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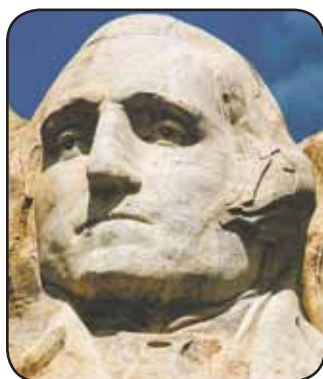
News and Possibilities for Seniors

April 2016 • Free

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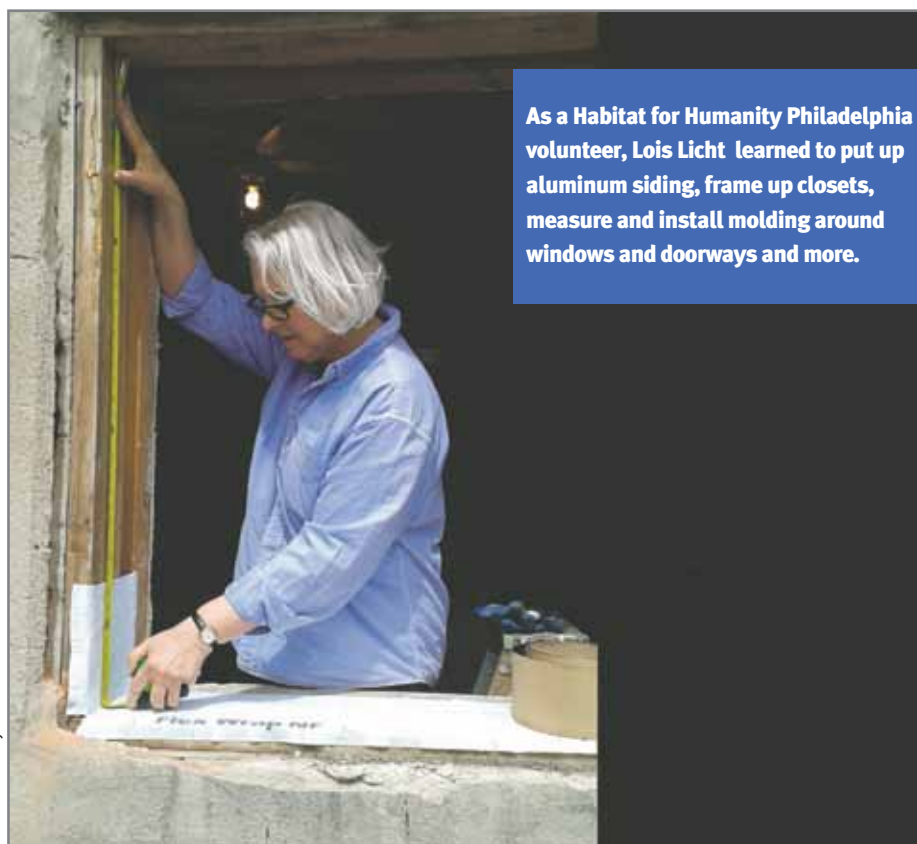
The Milestones

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Next Month:

Celebrate Arts & Aging

Volunteer for Habitat learns new skills



As a Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia volunteer, Lois Licht learned to put up aluminum siding, frame up closets, measure and install molding around windows and doorways and more.

Photo courtesy of Lois Licht

By Marcia Z. Siegal

Lois Licht's path to becoming a Habitat for Humanity volunteer was paved by a series of life changes and losses; and an interest in construction.

"In 2012, I retired from my job as a social worker," she says. "My mom had died a few months earlier, followed by the unexpected death of my best friend. It was a time of deeply felt loss. I told myself, 'All those things you say you're going to do, do them now,'" says Lois Licht.

Her path to becoming a Habitat for Humanity volunteer began then. "I realized that I've always enjoyed making things with my

hands, and I've always been curious about how things are put together. I enjoy looking at construction sites. For years I had a secret wish to operate a jackhammer and backhoe. I love large machines. I think they're beautiful," Licht says.

Soon after, she enrolled in a workshop on home repair and another on mosaics. Pursuing her interests still further, she went to a local Home Depot store and spoke to the manager. "I told her I wanted to learn how to operate power tools and asked if someone there could help me. She introduced me to Lou and Rocco who worked there. They set up a whole table with different kinds of saws and drills and taught me how to operate them.

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Going Green

Volunteers make the world a greener place

By Linda L. Riley

Volunteering, gardening and just getting outside in the fresh air have all been shown to have measurable health benefits. There are plenty of places to do all three, and you don't even have to leave the city limits to find them. Whether you want to plant trees, grow vegetables or cultivate beautiful flowers, there is a volunteer opportunity waiting for you.

Transform vacant lots

"We build community, one vacant lot at a time," says the Urban Tree Connection's website. Despite the name, the organization is about much more than trees. With the help of volunteers, they work to clean up, clear and transform abandoned properties into green oases. Their efforts originally focused on West Philadelphia, but have recently begun expanding to nearby neighborhoods. Volunteers need not be from the neighborhood where the work is taking place. They are needed to help with a wide range of projects, including planting, weeding, mowing and building raised beds. Tasks are tailored to the individual's abilities and physical limitations. Generally, work is scheduled in three-hour blocks of time; tools and work gloves are provided. Founded in 1989, the organization has turned 29 lots into community green spaces; perennial gardens; and one ¾-acre farm, which produces tomatoes, cucumbers, arugula, squash and chard.

Volunteer in a Victorian garden

Morris Arboretum, a 92-acre expanse on the outskirts of Chestnut Hill, was created by

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Health Brief

Volunteering can improve health

Using your time and talents to help a worthy cause has benefits far beyond “feel good” effects. “Seniors who volunteer have higher rates of overall happiness, life satisfaction, self-esteem and physical health, as well as lower rates of depression,” said Andrea Birget, Senior Companion Program manager at Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA).



Volunteers in Philadelphia Corporation for Aging's Senior Companion program report greater life satisfaction and better physical health.

“The ability to contribute to the community in a meaningful manner leads to an improved mental outlook, which in turn can decrease risks for physical and mental health problems.”

Birget has witnessed a positive change first-hand in Senior Companion Program volunteers, who report greater life satisfaction and better physical health. “Interestingly, volunteers with a chronic medical condition, such as heart disease, experienced decreases in their reported level of disability, pain and depression as they volunteered,” she said.

Live longer

The more than 18 million older adults who volunteer each year and contribute more than one billion hours of service to their communities are also contributing to their own longevity. An issue brief compiled by the Corporation for National & Community Service, which funds the Senior Companion Program and other senior volunteer initiatives, shows that volunteers live longer. In a study of Americans age 60-plus, those who volunteer reported lower disability and higher levels of well-

being relative to non-volunteers.

The effects of volunteering were found to be greater than other factors including income, education level or marital status. This is likely due to the increased physical, social and mental activity that volunteering brings, as evidenced in one study over a 20-year period that showed environmental volunteering during midlife was significantly associated with greater physical activity.

Another study by Experience Corps, which recruits older adults to serve in schools, showed that volunteers experience increased brain activity as measured by functional MRIs and the preservation of cognitive function. After two years, Experience Corps volunteers had reduced levels of depression and functional limitations, while the similar-aged control group had increases in both categories.

Volunteering may be particularly helpful for older Americans undergoing a stressful life event or for those who are at risk of being isolated. One study found that bereaved individuals who engaged in volunteering activities experienced a shorter course of depression than those who did not volunteer. There is also evidence that the health benefits of volunteering are strongest among those who do not drive.

