

RSVP

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

Senior Expo and Volunteer Fair

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Berks, Pike & Wayne Counties joined Berks Encore in Berks County and Salvation Army in Lackawanna and Wayne Counties at the 2022 Senior Expo October 5, 2022 for Berks and October 27, 2022 for Lackawanna and Wayne. These expos were an excellent opportunity for the seniors to interact directly with people, agencies and businesses providing products and services they need. The events were well-attended by mostly seniors. RSVP was able to recruit volunteers and many signed up to get more information.

RSVP also attended the Volunteer Fair of St. Paul's Church Lutheran Church in Douglassville, PA, October 10, 2022. Several seniors were interested in volunteering. It was a great opportunity for us to meet other non-profit organizations and seniors in the community.



WINTER 2022

Inside this issue:

Senior Expo and Volunteer Fair	1
Director's Notes	2
Winter Crossword	3
Winter Fun Facts / Recipe	4
Winter Safety	5
Winter Donations / Birthdays	6
Advisory Council Member Feature / Volunteer Spotlight	7
Advisory Board	8



DIAKON COMMUNITY SERVICES

DIAKON CHILD. FAMILY & COMMUNITY MINISTRIES



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Happy New Year to all!

Welcome to the Winter Edition of our RSVP Newsletter! I hope everyone was able to enjoy the holidays with family and friends. Once again, we are keeping in touch with you to keep you posted of what we do in the RSVP of Berks, Pike & Wayne Counties. Cheers to 2023 and let's be thankful for a new start.

As we begin a new year, we are also trying to return to the lives we lived before the pandemic and many of us are experiencing re-entry anxiety. In fact, a recent survey by the American Psychological Association showed that 49% of respondents said they feel uneasy about adjusting to in-person interaction once the pandemic ends.

What is re-entry anxiety? Re-entry anxiety refers to fear that can accompany letting go of the safeguards that protected us during the COVID-19 pandemic and our re-entry into a world that has been changed by the virus.

Here are some tips to help you adjust:

1. **Accept your feelings.** Don't be too hard on yourself if you aren't ready to jump back into things. Your life may be quite different than it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people are now navigating changes to their relationships, jobs, bodies, and more. Avoiding the unpleasant feelings you may have about these changes might feel more comfortable at first, but they won't go away – acknowledging how you feel can help you to cope and move through those challenging emotions.
2. **Start slow and small.** It's common to avoid the things that make you anxious – but you usually need to face your fears head-on at some point to move past them. The best way to get more comfortable with post-pandemic life is to start living it – this is called exposure therapy, and it's an effective way of treating anxiety. Identify what specifically worries you about returning to pre-pandemic living and take baby steps to ease your way back in.
3. **Set boundaries.** We all have different comfort levels around pandemic safety, and some people will need more time to adjust than others. You may have friends and family members who are ready to operate the way they did before COVID-19 and others who aren't quite there yet. Maybe you're in a different situation than others, like living with someone who can't get vaccinated or being unable to get vaccinated yourself, so you need to remain cautious. Remember that everyone is allowed to create their own timeline – respect the decisions of others and stay firm with your boundaries.
4. **Find a buddy.** There's likely someone in your life at a similar stage of re-entry comfort as you are. Tackle this challenging time together – you can hold each other accountable for taking steps forward while also being a safe and familiar face for each other as you navigate this “new normal.”
5. **Do something fulfilling.** It's easier to be excited and motivated about communities reopening if you're spending time with loved ones and doing things that you genuinely enjoy. Make a “bucket list” of things you're excited to be able to do again and make time for those activities.
6. **Seek help if you need it.** Adjusting to post-pandemic life is a pretty significant transition, and many people aren't ready to move forward yet – that's okay. If you need extra support, therapy is a great tool to help you work through this stage and get you to where you want to be. Some anxiety during this stage is to be expected, but make sure it's not interfering with your life.

We welcome your insights as well as volunteer articles and recipes that you may wish to share. Please email me at pedrosom@diakon.org or call me at 610-682-1351. I would love to hear from you!

