



# BERKSHIRE SENIOR



**Remembering  
Mama On  
Mother's Day**

***The Internet  
in a Nutshell***

**Thanks to Our  
Volunteers**

**Making and  
Maintaining  
Friendships**





**AD**

Mission Statement

The mission of Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc. is to provide Berkshire elders, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities the opportunity to live with dignity, independence, and self-determination, and to achieve the highest possible quality of life.

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Potential Federal and Medicaid Funding Cuts Add to State Budget Deficit Concerns



By Christopher McLaughlin, Executive Director of Elder Services



Hoping all is well with you and yours. In the previous issue of Berkshire Senior, I made you aware of funding shortfalls in the FY25 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025) State budget that threaten vital home care services for older adults. These services, including homemaking and personal care, are essential for helping older adults live independently and safely in their homes, all while enhancing quality of life and reducing healthcare costs.

Due to the Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE) (formerly the Executive Office of Elder Affairs), not accounting for significant increases in the volume of home care services organizations like Elder Services of Berkshire County provide, there is a \$50 million statewide deficit in this year’s budget for State Home Care services. A supplemental budget released in mid-January did not address this deficit. AGE believes another supplemental budget will be issued in early April, but it remains to be seen if this supplemental will include additional funding to address the deficit.

AGE is not waiting to see if a supplemental is issued and has made some programmatic changes to address the deficit. The most significant of these changes is the imposition of a cap on the number of individuals we can enroll in ECOP. The Enhanced Community Options Program is a program for seniors who qualify for nursing home care that provides services and supports in the home. With the cap in place, we will be forced to limit the number of people we enroll in ECOP. This is not to say these individuals will not receive home care services from us, but it does mean they will receive fewer services than they would if there was no limit on ECOP enrollment.

On January 28 we became aware that the previous day an Executive Order had been issued that paused federal loans, grants, and other financial assistance from the federal government to the states. Federal dollars fund about a third of the total revenue Elder Services receives for our Meals on Wheels Program and provides funding for some of our other programs and for the sub grants we award to local organizations that provide invaluable services to seniors. How would we be able to continue providing Meals on Wheels with a third less revenue during a time when the cost of producing and delivering each meal increases with each passing month? Fortunately, a few days later the Executive Order was

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# Remembering Mama On Mother's Day

*“My own mother, B. Barbara (Bartnicki) Wicker was the first born of seven children to Polish immigrants.”*

By Susan Guerrero

The bond between a mother and daughter is usually unbreakable. First comes the carrying of a tiny, totally innocent life for nine months inside one's own body.

Then, bringing the living baby girl into the world takes immense stamina and the ability to suffer searing pain and discomfort. Mothers have to put the thoughts of their baby daughters way above their own comfort. It takes great self-sacrifice, that's for sure, and that self-sacrifice lasts for an entire lifetime. The pregnancy, labor, and delivery are just the beginning of the mother/daughter connection.

Even when the daughter becomes an adult, a mother never stops thinking about her and loving her more than herself. That's what being a mother is like. That's what most mothers of daughters and of sons will feel in their hearts this Mother's Day.

The mother/daughter relationship changes throughout the decades but the love that cements it together never really ends until death.

My own mother, B. Barbara (Bartnicki) Wicker was the first born of seven children to Polish immigrants. Their lives were full of hard struggles, backbreaking work, and poverty. My mother's



The author's mother, B. Barbra (Bartnicki) Wicker

childhood was anything but cozy. What she endured as a little girl actually left an indelible mark on her personality and life outlook. Still, she was a kind woman who constantly loved others, especially her own five daughters.

We were told how Mummy wanted so much to attend college as a young woman but that was a total impossibility for her. There was no money to pay for college tuition, books, and so forth. But that never stopped her from becoming a life-long voracious reader.

She loved theater, too, especially musicals. Music was important to Mummy throughout her life and she passed it on to all of her daughters. Each one plays one or more instruments and two became music teachers. Mummy played a mean piano and sang many of the songs as she played. Even today, when I hear the song “Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home,” it propels me back to the living room of my childhood home. I can clearly see Mummy pounding those ivory

keys while singing her heart out at the top of her lungs.

