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ON THE COVER

20 Years of Comfort



Virginia Caras (standing) and Lynne Skelton enjoy visiting friends in one of the common lounge areas at the CHEER Apartments. They have been residents of the senior independent living facility since it opened in 2000. For more information, see story on page 5. (Photo by Dawn Tomeski)

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CHEERful Living

This magazine is published quarterly by the Delaware State News in partnership with CHEER.

To support healthy and active lifestyles for seniors in Sussex County.

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The CEO's Perspective...



By Kenneth Bock

CHEER Chief Executive Officer

Each New Year, I look forward to the promise of new opportunities. At this time of year, I hope we can all see the glass as being at least half full and maybe more.

This is also a good time to reflect on those events that helped define 2019 for each of us. The one universal thing I have heard from so many of our great CHEER staff as last year came to an end was the hope that we would have more time to catch our breath in 2020. Sometimes the cup runneth over. I can certainly appreciate that; while at the same time, recognizing the need to embrace opportunities when they present themselves. 2019 has been a record great year for CHEER and our members, and we eagerly embrace 2020.

Last year, CHEER served record numbers of people while making a positive difference in the lives of many of our friends, neighbors, customers, volunteers and staff. We all benefited from CHEER. More people received more hours of CHEER personal assistance services in their homes than in any other year in our 49-year history. During that same period, our Adult Day Care program welcomed more new members than ever. People throughout

our county continued to participate in programs and events at each of our seven CHEER activity centers, while we continued to deliver meals in homes in almost every town and community in Sussex. For some, this was just another year of CHEER; but for many, it was so much more than that.

CHEER's all volunteer Board of Directors expanded by three new members last year as we continue to work to ensure that our leadership reflects the needs of the communities we serve. We have enhanced our recruitment efforts for home care workers and volunteers. Record service levels are a testament to our efforts to bring more people into the CHEER family.

A major goal for CHEER in 2019 was to begin securing funding and start the process to construct a new central kitchen in Georgetown to replace an obsolete 30+ year-old undersized kitchen that produces 1,700 meals daily to feed our senior citizens. Again, 2019 produced record results as CHEER's *Cooking for Sussex Seniors* capital campaign generated over \$1.5 Million from private foundation grants, State and County funds, and private donations. We still need additional support, but the highly successful *Cooking for Sussex Seniors* campaign has allowed us to begin the design and engineering work right on schedule. Our goal continues to be to begin producing meals out of a newly constructed kitchen in the spring of 2021.

The We Care Wellness project was not even something that was on our radar screen when we started 2019. Last spring, we were approached by Education Health Research International to

partner with them to develop a new program to help check on the wellness status of recipients of home delivered meals and to provide medical advocacy services if and where they may be warranted. We received a federal grant to conduct a three-year program to reduce the incidences of medical crises for home delivered meal recipients by providing proactive wellness screenings. This new service is already being offered in a limited prototype operation by the time this article went to print.

Catch your breath! 2019 has been a very busy year, but 2020 is now off and running. We Care will make a difference in the lives of Sussex seniors in 2020. Concrete and steel will start coming together to form a new kitchen that will serve thousands from current and future generations of seniors. Last week, CHEER set a new record high for the number of people receiving personal assistance care. CHEER will continue to pursue opportunities to serve our Sussex County community while maintaining our commitment for caring and compassion that are the hallmarks of CHEER's decades of service to Sussex County seniors. As always, we will continue to service our aging friends and neighbors while providing opportunities for others to get involved through volunteering and donations. Every volunteered hour and every donated dollar makes a difference in the lives of our most special customers.

One thing that held true before 2019 and continues to be true today in 2020 - everyone could use a little more CHEER in their life. Happy New Year; let's all make it another great one.

CHEER, Inc. STAFF

Kenneth Bock,
Chief Executive Officer

Beckett Wheatley,
Chief Operating Officer

Joyce Westen,
Chief Administrative Officer

Deborah Crum,
Finance Director

Lasandra Baynard,
Human Resources Director

Ken Moore,
Employee Benefits and
Donor Analyst

Carolyn O'Neal,
Community Relations Director

Carmel Rickenbach,
Nutrition Program Director

Debbie Joseph,
Personal Assistance Services
Program Director

Cindy Mitchell,
Sand Hill Adult Day
Program Director

Elizabeth Walls,
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Katie Leister,
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John Argo,
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Life is Good and Quiet at CHEER Apartments

20-Year Residents Say They are Blessed

By Carolyn O'Neal

Community Relations

CHEER Apartments in Georgetown celebrated its 20th anniversary in January 2020. At the time of opening, former CHEER Executive Director Arlene Littleton said, "We embarked upon an ambitious program to provide much-needed housing for many of our senior citizens."

Of all the residents in the 60 units, four remain who remember that first year. Lynne Skelton, Virginia Caras, John Yunus and Margot Kia agree that they are blessed to have homes in the senior living facility.

"I was so excited to move in," **Lynne Skelton** said about her apartment. Lynne moved into her home when the building opened on January 2, 2000. She is the longest residing person there.

"Although other apartments had been reserved, I was the only person on the floor until February," said Lynne. "I was all by myself for a month."

Lynne said she had the pick of all the apartments and settled on one on the second floor that picked up the morning sun. "Everything was so nice and new."

The retired hairdresser from Baltimore came to Millersboro in 1997 to help a friend take care of a menagerie of animals. Her son and grandchildren are still in Baltimore.



Resident John Yunus stirs some food on the stove in his CHEER Apartment.