“Retirement and aging can be a difficult transition period for many seniors,” said Birget. “Social connectedness and social roles are key protecting factors and can help individuals through difficult transitions or challenging periods in their life. Participation in volunteering provides a source of support, a reason to get dressed and out of the house on a regular basis, and exposure to a network of peers. This sense of purpose and belonging leads to reported improvement in mood and mental health, and an overall increase in life satisfaction,” said Birget.

All the research shows that volunteering offers older adults opportunities to meet critical community needs while contributing to longer, healthier lives.



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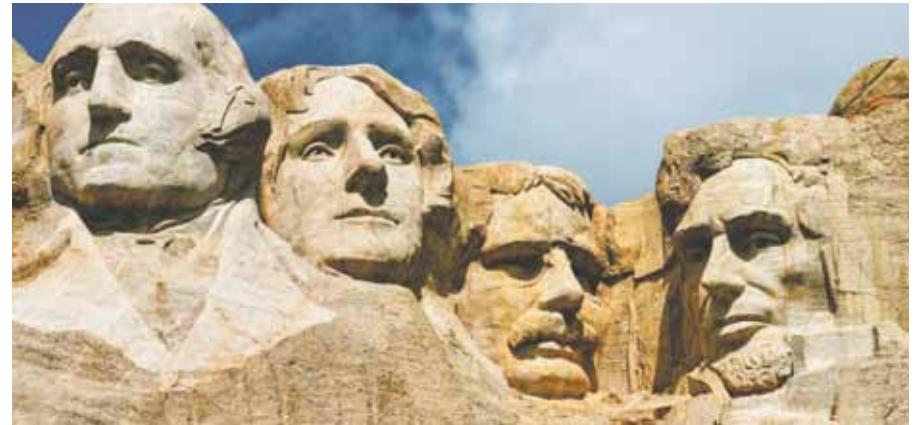


- Alzheimer's & Dementia Patients
- Cancer Patients
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Take a closer look at the presidency



By Linda L. Riley

George Washington died because his doctors used leeches rather than trying a new technique that would have saved his life. Grover Cleveland had a secret operation on a yacht to avoid creating a national panic. Franklin Delano Roosevelt tried (and failed) to pack the Supreme Court to salvage his New Deal programs.

Historians have written at length about the foibles and failings of even the loftiest presidents, but they're not common knowledge among the general public. Now, in the frenzied election season, one forum aims to stimulate voters to think beyond the TV sound bites.

The Free Library of Philadelphia's "American Presidency Series" of free evening lectures opens April 27 with a topic most presidents would prefer not to discuss. "To the Worst of My Ability: Lessons in Presidential Failure" will be presented by Presidential Historian Richard Norton Smith.

"We knew that we wanted to start by focusing on people who faced the sternest tests America had to offer – and failed," said Librarian Richard Levinson, who proposed the series. FDR is among them.

"FDR made the mistake of trying to pack the Supreme Court," Levinson said. "It was a terrible disaster." During his first term in office, FDR had created multiple programs and agencies to help the nation pull itself out of the Depression. But just before his election to a second term, the court began striking down parts of his New Deal as unconstitutional. Roosevelt asked Congress to expand the number of justices on the Supreme

Court, by empowering him to appoint an additional justice for each justice who was age 70 or older. "Congress would not go along with his idea of wanting to enlarge the court," Levinson said.

Provoking thought

"We want to stimulate dialogue about what is happening now, and in particular the impact of personality on history, which is so important," Levinson said. "Typically any sort of program series about the presidency is a long and triumphant march through American greatness. We wanted to present a series of fresh, provocative programs that will shake people up and make them think."

Abraham Lincoln was ranked America's greatest president in a poll last year of the American Political Science Association. But he was "the most divisive president in American history," Smith pointed out in an interview last July on C-Span. "His very election caused several Southern states to leave the Union, soon to be followed by several more. It is only in retrospect that Lincoln has been, to some degree, sanctified."

Levinson, a self-confessed "political junkie," who previously worked at the College of Physicians, will present "The Hidden History of Presidential Health," about our presidents' medical care. Among them, Cleveland's secret cancer surgery on a yacht; and the bungling that led to a gynecologist performing surgery on William McKinley after an assassin shot him. Other topics in the series include "When the Best Man is a Woman;" "Money in Politics;" "The Battle for the Hispanic Vote;" "The History of Politi-

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Habitat

• continued from page 1

"Later, I went to Colonial Lighting Company and apprenticed myself to this wonderful man to learn how to wire lamps and chandeliers."

Then she called Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia and asked to volunteer. "It seemed like a wonderful way to learn and build up my experience in construction," Licht says. Yet another powerful motive spurred her to reach out to the organization. "Habitat appealed to me as a way to collaborate with other people and use my background as a social worker," says Licht.

"From the start, I felt a warm welcome. It's an organization that finds a niche for you. In addition to assisting on construction projects, I was invited to join the Family Services Committee to help advocate for families who are beginning the home ownership process," she says.

Learning skills

During the past two and a half years, Licht volunteered once a week, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on construction sites. "I remember the first time I came. I was so excited, like it was the first day of school. But I also worried that they might say, 'What is this old lady going to do here?'" Her apprehension was quickly allayed. Project Director Tom McGlenn took her seriously from the start. "Grab that bucket and that (40-pound) bag of cement. We're going across the street," he told her. She was thrilled.

"As a volunteer, I learned to put aluminum siding up, frame up closets, measure and install molding around windows and doorways, lay tongue and groove flooring, and use chop saws and drills. I also helped with demolition. When Habitat rehabs a house, they strip it down to the lathing so the house is totally gutted and rebuilt from scratch including the plumbing, heating and electrical systems. I've used a crowbar to pull up flooring and have been up on a ladder and sawed through nails to pull down two-by-fours."

Every task includes other helpers and supervision by the project director. McGlenn, with whom she often worked on projects, did not mollycoddle volunteers. "Everything had to be at the highest standards.



Photo courtesy of Lois Licht

Lois Licht channeled longstanding interests and her social work skills in volunteering for Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia.

If you did something incorrectly, for instance if the tiles were not laid properly, he'd say, 'Pull them up. You have to redo that. There's a family going to be moving in here.' He inspired us all," Licht says.

The process of building, rehabilitating and repairing homes "is exhilarating and it's exhausting," Licht says. Her weekly volunteering allowed her to witness dramatic progress on the home each week she came back. "I would see the work that had been done in the span of that time. I could feel the presence of all the volunteers and staff that had been there and left the imprints of their hands – and their hearts."

One of the benefits of volunteering at Habitat construction sites is the opportunity to work with a committed group of people, all of whom are inspiring, she says. There are people from all walks of life, among them: architects, carpenters, plumbers and electricians; financial and human service professionals; future Habitat homeowners fulfilling their sweat equity hours; and many retirees and young adult AmeriCorps volunteers, says Licht, a 1967 VISTA volunteer herself. There are professionals at every site to do teaching and training. "Everyone works with a shared purpose, and it's like a family from the top down," says Licht.

Licht currently concentrates her Habitat volunteer work on its Family Services Committee as she focuses her love of building things on creating sculptures out of scrap and other "found material." While busy with art classes and independent creative projects, the committee work keeps her connected to Habitat's mission.

Helping families

Family Services Committee volunteers help make the final determination of which families are selected for homes after applicants have completed the prior steps in the process, including a home visit and interview by members of Habitat's Family Selection Committee.

Applicants are carefully selected to ensure that they are well-prepared and qualified for Habitat homeownership. They must demonstrate a need for housing, such as living in unsafe or overcrowded conditions or are paying too high a percentage of monthly income towards rent; meet current income guidelines; and have a stable work history to ensure they will be successful as homeowners and can pay a monthly mortgage. They also must demonstrate a history of good credit and a willingness to work with the Habitat team toward their goal of home ownership. Accepted applicants must fulfill 350 "sweat equity" hours of volunteer work that includes working at the organization's construction sites and attend a series of workshops focused on home ownership. Usually they help to build or rehabilitate their future homes.

