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COATS FOR KIDS



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Jayden Kieffer, Nick Hogan, Avery Kieffer, Ellie Schwerdtfeger and Bria Gentile enthusiastically model some of the winter accessories already donated to the 2020 Operation Warm drive organized by Grands Stepping Up.

Grands Stepping Up launches Operation Warm 2020 to keep kids toasty this winter

By Peg DeGrassa
pdegrassa@21st-centurymedia.com
Editor of Town Talk, News & Press of Delaware County

HAVERFORD » The temperatures outside may still

be summer-like, but Delaware County's Grands Stepping Up launched a campaign this week that's focused on keeping children warm during the cold months ahead.

Operation Warm

2020, running now until Wednesday, Sept. 30, is the organization's community effort to collect warm clothing and blankets for children in the county who need winter coats, hats, socks, throw

blankets, slipper socks, scarves, gloves and mittens. All sizes are needed for children, from infant to size 18.

Grands Stepping Up is a Delaware County-based organization that assists

local grandparents and other kinship guardians who are surrogate parenting, raising their grandchildren, primarily due to the opioid epidemic, incarceration, mental health issues, death, illness or

other issues that make the parents unable to fulfill their traditional parenting roles. The organization provides moral support as well as a network of resources and assistance

WARM 2020 » PAGE 2



25 YEARS AND GROWING STRONG



Over the years we have devoted ourselves to making sure Riddle Village is always thinking about the future by providing a progressive approach to everything we do. We understand that staying fresh and responding to new concepts and ideas is key to our success. Come see how we have grown, updated and changed, while maintaining our dedication to the foundation of Lifecare.

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Warm 2020

FROM PAGE 1

with everything from attaining diapers and clothing to offering guidance on education, housing and legal issues. GSU takes a holistic approach by offering programs that support grand-families financially, psychologically, legally and socially.

The nonprofit organization also works to educate local government, school districts and healthcare professionals about the complexity and needs of grand/kinship families.

In an effort to keep their grandchildren out of the foster care system, many grandparents opt to raise their grandchildren, but struggle to afford, not only the basic human needs, but also things like school supplies, sports equipment, music lessons, winter coats, apparel, and more. Operation Warm is the latest effort to fill this need, right in time before the change of season and arrival of chillier temperatures.

GSU, founded by grandparent Karen Barnes of Drexel Hill, is a no-judgment zone, helping grandparents in all situations and from all backgrounds. No one will be turned away, she says.

Earlier this year, GSU partnered with the Llanerch Hills Chapel, a non-denominational Christian church at 1516 Myrtlewood Ave., Havertown, to open Denis' Pantry and Clothing Closet. It takes a village to support local grand-families and the community has been there since Denis' Pantry opened in May to stock its shelves with food, baby equipment, clothing and other necessities that grandparents may need in their day-to-day struggle to make ends meet.

Just over the past several weeks alone, Denis' Pantry received donations of backpacks and school supplies from Nativity BVM's PREP Program of Media, as well as a donation of

1600 books, book shelves, protective masks and baby items from Girl Scout Troop 51108 of Havertown under the leadership of Melissa Carroll and Carla Vanwinckel.

Other ongoing support for Denis' Pantry has come from Gayle Oddi of the Delaware County Department of Human Services who held several food drives this year, as well as Faith Kwazskiewicz, the president of Individuals Aiding In Emergencies, Kristen Taylor of the Havertown Township Recreation Department, Maria Kollar of St. Marks Food Pantry in Broomall, the Peterson Insurance group of Havertown, Long and Foster of Media, the Mike Mullholland Team, as well as Havertown and Bryn Mawr locations, Tim Carroll of the Dennis Kelly AOH of Havertown, and volunteers Chelsea Barnes, Roe Lohr, Lorna Laffey, Pixie and John Hunter, Amie Cannon, Kathy Baggio, Betty Barnes, Latasha Hall, Jess Bordas, and GSU executive director Kathryn Meloni Esq.

"We are thrilled to report that the pantry has given over \$25,000 worth of in-kind donations to our clients who reside in Delaware County," stated Barnes. "We look forward to all of our drives for the rest of the year - Operation Warm, Thanksgiving, and Holiday Giving. We are always in need of more volunteers. Anyone who is interested can private message us on our "Grands Stepping Up" Facebook page. We are so grateful - none of this would be possible without the generous people and businesses in Delaware County."

Operation Warm drop-off bins will be all month at the following locations:

St. Mark's Church, 2220 S. Sproul Road, Broomall; Paddy Rooney's Pub, 449 West Chester Pike, Havertown; New Liberty Baptist Church, 3210 Concord Road, Aston; Llanerch Hills Chapel, 1216 Myrtlewood Ave., Havertown; Mt. Zion CME Food Bank, 701 Felton Ave., Sharon Hill;

Eddystone Borough, 1300 E. 12th St., Crum Lynne; Interstate Auto Electric, Inc., 2545 Market St., Aston; Delaware County Bar Association Vestibule on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, 335 W. Front St., Media; Newtown Square Fire Co., 2 Charles Ellis Lane, Newtown Square, bins on side of firehouse; and TSC All Stars, 2 Raymond Drive, Havertown.