Most of her life she dedicated to raising her five girls, all of whom have distinctly different personalities and career paths. My own relationship with my mother had its share of discord, mainly because I tended to be rebellious and disliked being controlled. In addition, I didn't like conforming to the expected norms of girls my age. This did not set well with Mummy, who definitely had control tendencies. Still, our love for each other was fierce. No matter where I lived, many times far from Pittsfield, where she lived most of her life after marrying my father, a letter or phone call from her always made me cry. Mummy was a very faithful letter-writer and wrote probably hundreds of letters to me about what was happening back home. I cherished every one. She wrote life-long letters to her sister, Genia Miller, too, who is the last living sibling in my mother's family of origin. Aunt Genia's 97th birthday is in April!

When I fell in love with a man from Nicaragua, Central America, and went there to marry him and live there, my mother was horribly worried I'd never return. When we moved to El Salvador, also in Central America, she got a passport and flew out of the country for the first time in her life. She came to visit me with her sister-in-law Jean. That was quite an amazing feat for Mummy. We took them on a bumpy ride to the top of a huge volcano, walking several blocks at the end. Mummy looked down into the cavernous hole in the earth and quipped, “Hmph. Looks like an optical illusion.”

The smell of sulfur stung our noses and flocks of colorful parrots cawed in the sky above us. I was proud of Mummy

that day. She was not a traveler but made that trip to a Central American country to visit me.

As the years passed, Mummy became more frail and faced health challenges. She lived for 14 years with her youngest child's family, becoming a dedicated grandmother to three grands there. More grandchildren were born until she became the proud Grandma of 11 grands. As the kids grew, there were many happy years. There were dozens upon dozens of holiday celebrations and gatherings for all of life's important events. Mummy disliked cooking but still made delicious meals. She roasted untold numbers of stuffed turkeys with all the trimmings that tasted absolutely delicious. She always set a beautiful table, too. She must have been completely exhausted after those backbreaking events but she never issued a single complaint. She was happy to have her large brood together and did all of the baking, cooking, cleaning, and decorating out of sheer love.

In her younger years, when my late father had a huge garden, Mummy could be found in the heat-logged kitchen canning tomatoes or making the most delicious red raspberry jam one could ever imagine. My father grew the berries on several bushes in the backyard, next to a huge garden. There were always fresh veggies in the summer, including a huge mound of freshly boiled corn on the cob on the supper table. Daddy would pick the corn, shuck it, and Mummy would plop it into a huge pot of boiling water. Those vegetable suppers could never have been more delicious.

Mummy's own father had also kept a huge garden annually in the Strathmore paper mill town of Woronoco. It actually helped keep them alive during



the agonizing Depression years. As kids, we loved hearing stories about her early life that were really quite fascinating. We'd ask her to repeat them many times and she always did. The neighbors in that little town, the teachers in the schools, and happenings in every season came to life through Mummy's story telling. We loved hearing how our grandfather used to trudge up the mountain to pick blueberries despite the very real presence of numerous rattlesnakes. Mummy's stories were always filled with descriptions and juicy details.

Mummy, like her own mother, had very strong, deep faith in God. My sisters and I learned all our prayers from her. She said countless rosaries for whoever needed Divine help. Her rosary beads never stopped moving in her dear hands that had held all those babies and then the babies' babies. The gift of faith was the greatest gift that both of my parents gave to their children. Personally, it has sustained me through every hardship that life dropped in my path. As an adult, I often marveled at how Mummy helped raise five daughters on a strict budget. She was especially amazing at Easter time. When we were kids, each of us somehow got a new outfit, complete with bonnets, white gloves, and black patent leather shoes. Mummy had many sayings, too. For anyone who struggled to find a mate to share life with, she'd say, "There's a lid for every pot." Or, if a fairly impossible to solve crisis reared its head in our lives, Mummy was quick to remind us that "more miracles are wrought by prayer than this world ever dreamed of" and out would come

