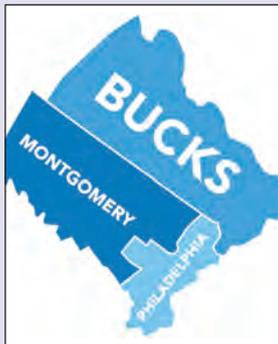


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**NEXT MONTH:
 Adventure**



Courtesy of Lee Ann Etscovitz

Lee Ann Etscovitz relaxes in her Hatboro home. At 82, she finally feels free to be her true self.

Gender transition allows her to be free and finally become true self

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

After years of “gender unhappiness,” Lee Ann Etscovitz took a huge step in a long, painful journey. At the age of 65, she underwent male-to-female sexual reassignment surgery in May 2001. “I had to live as much as possible as the female I felt myself to be,” says Etscovitz, a Hatboro resident.

She’s slender and of average height, and has facial skin that looks baby-soft. Her appearance is altogether feminine. At 82, Etscovitz now walks with the aid of a cane, but she breathes an air of contentment and exhibits a lively wit. Her appearance, voice and manner show no trace of her former male self.

“By the time I was 4, I sensed I was different from other children, but I didn’t understand it,” says Etscovitz, who was raised in Houlton, Maine, a small town near the Canadian border. By adolescence, she felt uncomfortable as a male when around other boys but at ease with girls. Scared and embarrassed to tell anyone about her gender confusion, Lee Ann

(who was called Lionel as a male) began living a secret life. “At age 13, when I was home alone, I cross-dressed, primarily in my mother’s lingerie,” she says. For the next 42 years, she continued to cross-dress secretly.

At the same time, Etscovitz was attracted to women. “I always had a girlfriend,” she says. She continued to live outwardly as a male and married for the first time in 1961. That union lasted 15 years and produced two sons and a daughter. With a doctorate in educational philosophy and human relations, she also began a teaching career in higher education. Between her family life and professional position, she appeared to be living a “normal” life as a male. “But it was a charade,” she says. “I was preoccupied with gender and sexual fantasies that interfered with my domestic and professional responsibilities.”

Coming out as transgender meant risking enormous rejection. “By revealing my female self, I could lose my family, my friends and my livelihood,” Etscovitz says. “I didn’t know if

• continued on page 12

Independence

Maintaining autonomy while caregiving

By Sally Friedman

Once past childhood dependence, most adults cherish the gift of autonomy. They want to determine their own destinies. But needs can change with satisfying – or devastating – results. The shifting of one’s role from equal to caregiver or care recipient can be painful enough to destroy even the best family relationship. But the picture is not all desperate. Help is available, from emotional to practical to financial. Expert staff and comprehensive resources at Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) can be invaluable to helping people maintain independence when involved in caregiving.

Barry J. Jacobs, Psy.D., a clinical psychologist, writer and lecturer, knows from experience that the structure of a family can drastically change when caregiving becomes part of the dynamic.

As a caregiver himself for his late mother, he’s learned important lessons about making the most of time together while also seeing to his ailing mother’s needs and giving with grace. “Freedom and independence are basic to our sense of self and well-being,” he says.

• continued on page 14



Paola Noguerras

Charlotte and Jim Brown prepare collard greens in their West Philadelphia home.

PCA

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WHO IS PCA?

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) is a nonprofit agency dedicated to serving Philadelphia seniors. In addition to bringing you Milestones newspaper, PCA offers:

- Care in the home
- Home-delivered meals
- Home repairs and modifications
- Protective services
- Senior centers
- Caregiver support
- Employment and volunteer programs
- Legal services
- Transportation



- Ombudsman services
- Health education
- Information and referral

For more information, call the PCA Helpline at 215-765-9040 or visit pcaCares.org.

Health Brief

Advances in home technology are helping seniors remain independent

A significant rise in the number of people 65-plus is driving technological innovations aimed at helping older adults live more independently. The United States Census Bureau estimates that the nation's 65-and-older population is 46 million and will reach 83.7 million by 2050. With more Americans living longer, the demand for technology to help people "age in place" will only increase.

The most popular home technology currently on the market comes in the form of voice-assisted devices such as Amazon Echo or Google Home, according to a report in USA Today. These devices allow users to control lighting and thermostat settings with just the sound of their voice, giving seniors greater control over energy use.

Seniors can also use the devices to set reminders about medication or upcoming appointments. In an emergency, these devices allow users to get in contact with first responders or loved ones instantly, even if they are unable to reach a telephone.

Some devices offer more personalization and are specifically marketed to seniors. Reminder Rosie allows users to record custom messages that will alert them when it is time to take medicine, put garbage out for collection or call a relative.

MedMinder is a high-tech pill dispenser that can simplify complicated medication schedules through a series of visual and/or auditory alerts. The device can schedule medication for multiple weeks and can be set up to lock and unlock only at certain times of the day. If an important dose is missed, a built-in cellular connection can connect users with a caregiver automatically.

Wearable technology that tracks movement can help family members remain connected to their older relatives from anywhere in the world. FitBit is a watch-like device that tracks a user's steps in real time. When paired with a relative's smartphone, these devices can alert loved ones to potential problems. A dip in recorded activity, for example, could signal sickness or an urgent mobility issue.

More advanced technology is in development across the country. Researchers at the Georgia Institute of Technology test cutting-



Personal devices can help family members remain connected to older relatives from anywhere.

edge devices inside a 5,000-square-foot living laboratory called the "Aware Home." The facility looks like a normal three-story residential home on the outside but is outfitted with state-of-the-art technology.