Local grandmother Gina Cappelli said, "I am a single grandmother raising my three grandchildren, ages six, three and one, and I am very grateful for having Operation Warm. I am astounded at the preparation and hard work that Karen Barnes and the other volunteers have shown through this pandemic, while we are all unemployed. I am so, excited that my grandchildren will be warm this winter with hats, coats and scarves. I am so grateful for the donations."

"Operation Warm is a drive to benefit every needy child in Delco," Barnes stated. "This will assist all of GSU grandchildren, as well as every Delaware County child in need, due to Denis' Pantry's collaboration with the Llanerch Hills Chapel. We are so grateful to everyone who wishes to donate to keep our Delco kids warm this winter!"

Operation Warm distribution will be Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 10-11, and Oct. 17-18. Grandparents and others in need of winter coats and warm apparel for their children, can send an e-mail to hello@grandssteppingupinfo.com with "Operation Warm 2020" in subject line, and include number of children in household, their dates of birth and gender, the items requested and sizes.

Grandparents raising their grandchildren are encouraged to reach out to GSU for support and information on community resources by calling Barnes at 610-355-6362. All calls are strictly confidential. For more information on GSU, visit www.grandssteppingupinfo.com.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Generous community members and local businesses and churches keep Grands Stepping Up's Denis' Pantry & Clothing Closet in Havertown stocked to meet the needs of grandparents, often on fixed incomes, who are raising their grandchildren due to a variety of reasons, from drug addiction and mental illness to sickness and death. The Pantry will soon have winter coats to distribute in October.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Ellie Schwerdtfeger and Bria Gentile show off their new winter coats and hats, thanks to the community's generosity.

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AUCTION

The Hickman's Art of Caring online auction begins Oct. 8

MediaNews Group

The Hickman Friends Senior Community of West Chester will host the week-long Art of Caring Online Auction beginning Oct. 8. The items in the virtual auction were collected for the community's canceled fundraiser event, Art of Caring: The Roaring 20s, that was scheduled on March 21.

"Due to the pandemic, we had no choice but to cancel the in-person, 1920s-themed event," said Charles "Ebbie" Alfree III, The Hickman's director of advancement. "We did not want to put our vulnerable residents, guests, volunteers and staff members in a precarious situation. The safety of our residents and community is our top-priority."

Prior to canceling, the

volunteer event committee collected many exquisite and unique items for the Art of Caring's silent and live auctions.

"We were very fortunate to receive such wonderful pieces of art, sports memorabilia, jewelry and other items to include in the auctions," Alfree said. "We deeply appreciated the generosity of the many individuals and establishments that not only donated the items, but also allowed us to keep them for a future event."

Initially, the committee hoped to hold an in-person event in the fall, but as the pandemic continued, they realized hosting the auction online was the best option.

"We love bringing our supporters and friends together, and we look forward to doing that again in the future," Alfree said. "But, for now we hope they will join us virtually."

The auction will include approximately 30 items at a variety of price points.

"From an original oil painting by Gregory Blue, to a signed Eagles football by defensive tackle Fletcher Cox; a dinner prepared by Chef Dan Tagle, to a Tiffany & Co. silver bracelet," Alfree said. "We certainly have something for everyone!"

The link to the online auction will be released on Oct. 8 on The Hickman's website, www.thehickman.org, and on the community's Facebook page. Both sites will be continuously

updated prior to the release age-Alfree Family, Managery Gregory Blue's original oil painting, "March Sunset, Stroud Series, Study," is part of the Art of Caring Online Auction.

date with information and pictures of auction items.

The Hickman thanks the 2020 Art of Caring sponsors: Jazz Star: WSFS Bank; Famous Flappers: Gawthrop Greenwood PC, John Serock Catering, Pine & Pine Law Offices and Woman's Encore LLC; The Bee's Knees: Blue Dog Printing & Design, Martha Boston & Christopher McKeenney, Brandywine Valley Heating & Air Conditioning Inc., Founds-Feryo Cremation and Burial Services LLC, Fulton Bank, Greenbrier, Jeffrey House & Kathy Adams-House, Kencor Elevator Systems Inc., Di & Dallas Krapf, Lenhardt Rodgers Architecture + Interiors, Patricia B. Loew, J. Dean & Nancy O'Banion, PECO, Hank & Julie Schellenger, SERVPRO of West Chester / Southern Delaware County and West Chester Downtown Foundation; Art Deco: BAYADA Home Health Care, Benchmark Construction, Blue Blaze Associates LLC, Brad Abel, Edward Jones Investments, Chester County Hospital, Steve & Kristi Crum, Dave's Automotive Repair Ent. LLC, Fizzano Family of Associates, Realtors, Freeman's, Johnson Kendall Johnson, Diane Kauffman-Smith & Joe Smith, Matt & Dianne Krasney, Lamont Coffee & Tea Co., The Lever-

tawny Still Works, Mutual of America, Joel & Lisa Necowitz, Stephen Olsen & Beth Collins, O'Rourke & Sons Inc., Rainer & Co., Dr. & Mrs. Donald J. Rosato, Rovito Law LLC, Betsy Stratton, William Bunch Auctions & Appraisals and Ken & Tina Witek.

Photographs taken by Hunter Reeser.



