

RSVP

Retired & Senior Volunteer
Program of Berks, Pike and
Wayne Counties

Fall 2025

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Berks, Pike & Wayne Counties Celebrates Volunteers at Annual Recognition Luncheons

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Berks, Pike & Wayne Counties held its annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheons during the spring and summer of 2025 to honor the remarkable dedication and service of its volunteers.

The Pike & Wayne County Luncheon took place on April 30, 2025, at the Ladore Camp, Retreat and Conference Center in Waymart, PA, and the Berks County Luncheon was held on July 10, 2025, at the Lutheran Home at Topton, in the Old Main Permanency Conference Room, Topton, PA. Both events featured a carnival theme, and volunteers gathered to celebrate another year of outstanding community service, reflecting on their experiences and accomplishments while enjoying time together in appreciation of their impact.

The luncheons highlighted the meaningful hours RSVP volunteers have devoted to supporting local programs, agencies, and residents.

Both events recognized the compassion, energy, and commitment of senior volunteers who continue to make a difference in their communities through

Senior CHAT, Meals on Wheels, helping in food pantries, senior centers, a community library, and a blood center, as well as many other valuable efforts.

RSVP offers heartfelt thanks to all its volunteers for sharing their time, talents, and dedication. Their service strengthens communities, brings people together, and truly improves lives throughout Berks, Pike, and Wayne Counties.

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COMMUNITY SERVICES
FOR SENIORS



Director's Note:

Dear all,

As the vibrant colors of autumn paint our communities with gold and crimson hues, we are reminded of the beauty that comes with change and the importance of embracing every season of life with purpose and care. Fall is a time of reflection—a moment to appreciate the fruits of our labor, the friendships we've nurtured, and the meaningful service we continue to provide through RSVP.

To all our dedicated volunteers, your compassion and commitment continue to warm hearts even as the temperatures drop. Whether you're helping neighbors through companionship programs, supporting food pantries, or delivering meals, your acts of kindness bring light and comfort to many. Thank you for proving that the spirit of service knows no season.

As we enjoy the crisp air and festive gatherings, let's also take time to focus on fall safety—especially important for older adults. Here are a few reminders to help keep you and your loved ones safe:



Prevent Falls Indoors: Keep walkways clear of clutter, use non-slip mats, and ensure good lighting—especially near stairs and bathrooms.



Stay Steady Outdoors: Wet leaves can be slippery! Wear supportive shoes with good traction when walking outside.



Check Heating Equipment: Have furnaces and space heaters inspected to prevent fire or carbon monoxide hazards.



Stay Visible: Shorter days mean dimmer visibility—carry a flashlight or wear reflective gear when walking at dusk.



Stay Warm and Active: Dress in layers, keep moving, and stay connected with others to boost body warmth and well-being.

As we move into this season of gratitude, may we continue to find joy in simple moments, peace in our routines, and purpose in our service. Thank you for being part of our RSVP family and for all that you do to make Berks, Pike, and Wayne Counties brighter and safer places to live.

Wishing you a safe, colorful, and heartwarming Fall season!