Researchers' main goals in the facility are to make homes safer for older adults by reducing the incidence of the most common accidents, according to CNN. Much of the technology being tested inside Aware Home is aimed at reducing accidents related to cooking and household chores, such as kitchen fires from unattended stoves or water damage from neglected water sources.

Many of the devices being developed will collect personalized data to better serve individual users in their homes. For instance, Aware Home is outfitted with gait-sensing technology that constantly monitors movement and can detect changes in walking patterns. The data is analyzed and paired with an algorithm to alert caregivers to any potential changes in an individual's gait pattern.

Researchers say their goal is to provide more personalized options for older adults, allowing them to live more independently. Organizations like Aging in Place Technology Watch track many of these advancements from the development stage through market launch. Read more at AgeInPlaceTech.com.

Source: USA Today and CNN

Milestones

Published by Philadelphia Corporation for Aging

Call 24/7 to report suspected elder abuse.
PCA Helpline: 215-765-9040
Outside Philadelphia toll-free:
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www.pcaCares.org

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Independence

PCA expands its service coordination to Bucks and Montgomery counties

By Marcia Z. Siegal



Eligible seniors in Bucks and Montgomery counties can now receive help to remain in their homes with service coordination through Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA). PCA has expanded the geographical reach of its Aging Waiver service coordination program. This initiative builds on more than four decades of PCA providing service coordination to older Philadelphians.

Pennsylvania's Aging Waiver program serves individuals 60-plus who are eligible for both Medicaid and a nursing-facility level of care who choose to "age in place," in their homes, rather than in nursing facilities. Service coordinators are vital to helping them achieve this goal. Among the services these professionals provide are to:

- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment that includes the participant's goals and preferences
- Develop and implement an individual-

ized care plan, arranging for services such as personal care, home-delivered meals and transportation

- Help participants access benefits and resources
- Monitor participants' progress and concerns through visits and phone calls

"We have service coordinators who live in or near Bucks and Montgomery counties and are eager to help with participants there," said Ann Danish, PCA's director of care management. Staff serving those counties are familiar with local resources to which they can connect participants, such as personal-care and home-health agencies, transportation, and adult day services, she said.

PCA provided service coordination to more than 17,000 participants in Philadelphia during the 2016-2017 fiscal year. According to Danish, the agency's expansion of service coordination to Bucks and Montgomery counties illustrates that "we are innovative and



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Service coordination through PCA helps seniors age in place, instead of in a nursing facility, by providing comprehensive assessment, care planning, access to resources and monitoring.

flexible" in reaching out to new populations. It also positions PCA for the upcoming transition to Community HealthChoices (CHC), a state-mandated managed care program that will affect many Pennsylvania seniors and people with disabilities. Under CHC, both physical health care and "long-term services and supports" – meaning nursing-home or home-based care – will be coordinated through select managed-care organizations (MCOs). CHC began in the southwest part of the state in January 2018 and will start in Southeast Pennsylvania in January 2019.

Under CHC, seniors who are eligible for the Aging Waiver Program will be asked to choose from among three MCOs: Keystone

First (a member of AmeriHealth Caritas), PA Health & Wellness, and UPMC Community HealthChoices. Efforts are underway for PCA to be a contracted service coordination provider with all three MCOs.

For information about service coordination or to request an assessment for yourself or an older adult living in Philadelphia, Montgomery or Bucks counties, call the PCA Helpline at 215-765-9040, weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; or go to pcaCares.org and click on the "Why choose PCA?" tab at the top or the "Request Assistance" button below it.

Marcia Z. Siegal is public relations manager for Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA).



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Milestones newspaper expands distribution

Milestones newspaper, which is read by more than 178,000 older adults each month, has extended its reach outside of Philadelphia. To coincide with Philadelphia Corporation for Aging's recent expansion of service coordination to Bucks and Montgomery counties (see article above), Milestones is now being distributed in these areas. The newspaper is available, free of charge, at nearly 1,100 sites, including libraries, phar-

macies, senior housing complexes, senior community centers, churches, diners, hospitals and rehabilitation centers throughout the region.

To find a distribution site near you, call 215-765-9000, ext. 5050, or go to pcaMilestones.org, where you can also download and read current and past issues. Home delivery of Milestones newspaper is available for \$12 a year.

Tour of the President's House reveals unique aspects of nation's history



M. Kennedy for GPTMC

The President's House, located on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is a memorial to the site of the home of the first two U.S. presidents, George Washington and John Adams.

By Dorothy Stanaitis

There's a historical gem located within our midst that many Philadelphians do not know about. Just across the street from the Independence Visitor Center, located at the corner of Sixth and Market streets, you can see the footprint of the former home of the first two U.S. presidents, called the President's House. The house was occupied by both our first president, George Washington, and his successor, John Adams, when Philadelphia was capital of the United States from 1790 to 1800.

Built in the late 1760s, the three-story, gracious Georgian brick mansion was commandeered by Gen. William Howe as his headquarters when, during the Revolutionary War, the British occupied Philadelphia from 1777 to 1778.

After the occupation, Major Gen. Benedict Arnold moved in for a year. In 1779, Robert Morris, one of the richest men in America, bought and modernized the mansion by adding a two-story bathhouse and an icehouse. Morris also decorated the front parlor with lavish, imported Chinese wallpaper.

