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Summer 2020

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Center Expands**

**Mr. Goodwood
Likes Smiling
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All proceeds will go towards CHEER's program



ON THE COVER

Dedicated to Volunteers



This issue is dedicated to all the volunteers who continued to help CHEER during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that seniors would not go hungry while isolated in their homes. Together we continue to meet the challenges of the elderly in Sussex County. Ms. Edith Poore represents all the faithful who put on masks and gloves to serve their neighbors. Read more about her contribution on page 9.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHEER, INC.,
VISIT CHEERDE.COM OR LIKE US ON FACEBOOK.

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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
CEO, CHEER

We have just gone through what will most certainly be remembered as one of our country's darkest periods, and for many of us, it is not over yet. In the coming months, there will be all kinds of analysts who will tell us how this happened, what went right, and what we should have done better. I will leave those discussions to those experts.

As I reflect on the events of the last several weeks, I want to remember the people and organizations that stepped up to the challenge, going above and beyond to serve people throughout their communities. During these truly amazing times, I have seen people do some truly amazing things that made bigger differences in the lives of others than we will ever know.

I want to start with some of the big little things. When this whole pandemic first started, many of us laughed about the run on toilet paper and the fact

the TP shelves were bare in most grocery stores. It stopped being funny when I saw several of our home-delivered meals volunteers carrying around packages of toilet paper in their car trunks so they could leave a couple of rolls with a senior citizen who had none in their home and no way to get it if they could. Nobody told these volunteers to do this, but I can only imagine what that must have meant to a senior citizen isolated in their home for weeks on end. We will never know the number of loaves of bread, jugs of milk and cartons of eggs that CHEER volunteers bought with their own money to give to a senior who had bare cabinets. That was never written in any job description or service specification and yet, it was happening daily all over our county. What can we ever say about people who deliver a meal to a homebound senior, see a need, jump back in their car, go to the local store, and then deliver back to that senior a message that says, "I care and you are not alone". How do you ever measure the meaning of that?

Public and private organizations that have occasionally found themselves criticized for one bureaucratic thing or another also stepped up to the challenge. Funding organizations that often award grants

once or twice a year, and often after long application processes, were processing streamlined applications and putting much needed funding into the service community every week or two. Foundations were contacting us to offer to allow us to shift funding priorities to help serve the needs of the new pandemic period. State agencies that often thrive on mountains of paperwork requiring months to respond were calling service organizations almost daily to offer their help and their motto of the day was "Let's make sure we are caring for the people and we'll get the rest of the details worked out later."

When this pandemic is all over, there will be more than enough people placing blame and pointing fingers. When all of this is over, I want us all to remember that ordinary people throughout our county stepped up and did extraordinary things for friends, neighbors, and even total strangers. These "ordinary" good people just quietly went about the extraordinary job of making a difference in the lives of others. Whatever else comes out of this COVID-19 experience, let's not forget that in the darkest of these recent times, many good people stood tall and shined brightly and did great things. I thank each and every one of you.

CHEER, Inc. STAFF

Kenneth Bock,
Chief Executive Officer

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Chief Operating Officer

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Support Services Director

Ken Moore,
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Carolyn O'Neal,
Community Relations Director

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Nutrition Program Director

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Program Director

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Sand Hill Adult Day
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Katie Leister,
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Genny Hines,
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MISSION STATEMENT

**CHEER's mission is
"to promote and maintain
the highest quality of life
and independence by
developing and providing
services that meet the
continuing needs of senior
citizens 50 and over."**

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Sussex Community Helps CHEER Fill Seniors' Needs During COVID-19



Delaware State Treasurer Colleen Davis (center) and her son, Liam, load hot meals in their car at the Georgetown CHEER Center from Outreach Worker Anastasia Jones. Mrs. Davis volunteered to deliver Meals-on-Wheels food to recipients in Sussex County. CHEER continued to feed 1,300 seniors a day despite the struggles caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

By Carolyn O'Neal
Community Relations

CHEER, Inc. was founded almost 50 years ago because there was a need to help Sussex County senior citizens in their homes. The program expanded when Dr. Milton Keene, a Methodist minister and administrator at Methodist Manor House in Seaford, saw another need for the home health services to include a meal program. The history of CHEER's growth centers around recognizing a need, and doing something to fulfill that need.

When Delaware Governor

John Carney issued a stay-at-home order on March 22 because of the Coronavirus, CHEER was categorized as an essential business and was allowed to continue operating. But, the next day Gov. Carney issued another executive order that closed all senior activity centers, including CHEER. The agency, however, has continued its Meals-on-Wheels program throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and offered drive-up curb service to congregated members who were able to come to a center and get a take-out meal. Recognizing the threat that oper-

ations could be shut down at any time and seniors could be left without food, the agency reassigned tasks and put employees to work compiling 3,500 shelf-stable meals. A two-week supply was delivered to Meals-on-Wheels clients to have on hand in case of an emergency while hot meals continued to be delivered every day.

