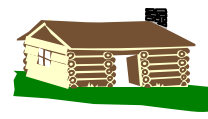


Chester County Department of Aging Services



No place like home?



Volume 2, Issue 3

July 2010

Director's Corner

Wanda Stonebraker

Director, Chester County Department of Aging Services

I have always been active, played some sports, not well but with enthusiasm, and as a young adult, began running. I have never been very coordinated but, running, now that was something I was able to do without falling down or tripping too often. By the time I reached 50 my knees and feet were shot so I went from running to walking. Fortunately I had a best friend to walk with me. Without her pushing me I would never have continued. I know this because when I moved away from her I stopped walking. Actually, I stopped all recognized forms of exercise. I gained weight and began to feel my age. After several years of this nonsense and I do mean several, I took a look at myself and did not like the lazy, tired old woman I had become.

I decided there was more to exercise than running. I acknowledged that not having the time was an excuse. I explored my options. I could start walking again but that wouldn't last without a 'buddy'. Due to my coordination issues organized sports and bicycling were out. I don't like

(See Directors Corner, page 2)

Program Spotlight!

Long Term Care Ombudsman



Donna Eaves

Long Term Care Ombudsman

Have you ever heard the word *Ombudsman*? It is a Swedish word which means *Citizen Representative*. The Long Term Care Ombudsman is a position established by the federal government under the Older Americans Act for the purpose of advocating for better quality of care and quality of life for long term care consumers. These consumers may reside in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, personal care homes, domiciliary care homes (personal care homes with three or less residents) or they may receive long term care services in their own homes.

The primary responsibility of the Ombudsman is to receive, investigate and attempt to resolve concerns of long term care consumers. We first encourage self-resolution. However, if that is not successful, the Ombudsman can act as a mediator or negotiator by bringing the interested parties together to reach agreement on a solution. Ombudsmen do not license or regulate long term care facilities and therefore cannot cite a provider for deficient practices.

Another responsibility of the Ombudsman is to be a visible presence in long term care facilities. There are more than 75 facilities in Chester County. Our Ombudsman program has over 30 trained volunteers. Each volunteer is assigned to a facility, visiting residents on a regular basis to provide information on residents' rights. It is important for long term care consumers, especially new residents of facilities, to realize that they did not lose their rights upon admission. Volunteer Ombudsmen encourage new residents to be empowered to express their preferences and to bring up questions or concerns with facility staff without fear of retaliation.

The Ombudsman is a resource to consumers or potential consumers of long term care services by providing information about long term care services in the county and the regulations that govern the various levels of care. All conversations with the Ombudsman are strictly confidential, with consumer consent required before any information is shared with a long term care provider.

For more information you may contact Donna Eaves at 610-344-5612 or contact our Information and Assistance service at 610-344-6320. ■

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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

Carol Aichele

Terence Farrell

Kathi Cozzone



(Director's Corner continued from page 1)

to clean and get through it as fast as possible. There was no way I was going to turn that into exercise. What to do? What to do? Even as a former runner, joining a gym was beneath me! You probably didn't realize that many runners are a little snooty about their exercise. Please note, I said many, not all. I will admit I was one of them.

I finally realized I needed to decide my goals for exercising. First and most important was to regain and maintain my fitness, thus improving my health. Actually, that is my only goal. I have two grandchildren and another one due at the end of the year. My good health is as important to me now as it was when my children were little. I joined a gym!

Can I just say, I love it! I have found classes that work so well for me. I do weight training for two hours and two hours of cardio per week. My sugar level is lower, my cholesterol is lower and I feel great! I learned three words that I never thought very much about, "strengthening your core".

As we age, a strong core is critical to maintaining our balance which helps us to continue walking without risk of falling. Believe me, I can and do still fall but not because I don't have good balance.

You probably started wondering after the first paragraph what is this all about. It is to encourage you, with your doctor's approval, to begin an exercise program. For those of you who may not know, we have 6 Senior Centers in Chester County. All 6 have excellent exercise programs designed for seniors. Maintaining one's health is not something young people think about and many never get into the habit of exercise. I am fortunate because I enjoyed it, then and now.

Check out your Senior Center, learn what exercise classes they have, decide what goals you want to accomplish, **get your doctor's approval** and do it.

Have a great summer!!

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

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

Send us an e-mail inquiry:

ccaging@chesco.org



Rates Increased for Shared Ride Program!!

Due to increases in the cost to provide service, Krapf Bus Companies, Chester County Department of Aging Services (CCDAS) and Community Development began meeting almost a year ago in order to come to some agreement about a fare increase. As a result, effective July 1, 2010, co-pay for seniors was increased from 75¢ to \$1 per trip and limited to sponsored trips.