When America's new president needed a house grand enough to host his weekly receptions, salons and dinners and to receive political leaders from all over the world, Philadelphia chose Robert Morris' convenient and elegant home.

With Washington's large staff and several family members, 30 people lived in the house. Washington; his wife, Martha; two grandchildren; and two enslaved maids lived on the upper floors of the back wing over the kitchen. His secretaries lived and worked in the official executive office on the third floor.

Some of the many servants, cooks, washwomen, porters, coachman, a housekeeper

and a steward lived in the attic. Downstairs, in order to create a dramatic, ceremonial background for reception of his guests, Washington is said to have designed the 16-foot bay window that was added to the living room of the spacious mansion.

Sadly, in the 1830s, when Philadelphia was no longer the capital city, the house was nearly demolished. It was used for a while as a hotel, then divided into shops. But it wasn't long before there was no visual trace of the mansion left.

In 1951, Pennsylvania demolished all of the buildings in the area to create Independence Mall State Park. A women's restroom built on the site bore a marker describing the significance of the building that had once stood there.

In 2007, an archeological dig came across the 18th century foundations of the house. Rather than recreate and rebuild that mansion, the architect and planner created an outline of the mansion to show its footprint using red brick partial walls, granite flooring, and white door and window frames.

• continued on page 15

Crossword puzzle solution

(See page 15 for clues.)

N	E	E	N	S	L	E	N	S	L	E	D	T	A	M	E	D
I	R	A	T	E	G	O	G	A	G	O	G	I	R	A	T	E
U	N	P	R	O	V	I	S	I	O	N	A	L	L	Y		
E	R	A	S	E	S	L	A	P	D							
C	O	C	O	A	M	Y	S	O	S	S	E	T				
I	M	P	R	O	B	A	B	I	L	L	I	T	E	S		
R	A	S	P	S	R	I	P	E	R	G	O					
S	T	R	E	A	M	E	R	I	C							
C	O	U	N	T	E	R	P	R	O	P	O	S	A	L		
T	I	M	O	A	S	T										
A	L	E	C	R	E	I	N	S	P	A	R	E				
T	E	D	S	P	L	E										

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Independence



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Program provides temporary help to support self-sufficiency

By Marcia Z. Siegal



PCA-managed

When Sarah Jackson* was recovering from a double mastectomy and receiving chemotherapy to treat her breast cancer, the ordeal left the 60-year-old drained and lethargic. Taking care of herself and her home had become overwhelming. That situation changed when she began to receive temporary support services through the In-Home Support Program (IHSP) offered by Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA).

"We provided her with home-delivered meals, housekeeping and shopping assistance during her recovery," said Karen Becker, director of in-home support and special projects for Catholic Housing and Community Services (CHCS) at St. Charles Senior Community Center. "Once she was back on her feet in six months' time, she was discharged from the In-Home Support Program. She was able to return to work from her medical leave and regain her independent lifestyle."

Serving seniors in South Philadelphia, St. Charles is one of five senior community centers in Philadelphia subcontracted by PCA to administer IHSP.

The only program of its kind in Pennsylvania, IHSP provides a short-term solution (from one to six months) for people who need extra help due to a temporary setback such as a surgery, an injury or a serious medical condition that has impaired their independence. It does not serve people in need of ongoing long-term care services; rather, it pro-

vides early intervention to prevent the need for long-term care services. Last year, the program assisted nearly 3,200 older Philadelphians.

Depending on the individual's care needs, IHSP can provide home-delivered meals; housekeeping, personal care and shopping assistance; an escort to medical and other appointments; a senior companion (a stipend volunteer, who helps with small tasks and provides companionship to an older adult who is socially isolated); transportation; medical supplies; help with accessing benefits; and more. "Our goal is to assist participants by improving their chances of recovering safely in their homes and enabling them to do so with dignity," Becker said.

Needed assistance

To be eligible for this temporary program, individuals must be 60 or older and need assistance or supervision with leaving their home on a short-term basis. There are no income criteria. "Typical issues include difficulty managing themselves and/or their environment after returning home from a hospital stay and lack of adequate support from family or friends during recovery," said Becker. "Individuals who have experienced fractures from a fall or accident often seek our assistance while they are healing. They cannot perform normal activities of daily living during the healing/recovery process. We emphasize the importance of working toward becoming

• continued on page 7

Self-sufficiency

• continued from page 6

independent again within a reasonable amount of time.”

Once an individual is referred to IHSP – often by a family member – a case manager schedules an assessment visit within a few days to determine the person’s service needs. Currently, there is no waiting list for IHSP administered by any of the five subcontractors. “We are able to assess people and arrange for [PCA’s] home-delivered meals immediately and start the process to connect them to other needed services,” Becker said. Most services, such as personal care and shopping assistance, are only offered for a short period of time. Certain services may be available for as long as they are needed, such as home-delivered meals, transportation and senior companions.

A safety net

Services provided through IHSP can often help prevent a minor health setback from becoming a crisis. Regina D’Adamo* became an IHSP participant due to severe visual impairment that unexpectedly set in after her cataract surgery. She lives alone and received much-needed housekeeping and shopping assistance for several months. “It helped me do things I couldn’t do for myself and lifted my spirits at a difficult time,” she said.

D’Adamo is deaf in one ear and severely hearing-impaired in the other. Through IHSP, discretionary funds were available to help her pay for a new hearing aid when her old one was beyond repair. “She was completely deaf without it, and she could not afford to replace it herself,” Becker said. While D’Adamo’s vision loss prompted her to contact IHSP for support, “the main inhibitor to her independence was the loss of her hearing,” Becker said.

