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Happy Volunteer Week/Month!

Inside this issue:

<i>Spring Forward</i>	2
<i>Bunny Bait</i>	2
<i>Remembering Doris</i>	2
<i>Volunteer Opportunities</i>	3
<i>Rent Rebate Info</i>	3
<i>Farewell, Heather</i>	3
<i>Stubborn is GOOD!</i>	4

National Volunteer Week/ Month is celebrated annually during the third week of April to recognize the contributions of volunteers and highlight the impact of volunteer service in communities across the United States and beyond.

Established in 1974 by President Richard Nixon through an executive order, the week provides an opportunity to thank volunteers, inspire civic engagement, and encourage more people to participate in volunteer activities.

During this week, organizations and communities host a variety of events, projects, and recognition programs to cele-

brate volunteers' efforts.

It also coincides with Global Volunteer Month, which emphasizes the broader impact of volunteerism and encourages ongoing participation during April.

In 2026, National Volunteer Week begins April 19 and concludes on April 25, offering a full week to honor volunteers, organize community service activities, and raise awareness about the importance of giving time and effort to help others.

National Volunteer Month encourages people to:

- Make a tangible impact: Contribute to projects.

Develop skills: Gain experience in new areas.

Connect with others: Build relationships with like-minded volunteers and community members.

Boost well-being: Volunteering has been shown to reduce stress, increase happiness, and improve mental and physical health.

There are great opportunities to volunteer with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

Reach out if you'd like to make a difference to a consumer in long-term care.

Did you know?

- The word "April" comes from the Latin word "Aprillis", which means "to open".
- The full moon in May is called the "Flower Moon".
- The birthstone for June is the Pearl. It is the only birthstone derived from a living organism - a mollusk.

Training Calendar

Ombudsmen who volunteer their time and talent are invited and encouraged to participate in online training modules offered by the PA Department of Aging, Consumer Voice, 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 announced at a later date.

Details will be provided as soon as they become available.

PEER Meetings are held in individual homes and when requested.





It has been a LONG, cold, and dark winter and it is time for us to “spring forward”.

March 8 marks the weekend that we move our clocks forward 1 hour.

The United States first observed Daylight Savings Time in 1918. It currently begins on the second Sunday of March and ends on the first Sunday of November. The current schedule was intro-

duced in 2007 and follows the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Historically, there were no uniform rules for DST from 1945 to 1966. This caused widespread confusion, especially in transport and broadcasting. The Uniform Time Act of 1966 aligned the switch dates across the USA for the first time.

Following the 1973 oil embargo, the US Congress ex-

tended the DST period to 10 months in 1974 and 8 months in 1975, in an effort to save energy. After the energy crisis was over in 1976, the DST schedule in the US was revised several times. From 1987 to 2006, the country observed DST for about 7 months each year.

48 States plus the District of Columbia observe DST, while Arizona and Hawaii do not.

Bunny Bait



A quick and colorful recipe anyone can make that's just perfect for Spring!

INGREDIENTS: 3-1/2 cups Rice Chex cereal; 3-1/2 cups Honey Nut Cheerios; 1-1/2 cups pretzel sticks; 1/2 cup salted peanuts; 16 ounces vanilla almond bark, chopped (2 cups or 8 squares); 10 ounce

bag of Easter M&Ms; 1/2 cup butterscotch chips

INSTRUCTIONS: Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Mix cereal, pretzels, and peanuts together. Set aside.

Melt vanilla bark until melted completely.

Pour over the cereal mixture

and toss together until combined.

Gently fold in M&Ms and butterscotch chips.

Transfer to baking sheet. Spread mixture evenly and allow to set for about 45 minutes.

Once set, break the bark into pieces and transfer to a serving dish. Enjoy!

Remembering Doris Hollenbush

Gone too soon but
always in our hearts.

Rest in Peace.



It is with great sorrow that we announce the passing of PEER Doris “Fay” Hollenbush. Doris passed away February 17 at Seton Manor.