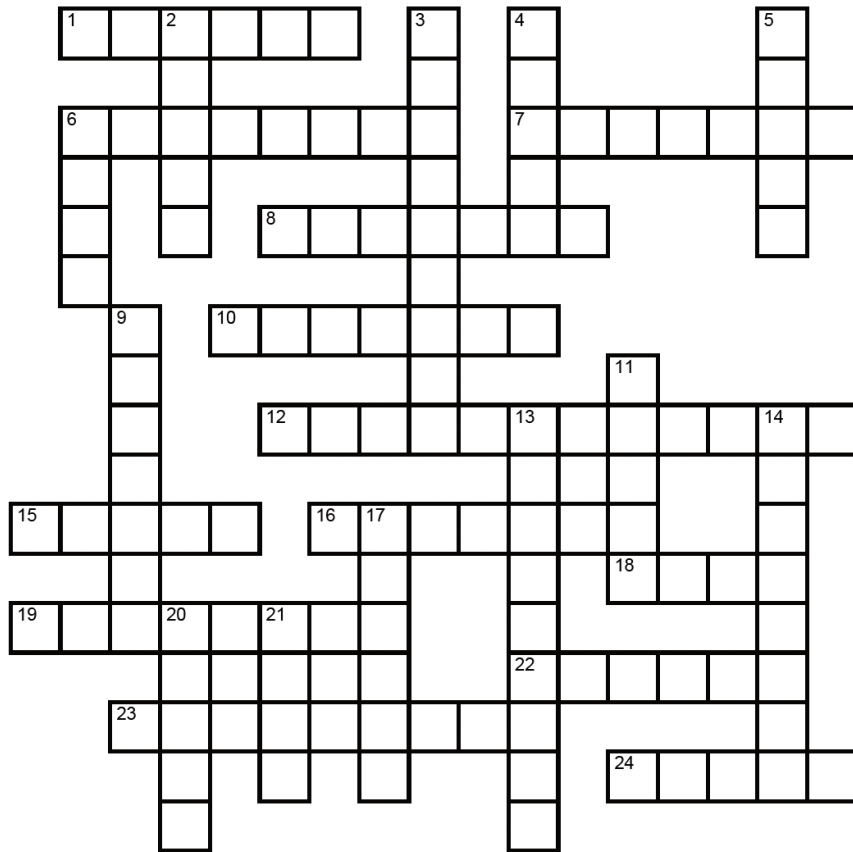
With gratitude and grace,

Mary Grace Doloso-Pedroso

Director, RSVP of Berks, Pike & Wayne Counties

I LOVE FALL

Acorn
Apple
Autumn
Chestnut
Cider
Cobweb
Fall
Football
Gourd
Halloween
Harvest
Hay Bale
Hayride
Leaves
Maize
November
Nuts
October
Pumpkin
Quilt
Rake
Scarecrow
September
Sleet
Thanksgiving



ACROSS

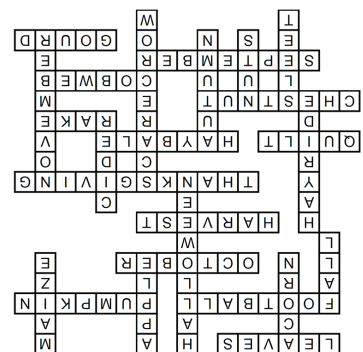
1. They fall from trees.
6. Popular autumn sport.
7. Jack-o-lantern gourd.
8. The 10th month of the year.
10. The gathering of crops.
12. The fourth Thursday in November.
15. Might be patchwork.
16. Seat at a square dance (two words).
18. Leaf gathering yard tool.
19. They are roasted on an open fire.
22. Halloween decoration made by a spider.
23. The 9th month of the year.
24. Decorative squash.

DOWN

2. Oak tree's fruit.
3. October 31st.
4. Honeycrisp.
5. Also known as corn.
6. The season that follows summer.
9. Fun activity on a farm.
11. Drink made from apples.
13. Used to keep birds off of crops.
14. The 11th month of the year.
17. Another word for the fall season.
20. Semi-frozen rain.
21. What squirrels often gather.



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HEALTH UPDATES

Preventing Respiratory Illnesses

Each year, respiratory viruses are responsible for millions of illnesses and thousands of hospitalizations and deaths in the United States. The good news is there are actions you can take to help protect yourself and others from health risks caused by respiratory viruses.

Reducing risk

Respiratory illnesses can make anyone sick. However, some people have risk factors that can increase their chances of getting very sick (severe illness). If you are, or if you spend time with someone, at higher risk for getting very sick, these prevention strategies are especially important.

Core prevention strategies

Core prevention strategies are essential practices recommended for everyone. They provide a foundation of protection for you and your loved ones:

- Stay up to date with recommended immunizations. Talk to your doctor or trusted healthcare provider about what may be recommended for you and your family.
- Practice good hygiene like washing your hands regularly and cleaning commonly touched surfaces.
- Take steps for cleaner air as possible in places where people live and work.
- When sick with a respiratory illness:
 - Stay home if you have respiratory virus symptoms (fever, cough, fatigue, headache, runny nose, etc.).
 - Return to normal activities only when:
 - ☆ Symptoms are improving, and
 - ☆ No fever for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.
 - Take extra precautions for 5 days after returning: mask, distancing, good hygiene, cleaner air, testing as needed.
 - You may still be contagious even if feeling better; immunocompromised people may shed longer.