In addition, D’Adamo received home-delivered meals offered by PCA to homebound seniors in long-term care and seniors in IHSP. “The meals have been very good,” said the 69-year-old. “I get a delivery of seven frozen meals a week and put one in the microwave each day. It’s a lot easier for me to manage this way since I can’t prepare meals on my own. The people who deliver the meals are very courteous and caring. I enjoy talking to them when they come.”

IHSP can also address additional needs, including extermination services; financial assistance with the purchase of nutritional supplements and incontinence supplies; and home repairs, such as repair and installation of handrails, to enhance participants’ ability

to navigate their home environment.

IHSP case managers make regular phone calls and visits to monitor participants’ progress and assess any changes in their health and need for services that would necessitate a change in their care plan.

Generally IHSP consumers are discharged after a few months, when they typically reach a level of independence that does not require additional assistance. If the need for care increases, a participant may be referred to PCA to be assessed for long-term care services and discharged from IHSP once the long-term care plan is in place.

Supporting independence

Through IHSP, Joseph and Rita Cirella are able to more easily remain in their book-filled South Philadelphia home of 58 years. The couple began receiving IHSP services when Rita, now 80, was recovering from knee replacement surgery and Joseph, now 84, developed a neurological condition. Both had difficulty leaving the home independently. The program provided them with housekeeping assistance for several months until they were able to manage on their own and continues to provide them with PCA’s home-delivered meals.

While the two were able to resume many activities, IHSP continues to fill an important gap, especially through regular meal deliveries.

“I think it’s a wonderful thing,” Rita said of the meals. “Every weekday, the meal truck pulls up on our little side street. If we didn’t have this, I don’t know what we would do.”

For more information on the In-Home Support Program, contact one of the following IHSP providers:

- **North Central Philadelphia** – Northern Living Center, 827 N. Franklin St. (Call to verify location; opening expected in early July); 215- 978-1360
- **Northeast Philadelphia** – KleinLife: Northeast Philadelphia, 10100 Jamison Ave.; 215-698-7300
- **Northwest Philadelphia** – Center in the Park, 5818 Germantown Ave.; 215- 848-7722
- **South Philadelphia** – Catholic Housing and Community Services at St. Charles Senior Community Center, 1941 Christian St.; 215-732-1140
- **West Philadelphia** – Lutheran Children and Family Service at West Philadelphia Senior Community Center, 1016-26 N. 41st St.; 215-386-0379

**Names have been changed*

Marcia Z. Siegal is public relations manager for Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA).



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SUNDAY

1
Free Museum Day. Journey through the Declaration of independence with flag raising ceremony & guided tours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Fort Mifflin, 215-685-4167. View world-renowned art collection: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Phila. Museum of Art, 215-763-8100.

8
Sundays on Stage: Charlotte Blake Alston. Family-friendly performance of stories & songs of African & African-American oral traditions. 2 p.m. Parkway Central Library. Seating is first-come, first-served. 215-686-5322.

15
Sundays on Stage: Magic by Poly. Family-friendly performance of illusions, comedy, live animals, music & audience participation. 2 p.m. Parkway Central Library. Seating is first-come, first-served. 215-686-5322.

22
Music in the Galleries: Light, Line, Shadow. World premiere of Pierre Jalbert's composition inspired by Edward Hopper's painting "Road and Trees." Performed by Network for New Music. 3-4 p.m. Phila. Museum of Art, Dorrance Galleries, 1st Floor. 215-763-8100. \$

29
Riverboat Tour to Bartram's Garden. Learn how the Bartram family helped Phila. become a mecca of natural science, education & government. Includes guided tour of the garden, community farm & recreational trail. 12 & 1 p.m. Departs Walnut Street Dock. 808-495-0244. \$

MONDAY

2
Billiards. 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. (Weekdays)
Sand Sculpture Spectacular. 40 tons of sand art. 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Shops at Liberty Place, Rotunda. 215-851-9055. (Through July 4)
Stretch 4 Life. 12:30-1:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

9
Line Dancing for Beginners. 3-4 p.m. Center in the Park 215-848-7722. \$ (Mondays)
Films at African-American Museum Philadelphia. Collective conscious shorts. 6:30 p.m. 215-574-0380. \$

16
Pinochle. 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-844-7722. (Weekdays)

23
Snapchat Workshop. Learn the ins & outs of Snapchat & how to use photo filters. 9:30 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

30
Philly Dance Party. DJ Spina, refreshments & raffles. 12:30 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1971. \$

TUESDAY

3
Farmer's Market. Local fresh produce from on-site gardens. 12-2:30 p.m. KleinLife Northeast Phila. 215-698-7300.
Independence Day. Festive meal for July 4th. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Phila. Senior Center - Avenue of the Arts. 215-546-5879.
Independence Day & July Birthday Party. 11:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. KleinLife Northeast Phila. 215-698-7300.

10
Pilates for Everyone. 10:30 a.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969. (Tuesdays) \$
Senior Resource Fair. Information, resources & vendors. Greensgrow Farms Mobile Market will be on-site to redeem produce vouchers. 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Journey's Way. Presented by Councilman Curtis Jones. 215-487-1750.

