



Volun-PEER Newsletter

A Publication of the Schuylkill County Ombudsman Program

Volume 19, Issue 2

Celebrating Volunteers

April 16-22, 2023 marks National Volunteer Week. The theme for this year's celebration is "Volunteering Weaves Us Together".

Our volunteers support each other, and our respective programs, by the sharing of time, talent, and energy to strengthen the members of the community.

Research conducted by the Mayo Clinic tells us volunteering improves both physical and mental health, keeping people moving and thinking at

the same time.



Volunteers have better physical health than non-volunteers, leading them to reduced amounts of stress, and lower reports

of depression and anxiety.

Volunteering also provides a sense of purpose and teaches valuable life skills. Volunteers also experience greater increases in life satisfaction and self-esteem.

Volunteering also increases social interaction and helps build a support system based on common interests.

We are grateful to Linda DaRosa and Kris Karnish for their dedicated service to the Ombudsman Program through the years!



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Training Calendar

Volunteers are invited and encouraged to participate in on-line training modules offered by the PA Department of Aging, Consumer Voice, Learning Management System (LMS), and a host of other options.

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

A variety of modules are offered through the year in-

cluding participation in Virtual Family Council, either live via Zoom or the recording via YouTube.

Contact Eileen for further information or to register for training opportunities.



Did you know?

- Italy sold the largest chocolate egg, weighing the same as 3 cars and measuring 34 feet tall
- Arizona and Hawaii are the only two states that do not follow Daylight Savings Time
- The first day of Spring also marks the beginning of Nowruz - The Persian New Year

Lemon Crinkle Cookies

Lemon Crinkle Cookies are light and fluffy on the inside and crunchy on the outside.

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup butter (softened), 2 cups granulated sugar, 4 large eggs, 4 tbsp. lemon juice, 4 tbsp. lemon zest, 4 tsp. baking powder; 4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour.

Food coloring: pink, blue, yellow
1/2 –1 cup powdered sugar (to roll cookie dough in)

INSTRUCTIONS:

Cream the butter and sugar until completely combined.

Add in eggs and mix until the dough is fluffy.

Add in lemon juice and lemon zest and mix until fully incorporated.

Add in the baking powder.

Mix in the flour, a third at a time.

Split dough into 4 portions and use food

coloring to tint the cookie dough pink yellow, blue, and purple.

Refrigerate dough for two hours.

Roll dough into balls and roll in powdered sugar.

Bake at 350 degrees for 12 to 14 minutes or until lightly browned on the edges. Cool on cookie sheets for 10 minutes before removing to wire rack.

Store in airtight containers or freeze for up to 3 months.



Getting Back to Nature

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is interested in working with long-term care facilities to connect older adults to nature via a toolkit. The project is a partnership with the Department of Health.

As part of the toolkit, DCNR would like to highlight facilities that are already creating meaningful connections to the outdoors for the aging adults they serve.

Some homes have residents going outdoors and some homes bring nature

indoors to the residents.

Facility staff are asked to answer the following questions:

Are there resources required to facilitate the activity (i.e. - staff, volunteers, materials, transportation, etc.)?

Is there any advice you can offer other homes that might be considering some type of activity for the first time?

Homes that are participating are asked to share photos of their accomplishments.



“DCNR would like to highlight facilities that are already creating meaningful connections to the outdoors for the aging adults they serve.”

Questions, comments, or concerns can be forwarded to Madison Short (madshort@pa.gov) or Nicole Faraguna (nfaraguna@pa.gov).

Remembering Donald Reese

The Ombudsman Program and all PEERs extend their deepest sympathies to the family, friends, and fellow residents on the passing of Donald Reese.

Donnie graduated from PEER Training in March, 2016 and lived at Broad Mountain Health and Rehabilitation Center.

An enthusiastic advocate for the rights of all residents, he was a “regular” at the monthly Resident Council Meetings, and all PEER meeting and functions.

While his fellow residents were important to him, he was most proud of his family and spoke highly of them and their numerous accomplishments.



