



The mission of the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging is to develop, coordinate and promote a continuum of quality services that supports, respects, and advocates for older adults and their families; empowers them to maintain independence and dignity; and enhances their overall well-being.

A Celebration for our Bucks County Centenarians!

By Kathy Bennett, Director



On October 1, 2024, the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging (BCAAA) hosted its first event celebrating Bucks County Centenarians. The BCAA partnered with Christ's Home in Warminster to hold the event in their

Community Center. In attendance were 25 of the 197 residents who are 100 years of age or older and live in Bucks County. We were honored to have Commissioner Robert (Bob) Harvie, Bucks County COO Margaret (Margie) McKeivitt and representatives from the offices of Senator Fetterman, Congressman Fitzpatrick, and State Senator Santarsiero and State Senator Farry at the event. Rounding out the celebration was music provided by a volunteer piano player, Judie Stebner. It was a fabulous event and one that we plan on continuing on an annual basis.

In addition to the BCAA staff who helped at the event, one of our graduate social work interns from Widener University was on hand to welcome the Centenarians and their families. As part of a school assignment, she wrote an article about one of the attendees which we are highlighting in this edition of the newsletter (on page 5), as well as a number of pictures from the event that we hope captures the joy and fun of the Centenarians and their family members. As you read about the gentleman in the article, and

look at the pictures, think about what you would do in your life if you have the opportunity to live to 100 years of age. You are indeed a legacy in the making!

Wishing you many happy birthdays,

Kathy Bennett

To receive information about our various services, please call 267-880-5700, email us at aging@buckscounty.org, or visit our website and submit an on-line request form at buckscounty.gov/289/County-Resources-for-Seniors.



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Photos: BCAA staff



Health & Wellness

Free health & wellness programming

For more information, please contact us at 267-880-5700 or aging@buckscounty.org.

Recommended Vaccines for Adults Age 65+

The Standard Recommendation for vaccinations for most older adults include:

- COVID-19
- Seasonal Flu (Influenza)
- Pneumonia (pneumococcal)
- Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis
- Shingles (Zoster)

Other Vaccines May Be Needed, due to other factors or your age.

Talk with your doctor. Learn which vaccines are recommended for you.

Some of those vaccinations may include:

- RSV
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)
- Meningococcal

Are there any vaccines I should not get? Because of age, health conditions, or other factors, there are certain vaccines some people should not, and others they should wait to, receive. It is important to consult with your doctor/health care professional.

More information and details, go to: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/aging/health-topics-for-older-adults/immunizations.html>

Do you like fun, friendly competition?
Are you 50+? **SAVE THESE DATES!**

The 42nd Annual Bucks County PA
Senior Games
June 5-12, 2025





Registration:
March 15 - May 15

Kick-off event:
May 28 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

267-880-5700 #6
buckscounty.gov/seniorgames

Photography by Flattail



What are the Senior Games?

The Senior Games are an opportunity for those 50 and above, at all levels of ability, to compete, learn a new game, and have fun. It's a great week to be outside and socialize. Billiards, Bocce, Disc Golf, Bowling, Chess, Darts, and Pickleball clinic are just a few of the event offerings. Register March 15-May 15 at www.buckscounty.gov/seniorgames

My Life, My Health

- Diabetes Self-Management
- Chronic Disease Self-Management
- Healthy Steps for Older Adults (HSOA)
- Virtual Chair Yoga

Also check the website or call in the end of Jan. for the Spring schedule of offerings!

Register now! Call 267-880-5700

<https://www.buckscounty.gov/248/Health-Classes-and-Information>





Dealing with SSI Overpayments

Rhonda Sherrod, Esq.
Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania

Supplemental Security Income (“SSI”), administered by the Social Security Administration (“SSA”) is for those who are disabled, blind, or age 65 and over with little or no income or resources. People of retirement age whose social security income is less than the maximum SSI monthly benefit (currently \$943 for a single person; \$1,415 for couples) can receive SSI payments in addition to their social security, bringing their total social security income to the SSI maximum payment.

Because SSI is income and resource dependent, recipients:

- Are required to report changes in income or resource status to Social Security.
- Have reduced SSI benefits for the month in any month that other income is received.
- May lose eligibility for the month if they receive income or resources over the maximum SSI benefit amount.

As a result, SSI overpayments happen occasionally. Overpayments:

- Are when the payment received is greater than the eligible amount.