The sponsored trips are as follows:

- Medical appointments
- Adult Day Centers - for CCDAS consumers only
- Senior Center - closest to the senior's residence
- Groceries - closest to the senior's residence and between 10:00am and 2:00pm
- Pharmacy - closest to the senior's residence and between 10:00am and 2:00pm
- CCDAS
- CCDAS sponsored events
- Voting

The following trips are no longer sponsored:

- Visits to nursing facilities
- Employment
- Volunteering
- Church

The \$1 co-pay will be waived if the consumer meets certain financial eligibility requirements. Please contact your local Senior Center or Aging Services to see if you qualify.

We regret having to make this change but increasing costs and stagnant funding made it necessary. ■

Elder Abuse??

- **Are you 60 years of age or older?**
- **Do you reside in Chester County?**
- **Are you dependent on others to provide care?**
- **Are you incapacitated?**
- **Are you at imminent risk of neglect or physical, financial or sexual abuse?**

If you answered yes to all of these questions you can contact the Chester County Department of Aging for help...

1-800-564-7000

CAREGIVING IN THE U.S.

A Focused Look at Those Caring for Someone Age 50 or Older, November 2009

The first national profile of caregivers was published in 1997 in *Caregiving in the U.S.* An updated version of the study reported in 2004. This latest report describes the findings from the third wave of this important study and begins to trend the findings.

We estimate there are at least 43.5 million caregivers age 18 and over, equivalent to 19 percent of all adults, provide unpaid care to an adult family member or friend who is age 50 years or older. The percentage of people who are caregivers does not appear to have changed significantly since 2004.

Most caregivers assist other family members, most commonly their mother. While caregivers and care recipients continue to be predominately female, they are approximately two years older now than their counterparts were five years ago. The average age of today's caregiver is 50, and the average age of today's care recipient is 77.

Although there has been a decrease in the number of hours of care provided in an average week, a higher proportion of caregivers report helping their care recipient get into and out of beds and chairs, assisting with housework, and preparing meals.

Caregivers also say they have increased their use of some services (such as outside transportation services for the person they help, and using a respite services or sitters).

Approximately three-fourths of caregivers have worked while caregiving. While this has remained consistent since our last study, there has been an increase in the proportion who say they have had to make a workplace accommodation due to caregiving.

Time is an important issue for caregivers because this role takes time they could devote to other parts of their life. This situation can be further complicated when the caregiver does not feel she or he had a choice in taking on the role. Four in ten (43%) say they did not feel they had a choice in taking on this role.

Although most caregivers say they experience little physical strain, emotional stress, or financial hardship as a result of being a caregiver, there are indications that caregiving is becoming more emotionally stressful for some, and that some are experiencing more financial hardship fulfilling this role than five years ago. ■

Source: National Alliance for Caregiving in collaboration with AARP (November 2009), www.caregiving.org/



Need Help??
Refer Web is Your
Source for Health &
Human Services
Information!!

Kathryn Brauner

Program Specialist, Human Services

Have you ever needed to find a health or human service agency for a consumer and didn't know where to look? Have you ever needed to find a telephone number for a health clinic or mental health provider in the county and couldn't find it? Then you need to know about Refer Web: Your source for the most up-to-date information on health and human services in Chester County and the surrounding areas.

Refer Web is a web-based information and referral application that allows anyone with internet access to search for health and human services provider agencies and services on their own. This database has over 900 organizations in it with thousands of services listed. You can search by category, keyword or by a specific agency.

Refer Web is accessible on any computer with internet connection at www.referweb.net/chesco. It is also accessible on the Chester County website under e-Government then click the link "FIND HELP: Health & Human Services Resources." The best way for county employees to access Refer Web and ensure easy accessibility is to have an icon placed on their desktops, so all you have to do is click on the icon and you will automatically be linked to the website!

The Chester County Department of Human Services maintains the information in Refer Web on a daily basis. **If you cannot find an agency or find some information that has changed about an agency already in the database, such as an address or telephone number, please e-mail Kathy Brauner at kbrauner@chesco.org.** Keeping information current in Refer Web is very important, so we ask your help to assist us in this task and notify us whenever you find missing providers or incorrect information. **Any feedback regarding your experience of using Refer Web or finding information in it is also welcome. ■**

Age is no guarantee of maturity.