CHEER volunteers were wonderful throughout the ordeal. Although some of the older volunteers chose to temporarily stop delivering meals at this time because of concerns for their own

health, many other members of the community stepped up to help keep meals going out to shut-in seniors. Businesses whose work load had significantly decreased, such as RJK Bus Transportation in Houghton and Megee Plumbing and Heating in Georgetown, offered their employees and vehicles to CHEER for meal delivery. State Treasurer Colleen Davis and her son, Liam, came several times to help deliver meals to the elderly.

Dozens of congregated members who were now

See Community • Page 6



Milton kitchen manager Jackie Bossard helps Roger Pearce, service manager for Megee Plumbing and Heating, load meals for seniors in the company vehicle for delivery in the Milton area.



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Community

Continued From Page 5

confined to their homes, local quilting clubs, and several CHEER employees dusted off their sewing machines and made hundreds of masks for the staff as well as donated dozens more to local hospitals, nursing homes and police departments.

When Governor Carney gave the order at the beginning of April that everyone entering public buildings had to first have their temperatures taken, CHEER had difficulty locating thermometers. Delaware House Representative Ruth Briggs-King heard about our dilemma and contacted Sussex Tech High School where students in the Health Professions classes are taught to read thermometers. With

classes being suspended at all schools in the state, Sussex Tech Superintendent Stephen Guthrie graciously loaned 10 thermometers to CHEER.

At the beginning of April, CHEER was forced to close its Sand Hill Adult Day program. But creative thinking and a little modern technology helped CHEER stay in touch with the clients, and they with each other, by playing some weekly Bingo games, via conference calls.

The home health personal assistance services program also temporarily stopped serving housekeeping and companionship clients, although it continued to serve personal assistance and respite needs.

When the self-quarantine was enacted, CHEER offered its congregate members bus service once a week to and from their homes to the grocery store, bank and post office. As weeks went by, the seniors began to fear for their own health by being out in the public, so many declined the bus service. However, CHEER recognized that a lot of the seniors did not have anyone they could rely on to bring them essential supplies. At this point, CHEER established a grocery shopping program that was an extension of its CHEERmobile mini market. CHEER sent out employees to local grocery stores to buy as much essential stable foods and supplies as they could find. It converted the banquet hall in the community center into a make-shift mini food warehouse and emergency meal assembly line to accommodate the program. CHEER seniors could call in orders from a pre-determined inven-

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Above, Grocery Shopping Program Director Nancy Elliott fills an order for a senior from CHEER's mini-market.
(Photo by Ron MacArthur, Cape Gazette)

Right, Sussex Tech High School Superintendent Stephen Guthrie loans a box of thermometers to CHEER Community Relations Director Carolyn O'Neal in the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors during the pandemic. With schools closed, they were not being used and CHEER needed them to comply with the Governor's order that all people entering health facilities had to have their temperatures taken first.



Community

Continued From Page 6

tory list and have their groceries brought to their door by a CHEER employee. The CHEERmobile continued to operate on its regular schedule, and included free pet food donated by Brandywine SPCA

for the seniors' furry friends.

From the beginning of this crisis, CHEER employees have been making regular wellness calls to its members and clients to ensure their wellbeing and health. There is nothing more detrimental to one's health than isolation and loneliness. Hearing a voice at the other end of the

telephone line asking about one's day helps to put a smile on a senior's face by ensuring them someone cares. CHEER will continue to care and fulfill the needs of Sussex County's seniors.

(Editor's Note: This is a recap of the steps taken by CHEER during the beginning of the self-quarantine until

the end of April at the time of our publishing deadline. After that, developments in the pandemic continued to change day by day but we were not able to publish them. However, you can be certain that CHEER and its faithful staff and volunteers continue to serve the needs of seniors as they arise.)



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in this quarterly magazine**

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CHEERful
Living



A publication of
Delaware State News
The State Capital Daily

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Edith Poore

Edith Poore of Georgetown enjoys being around people and working with older people. "I hope someday someone will do the same for me," says the 71-year-old youngster.

Edith retired from Perdue two years ago after working 36 years in the processing department. Always a person who had worked hard, she soon realized sitting around the house was not for her. She heard good things about CHEER from friends who



were receiving some of the agency's services. She went to the Georgetown CHEER activity center and asked if they needed help. For the past two years almost every weekday from 8 a.m. until midafternoon when the job is finished, Edith can be found at the CHEER center volunteering to pack meals for the homebound or serve up hot lunches for the congregate seniors.

"Miss Edith is so faithful," said Linda Roberts, Georgetown's kitchen manager. "Sometimes I have to make her leave."

Edith likes her job at CHEER because it allows her the flexibility to do what she wants. If she wants a day or two off to do something with her daughter and grandsons, Linda always accommodates her. Linda says Edith is her longest-lasting volunteer in the kitchen. "I have a good team to work with," Linda declared.

Another part of the team is kitchen helper Sheila Collins. After working with Edith a little while, the two discovered that Edith's mother graduated from high school with Sheila's aunt. "We are a family in this kitchen," Sheila said. "We all love working with Edith."

Edith said life isn't about money. She thinks it's about how young you feel and how happy you are. "If I didn't like it here, I wouldn't stay," she revealed.