her rosary beads. Mummy wrote some beautiful poems of her own in her younger years. Also, all through her life, she could recite entire poems by heart, probably learned when she was a student in elementary school. She'd recite them with enthusiasm and lots of drama to keep us engaged. "Trees" by Joyce Kilmer was one of her favorites. It started out with "I think that I will never see, a poem as lovely as a tree." It ended with "Poems are made by fools like me. But only God can make a tree." "The Swing" by Robert Louis Stevenson she also commanded to memory. The one I remember most clearly, though, she recited at this time of the year, spring. It was "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" by William Wordsworth. Still, when I close my eyes, I can see Mummy in the kitchen, standing with her apron on. She begins recitation of the poem's first verse, "I wandered lonely as a cloud, that floats on high o'er vales and hills." She'd open her eyes wide as her arm would sweep through the air. "When all at once I saw a crowd, a host of golden daffodils. Beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze." I'd stand in awe in that humble room, seeing the bright yellow daffodils in my mind's eye, with Mummy's impassioned recitation of the poem.

In her final year of life, Mummy came to live with my late husband and myself, in a lovely front entry Colonial home we bought and which I loved with all my heart.

Cancer was chopping away at her life and she went to her heavenly reward at age 91 years old, right in the guest bedroom of our house.

In those last days, I remember her saying, "If only I had one year left, just one more year." But her time on earth was up.

With tears streaming from our eyes, and sorrow squeezing our hearts, my sisters and I

said goodbye to the woman who had given all of us life. Without any doubt, this Mother's Day, Mummy is in a truly better, more beautiful and peaceful place that has, for sure, many fields of golden daffodils.

### Funding Cuts

*continued from page 3*

rescinded. While this enabled us to breathe easier, at least for the time being, it begs the question about whether we (and other social service organizations) will be subject to future federal funding cuts that will require us to make difficult choices.

As if state budget deficits and new fears regarding the future of federal funding were not enough, we are now worried about Medicaid funding cuts. Recent headlines suggest that President Trump may be looking to reduce \$880 billion from federal spending as part of his plan to grant tax breaks to wealthy Americans. Massachusetts' Medicaid program, MassHealth, funds the Frail Elder Waiver (FEW). The FEW provides home care services to those sixty and older who have MassHealth coverage and meet the eligibility for nursing home care, but prefer to live in the community, is Elder Services' largest program funded by Medicaid. It is important to point out that 65-70% of residents in Massachusetts nursing homes are covered by the Medicaid program. Medicaid funding also enables many seniors to be able to afford their Medicare coverage.

Long story short, these are but a few examples of the many significant detrimental impacts cuts in Medicaid funding would have on Elder Services clients and seniors in general.

To be clear, as I write this today, we do not know whether there will be cuts in federal and/or Medicaid funding. Unfortunately, we are having to learn to be comfortable with the uncomfortable. In this case, what is uncomfortable is not knowing how or when we (and seniors in our community) may be impacted by federal and Medicaid cuts. As always, we remain cautiously optimistic that a supplemental state budget will address the State Home Care funding deficit and that our legislators will find ways to avoid making detrimental cuts to federal funding and to Medicaid. Elder Services has been here for more than half a century. This is not the first difficult situation we have had to adapt to, and we will, as we always have, find our way through it while keeping our mission and the people we serve at the forefront of everything we do.

Until next time be good, be kind and be careful.

AD

# The Internet in a Nutshell

By Perry Burdick

The whole world relies on the internet—for everything. People use it for communication, entertainment, commerce, social networking, and banking, just to name a few! In 2016, the United Nations stopped short of declaring the internet a basic human right, although several countries already do. It's unlikely that the vast majority of internet users have even a rudimentary understanding of how it works. So, what happens when you click that link?

The internet is a combination of many systems working together. To begin with, the web page with the link was sent to you via a web server. How are you even connected to a web server? It seems like magic when you pay Big Cable Inc. to install a little black box that allows you to shop online and binge-watch

your favorite shows. That box is called a router (more on this later), and its job is to connect you to the physical layer of the internet, where all the networks are stitched together—a global network of networks, if you will—by fiber optics, copper, and satellite transmissions. So, for now, let's just say the web page made it to your browser (Chrome, Edge, Firefox) by traveling down the Information Superhighway.