Doris began her PEER journey at the Tremont Health and Rehab Center, transferring to Seton Manor to be closer to

her husband.

Graduating February 28, 2019, Doris was a “constant” at Resident Council in both homes. She could be found greeting residents and visitors while wearing her signature “hoodie”.

She was soft-spoken and

always had a big smile which made you feel her welcoming spirit.

Our program was fortunate to have her as a member, and we express our condolences to the family members, residents, and friends of Doris.

Volunteer Opportunities

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

NURSING HOMES:

Broad Mountain (Frickville), Edenbrook (Pottsville), Green Valley (Pottsville), Greenwood Center (Hometown), Orwigsburg Center, Ridgeview (Shenandoah Heights), Rosewood (Schuylkill Haven), Seton Manor (Orwigsburg), Shenandoah Senior Living Community, and St. Luke's University

Health Network Long-Term Care Unit (Coaldale).

PERSONAL CARE:

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

ASSISTED LIVING:

Luther Ridge at Seider's Hill (Pottsville)

OLDER ADULT DAY

LIVING CENTER:

Eldergarden (Pottsville)

LIFE CENTER:

LIFE Geisinger at Miner's Loft (Minersville)

Free training is provided, including on-line and virtual modules.

Contact Eileen for further details.



Rent Rebate Available to Nursing Home Residents

Residents living in Skilled Nursing Homes are now able to apply for the Pennsylvania Rent Rebate.

In order to be eligible, you must be 65 and older, widows/widowers 50 and older, or people with disabilities 18 or older, with an annual income of less than \$48,110.00.

Eligible Pennsylvania residents can receive a rebate of \$380.00 to \$1,000.00 on rent paid in 2025 depending on your Income Level, with applications accepted through June 30, 2026.

Form PA-1000 (PA Rent Certificate and Rental Occupancy Affidavit) is to be completed,

and the applicant must also provide Form SSA-1099, Social Security Benefit Statement, and proof of ALL other income.

The application is available online at the PA Department of Revenue website.

Applicants must have paid rent in Pennsylvania during 2025.



Farewell to Heather Rupert

Our program is thrilled to wish good luck to Heather Rupert, who has transitioned from her long-term care home to a home in the community!

Heather completed her training at Ridgeview Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center and graduated September 5, 2024.

As President of Resident Council, Heather was known to come to each meeting with a supply of Grievance Forms. She made it her personal mission to let every resident in her home know that they could file a grievance if they had an issue they wanted solved.

She would review the grievances at every meeting, making sure each concern was addressed through the proper channels.

We wish Heather all the best as she begins this new journey and thank her for her service to our consumers.





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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.



Stubborn is Good!

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the word “stubborn” as “justifiably unyielding”. To that end, may I present to you the “**PANSY**”. They come in all shapes and sizes, have “faces”, never allow a challenge (winter?) to stop them, and are the epitome of **STUBBORN!**

When I was a little girl, my Nanny, had a version of pansies in her yard, which she called “Johnny Jump-Ups”. They were tinier than the average pansy and grew under a trough that contained geraniums. They kept coming back each Spring and made the yard

look so pretty! She didn’t plant them, they just showed up.

STUBBORN is good!

My childhood home did not have a garden; rather, it had a yard with pads of cement.

One Spring, we noticed something growing between the cement and the cinder block garage at my parents’ home.

No one dared remove it so we could see what it would become. Lo and behold, a group of pansies had taken up residence. We don’t know where they came from. We soon realized no matter how hard we tried to prevent them from returning, they kept coming

back year after year. They could not be stopped and brought a lot of pleasure.

STUBBORN is good!

A volunteer is quite the same. We don’t always know where they come from, we can’t stop them, and they are “justifiably unyielding”. In this case, being **STUBBORN is GOOD!**

During the month of April we recognize the Volunteers who are unyielding. To the Ombudsmen and PEERs, “THANK YOU” for all the **GOOD** that you do!

Eileen