-- Lawana Blackwell



A Glimpse into the 'Older Adult Protective Services Act'

by Barbara Paisley, Esquire

The 'Older Adult Protective Services Act' (the "Act") was passed to safeguard individuals over 60 years of age from:

**Abuse,
Neglect,
Exploitation, and
Abandonment**

The underlying policy is also concerned with encouraging self-determination and assuring continuity of care for the older adult. This article hits the highlights of the Act for the benefit of your friends, your family, and yourself.

Here is a description of the affected parties:

The Individuals Reporting Suspicious Situations: Reporters of suspected abuse of older adults are immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious purpose. Reports are voluntary, except for employees of skilled nursing facilities. If the report proves to be unsubstantiated, the name of the reporter and alleged abuser are immediately deleted. The release of the reporter's name is prohibited.

The Chester County Department of Aging Services (CCDAS): Under the Act, CCDAS is required to provide a 24/7 hotline to receive reports of suspected older adult abuse. The number is 800.564.7000. CCDAS has the following duties:

- Investigation must be initiated immediately to ensure the immediate safety of the older adult if there is risk of imminent danger, within 24 hours if the report is a priority, within 72 hours if it is a non priority;
- Assessment of Older Adult's Needs (physically, psychologically, and financially);
- Service Planning; and
- Delivery of Services.

CCDAS employees are immune from liability except for willful misconduct or gross negligence.

The Orphan's Court: As with the CCDAS, the court must have a judge or magisterial district judge available 24/7 to hear emergency order petitions regarding older adults. Emergency orders are available in the case of an older adult if there is imminent risk of death or serious physical of harm. The court may order the turnover of the older adult's records which would normally be considered confidential.

Law Enforcement: The Act provides that law enforcement (i.e., state and local police, District Attorney) has access to records if an investigation results in a report of alleged criminal activity.

The Older Adult: Even if the report of suspected abuse cannot be substantiated, the name of the older adult is kept on file for six months. In the case of an emergency order, the Court will appoint counsel for the older adult if they are unable to obtain one. The older adult may agree to a release of their records. They are not, however, entitled to know the identity of the reporter.

In conclusion, it is important to be aware of the significant service the CCDAS, as well as the other parties, provides in the protection of our older adults.

The hot-line number is 800.564.7000 for suspected abuse of older adults. ■

© Barbara Paisley, Esquire 2010



Pennsylvania SeniorLAW Helpline

**1-877-PA SR LAW
(1-877-727-7529)**

The Pennsylvania SeniorLAW Helpline is a toll-free, state-wide, legal information, advice and referral service for Pennsylvania senior citizens (60 years and older).

**A free and confidential telephone service, staffed
by attorneys, Monday through Friday,
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

The Helpline provides free legal information, advice and referrals on a variety of topics, including:

- consumer problems (credit, debt, bankruptcy)
- health care, including Medicare Part D
- estate planning (wills, powers of attorney)
- pensions – government and private
- family law (divorce, custody, domestic violence)
- housing (landlord-tenant, deeds, utilities)
- many other areas of the law

We provide interpretation services in 150 languages.

PA SeniorLAW Helpline is a project of SeniorLAW Center in Philadelphia.

Visit us at www.seniorlawcenter.org or email us at helpline@seniorlawcenter.org

This project is made possible with generous support from Pennsylvania Department of Aging and US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging ■



PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED

Harrisburg – The deadline to apply for Pennsylvania's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program for older adults and residents with disabilities has been extended from June 30 to Dec. 31.

"Property Tax/Rent Rebates, combined with general property tax relief from slots gaming, will completely eliminate school property taxes for about 120,000 residents this year," said Secretary of Revenue C. Daniel Hassell. "Governor Rendell is extending the rebate program deadline again this year because he wants to be sure everyone who is eligible has time to apply for the relief they're owed."

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians who are 65 and older; widows and widowers 50 and older; and people with disabilities 18 and older. A 2006 program expansion increased the income limit from \$15,000 to \$35,000 (which excludes half of Social Security income) for homeowners and raised the maximum standard rebate for homeowners and renters from \$500 to \$650. The income limit for renters is \$15,000.

As of May 28, the Revenue Department had received more than 533,000 rebate applications. Nearly 600,000 older Pennsylvanians and residents with disabilities are expected to benefit from the program this year.

As specified by law, rebates will begin to be distributed on July 1. After June 30, rebates will be distributed as claims are received and processed.

Obtain Property Tax/Rent Rebate claim forms (PA-1000) and related information online at www.PaPropertyTaxRelief.com or by calling 1-888-222-9190. Forms and assistance also are available at Department of Revenue district offices (listed in the government section of phone directories), local Area Agencies on Aging, senior centers and state legislators' offices.