Let's talk a little about that link you clicked on. The link was coded into your page using a computer language called HTML (Hypertext Markup Language), which was invented by Tim Berners-Lee in 1991. It looks like this (please don't run away!): `<a href="https://www.example.com">Link Example</a>`. You don't see all of the technical stuff, just the words "Link Example," or wherever the link points to (e.g., Amazon, Google, etc.). The



words in the quotes after the "href" are called a URL (Uniform Resource Locator). If we break that down, two systems are being used here. The "https" (called a protocol) tells your browser how to retrieve the web page. This technological marvel ensures that your web page and pictures get from the other side of the world to your computer, arriving in the right order, without error, and without getting lost. If it's HTTPS, another system called TLS is being used to encrypt your connection and information. HTTP is not secure and should be used cautiously. The words after the "://" form the domain name, which is a system used to simplify using the internet by assigning names to websites. Would you rather remember `www.example.com` or a series of numbers? This system is called DNS (Domain Name System), and it's responsible for converting domain names into IP (Internet Protocol) addresses. We'll talk about that next.

An IP address is like your home address on a piece of postal mail—it uniquely identifies your location on the internet.

If you Google "What is my IP address?" you will see a series of dot-separated numbers that look like this: 192.168.1.234. Can you see why they created domain names? The numbers between the dots range from 0 to 255, so all four numbers can create over four billion unique IP addresses. Believe it or not, most of those addresses have been used up. A new system, called IPv6, is slowly being rolled out. With 340 undecillion addresses, we won't run out anytime soon. When you click on that link, a kind of virtual envelope is created, called a packet, that contains both your IP address and the IP address of the web server you want to visit—thanks to the magic of DNS. Now, back to that router. The internet is full of them, big and small. Its main purpose is to navigate your envelope (packet) to the web server and back to you. In some cases, the router doesn't know where the web server or you are located; it merely sends the packet upstream to the next router in the hierarchy until one does know it. The web server then sends you a new web page, and the process starts all over again.

This article may have been a little technical, but the sheer number of systems that have to work together is both mind-boggling and fascinating. I hope you now have a rough idea of all the gears that have to mesh whenever you click on a link. That puts you in a pretty small club!

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## Memorial Day, It's Not Just Hot Dogs and Burgers

By Kara Graziola

For many of us we may think of Memorial Day as the official “beginning of summer”, the weekend where it’s time to open the pool, plant gardens, enjoy a long weekend off from school or work and fire up the grill for the first time. Let’s not forget the true meaning of this holiday and why it’s an important time for reflecting, commemorating and honoring those who fought and lost their lives serving our country.

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, first began as a way to honor those lives lost in the Civil War. After World War I, it changed to honor those who lost their lives in all U.S. Wars, with an official change to Memorial Day in 1971.

Many cities and towns in the United States host parades as a way to honor those lost. Many Americans will also visit cemeteries or wear a red poppy as a way to remember those fallen in war. The Pittsfield Veterans Memorial located just off of South Street is a great place to commemorate the holiday. You can also take a trip up Mount Greylock and visit the Veteran’s War Memorial Tower. Almost all the cities and towns in Berkshire County will host a Memorial Day Parade where you can watch local veterans, active-duty military personnel and marching bands take pride in marching. You can also view the National Memorial Day Parade held in Washington, D.C.

Visit [hmdb.org](http://hmdb.org) for a full list of historical markers and sites throughout Berkshire County.

However you choose to celebrate Memorial Day, try to make it meaningful and significant. Let’s remember and honor those who fought for our country and made the ultimate sacrifice. And yes, you can still have that hot dog (I’ll take mine with mustard)!





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# We Extend Heartfelt *Thanks* to Our Exceptional Elder Services Volunteers

Your commitment and dedication make the difference in the lives of seniors. We thank you  
for your amazing contributions to our Berkshire County community.