Once selected, the path to home ownership takes approximately two years during which time partner families complete their sweat equity requirements, attend all required workshops and build up their escrow account to cover closing costs. Habitat matches them with Family Services Committee volunteers like Licht to advocate and support them during that time.

"An advocate serves as a listener, supports the enormous efforts of each family, cheers progress, and, if able, volunteers on-site with families to donate time toward their required sweat equity hours," Licht says. "I recently brainstormed ways with one prospective homeowner to stay on schedule with monthly escrow and sign up for sweat equity hours. Each family I have

known is highly motivated, organized, and successful in managing the added hours and responsibilities to their already busy work, school and family commitments.

"If a family is experiencing some difficulties, their advocate can help them navigate with the Habitat office, which, in my experience, is always very supportive; find ways for them to share resources if needed; or make a referral to agencies to serve the family need, such as health care and counseling services."

Licht has attended a number of ceremonies when a new home is dedicated and the family moves in. The new homeowners' extended family and friends, as well as Habitat staff and volunteers and members of the local community are invited. Sometimes local dignitaries also attend. A big red ribbon stretches across the front door.

Attendees recite a blessing on the house and on the family. Frank Monaghan, Habitat Philadelphia's executive director, hands the family a giant scissors to cut the ribbon. Habitat presents the family with gift certificates to stores like Home Depot or Target and to its own home improvement store, ReStore. The family also receives a large basket filled with household supplies.

When the family opens the door, their new home is resplendent – freshly painted with shining hardwood floors and new appliances. "When you've worked on a house and come to know the individuals, you feel a great sense of joy and pride," says Licht. "It's a very emotional moment and a unique privilege to be a part of it."

In 2015 Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia built 10 homes, rehabbed two and made 88 critical home repairs. To learn more about volunteering as an individual, organization or group, call 215-765-6000 or go to the website www.habitatphiladelphia.org and click on "Get Involved."

In addition to volunteering at construction sites, Habitat Philadelphia offers volunteer opportunities at its ReStore, located at 2318 Washington Ave. ReStore sells new and gently-used furniture, appliances, building supplies, home goods and more. Habitat uses 100% of ReStore profits to build and repair homes in Philadelphia.

Contact Marcia Z. Siegal at msiegal@pcaphl.org

Climate change: How does it affect seniors, and what can they do about it?

By Alicia M. Colombo

Extreme weather has become the norm in the northeastern United States, where in recent years there have been hurricanes and severe rain, heat waves and massive snow storms – sometimes within the same year.

“Climate change can be scary and depressing. But if you are informed, it takes some of the fear away. We give people hope by exploring the solutions,” said Raluca Ellis, Ph.D., environmental scientist and program director for Climate & Urban Systems Partnership (CUSP) at The Franklin Institute. “Cities, like Philadelphia, are really responsible for the majority of emissions of heat-trapping gases that cause climate change. The pollution comes from here, but the innovation and solutions come from cities, too,” she said.

Photo courtesy of The Franklin Institute



Mary Ann Robinson (left) and Dorothy Oczkowski start mini-rain gardens in class to be transplanted in their gardens at home.

Seniors and climate change

Climate change impacts everyone, but it can be argued that seniors are affected more than any other age group. The reasons are complex, and interconnected.

- In times of severe weather, seniors may have difficulty getting out to shop for healthy foods. It is easy to become malnourished, when you don't have access to nutritious foods on a consistent basis.
- Being unable to get outside for long periods of time can also lead seniors to become depressed or to miss medical appointments.

Seeking solutions

CUSP seeks to educate the public about the local climate and how Philadelphia is responding to changes. The program takes a local, hands-on and solutions-based approach. “The program allows participants to investigate solutions to be prepared and to help their community,” said Ellis. “The bottom line is that it's going to get hotter and wetter. We are expecting to experience more heavy downpours. We are between two rivers, so we have to be concerned with storm surges and flooding. It puts stress on our city infrastructure, and aging homes.”

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Horse Show & Parade: April 24

Wissahickon Day Horse Show

10 a.m. to noon
Northwestern Stables,
120 W. Northwestern Ave.
Horse show entries will be in four
classes: English, Western, Stable Group
and Carriages.

Wissahickon Day Parade

12:30 p.m.

The Parade will start at 12 p.m.,
departing from Harper's Meadow at
the corner of Northwestern Ave. and
Germantown Ave. Line-up will start
with carriages, in front of Northwest-
ern Equestrian Facility (NWEF) at ap-
proximately 11:45 a.m. Riders will fall
in line behind the carriages starting
at Harper's Meadow. The Parade will
travel to Forbidden Drive and continue
along the Drive to the judging area at
Valley Green Inn.

Tips for spectators

Northwestern Avenue will be closed
to traffic and parking to accommodate
horse trailers and carriages. Parking will
be available in the lower lot at Chestnut

Hill College off Germantown Avenue; and
in the upper lots at Valley Green (access
from Wisers Mill Road, off Ridge Avenue,
or Valley Green Road, off Germantown Av-
enue).

Spectators can watch the horse show
from the bleachers in front of the ring in
Harper's Meadow.

Parade viewing is available anywhere
along Forbidden Drive. The judging area
in front of Valley Green Inn is the most
popular parade viewing site. Picnic areas
are available throughout the park.

Food and beverages are available at Val-
ley Green Inn. (Reservations are recom-
mended.)

Professional storytellers will entertain
children and a Fancy Hat Contest will be
held during a break in the horse show.
Bring your own hat or make one to enter
the contest.

The Wissahickon Day Parade is spon-
sored by the Wissahickon Valley Rid-
ing and Driving Association (WVRDA).
For more information, go to the website
www.WissahickonDay.org.

Fascination that began in 1929 continues



Photo courtesy of Dr. Thomas A. Fitzpatrick

Dr. Thomas A. Fitzpatrick (right) and Springfield Township Corporal John Gross make their way past the Valley Green Inn in 2015.

By Barbara Sherf

Thomas Fitzpatrick was 5 years old
when he watched his first Wissahickon
Day parade in 1929. On April 24, he'll
be participating in the 95th annual pa-
rade in a two-wheeled horse-drawn car-
riage. Believed to be the oldest continual
equine parade in the country, it began
as a protest, and led to the main road
through the park being renamed "For-
bidden Drive."

In 1921, the president of the Fair-
mount Park Commission, E.T. Stotes-
bury, proposed opening all park roads
to automobile traffic, including the scen-
ic road that ran along the banks of the
Wissahickon Creek. More than 600 rid-
ers gathered to protest the proposal, in
a "Save the Wissahickon" campaign and
rode from one end of the park to the
other as spectators rallied around them.
Following the defeat of the proposal,
the road was named "Forbidden Drive,"
memorializing the victory. Since then,
a triumphant parade of horses and car-
riages has taken place annually on the
last Sunday in April.

"As a family we would pack a picnic
and spend the day along Forbidden
Drive and watch as the horses and car-
riages came by and the crowds would
line up and cheer them on," said Fitz-
patrick, a lifelong bachelor and avid
sportsman, whom many describe as "an
old-school gentleman."

During World War II, Fitzpatrick flew

30 missions in a B-17 over Nazi-occupied
Europe as an Air Force navigator and gun-
ner, serving in the North African and Medi-
terranean European Theaters. Having re-
ceived a host of medals, Dr. Fitzpatrick says
he'd much prefer a horse show trophy any
day.

Fitzgerald worked for 40 years as a bio-
chemist in the laboratory at the United
States Department of Agriculture in Wynd-
moor. It wasn't until his retirement 35 years
ago that he made his way into the ring for
the first time at the esteemed Devon Horse
Show in the two-wheeled carriage class.