- If symptoms worsen or fever returns, stay home again and follow the same rules.
- Seek health care promptly for treatment if you have risk factors for severe illness; treatment may help lower your risk of severe illness.

Additional prevention strategies

Additional prevention strategies are extra measures you can choose that can further reduce your risk of respiratory illness. They can provide an extra layer of protection and can be especially important in certain settings or when illnesses are increasing in your community.

- Wearing masks
- Physical distancing
- Tests

You may not be aware of the things that can make others more vulnerable to serious illness. If you are unsure about the health condition or risk status of those around you, the most protective option is choosing to use these additional prevention strategies.

Key times for prevention

All of the prevention strategies described in this guidance can be helpful to reduce risk. They are especially helpful when:

- Respiratory viruses are causing a lot of illness in your community. One thing to remember, though, is that vaccines take time to work. It's best to get vaccinated before viruses start spreading in your community.
- You or the people around you were recently exposed to a respiratory virus, are sick, or are recovering.
- You or the people around you have risk factors for severe illness.

Source: Center for Disease Control



JUNE

Patricia Nelson
Christine Wetzel
Jorge Maldonado
Ronald Battista
Janet E Levengood
Marilyn Brizzi
Paul Faeder
Robert Rohner
Sandra Kline
Suzanne Bornemann
Mary Ann Asimake-Noon
Richard Flora
Sandra Maciejewski
Patrick Corcoran
Jean Imperiale
Christine DeLuca

JULY

Theresa Block
Christopher Koch
Jean Pollaro
Debra Wolf
Kathy Ellex
Maureen League
Cynthia Miller
Linda Henkelman
Laurie Vilim
Kathleen Harrington
Philip Laperna

Marianna Winsjansen

Lepin Saldana
James Borell
Bernice Russell
Gail K Frey
Jeff Karpen
John Russell Imlay
Donald Smith
Anna Spear
Keith Jones
Lynne Modugno

AUGUST

Jim Hathaway
Donald Giuttari
Edward O'Connor
Joseph Ballestrieri
Anthony Campbell
Phillip Houseknecht
Edward Koelln
Richard Gardner
Virginia Ann Motsko
Roy Santilli
Karen DeZago
Ellen Ace
Wayne Poppich
Constance Dempsey
Bonnie Schreiber
Frances Beck
Lori M Koehler

Cinda Tietjen

Fanny Anton
Steven Knutsen
Dorothy Sherman
Jeanne Wasman
Carolyn Anderson

SEPTEMBER

Margaret Dietrich
Paul Ruiz
Roseann Van Why
Sarah Tiel
Peter Dietrich
Ellaina Kennedy
Barbara Casey
Arthur Frey
John Noon
Margaret Long
Julia G Sadlon
Adeline Heesh
Beverly Miller
Susan Palmisano
Andrey Grishin
Eric Whitaker
Walter Jarvis
Jean Leone

OCTOBER
Mary Allen
Donna Capone

Ivette Echevarria

James Henkelman
Barbara Sprovkin
Rickie Rentas
Robert Skibber
Theresa Tisano
Ethel Wood

Mary Catherine Weber

Elizabeth Medina
Melodie Leon
Dorothy Cousins
Tamlyn Ebert
Theodore Nakielny

NOVEMBER

Janet Kepnach
Keely Yetter
Mary Ann Brooks
Marguerite Koch
Carolyn Koelln
Helen Hansen
Patricia Yasanovich
Vincent D'Agostino
David J Levengood
Janet Sauers
Bonnie Snyder
Liz Faeder
Carolyn Miller

Berks Volunteer Recognition .





Pike and Wayne Volunteer Recognition







Fall Fun Facts!



Celebrate the Colors, Crisp Air, and Cozy Moments of Autumn



1 “Fall” or “Autumn”?

Both names are correct! ‘Autumn’ comes from Latin roots, while ‘Fall’ became popular in America during the 1600s from the phrase ‘fall of the leaf.’