Her mechanic told her about the CHEER Apartments being built. Unfortunately, there was already a waiting list. However, someone backed out at the last minute, and Lynne got the call to move in. Lynne says she had a lot of stuff so the hardest part about moving was deciding what to bring with her.

"My advice to anyone mov-

ing is to not get rid of anything until after you move in. Then what's left over you can discard," warns the 82-year-old.

Lynne likes to go to the movies and the beach. She also doesn't shy away from getting involved in community affairs. She takes pride in being the driving force in getting the trash collection changed for

the residents. Lynne especially likes how quiet and well-kept the CHEER Apartments are. She credits Gary Harmon, CHEER's groundskeeper, for his hard work.

"Gary is a wonderful person. He does the work of two people," declares Lynne. "He is always outside doing something."

If Lynne Skelton can be defined as the community advocate for the CHEER Apartments, then **Virginia (Ginnie) Caras** can be described as the unofficial activities director for the facility. She enjoys leading her fellow residents in craft classes and is looking for a fourth person to begin a Bridge team.

Ginnie was born and raised in Rehoboth. Her father owned the Rehoboth Lumber Company. She met her former husband while he was stationed with the Coast Guard off the Delaware shoreline. Three months later, they were married. She is fortunate that her six children still live in Delaware. Her favorite pastime is golf.

"I would get the kids in school and then go out and golf," the 89-year-old chuckled. She was once on the Board of Directors of Sussex Pines Country Club (now Mulligan's Point). She still likes to play a round of golf when the

See Apartments • Page 6

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The finished CHEER Apartments can be seen located behind the CHEER Community Center.

Apartments

Continued From Page 5

weather is cool and goes to the country club to play Bridge on Mondays.

"It keeps me busy in both mind and body," Ginnie said.

Ginnie recently sat in her CHEER apartment and watched the crew of workmen put a new roof on the building. She was amazed at how they could walk on the roof. Ginnie said she was determined not to live with any of her children when she grew old. A friend recommended she apply at the CHEER Apartments.

"I am so lucky to be living here. I love my apartment and everybody here," said Ginnie. "The apartment also has a lot of room and closet space."

John Younus also considers himself lucky to be living in the CHEER Apartments. A native of India, he left his homeland at the age of 18 and made his way to Canada by way of London and Norway before eventually coming to the United States. He served in the Merchant Marines during World War II and after retiring from the service, opened a restaur-

ant in Manhattan, New York, that he operated for 26 years.

After leaving the restaurant business, John's son brought him to Millsboro 22 years ago. He also has a daughter and two grandchildren. He told that his late wife gave him the information about the CHEER Apartments.

The 93-year-old enjoys walking to stay physically fit. A quiet man, John says his life at the CHEER Apartments is "very comfortable."

Margot Kia is the only 20-year resident still working. She came to Delaware from Missouri to work at a condominium complex at the beach. "My cousin sent me a one-way ticket to Salisbury, Md. airport," the 82-year-old explained. That was 20 years ago. She still works part-time in the office of the same complex.

Margot lived with her cousins for six years before they retired and moved to Florida. She didn't want to relocate again, so decided to stay in Delaware. They had all watched the CHEER Apartments being constructed in 1999, so she decided to apply. Her cousins

See Apartments • Page 8

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The CHEER Apartments are shown being built in 1999.



Margot Kia enjoys crocheting lap robes for the Nimble Fingers club in the third floor lounge of the CHEER Apartments.

Apartments

Continued From Page 6

helped her move into the independent living facility in April 2000 before they headed to Florida.

Living in Georgetown is very convenient for the active senior. She has been on the planning committee for 25 years for Del Tech's Today and Tomorrow Conference and was part of the college's Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA). She also is very busy with the Nimble Fingers crocheting club.

Margot has no children and all of her family lives on the West Coast. She describes her living arrangements as very peaceful and quiet. "I can stay up as late as I want and get up when I want. I especially enjoy watching the sunset from my

car when I come home," said Margot.

CHEER Apartments are located on Clark Avenue, east of Georgetown, and are within walking distance to the Warren L. and Charles C. Allen, Jr. CHEER Community Center. The one-bedroom units average approximately 732 square feet. There is a community lounge on each of the three floors. Residents are invited to enjoy all activities at the Community Center and hop on the CHEER bus to travel to the Georgetown CHEER Activity Center across town. The subsidized senior housing facility is managed by East Coast Property Management. There is a one-to-two year waiting list for occupancy. For more information, call manager Susan Vanderslice at 302-856-6676.

New Board Member Wants to Close Generation Gap

By Carolyn O'Neal

Community Relations

Bernard Miller believes the younger generation can learn a lot from senior citizens. He says it is important for seniors and young folks to be more connected and take advantage of the seniors' wisdom. As a retired State Police supervisor of school resource officers, Bernard says he has done safety presentations to both generations and has been impressed with the questions asked by the senior citizens.

"They are more in tune to what's going on in the world," Bernard said. "The seniors pay attention to the issues (of the world) whereas the kids do not. I think our kids can learn a lot from the seniors."

Growing up in the Milton/Lewes area, Bernard graduated from Cape Henlopen High



New Board member Bernard Miller gets a tour of the food serving area at CHEER's Georgetown Activity Center. Left to right are: volunteer Edith Poore; kitchen helper Sheila Collins; kitchen manager Linda Roberts; Miller; and head cook Harry Cannon.

School in 1982. He attends Mount Zion Holiness Church in Milton, pastored by Bishop Grace Batten who is also the president of CHEER's Board of Directors.