"I had been riding horses under saddle
in the Wissahickon Valley for years, but that
first time in that ring in a carriage was, and
is, indescribable," said Fitzpatrick. For years
now, he has also shown in the ring in the
Wissahickon Day Horse Show, which pre-
cedes the parade and will be there again this
year, in the two-wheeled carriage class.

"You wouldn't find 600 horses in the
Wissahickon today," said Fitzpatrick, "but
it's important to maintain an equestrian
presence in the park. Horses are such an
important part of our region's history and
they do provide pleasure to those who ride
and to those watching the individual horses
and carriages."

"The parade is rich in history and when I
share the tale of how Forbidden Drive got its
name, people light up when they hear the
story," he said.

Barbara Sherf can be reached at 215-990-
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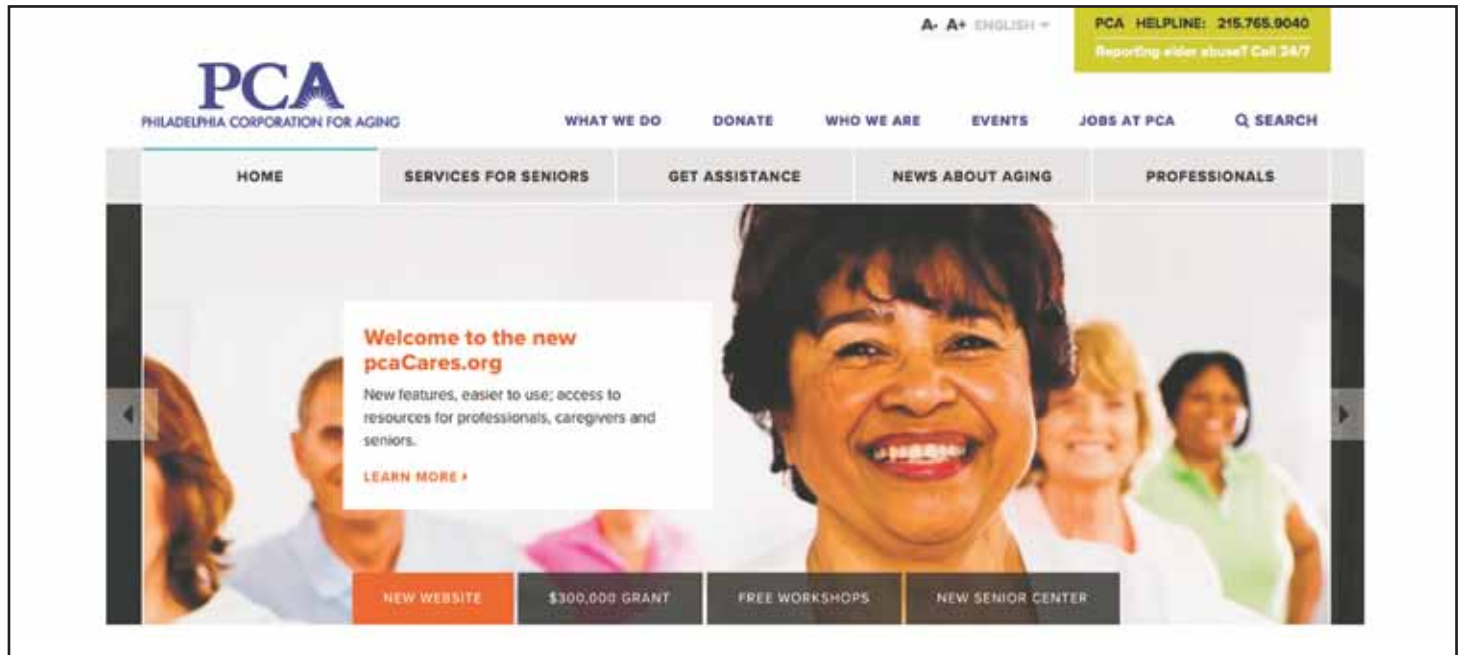
Philadelphia Corporation for Aging's website, www.pcaCares.org, has received a makeover worthy of the pros at the popular TV reality program "Style by Jury."

"It's fresh, clean, appealing, and most importantly, easy to navigate," said PCA Director of Communications and Legislative Affairs Linda Riley.

New features include a "Get Assistance" section which offers users several options, depending on their needs. If they are unsure what kind of help they need, a Service Needs Checklist produces results and recommendations based on the user's responses. An online referral form enables professionals, family members, or seniors themselves to submit a request for assistance, identify specific concerns, and receive a call or email, based on their preference, by the end of the next business day.

"This website is designed to enable users to easily find resources, and includes both services provided by PCA and a database of 1,200 senior-serving organizations, among them adult day centers, senior community centers, personal care providers, and affordable housing listings," Riley said.

The section "News About Ag-



ing" includes articles on health, housing, finances, food, fitness and caregiving, among others. PCA's weekly Milestones e-news will continue to be provided via e-mail to subscribers, and the content will be easily accessed under "News About Aging."

The site's event calendar has been streamlined to include only events, programs, and classes specifically for seniors, caregivers, and professionals in the aging network. "This will make the content more targeted, and enable users to find

opportunities that are directly relevant to their interests," said Riley.

The new site is also designed to adapt how it displays depending on what device the user is viewing it on – cell phone, tab-

let, laptop or desktop computer. "We know that more and more people are accessing the internet on their phones, and we wanted to ensure that the site is user-friendly on any device," said Riley.

Senior science workshops starting

The Climate & Urban Systems Partnership (CUSP) of The Franklin Institute will present a Science of Solutions workshop series at Southwest Senior Center, 6916 Elmwood Ave. Weekly programs will be held on Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to noon from April 6 through June 15 and will include a joint field trip with Lutheran Settlement House members to The Franklin Institute.

Workshops will provide information about downspout planters, porous pavement, asthma prevention, cool roofs and more. Guest speakers from the Office of Emergency Management and Pa. Horticulture Society are planned. For information, call the center at 215-937-1880.

Following the success of the CUSP pilot last summer, St. Anne's Senior Community Center, 2607 E. Cumberland St., has been hosting its own monthly Science Workshops on Mondays from 10 to 11 a.m. at the center. The next three dates are April 25, May 23 and June 6. To register or for more information, call 215-426-9799.

See related story, page 7.

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April 2016

National Volunteer Month

Milestones

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Phone: 215-765-9000, ext. 5081
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E-mail: acolombo@pcaphl.org

Sunday

3

Phila. Chamber Music Society Concert. Violinist Francesca dePasquale & pianist Meng-Chieh Liu perform works by Bach, Schumann, Bartok, others. 3 p.m. Phila. Museum of Art. 215-569-8080. \$

10

The Philadelphia Orchestra Presents: An American in Paris. 1930s jazz-infused program includes works by Gershwin, Weill & Ravel. 2 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-893-1999. \$

17

Phila. Chamber Music Society Presents: Brentano Quartet. Works by Haydn, Ran & Dvorak. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-569-8080. \$

24

Phila Chamber Music Society Presents: Imani Winds. Works by Coleman, Rimsky-Korsakov, Piazzolla, D'Rivera & Shasheen. 3 p.m. Phila. Museum of Art. 215-569-8080. \$

Monday

4

The Doctor's in the House. Health presentations by Drexel Univ. College of Medicine with Q&A. 10 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
ID Theft, Scams & Financial Predators. Presentation by CLARIFI. 10 a.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969. (Understanding Your Credit Report: April 18)

11

LGBT Elder Initiative Presents: Healthy Mind, Healthy Body. How HIV+ adults can live healthy lifestyles. Noon-2. Office of HIV Planning. 215-720-9415.
Sleep Troubles? David Cohen, M.D., neurology at Chestnut Hill Hospital, discusses sleep disorders & treatments. 12:30 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654.
Understanding Reverse Mortgages. 10 a.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969.