Do not panic if you receive a Notice of Overpayment.

- It is important not to ignore these notices.
- There are steps to take for an overpayment that don’t require immediate full repayment.
- If you ignore a notice, Social Security may start deducting 10% of your monthly benefit to recoup the overpayment.

There are three basic steps a person can take to address an overpayment issue with the SSA.

- **Ask for reconsideration.** You can appeal for your case to be reconsidered. Do this if you think the amount of or the reason SSA gave for the overpayment is wrong.

- **Ask for a waiver.** If you agree you were overpaid, not at fault and can’t afford to repay the money, ask SSA to waive repayment. A waiver request can be made at any time.
- **Ask for a payment arrangement.** If you think you were at fault or can afford to pay the overage back, tell SSA you want to repay the money over time. If needed, a lower payment can be sought.

Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania can assist Bucks County residents with SSI Overpayments. Contact us at (215)781-1111 for more information.



The Senior Quarterly

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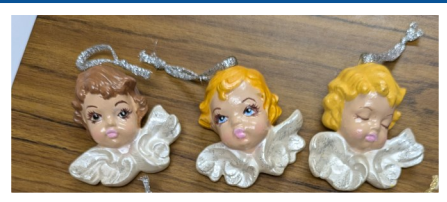
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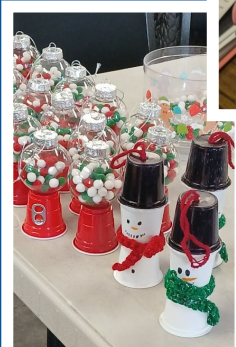
Katy Meyerson, Wanda Ritter

The Capital Christmas Tree

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging asked Senior Centers to contribute hand crafted ornaments to decorate the State Capital Christmas tree. Several of the Bucks County Senior Center members created ornaments that the centers then sent to the Capital. The Centers that donated ornaments for the Capital Tree were Middletown, Eastern Upper Bucks, Central Bucks, Bensalem, and Ben Wilson. We'd like to thank them for their contributions!!



Bensalem Senior Citizens Center (angels—above; Santa boots—right)



Ben Wilson Senior Activity Center (candy machines and snowmen—left)

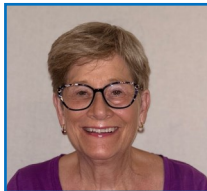


Eastern Upper Bucks (crèche)

PA MEDI Retirements



On Dec 6, 2024, **Janine Slabicki** retired. Janine served as the Agency's coordinator of the Medicare Counseling program (PA MEDI) for nearly 10 years. Her responsibilities included providing support, training, and equipping a volunteer team of up to 18 volunteers at one time. Staff and volunteers alike are fond of Janine and will miss her very much.



Ginny Watkins volunteered in the PA MEDI program since 2007, giving over 6,000 hours of her time primarily to the PA MEDI program. She also volunteered as a long-term care Ombudsman, later holding a contract position in the program. She has been a tremendous asset to the Agency. She has a passion for and is tenacious when aiding older adults who might feel marginalized or lost in the gaps between services. Ginny had also become the resident expert on Medical Assistance, often quoting the rules of Medicaid to help advocate for a Bucks County Resident. A favorite Ginny story is one in which she was involved with both the Ombudsman and PA MEDI programs. There was an issue in getting a nursing facility resident, June, a motorized wheelchair. Ginny leveraged her knowledge in both programs to explore every option under insurance and beyond. She worked with the facility to secure a grant to get residents motorized wheelchairs. It took nearly a year, but Ginny got June her chair!! Ginny has been efficient and effective, a high producer with great knowledge and passion. Ginny has mentored several PA MEDI team members about Medicare and provided training on Medicaid to her colleagues. Ginny will be missed by the entire team. We all feel lucky to have known her! Best wishes, Ginny!

Ombudsman Staff Retirement

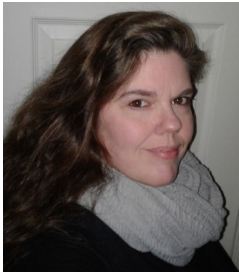
Nancy Morgan came to the Ombudsman program in December of 2022. She had extensive experience in the social work world and had done great advocacy for children in Bucks County. She served older adults through the Ombudsman program in 21 long-term care facilities. Nancy has been a frequent visitor in facilities with the greatest need, a friend to many residents facing challenges, and a willing team member.