An interlocking silver Tiffany & Co. bracelet is up for auction.

Photograph A - Gregory Blue's original oil painting, March Sunset, Stroud Series, Study.

Photograph B - Interlocking silver Tiffany & Co. bracelet.

Photograph C - Signed Eagles football by Fletcher Cox (#91 - Defensive Tackle).

About The Hickman: The Hickman is a nonprofit personal care community lo-

cated on a residential street in the heart of West Chester. Founded in 1891 and guided by Quaker values and traditions, The Hickman provides compassionate, individualized care to older adults in an affordable, home-like environment. For more information or to schedule a personal tour, visit www.thehickman.org or call 484-760-6300.



An Eagles football autographed by defensive tackle Fletcher Cox is up for auction.

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- Jill R. and Rod S., family members of resident



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COURTESY OF THE HERITAGE OF GREEN HILLS

From left, Susan Rothenberger, Ralph Rothenberger and Marsha Sergent during the ceremony at the Heritage of Green Hills observing the 19th anniversary of 9/11.

Heritage of Green Hills remembers 9/11 and celebrates freedom

MediaNews Group

On Sept. 11, residents at the Heritage of Green Hills, a healthy life plan community in Cumru Township, celebrated a new level of freedom after months of staying on the community's campus by stretching out the 6-foot Unity Chains each resident created out of paper strips during the COVID-19 lockdown.

The chains were connected to form a single symbol of togetherness and placed in a circle around an American flag.

Then, the community's veterans led a ceremony observing the 19th anniversary of 9/11.

Residents in the Independent Living neighborhood are now able to travel freely on and off campus without having to quarantine themselves (unless they visit an acute care environment or any areas indicated by the CDC or government as high risk).

The day included a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, singing the "Star



COURTESY OF THE HERITAGE OF GREEN HILLS

Rodney Focht, a military veteran, plays "Taps."



COURTESY OF THE HERITAGE OF GREEN HILLS

Carol Lauer holds her Unity Chain.

Spangled Banner," speeches by Well By Design Director Cheryl Anderson and Heritage Veterans Association President Paul Laintz, a moment of silence and the playing of "Taps" by veteran Rodney Focht.

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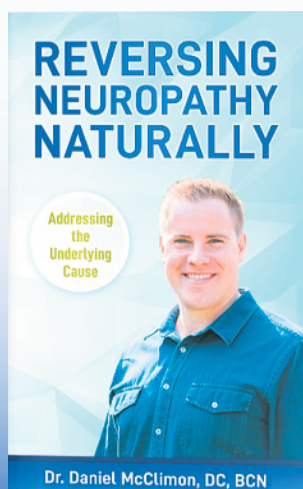
"At night, I couldn't sleep well because my feet were shocking me. They aren't doing it now and I can sleep all the way through." - Cheryl G.



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POETRY

Maris Grove resident writes book of poetry during pandemic

MediaNews Group

Carl Koch, a resident of Maris Grove, an Erickson Living senior living community in Glen Mills, Delaware County, enjoys an active lifestyle. He and his wife, Nancy, keep busy with all types of activities, including card games, movies, live theater, crafts, and getting together with friends.

In March, to pass the time during Pennsylvania's stay-at-home order, Carl started writing poems and discovered his passion for creative writing. Since he wrote so many poems, he decided to self-publish a book titled "Pandemic Poet: Passing the time during lockdown," which is available on Amazon.com and other online bookstores.

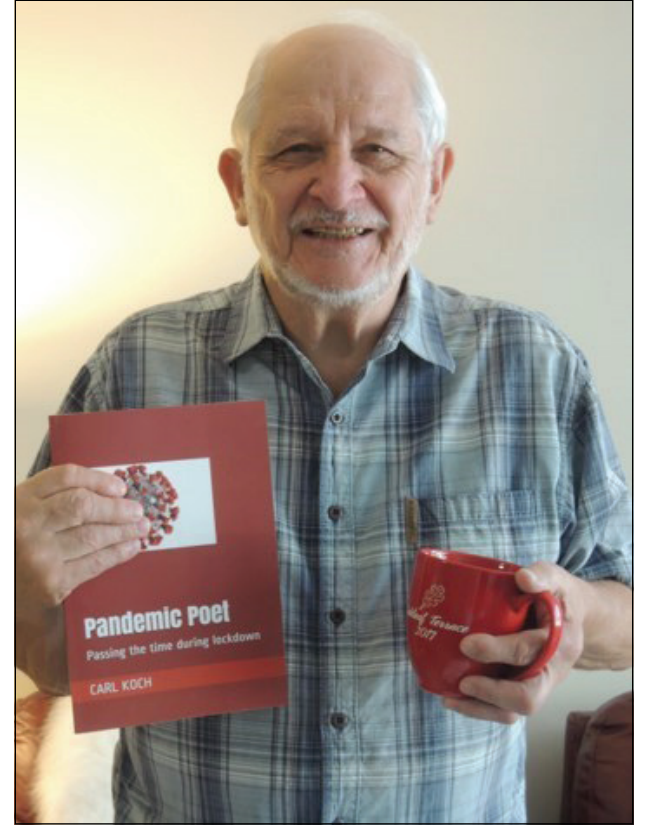
The first 15 poems describe significant and humorous events in the life of the author and his family. They include their wedding, holiday memories, trips, work experiences and hobbies.

The next eight poems are about the COVID-19 virus and its impact on society and life. It also includes a poem written from the perspective of the virus itself.

The 14 poems in the chapter titled "Things" describe sports, games, butterflies, feathers and an accidental encounter between a dog and a frog. The final four poems consist of prayers and inspirational writings.

The poems have received a great response from family, friends and neighbors. Some of the poems have been shared on Maris Grove's community TV station as well as Carl's Facebook page.

"I want to thank my wife



COURTESY OF MARIS GROVE

Maris Grove resident Carl Koch holds his poetry book, "Pandemic Poet: Passing the time during lockdown."

Nancy, who was an inspiration for many of my poems," Carl said. "She also was an indispensable help in reading and proofreading my poems. I also want to acknowledge the TV station here at Maris Grove for including some of my poems in a poetry reading program.

"Writing the poems about my childhood memories and real-life adventures was almost like writing my autobiography. I enjoy receiving comments from family and friends after posting my poems of shared experiences."

Carl, a retired environmental engineer, received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania.

He plans on publishing his second book of poems next year.

About Maris Grove: Maris Grove, one of 20 continuing care retirement communities developed and managed by Erickson Living, is situated on a scenic 87-acre campus in Glen Mills. The not-for-profit community of more than 1,900 residents and 1,000 employees is governed by its own board of directors, affiliated with National Senior Campuses, who provide independent financial and operational oversight of the community. Additional information about Maris Grove can be found at MarisGroveCommunity.com.

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MEDICARE

Prepare for Medicare open enrollment now

RSVP

Medicare can be confusing. How will you choose the best plan(s) to fit your unique health needs?

At this time of year, Medicare recipients are receiving notices from their current plans and mailings from other companies offering their plans. Even though it may seem overwhelming to read through the information, it is important.

Oct. 15 through Dec. 7 is the time of year to re-evaluate your Medicare health coverage to be sure it will meet your health care needs going forward, learn whether your prescriptions are still covered in 2021 and understand any changes that occurred in your current plans.

Pennsylvania offers the APPRISE Program, a free health insurance counseling program designed to help Pennsylvanians with Medicare. APPRISE counselors are state-trained volunteers who provide objective, easy-to-under-

stand information about health insurance options to Medicare beneficiaries and to those who are becoming eligible for Medicare.

Counselors will answer your questions and provide you with information about Original Medicare, Medicare Supplemental Insurance, Prescription Drug Plans, Medicare Advantage Plans and financial assistance programs, so that you can make more informed decisions about your choices. APPRISE counselors are objective, independent and have no financial interest in the decisions you make.

Due to COVID-19, APPRISE counselors in our area will only be available via phone or by virtual meetings online. In Montgomery County, APPRISE counselors volunteer through RSVP and can be reached at 610-834-1040, ext. 120. In Bucks County, counselors are available through the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging at 267-880-5700. In Chester County, services are offered through the Ches-

ter County Department of Aging Services at 610-344-5004. In Delaware County, services are offered through the Delaware County Senior Community Services at 484-494-3769.

When you call, an APPRISE counselor will call you back to educate, answer questions or research and discuss options on your particular situation.

If you want to learn about Medicare before you call APPRISE, a way to do this is to watch some videos about it. One website to explore is the Montgomery County APPRISE Medicare Help site, which you can find at www.rsvpmc.org/medicare-help.

There you will find easy-to-understand videos on Medicare Basics (Medicare 101), How to Enroll in Medicare and other topics pertaining to help with Medicare and prescription expenses. There is even an Online Toolkit that provides a Medicare Preventative Benefits checklist you can discuss with your doctor.

Another great website is www.Medicare.gov. There you can create your own MyMedicare account, store medical records, sign up for Medicare for the first time at age 65, check or compare drug costs, find out which procedures are covered and find and research medical providers in your area.

If you are about to turn 65, retired and are taking Social Security payments, enrollment in Medicare will be automatic as of the first day of your 65th birthday month. Talk to an APPRISE counselor to understand your Medicare coverage options.

If you are about to turn 65, retired and haven't started taking Social Security payments, you should know that enrollment in Medicare is not automatic. You will need to enroll in Medicare Part A (Hospital in-patient coverage), Medicare Part B (out-patient services) and Medicare Part D (prescription plan). An APPRISE counselor can help you with this.

If you are about to turn

65, still working and are covered by your employer's medical plan, as long as your employer has more than 20 employees, you can defer enrollment (but always check with your employer about this). Talk to an APPRISE counselor now to understand how you will enroll in Medicare when your employment ends.

APPRISE counselors are available to not only help you select the best plan to suit your current or anticipated needs, but they may be able to save you money as well. Counselors can compare your medical needs and prescriptions against all the plans available in your area and help you select the plan that is best for you.

Also, some people with lower incomes may qualify for programs that can reduce Medicare-related costs. The Extra Help Federal program and the Pennsylvania State PACE/PACENET program can help. There are also Medicare Savings Programs for people on Medicare with

limited income and resources that can help with co-insurance, co-pays, deductibles and prescription drug costs. APPRISE counselors can help you determine if any of these are right for you.

So, talk to an APPRISE counselor about your Medicare questions and concerns. You can call 610-834-1040, ext. 120, or visit www.rsvpmc.org/medicare-help for APPRISE in Montgomery County, 267-880-5700 for APPRISE in Bucks County, 610-344-5004 (option 2) for APPRISE in Chester County or 484-494-3769 for APPRISE in Delaware County.

RSVP (Responding to Community Needs Through Volunteerism) improves the lives of vulnerable populations in the Greater Philadelphia area and beyond with programs focusing on education and wellness which utilize a dedicated pool of 1,200-plus, volunteers. To learn more visit www.rsvpmc.org.

ASK LU

When can changes be made to Medicare coverage?

By Lucille Bondi

Here are some answers to questions about Medicare coverage.

When can I make changes to my Medicare coverage?

There are certain times when you can make these changes; some of these time periods are different depending on the type



Lucille Bondi

(also known as Part D) there's an Annual Election Period (AEP) when you can sign up for, change, or

disenroll from these plans. The Annual Election Period for Medicare Advantage and Medicare prescription drug coverage runs from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 each year. If you didn't sign up for one of these plans when you first became eligible for Medicare (during your Initial Enrollment Period), the AEP is generally your chance to make these changes, unless you qualify for a Special Election Period (SEP).

If you have a Medicare Supplement Plan, you can change that any time during the year if you can pass underwriting. (health questions)

What changes can I make during the AEP?

Here's a quick rundown of what you can do during the Annual Election Period: Change to a Medicare Advantage plan from Original Medicare, Part A and

Part B. Change from a Medicare Advantage plan to Original Medicare, Part A and Part B.

Change from one Medicare Advantage plan to another (regardless of whether either plan offers drug coverage).

Enroll in a Part D prescription drug plan.

Change from one Medicare prescription drug plan to another.

Opt out of Medicare pre-

scription drug coverage completely.

Changes you make during the AEP go into effect Jan. 1.

Contact: Lucille Bondi Insurance Solutions, 439 Main St., rear building, Harleysville, PA 19438. Phone: 215-256-5954. Email: lucille@bondimedicaresolutions.com. Website: bondimedicaresolutions.com

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SPOT OF T

You can't hug a memory

By Terry Alburger

People come and go in our lives. I truly believe they appear for a reason. Even the most casual acquaintances or neighbors or coworkers all have an impact on you, whether you are aware or not.

I think that you can gather the best from people and leave the worst, and by doing so, enhance your own life. Even perfect strangers can have an impact, just by your observing their actions.

Then there are those closer to you. Your family, friends and even those four-footed babies in your life, they all can have a profound effect on you. The feeling of being loved and cared for brings a serenity that is rarely equaled.

Together, you share wonderful times and create some magical memories. Life can be incredibly good while you get to spend time with these guys. You wish you could bottle some of those moments, you wish you could save them forever.

Many times, we are so wrapped up in taking pictures to try to capture those moments that we forget to actually live them, to put the phone down and savor them. Keep them in your heart rather than on your phone.

Life is not a photo op. It is not a Facebook or Instagram post. It is real. It is fleeting. You can share those moments on social media, but you will never get the chance to relive them. You can't get them back once they are gone.

So, by all means capture those moments digitally, but make sure to savor



Yellow ball with a good smile

PIXY.ORG

them as they happen. You cannot hug a memory. You can't snuggle a picture. Be present in the moments as they happen.

This week, I lost someone very close to me. And while the pictures make me smile, the knowledge that I held her and hugged her often truly makes me the happiest. While I miss her terribly, I know that her time with me was

wonderful and vice versa.

I firmly believe that it is the definition of a life well-lived ... and she is missed so very much by all who knew her. She brought smiles. And yes, she was a dog. Not just any dog, mind you. She was my girl, Rumor.

Rumor taught me a lot about love and life and how to be a better person. In her passing, she

taught me yet another lesson: in this COVID world, we are all struggling with some manner of loss. We have lost freedom to come and go as we please, to eat out in our favorite restaurants, to host and go to large parties. We can't travel to many places, and we are most definitely feeling the losses.

Losing Rumor, I have

come to realize that while the many losses we've been struggling with are difficult, they are nothing compared to losing one that you love.

Prioritize your thought process — if you have not lost anyone close to you (and I certainly pray you have not), the other losses are tolerable. They are but minor inconveniences in a world that will one

day be healed of this pandemic. And if you have lost someone, you have my heartfelt condolences.

Try to savor life, each day find something positive for which to be grateful. Focus on the good, not the bad. And smile. Even in the most difficult moments. Wag your figurative tail. Rumor always did, and she was always happy.



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SENIOR LIFE

Discover why residents love Hershey's Mill in West Chester

MediaNews Group

Thinking of downsizing or relocating to a 55-plus community in the Delaware Valley? Hershey's Mill offers the best in active adult community living. After surveying newly relocated residents, the Hershey's Mill marketing team has put together a list of what is most appealing to new buyers at Hershey's Mill in West Chester.

Hershey's Mill is situated around an 18-hole championship private golf club featuring casual and formal dining. The premier community also offers Tiger Turf coated tennis courts, pickle ball, bocce courts, winter paddleball, shuffleboard and horseshoes, as well as miles of walking trails and protected interior paved roads for biking.

A park-like atmosphere with large mature trees and wildlife give Hershey's Mill a "resort-like" appearance. The extensive grounds, well planned and impeccably maintained, cover nearly 800 acres and are features all residents enjoy.

With more than 1,720 homes in 25 villages, residents enjoy village living at its finest. Stress-free living with exterior building maintenance, landscape and to-the-doorstep snow removal is often a deciding factor. Most homes in The Mill have first-floor owner's suites. This is another requirement of many relocating to a 55-plus community.

Security appeals to potential buyers. Hershey's Mill is a gated community with a 24/7 manned main gate and marked security vehicle traversing the community 24 hours a day. This offers a sense of security that few other communities can offer. The "Lock-and-Leave" policy means



COURTESY OF HERSHEY'S MILL

Hershey's Mill Security with 24/7 protection.

little worry when away for vacations or a second-home stay.

Hershey's Mill, an active adult community, features only independent living but is close to hospitals, assisted care facilities, fitness centers, shopping and cultural events. There are five fitness centers within a 10-minute drive. Paoli Hospital, with Chester County's only trauma and cancer centers, and Chester County Hospital are each 15 minutes away by car. In addition, Center City Philadelphia and its renowned major medical centers are a short drive from the community.

Plus, this active-adult community offers all of this: a heated outdoor pool

with diving and lap areas, as well as a shallow roped-off area for the grandkids; championship golf, tennis, bocce, pickle ball and more; more than 35 clubs offering everything from art to yoga; a renovated community center with beautiful great room with fireplace; a well-stocked library; and rooms for billiards, bridge, Mah Jong and other activities. Sullivan House, a historic mansion situated on a rise overlooking the Chester County countryside is available to residents for private parties and community gatherings.

Hershey's Mill's private roads with low traffic volume provide a great place to walk, bike or jog. A com-

munity garden with more than 140 plots and a fully equipped woodshop are available to residents. Verizon Fios Triple Play with Preferred HD TV is also included. An independent community access TV station presents movies, activity schedules and informative programs. The Hershey's Mill bus takes residents to regional attractions, cultural institutions, and gaming and sporting events. And one of the best features is a golf clubhouse offering casual and formal dining, as well as Friday happy hours, Sunday brunches, barbecues and holiday events.

Go to hersheysmill55plus.com to learn more.

SENIOR LIFE



COURTESY OF SPRING MILL SENIOR LIVING

Find comfort in the midst of chaos at Spring Mill Senior Living

MediaNews Group

Something we can all agree on is that 2020 has been the year of unpredictability. That being said, we want you to know that at Spring Mill Senior Living in East Pikeland Township, Chester County, we are COVID-19-free and open for business.

We are accepting new residents at our award-winning senior community, where your loved ones can always count on benefiting from the safety, care and lifestyle they truly deserve.

If you are concerned about the security measures we are taking to address the pandemic, we understand and want you to know that early on we implemented baseline testing for all residents and staff.

Now, with the blessing of the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Human Services, we have officially implemented our reopening plan, available to read on our website, springmillseniorliving.com.

We are offering sched-


uled on-site visitation for resident loved ones and family members in our outdoor patio areas. Visitors will be screened and have their temperature taken immediately prior to their reservation and remain socially distanced and wear masks during their visit.

Team members will assist residents to designated locations and disinfect the visitation area between scheduled visits.


We are offering a limited-time-only significant discount on our Personal Care and SHINE Memory Care apartment-homes.

Last month, the SHINE Memory Care program was endorsed by the Alzheimer's Association as one of only eight nationally recognized programs in the country.

At Spring Mill Senior Living, you and your family can rest easy knowing that while we all may be socially distanced, we never have to be alone. Visit our website or call us at 610-422-3975 to speak with a senior lifestyle counselor.







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GARDENING

Labor of love

Exeter Township garden is created between rocks and a high place.



COURTESY OF MIKE FOSTER
Mike Foster stands on his Exeter Township property in 2004, before he started creating his garden.

By Kathy Folk
kfolk@readingeagle.com
@kbick on Twitter

When Mike Foster and his wife, Carolyn, were looking at an Exeter Township property back in 2004, they know a garden would be a high point when they built their new home, and that there would be a rocky road to creating it.

Literally. “When I first saw this property it was covered in trees and thick undergrowth,” Mike said. “The rise in elevation was obvious but not indicative of what it would look like after site preparation.

“After the house was completed the builder intended to shore up the base of the grade with boulders then grade the remaining elevation up to the tree line, then hydro seed the grade and be on his way. I traded the cost of grading and seeding for the use of his track loader.

“The operator and I placed many huge boulders in strategic locations along the hill of stone and scree giving me the raw canvas to plan the garden.”

Mike discovered his property was in the heart of a rock formation that he said runs from Lancaster County through Kutztown.

“So much of the initial work was to keep the hill from spilling into the back of our house,” he said. “Terrace building was the answer, and I had plenty of rock to work



COURTESY OF MIKE FOSTER
This pond is above ground level with large rocks and wood masking the hard liner.

with. Each had a place and purpose.”

Over the last 16 years, Mike, 70, who is retired from Brilliant Graphics, Exton, has worked diligently to make that garden a showcase that has a more than a touch of his free-spirited personality.

“As it flows and interacts with the natural landscape, it has little of the discipline associated with formal gardens,” said Mike, who described himself as an outdoors person who likes the challenges and rewards of gardening. “I enjoy classical music but would probably be a jazz musician. I love Longwood’s symmetrical gardens but feel more at home wandering the paths.”

As with most gardens, there were things that didn’t go as planned, but Mike

doesn’t necessarily look at those as mistakes.

“Garden mistakes do not exist unless you are feeding your family with the produce,” he said. “Every misstep suggests what needs to be adjusted moving forward.

“A plant may not be right for location No. 1 but is perfect for location No. 2. You will get it right eventually.”

Mike said his favorite plant in the garden is a 16-year-old Japanese redwood.

“My concern is that one day it will need to be harvested due to its size,” he said. “What a glorious tree!”

Mike said for inspiration he looks to the book “Perfect Plant, Perfect Place” by Roy Lancaster, as well as to Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Chester County, and Winterthur in New Castle County, Del.



COURTESY OF MIKE FOSTER
The capstone acts as a footbridge across the mid-terrace. The stone is 7 feet long by 4 feet wide.

He said he’s not really comfortable giving other gardeners advice, but he did share a few tips he’s picked up over the years.

“Evaluate your site carefully and amend, as necessary,” he said. “Plan with both eyes on the future if you want your garden to evolve over time.

“Prioritize understanding that some of your efforts may take years to fully impact the overall look of a mature landscape.”

Mike hired a contractor to build the deck but has done the rest of the work in the garden himself.

“Landscape gardening requires so much physical engagement that it keeps asking me to get back to it,” he said. “The challenges and rewards check all of my boxes for time well spent.”



COURTESY OF MIKE FOSTER
The backyard deck.



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BERKS COUNTY



RON DEVLIN — MEDIANEWS GROUP

Sandra Reitz, 79, of Mohnnton, visits the Holocaust exhibit at the Berks Military History Museum. Her uncle, Harry Piersol, formerly of Shillington, was "skin and bones" when he was liberated from a concentration camp at the end of World War II, she said.

A somber reminder

War museum unveils Holocaust exhibit on anniversary of formal end of WW II



RON DEVLIN — MEDIANEWS GROUP

Above: State Rep. Mark Gillen (second right) and Troy Fasig (right) officially inaugurate an exhibit on the Holocaust at the Berks Military History Museum. It was unveiled as part of a ceremony commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II. Rob Kantner (second left) and Dewey Brown represented the Vietnam Veterans Association.

At left: A portrait of an unidentified Jewish woman is part of an exhibit on the Holocaust at the Berks Military History Museum in Mohnnton.

By Ron Devlin
 rdevlin@readingeagle.com
 @rondevlinre on Twitter

Within arms reach of a blue-striped uniform worn by a Jewish prisoner in a concentration camp during World War II, Sandra Reitz was overcome with emotion Wednesday morning at the Berks Military History Museum in Mohnnton.

Her uncle, Harry Piersol, formerly of Shillington, had worn a similar uniform. She no longer remembers the name of the camp, but cannot forget that he was "skin

and bones" when the camp was liberated in 1945.

"Oh my gosh, how sad for all those people," uttered Reitz, 79, of Mohnnton. "So sad."

Reitz was among visitors to the museum's exhibit on the Holocaust, unveiled on the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Over the past nine months, the museum assembled a large collection of Holocaust memorabilia that fills an entire gallery.

Laid out chronologically, the exhibit charts the history of the Holocaust from

Hitler's rise to power in 1933 to the settlement of Israel as a Jewish homeland in 1948.

State Rep. Mark M. Gillen, museum president, said the Holocaust exhibit fills a void in the museum's mission to tell the story of World War II.

"We realized that the Holocaust cannot be separated from World War II," said Gillen, a certified teacher who serves on the House Education Committee.

The world at war

World War II began when

Germany invaded Poland on Sept. 1, 1939, 81 years ago.

The U.S. entered the war on Dec. 8, 1941, the day after the Japanese surprise attack that devastated the Pacific naval fleet at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

The U.S. joined England and the Soviet Union to comprise the Allied Powers. The adversaries, Germany, Italy and Japan, were known as the Axis Powers.

The war ended in Europe on May 7, 1945, known as Victory in Europe, or V-E

Day. It continued in the Pacific Theater until Aug. 15, 1945, when Japan surrendered six days after the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on Nagasaki, a few days after another bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. The date is known as Victory Over Japan, or V-J Day.

Japan's formal surrender was held aboard the battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Harbor on Sept. 2, 1945, 75 years ago Wednesday.

Gen. Carl "Tooe" Spaatz of Boyertown, commander of U.S. Strategic Air Forces

in the Pacific during the final days of the war, was part of the U.S. delegation aboard the Missouri during the surrender proceeding.

Statistics differ, but it is generally regarded there were 60 million to 75 million military and civilian deaths during World War II.

The museum marked the 75th anniversary in an outdoor ceremony with the Veterans Riders Association honor guard presenting the colors.

In brief remarks, Gillen

WAR MUSEUM » PAGE 13



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Troy Fasig, an Exeter Township collector, compiled an exhibit on the Holocaust for the Berks Military History Museum. It was unveiled on Wednesday, the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II.

War Museum

FROM PAGE 12

called attention to the pain and sacrifice endured by Berks County families, “We must make sure,” he told a group of about 50, “that this never happens again.”

Gallery of pain

In a gallery where the gaunt faces of Jews in Auschwitz stare blankly from World War II photos, Troy Fasig is most passionate about three tiny cloth dolls.

“They’re wearing the Star of David,” Fasig of Exeter Township said. “They once belonged to children in the Warsaw Jewish ghetto.”

The owners of those dolls, Fasig said, were among 1.2 million Jewish and 500,000 non-Jewish children who died during the Holocaust.

Fasig, a veteran collector of military artifacts, was instrumental in assembling the Holocaust exhibit at the museum.

Scouring the world via the internet, he assembled a collection that ranges from a uniform worn by a concentration camp inmate

who died on Christmas Eve 1944 to uniforms worn by Jewish freedom fighters in Israel.

Much of the collection came from Daniel DeVarennes, a Canadian author of “A Glimpse of Evil,” a Holocaust history.

Fasig said working on the Holocaust collection became as much a passion as a historical endeavor.

Drawing on a quote by the philosopher George Santayana, Fasig said, “If you don’t remember history, you’re condemned to repeat it.”

Michael Perkins of Douglassville has more than a passing interest in the Holocaust.

His mother, Patricia Perkins, was part of a British Army delegation that liberated the camp at Bergen-Belsen in April 1945. She ran a canteen for inmates and soldiers during the liberation and his father, Charles Perkins, served with a British peacekeeping force in Palestine.

“This is something that should have never happened,” said Perkins, 74, an Army veteran who toured the Holocaust exhibit. “And, it should never happen again.”

His wife, Kathie, has

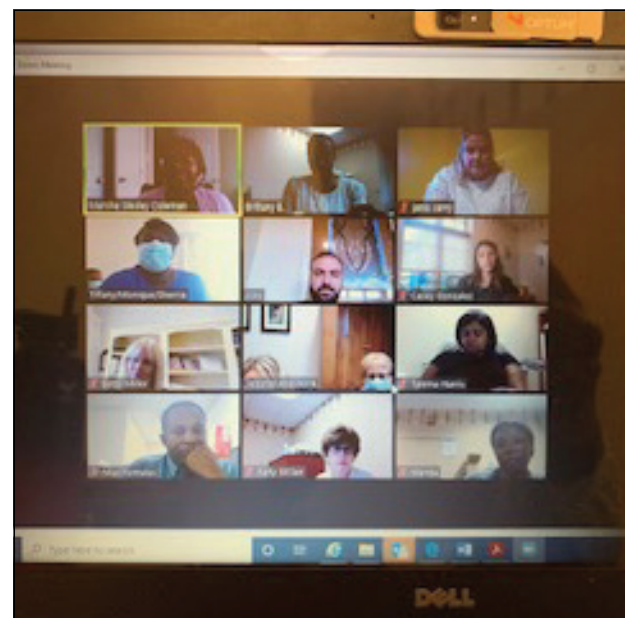


Vietnam veterans Rob Kantner, left, and Dewey Brown during a ceremony observing the 75th anniversary of the formal end of World War II at the Berks Military History Museum in Mohnton on Wednesday.

read many books on the Holocaust. But seeing the artifacts brought a sense of realism that can’t be found in books.

“This exhibit gives us a connection to the Holocaust,” she said. “It’s something to help us care about it.”

DIVERSITY



COURTESY OF WHITE HORSE VILLAGE

White Horse Village team members participate in a virtual conversation on race.

White Horse Village hosts ‘A Conversation on Race’

MediaNews Group

Since its opening in 1989, White Horse Village in Newtown Square, Delaware County, has been committed to creating a diverse environment that is welcoming and accepting. Last year, residents and team members joined together to create an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Advocacy (IDEA) committee to encourage and support diversity, inclusion and equity.

The IDEA committee presented the first of three virtual discussions, titled “A Conversation on Race,” on Aug. 25. Thirty-seven team members participated in the discussion, facilitated by Marsha Wesley Coleman of Friends Service Alliance. The virtual events feature a group discussion, small group reflections and a themed video. Laptops and paid time off are provided for team members to participate in IDEA events.

“Building a culture on an open and inclusive foundation that encourages team members and residents to share ideas freely will reap many long-term benefits

for the whole community,” said Brittany Brown, IDEA committee member and senior director of Canterbury and nursing home administrator.

The IDEA events offer a warm and friendly environment that encourages people to be genuine in sharing who they are and their experiences in belonging. By becoming a more inclusive community, White Horse Village provides all people the opportunity to feel welcome and valued.

About White Horse Village: Situated on 96 acres in southeastern Pennsylvania, White Horse Village is an active senior living community offering a full range of living options and health-care services. The community intentionally creates opportunities for extraordinary living in a vibrant, diverse community through personal growth, connectedness and relationships. As a nonprofit organization, White Horse Village reinvests earnings back into the organization to further the mission and vision. For more information, visit www.whitehorsevillage.com.



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