18

Breast Cancer Support Group. 1-2:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Caregivers Support. 12:30 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969.
Get to Know Your Android Phone. 1-3 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654. (Continues April 25) \$
Trip: Resorts Casino. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Departs/Returns: PSC on the Ave. of the Arts. Register: 215-546-5879. \$

25

Drama Club. 10 a.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100.
Science Workshop. Explore chemistry, physics & science of everyday life. 10 a.m. St. Anne's Senior Community Center. 215-426-9799. (May 23 & June 6)
Spiritual Journeys Class. Session for the mind, body & spirit. 10 a.m. Peter Bressi Northeast Senior Center. 215-831-2926. (April 25)

Tuesday

5

Health & Wellness Fair. 10-noon. St. Anne's Senior Community Center. Sponsored by Aria Health. 215-426-9799
Safety & Self-Defense Class for Older Adults. 10-11:30 a.m. Center in the Park. Register: 215-848-7722. (Continues April 12.) \$
Savvy Rider. Learn to ride SEPTA safely & plan trips online. 10 a.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969. (April 12, 19 & 26)

12

Harvest Health Chronic Disease Self-Management Program Begins. 10 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. (Tuesdays)
Mahjong. 1-3 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Movie & Popcorn: "Quartet." 1:30 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654. \$
Penn Care Medicine Presentation. 10:30 a.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100. (April 26)

19

Earth Day Celebration. Discuss the day, recite a poem, enjoy refreshments & volunteer for planting in the Hoop House. 12:30 p.m. KleinLife: Northeast Phila. 215-698-7300.
Foot Reflexology. Massage to reduce stress & increase energy. 10:30-noon. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654. \$
Glass Vase Decorating Class. 1:30 p.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100. \$

26

African-American Journeys. 1 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Chinese Medicine, Acupuncture & Renewing our Bodies This Spring. 11 a.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654.
International POP: Exhibition Outreach Lecture. 12:15 a.m. KleinLife: Center City. 215-832-0539.

Wednesday

6

Money Management Seminar. Budgeting on a fixed income. Presented by CLARIFI. 12:30 p.m. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969.
Rubber Stamping Club & Card Making Class. 2:30-4:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. (April 20) \$
Salsa Dance Class. 2 p.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100. (Wednesdays)

13

Hats on Parade Fashion Show. Members model spring styles. 11 a.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100.
Phila. Chamber Music Society Presents: Takacs Quartet. Works by Beethoven, Webern & Elgar. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-569-8080. \$
Passover Seder. Celebrate the holiday with friends. 10:30 a.m. KleinLife: Northeast Phila. Register by April 6 to 215-698-7300. \$

20

April Birthday Party. Cake & classic tunes by Bobby Jones. 11:45 a.m. KleinLife: Northeast Phila. 215-698-7300.
Blood Pressure Screening. 10-11:30 a.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Open Mic Night: Calling All Poets. 5:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

27

iPad Lessons. 10 a.m. Peter Bressi Northeast Senior Center.
To The Worst of My Ability: Lessons in Presidential Failure. Lecture by Presidential Historian Richard North Smith. 7:30 p.m. Parkway Central Library. 215-686-5331.
Tai Chi Class for Seniors. 9:30-11 a.m. NewCourtland Senior Services Center at Roxborough. Register: 1-888-530-4913.

Thursday

7

Energizing & Empowering: Becoming Engaged in Community. Presentation on benefits of volunteering. 2 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-2654.
Trip: Sight & Sound Theatre in Lancaster. Includes "Samson" show & luncheon buffet. 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Departs/returns: PSC on the Avenue of the Arts. Register: 215-546-5879. \$

14

Health Programs. Resources for caregivers @ 9:30 a.m. Falls prevention: 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., (Continues April 21). Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100.
Passover Seder. Service, lunch & entertainment. 11:30 a.m. KleinLife: Rhawnhurst. Register by April 6: 215-698-7300. \$
Politics 101: Voter Education. Meet State Rep. Vanessa Lowery-Brown. 12:30 p.m. West Phila. Senior Community Center. 215-386-0379.

21

Astral Concert. Classical presentation by Astral's Saxophone Fusion Quartet. 5:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Intro to Reiki. Techniques to reduce pain, stress & anxiety. 1:30-3 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654.
Save Money & Save the Earth. Learn about environmentally safe cleaning solutions. Marconi Older Adult Program. 215-717-1969.

28

EnhanceFitness. Exercise program for seniors: strength training, aerobics, flexibility & balance. 9:30 a.m. St. Anne's Senior Center. 215-426-9799. (Thursdays & Fridays)
Life After Loss. Workshop & support for dealing with grief & re-shaping your life. 1:30-3 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654.

Friday

April Fool's Day

1

Health & Wellness Symposium. Activities, vendors, raffles & prizes. 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Phila. Protestant Home. 215-697-8007.
Phila Chamber Music Society Presents Bach by Pianist Richard Goode. Kimmel Center. 215-569-8080. \$
Yiddish Class. All levels. 9:30 a.m. KleinLife: Center City. 215-832-0539.

8

Phila. Chamber Music Society Presents Violinist Christian Tetzlaff. Works by Ysaye, Bach, Kurtag & Bartok. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-569-8080. \$
Vocalist Courtney Colletti. Lunch: 11:30 a.m. (RSVP). Performance: 12:15 p.m. KleinLife: Center City. 215-832-0539.
Volunteer Recognition Party. Live entertainment & meal. 11:30 a.m. Peter Bressi NE Senior Center. 215-831-2926.

15

Balancing Dollars & Sen\$. Financial & housing workshops, community resources for people 55+. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.
Cookology Class. Certified dietitian makes tasty & nutritious treats to sample. 10 a.m. Peter Bressi Northeast Senior Center. 215-831-2926.
Passover Seder. Service & lunch. 11 a.m. KleinLife: Center City. Register: 215-832-0539.

22

Earth Day
Passover Begins at Sundown
Clay Creations. Learn the art of hand-building pots. 12:30-2 p.m. St. Anne's Senior Community Center. 215-426-9799. (April 29) \$
Senior Nutrition Education Program: Fix It Safe. Cook bok choy & mushroom stir-fry. 10:30-noon. Walnut Street Library. 267-405-2175.

29

Celebrate Wellness: Older Americans Month Kick-Off. Craft sale; fitness demos; info about nutrition, health, caregiving, stress reduction. 9-11:15 a.m. The Center at Journey's Way. Sponsored by Roxborough Memorial Hospital School of Nursing. 215-487-1750.
The Next Chapter. Peer discussion for people 55+. 11 a.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100.

Saturday

2

Let's Talk About Breast Health & Cancer Awareness: Pamper Party. 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. St. Matthews AME Church. 267-466-9585.
Women's Wellness Workshop: Preventive Health Care. 10-11:30 a.m. ACANA. 215-729-8225.

9

CARES Conference: Setting Our Sights on Glaucoma. Free screening & information day. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dorrance H. Hamilton Bldg., Jefferson Hospital. Register: 484-678-4535.
LGBT Elder Initiative Presents: Older Women's Sexual Health. Discuss sexuality & aging. 12:30-3 p.m. William Way Community Center. 215-720-9415.

16

Flea Market. Various items for sale: shoes, handbags, jewelry, clothes, DVDs, CDs, electronics, knick-knacks, & more. 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Vernon House Senior Apartments. 215-300-2245.