The Ombudsman team will miss her very much. Happy retirement, Nancy!

A Centenarian's Thoughts Upon Turning 100

By Tara Lynn Johnson



If you ask John Dieckman, who turned 100 on December 10, what life is all about, it's family. The father of 11, grandfather of 13, and great-grandfather of 6 looks forward to seeing many of them for their weekly Pinochle game on Tuesdays. *(Mr. Dieckman and family are pictured in the photograph to the lower right, below.)*

They go out to dinner on Saturdays, too. Even with his almost 40-year career in the cable TV industry, his serving in the U.S. Navy, and his entertainment career as a crooner (including singing *I Left My Heart in San Francisco* to me during a recent phone call), nothing else compares. "Family's really what it's all about," he said.

Dieckman, a widower, was born in his grandfather's house in Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania in 1924, and now lives in Lower Southampton. He's lived in various places, like Florida and Missouri, but he likes having family close by. Though he is a century old, his doctor told him he's the healthiest guy his age that he knows. Dieckman walks and does puzzles like cryptograms and sudoku daily. He doesn't spend time "tied to a screen" like most people these days. "That's not the way I want to live," said Dieckman, who prefers a landline telephone. He is amazed at how the world has changed during his lifetime. "The tech from my day doesn't exist anymore," he said. "It's a different world."

When contemplating turning 100, Dieckman shares his attitude of gratitude. As he tells his life story, there is a consistent refrain: "I can't think of anything I haven't done... A lot of interesting things can happen in a lifetime."

That includes turning 100, and having several birthday parties, including the one hosted by the Area Agency on Aging, to celebrate. There were also family celebrations for such an amazing milestone. December 10th was a Tuesday in 2024, and was an extra special family game night, with cake and lots of candles.

Happy 100th birthday, Mr. Dieckman!



Be Prepared

When I was little, I was told to be prepared. I was never sure for what, but I was determined none-the-less. Now that I am not little except perhaps in stature, I am preparing but this time with an idea for what!

In re-thinking what constitutes an emergency, the awareness came that a fall, medication reaction, physical malady or simply weakness from aging can place me in a situation where I need help or worse. I need to be ready to help others help me. I need an emergency kit and it needs, at the very least:

A List: List doctors, their discipline, phone numbers, Rx and dosages, allergies and pharmacies as ready reference.

A Network: Have a supportive group of family/friends (with their phone numbers) listed.

A Key: Give a spare house key to someone in the network.

A Communication Chain: Plan a communication chain with family/friends.

A Plan: Make an emergency plan. Where to go (can medical needs can be met?), how to get there, what to take, who to tell.

I can take much of this with me when I travel too. Just in case.

<https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/aging/documents/aging-programs-and-services/health-wellness/documents/seniors.pdf>

www.ready.gov

How to Stay Informed, Not Overwhelmed

Being aware and informed of what is going on in the world around you is important. These days there are many outlets to stay informed, including the internet, social media, newspapers and television. It is important to know the best sources to get your news from, how to check the facts, and what to avoid.

- Create a news schedule, to keep the news stories to a limit and then it is not so overwhelming. With a schedule, you check in once, maybe twice, a day and move on. With so many varied news options, you can spend hours looking through the different reports and easily lose track of time.
- Do look into different news sources, allowing you to hear multiple perspectives from diverse resources, gaining a more rounded understanding of the event or situation. Try scheduling one source in the a.m. and a different one in the p.m.
- Have discussions with friends or groups about current events. This can become a social opportunity over coffee or lunch.
- Question what you are seeing or hearing in the news. Make it a goal to learn more, fact check, be skeptical, think critically, analyze, and cross reference. Some outlets have an agenda and report things as fact when it may not be the case.
- Be careful with Social Media. You can use it as a starting point being sure to look to other sources for verification and more details. Often times, what comes off as a fact on social media posts is someone posting an opinion.
- Being informed carries the responsibility that you provide accurate information. Do not jump in to the world wide game of telephone that often occurs on social media. Often times, erroneous information gets started this way. Most of us have seen it. For example, someone says, "I saw on Instagram, a post saying, "Wouldn't it be grand to get rid of cars and use horses instead". The next thing you hear is that the world is changing back to horse-drawn carriages! All it takes is one person to incorrectly overhear that first comment and upon being repeated multiple times, it gets twisted from a wish to a mandate. It is important to check your sources and confirm the facts as best you can.