Claimants who already applied for Property Tax/Rent Rebates may check the status of claims online at www.PaPropertyTaxRelief.com or by calling, toll-free, 1-888-PATAXES.

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is one of five programs supported by the Pennsylvania Lottery. Since the program's 1971 inception, more than \$4.5 billion has been paid to eligible older adults and residents with disabilities. The expanded portion of the rebate program is paid for with revenue from slots gaming. ■

Source: PA Dept of Revenue: 06/03/2010



Summer Thunderstorm Safety

Patricia Mains, Chester County
Department of Emergency Services

Thunderstorms are most likely to happen during the spring and summer months and during the afternoon and evening hours. They can pop up very quickly with little or no warning. A thunderstorm affects a relatively small area compared to a hurricane or a winter storm. A typical thunderstorm is 15 miles in diameter and lasts an average of 30 minutes.

Know the difference in Watches and Warnings. A **Watch** means that there is a possibility that the condition exists – Tornado Watch means the atmosphere is in the right condition to cause a tornado; continue to listen to the radio or TV for further information. A **Warning** means that the condition is occurring or will occur soon – Flash Flood Warning means that flash flooding is occurring and you need to get to higher ground immediately.

For thunderstorms, watch the sky. If you see lightning, darkening clouds or increasing winds, check the forecast for your area before going outdoors. If you are outdoors and are caught in a thunderstorm, get indoors quickly. Avoid open areas and stay away from isolated tall trees, towers or utility poles. **Remember, if you hear thunder – you are close enough to be struck by lightning.**

With thunderstorms flash flooding may happen; which is the #1 cause of deaths associated with thunderstorms. More than half of all flood-related drownings occur when a vehicle is driven into flood waters. Six inches of fast-moving water can knock you off your feet; 2 feet will cause most vehicles to float.

If you are caught on a flooded roadway – DO NOT DRIVE through the water. Turn around and go another way. The water may be deeper than it appears. Respect the "road closed" signs; it was put there to protect you from danger.

Many thunderstorms cause power outages. Having flashlights and fresh batteries and a battery operated radio can help you tolerate the power outage more comfortably.

Please DO NOT call 9-1-1 when your power is out. You need to call your power company, PECO at 1-800-841-4141 - to report the outage.

Only call 9-1-1 to report an emergency situation.

Stay Safe this Summer!! ■



Medicare Part D Rebate!!

In June, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) began mailing \$250 rebate checks to people in Medicare Part D who reached the prescription drug

coverage gap (or doughnut hole). As part of the new health care law, rebate checks are the first step in the gradual closing of the doughnut hole, which will help make prescription drugs more affordable for people in Medicare Part D.

You don't have to do anything to receive a rebate. Medicare tracks your drug costs for you, and will send you a check once you reach the coverage gap.

Here's what else you need to know about the Medicare Part D rebate checks:

- Receipts can help you track your spending. People in Medicare Part D who have paid more than \$940 in out-of-pocket drug costs should automatically receive a check. If you think you've reached the doughnut hole and don't receive a check within a few months, having receipts handy will be helpful when talking to Medicare.
- Protect yourself against scams. If someone says they can help you get a check more quickly if you pay them a fee, immediately report this scam or any similar fraud to the police or to the PA Attorney General. You should also report any suspected scam to Medicare by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).
- Your check will be mailed to the address Social Security uses to reach you. If you need to change your address, please call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213. If you prefer, a change of address may also be reported by calling or visiting your local Social Security office. ■

Source: AARP Pennsylvania E-News Monthly – June 2010



MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES AND FAMILIES! DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS HELP WITH PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS?

Under a new law, more Medicare beneficiaries could qualify for Extra Help with their Medicare prescription drug plan costs because some things no longer count as resources and income. Beginning January 1, 2010, when determining eligibility for Extra Help Social Security will:

- No longer count any life insurance policy as a resource; and
- No longer count as income the help you receive when someone else provides you with food and shelter, or someone else pays your household bills for food, mortgage, rent, heating fuel or gas, electricity, water, and property taxes.

Anyone who has Medicare can get Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage. Some people with limited resources and income are eligible for Extra Help to pay for the costs—monthly premiums, annual deductibles, and prescription co-payments—related to a Medicare prescription drug plan.