CHEER is glad that Miss Edith chose our agency with which to share her life. Her happiness is shared every day with the seniors who come to the Georgetown center and with the staff and administrators who work at the center. Thank you, Miss Edith, for choosing CHEER.

Adult Day Program solves world's problems One BINGO game at a time.



By Cindy Mitchell
ADP Director

Over the past month, I have been making many, wellness check phone calls to the various members of CHEER. Two things everyone has in common is they miss being active and they miss being with their friends.

The Adult Day Program decided to do something about it. Five members got together and played Bingo from the comfort of their own home. They did it by the way of a phone conference. It was great. For several it has been over a month since they have talked to each other.

We have all been so afraid of catching the dreaded COVID-19 virus that we have forgotten how important it is to play, especially playing with friends. Fun activities that challenge the brain can help prevent memory problems and improve brain function. The social interaction of playing with family and friends can also help ward off stress and depression. One of my favorite quotes is by George Bernard Shaw, "We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing." Play can boost your energy and vitality and even improve your resistance to disease, helping you function at

your best.

If you would like to join us in a game of Bingo from the comfort of your own home, give me a call at 302-854-2882.

(Editor's Note: The Bingo games were so successful for the Adult Day Program that they were offered to members of the Memory Café, and at press time details were being worked out to offer to individual centers' members.)



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Letters to the Editor

Editor's Note: The following is a letter sent to one of our Outreach Workers from one of our wonderful volunteers who is looking out for our seniors:

As you know, we share a delivery route on Wednesdays. During these health emergency times of self-isolation, social distancing, empty grocery store shelves, and increased anxiety, we wanted to provide a special gift to our home-bound meal recipients to help them get through another day. But, what to do?

We decided to give a gift of a roll of toilet paper to each person on our route. We included a note with some topical cartoons to help them laugh. The gifts were delivered last Wednesday, April 8th. Today,

we received many "thanks" for the gift-not only for the TP but also the humor provided.

We received a note today from one of our wonderful ladies on our route. She wrote:

"THANK you CHEER and all your people that work giving me food. I am 92 years old and experienced using "phone books paper" when going to the bathroom "OUTSIDE" when I was young, but it wasn't as nice as phone books it was "newspaper." So, I am writing to tell you I am grateful to all of you". When we delivered her meal today, her son came to the door, as usual, and just began to laugh out loud to let us know what the gift meant to his mother (and him).

We also received the fol-

lowing "thanks":

"Your gift last week was very funny and welcome."

"That gift was worth its weight in gold."

"That gift from CHEER was very thoughtful." When we told him the gift came from us (not CHEER), they were even

more thankful and indicated it was a wonderful idea.

These kind words from our MOW recipients are very heartwarming.

Signed,

Anonymous Volunteer

Special "thanks" to all of our wonderful CHEER Volunteers!!



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

These are certainly difficult and challenging times. And, during these times we rely more than ever on the services of the CHEER agency to assist you and our community. I want you to know that the CHEER team, which includes the caring staff and awesome volunteers, is committed to doing the best they can do to continue to help you.

In times of plenty and in times of want, the CHEER organization has worked through difficult situations to keep you informed, as well. While the circumstances may change, the desire and goal to provide for the seniors in our community has not.

I want to share some "good news." The federal economic stimulus package - the CARES Act - was recently signed into law by President Trump. This means each adult, YOU, will receive \$1,200 from the federal

government - even those adults who receive Social Security income. It doesn't matter if you have earned or unearned income, adults will receive this stipend.

I will continue to work behind the scenes to provide for your needs and safety. More importantly, I will work with your Sussex County CHEER so that they can work for you. I am encouraging you to be extra careful with those trying to "scam" you or take advantage of our current crisis. If you have questions or needs, rely on those folks you know to give you good information.

In closing, we will overcome this virus and once again be a healthy community. I pray you will stay well and stay safe. If you need assistance, the state helpline for COVID-19 is 1-866-408-1899.

Sincerely,

State Rep. Ruth Briggs King

37th District



CARES ACT: \$300 Charitable Deduction Did You Know?

One of the many inclusions in the CARES Act is the \$300 charitable deduction that "regular" taxpayers can now take. What this means is that for taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions, they can now make a \$300 cash donation to CHEER and claim it on your taxes.

It's a win-win for you and for CHEER!

Read more about the 'Universal' deduction as detailed in a recent article in the Chronicle of Philanthropy at philanthropy.com/article/How-the-new-300

Cooking

For Sussex Seniors

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Richard grew up in Eastern Europe during the 1940s. By the 1950s, Richard and his family were on a Liberty ship headed for New York City. Later in life, Richard was diagnosed with cancer. In an effort to avoid trips to the emergency room, Richard called Delaware Hospice. At our first visit, he was unable to get out of bed. Richard began receiving home-based hospice services from Delaware Hospice's expert team and was soon able to get up from his seat on the porch and walk to the dining room to talk with friends and family. Three months from his first call, he was strong enough to attend his grandson's wedding!