"I have heard Bishop Bat-

ten talk so much about CHEER that when she asked me to serve on its Board I thought this was something I wanted to be a part of," Bernard explained. "I spoke with the CEO (Ken Bock) and saw that

their vision lined up with what I thought was important, so I said yes."

Bernard reflected on the growth he has seen in Sussex County during the past few decades. He pointed out just the tremendous amount of people now on the county's roads. "I'm not against growth," he said. "Others are seeing what we always knew was here. But because of that growth, many agencies and organizations have to change."

Although Bernard is still learning about all the services CHEER offers senior citizens in Sussex County, he says there is a need to expand on those services. "I would like to help close the generation gap and change the public's perception of the agency," he said.

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Nutrition Director's Legacy Lives on in New Kitchen

Florence Mason Retires After 27 Years at CHEER

By Carolyn O'Neal
Community Relations

December 26, 2019 was a strange day at CHEER, Inc. It was the first day in 27 years that Florence Mason did not work at the agency. The day before, she worked at CHEER's annual Operation Christmas CHEER greeting volunteers who gave of their time to come pick up gifts and a hot meal and deliver them to a homebound senior in Sussex County. As in the past 27 years, three generations of Florence's family were also there to help. However, when Florence walked out of the Georgetown Activity Center at noon, her responsibilities at the agency ended. She was officially retired. The occasion was surreal for Florence, her biological family, and her CHEER family.

Florence came to CHEER in February 1992 after working 25 years as the Food Services Director at Nanticoke Memorial Hospital. That retirement lasted two months before she was pushing a laundry cart at



The CHEER Board dedicated the new central kitchen in honor of Florence Mason. Left to right are: front row - Chief Operating Officer Beckett Wheatley, Ms. Mason, Walt Koopman, Chief Administrative Officer Joyce Westen, Diaz Bonville and David Baker; back row - CHEER Chief Executive Officer Ken Bock, Assistant Nutrition Director Robin Greene, Nick Varrato, and Harry Cannon, head chef. Hidden behind Ms. Wheatley is Board Member Joe Conaway.

Peninsula Regional Hospital in Salisbury as a member of its housekeeping team. A few months later, she took a job as the Food Services Director at Harrison House in Georgetown. Then she saw an advertisement for a Nutrition Director at CHEER. Former CHEER Executive Director Arlene Lit-

leton interviewed her and offered her the job the next day.

At that time, CHEER had a limited nutrition program. "The first week, we were monitored by the Division of Aging," Florence remembers. "Nirmala Abraham (retired State Nutrition Program Director) was instrumental in

helping us comply with state requirements. Six months later, she came back (to again assess the agency), and we had all the prospective basics intact."

Today, CHEER serves 1,700 meals a day to Sussex County seniors at either its seven

See Flo • Page 11

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CHEER staff presented Florence Mason with a family Bible as a parting gift upon her retirement. Left to right are: CHEER Chief Operating Officer Beckett Wheatley, Ms. Mason (hidden behind is Harry Cannon, head chef), Assistant Nutrition Director Robin Greene (who has worked with Ms. Mason for 18 years), CHEER Chief Administrative Officer Joyce Westen, and CHEER Chief Executive Officer Ken Bock.

Flo

Continued From Page 10

activity centers and day care center, two independent senior centers, or Meals-on-Wheels recipients.

Hard work is something from which Florence never shied. As Ken Bock, CHEER Chief Executive Officer, said, "Florence Mason's car is the first one in the parking lot, and all too often it is the last one to leave every night."

Florence first married when she was 18 years old. She had two daughters with her first husband. She remarried in 1965 and had three daughters with her second husband, and helped raise two stepsons. While raising a large family and working full-time at Nanticoke, she went back to school at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore to get her college degree. Although she could get the basics at UofMd., they had no dietetic curriculum, so she had to travel to its campus at College Park, Md. for those classes. However, in order to qualify to do nutrition educa-

tion in a hospital setting, she needed a Master's degree, so more time and effort was spent at Salisbury State College.

Food is not the only thing Florence supervised at CHEER. CHEER already had events such as the Trap Pond Picnic, Operation Christmas CHEER and Beach Day. Through the years, Florence helped begin and supervise events such as March for Meals, Older Americans Day, Car, Truck and Bike Show, Holiday Feast, Veterans Celebration and the spring and fall craft shows. She was also on the Board of Directors of Meals on Wheels Association of America from 2000-2002 and was chairperson of producing the Regional 3 MOW Conference in April 2002.

To show appreciation for Florence's many years of dedication to the non-profit agency, CHEER hosted a retirement dinner on December 20 that was well attended by family, friends, co-workers, and dignitaries. The Delaware State Senate and House of Representatives, and Town of



Travel Club

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Set in the opulent yet perilous Persian Empire, Queen Esther is a captivating tale of beauty and bravery. \$115/person includes round-trip bus, show ticket, and Grand Smorgasbord at the Hershey Farm Restaurant. Leave CHEER Community Center, Georgetown, at 7:30 a.m., return approx. 6 p.m.

HOLOCAUST MUSEUM, Washington, DC Tues., May 26, 2020

The museum offers a tour of the permanent exhibit known as "The Holocaust." It is divided into three parts - "Nazi Assault," "Final Solution," and "Last Chapter." Upon entrance, visitors are issued an identity card with the name of a real person who was persecuted by Nazis or their collaborators. You will be guided on a path through the three-level exhibit, which contains photographs, artifacts, and audio and video footage, as well as large-scale installations, including a Polish railcar that was used to transport Jews to concentration camps and that visitors are allowed to board. Throughout the exhibit, visitors are given a chance to learn about the fate of the individual on their assigned identity card. Leave CCC in Geo. at 8 a.m. On your own til tour at 11:45 a.m., then on your own until depart DC at 3:30 p.m. \$55/CHEER member; \$65/public.