- IF YOU ARE SINGLE and have a total monthly income of less than \$1,354 per month AND less than \$12,510 in resources
- IF YOU ARE MARRIED and have a total monthly income of less than \$1,821 per month AND less than \$25,010 in resources

For information or help applying call the APPRISE phone line, 610-344-5004, leave your name and phone, and a volunteer will call you back within 24 hours.

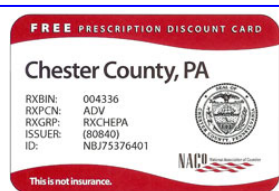
To apply directly:

- Call The Extra Help Applications Center at 1-800-866-1807, Monday-Friday 9am - 5pm
- Apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov/extrahelp;
- Call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) to apply over the phone or to request an application;
- Apply at your local Social Security office, 1101 West Chester Pike, West Chester, PA

You will need the following when you call:

RESOURCE INFORMATION: Amount of your bank accounts, stocks, bonds IRAs, savings, cash at home, any real estate other than your home

INCOME INFORMATION: Any wages, social security income, VA Benefits, other income from pensions, workers comp, alimony etc. ■



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 cchd@chesco.org or call 610-344-6225.

Meet the Staff!!

Andrea Walker

Supervisor, Care Management

The Department of Aging has been privileged to have a number of new staff join the office in the last year. This month, some of the newest staff members will be highlighted.

Lisa Robinson, an Aging Care Manager, has worked for the County of Chester for almost 3 years and has been with the Department of Aging for the last 6 months. Prior to joining the Department of Aging, Lisa was a Supports Coordinator in the office of MH/IDD. When asked about her favorite part of the job, Lisa responded that she likes coming to work as her co-workers are supportive, and it is satisfying being able to help someone in need. When not at work, Lisa enjoys Reading, gardening, and spending time with family.

Rebecca Rohrmayer, who has been with the Department of Aging since November 2009, is an Aging Care Manager. Rebecca, who was previously a music therapist at an Adult Day Center, reports that her favorite part of this job is getting to know her consumers. In her free time, Rebecca, who would love to try hang gliding, enjoys Bible Studies, reading, and hanging out with friends.

Craig Robertson, an Aging Care Manager, has been with Chester County Department of Aging since October 2009. Before coming to Chester County, Craig's experiences included working as an assessor for another Department of Aging and teaching secondary education for 10 years. Craig, who has his M.Ed and a Certificate in Gerontology from George Mason University, enjoys the staff at the Department of Aging and the focus on meeting consumer's needs. Outside of work, Craig has a great interest in History especially regional history, train history, architectural history and world history.

Aging Care Manager, Elysa Handley, is the newest member of the Department of Aging. Elysa, who has worked for the County for 9 years, joined the Department of Aging on June 21, 2010. Before joining the department, she was a Foster Care Caseworker for Children, Youth and Families. Elysa is enjoying her first few weeks at the Department of Aging and reports that she is looking forward to working with her consumers. Some of Elysa's favorite pastimes include, hugging and kissing her baby, hanging out with family and friends and going to Phillies games!

Brad Bradlee, an Aging Care Manager, has been with the Department of Aging for 6 months. Before coming to Chester County, Brad worked as a substitute teacher at Great Valley High School. When asked about his favorite part of the job, Brad responded, "it is great



CHESTER COUNTY SENIOR GAMES AND SENIOR PICNIC 2010

Chester County's 31st Annual **Senior Picnic** and 28th Annual **Senior Games Day** will be happening once again this year at one great location, Brandywine Picnic Park in Lenape, on Thursday Sept. 23, 2010. This will be the first time that both events are held simultaneously and it should prove to be double the fun for all involved. All Chester County seniors, ages 50 and above, are invited to be part of the festivities.

Brandywine Picnic Park has, for many years, been a wonderful location for our Senior Picnic and their ample grounds should serve as the perfect spot to hold this year's games which will include: Bocce, Horseshoes, Frisbee Putting, Softball/Football throw, Darts, Table Tennis, and Bingo. And as always, a delicious chicken barbeque will be served at lunch time.

Additional Senior Games Events such as **Bowling, Badminton, Swimming, Tennis, Track, and Golf** will also be held throughout Chester County between the dates of **September 20th through September 30th**. Registration forms will be mailed in mid-late July. If you are interested in registering, or in need of additional information, please email whake@chesco.org or call Lois McMillan at 610-344-6035. ■



seeing consumers benefit from the Department's work, and the support and camaraderie of my co-workers makes the job a pleasure." Brad, who once won an autographed Flyers Hockey Stick for selling more Pancake Day tickets than anyone else in his Scout troop, now enjoys film noir, Rockabilly and visiting sites of architectural and historical interest. ■