23

Music From The Heart Jazz Concert. Tim Warfield's Organ Band & pianist Dennis Fortune. Center in the Park. 3-7 p.m. 215-848-7722, ext. 203. \$

30

The Philadelphia Orchestra Presents: Yo-Yo Ma. Master cellist performs works by John Williams, Debussy & Mussorgsky. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-893-1999. (May 1 at 2 p.m.) \$

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April 2016

In Season

Five fun ways to enjoy your spinach

Spinach is much more appealing and flavorful when it's fresh. Here in Pennsylvania, this healthy and versatile green leafy vegetable is in season for only two months: April and May. So now's the time to choose fresh over the canned or frozen



varieties. Spinach is high in dietary fiber, Vitamins A and C, iron, folate, and magnesium. It can be eaten raw or cooked, and can be used in a variety of ways from salads to side dishes and entrées.

ach leaves to make a salad, then toss in some strawberries, mandarin oranges and/or apple slices.

1. Veggie omelets: Add spinach, mushrooms, onions and low-fat cheese to make a nutritious and delicious omelet or frittata.

2. Sweet salad: Use fresh baby spin-

3. Easy dinner: Cook spinach, bell peppers, onions, mushrooms and broccoli in a little olive oil on high heat for a delicious vegetable medley. Add tofu to make it an entrée, or serve as a side dish with chicken, beef, pork or sausage.

4. Popeye's potatoes: Steam spinach, chop and mix into mashed potatoes. Top with parmesan cheese for a twist on an old favorite.

5. Salad on-the-go: Tear spinach leaves and toss into a whole wheat pita with chopped cucumbers, tomatoes and peppers; then drizzle on low-fat dressing for a quick meal or snack.

Source: Produce for Better Health Foundation

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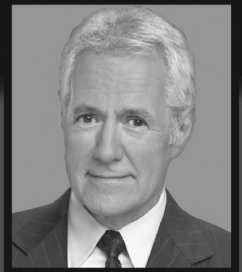
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'Good sport' was really just relieved

By Dorothy Stanaitis

As I watch the caravan of buses, SUVs and cars dropping off children at our local elementary school, I marvel at how different it all is from the peril-filled trips I made to James Rhodes School during the 1940s. Each morning, I faced a series of terrifying obstacles that took all of my courage to overcome.

Fortified by a goodbye kiss from my mother, I would bravely set off on my block-and-a-half walk to school. I refused to worry her with my problems, so she never knew what I had to endure each day. Still, she would wait on the front porch until I reached the lamppost in the middle of the block where I would turn and wave a final goodbye.

The first challenge was a neighborhood dog named Brownie. He was tied to the front porch railing and flew into a frenzy of leaping and barking as I scurried past. I worried that his chain might snap or the porch railing would break, unleashing the 12-pound ball of fury. My heart pounded as I raced past his house. And I had to do that racing extremely carefully, jumping and leaping down the sidewalk.

The neighbors smiled as they watched the little girl they thought was trying some fancy skipping. They didn't know that my curious gait was devised to avoid the damaged pavement. After all, every second grader knew that if you stepped on a crack, you'd break your mother's back or if you stepped on a line, you'd break your father's spine. And this skipping and hopping had to be done very quickly too, because every second grader also knew that if we were late for school we would be sent to the janitor's room and beaten with a cat-o-nine-tails. We knew this because the sixth graders had told us so.

When I reached the corner where I had to cross the street, my vigilance increased. We seldom saw traffic on Ogden Street since most of the cars were away for the duration of World War II. Still, I carefully checked both ways two times before racing madly to the other side of the street. Then I had just half a block to reach the safety of the school yard, which was surrounded by a six-foot-tall wrought iron fence.

Once inside, the only problems I might have would be teasing from a classmate if

I had lost one of the ribbons that tied the ends of my braids, inelegantly called pig-tails on the playground.

But more than the teasing, I dreaded the look on my mother's face as she opened her little black change purse and sent me around the corner once more to Diamond's Dry Goods for a replacement ribbon. I was such a frequent customer that I was known by name in the store.

How I looked forward to Saturdays when I could take a break from those weekday terrors. Relieved of the fear of crippling my parents by a careless misstep, I could help my mother dust the living room furniture as we listened to Grand Central Station, Crossroad of a Thousand Private Lives on the radio. In the afternoon, I could go roller skating on our traffic-less street or go to the Frolic or Belmont movie theater with the neighborhood crowd for the Saturday matinee, always a double feature with cartoons, Movietone News and previews of coming attractions.

But one Saturday morning, my mother gently shook me awake. "Dorothy," she said, "The school just called. They're having special classes today."

I flew out of bed, got ready and dashed out of the house. I didn't want to face the janitor's wrath for being late. Leaping and jumping over sidewalk cracks, I tore past Brownie. When I reached the lamppost, I turned around for the usual goodbye wave to my mother. But instead of waving, she was beckoning me to come back. What could she want? If I went back, I would surely be late, but how could I disobey my mother? I turned and raced back to my house. When I reached the porch, my mother hugged me and said, "April Fool's!"

I stared at her. I couldn't believe my luck. I had been spared. I wouldn't be late for school after all. I wouldn't be sent to the janitor. I was safe at home with my mother. I began to laugh.

Later, I heard her tell her friends what a good sport I was. I was willing to take credit for that even though it was just simple relief that had made me laugh at her April Fool's joke.

Dorothy Stanaitis is a retired librarian and a freelance writer.

President

- continued from page 4

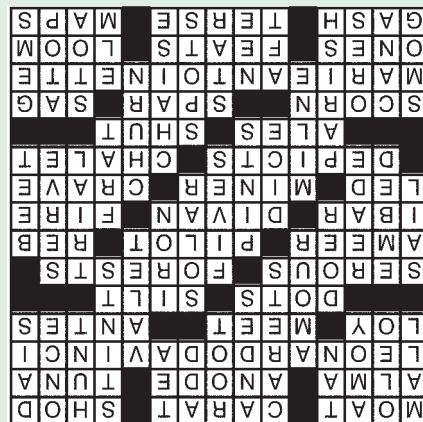
cal Spots;" and "Presidents and Baseball." Speakers are a "Who's Who" of political expertise, including Matea Gold of the *Washington Post*; Doyle McManus of the *Los Angeles Times*; political consultant Neil Oxman; and Presidential Speechwriter Curt Smith. On Wednesday, November 16, members of the foreign press, including journalists from Russia, Israel and Canada, will present a post-election analysis from a global perspective.

All events in the American Presidential Series will take place in the fourth floor Skyline Room of the Parkway Central Branch, 1901 Vine St. For dates and times of each event, call 215-686-5331, and ask for Dick Levinson; or visit www.freelibrary.org/calendar.

Contact Linda L. Riley at lriley@pcaphl.org

Solutions to the *Milestones* Crosswords puzzle

(see page 19)



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Climate

• continued from page 7



Photo courtesy of The Franklin Institute

Pat Burton (left) and Rita Malinowski conduct an experiment to view the effects of heavy rainfall on rowhomes.

In May 2015, CUSP piloted a climate change program for older adults, called "The Science of Solutions," at St. Anne's Senior Center in Port Richmond. "The seniors loved it," she said. "We loved being there with them, and it was a really great experience and we have expanded to other centers."

Activity kits allow participants to conduct experiments, so they can witness the effects first-hand. The Ready Row Home explores what happens in conditions of heavy downpours. Sewers may overflow and buildings may become flooded from the runoff. The model also demonstrates how storm water can be absorbed or diverted. "The activities go hand-in-hand with what city is investing money in – green roofs, rain gardens and barrels, and green space. We also built mini-rain gardens using hearty, water-absorbing plants," she said.

The material was originally developed for use in junior and high school settings. But it soon became apparent that the topic appealed to a much wider audience. "It was a natural progression to work with seniors. They've noticed a lot of these changes over their lives. Many

of these seniors have lived in this part of the country and have experienced weather trends first-hand," she said. A series of workshops will be held at Southwest Senior Center starting April 25. (See story on page 9.)

