

Volun-PEER Newsletter

A Publication of the Schuylkill County Ombudsman Program:

Dedicated to Volunteers and PEERs



Volunteer Conference a Great Success!

Inside this issue:

<i>Bringing Together the Youth of the World</i>	2
<i>Aunt Betty's Banana Pudding</i>	2
<i>World's Largest Aquariums</i>	2
<i>Volunteer Opportunities</i>	3
<i>The Passing of a Legend</i>	3
<i>Remembering Lori Ice</i>	3
<i>Where Does the Time Go?</i>	4

Wind Creek, Bethlehem, was the location for this year's Volunteer Conference, sponsored by the PA Aging Network.

Several hundred Ombudsmen who volunteer attended the 3-day conference.

Day 1 included Welcoming Remarks from the Acting Administrator of the Northampton County AAA, Lori Stanton Laney; County Executive, Lamont McClure; and Education and Outreach Director of the PA Department of Aging, Steve Rodgers.

Break-out sessions on Day 1 included Navigating & Finding Fulfillment as a Volunteer, Future Care Planning. An

evening reception with light fare and the ability to browse the Resource Tables and meet with Exhibitors concluded our opening day.

Day 2 included Reframing Aging, a presentation from Dementia Friends PA, Independence to Serve and Live, an Interactive Volunteer Recruitment and Retention discussion.

Day 3 included Aging Our Way PA, a presentation from Bright Side Opportunities Center, and Meeting the Needs of LGBTQ+ Older People.

The closing Keynote was presented by Dr. Susan Wehry, from Aging ME on "The Aging Brain".

The highlight of the conference was the Volunteer Recognition Dinner, which featured a remarks from Secretary of Aging, Jason Kavulich.

Entertainment was provided by the Liberty High School Chorus

Volunteer Milestones were recognized and Certificates were presented, including one to Linda DaRosa from Schuylkill County for providing 5+ years of advocacy to our long-term care consumers.

Congratulations to all who served and continue to volunteer their time!



Did you know:

- Lobster was once known as "poor man's protein"?
- In the summer, squirrels use their big, bushy tails to protect themselves from the sun?
- The traditional birthstone of June is the Pearl, but the modern version is the Alexandrite?

Training Calendar

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

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

The next **Network Meeting** will be held August 15 from

10 am to 1 pm at the Lackawanna County 911 Center.

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

Contact Eileen for additional information.

Bringing Together the Youth of the World



The Olympic Games, which originated in ancient Greece as many as 3,000 years ago, were revived in the late 19th Century and have become the world's preeminent sporting competition. From the 8th Century B.C. to the 4th Century A.D. the games were held every four years in Olympia, in honor of the god Zeus.

The first modern Olympics took place in 1896 in Athens and featured 280 participants,

all men, from 12 nations competing in 43 events.

Since 1994, the Summer and Winter Olympic Games have been held separately and alternated every two years.

The 2022 Winter Olympics were held in Beijing, China and featured figure skating, ice hockey, curling, and more.

The Summer Olympics 2024 will be held in Paris, France, from July 26 to August 11, marking the centenary of the

1924 Games in the same city.

Paris 2024 will feature 33 sports and 339 events, with four new sports added to the program: breakdancing, skateboarding, surfing, and sport climbing.

The Games will showcase iconic landmarks and cultural venues of Paris, such as the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, the Champs-Élysées, and the Seine river. The official motto of Paris 2024 is "Made for Sharing".

Aunt Betty's Banana Pudding



Ingredients:

2 (3.4 oz.) packages instant vanilla pudding mix; 1 cup milk; 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk; 1 (8 oz.) container sour cream; 1 (8 oz.) container frozen whipped topping, thawed; 6 bananas, sliced; 1/2 (12 oz.) package vanilla wafers.

Directions:

Step 1: In a medium bowl, combine pudding mix and milk and stir until mix is dissolved. Refrigerate 15 minutes, until partially set.

Step 2: Stir condensed milk into pudding mixture until smooth. Fold in sour cream and whipped topping. Fold in bananas.