We thank Donald for his dedication to the PEER Program and will continue to honor his memory with our good deeds and advocacy for those who cannot speak for themselves.



Ombudsman Volunteer Symposium

The Office of Long-Term Care Ombudsman will sponsor a Volunteer Symposium on April 20 and 21, 2023 at the Hershey Lodge.

This two-day gathering will focus on a number of topics, to include: Understanding Mental Health to Improve Engagement, a session entitled “Who Benefits More, You or the Resident?”, a round-table discussion on Volunteer Recruitment and Retention, as well as a presentation conducted by members of the Volunteer Task Force.

Day 2 begins with an overview from Dementia Friends, PA representatives Anneliese Perry and Stacie Bonenberger.

The symposium will conclude with a talk from Dr. Susan Wehry who will present “Choose Hope and Carry On” that will provide an overview of all that we’ve been through in the last few years, what we’ve learned and how

we’ve grown.



Each day will include General Sessions and Keynote Speakers.

This will be the first time we have been able to “gather” since the pandemic and we

look forward to being together once again!

Volunteer Opportunities

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

NURSING HOMES:

Broad Mountain, Green Valley Nursing, Greenwood Center for Nursing (formerly Hometown Nursing), Orwigsburg Center, Ridgeview, Rosewood, Schuylkill Center, Seton Manor, Shenandoah Manor and St. Luke’s University Health Network Long-Term Care.

PERSONAL CARE:

Heritage Mills, Providence Place (Pottsville and Pine Grove campuses), The Birches at Shenandoah Manor.

ASSISTED LIVING:

Luther Ridge at Seider’s Hill

ADULT DAY LIVING:

Eldergarden



LIFE CENTER:

LIFE Geisinger at Miner’s Loft

Free training is provided. Contact Eileen for further details.

The Loss of Alice Bolton

The PEER Program was informed of the passing of Alice Bolton, a PEER living at Broad Mountain Health and Rehab Center, Frackville. Alice passed on April 13, 2023.

Alice trained at her home in 2013 and was an active member of the Resident Council. She also participated in the bi-monthly PEER Conference Call.

She was involved in all activities in her home and was a welcoming presence to new residents.

Alice’s infectious smile and willingness to help anyone will be the legacy she leaves behind.

Our condolences are extended to Alice’s family members, friends, and all residents at Broad Mountain.





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 County”



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.



Hope Springs Eternal

I have a friend who lives out of the area and we maintain contact routinely. During a recent conversation we both agreed the best time of the year is early Spring when the trees reach a specific color - not the buds, not the fully developed leaves, but the in-between part when the new leaves are “young” and “puffy”, such as... *** There’s just nothing like it! New life has returned and there is hope. Spring has arrived! Then we got all philosophical and one of us said “But what is hope?”.

The dictionary defines hope as “a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen”, “a feeling of trust”, and “the *want* for something to happen”.

Let’s keep in mind, however, that hoping and wishing are two completely

separate things. When we hope, we trust that what we ask for will happen or occur. When we wish, we desire something that is not easily attainable.

Over the past several years, we have lost a great number of volunteers - for any number of reasons. At one time, our program had 21 Ombudsmen who volunteered their services. We are now down to 2. Let’s be clear: I am eternally grateful for their service to this program.

Full disclosure: there are 2 additional Ombudsmen-in-training who are closing in on certification. While I know wishing doesn’t make it so, I do *wish* we had more! Realistically, I *hope* that we can continue to increase our complement!

Our residents wish and hope a lot, too.

They hope staff will show up for work, they hope the food is good, they hope their rooms are clean, they hope their lives are filled with quality. They trust that all these things will be provided.

Our Ombudsman who volunteer bring hope to our residents. They are a hopeful sight and work along with the residents to assure their lives are filled with all the things that bring quality to their day-to-day existence.

During this year’s National Volunteer Week, let’s be thankful for those who offer their precious time and be grateful for those who have gone before us.

Eileen