17
Ageless Grace with Juan. 10 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

24
AARP Driver Course. Refresher course. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Phila. Senior Center. 215-546-5879. \$
Bitmoji Workshop. Learn how to make your own cartoon. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Four-Day City Tour. Visit famous Philly sites with ferry ride. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1971. \$ (Through July 27)

31
African-American Journeys. 10 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

WEDNESDAY

INDEPENDENCE DAY **4**
Philadelphia's Independence Day Celebration. 11 a.m. - parade from Independence Mall, Chestnut St. between 5th & 6th sts. 12-7 p.m. - Party on the Parkway: fun for all ages on Benjamin Franklin Parkway. 7 p.m. - Welcome America concert featuring Pitbull, Heather Headley & the Philly Pops Big Band. 267-546-5424.

11
AARP Foundation Experience Corps. Information Session. Volunteers help children in kindergarten through third grade learn to read. 9:30 a.m. 267-592-4459.
Produce Voucher Distribution & Farmers Market. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Marconi Older Adult Program, 215-717-1971. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Reading Terminal Market, 215-765-9040.

18
Blood Pressure Screening. 9:30-11 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Dine & Shop. Lunch at the Famous Dave's. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Presented by Phila. Senior Center - Avenue of the Arts. 215-546-5879. \$

25
Facebook Workshop. Learn the basics, including tools & applications to enhance the user experience. 9:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Produce Voucher Distribution. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Reading Terminal Market. PCA Helpline: 215-765-9040.

THURSDAY

5
Caregiver Support. Supportive discussion & resources for caregivers. 12:30 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1971.
Screenings Under the Stars: 'Justice League' 8:30 p.m. Penn's Landing. 215-922-2FUN. (Thursdays through August)

12
Brain Health Workshop. 10 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Secrets of the Schuylkill. Fun & fact-finding guided tour that highlights the past, present & future of the Hidden River. Tour departs from Walnut Street. 5:30 p.m. 215-309-5523. \$

19
Caregiver Support. Supportive discussion & resources for caregivers. 12:30 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1971.

26
Instagram Workshop. Tell your life story through photos. 10:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

FRIDAY

6
Challenge your Brain Game Day. 10-11:30 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. (Tuesdays & Fridays)

13
Yoga Exercise Class. 10:15-11:30 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. \$

20
Philadelphia Orchestra Presents "Star Wars New Hope." John Williams' iconic musical score performed live as the film is projected on three giant screens. The Mann. 215-546-7900. \$

27
You Can YouTube. Learn how to find and view "how to" videos & other features. 10:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

SATURDAY

7
Hispanic Fiesta. Great Plaza at Penn's Landing. 2-8 p.m. 215-922-2FUN. (Also July 8)
Opera Double Bill in Manayunk. Delaware Valley Opera Company presents two short, power-packed operas by Puccini. 8 p.m. Venice Island Performing Arts & Recreation Center. 215-725-4171. (Also July 11 & 15) \$

14
Bring It! LIVE. Miss D & her Dancing Dolls, stars of Lifetime's hit series, will perform new routines with audience participation & behind-the-scenes exclusives. 3 & 8 p.m. Merriam Theater. 215-893-1999. \$

21
World War II. Explore the eastern front. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fort Mifflin. 215-685-4167. \$

28
Baskets of Love for Our Treasured Seniors. Distribution of personal care items & goods. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Helping Hands Ministries. 267-595-9000.
PA Care Health Feast. Free health screenings, kids' carnival, yoga, line dancing & more. 12 to 8 p.m. Great Plaza at Penn's Landing. 215-922-2FUN.

Milestones

Events that end with a "\$" require an entrance fee or advance ticket purchase. Free events may request donations or sell items. Please call the number listed for pricing or other details.

Send your calendar items to:

ATTN: Milestones Editor
 PCA, 642 N. Broad St.,
 Philadelphia, PA 19130
 Phone: 215-765-9000, ext. 5081
 Fax: 215-765-9066

Email:
milestonesnews@pcaCares.org

Event submission deadline: 25th of the month for publication in month after next.

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Independence

Moving on: From a private home to a continuing care community

By Sally Friedman

It was my lousy back that got the first discussions going about a move to a continuing care retirement community (CCRC).

For years, I've struggled with my unwell-come genetic legacy – a disc issue that was starting to make life in a two-story home downright daunting.

"Oh, my aching back!" became an all-too-common refrain. After a while, our bossy, adult daughters – all three of them – began a campaign. We knew it was time to get serious about an easier, more carefree and supportive way of life.

My husband, Vic, and I balked at first. We felt just fine in our house. We had lived in the same town – Moorestown, New Jersey – for 45 years, and it was where we still wanted to be.

But my back did not agree with those plans, and it made that clear. I was starting to actually ponder the notion of giving up our total independence in search of a more helpful and age-appropriate environment.

Our first forays into South Jersey's and Philadelphia's abundant CCRCs ranged from enlightening to depressing. We were overwhelmed by the questions that started to flood our minds: Was this non-independent lifestyle right for us? Why surrender autonomy? Could we willingly accept scheduled communal meals, some general communal living and on-site medical care all of which was clearly part of the package? Would all of that be the answer for feisty folks like us?

Vic and I have always managed our own lives, sought privacy and prided ourselves on looking out for one another. We had gotten this far with no outside help.

Still, we roamed the housing marketplace looking for that elusive fit – a place that would somehow seem to say, This is the right home for two semi-rebels.

It took us a year to budge from "We're not ready" to "This makes sense." The place we ultimately found as a fit for us, Medford Leas, is a Quaker community set on an arboretum with gorgeous trails and a country feel. It was just 10 miles from our home in Moorestown. But initially, going there felt like a trip to another universe.