Taking aim at the problem

CUSP's initiative is just one example of how senior centers are tackling the issue of climate change. In the past year, 10 senior centers in every part of the city from the Far Northeast to South Philadelphia presented "Climate Change and Older Adults: Protecting, Preserving & Promoting Health." This educational program, developed by Philadelphia Corporation for Aging's (PCA) Health Promotion Department, provided simple steps individuals can take to reduce greenhouse gases and contribute to positive change. "These easy steps empower seniors to take actions that will enable them to save money, be healthier and to improve the community," said Sharon Congleton, R.N., B.S.N., nurse consultant at PCA. Among them:

- **Conserve resources:** Turn off the lights, lower the thermostat a degree or two, seal drafty windows and doors, and cook in large batches. Buy energy-efficient appliances. Look for the Energy Star symbol. Turn the faucet off when not in use, like while brushing teeth. Wash clothes or dishes only with full loads.

- **Go carless:** Walk, ride a bike or take the bus.

- **Be green:** Add plant-based foods, like garden salads, fruit, vegetables, beans, legumes, seeds and nuts, to your diet. Plant a native tree, add a rain garden or install planters.

- **Reduce waste:** Buy in bulk and choose products with less packaging.

- **Re-use:** Before you buy, consider if can you re-purpose items you already own. Donate or give away anything you no longer want or need.

- **Recycle:** Think beyond plastics, glass, paper or aluminum. Sneakers, eyeglasses and many other items can be donated to benefit others.

Contact Alicia M. Colombo at acolombo@pcaphl.org



Photo courtesy of Morris Arboretum

Volunteers at Morris Arboretum work to fill wheel barrows with mulch, to move to various parts of the garden.

Green volunteers

• continued from page 1

brother and sister John and Lydia Morris in the late 19th century. Volunteers help maintain the garden by weeding, mulching, pruning and removing invasive plants from the landscape, which includes a rose garden, vast expanses of azaleas, an herb garden, wetlands and Japanese-style gardens. "We are so fortunate to have a very dedicated group of volunteers who love working outside and love the Arboretum," said Volunteer Coordinator Pamela Morris Olshefski. "Working together as a group, they accomplish so many large tasks that help make the Arboretum look amazing. They are an essential part of our Horticulture Team and we can never thank them enough."

No previous experience or knowledge is needed, but volunteers must be able to lift at least 10-15 lbs. They meet on weekday mornings once a week from March through mid-December, working in groups in designated sections of the gardens. A section leader explains or demonstrates the tasks for the day.

Farm in the city

You wouldn't expect to find a farm located on the site of a former steel galvanizing plant in the heart of Kensington,

but Greensgrow is no ordinary farm. It began almost 20 years ago, with a crop of baby field greens. Today, this city block has been transformed into a lush oasis of greenery. Lettuce, tomatoes, eggplants and more are grown in raised beds. Another location was added last year in West Philadelphia. Among Greensgrow Farms' goals are to improve food access and sustainability, and to demonstrate that urban agriculture can be a workable solution for creating local food sources.

Volunteers are scheduled in advance; gardening and farming tasks include weeding, watering and harvesting

plants; then washing, packaging and labeling produce.

"Greensgrow Farms would not be where it is today without the dedication of countless volunteers," said Volunteer Coordinator Lauren Kruglinski. "In 2015, we had the help of more than 150 individual volunteers who did everything from weeding flower beds to hauling heavy produce around the farm stand. Volunteers are an important part of Greensgrow's community and we do our best to make the experience mutually beneficial."

Plant a tree

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) holds Tree Planting Workdays in the spring and fall, throughout the city and surrounding counties. Volunteers dig holes, plant trees, water, mulch and maintain the sites. This year, PHS Tree Tenders will plant nearly 900 trees the weekend of April 22. About half will be in Philadelphia neighborhoods and the other half in the surrounding Pennsylvania counties. The activities are part of the Plant One Million campaign, the largest multi-state tree-planting effort in the nation. The goal is to restore the tree canopy cover in the Greater Philadelphia region to 30 percent in order to improve the environmental health and beauty of our communities.

Contact Linda L. Riley at lriley@pcaphl.org



Pennsylvania Horticultural Society "Tree Tender" volunteers aim to plant nearly 900 trees the weekend of April 22.

Where to be a "green" volunteer

Gardening is dirty work, so be prepared to get muddy. Wear clothing you don't mind getting dirty; sturdy shoes; a hat; and, if you have them, gardening or work gloves. Bring your own sunscreen, insect repellent and a water bottle; garden tools are provided by all of these organizations.

Urban Tree Connection

Located at 5070 Parkside Ave., Suite 3500C

To volunteer, e-mail info@urbantreeconnection.org or call 215-877-7203. Groups interested in volunteering may e-mail Sue Witte, volunteer coordinator, at suegwitte@gmail.com. www.urbantreeconnection.org

Morris Arboretum

Located at 100 E. Northwestern Ave.

Orientation takes place once a month. Following a half-hour introduction, the new volunteers are able to join the group and get started. An application and signed waiver must be submitted in order to register for orientation. For more information, call 215-247-5777, ext.188 or e-mail Volunteer Coordinator Pamela Morris Olshefski at pamela@upenn.edu. www.morrisarboretum.org

Greensgrow Farms and Greensgrow West

There are two locations, one in Kensington at 2501 E. Cumberland St. and the other in West Philadelphia at 4912 Baltimore Ave. To volunteer, complete an online form at www.greengrow.org/get-involved/volunteer. For information, e-mail volunteer@greengrow.org. If you don't have internet access, call the office at 215-427-2780 and ask for Lauren Kruglinski. www.greengrow.org

Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS)

Contact PHS Volunteer Manager Betty Greene by e-mail at bgreene@pennhort.org or call 215-988-8826. www.phsonline.org

Photo courtesy of Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Senior volunteers' discovery prompted a \$1 million-plus emergency repair

By Marcia Z. Siegal

The Wissahickon Creek passes through Germantown and Chestnut Hill on its 23-mile course from Montgomery County to the Schuylkill River in Philadelphia. Many are drawn by its scenic beauty. David Schogel is also attuned to the quality of its water.

Schogel is one of 15 active volunteers with the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps (PaSEC) group based at Center in the Park senior community center in Germantown. Their work was celebrated in the 2004 documentary, "Knee Deep," which aired on PBS stations locally and nationwide. Produced and directed by Ann Tegnell and Sharon Mullally of extendedPLAY inc., it chronicled the group's discovery of untreated sewage in the Monoshone Creek (a Wissahickon feeder creek). Their discovery, which the Philadelphia Water Department confirmed, prompted the department to undertake a \$1 million-plus emergency repair of leaking and cracked

pipes in the sanitation system in that area in order to prevent possible contamination of the city's water supply.

Based at senior center

Schogel joined Center in the Park for its exercise program soon after he retired from a career in social work. He was immediately drawn to volunteer with the Senior Environment Corps based there, known as CIPSEC. As Fred Lewis, the group's coordinator, notes in his recruitment pitch: "If you like the outdoors, want to stay physically and mentally fit, are interested in monitoring the environment and in mentoring young people, the Senior Environment Corps is for you."

In addition to Schogel and Lewis, a retired business manager, the group includes a former chemist, ex-teachers and business owners, retired retail and clerical professionals, and a former bus driver, among others. Those who want to contribute in a less physically challenging way can opt to help with data entry to record results of the regular water quality tests. While SEC targets adults age

55-plus, younger folks are welcome to join them on their excursions and often do, Lewis says.