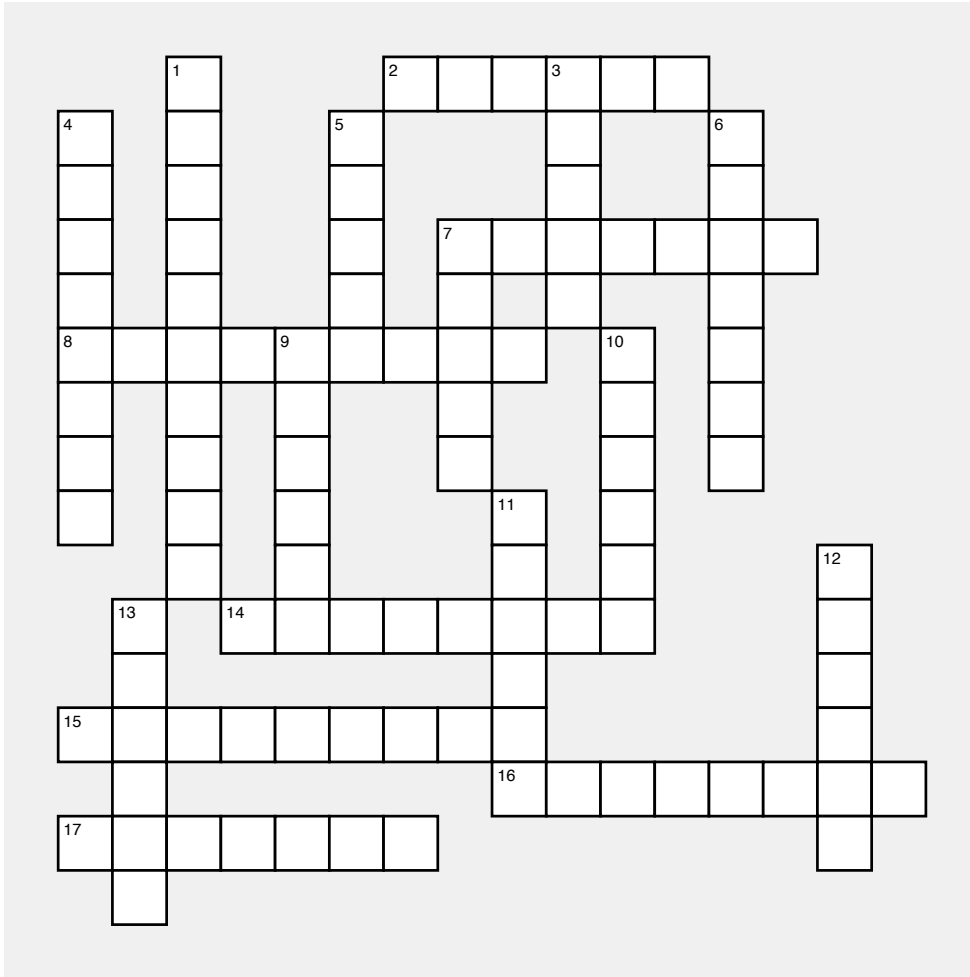
All the best,

Mary Grace Doloso-Pedroso

Director RSVP Berks, Pike & Wayne Counties



WINTER CROSSWORD



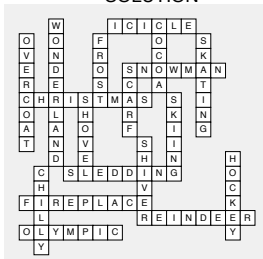
ACROSS

- 2) Frozen spike
- 7) Winter sculpture
- 8) Present day?
- 14) Winter coasting
- 15) Hearth
- 16) Rudolph and teammates
- 17) Winter ____ Games

DOWN

- 1) White Rabbit's milieu
- 3) Hot chocolate
- 4) Winter outerwear
- 5) Icy coating
- 6) Rink dancing
- 7) Neck wrap
- 9) Snow remover
- 10) Aspen activity
- 11) Small shake
- 12) Stanley Cup sport
- 13) Uncomfortably cool

SOLUTION



WINTER FUN FACTS

Reindeer Can See in the Dark

Reindeer above the Arctic Circle are in total darkness for weeks at a time. According to the Meteorological Office of the UK, a small area of tissue behind the retina changes from gold to blue in the winter, which allows the reindeers' eyes to detect uv light and have the ability to see in the dark.

Snow Can be Different Colors

According to The Old Farmer's Almanac, snow is actually colorless. Dust and algae can make it appear different colors. Pink snow, or watermelon snow, fell in Krasnodar, Russia in 2010 and had a sweet smell and taste.

The Tallest Snowperson Stood Over 122 Feet Tall

The tallest snowperson was over 122 feet tall, took 13 million pounds of snow and over a month to build. It was built by the residents of Bethel, Maine, and was completed on February 26, 2008. With eyelashes made of skis, lips of tires, arms of spruce trees and a nose of chicken wire and cheesecloth, the snowperson was nearly as tall as the Statue of Liberty!