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GRANT-IN-AID

The Lifeblood of Those Who Serve Your Community

By Kenneth S. Bock
CEO, CHEER

As I am writing this article, we are now more than a month into the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown here in Delaware and the end is not yet in sight. Many good and important businesses are shuttered. Many good and important people are struggling. All will need the help of community-based non-profit service providers to get back to whatever the new normal will be.

Through it all, organizations like CHEER continue to serve, providing essential nutrition, home care, and transportation services to senior citizens throughout all of Sussex County. Throughout this pandemic, CHEER staff and volunteers continued to serve and make a difference in the lives of many of our most vulnerable citizens – five days a week, each and every week. Like the changes that have affected each of our lives, CHEER changed its services to continue to meet the needs while helping to preserve health and wellness for all we came in contact with. Income from many traditional service programs was suspended while CHEER incurred increased costs to establish much-needed grocery services and purchase equipment to help keep clients, volunteers, and staff safe. The challenges continue to be great, but for the wellbeing of so many throughout our

county, we continue to serve and to meet those challenges.

We, at CHEER, understand and appreciate the financial hardships the COVID-19 pandemic has caused for our State government. We talk with elected leaders on an ongoing basis and we know that the process of developing a State budget for the new fiscal year starting July 1 will not be like any budget year before. There will be no easy answers, but we are already hearing talk about cutting the State Grant-in-Aid program which provides essential funding for so many community service organizations. Without a sustained level of commitment on the part of the State to maintain Grant-in-Aid funding for the coming year, the next shutters to close may very well be those of some of the organizations we have all depended on during this pandemic period.

Throughout COVID-19, CHEER and many other community-based service providers have been there to help preserve and sustain life. Now we need your help to sustain the lifeblood of those essential non-profit service providers that have been there for you. Please join with me in asking your elected State official to preserve Grant-in-Aid funding for non-profit community service providers.

Thank you and may we all Be Well!



Local Winery Supports CHEER

CHEER, Inc. was the recipient of the proceeds from the annual Crock Off competition at Salted Vines Vineyard and Winery last winter. The Frankford business donated \$700 to CHEER to help continue its services for senior citizens in Sussex County. In photo, Katie Duke (left), event coordinator, presents the check to Carmel Monfiletto, CHEER Nutrition Program Director.



Senior BEACH DAY



Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2020
Rehoboth Beach, DE - 10 a.m. til 2 p.m.

"A Day In The Sun With Lots of Fun"
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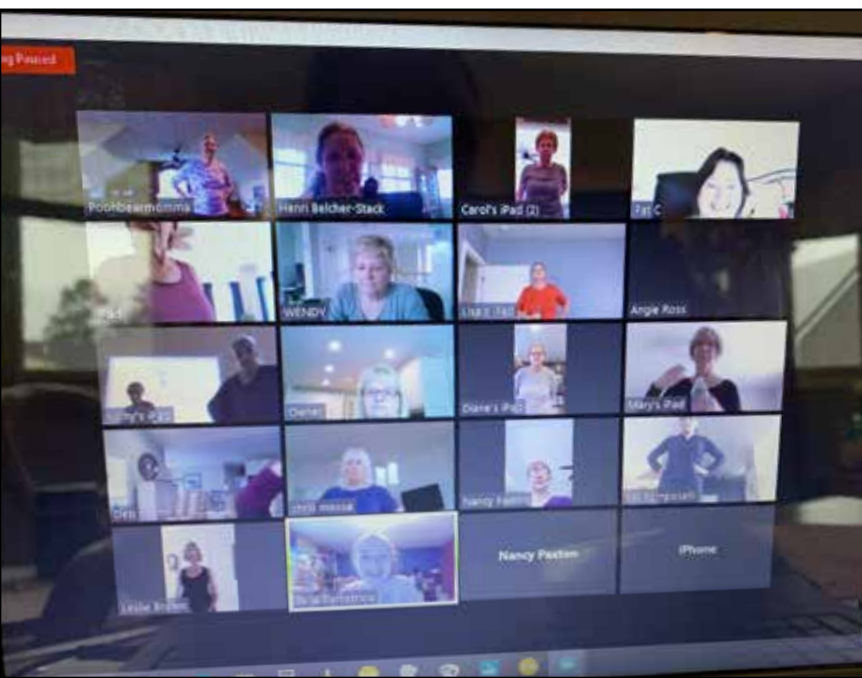


Above, bus drivers Jim Singel and Bill Berryhill give help in assembling shelf stable meals for homebound seniors.

Left, Ocean View dishwasher Mary Jones makes sure all dishes are sterilized.

Bottom Left, Milton seniors enjoyed some Zumba exercise via Zoom over the internet.

Bottom Right, Jay Infussi, Georgetown center receptionist, mixes some homemade hand sanitizer.



Smiling under MASKS



Top Right, Long Neck kitchen helper Audrey Schaeffer prepares MOW meals for delivery in Long Neck.

Bottom Right, Vicky and Larry Cannon were faithful Greenwood MOW delivers during the pandemic.

Bottom Left, Long Neck volunteer Mary Hosley makes wellness check telephone calls to members.