Step 3: Make a single layer of vanilla wafers in the bottom of a 9x13 inch dish. Spread pudding evenly over wafers. Crush remaining wafers and sprinkle on top. Refrigerate until ready to serve.



World's Largest Aquariums



In the context of aquariums, "largest" typically means having the greatest water capacity or the most extensive exhibit space. Aquariums can be measured by the total volume of water they contain, which is usually expressed in liters or gallons. The larger the aquarium, the more diverse marine life it can accommo-

date, including fish, coral, and other aquatic organisms. The Top 10 Aquariums from #10 to #1 include: Aquarium of Western Australia, Aquarium of Genoa (Italy), Shanghai Ocean Aquarium, uShaka Marine World (South Africa)

Monterey Bay Aquarium (California), Tukuazoo (Istanbul), L'Oceanografic (Spain), Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium, Dubai Mall Aquarium

Coming in at #1 is the Georgia Aquarium at 6.3 million gallons of water.

Volunteer Opportunities

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

NURSING HOMES:

Broad Mountain (Frackville), Green Valley (Pottsville), Greenwood Center (Hometown), Orwigsburg Center, Rosewood (Schuylkill Haven), Seton Manor (Orwigsburg), and St. Luke’s University Health Network Long-Term Care Unit (Coaldale).

PERSONAL CARE:

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

ASSISTED LIVING:

Luther Ridge at Seider’s Hill (Pottsville)

ADULT DAY LIVING:

Eldergarden (Pottsville)

LIFE CENTER:

LIFE Geisinger at Miner’s Loft (Minersville)

Free training is provided.

Contact Eileen for further details.



The Passing of a Legend

It is with great sadness that the PEER Program announces the death of Charles “Chuckie” Bunnell on April 17, 2024.

Chuckie was one of the original PEERs having trained in Schuylkill County’s pilot program.

A resident of Pottsville Rehabilitation and Nursing Center

(formerly ManorCare), Chuckie was affectionately known as the “Mayor of ManorCare”. He literally “came in with the bricks” as Resident #3.

His devilish laugh and infectious smile made him endearing to all who met him.

Chuckie loved electronic gadgets, watching Western movies,

and was an expert bowler with his beloved UCP Team.

Our program was honored to have Chuckie as one of our own and thank him for his MANY years of service to the residents of Pottsville Rehab, the CRA Group, and PEERs across the Commonwealth.



Remembering Lori Ice

We are saddened by the loss of PEER Lori Ice.

Lori served as a PEER at the Tremont Health and Rehab Center. She graduated from training January 23, 2024. While she was not with us for a long period of time, her advocacy was prevalent well before

she even became a PEER.

Lori could be seen around her home meeting new residents, assisting those who had difficulty at an activity, in their room, or just needed a friendly ear to listen to their problems. She was a “natural” as a PEER and will be greatly missed.





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

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



Where Does the Time Go?



My job as an Ombudsman began in September, 2005. It was a difficult decision to leave a job I'd held for 18 years. It was comfortable, close to home, there were relationships developed that continue to this day. The first time back in that nursing home as an advocate, I was sure I was going to pass out. I shook like a bowl of jello! 6 weeks later, my granddaughter, Haley, was born. Her arrival is the timeline by which I measure my work life. Fast forward 18 years, and we are readying for graduation. It doesn't seem possible that all that time has passed! It's true

when people say the days drag on, but the years fly by.

How many of our long-term care consumers feel the same way? Many of them tell us they can't imagine they would live this long. They never thought they'd "end up in a place like this".

How do we make them feel better about their current situation? This is where the Ombudsman can step in.

Their lives were comfortable before moving into long-term care. Many of our consumers lived in the home in which they were born, or were living

since being married. They developed relationships in their communities. Coming into this "new home" was scary.

The Ombudsman who volunteers can help to alleviate that angst by being a friendly face and a caring advocate.

If you would like to be that friendly, caring person, let me know. The time you spend will create relationships you will remember for years.

Congratulations to all members of the Class of 2024 - especially my favorite Graduate!

Eileen