<https://www.goodnet.org/articles/9-heartwarming-winter-fun-facts>

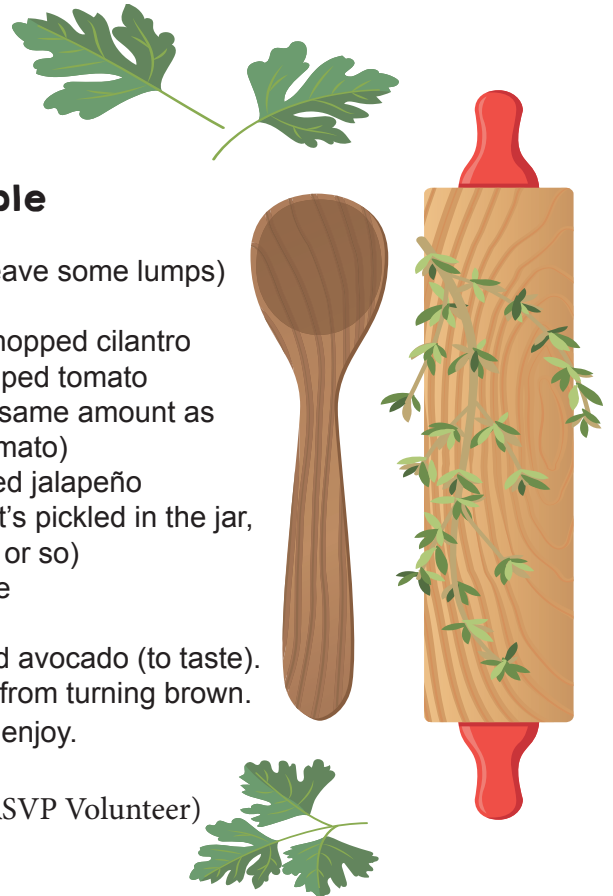
RECIPE

Guacamole

- 2 ripe avocados mashed (leave some lumps)
- 1 lime
- 2 tablespoons of finely chopped cilantro
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup of chopped tomato
- Finely chopped onion (the same amount as the chopped tomato)
- 1 teaspoon of chopped jalapeño
(you can use the jalapeño that's pickled in the jar, about five slices or so)
- Salt to taste

Squeeze lime over the mashed avocado (to taste).
This will keep the guacamole from turning brown.
Mix it all up and enjoy.

Recipe from Judy Wells (RSVP Volunteer)



WINTER SAFETY FOR OLDER ADULTS

When the temperature drops, older adults run a higher risk of health problems and injuries related to the weather, including hypothermia, frostbite, falls and injury while shoveling snow. Like most things in life, it is better to be prepared. Here are a few precautions everyone should take, especially older adults, during the winter:

Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when your body temperature drops to a dangerous level. Your body temperature can drop when you are out in the cold for an extended time because it begins to lose heat quickly. Older adults are at an increased risk of hypothermia due to changes that happen to your body with aging.

Warning Signs: cold skin that is pale or ashy; feeling very tired, confused and sleepy; feeling weak; problems walking; slowed breathing or heart rate. Call 911 if you think you or someone else has hypothermia.

Note: Shivering is not a reliable warning sign because older people tend to shiver less or not at all when their body temperature drops.

Precautions to Take:

- ◆ Stay indoors (or don't stay outside for very long).
- ◆ Keep indoor temperature at 65 degrees or warmer.
- ◆ Stay dry because wet clothing chills your body more quickly.
- ◆ Dress smart – protect your lungs from cold air. Layer up! Wearing 2 or 3 thinner layers of loose-fitting clothing is warmer than a single layer of thick clothing. Think about getting your thermals!
- ◆ Essential winter wear: hats, gloves (or preferably mittens), winter coat, boots, and a scarf to cover your mouth and nose.

Frostbite

Frostbite occurs when your body experiences damage to the skin that can go all the way down to the bone. Not surprisingly, extreme cold can cause frostbite. It is most likely to occur on body parts farthest away from your heart. Common places include your nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, and toes. In severe cases, frostbite can result in loss of limbs. People with heart disease and other circulation problems are at a higher risk.

Precautions to Take:

- ◆ Cover up! All parts of your body should be covered when you go out in the cold.
- ◆ If your skin turns red or dark or starts hurting, go inside right away.
- ◆ Know the warning signs of frostbite: skin that's white or ashy or grayish-yellow; skin that feels hard or waxy; numbness.
- ◆ If you think you or someone else has frostbite, call for medical help immediately.
- ◆ If frostbite occurs, run the affected area under warm (not hot) water.

Falls

It is easy to slip and fall in the winter, especially in icy and snowy conditions.

Precautions to Take:

- ◆ Make sure steps and walkways are clear before you walk.
- ◆ Be especially careful if you see wet pavements that could be iced over.
- ◆ Clear away snow and salt your walkways at home, or hire someone to do it.
- ◆ Wear boots with non-skid soles – this will prevent you from slipping.
- ◆ If you use a cane, replace the rubber tip before it is worn smooth.
- ◆ Consider an ice pick-like attachment that fits onto the end of the cane for additional traction.

