kennedy designating May 1963 as Senior Citizens Month, encouraging the nation to pay tribute in some way to older people across the country. In 1980, President Jimmy Carter's proclamation changed the name to Older Americans Month, a time to celebrate those 65 and older through ceremonies, events and public recognition.

Each year the Administration on Aging (AoA) issues a theme for Older Americans Month. This year's theme "Living Today for a Better Tomorrow" reflects AoA's continued focus on prevention efforts and programs throughout the country that are helping older adults have better health as they age and avoid the risks of chronic disease, disability and injury.

Here are some Interesting numbers.....

37.9 million: The number of people 65 and older in the United States on July 1, 2007. This age group accounted for 13 percent of the total population.

88.5 million: Projected population of people 65 and older in 2050. People in this age group would comprise 20 percent of the total population at that time.

73: The number of men 65 and older on July 1, 2007, for every 100 women in this age group. For those 85 and older, it drops to 48 men per 100 women.

4 million: Number of people 65 and older living in California on July 1, 2007, the highest total of any state. Florida, with 3.1 million, was the runner-up.

17%: Percentage of Florida's population 65 and older in 2007, which led the nation. States with the next-highest percentages of older people included West Virginia (15.5 percent) and Pennsylvania (15.2 percent).

96,548: Estimated number of centenarians (age 100 or older) in the United States on Nov. 1, 2008.

601,000: Projected number of centenarians in the United States in 2050.

Source: US Census Bureau 'Facts for Features' March 3, 2009■



Senior Citizens...

All residents of this county 65+ years of age are sponsored to ride ROVER Community Transportation with 85% of the ride paid for by State Lottery funds; the remaining 15% is paid by the rider or by the rider and the County of Chester.

Fares are calculated based on trip purpose, length of trip, and number of passengers accessing the ride.

Fare amounts are given as reservations are made or upon request. To register to ride or for additional information:

Call 610-594-3911, or toll free 1-877-873-8415.
Or visit the Rover office located at
495 Thomas Jones Way
Exton, PA 19341



NEW Chester County Discount Prescription Drug Card

This program, sponsored by the National Association of Counties, offers average savings of 22% on the retail price of commonly prescribed drugs. **There is no cost to Chester County taxpayers for this program.** For more information email the Chester County Health Department at chd@chesco.org or call 610-344-6225.

Got Questions?? Contact us!!!

Information and Assistance services are always free of charge and available to all interested persons.

Call: 610-344-6350

Toll-free: 1-800-692-1100 extension 6350

TTY #: 610-344-5233 (Text Telephone for the Hearing Impaired)

601 Westtown Road, Suite 130
P.O. Box 2747
West Chester, PA 19380-0990

You may also visit our website:
www.chesco.org/aging

or send us an e-mail inquiry:
ccaging@chesco.org

I was always taught to respect my elders and I've now reached the age when I don't have anybody to respect. – George Burns