(The following is the list of the wonderful individuals who volunteered their time in 2024)

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Melissa Bressette  
Allan Brazeau  
Francesca Brown  
Danielle Bruno  
Christina Buffi  
Nora Burch  
Angela Burke  
Joshua Burrows  
Brenda M. Bush  
Amy Butler  
Beth Castella  
Cindy Cavanaugh  
Kristine Charbonneau  
Isabella Carey  
Louise A. Charron  
Jeffrey Chenail  
Eileen Clarke  
Frank Clarke  
Nathan Cohen  
Carol Couture  
Linda Cox  
Barbara Delmolino  
Veronica Deome  
Alisha Desnoyers  
Harriet Jane Diaz  
Alan Dunlavey  
Emilee Eichorn  
Hannah Eichorn  
Michael Ende  
Garret P. Erwin  
Kelsey Marie Fontana  
Patricia Ferrari-Behan  
Robert Fiedler  
Timothy Franchere  
Donald Freedman  
Sandra French

Charles Gallivan  
Gordine Galusha  
Andrea Gaylord  
Elsie Gilligan  
John Gilligan  
Matthew Girard  
Eric Paul Greenberg  
Wadja Groleau  
Thomas Guachione  
Samuel B. Guy  
Margaret Gwozdz  
Katherine Hamick  
Michelle Harwood  
Sally Haver  
Rosemary Houghtlin  
Kevin Huttie  
Charles Joch  
Doreen Kahlstrom  
Julia Kaplan  
Jeffrey Kane  
Betty King  
William L. Kormanik  
Aidan Kozik  
Erna Lampman  
Tre Nicholas Lehman  
Michele C. LeLandais  
Catherine Leveque  
Donna MacDowell  
Elizabeth A. Mach  
Mary Machia  
Shea Louis MacPherson  
Nancy Macy  
Jennifer Mason  
Lisa McSheen  
Maria Mendonca  
David Messina  
Alan Metzger  
Brent Mille  
Candace Mills  
Rebecca Miner  
Germaine Monson  
Susan Morris  
William O'Brien  
Margaret O'Keefe

John O'Donnell  
George Oleen  
Patricia Paduano  
Alexander Pettus  
Joan Powers  
Victoria Provencher  
Marlene Rivers  
Roman Rivers  
John Roche  
Karen Roche  
Elizabeth Rodgers  
Bruce Rose  
Virginia Rose  
Eleanor Rosier  
Susan Rothschild  
Jane Rozak  
Richard Rozak  
Edward Scarafoni  
Olivia Schultz-Falandes  
Ryan Schwendenmann  
Thomas Scrimo  
Dennis Sears  
Linda Shaw  
Dan Skorcz  
Ronald St Germain  
Kathy Staropoli  
Arlene Stockley  
Dakota Sunskis  
David Sweeney  
Ms. Julia Taylor  
Kelsey Taylor  
Jenna Thomas  
Gail Tighe  
Peter Traub  
Margaret Tringali  
Flora Whiffen  
Grace ( Beth) Wiggers  
Sarah Wiles  
Aiyana Will  
Dominic Williams  
Charlene 'Charli' Winseck  
Sydni "Phoenix" Winters  
Anne Woods  
Bonnie Worth

Grace Zbell  
Shirley Zurrin

### ESBCI Kitchen

Carolyn M. Coco  
Dennis DeVergilio  
Roxanne Iwanicki  
Peggy Malumphy  
Christine Orcutt Savolis  
Susan Sorcinelli  
Robert St. Peter

### Long-term Care Ombudsman

Gail Altman-Orenstein  
Virginia Bosco  
Eileen Gabriel  
Donna Gordon  
Georgette Kinney  
Peter Olsen  
Lonnie Solomon  
Deborah Wehry

### Money Management Program

Amy Backiel  
Sharon Bartels  
Wendy Batchelder  
Rushelle Bowie  
Sharon Bartels  
Yvette Bastow  
Shelley Crippa  
Judith Douville  
Michael Einstein  
Marianne Fresia  
Tanya Haas  
Heather King  
Emily Minkle  
Paula Morey  
John Philpott  
Ronald Terry  
Donald Usher  
Robin Zeamer



# A Year in the Life of Elder Services' Volunteer Program

By Margaret Zamierowski

We have seen many changes here at Elder Services of Berkshire County (ESBCI) within the last year. Among them are these: we moved our offices to 73 South Church Street in Pittsfield in July of 2024. The SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) Program was tasked with finding new health insurance for seniors signed up with insurance companies no longer serving Berkshire County residents. And we renewed our relationship with Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