Mr. Goodwood enjoys talking to CHEER seniors

By Carolyn O'Neal

Community Relations Director

"I ain't lyin'" is a catchphrase a lot of people have heard around the Delmarva Peninsula. But it isn't spoken by the human tongue. Or is it?

The speaker is a 102-year-old man with a wooden tongue, glasses and wild, flyaway hair named Mr. Goodwood. By looking at him, you may believe he is speaking to you, but the voice is actually coming from his sidekick, Ken Huff of Seaford.

"People want to believe what they see," Ken explained about the art of ventriloquism. "If they hear a different sounding voice, then they believe it comes from him. If my voice is deep, his has to be high."

Ken Huff and Mr. Good-



Mr. Goodwood and Ken Huff performed at CHEER's Frontier Festival and many more of the agency's events.

wood have been performing together for over 30 years. Twenty years of that was spent in the United States Air Force as

members of the Tops in Blue entertainment force. They have traveled together all over Europe – Germany, Spain, Greece, Holland, Turkey – and throughout the United States. They even performed at the world-famous Apollo Theater in the Harlem neighborhood of Manhattan, New York. Following retirement from the military, Ken and his family moved to Seaford, and Mr. Goodwood came too. The duo now spends their time entertaining at senior centers, adult day cares, and charitable, civic and nonprofit events. Many times, all or a portion of their act is donated.

Ken became interested in ventriloquism while growing up and watching the ventriloquism act of Willie Tyler & Lester on the Laugh-In television show during the 1970s and 80s. He read an article in TV Guide in 1978. "I thought it was amusing, hilarious actually," he said. "I thought if it is funny to me, it may be funny to someone else, so I thought I would give it a try."

He sent away for a "Danny O'Day doll," a small, vintage

ventriloquist dummy, and entered a talent show – and won! However, the judges told him he had to get a bigger doll. So he got a bigger one and entered another talent show. Again the judges told him his doll was "still too small, and too urban and young." So Ken went to get a bigger one at a factory in Littleton, Colorado, that specialized in ventriloquist dummy dolls.

"When I saw this old man sitting on the shelf, the personality in his face just spoke to me," said Ken. "It was like he had been waiting for me on that shelf."

Since then, Ken and Mr. Goodwood keep busy around the area talking about current events and being old. Ken said he usually makes some notes for his show script, just to keep the right timing. Some shows they do can be 10-15 minutes long, or even go for an hour, depending upon what the host wants. But everything in the show is positive and family friendly.

"We have even done funerals," said Ken. "Whatever it takes for somebody to smile. Mr. Goodwood likes to see those smiling faces."

A lot of their act, however, is ad-lib, especially when they mingle with the audience. "Mr. Goodwood loves to talk to everybody," Ken smiled.

Ken says that if the audience is paying more attention to the doll than they are to him, "Then I am doing my job."

Ken Huff and Mr. Goodwood have performed at several CHEER activities. Their next scheduled event is at Rehoboth Beach Day on September 22 – "we ain't lyin'."

Support Groups

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

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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.

CHEER Says Good-bye to two Dear Friends

Joyce Westen and Kathy Landis Retire

By Carolyn O'Neal

Community Relations Director

CHEER sadly said good-bye to two of its strongest supporters on April 29 when Chief Administrative Officer Joyce Westen retired after 23 years with the non-profit agency and Caregiver Resource Director Kathy Landis left after 13 years at CHEER. Very humble people, neither lady wanted any fanfare or big going-away party, and the COVID-19 quarantine at the time helped to ensure them of that. However, I want to relate my experiences with these ladies in order to give you an insight into the beautiful people they are.

I first met Joyce Westen in January 1972 when I was a high school senior. I was the first student at Laurel High School to do half day work internship outside of the school. I was assigned to work in the bookkeeping department at the old Sussex Trust Bank on Market Street in Laurel. The bank has since been the Wilmington Trust Co. and is now M&T Bank. It was located only about a half mile from the school, so I could walk there during my lunch break and back to school at the end of the day to catch the bus home. Joyce was assigned to be my mentor and train me.

When the school year ended, I was allowed to continue working at the bank full-time during the summer before my first year of college. The plan was for me to walk from my



Kathy Landis

home just east of Route 13 into town to the bank, a little over a mile. Less than a week into this trek, Joyce saw me walking to work, stopped and offered me a ride the rest of the way. I explained that my family couldn't afford a second vehicle for me, therefore I had to walk to and from work. Joyce was coming from her home in Millsboro and had to drive past my house, so she offered to pick me up each morning and take me home at night. Thus, a long, beautiful friendship was born.

During those short 10-minute drives, Joyce and I would chat about anything and everything. We learned that our parents' families knew each other. My paternal grandmother's family owned a farm off Shortly Road, and Joyce and her two sisters grew up on the Wilkins family farm near Jones' Store Crossroads. Thus, the farms were not too

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Good-bye

Continued From Page 17

far apart near Georgetown.