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY & CULTURE MUSEUM - Washington, DC Tues., June 29, 2020

The National Museum of African American History and Culture is a Smithsonian Institution museum located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The museum seeks to understand American history through the lens of the African American experience. Leave CCC, Geo. at 8 a.m., depart DC at 3:30 p.m. \$55/CHEER member; \$65/public.

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Miller

Continued From Page 9

referring to the thought that the agency is just for old, frail people.

"There is a lot going on here," he said. "People are living longer, more active lives now."

Bernard admits that his own life is in a chapter of change. After over 31 years with the State Police, acquiring the rank of Detective Sergeant, he now finds himself keeping busy with tennis, basketball, golf and cycling. His wife, Alison, their three sons and one daughter, plus two grandchildren, also help occupy his time.

"Right now my job is to keep busy in retirement," Bernard laughed. "CHEER fits right in with that."



Before leaving CHEER on Christmas Day, Florence Mason (sitting) poses with several volunteers, staff and family members who helped at Operation Christmas CHEER.

Flo

Continued From Page 11

Georgetown presented tributes to her. Letters of congratulations were read from U.S. Senator Tom Carper, Delaware Governor John Carney and former CHEER Executive Director Arlene Littleton. She also received gifts from Sussex Sheriff Robert Lee, CHEER Board of Directors, and her CHEER family.

However, the most memorable token was the announcement that Florence's legacy will continue at the new central kitchen at the CHEER Community Center. The CHEER Board decided to dedicate it "in honor of Florence Mason, who developed CHEER's nutrition program with passion for helping others." Design for the new central kitchen is in the works, and groundbreaking is tentatively set for this summer with the modern facility expected to begin operation in spring 2021.

Holding back tears upon hearing the announcement, Florence said, "I'm excited for

CHEER. Can you believe that – a big kitchen to double the amount we're doing now!"

Retirement finds Florence moving from Georgetown to live with one of her daughters on the other side of the Bay Bridge in the Baltimore area where she was born. Her mother was a "Rosie Riveter" during World War II and her father was a camouflage painter at an aircraft factory. After the war, he moved the family to Salisbury and opened an upholstery business.

Although Florence is anxious to spend more time with her eight children and several great-grandchildren, she says complete retirement is not her style. "I'll find something to do," she predicts. "I have been working since I was 12 years old in my father's upholstery garage in Salisbury, I have to do something. But nothing more in administration."

Deeply dedicated to her faith, a lot of Florence's retirement time will be spent helping her church. She said when she gave her life to God, she asked Him to reveal her pur-

pose to her, where upon He sent her to CHEER.

"CHEER gave me a paycheck to fulfill God's purpose for my life," the 76-year-old declared.

The one thing that Florence takes with her from CHEER is the family atmosphere she worked in every day for 27 years. She expressed her appreciation for how her co-workers supported her during a very dark time in her life.

"We care for each other," Florence described. "As I close this chapter in my life... I go with fond memories. I go with love and admiration for the people that I worked with... There is no one person. There is no "I" in team. I could not have done it; I could not have accomplished anything without each and every one of you that has worked with me now and during the years... No one person is an island ... it takes a team to pull it together, what we do for our seniors in Sussex County... Thank you for every memory, every accomplishment that we have done in 27 years. I love you all."



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Cooking for Sussex Seniors

After Serving Generations; CHEER's New Kitchen for More Generations

By Kenneth S. Bock
CEO

This will be the year we will break ground on a new kitchen that will serve current and future generations of senior citizens throughout Sussex County, just as our current obsolete and undersized kitchen did for generations past. Our *Cooking for Sussex Seniors* fundraising campaign continues to progress, but we still need your support. If you have not yet donated to our *Cooking for Sussex Seniors* capital campaign, or if you want to offer additional support, you may do so at any CHEER center, on-line at www.cheerde.com, or through the mail.

The design and engineering work for this kitchen is continuing as our requirements for this new kitchen are starting to take form on blueprints and equipment specifications. Think about what it would take for a kitchen to be able to produce up to 2,615 meals each day in an eight-hour period. I often tell people that when CHEER goes grocery shopping, it involves deliveries from at least two tractor-trailer trucks each week. We have now finalized the list of equipment and appliances that will be needed in our new kitchen. That alone is expected to cost in excess of \$300,000. Working with the engineers and designers, we are looking for every way to stretch every donated dollar to have a cost effective and efficient kitchen. Through the process of value engineering, we have been able to save literally hundreds of thousands of dollars from the designer's original estimates. These value engineering efforts are helping us to manage this project consistently within our approved budget and at the same time ensure that we are getting the greatest possible value for every precious dollar individual donors, elected officials, and foundations have entrusted to us.

One of our important commitments to each donor to the *Cooking for Sussex*



Seniors campaign is not only will we construct and equip a kitchen that will serve the growing senior citizen population in Sussex County for generations to come, but we will undertake this project in a manner that respects every dollar donated.

We have come a very long way since first announcing our plan to raise funds to build a new kitchen back in the spring of 2018. Now as construction plans are being drawn and we begin the process of regulatory reviews and approvals, the dream of this new kitchen is starting to become a reality. By this summer, we will be in the process of selecting a construction contractor. This fall, we will break ground. When I write this column a year from now, it will include an invitation to all of you to attend an official grand opening for the kitchen.