Do be sure to stay informed. And reassure the horse that he can continue grazing in the pasture and is not going back to work!

<https://www.autumnviewgardensellisville.com/blog/5-ways-for-seniors-to-stay-informed>

4 Tips to Follow if You've Been Victimized –

File a police report. Go to your local police station and file a report about the fraud or scam so you can prove to your bank and credit reporting companies you have been scammed.

Inform your credit card company and bank. If you are the victim of identity theft or some other financial scam, contact the fraud department at your credit card company and bank. You may have to close the account or the institution may just remove the fraudulent transactions.

Report the fraud to the three credit reporting companies. Do this as soon as possible, especially if your personal information was used to take out a new credit line, make purchases, take out loans, or anything else that could affect your credit. Each credit reporting company has a fraud unit: **Equifax:** (800) 525-6285; **Experian:** (888) EXPERIAN or (888) 397-3742; **TransUnion:** (800) 680-7289;

Gather evidence. In addition to the police report, save items related to the suspected fraud if you can. Letters/emails of solicitation; prospectuses; cancelled checks; receipts for cash, cashier's checks or money orders; bank, investment or medical statements could help you get your money back or protect yourself from further victimization.

Tips cited from <http://action.aarp.org>

To learn how to protect yourself from scams and fraud, please visit our website www.buckscounty.gov/cp or use the QR code. **Office of Consumer Protection: 215-348-6060**



Bucks County Crimes Against Older Adults Task Force www.buckscounty.gov/CrimesAgainstOlderAdults 24 – HOUR HOTLINE: 1-800-490-8505	
Bucks County District Attorney's Office: 215-348-6344	PA SeniorLaw center: 877-727-7529
Bucks County Area Agency on Aging: 267-880-5700	PA Office of Attorney General: 717-787-3391
Bucks County Register of Wills: 215-348-6265	USDOJ (United States Department of Justice): 215-861-8200
Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA): 1-800-675-6900	Bucks County Sheriff's Department: 215-348-6124
Bucks County Office of Consumer Protection: 215-348-6060	Central Bucks Regional Police Department: 215-345-4143
C&N Bank: 877-838-2517	Plumstead Police Department: 215-766-8741
US Dept. of Health and Human Services/OIG: 800-447-8477	Upper Southampton Police Department: 215-357-8900
A Woman's Place: www.awomansplace.org HOTLINE: 800.220.8116	

What to Do, When and Where

Do you ever scratch your head and think, 'I am really itching to get out, and go do something Maybe see something new, try a new eatery, go to an event. If only there were a central place, a hub of sorts, for this information.'

You are in luck! There is Bucks County Alive. <https://buckscountyalive.com/>

They say it best: "Bucks County Alive Bucks helps us stay connected to our community through one of the largest event calendars in the area, guides to our local attractions and how to enjoy them as locals, and other community resources..."

On the Bucks County Alive site, there are listings of all sorts of things: events, attractions, performances, classes, museums, wineries and more.

You can see what is happening all over the county.

What is very helpful is their feature whereby you can click on your town, or a town near where you want to go and find out what is happening. For listings by town, go to <https://communitiesalive.com/>.

But wait, there is more! They have a Bucks County Area Seniors Guide! <https://buckscountyalive.com/seniors/>.

They offer different senior-oriented resource information, including gift ideas for seniors.

Bucks County Area Agency on Aging
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Doylestown, PA 18901

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Bucks County Area Agency on Aging

55 E. Court St., 3rd Floor, Doylestown, PA 18901

Phone: 267-880-5700 Fax: 215-348-7827

E-mail: aging@buckscounty.org Website: www.buckscounty.gov/aging

Elder Abuse Hotline: 1-800-243-3767, available 24 hours a day

Office Hours: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday - Friday

The Area Agency on Aging offers more than 20 programs to help older adults and their families in Bucks County. Services include:

Information and Referral

Care Management

Assessment & Care Planning

In-Home Services

Volunteer Opportunities

Community Presentations

Adult Day Service

Employment Assistance

Health Insurance Counseling

Transportation

Caregiver Support

Outreach

Senior Centers

Ombudsman Services

Protective Services

Nutritional Services

Legal Services

Health & Wellness

Please visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/bcaging>.