We would have a small, open backyard but would share a courtyard with six neighbors within sight. Many other courtyards were scattered nearby, which meant that the lifestyle was definitely communal.

Meals were part of the package and were presented at specified times. Our laid-back style of eating dinner when we felt like it would have to yield to a new regimen.

In the end, it was the old system of pluses and minuses that helped to clarify this epic decision to move us past the doubts that had haunted us for months.

My husband is 85. I am 79. Feisty as we are about maintaining our cherished independence, we couldn't ignore that freedom isn't free. So after agonizing weeks of saying goodbye to cherished possessions that wouldn't fit in our smaller space and endless sleepless nights when we tried to imagine our new life, we finally moved into our new house in April. Lurking behind were the fears of less free will and of feeling "managed."

Now here we are in a new town, surrounded by new people and tasked with creating a home all over again. There are mealtime hours and parking restrictions. All of that actually fell into place far more smoothly than we had imagined.

Here's essentially what we have learned:

- Change comes hard, but it's also exhilarating.
- Our adult kids were right: We feel more relaxed than we have in years because there are people all around to help us.
- We miss our old house and our old life – but less and less, as time goes by.
- Somehow, the independence we feared losing has been a non-issue.

We love going on the community bus to near and distant places. While our car is "resting" in a nearby lot, we absolutely don't miss the traffic and hassles of modern highways and byways.

And best of all, my back has decided it likes life on one floor. I count that as the ultimate bonus!

Sally Friedman has written for The New York Times and other publications.

Recipe Box

Cool off with this refreshing drink

Watermelon and cucumber, both in season this month, blend well and can keep you hydrated on hot summer days. Watermelon is high in vitamin C. Cucumbers are notable for containing nutrients including vitamin A, folate, potassium, calcium and magnesium. Both are low in sugar and calories. Produce vouchers from the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (see article below) can be put to excellent use purchasing these two seasonal Pennsylvania-grown items at one of the certified farmers' markets in Philadelphia.



iStock

Watermelon and cucumber smoothie

(Servings: 2 large smoothies)

Ingredients:

2 ½ lbs. watermelon (about ½ an average-size watermelon)

½ cucumber

½ to 1 cup ice

1 tsp. to 1 tbs. agave or honey

Directions:

Chop the watermelon into large chunks and scoop out as many seeds as possible. A few remaining seeds are fine. You should be left with about 4 cups of watermelon.

Skin, seed and chop the cucumber.

Add all the ingredients to a blender and process until smooth.

If the smoothie does not seem thick enough, add more ice and blend again. Serve immediately.

Source: jrorganicsfarm.com

Produce vouchers still available

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging's (PCA's) annual distribution of Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program produce vouchers to eligible older Philadelphians is underway and continues while supplies last. Philadelphia seniors who are 60-plus may receive \$20 worth of vouchers to purchase seasonal Pennsylvania-grown produce at any of 55 certified farmers' markets throughout the city. The 2018 household income limits are \$22,459 for an individ-

ual and \$30,451 for a couple. (Add \$7,992 for each additional household member up to six people). Proof of age and Philadelphia residency are required.

The vouchers will be distributed at PCA (642 N. Broad St.) weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and at other sites throughout the city, including senior community centers. For a list of distribution sites and farmers' markets where the vouchers can be spent, call the PCA Helpline at 215-765-9040.

Milestones wants to hear from YOU!

We welcome your story ideas, feedback and suggestions. (Story-specific comments or questions will be forwarded to the writer.) Submissions of letters or articles for publication must be signed and dated and include your address and phone number. Submission constitutes permission to edit and publish in any form or medium.

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Transition

• continued from page 1

anyone would accept me again.”

She went through a period of internal turmoil, divorcing in 1976 and changing careers – to car salesperson – five years later. “I simply did not like the academic life anymore,” she says. “Besides, I knew a lot about cars because my father had been a car dealer. Even though I did not have any actual sales experience, the dealership where I began to work liked the way I presented myself and the way I spoke.”

While attempting to sell her own car, she met her second wife, Sonja, a Holocaust survivor. “In response to my newspaper ad, Sonja came to my apartment to buy my car,” Estcovitz says. “However, just as she arrived I was selling my car by phone. So she didn’t get the car, but she got the owner.” They began dating almost at once, and married two and a half years later in 1982. They’re still together 36 years later. At the time of their marriage, Sonja knew nothing of Estcovitz’s gender unhappiness.

A turning point came in 1988 when Sonja, at 54, had a stroke. “Her stroke made me realize that I wouldn’t live forever,” Estcovitz says. “I couldn’t bear the thought of dying without



Lee Ann Estcovitz, pictured above left to right: at 43 in 1979 as Lionel, her birth name, and post-transition at her 70th birthday party in 2005.

being my true self.” Sonja made a miraculous recovery. In 1989, less than a year later, Estcovitz confessed her gender confusion to her wife.

Sonja’s reaction was loving and accepting: “When I married you, I said to the rabbi ‘I do.’ Now all I can say is, ‘Oy vey!’”

“I must admit, it was a difficult moment in our marriage,” Estcovitz says. “Sonja never



Courtesy of Lee Ann Estcovitz

expected anything like a gender change in her husband. She wondered what her friends and relatives would say. I certainly placed her in a difficult situation, but in the end love won out.”