Elder Service's SHINE Program provides free, unbiased and up-to-date health insurance information, counseling and assistance to all Medicare beneficiaries and is critical during Medicare Open Enrollment every year from October 15 – December 7, when recipients can enroll and/or make changes in their insurance plans. SHINE volunteers provide the bulk of these efforts. The SHINE Program was presented with a formidable task in 2024 when two health insurance companies discontinued Medicare Advantage Plans for Berkshire County residents. And so, under the direction of Elder Service's SHINE Supervisor Lisa Jamros, (and now newly appointed Jonna Haskell), our nineteen SHINE volunteers dug in and assisted 4,661 Medicare recipients, contributing almost 3,000 hours to the effort. They met enrollees in ten host locations around the county, including our offices and the Pittsfield Senior Center, and conducted phone appointments.

SHINE counselors go above and beyond the usual volunteer duties, Lisa Jamros reports. There is an increase in counselor demands at certain points of the year, mainly during the Annual Enrollment Period, and the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period. Last year's

reduction of Medicare Advantage plan carriers in Berkshire County resulted in an extension of the deadline to make changes for some people from December 7th to Feb 28th, increasing the demand for appointments and extending the traditional Annual Enrollment Period.

SHINE counselors must pass a recertification exam each year and keep up to date with ongoing changes. They spend hours reading materials and researching plan changes preparing for Open Enrollment periods. Many times meeting with a consumer once is not enough. Depending on the complexity of an issue, they often have to schedule a follow-up appointment.

"We have a 'No Wrong Door' policy here at Elder Services," Lisa states. "Volunteers often help consumers with issues not related to Medicare."

This past year, we renewed our relationship with RSVP of Berkshire County, one of the many nationwide chapters funded in part by AmeriCorps Seniors and sponsored locally by the City of Pittsfield. They recruit, train and place persons 55 years of age and older as volunteers, enabling volunteers to bring their life experiences to staying active, helping others and making a difference in the community. Isaac Share, Home and Community Based Program (HCBP) Supervisor, worked with RSVP to re-establish Elder Services of Berkshire County as an RSVP placement site. In identifying objectives and resources, it became clear that the growing need for transportation services throughout the county is a shared initiative between the two agencies.

"The chair of the RSVP Advisory Board invited Elder Services to an organizing meeting to examine how the various county-wide ride services address this need," Isaac reports. "The initial meeting was held between

RSVP, ESBCI, and AdLib. We wanted to compare our efforts in providing free transportation to older and disabled adults in Berkshire County. We plan to bring more organizations to the table in order to bring all of our resources and work alongside each other.

"What are we each doing? Who is doing what?" Isaac asks. "We want to identify challenges and characteristics specific to Berkshire County: how rural and spread apart the area is, scarcity and tight scheduling, such as, last minute appointments, and traveling across the county. We all agree that more volunteers are needed to take older adults who are no longer driving to their medical and other wellness appointments! The initiative will continue into 2025 as we bring in other stakeholders and identify additional resources."

ESBCI will continue to conduct outreach and recruitment of volunteers, particularly in North County. We are always looking for folks who would like to give their time to our Home and Community Based Programs, Long Term Care Ombudsman, Money Management, Nutrition, and SHINE Programs.

Our volunteer program grew to 290 volunteers, 223 of whom donated hours in 2024, and 55 of whom signed on as new volunteers. These generous and warm hearted volunteers contributed almost 14,000 hours of their time in service to Berkshire County's older adults. They served on boards and committees, assisted with clerical tasks in the office, brought meals to homebound seniors, served meals at senior centers, helped some others organize their bills, assisted many in securing health insurance, advocated for nursing home residents, drove people to medical appointments, visited the homebound, and took older adults shopping. These are everyday people doing

## Volunteer with Elder Services of Berkshire County!

extraordinary things. We are eternally grateful to them, as are those older and disabled adults who benefit from the time and effort contributed by Elder Services' volunteers.

And as highlighted in the examples above, now it is more important than ever to contribute time and effort in assisting neighbors and friends to stay independent, living in their own homes, as long as possible. Please consider joining us, won't you?