Injury While Shoveling Snow

It's one of the evils of winter – snow shoveling. If you choose to shovel, take some precautions. Remember, when it's cold outside, your heart works double time to keep you warm. Strenuous activities like shoveling snow may put too much strain on your heart, especially if you have heart disease. Shoveling can also be dangerous if you have problems with balance or have "thin bones" (osteoporosis).

Several of our host stations offer evidence-based classes and programs designed to decrease the risk of falling anytime of the year.

If you are interested in finding a class in your area, you may call:

- Pike County Area Agency on Aging at 570-775-5550
- Wayne County Area Agency on Aging at 570-253-4262
- Berks County, Berks Encore at 484-388-3196.

WINTER HATS DONATED TO OPPORTUNITY HOUSE

Christmas is one of the best holidays that represent love and sharing. It is the season of joy, gift-giving and extending help in the community.

The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program of Berks, Pike & Wayne donated 100 winter hats to Opportunity House in Reading, Pennsylvania last December 12, 2022. The hats were handmade by RSVP Program Assistant Pam with the help of RSVP Volunteer Caroll.



December

Lauri Barr
Linda Bauer
Frances Cirelly
Michael Daniels
Judith Diacik
Judith Healy
Donna Henderson
Marilynn Palmer

Kathryn Highhouse
Nancy Howell
Toni Marino
Pauline McNair
Karen Merhtens
Janine Narducci
Frances Palmer
Patricia Miller

January

Katherine Blasch
Ilene Havey
Sandra Murphy
Linda Shepard

February

Leona Bieber
Carol Carroll
Caroll Cox
Nellie Curry
Sue Good
Elizabeth McGonigal
Elizabeth Miller
Patricia Miller

March

Nancy Bialkowski
Janet Blankenbiller
Pat Crane
Frances Drake
Robert Lindars
Patrick McCarthy
Janet Mollick
Jim Pierce

Lynn Potter
Susan Rees-Kirchner
Nancy Reitsma
Graziella Santoro
Tina Stein
Martha Weida
Judith Wells
Brian Woods

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER FEATURE



LORI KOEHLER

Lori grew up in East Reading, PA. She attended Reading School District and graduated from Reading Senior High School in 1977. She completed a bachelor's degree in education from Millersville State College in 1981. She was a teacher and an administrator in the Fleetwood Area School District from 1981 - 2017. She is married to Joe Koehler, and has been blessed with twin sons - 36 years old and both married. Lori has two granddaughters. Her hobbies are reading, gardening, exercising, spending time with family and friends, boating and camping. Currently, she is an advisory council member and a volunteer for the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program of Berks, Pike & Wayne, Medicare Counselor and a donor ambassador for the American Red Cross.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Showing Love to the Community through Serving

JUDY WELLS

This time of year, the Lakewood Food Pantry in Northern Wayne County is in full swing. The week before Thanksgiving the regular food pantry volunteers arrived, led by Suzie Wormuth, and were ready to hustle to build bags and boxes of food and staples for those they serve in the community. In addition, each family received a turkey, fresh potatoes, sweet potatoes, lettuce, and vegetables, along with their normal fresh eggs, milk and bread. Many organizations contribute canned goods and some donate monetary gifts to supplement the food that the Wayne County Area on Aging provides. We are so blessed!

One of the most rewarding aspects of serving the community is the fellowship among the volunteers. We have a dedicated team of regulars, including Suzie, Barb, Addie, Ron, Wayne, Jim, Eric, and Judy. And, others who come in to lend a helping hand, Denise, Ranata, Bob, Joe, and John.

We are so grateful for our volunteers and for our community. They bring smiles to our faces!



From left to right: Bob Spencer, RSVP Volunteers - Barbara Sprovin, Ron Watson, James Cordner, Judy Wells, and Eric Whitaker.



337A Park Place
Hawley, PA 18428



Mary Grace Doloso Pedroso, Director
PedrosoM@diakon.org

(610) 682-1351
1 South Home Avenue
Topton, PA 19562

Dawn Houghtaling, Coordinator
houghtalingd@diakon.org

(570) 390-4540
337A Park Place
Hawley, PA 18428

**Pam Gerlach, Administrative Assistant/
Senior CHAT Coordinator**
gerlachp@diakon.org

(610) 682-1412
1 South Home Avenue
Topton, PA 19562

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wendell Kay - Chairman
Mary Ursich - Vice Chairman
Jim Pierce - Secretary
Rick Olmos
Lori Koehler
Todd Reinert
Danielle Dietze
Lana Romeo
Joan Edel
Linda Shepard
Anne Marie Ferguson
Robin Skibber
Steve Guccini
Tammy Taylor