I am also happy to announce that by unanimous vote, the Board of Directors decided to dedicate the new kitchen to the legacy of its former nutrition director, Florence Mason. Florence was instrumental in developing the agency's nutrition program and served in that capacity for 27 years before retiring in December. See related story on page 10.

We have come a long way. We still have a long way to go and a lot of work needs to be done before we are able to produce that first meal in the new kitchen. But, this project is moving forward and that first meal and many more will be coming in 2021 and beyond.

Volunteer Spotlight

Ernestine Sheinall - Milton



Ernestine Sheinall likes football and baseball. She cherishes spending time with her four children and four grandchildren, plus the dozens of other people who lovingly call her mom. But two or three days a week, she enjoys coming to CHEER's Milton Activity Center and helping out in the kitchen.

"I attended the center for about a month," said the retired government worker. "Then I saw a need for help in the kitchen so I offered."

That was four years ago. Now she regularly schedules into her week volunteer time to pack meals for the homebound. But if she is needed, she will come to CHEER when called. She also can be found helping out at the center's Tuesday night dinners.

Originally from North Carolina, Ernestine made her way to Milton eleven years ago after living in Maryland while working.

Milton Center Director Sheila Rell can't praise the senior enough. "Ernestine is a big part of our Meals on Wheels team. She helps to keep the kitchen running efficiently and always has a smile for everyone."



A CHRISTMAS THANK YOU

(Editor's Note: The following letter is from a senior in Bethany Beach who was one of the recipients of the Operation Christmas CHEER meal and gifts delivered by dedicated volunteers. This is why CHEER has conducted this Christmas Day event for over 25 years.)

To Whom It May Concern,

I want to sincerely thank the group of people who visited me on Christmas Day. The meal and the gifts were greatly appreciated as I did not have anything prepared that day. I could use all of the gifts brought to me and it really brightened my day. Please give a special thanks to Alberta and Frank and the students from LNE (Long Neck Elementary) school. It was a wonderful thing that they did and I will remember them always in my prayers.

This note is late as I sent one right after Christmas to the wrong address. May everyone from CHEER Meals on Wheels and all that participated have a wonderful year and God bless you all.





Get to know the members of the Sand Hill Adult Day Program

Featuring "Woody" Dryden

By Cindy Mitchell

Day Program Director

Almost 75 years ago, Woodrow (Woody) Dryden was born on the eastern shore of Virginia in a small town near Chincoteague, Va., called Greenbackville. He was the youngest child with a sister four years older. When Woody was 12 years old, his family moved to a small town near Salisbury, Md., called Wango, so his dad could work on a chicken farm. As an adult, he learned to be a mechanic and took care of various chicken farms in the Georgetown/Seaford areas. Woody also spent six years working for Perdue in their Salisbury Hatchery. He now resides in Laurel with his wife of 33 years, Valerie.

Woody began attending the Sand Hill Adult Day Program in August 2018. When

asked what his favorite part of the program is, he said, "The staff is very friendly and helpful." He also said he has developed some good friendships with the other members. They cut up and carry on as brothers and sisters. Woody enjoys the weekly field trips. His favorite trips are to the Milton Park and Dunkin Donuts.

The Adult Day Program is open Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. with door-to-door bus service available throughout Sussex County. The program provides a hot, nutritious lunch and two snacks. Mornings begin with various brain fitness activities. Bingo is a group favorite; there are a dozen different kinds. Helen Bivens from Waters Edge Church comes into the program every Wednesday to lead a Bible Study for those who want to listen. Call Cindy Mitchell at 302-212-4482 or 302-854-2882 to learn more about our program.



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Adams State Social Service Bldg.
546 South Bedford St., Georgetown
Or CHEER Community Center
20520 Sand Hill Rd., Georgetown

We Care – A CHEER Value for Home Delivered Meal Customers

By Kenneth S. Bock

CEO

For almost five decades, CHEER has been delivering meals to senior citizens in their homes throughout Sussex County. Generations of seniors have benefitted from CHEER-delivered meals and enjoyed the companionship and compassion of CHEER's dedicated volunteers who make the home delivered meal program possible.

Last summer, CHEER began working with Education Health Research International on a proposal for developing a more structured way of monitoring home delivered meal customer wellness and establishing medical advocacy services to assist seniors in getting medical services which they may need and which they may be entitled to. We were awarded a federal grant to develop and implement a program over the next three years that will help us serve and improve wellness for our home delivered meal customers. Participation in the program will be voluntary and this service will be offered at no cost to the individual meal customer.

CHEER volunteers will be trained to periodically ask customers a brief series of questions with "yes" or "no" answers when they deliver meals. The questions will be general in nature involving feelings about health and related activities such as eating and exercising regularly. There will not be any questions about financial matters or about any health care providers the customer may have. All information will be treated as



confidential. The answers customers provide will be reviewed by a trained medical caseworker and researchers to try to identify any trends or other medical concerns. If a possible concern is detected, the medical caseworker will contact the customer to make them aware of the concern and offer to assist them in getting appropriate medical services if they wish to have those services. Customer participation is voluntary, and customers may opt to participate or not to participate as they wish.

The goal of the "We Care" wellness program is to help individuals maintain their health, continue to age in place in their own homes, and avoid medical crisis through a proactive approach to health wellness monitoring. The program is not a replacement or substitute for any medical services an individual may already have in place, but is a supplement to help each participant maintain their "wellness." Within the next few months, CHEER will be contacting home delivered meal recipients to provide more information about the important value added benefit for CHEER customers.