**AD**

# Making and Maintaining Friendships while Growing Older

By Peter Olsen

*"A few years ago, I tried an experiment for myself.*

*I deleted some friends on my phone. I blocked their calls.*

*I sent my email address to everyone on my blocked call list. I hoped my friends would email me wondering about my whereabouts. Not one email."*

....Anonymous

Never thought you would lose friends as you grew older, did you? But as the years go by, it happens more frequently. Why is this? I haven't changed, so why do my friends change?

A delicate and challenging question. As we age, life circumstances often cause social circles to shrink. Friends move away. We become less active.

There are fewer opportunities to connect. Familiar routines begin to fade.

It is not unhealthy to want to spend time alone, but loneliness is a different story. We inevitably lose friends as we age. Let's address these circumstances by looking at some causes for losing friends.

- Health issues conspire against you. Explore social activities that require less physical stress and strain.

- Your interests have drastically changed, but your friend's interests haven't. Change differs for different people.

- Life transitions are making you drift apart. Friends move away, or you move. If the physical distance is far, it puts strains on keeping personal relationships personal.



- Your friends are prioritizing family over friends. Due to proximity, older people spend more time with family members.

- You're holding onto grudges. Let go. No more needs to be said about this friend killer.

- Attitudes. Constant pessimism pushes people aside. Friends may not want to spend time with negative people.

Now, some thoughts about keeping friends. Making and maintaining friendships are two different concepts cut from the same cloth. No matter your age or personality, making friends and keeping them is possible. You need to know where to put your effort. Some first steps:

- Go to places where you know people are doing and thinking about things you like.

- The internet is a good place to start. Social media can be helpful, but it does not guarantee to find friends.

- Have no conditions. "I like you only when you agree with me about politics."-conditional. Don't look for your gain; think about helping the other person. Be a friend unconditionally.

- Be your true self. Look for open communication. Let friends "really" know you. Use your communication skills wisely.

- Prioritize. Your friends are important to you. Make time for them, catch up with them, and

don't wait for them to call you. Let go of your ego and contact them.

- Stay in touch through texts, calls, social media. Let your messages convey your concern for them.

- Schedule hangouts. Make plans to meet regularly at some place you both enjoy. Constant face-to-face time is mandatory (not just face time on the phone).

- Be supportive. Be a friend during tough times. Be there "emotionally" all the time. Talk, talk, talk.

- Share experiences. Create memories you want to save. Now, share them and reflect on them with friends who are part of the memory.

Friendships are an essential part of the aging process. Friends participate in your healthy living by being a caring person for you to rely upon when needed or not needed. Friendships are based on need. We need social contacts for interaction... to feel connected, stimulated, humored, and recognized. But later in life, our past achievements acquire a certain sameness," the same old story." Sometimes, friends tire of hearing the same old stuff. Something new is needed, and finding a new friend might just be the answer. Reach out, folks, reach out. Today is "Make a New Friends" day. (by my decree, only) Use it, and don't waste it.

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# Berkshire Senior Television



Patricia Janchuk and Melissa Scarafoni-Metcalf discuss  
Berkshire Alzheimer's Partnership and Caregivers Expo.

**Currently airing on PCTV, Channel 1301 Access Pittsfield**

**Broadcast schedule:**

Mondays at 5:00 p.m. ▪ Wednesday at 8:30 a.m.

Thursdays at 11:30 a.m. ▪ Saturdays at Noon



**Or watch online, ON DEMAND on  
[pittsfieldtv.org](http://pittsfieldtv.org).**

*Thank you to our friends at PCTV for all  
their help in making Berkshire Senior  
TV accessible to our community.*

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Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc.  
**NUTRITION PROGRAM  
SENIOR COMMUNITY  
DINING CENTERS**

The status and offerings of the Senior Community Dining Centers are likely to evolve. Please call for the latest update.