While I was at college, Joyce and her husband Marty had a daughter they named Karen. Marty worked at the old National Cash Register (NCR) plant in Millsboro. When it closed in 1981, Marty was transferred to South Carolina where the family stayed for three years before moving back to Sussex County.

Our paths crossed again in 1983 while I was working at the former Sussex County newspaper located on North Race Street in Georgetown. One day I saw Joyce walking down the street. We hugged and she updated me that she was now the director of the former Sussex Employment Services located in the next block of the street. We would see each other often during the next 14 years, and shared many walks uptown to have lunch.

In December 1997, Joyce joined CHEER as Human Resources Specialist. Through the years, she advanced to Human Resources Director, Director of Support Services and, finally, Chief Administrative Officer. Although we were

no longer across the street from each other, I saw Joyce often while covering CHEER events for the newspaper. In fact, one of Joyce's nephews, Lance Keeler, worked at the newspaper with me when I was editor.

In late June 2000, I received a telephone call from Joyce telling me that CHEER needed a marketing director and asking if I was interested. I was interviewed by former Executive Director Arlene Littleton and offered the job. After 27 years with the newspaper, I began a new career path with CHEER. It was nice working with my old friend every day just as we had done 28 years before. It didn't take long for me to remember how sweet and understanding Joyce is to work with. She is a peace-keeper who supports her colleagues and puts their best interests at the forefront.

When I left CHEER a short two years later, Joyce and I again kept in touch. As community relations director at Sussex Tech High School, I worked with Joyce to coordinate the efforts of the JROTC cadets in CHEER's annual beach walk. When I wanted

Good-bye • Page 20

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Nutrition Can Help Build Immunity Against Diseases

**By Carmel Monfietto,
MS, RD, LDN**

Wash your hands, get lots of sleep, practice social distancing... and eat right to support your immune system. A strong immune system may decrease your susceptibility to infectious diseases. Knowing this encourages us to add foods to our daily diet that strengthen our immune defenses and keep us healthier longer.

Eating a low-fat, plant-based diet may help give the immune system a boost. Studies show that fruits and vegetables provide nutrients, like beta-carotene, vitamin C and Vitamin E – that can boost immune function. Because many vegetables, fruits and other plant-based foods are also rich in antioxidants, they help reduce oxidative stress.

Beta-carotene is a powerful antioxidant that can reduce inflammation and boost immune function by increasing disease fighting cells in the body. Excellent sources include sweet potatoes, carrots, and green leafy vegetables.

Vitamins C and E are antioxidants that help to destroy free radicals and support the body's natural immune response. Sources of Vitamin C include red peppers, oranges, strawberries, broccoli, mangoes, lemons, and other fruits and vegetables. Vitamin E sources include nuts, seeds, spinach, and broccoli.

Vitamin D supplementation may reduce the risk for viral infections, including respiratory tract infections. Increased levels of vitamin D in the blood have been linked to prevention of cardiovascular disease. Add foods like fortified cereals and plant-based milks, and mushrooms.

Zinc is a mineral that can help boost white blood cells, which defend against invaders. Sources include nuts, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, beans, and lentils.

Selenium is another mineral that is needed in our diets. It is one of the most powerful antioxidants and helps protect against heart disease, certain types of cancer, boosts your immune system and helps fight off potential threats like bacteria, viruses, and parasites. Some of the best sources of selenium include Brazil nuts, Yellowfin tuna, halibut, eggs, sardines, and oysters. Other sources include good old chicken breast, and sunflower seeds.

Include these foods in your diet daily, weekly, monthly and feel the effects of a stronger immune system, and less sick days.

(Note: Taken from Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine. PCRM.org/news/blog/food-boost-immune-system.)

Good-bye

Continued From Page 18

to come back to CHEER in 2014, Joyce was the first one I called. She was my cheerleader in accomplishing that. We were back together again.

When my mother died in 2017, after my brother, Joyce was the first person I called at 6 a.m. I cried through the telephone to her because I knew she too had gone through the ordeal when her mother passed years before. Before noon arrived, Joyce was at my house with food and flowers. She took the time to sit and talk and hug me like only a "big sister" can.

It was not a welcome knock on the door the day Joyce told me she was retiring. I understand that she wants to spend more time with her family, and I cannot deprive her of that. But after working at home a couple days at the middle of April during the COVID-19 quarantine, when I came back to work I stopped by her office and was shocked to see most of her personal things gone from the room. The sight made me finally realize we would soon part again. Although I wish Joyce a much deserved happy retirement, I will miss my friend who



Editor Carolyn O'Neal (left) and Chief Administrative Officer Joyce Westen enjoyed CHEER's Deck the Halls Holiday Celebration in 2014. At the end of April, Joyce retired from the agency after 23 years' service.

was always the first to work in the morning and one of the last to leave. She was the one who remembered birthdays and anniversaries; the one who always said "good morning" when you walked by; the one who was always professionally groomed in a dress and high heels; and the one who always had a smile for everyone.

Kathy Landis was not at CHEER when I first was between 2000-2002. My association with her only goes back to 2014 when I returned to the agency. But she greeted

me with her bright smile and immediately extended her helping hand to me.