Estcovitz’s gender transition lasted 11 years, from 1990 to 2001. “I had counseling, hormone therapy, electrolysis and finally sexual reassignment surgery,” she says.

“People sometimes wonder if Sonja is my sister or my friend,” says Estcovitz, now 82. “Some people assume we’re a gay couple. Sonja dislikes being called a lesbian because she’s not gay. We simply state that we’re a married same-sex couple.”

Estcovitz is grateful for Sonja’s ongoing love, but she has also experienced more than her share of rejection. “At one point, I had to find a new family doctor,” she says. “Even after 25 years of having me as a patient, the doctor would no longer treat me.”

Family and other relationships also changed for Estcovitz, who has three children. “My sons don’t accept me,” she says. “One of them has two children I’ve never met. He also legally dropped his last name, Estcovitz. Some relatives and friends also have noth-

ing to do with me. Even a school rejected me when I applied for a teaching position because the parents were afraid I would be a bad influence on their children. Fortunately, I have a wonderful relationship with my daughter, who has two girls.”

“What all this rejection has taught me is that as a transgender person, I must show compassion to others as they struggle with my gender change,” Estcovitz says. “The transgender person needs to use gentle persistence, not harsh insistence. It’s both an emotional and relational issue for people.”

Writing poetry has provided Estcovitz a way to express and handle her feelings. Her book, “Let the Dandelions Grow: a Poetic Portrait of a Transsexual Journey,” published in 2012, sheds light on her struggle. One poem, “On Being Different,” talks about diversity and the importance of love.

*Each person is certainly different,
But a difference not everyone knows
So all we can do is be patient
And see what we each will disclose*

*And then we are put to the test
To accept or reject what we see.
The result is what makes us all human,
But love is what makes us all free.*

Estcovitz looks to the future with hope for those who are LGBTQ. More colleges and secondary schools than ever have LGBTQ groups and courses. Organizations such as PFLAG – formerly known as Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays – also offers support and education. Movies and books, including Estcovitz’s memoir, “An Inner Roadmap of Gender Transformation,” published in 2014, provide a deeper understanding of the transsexual experience.

“I am truly glad that I can now live as the woman I was meant to be,” Estcovitz says. “I am free at last.”

Native Philadelphian Constance Garcia-Barrio writes about many topics, including black history.

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Philly’s trans wellness conference

People from the LGBT community, as well as their supporters and allies, can participate in next month’s Philadelphia Trans Wellness Conference, Aug. 2 to 4 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, 1101 Arch St. The free conference gives participants access to more than 250 workshops relevant to the transgender community. Some workshops, like “The Social Safety Network for Transgender Elders” and “Getting Better with Age: Healthy Aging for Transgender Elders,” focus on seniors. The conference is a program of Mazzoni Center, a health care provider that serves the LGBTQ community. For more information, visit mazzonicenter.org or call 215-563-0652.

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Caregiving

• continued from page 1

Among the many losses this psychologist often sees among families involved with caregiving is the loss of even the most basic elements of independence. This psychologist often sees the loss of even the most basic elements of independence. The simple acts of taking a walk, going to the supermarket, and tending to other personal errands can be daunting.

Losing independence

Trauma can arise not only for the one giving care. The recipient, too, has to adjust to a new life situation. “Being reduced to needing care may be experienced as the loss or diminution of who they are,” Jacobs says. The loss of one’s cherished sense of independence can be a painful reckoning that can feel humiliating, even infuriating.

“Choice is what makes us feel free,” Jacobs says. “And there are almost always choices – no matter how seemingly minor – and even the smallest sense of control can enhance the human sense of independence.”

For couple Charlotte and Jim Brown, change and adjustments have come in a steady stream recently. In the early years of their marriage, these two bright, determined and successful partners were equals in their personal and professional relationship, working together as successful property managers.

“We were young, healthy and independent,” says Charlotte. “But you don’t realize that things can change – and even suddenly.”

That change came when Jim, who had struggled with glaucoma, also had a stroke. It sent his health on a downward spiral and compromised his short-term memory. “It slowly pulled the rug out from under him,” Charlotte explains. “I began having to be responsible for almost everything in our lives.”

Planning is key

A former teacher, Charlotte has learned that to preserve her sense of independence, she relies on the detailed planning of her early career. “Teaching taught me that planning is critical in freeing us from the uncertainty that comes when there is chaos,” she says. “For me, independence means predicting, to the extent possible, how each day will look.”

Two trained helpers relieve Charlotte for a few hours several days a week, enabling her to pursue activities that give more meaning to her life. A passionate crafter and student of genealogy and history, she sometimes re-

mains at home even when a helper is present. And she involves her husband in her hobbies to the extent he can manage.

For her, a sense of independence can come from a short walk or cooking. Prayer has brought Charlotte comfort and the realization that even a busy caregiver can find a sense of freedom and meaning.

“Because we’ve worked so closely together in the past, we know one another so well that we may be luckier than some,” she says.

Working with the staff at PCA has been extremely helpful, she says. So has the understanding that marriage is a partnership. “One of our most basic understandings is that I have expectations of Jim and he has expectations of me,” says Charlotte. “That understanding has gotten us through this new chapter of our lives. And it’s one we’re writing together.”

For Cheryl Clark-Woods, director of the Caregiver Support Program at PCA, the fine art of keeping both the caregiver and care recipient independent and thriving is challenging – but definitely attainable.