We could all use a little more CHEER in our lives, and the new "We Care" wellness benefit is just one more way for us to offer seniors more CHEER.



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Where Do You Get Your Protein?

Time for Something New – Beefless Vegan Tacos

By **Carmel Rickenbach,**
MS, RD, LDN

“Protein: Amount and Timing Matter,” (CHEERful Living, Summer 2019) discussed eating enough protein, spread evenly throughout the day, to suppress appetite and therefore help manage weight, preserve lean body mass and bone health, aid in the prevention of chronic diseases, and boost the muscle building effect of exercise. The target amount of protein that should be eaten at each meal is about 20 grams, or about 3-4 oz. of meat, fish, or poultry.

The 2015 - 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans encourage us to eat a variety of food, including alternative

sources of protein. Those who follow a vegetarian or vegan diet are familiar with this concept since animal products, which are typically the richest sources of protein, are off limits in their diets. Vegans and vegetarians routinely include foods like eggs (for ovo-vegetarians), beans and peas, nuts, nut butters, and soy products like edamame, tofu, and tempeh. If you are not familiar with tempeh, it has a cake-like texture and is a common replacement for meat in vegetarian and vegan cooking, in foods like veggie burgers.

Other lesser known plant based proteins include hemp seed which provides 11 grams of protein per three tablespoons

and is also a good source of Omega 3 heart healthy fats. Nutritional yeast, different from baking yeast, provides eight grams of protein per tablespoon and has a salty buttery flavor, and can be sprinkled on top of savory foods. Pea powder or supplements are loaded with protein at 20 grams per scoop and can be added to smoothies, or mixed with hot water or milk to make a soup stock. Spirulina, a form of al-

gae, is 65 percent protein and one tablespoon provides more protein than an egg.

So if you feel adventurous, or are trying a plant-based diet, experiment with some of the alternative protein sources above. You may find one or two that can be easily incorporated into your daily or weekly routine. One website that offers a variety of vegetarian recipes is EatingWell.com. See below for this nutritionist's pick.

Beefless Vegan Tacos (EatingWell.com, March 2019)

Ingredients:

16 oz. package extra-firm tofu, drained, crumbled and patted dry
2 Tbsp reduced sodium tamari or soy sauce
1 tsp chili powder
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp onion powder
1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 ripe avocado
1 Tbsp vegan mayo
1 tsp lime juice
Pinch of salt
½ c. fresh salsa
2 c. shredded Iceberg lettuce
8 corn or flour tortillas, warmed
Pickled radishes for garnish

Directions:

Step 1: Combine tofu, tamari (or soy sauce), chili powder, garlic powder and onion powder in a medium bowl. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the tofu mixture and cook, stirring occasionally, until nicely browned, 8-10 minutes.

Step 2: Meanwhile, mash avocado, mayo, lime juice and salt in a small bowl until smooth.

Step 3: Serve the taco “meat” with the avocado crema, salsa, and lettuce in tortillas. Serve topped with pickled radishes, if desired.

(Nutrition Facts: Per 2 tacos: 360 calories; 21 g total fat; 3.1 g saturated fat; 610 mg sodium; 553 mg potassium; 33 g Carb; 8 g fiber; 4 g sugar; 17 g protein; 556 IU Vitamin A; 8 mg vitamin C; 64 mcg folate; 375 mg calcium; 4 mg iron; 93 mg magnesium.)



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Santa's Sleighs Are Packed...



Santa's Sleighs were placed by CHEER in various businesses in Sussex County during the holiday season in which the public could put their donated Christmas gifts for senior citizens as part of Operation Christmas CHEER. In lower photo, County Bank employees Wendy Rogers and Bonnie Paulson at Long Neck gather up the gifts for Santa; bottom left photo shows the overflow of gifts from the sleigh at Meinke in Lewes, owned by Jody and Dave Repass, top left photo shows County Bank employees Pam Clowser and Terrie Miller at Georgetown are proud of their customers' generosity.





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CHEER Transportation Enters New Decade

By Genny Hines

Transportation Director

A new decade is just beginning. Can you believe it is 2020? Let's consider it the Big Bang of Sussex County. Even though it has been a very mild winter - which is okay for most Delawareans - a little bit of snow and frost would destroy the germs that bring on colds and allergies.

All of our CHEER buses and vans now have cameras and GPS systems installed in them that will help the drivers when going on trips and finding homes of new members who have recently retired or re-located to Sussex County. Looking around the area, there are approximately eight new subdivisions being built in Sussex County. Hopefully, that will bring more members to CHEER. Please feel free to

make suggestions on places and events in which you would like to see the center participate.

The interior of the grand hall at the CHEER Community Center has been recently painted and new tile flooring installed. It looks great. It is bright and has a warm welcoming feeling. Hope all the centers plan on attending upcoming events and meet Katie Leister, our new venue coordinator.

We still have March to get through with some sort of cold weather, but there's always something to do at the CHEER activity centers. So sign up to ride the bus and play Mah-jongg, go shopping, bowling, take Zumba, or just come in and have coffee or lunch and socialize with your neighbors, friends and members from all the CHEER centers.

March - March for Meals

Dignitaries to Deliver Meals on March 19;
Fundraising Dinners to be Held

CHEER, Inc. will once again participate in the National "March for Meals" campaign on Thursday, March 19. This is an annual campaign intended to generate public awareness, recruit new volunteers, and increase local fundraising for CHEER's local Meals on Wheels program. Elected officials and members of local communities have been invited to come and deliver a meal to a homebound senior and then enjoy lunch afterwards. They are encouraged to see first-hand the importance of the meal they deliver and have the opportunity to talk with the senior about how the meal benefits them.