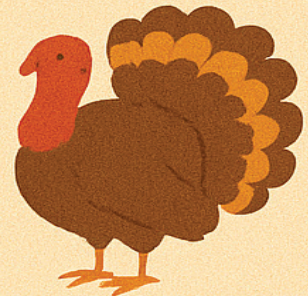


2 Leaves Change Color Because...

As daylight shortens, trees stop producing chlorophyll – revealing the beautiful reds, yellows, and oranges that were always hiding beneath the green!

3 Pumpkins Are Fruits!

Botanically speaking, pumpkins (and all squash) are fruits because they contain seeds. The largest pumpkin ever recorded weighed over 2,700 pounds!



4 Turkeys Can Blush!

When turkeys are excited or startled, the skin on their heads and necks can change color – turning red, white, or blue.



5 Fall Brings Cozy Traditions

Hot apple cider, pumpkin spice everything, hayrides, football games, and sweater weather – autumn is the season of comfort and connection.



A Tribute to **WENDELL R. KAY**

Former Advisory Council Chair

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Berks, Pike & Wayne Counties honors the memory of **Wendell R. Kay**, who passed away on June 30, 2025.

Wendell served as Chair of the RSVP Advisory Council with dedication, compassion, and steady leadership. Drawing on his experience as a Wayne County Commissioner and attorney, he brought valuable insight and a deep commitment to our mission of supporting and empowering senior volunteers.

He led with empathy and inclusiveness, ensuring every voice was heard and valued. Wendell's warmth, humor, and unforgettable ice breakers brought people together and created a lasting sense of community that continues to inspire us today.

We are deeply grateful for Wendell's many contributions and his unwavering devotion to service. His legacy of leadership, kindness, and care for others will always be remembered with respect and appreciation. Our thoughts are with his family and loved ones as we celebrate his life and lasting impact on the RSVP community.



Advisory Council Member Feature **Christa Caceres**

Christa Caceres is the newly elected Commissioner for Pike County, PA, serving a four year term from 2024-2028. Christa made history being the first African American

elected to the office in the county's 210-year history. She was appointed in December 2023 to serve as chair for PAGovernor Josh Shapiro's CLEAR (Citizen Law Enforcement Advisory Review) Commission and was named vice-chair for the Governor's Advisory Commission on African American Affairs in August 2023. Mrs. Caceres currently serves as president of the Monroe County branch of the NAACP. She holds a B.A. in Jurisprudence and M.S. in Law and Public Policy from California University of Pennsylvania.

As a childhood survivor of domestic violence and sexual abuse, she is laser-focused on issues that pertain to women, children, and sexual assault victims. In 2021, she was awarded the *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Community Service* from East Stroudsburg University and the *"Community Impact Honoree Award"* by Pocono Mountains United Way (PMUW) in

2022. In 2024, she received the *Lifetime Community Commitment "Frank Schoelch" Award* from the Pocono Mountains Chamber of Commerce. Christa's leadership and advocacy spans over twenty years, including current membership in the Rotary Club and the Pike County League of Women Voters.

Christa serves on the hiring committee of Stroud Area Regional Police and on the board of directors for PMUW, Emerge Pennsylvania, and the Pocono Chamber of Commerce. Her former board service includes Saw Creek Estates Community Association, the Greater Pike Community Foundation and Safe Haven of Pike County. Following calls for reform in law enforcement, Christa took a proactive approach and formed the *Monroe County Community Roundtable* in August of 2020 which united the heads of local and State police to find strategic and creative ways to make lasting changes in the community together.

Mrs. Caceres has been a resident of the Pocono Mountains since 2005 where she enjoys life with her husband of twenty years, her beloved son, and their dog Bella.

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ADVISORY COUNCIL

Jocelyn Cramer- Chairman	Lisa Gilbert
Timaki Johnson- Vice Chairman	Kim Grinage
Linda Bauer	Lori Koehler
Christa Caceres	Rob Rohner
Anthony Campbell	Robin Skibber
Michele Cory	Robin Soares
Danielle Dietze	Heather Wicke
Joan Edel	