CITY/TOWN PHONE	ADDRESS	MEAL TIMES	DAYS MEALS SERVED
ADAMS 743-8333	ADAMS VISITOR CENTER 3 Hoosac Street	11:30 am	Mon thru Fri
BECKET 623-8934	TOWN HALL Route 8	11:00 am	Tue, Thu
CHESHIRE 743-9719	SENIOR CENTER 119 School Street	11:30 am	Mon thru Fri
DALTON 684-2000	SENIOR CENTER 40 Field Street. Ext.	12:00 pm	Mon, Thu
GT. BARRINGTON 528-4118	CLAIRE TEAGUE SENIOR CTR. 909 South Main Street	11:30 am	Mon thru Fri
LANESBORO 448-2862	TOWN HALL 83 North Main Street	11:30 am	Tues, Thu
LEE 394-4160	SENIOR CENTER 21 Crossway Village	11:45 am	Mon thru Fri
LENOX 637-5535	COMMUNITY CENTER 65 Walker Street	12:00 pm	Mon thru Fri
NORTH ADAMS 662-3125	SPITZER CENTER 116 Ashland Street	11:45 am	Mon thru Fri
PITTSFIELD 499-9346	RALPH J. FROIO SENIOR CTR. 330 North Street	11:30 am	Mon thru Fri
PITTSFIELD- KOSHER* 442-2200	CONG. KNESSET ISRAEL 16 Colt Road	12:00 pm	Mon, Tue, Thu
SHEFFIELD 229-7037	SENIOR CENTER 25 Cook Road	12:00 pm	Wed & Fri
STOCKBRIDGE 298-4170 x263	SENIOR CENTER 50 Main Street	11:30 am	Tues, Wed
STOCKBRIDGE 298-3222	HEATON COURT 5 Pine Street	11:30 am	Thu
WILLIAMSTOWN 458-8350	HARPER CENTER 118 Church Street	11:30 am	Mon, Wed, Fri

Eligible seniors 60 years or older are welcome to attend any Senior Meal Site. Reservations are requested 24 hours in advance. The suggested donation is \$3.00 per meal. All contributions are returned to the community toward the cost of the Senior Nutrition Program. Those 59 or under are welcome at the required fee of \$8.00 per meal.

**MEDICALLY TAILORED MEALS**

Elder Services now provides medically tailored meals (MTMs). MTMs help meet the nutritional needs of seniors with health conditions that require specific diets such as diabetes and heart or kidney disease.

MTMs can be delivered to individuals at their home five days a week. Menus are developed by our registered dietician and trained staff.

Call Elder Services at (413) 499-0524 to request a special meal such as pureed, cardiac, diabetic, renal and vegetarian.



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Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid.  
The remaining letters spell a message about Spring.

T	L	E	M	W	O	N	S	S	S	A	R	G	L	A
G	C	Y	C	L	A	M	E	N	S	A	L	I	L	P
G	N	G	R	O	W	T	H	R	L	L	L	L	R	S
O	Y	I	I	D	L	S	A	R	A	I	E	S	N	N
L	A	L	N	K	A	I	E	B	E	R	R	O	H	E
F	M	L	O	A	N	F	E	S	G	M	I	P	W	W
E	N	A	E	E	E	S	F	I	U	L	R	R	A	L
I	O	B	Q	R	A	L	E	O	E	C	S	A	B	E
R	S	T	U	B	E	S	C	D	D	F	O	S	W	A
I	A	F	I	G	R	N	N	G	L	I	N	R	H	V
S	E	O	N	N	R	A	E	O	N	I	L	C	C	E
E	S	S	O	I	D	E	W	W	B	I	R	S	B	S
S	I	N	X	R	G	E	E	O	A	A	R	M	E	G
A	Y	F	L	P	R	O	R	N	M	L	W	P	E	O
E	T	E	W	S	S	P	I	L	U	T	R	S	S	R
R	E	T	S	A	E	P	L	A	N	T	I	N	G	F

- |            |            |                 |
|------------|------------|-----------------|
| ALLERGIES  | FROGS      | RAIN            |
| APRIL      | GOLF       | RENEWAL         |
| BASEBALL   | GRASS      | ROBINS          |
| BEES       | GREEN      | SEASON          |
| CROCUSES   | GROWTH     | SNOWMELT        |
| CYCLAMENS  | IRISES     | SOFTBALL        |
| DAFFODILS  | LILIES     | SPRING BREAK    |
| DANDELIONS | MARCH      | SPRING CLEANING |
| EASTER     | MAY        | TULIPS          |
| EQUINOX    | NEW LEAVES | WARMER          |
| FLOWERS    | PLANTING   | WET             |

**AD**