Asking for help

Part of independence for the caregiver depends on knowing when and how to ask for help. “When the burdens feel overwhelming for the caregiver, it is important ask for help clearly and specifically,” says Clark-Woods, a social worker who has worked at PCA for 20 years.

“It’s hard to maintain your own independence and well-being when you’re giving so much to someone else,” she says.

“Maybe you can ask a friend to see to Mom or Dad’s dinner one night,” she advises. “Keep a list of your needs and use it.”

The care recipient’s need for independence also is mighty. “That person needs to be encouraged to do as much as is safe and possible,” Clark-Woods says. “Letting that recipient feel empowered by participating in the action yields a sense of independence and satisfaction. That always includes the concept of choices, no matter how limited. It’s obvious that there’s nothing more important than how we treat one another as we live our lives.”

For information about PCA’s Caregiver Support Program and resources to support caregivers, call the PCA Helpline at 215-765-9040 or go to pcaCares.org.

Sally Friedman has written for The New York Times and other publications.

Don's Column

Monkeying around cities worldwide



By Don Harrison

Big cities are all alike, right? Seen one, seen them all? Not necessarily.

In the heart of New Delhi, one of the world's most populous cities, I saw an elephant being ridden by a boy and carting bundles of sticks in its trunk as it lumbered along a city street in the middle of traffic.

I never saw that in Philadelphia.

Nor do hordes of chattering monkeys confront you in Philadelphia's City Hall Square, as they do around the government offices in New Delhi. It's "the world's only government offices where the monkeys are OUTSIDE," the Indian foreign minister has quipped, perhaps frequently.

But you needn't go halfway around the world for uniqueness. Philadelphia is unique, too. While there are no elephants or monkeys outside of the Philadelphia Zoo, the city does offer a special combination of history and modernity that represents hundreds of years of Americana.

The older I get, the more I appreciate Philadelphia, the city where I was born and raised and educated and did my thing.

Violence on screen

Growing up in a so-called "rough" neighborhood had some risks – a bloody nose, maybe – but you did not fear for your life. Guns were unheard of, except on the big screen at the Saturday matinee.

Today, school massacres are so common it's been suggested that teachers bear arms to "protect" their classes! Each day, newspapers run stories about shootings and armed robberies.

Part of the reason, I'm convinced, is TV.

Bullets fly on every channel. Victims fall by the scores. And it all happens right in your living room.

Death is common in everyday interactions on TV.

Kids might be surprised to learn that this is not reality. Cops and others in law enforcement often finish their entire careers without firing a shot or hearing shots fired.

At the risk of oversimplifying a complex phenomenon, I'd suggest – if not a cease-fire – at least a cutback.

Milestones Editor Emeritus Don Harrison was deputy editor of the Daily News opinion pages and assistant managing editor and city editor of the Philadelphia Bulletin.

President's house

• continued from page 5

Fireplaces were placed in some walls with video screens above them. Glass windows protect and display below-ground foundation fragments, including the footing for the bay window that Washington had installed.

Perhaps the most touching sight is the

tribute to the slaves who lived and worked at the President's House. Their names are dug deep into a wall located right before the entrance to the Liberty Bell Center, near the slave quarters that Washington had added to the house.

Dorothy Stanaitis, a certified Philadelphia Tour Guide, writes about history and culture.

Visitor center offers amenities

Tourists coming to the City of Brotherly Love often begin their explorations at the Independence Visitor Center. The center offers visitors several amenities, ranging from an underground parking garage to the National Park Service booth staffed with friendly, well-informed park rangers. The center provides clear, informative maps and racks of booklets and brochures, all free for the taking.

These rangers are experts on Philadelphia sites and can help visitors plan their time while in the city by marking those maps with personalized tours based on the visitors' interests.

For more information about the Independence Visitors Center, go to 599 Market St., One North Independence Mall West; call 800-537-7676; email questions@phlvisitorcenter.com; or visit phlvisitorcenter.com.

Crossword

No cons here

Across

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Kennedy and Sorensen | 20 Alternative plan | 42 Designer Chanel | 61 Military acronym |
| 5 <i>G.I. Joe's</i> creator | 23 Flow | 43 Miss Carter's namesakes | 62 Mend |
| 9 Fall flower | 24 Early Norwegian navigator | 44 Caucasus inhabitant | 63 Ululate |
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| 2 George or T.S. | 12 Silkworm | 33 Cupid | 53 Forest clearing |
| 3 Raise an objection | 13 Lively dance | 34 Humane soc. | 54 Slur over |
| 4 Tea biscuit | 21 Italian poet | 35 Prone | 55 Welsh poet Thomas |
| 5 Prefaces | 22 Bay window | 37 City on the Arno | 56 Single component |
| 6 Kind of book | 26 Cable car | 40 1964 Nobel physicist | 57 Ibsen's rebel wife |
| 7 Speech impediment | 27 Sorceress | 41 Antiseptic: var. | 58 Baby carriage |
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| 9 Neat ___ | 30 <i>A Death in the Family</i> author | 48 Tines | 60 Golf club |
| 10 Teeth | 31 Price | 50 Like some waves | |

Solution

The solution can be found on page 5.

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Health Partners Medicare is an HMO plan with Medicare and Pennsylvania State Medicaid program contracts. Enrollment in Health Partners Medicare depends on contract renewal. This information is not a complete description of benefits. Contact the plan for more information. Limitations, copayments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits, premiums and/or copayments/coinsurance may change on January 1 of each year. You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium. Health Partners Medicare complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-901-8000 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-866-901-8000 (TTY: 711)。