On March 22, 1972, President Richard Nixon signed into law a measure that amended the Older Americans Act of 1965 and established a national nutrition program for seniors 60 years and older. For more than 45 years, these critical programs - commonly referred to as Meals on Wheels - have delivered more than just nutritious meals to homebound seniors in virtually every community across the country. The dedicated staff and volunteers who deliver these meals each week provide a vital lifeline and connection to the community, which are sometimes all it takes to keep our senior neighbors at home, where they want to be.

March for Meals was started by Meals on Wheels America, a national association of meals on wheels providers

across the country. Meals on Wheels programs have come together each March since 2002 to celebrate this proven collaboration of local community organizations, businesses, all levels of government and compassionate individuals to ensure that our seniors are not forgotten. By volunteering, donating or speaking out, you can ensure the seniors in your neighborhood can live healthy, happy and independent lives at home, where they want to be.

CHEER, Inc. will also be holding its Annual March for Meals Fundraising Dinners in all CHEER Activity Centers on Thursday, March 19 from 5-7 p.m. The purpose of these dinners is to make the public aware of what the home-delivered meal program is all about, and to raise funds for the Meals on Wheels program. The dinners are open to the public and CHEER hopes that everyone comes out and supports this endeavor. The dinners will have entertainment and a 50/50 raffle. The cost of the meal served that night is only \$5 per person. With every meal served, half of the proceeds will go to pay for the raw food for an additional senior meal. Everyone attending will be asked to sign a pledge letter stating that they participated in the event and support Meals on Wheels in their communities.

Contact your local CHEER Center to make reservations by March 12, 2020.

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**Contact Your Local
CHEER Center or call
302-854-9500**

CHEER

CHEER Looses Beloved Angel



CHEER is saddened upon the loss of one of its “angels of mercy” who supported the agency for over 33 years. Pat Rust lost her courageous battle against cancer at the age of 82 on January 31, 2020 surrounded by her beloved family.

Pat joined CHEER in 1987 as a home health nurse. After retiring, she joined the Board of Directors of CHEER in 1998 and served as its secretary until the spring of 2019. She began the CHEERful Notes Glee Club and served as its director for many years. Pat was also very active as a past Great Pocahontas of Delaware in the Degree of Pocahontas, the women’s affiliate of the Improved Order of the Red Men, and her church, Providence U.M. Church.

Pat lost her beloved husband, Fred, in September 2019. She is survived by two sons, George F. III (Rusty) and Keith; one daughter, Karen Farrell; four grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

2020 - New Year in a NEW Room!

Create the wedding ceremony and/or reception you’ve always dreamed of by using our renovated venue at the CHEER Community Center. New neutral paint on the walls and sparkling new tile flooring ensure that your color scheme will enhance the ambiance of the occasion. Set up for tables and chairs will be ready for your special touch decorating the day before your wedding day. Dining seating available for up to 400 guests.

CHEER can also accommodate a beautiful outdoors wedding ceremony on the grounds.

Marilyn’s Catering is very experienced and will customize a unique and affordable menu for you.



For those smaller parties for birthdays, bridal showers, baby showers, graduation, retirement, etc., take advantage of the space at one of the CHEER Activity Centers located in:

- Greenwood • Lewes • Long Neck
- Milton • Ocean View

20520 Sand Hill Rd. • Georgetown, DE

www.cheerde.com

302-854-9500

April – National Volunteer Month

CHEER to Honor Volunteers at Dinner

In the United States, volunteerism is instilled at a young age. In many parts of the country, it is the cornerstone of summer vacation or woven into after school programs. Most organizations in small towns, rural counties and the largest cities would not function without volunteers. In some families, the baton of volunteerism is handed down generation after generation.

Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes. They pick a cause and make a difference in someone's life. Sometimes the difference is a drop in the bucket. Other times it creates a tidal wave of change. From the anonymous volunteers who donate their resources to those whose efforts are part of larger national organizations, their missions provide valuable support to communities in times of need. April became National Volunteer Month as part of President George H. W. Bush's 1000 Points of Light campaign in 1991.

National Volunteer Week – April 19-25, 2020 – during the third week in April is an opportunity to thank all the thousands of volunteers across the country who keep many organizations running, communities safe, and provide the services that otherwise would not exist without volunteers.

It's also a time to consider volunteering or providing support to those organizations vital to your community. CHEER could not provide all of its services to senior citizens without the dedication of its volunteers. To honor all its volunteers, CHEER will be hosting Appreciation Dinners at each of its activity center sites during the month of April. Check local media, the CHEER website, or at your activity center for dates and complete details.

May – Cowboys Return to CHEER

50+ Frontier Festival Again Promises Western Fun

CHEER, Inc. will be bringing back the exciting Frontier Festival on Friday, May 1. CHEER's 50+ Frontier Festival will be a day of fun and surprises featuring all types of western activities and entertainment. Numerous healthcare educators and professionals will also be available to answer your questions.

The Frontier Festival will be held on the grounds of the Warren L. and Charles C. Allen, Jr. CHEER Community Center, 20520 Sand Hill Road, east of Georgetown from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Visitors to the Frontier Festival will be greeted by the hospitable antics of local disc jockey Sky Brady who will serve as master of ceremonies throughout the day for the outside activities. The indoor stage will feature music and local entertainers.