Kathy joined the agency in December 2007 as the Caregiver Resources Director. Her job was to arrange training and educational and support activities for caregivers and recipients of caregiving efforts. In addition, she maintained a comprehensive Resource Center in the CHEER Community Center as well as at satellite locations in other CHEER facilities. Kathy worked closely with county and state support groups such as Parkinson, Memory

Café, Dementia and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren.

Kathy is the type of person who always tried to do whatever was asked of her. Several times she helped me man the marketing table at vendor fairs. She could be found at the front receptionist's desk assisting visitors at the CHEER Community Center and her cheery voice could often be heard on the other end of the telephone line when calling the front desk. Kathy never refused to do whatever was needed.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Kathy contributed to the caregiving efforts of CHEER by placing wellness calls to seniors and helping the Volunteer Director gather helpers for meal delivery. She also joined the assembly line to put together 3,500 stable shelf meals for seniors.

I know our paths will cross again in this world. Joyce and Kathy helped to make this office a "cheery" place to be. CHEER isn't just a company name to them – it is their lifestyle. They really care about seniors. It won't be the same without them, because Joyce and Kathy always put a little bit of "CHEER" in everyone's life.



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CHEER Opens New Room at Long Neck Center

CHEER, Inc. recently celebrated the opening of its expanded space at its Pelican Cove Senior Activity Center in Long Neck. Last fall, the adjoining unit became available for sale. As the CHEER membership was outgrowing its space of approximately 8,500 square feet, the CHEER Board decided to purchase the unit next door and increase the center's size by approximately another 1,800 square feet.

"Long Neck is an ever growing community," said CHEER Chief Executive Officer Ken Bock. "With the many retirees moving here, more and more space is needed."

During the winter, CHEER maintenance personnel were busy repositioning walls, realigning plumbing, building storage space, hanging drywall, laying tiles, and painting to produce a beautiful new space that will allow seniors to be able to enjoy more activities at the center.

"By doing the remodeling work in-house, we were able to save approximately two-thirds of the estimated costs," said Bock.

Center Director Shawn Harris says it will no longer be necessary to rearrange the main room by taking down tables and then putting them back up every time a special event takes place at the center. Weight Watchers conducts two meetings weekly at the cen-



CHEER Opens Added Space of Long Neck Center in Unit 6 ... Taking part in the ceremonial ribbon cutting were, left to right: in front holding banner – CHEER Nutrition Director Carmel Montifetto and CHEER Centers Manager Robin Greene; holding ribbon – County Councilman Doug Hudson, CHEER Chief Financial Officer Beckett Wheatley, CHEER Chief Administrative Officer Joyce Westen, Long Neck Center Director Shawn Harris, CHEER Board Vice Chairman Walter Koopman, CHEER Chief Administrative Officer Ken Bock, Division of Services for Aging and Adults With Disabilities Administrator John Cannon, U.S. Representative Christopher Coons' representative Kate Rohr, and LaRed Chief Operating Officer Rosa Rivera; standing back row – County Council President Mike Vincent, unidentified CHEER member, State Senator Brian Pettyjohn, CHEER Finance Director Debra Crum, CHEER Vendor and Hospitality Director Katie Leister, and CHEER Support Services Director Sandy Baynard.

ter and the Church of God Lutheran holds weekly services there. LaRed Health Center also maintains offices in the center and sees patients there every Monday. The Long Neck CHEER Center can be rented for parties and meetings, plus bridal and baby showers any time after business hours and on weekends.

The CHEER Activity Center has been located in Pelican Cove Shopping Center in Long Neck for 17 years. It offers events and activities to seniors over age 50 including nutrition, transportation, social events, classes, a fitness center and a library. For information about the Long Neck CHEER Center, call 302-945-3551 or 302-515-3040.

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Or CHEER Community Center
20520 Sand Hill Rd., Georgetown

Pandemic Provides Learning Opportunity for Youngsters

By Carolyn O'Neal
Community Relations Director

"We just wanted to say thank you," said Donna Robbins of Selbyville. "It's been some fun, great family time."

Mrs. Robbins is a single grandmother currently helping to raise four of her seven grandchildren. During the time of self-isolation to help fight the Coronavirus Pandemic, she needed something for her grandchildren to do. Ranging in age from five to 13, it is hard to keep them occupied day after day with worthwhile projects.

"I wanted a project that taught the kids about compassion and that family is important," explained Mrs. Robbins.

Mrs. Robbins took care of her mother until her passing two years ago. The emotions are relived when she speaks about her. "I know that older people can be lonely," she said. "So I thought they might enjoy receiving a card." Thus, the project was born.

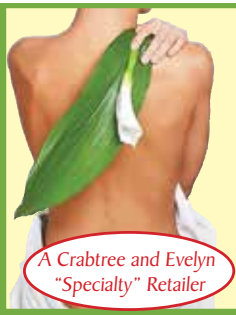
Mrs. Robbins and her four grandchildren – Shayla, age 13; Aalijya, 12; Aryanna, 10; and Michael, 5 – spent Palm Sunday weekend making 120 hand-written greeting cards for senior citizens. They were delivered to CHEER's Roxana Center to be distributed with the Meals-on-Wheels dinners.