CIPSEC members participate in a variety of important projects in addition to monitoring water quality in regional creeks. These can include habitat assessments, tree plantings, watershed tours, environmental events, advocacy projects, school programs, youth and community education, and outreach programs and trips.

Still, "water monitoring is our 'bread and butter,'" Schogel says of the group's primary volunteer activity. "We test for temperature and chemicals, like oxygen, sulfate and phosphate," he says. Tests kits are provided by Nature Abounds, an organization overseeing many SECs in Pennsylvania and other states. Elevated measures can indicate problems with water quality and the ability of aquatic life to thrive. Tests results are entered into a database which is available to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Unlike most SECs, the CIPSEC group also tests water for bacteria. Through a collaboration with Chestnut Hill College, members make use of a laboratory run by biology professor Robert Meyer, who specializes in environmental monitoring and analysis of local waterways. It was in "Dr. Bob's" lab, and with the help of the professor and his class, that the group identified the E. coli and coliform bacteria present in their samples of the Monoshone years ago.

In another memorable volunteer venture, Schogel describes pulling weeds and helping to plant 40 trees to reinforce the Monoshone Creek bank in Historic RittenhouseTown, a landmark preserved village that is the birthplace of the American paper industry. This kind of activity helps prevent soil erosion by rain and provides shade that helps cool the creek and helps keep its temperature under control, he says.

Intergenerational efforts

Education is central to the SEC's mission. CIPSEC has developed close ties with John B. Kelly Elementary School in Germantown. On April 22, Earth Day, the group will celebrate "Snapshot of Water Quality Day" with the students.

Snapshot Day was a statewide effort launched in 2000 by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Groups from across the state took water samples during the same week to provide a "snapshot" of water quality all over Pennsylvania. While the statewide effort has since been discontinued, "we decided to continue it on our own by doing something with kids," Schogel says.

"In preparation for Snapshot Day, we meet with the children at their school for two days of classwork that focuses on watersheds, the urban and natural water cycle, and the importance of clean drinking water. We give them simple lab kits to test water samples for dissolved oxygen, alkalinity and some other key measures," he says.

On Snapshot Day, the fifth graders come to Chestnut Hill College where they make use of sophisticated scientific equipment to analyze water samples; have the opportunity to identify aquatic macro-invertebrate that live in the water; enjoy a discussion with a representative from the Philadelphia Water Department; and have lunch in the college cafeteria. At the end of the event, the students receive certificates of appreciation for their participation.

"We try to get them involved in caring for the environment," Schogel says. Reflecting on his volunteer work he notes, "I think doing something good for the environment and teaching kids is a good legacy."

For more information about the Senior Environment Corps at Center in the Park (5818 Germantown Ave.), call 215-848-7722; e-mail flewis@centerinthepark.org; or visit www.centerinthepark.org and click on "Programs." A volunteer application can also be submitted online.

To find out about other SEC programs under the auspices of Nature Abounds, call 814-765-1453; e-mail info@natureabounds.org; or visit www.natureabounds.org and click on "Programs."

Contact Marcia Z. Siegal at msiegal@pcaphl.org

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Don's Column

Can't call him "Four Eyes" any more



By Don Harrison

Most of the conversation when old people get together is an organ recital, no surprise when you realize how much of our lives is devoted to matters medical. It certainly comes up when we ROMEOS meet, but as alumni of the city's daily

newspapers, we have lots of other stuff to talk about.

ROMEIO stands for Retired Old Men Eating Out. It's not original, I admit – a lot of groups of all kinds use that acronym.

Our weekly ROMEIO lunch is down to only a few regulars, but I try not to miss it. We talk about our grandchildren and, of course, our ailments, but mostly, about the Golden Age of Newspapering, which we were part of.

Newspapers today are hurting, their circulation and advertising plummeting, trying periodic layoffs and other cost-cutting measures just to survive. This has nothing to do with quality; it's because of the impact of the new technology and lifestyle changes on readers (ex-readers is more like it).

But when we were toiling in the journalistic vineyards, newspapers were still thriving, and ours was a world of public acceptance, excitement, colorful characters – and generous expense accounts.

My fellow-ROMEIOs are more retired than I am (I still write this column, and put in a few hours a week at Hollister Creative in Bryn Mawr), but we were good at what we did, and we loved it.

So, we try to recapture a piece of the past when what we did mattered, and we enjoyed doing it.

* * *

The eyes have it

Cataract surgery used to be an ordeal. It involved a long recovery, during which the patient had to be immobile for a period of time. Today, it's an outpatient procedure; in less than two days, I was behind the wheel again.

Except for what seems an interminable regimen of eye drops, that's all there was to it.

For almost all of my long life, I wore glasses. I tried to do without them as much as possible through adolescence (vanity, you know – although girls must have wondered why I kept bumping into things).

Not until I went into the Army did I wear them full-time. In that environment, I figured, I needed full control of all my senses.

Glasses were first prescribed when I was in third grade, and I cried. The kids would call me "Four Eyes," which, of course, they did.

That was a long, long time ago, and for most of those years, I've reached for my glasses first thing in the morning, and kept them on.

All of a sudden, I've been removing them to read fine print and to perform routine tasks, like shaving.

Now, let's see (no pun intended), which eye drops are due, and where did I put them?

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

Save these dates for 2016 Games

The Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Department invites all seniors from the five-county Southeastern Pennsylvania area to take part in the annual Philadelphia Games for Adults 50+. Early-bird registration is due Friday, May 6 and costs just \$10. Afterwards, the cost will double

to \$20. For registration forms and information, call 215-683-3683 or visit www.philadelphiangames.org.

June 4-10: Track & Field, Indoor Events
July 18: Triathlon

The full events schedule will be printed in next month's *Milestones*.

The Milestones Crossword

Famous Figures

ACROSS

- 1 Watery defense
- 5 Weight unit
- 10 Booted
- 14 ___ mater
- 15 Electrical terminal
- 16 Popular sandwich
- 17 Famous Italian
- 20 Actress Myrna
- 21 Track event
- 22 Poker stakes
- 23 Dowries
- 24 River deposit
- 26 Watery
- 29 Natural resources
- 32 Oriental prince: var.
- 33 TV test film
- 34 Mutineer
- 36 Building beam
- 37 Large couch
- 38 Element
- 39 Conducted
- 40 Silver seeker
- 41 Desire
- 42 Portrays
- 44 Swiss abode
- 45 Pub orders
- 46 Close
- 47 Reject
- 50 Sail support

- 51 Hang down
- 54 Famous Frenchwoman
- 58 Plural singular
- 59 Exploits
- 60 Textile machine
- 61 Cut
- 62 Succinct
- 63 Charts

DOWN

- 1 Shopping center
- 2 Bread spread
- 3 Chinese island
- 4 Color
- 5 Proofreading marks
- 6 Mighty mountains
- 7 Square ___
- 8 Do arithmetic
- 9 Beverage
- 10 Limits
- 11 Search
- 12 Formerly
- 13 Platform
- 18 French love
- 19 Butler
- 23 Active person
- 24 ___ system
- 25 Shackle
- 26 Leave the harbor
- 27 Imprint in the memory

- 28 English novelist
- 29 Basketball teams
- 30 ___ by combat
- 31 Play tennis
- 33 Capacity units
- 35 Vegetable
- 37 Decorated cubes
- 40 *Winnie the Pooh* creator
- 41 Agitate violently
- 43 Louisiana county
- 44 Carriage
- 46 Small amounts
- 47 LA's health hazard
- 48 Biblical miracle village
- 49 Miracles
- 50 Hollywood notable
- 51 Greek portico
- 52 At the summit
- 53 Diamonds
- 55 Behind
- 56 Born
- 57 Hardwood

Solution

The solution for the crossword puzzle can be found on page 15.

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
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