Highlighting the themed entertainment in the outdoor tent will be a display of western skills demonstrated by Shane Karson and his family. Shane returns by popular demand and promises to bring a new routine of equestrian skills. Shane has been performing for decades at rodeos and fairs around the country doing some impressive cowboy tricks and maneuvers. He has been honored to perform at the Pro Rodeo National Finals in Las Vegas, Nevada, and at Dollywood in Tennessee. He is now the manager of the Frontier Town Western Theme Park in Ocean City, Md., the same park where his father and mother performed when Shane was a youngster. His wife, Julie, and son, Clay, will be joining him at the



Shane and Julie Karson and son from Frontier Town, Ocean City, Md., will return to perform at CHEER's Frontier Festival on Friday, May 1.

CHEER Frontier Festival with a repertoire of new acts.

Other activities during the day will include carriage rides, an arson dog sniffing demonstration, and new this year – mule jumping competition.

The public is invited to join the fun at CHEER's 50+ Frontier Festival. Admission is free. Come dressed in your western attire. Lunch will be available. Complete details will be publicized as completed.

If you would like to be a sponsor or vendor at CHEER's 50+ Frontier Festival on May 1, call Carolyn at 302-515-3044. CHEER is a non-profit agency that serves Sussex County's seniors. All proceeds from the Festival will benefit those services.



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Bethany Women Support CHEER...

The Women's Civic Club of Bethany Beach showed its support of CHEER by presenting a \$2,000 donation to the agency's Cooking for Sussex Seniors capital campaign to build a new central kitchen that will have the capacity to feed Meals on Wheels senior citizens for years to come. Making the presentation is Club President Kay Houston (right) to Ken Moore, CHEER Employee Benefits and Donor Analyst.

Support Groups That Can Help

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Ocean View CHEER, third Friday of each month, 11:30 a.m. Lunch is available to purchase.
Lewes CHEER, fourth Tuesday of each month, 10 a.m.
Milton CHEER, fourth Friday of each month, 1 p.m.

PARKINSON SUPPORT GROUP

The Lutheran Church of our Savior, Rehoboth, 7 Bay Vista Rd. (Behind Big Fish on Rte. 1), first Monday each month, 1:30 p.m.

PARKINSON SUPPORT GROUP

Manor House, Seaford, third Thursday each month, 9:30 a.m.

PARKINSON SUPPORT GROUP

Ocean View CHEER, third Wednesday each month, 3 p.m.
Call Yolanda, 302-539-2671.

MEMORY CAFÉ

Social for Caregiver and Loved One with Dementia
Call Gerri - 302-854-9500.

DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

Ocean View CHEER, first Thursday each month, 6 p.m.
Call Yolanda 302-539-2671.
Greenwood CHEER, first Monday each month 1 p.m. Call Fran 302-349-5237.
Milton CHEER, third Thursday each month 1 p.m. Call Sheila 302-684-4819.

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN SUPPORT GROUP

CHEER Community Center, fourth Monday of each month, 1 p.m. Call Kathleen Landis, Caregiver Resource to register - 302-854-9500.



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GIFTS FOR SENIORS



Top left: Joan Breasure (right) and her sister, Peggy, have been donated for the past 15 years. Accepting the 2019 donation is former CHEER Nutrition Director Florence Mason.

Bottom left: Tabatha Circle of Georgetown Presbyterian Church donated dozens of gifts to Operation Christmas CHEER. Left to right are: CHEER Volunteer Director Elizabeth Walls, Tabatha Circle members Carol Ann Stone and Terry Burkey, former CHEER Nutrition Director Florence Mason, and CHEER Assistant Nutrition Director Robin Greene.

Right: Hawthorne Development neighbors donated to Operation Christmas CHEER. They tallied 128 gifts, 135 cans of cat food, 107 cans of dog food and numerous other items. Delivering the goods are, left to right: Cindy Picard and Susan Cahill to CHEER Assistant Nutrition Director Robin Greene.



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COSMETIC GIFTS FOR SENIORS:

Mary Kay Cosmetics representative Karen Adams and her husband delivered a hundred donated gift bags of cosmetics to Operation Christmas CHEER to be given to senior citizens in Sussex County. Mrs. Adams has been treating the seniors for several years.

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CHEER

Thank You!

CHEER will be honoring all CHEER volunteers at Appreciation Dinners at each of our CHEER sites during the month of April! Check with the centers for dates and times.

CHEER Acknowledges Dedication of its DCWs

CHEER recognized several Direct Care Workers in its Personal Assistance Services department at their winter in-service training for providing outstanding personal assistance to senior citizen customers. Taylor Robertson of Bridgeville was honored by being designated as Aide of the Summer 2019 Quarter, and Ronda Dobson of Laurel received the award for Aide of the Fall 2019 Quarter.

Being named Stars of the Month in 2019 were: January – Paulette Jones of Seaford; February – Nancy Smith of Frankford; March – Debbie Walton of Georgetown; April – Allison Mazza of Dagsboro; May – Pauline Wescott of

Bishopville, Md.; June – Nancy Smith of Frankford; July – Taylor Robertson of Bridgeville; August and September – Ronda Dobson of Laurel; October – Laura Pusey of Seaford; November – Ronda Dobson of Laurel; and December (not announced by press time).

Topic of the in-service training was “Sexual Harassment” presented by CHEER’s Human Relations Director Sandy Baynard. CHEER’s Personal Assistance Services are administered by trained and insured professionals who provide care and companionship for you or your loved one. For more information about PASA, call 302-854-9555.

Ronda Dobson (right) receives her award from PASA Director Debbie Joseph.



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