



News for Immediate Release

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Department of Aging Honors Older Pennsylvanians Month

Older Volunteers are Recognized for their Contributions to their Communities

Harrisburg – Secretary of Aging Brian Duke urges all Pennsylvania residents to join in the national celebration marking the 50th anniversary of Older Americans Month in May.

This year's theme, "Unleash the Power of Aging," focuses on recognizing the many older adults who are productive, active and influential members of society, especially those who bring value to our communities through volunteerism.

Duke will take part in programs being held across the state by many of the 52 Area Agencies on Aging. Events include luncheons honoring Pennsylvanians 100 years of age and older, as well as volunteer recognition programs.

"We celebrate the 50th anniversary of Older Americans Month by recognizing the contributions of our older Pennsylvanians who are actively engaged and committed members of their communities," Duke said. "Through their community work, they serve as role models that inspire us all to become vital and active individuals."

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging in partnership with the Area Agencies on Aging is proud to host a number of volunteer programs. Some of them include:

- Foster Grandparents, who mentor more than 5,000 young people with special needs.
- Senior Companions, who help more than 2,600 homebound seniors and other adults maintain independence in their own homes.
- The Ombudsman program which utilizes volunteers to help resolve individual concerns involving long term care services. Among these volunteers are participants in the Pennsylvania's Empowered Expert Residents program.
- The APPRISE program, where volunteers undergo extensive training and provide free health insurance counseling to older Pennsylvanians. They help them with questions about Medicare, Medicare Supplemental Insurance, Medicaid, and Long-Term Care Insurance.

Since 1963, communities across Pennsylvania and the nation have joined together in the annual commemoration of Older Americans Month to show special appreciation for our elders.

The Department of Aging encourages all residents to pay tribute to older Pennsylvanians during May.

For more information on Older Americans Month and the programs the department offers, visit www.aging.state.pa.us

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Editor's note: The text of the Governor's Proclamation for Older Pennsylvanians Month Follows:

PROCLAMATION
OLDER PENNSYLVANIANS MONTH
May 2013

WHEREAS, There are 2.7 million citizens aged 60 and older in Pennsylvania whose health, independence and quality of life are key elements in our state's well-being and this month marks 50 years that Older Pennsylvanians Month has been continuously celebrated; and

WHEREAS, our society is enhanced by the spirit of volunteerism practiced by older adults leading by example and helping through their interest and regard for children, youth and adults from other generations; thus exemplifying the fruits of a disciplined life, showing others how giving sustains their own vitality and sense of joy in community; and

WHEREAS, older adults are the roots from which our state grows, and they bestow the lessons of our shared history of service and industry – bringing their gifts of wisdom and insight to fellow Pennsylvanians; and

WHEREAS, our elders should be commended for their role in contributing to the enduring fiber of our communities and nation which makes the Commonwealth a great place to live and age well; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, in conjunction with the 52 Area Agencies on Aging, provides programs and services that promote good health, quality of life and social participation to 960,000 adults on an annual basis, thereby protecting our elders who are a great source of wisdom and guidance for our society; and

WHEREAS, within our Commonwealth, older adults have ample opportunities to enhance their bodies and minds, through an array of activities such as cultivation of a garden, lending a helping hand to a neighbor, gracious acts of kindness, the preparation of a meal with family or friends and the dynamic spirit of May 2013 – volunteering.

THEREFORE, I, Tom Corbett, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim May 2013 as OLDER PENNSYLVANIANS MONTH. I urge all citizens to take time this month to honor our older adults by engaging them through enjoyable social interactions such as sports, games, contests and other forms of lighthearted activity.