Crayons, magic markers, colored pencils, colored construction paper, glitter and glue were spewed on the kitchen table as the children spent their days drawing and writing out



Donna Robbins of Selbyville and her grandchildren deliver the greeting cards to the Roxana CHEER Center.

Youngsters • Page 23



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Cheer Activity Centers

By Carolyn M. O'Neal

Community Relations
Director

*With contributions from
Arlene Littleton, former
Executive Director,
Carol Carpenter, Greenwood
and Long Neck,
And Dawn Zimmerman,
Roxana*

Of the dozens of services that CHEER offers senior citizens in Sussex County to help enable them to remain in their homes, possibly the one that most people associate first with the agency is its senior activity centers. The seven activity centers, located around Sussex County in Georgetown, Greenwood, Long Neck, Milton, Lewes, Ocean View and Roxana, offer numerous opportunities for older adults to stay healthy and active. Members can enjoy exercise programs, support groups, self-enrichment classes, trips and more. Under the supervision of the CHEER Nutrition Program, delicious heart-healthy meals are served at each center. As CHEER quickly approaches its 50th anniversary in 2021, here is a short synopsis of each center's history to better acquaint you with their backgrounds.



GEORGETOWN

Iva Hedges was the first director of the Georgetown Center which was located in the basement of St. Paul's Church on Pine Street. This location was used until October 1982

when the center, with 30 active members, moved to its present location in the Georgetown State Service Center. In an article printed in the town's weekly newspaper, The Sussex Countian, Mrs. Hedges describes the process that opened the Georgetown center. She says, "I started working in March 1974. I met with several ministers in Georgetown and also met with Grange members to find a location for the center. I went to O.A. Newton to make arrangements for the delivery of our first refrigerator and other supplies. I also canvassed Georgetown, knocking on doors and inviting seniors to attend our center." Mrs. Hedges retired in May 1984.



GREENWOOD

Greenwood CHEER began on June 13, 1974 in the basement of Greenwood United Methodist Church under the direction of Charlotte Shea. Evelyn Doughton took over in 1975. On-site lunches, as well as delivered meals to home-bound seniors, were served out of the center. However, the building was not handicap accessible so in 1995, the agency had to rent the Old Lettuce Bowl restaurant located on the southbound lane of Route 13 for the center. Fellowship continued with daily activities and special programs. In 2001, Mary Juraniec, Greenwood CHEER food serve manager,

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Youngsters

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Easter cards for the seniors. It didn't matter if a word was spelled wrong or the drawing was a bit ragged because each card was filled with love.

"The seniors loved receiving the children's cards," said Dawn Zimmerman, Roxana center director. "They really put a smile on their faces."

"Sometimes you have to go through bad to get to good," Mrs. Robbins said about the COVID-19 Pandemic. "It gave the kids the opportunity to do something that also taught them compassion for others. I've been helped, and I'm so glad to be able to give back."



Young Michael Walters is very proud of the greeting card he made for a senior citizen.

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Centers

Continued From Page 23

was named Outstanding Older Worker of Delaware by Experience Works, an organization which promoted leadership among senior citizens.

The center's next move came when it went across the highway after the agency purchased another former restaurant building on the north-bound lane of Route 13. In 2006, that building was sold to a church so that financing was available to build a new center on property adjacent to the old center.

Today's Greenwood CHEER center building is located at 12713 Sussex Highway, east of Greenwood, behind the Royal Farms store. It celebrated a grand opening on Thursday, March 8, 2007. The new center is significantly larger than the old building encompassing approximately 5,300 square feet. It houses a large multi-purpose room that can be easily divided, a full commercial kitchen, offices, a small conference room, and a well-equipped fitness center. The building is also available for rental and use by community groups, regardless of age.

LONG NECK

The first CHEER center in the Long Neck community was housed in the Oak Orchard Community Church



which was generously rented to the agency by Pastor Silas Dukes at a very low price. Although the church required very strict rules and regulations about what activities could take place in their building – including no Bingo – Center Director Pauline Worthington made sure seniors had fulfilling activities there for many years until CHEER purchased space in the Pelican Cove building.

The opening of the Long Neck Pelican Cove CHEER Center in the Shoppes on Long Neck Road was on May 2, 2005 with Meg Smith as director. There was a strong emphasis on "Wellness" at the new center which offered various programs such as exercise in its fitness center and weight loss programs, support groups and screenings. When first opened, CHEER housed its Home Services division at the center for less than a year before moving it to its present site at the CHEER Community Center in Georgetown. The center membership grew so fast that extra space was sorely needed by the members.

In 2019, CHEER opened the second satellite site for LaRed Health Center to make health

care more accessible to Sussex Countians. In February, 2020, CHEER celebrated the opening of expanded space at its Pelican Cove center, accomplished by the acquisition of the adjoining 1,800 square feet.



LEWES

The Lewes CHEER Center was originally located in the annex of Huling Cove on Savannah Road. The complex is made up of senior living, low income apartments and cottages. