Senior Community Services' (SCS) Mission: To promote independent and meaningful living for older adults through direct services and programs in the home and community.

SCS Connection

SCS SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

SPECIAL ANNUAL REPORT EDITION – FISCAL YEAR 2014

A Message from the Executive Director

The phenomena of Baby Boomers "aging into" the system at records rates has taken on several catch phrases, I particularly enjoy the Silver Tsunami. Never before has there been such an emphasis on the aging system and what it means to be an older adult in our society. I have dedicated my career to promoting active aging and this is certainly both an exciting and challenging time to be at the helm of Senior Community Services.

Despite lean economic times and tight budgets, I believe that SCS is as vibrant as ever. SCS is a unique agency with a patchwork of programs and services all woven together to create a strong and cohesive blend of supports for seniors in Delaware County. These services meet seniors where they are, allowing them to age in place.

I am very excited about our newest program, Aging at Home. This United Way grant funded initiative allows seniors living in the Greater Lansdowne area to access services and supports necessary to keep them independent and at home. The newest service offered by Aging at Home, which just celebrated its one year anniversary at SCS, is a new door-thru-door transportation service. One of the most challenging things for a homebound senior to access is transportation and we are happy to help fill the transportation gap in Delaware County.

In addition to Aging at Home, all of our programs and centers are dedicated to fostering dynamic relationships that will continue to support and follow individuals throughout the aging experience. One great example is that of Enrico Gatti. He originally came to SCS through the long term care department, receiving care management. Mr. Gatti's care manager, knowing about his passion for painting entered him in the annual SCS Art Show. As Mr. Gatti's mobility declined, he was referred to Senior Center at Home, which allowed him to continue to explore painting and other creative avenues. Mr. Gatti passed away this fall, but even while in hospice care, he continued to receive visits from SCAH. All along the way, SCS was there, supporting Mr. Gatti.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the generous financial commitment from our dedicated donors and partners. Without their support, we would be unable to serve the thousands of seniors throughout Delaware County who rely on activities in our senior centers, cognitive stimulation kits, home delivered meals, friendly visits in their homes, care management, and so many other valuable programs and services.

Inside these pages you will find more inspiring success stories from each of these special programs, all of which contribute to the strength and vibrancy of the agency.

Arthur Weisfeld

Arthur Weisfeld

SCS Strategic Plan Seeks to Strengthen and Diversify Agency

By Heather Dale

Every three years, Senior Community Services develops a strategic plan to help shape the agency's future. The newest plan, which spans from 2014 to 2017, will help SCS push for continued sustainability and growth.

The first initiative is to create a comprehensive development program. In doing so, the agency's goals include increasing individual giving and planned gifts. Another initiative in the plan aims to launch a capital campaign and generate revenue from entrepreneurial activities, helping to broaden the agency's reach within Delaware County. The other two initiatives push the agency to expand the Center Without Walls program and also expand senior center participation.

"This strategic plan will help us compete in the aging marketplace as well as better serve, and reach, the growing ranks of seniors here in Delaware County," said Arthur Weisfeld, executive director of SCS.

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Carmen Olive, Center Director

Seeking New Challenges Well Into His '80s

By Carmen Olive

To listen to William Jones, III tell it, he has lived an ordinary life filled with service, family, and an enjoyable career. But, in 89 years, Jones has approached each transition in life with positivity.

Jones started attending Good Neighbor Senior Center just over a year ago, after being retired for 28 years. The World War II veteran goes to the center each weekday and takes advantage of all of the programs that are offered from Bible study to exercise classes and trips.

"The center is a great place to meet friends and is a good place to relax and enjoy a day out," Jones said.

Jones grew up in Glenolden, the second oldest of eight children (two brothers and five sisters). Now 89 years old, Jones still fondly recalls playing football and baseball in high school. After high school, Jones was drafted to serve in World War II. He served a total of 29 months in the Army, 14 of which were in Italy. Jones remembers that it was while he was in the Army that he experienced his first Christmas away from home. A young man, he longed for the comfort and familiarity of his home and family.

Once he returned home, Jones married and started a family. His three girls and two boys are the pride and joy of his life. He is now a proud and doting great grandfather to two great granddaughters.

Jones worked for the United States Postal Service for nearly 40 years in Philadelphia, remaining on the same route for more than 26 years.

"I watched the children on my route grow up," he said. "They went on to have great and wonderful lives."

During his retirement Jones traveled to New York, Florida, Jamaica and throughout the Caribbean with his children.

"I really enjoy seeing the beautiful places around the world," he said.

But after 28 years of retirement, Jones decided to change things up and that is when he started going to Good Neighbor daily.

He said he enjoys partaking in good conversation with friends. He passes the time after lunch by playing cards, checkers, dominoes, pool, or watching a movie. Jones takes full advantage of other programs at the center and enjoys attending healthy food presentations as well as informational presentations on Medicare and health issues.

Even at 89, Jones proves that it is never too late to get involved and stay engaged.

CARE MANAGEMENT

Services Provide Safety and Support for Hundreds of Seniors

By Heather Dale

Before receiving a Stair Ride in her home, getting up the stairs was an event for Marie Carson. "Oh it was terrible," said Carson, 84. "I had to walk halfway up the steps and then stop and then wait, catch my breath and do a couple more steps. Then I would do the same thing over again."

Carson, was one of 300 seniors in Delaware County who benefited from targeted special funding by the state this year. The additional funds allowed for seniors who had been on the waiting list for services for months, and some years, to get the help they needed to remain in their homes.

"Now I can just sit on there and ride right on, get on and get off," Carson said. "And I don't have any trouble at all. That's the best thing that happened for me."

In addition to a Stair Ride, Carson also received a medical alert device that she can use in the event of a fall or other emergency. Carson, who lives alone, does not have a high level of care, but needed just enough support to make her living situation manageable and safe.

An aide now comes every other week to assist with housework, things that became too difficult for Carson, who uses oxygen in the evening and has a bad leg, to get to on her own, like running the vacuum and cleaning the bathroom. "I just didn't have the energy to do that work," she said. "Before … I could run up the stairs, no problem."

Senior Community Services manages the state-funded Options Program in Delaware County, in partnership with the County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA). The Options Program assists seniors, ages 60 and up, whose needs range from a small amount of assistance to those who require nursing home level of care. There are over 1,000 seniors receiving care management and services in the program. Last year a total of 1,743 families were served by SCS care managers. Prior to the infusion of special funding to the program, over 300 seniors were on the waiting list.

"These services can mean the difference between allowing a consumer to age in place in the community they are comfortable in, or having to move into a nursing home," said Trindy Grundy, associate director for long term care at Senior Community Services. "To be able to provide the help and support needed to keep seniors at home is tremendous."

If you have questions about the Options Program or other in-home programs available for seniors in Delaware County, please contact the SCS Long Term Care Department at 610-237-6222.

CHESTER SENIOR CENTER

610-497-3550 / 721 HAYES STREET, CHESTER, PA 19013

Jamee Nowell Smith, Center Director

Success for the Center...

Chester Senior Center Pool Room: Men Do Enjoy Senior Centers!

By Jamee Nowell Smith

The Chester Senior Center Pool Room was always a rather quiet room. The few men who played pool and used the room on a daily basis would talk about sports and enjoyed conversation among friends about anything and everything. They soon became known as the "Chester Pool Room Guys."

Over the years, the senior center staff wondered how to get more men involved in the senior center activities and especially the "Pool Room Guys." The staff tried men's only breakfasts, men's health programs, fishing trips, trips to see various sporting events like the Phillies, Sixers and Eagles and more. The center staff even attempted outreach in barbershops and local hangouts where men were known to visit. The events always attracted people, but no men remained active with the center after the event ended.

The center staff had all but given up hope, convinced that men were just not that interested in attending senior centers. Until the staff had an "ah-ha!" moment and decided to involve the men in planning their own program. The center staff encouraged the men to go out and do outreach among their friends and other men in the community who they connect with day to day. The staff encouraged them to invite their friends to the center, just for a friendly game of pool.

Within the last year, by letting the men run their own program, the number of male members of the Chester Senior Center and the Chester Pool Room has more than doubled! More than 25 older men are going to the Pool Room on a daily basis. They have developed their own environment of friendship, support, fun, and lots of "trash talking!" The men, in reaching out to other men, in the Chester community found that "men just want to hang out." In doing so, they have built a superior Pool Team that competes with SCS and other local senior centers on a regular basis as well as pool leagues from Delaware and Philadelphia. The greatest part is that the Chester Senior Center Pool Team went undefeated this year!

In the end, the center staff learned that men are interested in senior centers for their own needs and interests; the staff just had to let the men discover the center on their own terms. The Chester Senior Center men have taken their place in the Chester Senior Center as a strong, connected, and growing presence, not only in the center walls, but in the greater community as well.

Here's to another wonderful year and undefeated pool season in 2015!

Success for Individuals...

Finding Support and Strength Within the Center Walls

Frances P., 71 was introduced to the Chester Senior Center by working with the Senior Employment Program as a program assistant. When she first began, she was withdrawn and dealing with several stressful events in her life: the loss of loved ones, a fire that destroyed her home, financial pressures, as well as family and health issues. She was burdened and felt very depressed but often pushed herself to keep going. She did her best as a program assistant, helping wherever needed, mostly with games and one-on-one interactions with members. She enjoyed being at the center because it felt like being among family.

Frances was not only a staff member, but she saw the value in the many services and programs offered at the center. She was able to get assistance with her property taxes, get financial counseling and planning, improve her access to health benefits and insurance, use transportation, housing counseling, received peer counseling and more! She truly saw the center for the great value it is!

"With the help of God and the center I have come a mighty long way and I am grateful," Frances said. "I do not know what I would do without the center."

Upon the end of her time with the employment program, she was excited that she could continue attending and participating at the center! She became an active volunteer helping with meals, answering the phone, serving coffee, registering people for meals, programs, and trips and in whatever ways that she is able!

"With the help of God and the center I have come a mighty long way and I am grateful," Frances said. "I do not know what I would do without the center."

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Transportation Services Aim to Keep Seniors Independent

By Heather Dale

Shortly after John Harnish retired, the lease on his car expired and he found himself carless. To run errands and get around he would rely on family, when they were available, or call cabs, but on a fixed income, they were pricey.

Luckily for Harnish and other seniors living within the area, Aging at Home – A Community Network offers affordable and reliable transportation and helps to fill the transportation gap for seniors who require occasional trips to the hair salon, market or to medical appointments within their community.

"I'm 71. I have chronic fatigue. I appreciate the fact that I can sit back and let someone else do the driving," Harnish said.

Aging at Home assists older adults living within Aldan, Colwyn, Darby, East Lansdowne, Lansdowne and Yeadon boroughs and helps provide support for seniors who need just a little assistance to maintain their independence in the community.

"Our goal is to work with seniors living in the Greater Lansdowne area who need access to reliable transportation, and who are not connected to Community Transit," said Trindy Grundy, associate director of long term care at Senior Community Services. "Our plan is to work hand-in-hand with the available transportation services provided in the county, while addressing the needs for those specifically in our catchment area."

Aging at Home members, ages 60 and over can access transportation each weekday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Those in need of a ride within the service area for medical appointments and errands are asked to contact the program at least 48 hours prior to their need for transportation. A donation of $5 is requested for each ride and must be within a 7 mile radius from the member's home.

Since launching the service earlier in the fall, the program averages about 50 rides per month. Rides are provided by trained Senior Community Services staff members in a new Ford C-MAX Hybrid vehicle.

Harnish has nothing but praise for the driver who takes him to Rite Aid and the grocery store on Wednesdays. They are both Air Force veterans and always have great conversations. "It gives me something to look forward to on Wednesdays," he said. "[The driver] is one of the most cautious and responsible drivers."

In addition to providing transportation services, Aging at Home, which is funded by a grant from the United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, also provides key services that seniors need to remain independent in the community: with house/yard work and minor home repairs; home delivered meals; guidance with health insurance and prescription coverage options; help reducing the financial and emotional stress of caring for an aging loved one; and healthy living and lifelong learning classes.

If you need assistance and live in one of the communities served by Aging at Home or have any questions, please contact the program at 484-534-2201.

Adults Praise Classes Offered by CWW

By Farah Esfahani, CWW Program Manager

From its inception in 2003, Center Without Walls (CWW) has been committed to providing adults age 50 and beyond a series of high quality workshops, classes, and seminars. Hundreds of older adults participate in CWW programs each year. One of the most successful and popular programs CWW offers are the art classes. Last semester 69 artists participated in the 5 art classes we held in 3 of our 4 locations. We are planning to start another watercolor painting class in the spring to accommodate those who are on the waiting list.

CWW art classes are designed to meet the needs of individuals who have always been interested in finding a creative outlet and a positive way of self- expression through art, but never had the time or the opportunity to do so. The art classes are also designed to meet each artist at their own level of skill.

Eileen, who participates in drawing and watercolor classes, "felt rather amateurish" when she joined the drawing class.

"It didn't take long at all to feel like I was a vibrant part of the class," she said.

"Retiring after 50 years of high-stress school administration left me searching for a creative outlet. How thrilled I was to discover the SCS watercolor classes."

– Dr. Cinda Russell Reese

Several of the students have said the art classes have had a positive impact on their quality of life. The students said they enjoy the art classes and the spontaneity that comes with the art of painting and drawing in a supportive and warm environment.

"Retiring after 50 years of high-stress school administration left me searching for a creative outlet. How thrilled I was to discover the SCS watercolor classes," said Dr. Cinda Russell Reese. "Just challenging enough, the classes provide me with new social contacts and an outlet for all that stored-up creative energy."

Dr. Reese takes painting classes with Helen Baur and Agnes Bakow in both the Concord and Brookhaven locations.

Ann has been taking drawing and watercolor classes at Aston Community Center for the past two years. She joined the art classes several months after she lost her husband.

"It is not only about the art, it is about the friendships I have developed with the class participants," she said. "It gives me a sense of belonging to a group with a common interest."

Ann is passionate about her new hobby and the creative joy the classes have brought into her life. She finds peace, tranquility, and a new beginning in her drawing and painting.

"They give me a sense of pride, accomplishments and a new purpose in life," Ann said.

The success of CWW art program is attributed to our accomplished instructors, Helen Baur, Agnes Bakow, and Van Buren Payne. They have inspired their students with their passion for art and their extraordinary talents. They encourage students to believe in themselves and to explore their creativity. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be associated with so many creative artists who have put their heart and soul into their work.

"I have been taking drawing lessons for a little over a year at the Aston Community Center and have enjoyed every bit of it," said Dr. Juan Arensten. "Our teacher, Van, is a real inspiration and full of life."

The spring CWW semester will begin the first week of March. Please feel free to contact CWW at 484-496-2143 or fesfahani@scs-delco.org if you have any questions about upcoming programs.

Volunteers Contribute to Agency's Vibrancy

By Tiffany Schaff
Director of Volunteers and Outreach

I'll admit, this article was difficult for me to write – not because I haven't witnessed enough success stories in my two and a half year tenure at SCS, but because I have seen more than I could possibly write about. Rather than singling out one of our over 400 volunteers through four centers and several programs, I chose to reference the overwhelming appreciation I have for them.

In April, SCS hosts the annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon. The luncheon recognizes the work that the volunteers have completed throughout the year – from the countless hours our meal drivers and runners contribute to the friendly visitors through Senior Center at Home, and various class instructors in the centers. By the time this issue comes out, open enrollment will be over for APPRISE, but our dedicated volunteers will continue to work diligently throughout the year. SCS' newest program offers handymen that are constantly on-call to assist older adults in the Greater Lansdowne area. Without great volunteer receptionists, calls would go unanswered and visitors would be unassisted. Our kitchens would not function like they do and meals would not be served daily. Simply put, our centers could not open their doors.

Our volunteers are the success story. The luncheon is the one grand gesture we are able to appreciate them with. I would be remiss not to mention the luncheon and volunteers without speaking about Jill Boone, a major production star in the luncheon. Jill volunteers her time at Friendship Circle and Schoolhouse and singlehandedly solicits and gathers every prize, every gift certificate for the luncheon. Over two thousand dollars worth of prizes are distributed to other hard working volunteers and Jill doesn't ask for anything in return. Jill truly embodies the spirit of SCS volunteers – selfless, kind, and dedicated to the mission.

Thank you to each and every one of our volunteers – you are our backbone and the reasons that Senior Community Services continues to be successful and thrive.

Finding a Vessel

By Frannie Schmerling, SCAH Program Manager

I had the privilege of visiting with and getting to know Enrico Gatti for more than 2 years. He was always so positive, energetic and sweet. I often left his home feeling uplifted, which is why it was so difficult to watch him battle cancer. He lost that battle in late November.

I wanted to share one of the last visits I was able to have with "my Ricky" once he moved to a nursing home and was receiving hospice care. It was difficult to see him, a shell of himself, but looking back I am so happy that I made the effort and found the strength within myself to see him.

When I first visited Ricky in the nursing home, I all but fell apart. I could barely talk I was crying so much. I felt so bad for breaking down like that in front of him but I couldn't stop. All week I knew I had to go back and be more of a comfort for him. I told myself that even though his health is declining, and he admitted to me that he is ready to go, he is still here and he can still enjoy something.

I went back another day because I was in the area. I found him sleeping in bed. He did not look well and I did not have the heart to wake him up. I felt depleted again, like I had missed my chance, that he is already too far gone.

But in the next couple days, I dug deep and found my own strength to be patient and persistent in helping to reveal his true and remaining strengths that were hiding behind his gaunt face, unkempt hair, and muted mouth.

I went back, more prepared than before. I left my tears behind and went in with the purpose of evoking a positive experience for him.

I got to his area and found him right away, dozing in his wheelchair at the dinner table. I wasn't going to turn back this time. I went over, tapped his arm and he stirred right away, looked at me with almost blank eyes, and smiled back. It was just a slight upturn of his lip, but it was real. I was still nervous, afraid that he may be too weak to participate like he once had. But I persevered. I presented a bongo drum and asked him if he wanted to play. His eyes lit up at the sight of the instrument I had brought to his home several months before. I asked him what song he was playing. He whispered to me and then continued singing a song he had sung for me so many times back in his living room, but this time, in a hushed voice. After his grand finale I applauded and he placed his hand under my chin to acknowledge me.

"I recently heard that the greatest gift we can give someone is the facilitation for a person to be themselves."

Then I showed him a tangerine. He seemed open to trying it even though I knew he hadn't been eating. I asked the nurse, who tried to dissuade me. Ricky had not been eating and was experiencing some swallowing issues, but agreed that if I cut small pieces, we could give it a try. After cutting up the tangerine, Ricky grabbed the bowl and spoon and dug right in. I could see him savor each bite and consciously remove seeds I missed, highlighting another one of his hidden, and still present, strengths.

It worked. He was receptive to my willingness to let him continue to be his true self despite losing part of himself. I recently heard that the greatest gift we can give someone is the facilitation for a person to be themselves. We can use objects and tools as vessels to assist this process for those who are less privileged, less abled, or less sure of themselves. It is important to listen and really get to know people to understand what their vessels can be. For my Ricky, on this day, his vessels were a bongo drum and a juicy tangerine.

Cognitive Stimulation Kits Help Unlock Life's Best Memories

By Annette Helmandollar, Student Writer

The Cognitive Stimulation Program uses specially developed kits as a tool to stimulate conversation and the sharing of memories to help limit the impairment of mind and spirit that many adults confront.

Stephanie Dempsey, the activities director at Veteran's Victory House said about 20 residents participate in the kit program each month. Dempsey said the kits allow the participants to express themselves, and most importantly, to simply smile. "They absolutely bring back memories of their yesterday years and engage their minds of happy times," Dempsey said.

The Cognitive Stimulation Program was developed over 30 years ago by the Horizons Unlimited Geriatric Education Corporation and is now offered by Senior Community Services. There are close to 400 kits containing 160 topics that can be used one-on-one or in a group setting. The themes include Broadway musicals, friendship, Norman Rockwell as well as themes pertaining to travel, nature, holidays, seasons and more.

Maryann Toogood, an activity director at Plush Mills Senior Living, said she has seen seniors in both the Memory Care and Visually Impaired Units at the facility have positive experiences with the kits. The kits can help a participant dig deep and remember long term memories. Songs seem to especially evoke strong reactions, particularly songs that are learned during childhood.

"Short term memories may not be the best experiences to remember," Toogood said. "So, why don't we try to help them remember the good times."

Recently, Dempsey presented a kit called, "Christmas Around the World." Residents, she said, loved the idea and it took them back to their childhood, putting milk and cookies out, anxiously waiting for Santa to come down the chimney.

Dempsey began utilizing the kits in 2014 and said they have been a powerful tool to help seniors reminisce about the good times in their lives, which she believes, is vital to good health.

For more information or to rent a kit, please contact Program Manager Dorothy Darragh at: 484-496-2144 or ddarragh@scs-delco.org.

Collaboration Helps FCSP Widen Reach

By Heather Dale

The Family Caregiver Support Program, in collaboration with Schoolhouse Center, offered a series of unique programs to serve both caregivers and the loved ones they provide care for last spring. With nearly 50 caregivers attending the sessions which covered topics like compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, as well as elder law, the series was a success - so much so that FCSP is teaming up this spring with Friendship Circle Senior Center in hopes of reaching even more caregivers in need.

"The series really proved to us that caregivers all over Delaware County require support," said Debbie Templeton, FCSP Program Manager. "Their needs and the needs of their loved ones are special and we were happy to meet those needs with these creative sessions."

Sessions for care receivers included mosaics, animal therapy, music and movement, as well a horticultural session.

FCSP is a state- and federally-funded program that is managed by Senior Community Services in Delaware County. The program aims to ease the stress of caregivers while providing emotional support, access to community resources, as well as financial reimbursement for caregiving supplies. The sessions held last year were a departure for FCSP, which focuses on serving the nearly 200 families in the program through care management. This series of programs allowed FCSP to cast a wider net, serving caregivers who were not already receiving assistance by FCSP care managers.

"These simultaneous sessions allowed caregivers to bring their loved ones with them, offering respite along with an opportunity to connect with other caregivers," said Trindy Grundy, associate director of long term care at SCS. "Because the program was so successful, we decided that the opportunity to assist more caregivers and care receivers was just too great to pass up."

The program will resume in the spring on Wednesdays. Caregivers are invited to attend six new educational classes while their loved one participates in a guided Cognitive Stimulation Reminiscence program. The programs will be held at Friendship Circle Senior Center located at 1515 Lansdowne Avenue in Yeadon. If you have any questions about the upcoming program or would like to reserve your spot, please contact either FCSP Program Manager Debbie Templeton at 484-540-0372 or dtempleton@scs-delco.org or Friendship Circle Senior Center Director Barbara Caso at 484-534-2031 or bcaso@scs-delco.org.

Hearing Discovery Center Provides Support for Families

By Donna Schumacher, HDC Coordinator

Several years ago Catherine Ford, of Swarthmore, saw an article in a local paper about a Hearing Loss Group at Friendship Circle Senior Center. Ford, who is not hearing impaired herself, but whose husband's hearing was impacted after a welding accident more than 20 years ago, decided to check the meeting out.

Ford said she learned a lot after attending the meetings and then joined the National Hearing Loss Association. She also attended the annual meeting in King of Prussia last spring and has also spoken to Hearing Loss staff about assistive device information.

"The information I have received attending these meetings is invaluable and I will continue to attend them as often as possible to keep up with the ongoing advances to help people like Ron and their families cope with this devastating disability," she said.

From left to right: Catherine Ford, Ron Ford and Elizabeth LeBaron, former National and State Chapter Coordinator for Hearing Loss Association of America

While only a member of the support group for a couple of years, Ford has been able to advocate for herself, her husband of more than 50 years, as well as other families. Her dedication to advocacy and advances in the arena of assistive device technology highlights the success of the Hearing Discovery Center and its group that meets quarterly.

Come and visit the group in the New Year. We will meet on February 28 (snow date – March 7) and May 30 at 10 a.m. at Friendship Circle Senior Center located in Yeadon.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact: dschumacher@scs-delco.org or 484-534-2033.

Sherry Biggs Helps Seniors Solve the Medicare Puzzle

By Annette Helmandollar, Student Writer

During a Medicare individual counseling session, Sherry Biggs, was taken aback when an elderly woman walked into the Apprise Office and said, "Tell me what medicine to get." The woman's frustration was evident and she had all but given up on choosing the best Medicare prescription plan that would fit her financial needs when she entered the office.

Thanks to Biggs, who is a Delaware County Apprise Program Volunteer, she had no problem helping the older woman select the best option available. With her assistance, the woman was able to receive affordable medications through either a Medicare Part D or an Advantage (HMO) plan that was selected for her on the Medicare.gov Plan Finder website.

The Apprise Health Insurance Counseling Program is a free state-funded health insurance counseling program designed to help older Pennsylvanians with Medicare education and information. The program is run mainly by volunteer counselors who are extensively trained by the state. The volunteers help ensure that a Medicare recipient finds a health insurance plan that meets their needs either by finding a lower premium plan or a plan that fits their unique medical situation.

The program reaches a tremendous amount of seniors throughout the year, but particularly during the Medicare Open Enrollment Period which runs from mid-October to early December each year. Over 7,000 Medicare beneficiaries were helped in 2014, being assisted either on a recorded call, in a presentation, an individual counseling session or a Part D comparison session. Nearly 400 beneficiaries were helped over the phone during Open Enrollment alone.

Apprise Program volunteers assist Medicare beneficiaries by answering their calls, providing one-on-one counseling, and making presentations in the community. If you have any questions about your Medicare coverage or health insurance plans please contact Apprise Program Manager Glenda Radical at 484 494-3769.

Biggs, 58, who is disabled, decided to volunteer with Apprise to help seniors and other people with disabilities understand their Medicare health insurance plan options. She has been volunteering with Apprise at Senior Community Services for just over a year. Biggs volunteers her time three days a week but, often finds herself in the office more than the three days assisting Program Manager Glenda Radical with telephone calls, data entry, individual counseling, and providing Medicare presentations at community educational programs and/or agencies.

Biggs said she loves the work so much she hopes it can lead to a career.

"I started out to gain job experience but I fell in love with helping people," she said.

Biggs also helps Medicare beneficiaries with paperwork and online enrollment into the two Pennsylvania Medicare cost sharing programs like the Medicare Saving Program (assists with Part B premiums) and the Extra Help Program (assists with Part D Prescription premiums). With her assistance, Biggs helps Medicare beneficiaries avoid headaches in the process, which can be at times, difficult. Through personal experience, Biggs understands just how stressful the process of finding a good Medicare plan can be.

"It can be so hard and confusing," she said. "Even the highly educated people come for help due to the Medicare enrollment process being so intimidating."

For more information on the Apprise Program or if you have any Medicare questions please contact Apprise Program Manager Glenda Radical at 484 494-3769. If you are interested in becoming a Delaware County Apprise Volunteer, please contact Volunteer Director Tiffany Schaff at 484-496-2149.

APPRISE
State Health Insurance Assistance Program
... counseling for people with Medicare in Pennsylvania

SCHOOLHOUSE SENIOR CENTER

610-237-8100 / 600 SWARTHMORE AVENUE, FOLSOM, PA 19033

Kim McDaniel, Center Director

Success for the Center...

Schoolhouse Gardeners Branch Out

The Schoolhouse Gardeners have greatly benefitted from the involvement of Master Gardener Thom Mrazik who has brought his knowledge and green thumb to the center and its landscape.

The Schoolhouse Gardens were recently approved as a project for the Penn State Master Gardeners Program. Two master gardeners are already involved with the center's gardents, Mrazik and Beverly Miller in addition to volunteer gardeners who are part of the Schoolhouse Garden Committee.

The group is already gearing up for the spring, eager to get their hands on the mulch and new shrubs that Senior Community Services will provide to the group.

In addition to getting their hands dirty, the group also gives presentations on gardening issues, helping members with specific plant and garden questions. If you have any questions, feel free to stop in and chat with our garden experts and the Master Gardeners from Penn State Extension.

The group's next meeting will be held on Monday, February 23 from 9 to 10 a.m. at Schoolhouse and they will discuss questions related to gardening. The discussion will turn to planning the Schoolhouse garden from 10 to 11 a.m. The Garden Committee welcomes new members who want to talk about and learn more about plants and gardening; outdoor gardening is an optional activity.

Success for Individuals...

Finding Friendship in the Face of Loss

By Kim McDaniel

Jim Gilligan has been coming to Schoolhouse on and off for over a decade. He is a proud veteran, cherished father and grandfather. Jim was blessed with a beautiful, Irish tenor voice. In recent years Jim and his wife were not active at the center. Upon her death, Jim had to cope with this terrible loss as well as estate and financial issues.

At the advice of his doctor, Jim stopped into the center. After a few visits to come in just to talk, he wasn't interested in grief counseling, but felt he needed something concrete, something that he could do. A referral to Carl Clauss, turned into a few visits that really helped to straighten out the fiscal issues.

Jim was invited to use his talent by having his own program, which he proudly named "Gilligan's Guile." Jim always has a story to tell, many about growing up in South Philly, a young, street-smart scrapper. In between the stories, he sings beautiful, heartfelt Irish tunes. At first, he found it hard to get through a song without getting a bit choked up, but now Jim conducts his program like a pro and has a regular following. Returning to the center has brought the healing power of music and friendship back into his life.

By Jim Gilligan

Where I live there's an old Schoolhouse
That's been claimed to serve the old

All the young people seem to be searching today
So this story must be told.

These old walls ring with music and song
People work with arts and crafts
I try to help things along

I give people some stories and laughs
Like when my dozen Easter chicks
Which two very old sisters won,
After the 50/50 run by Father John

I went to the doctor after I lost my wife.
She sent me to the old Schoolhouse to regain my life.

FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE SENIOR CENTER

610-237-6222 / 1515 LANSDOWNE AVENUE, DARBY, PA 19023

Barbara Caso, Center Director

Pair Provides Service to Seniors for 25 Years; Builds a Beautiful Friendship in the Process

In the 25 years that Myrtle Johnson and Ida Fazzi delivered meals to homebound seniors, they experienced a lot and grew close to one another, bonding over their service.

There were light moments that they remember fondly like the well-dressed woman they delivered meals to, who despite no longer being able to cook, always kept her dining room table neatly set with placemats and dishes. They also recall the sad times when the meal recipients they had been delivering to for some time, passed away.

But through it all, they kept going.

"We never get frazzled," Fazzi said.

"We never fretted," Johnson said.

Myrtle Johnson (left) and Ida Fazzi (right) met one another at Friendship Circle Senior Center and have been friends for over 25 years.

Fazzi and Johnson started delivering meals at Friendship Circle over 25 years ago. They both started out as runners for Dick Moody, who was a driver. They were eventually paired up by former Friendship Circle Center Director Dixie Teaford. They started out delivering meals once a week, but eventually increased their service to 2 to 3 days a week to compensate for no-show drivers. Their routes mainly covered Lansdowne, Aldan and Collingdale.

The duo proved to be unstoppable with Fazzi behind the wheel and Johnson running the meal to recipients. They would often double up their routes prior to a holiday and much like the postal service, even delivered in inclement weather, delivering as many as 25 meals on their route each day.

Both women said they received so much joy delivering meals, knowing that they were able to do something for someone in need. Through the years, they got to know the meal recipients. They both agree that taking time to get to know the people was a great source of comfort. Fazzi said that volunteering has made her appreciate her life more and, in turn, she has learned a lot about life as well.

"I'm grateful for what I've been blessed with," Johnson said. "It doesn't matter if it's just 30 seconds at the door, we build relationships."

Volunteering has helped both Johnson and Fazzi find the strength to get through personal tragedies in life. Volunteering and helping others, they said, has been part of their healing process.

"Love begets love," Johnson said.

Both are very spiritual and always said a prayer before leaving the center to deliver meals.

"I pray every time and I've never had an accident," Fazzi said. "Myrtle and I just clicked right away."

Over the 25 years that the pair provided their service to countless homebound seniors, a beautiful friendship also developed. They agree that their friendship, which they describe as "genuine" was truly the best thing that came out of their volunteer experience.

"Our relationship works because we look out for each other," Johnson said. "We have laughed together and have cried together."

After a quarter century of service, the duo decided to retire this past September after family and friends encouraged them it was in their best interest. They were concerned for their well-being. Johnson will turn 92 on February 28 and Fazzi is 87.

They have settled well into their retirement. Johnson is catching up with friends and family and still enjoys the book club at Friendship Circle on Tuesdays mornings. Fazzi remains busy, focusing her energy on the Friendship Circle boutique.

If you are interested in volunteering your time delivering meals at any one of Senior Community Services' senior centers please contact Volunteer Director Tiffany Schaff at 484-496-2149 or tschaff@scs-delco.org.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Statement of Financial Position June 30, 2014 and 2013

		2014		2013
ASSETS				
Current Assets	$	1,204,464	$	1,062,543
Property and Equipment, Net		28,789		868,535
Total Assets	$	2,033,253	$	1,931,078
LIABILITIES				
Current Liabilities	$	278,043	$	188,799
Long-Term Liabilities		0		0
Total Liabililites		278,043		188,799
NET ASSETS				
Unrestricted Net Assets		1,615,468		1,550,708
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets		134,242		186,071
Permanently Restricted Net Assets		5,500		5,500
Total Net Assets		1,755,210		1,742,279
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	$	2,033,253	$	1,931,078

SCS Service Delivery Highlights

Senior Centers:
7,650 individuals made 84,828 center visits

Congregate Nutrition:
27,000 noon time hot meals, deli sandwiches and Southern Grill dinners

3,000 evening meals at an apartment facility for the elderly

Senior Suppers:
135,080 homebound meals served involving 475 consumers

Center for Life Long Learning and Center Without Walls:
2,367 class sessions (nearly 500 courses) offered at ten sites throughout the county

Center Without Walls Program Participants:
733

Volunteer Program:
430 individuals dedicated 48,000 philanthropic hours to SCS

Long Term Care Management:
1,743 people served
2,082 home visits/assessments performed

Family Caregiver Support Program:
276 families served

Senior Center at Home:
1,100 visits to 106 homebound elderly

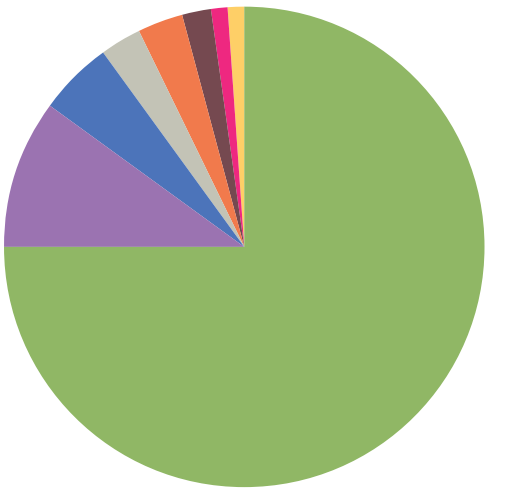
APPRISE Health Insurance Counseling:
3,519 individuals received one-on-one counseling

4,341 individuals attended 274 community workshops

Aging at Home – A Community Network:
300 individuals served in its first year of operation

Cognitive Stimulation:
1,217 kit presentations at nursing homes, assisted living facilities, adult day centers and senior centers

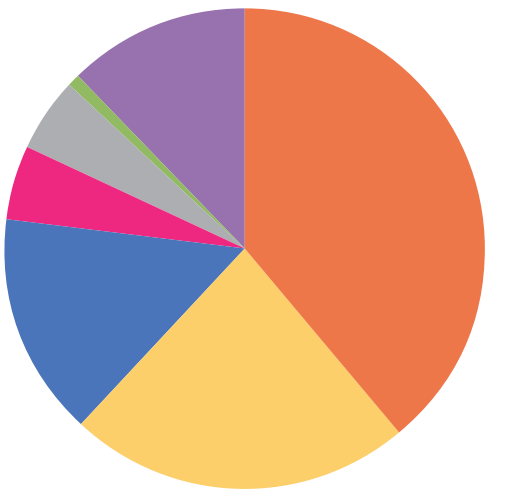
Total Revenue
$3,771,763



COSA	$ 2,815,267	75%
United Way[1]	$ 367,364	10%
Grants[2]	$ 185,313	5%
Management Contracts	$ 129,701	3%
Program Income	$ 126,882	3%
Individual Giving	$ 63,633	2%
Municipalities	$ 50,900	1%
Other	$ 32,703	1%

1 Includes Aging at Home demonstration initiative as well as Partner Agency allocation and Donor Choice contributions
2 Includes foundation and corporate grants (includes $58,806 released from restrictions)

Total Expenses
$3,715,578



Care Management[1]	$ 1,451,789	39%
Senior Centers[2]	$ 851,713	23%
Caregiver Support Services	$ 563,664	15%
Administrative and Support[4]	$ 456,533	12%
Aging at Home	$ 182,016	5%
Other Programs/ Services[3]	$ 174,634	5%
Housing Support Services	$ 35,229	1%

1 Includes Care Transition
2 Includes Center for Life Long Learning and Center Without Walls
3 Represents APPRISE Health Insurance Counseling, Cognitive Stimulation and Senior Center at Home Programs
4 Expenses include $94,719 Depreciation/Amortization

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Joseph Miller
Kathleen Muckenfuss
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"Senior Community Services is a leader in their local community in understanding the needs and gaps in service for older adults. With support of our Impact Fund, together we're able to promote healthy, independent and meaningful living for older adults through a coordinated network of services and programs."

–Sara McCullough
United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey

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"The W. W. Smith Charitable Trust has had a long relationship with Senior Community Services and is proud of the fact that the grants they receive from the Trust are providing meals that help with proper nutrition for needy seniors. SCS should be commended for helping seniors achieve a self-sufficient lifestyle, remain healthier, and know that SCS is committed to the people they serve."

–Michelle Montgomery
W. W. Smith Charitable Trust

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Dunwoody Village
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Little Flower Manor
Naaman's Creek Country Manor
Plush Mills Senior Living
The Quadrangle
Riddle Village Retirement Center
Saunders House
Senior Care at Broomall
Senior Care at Clifton Heights (formerly Family Matters)
Senior Care at Crozer
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Torrey House
White Horse Village

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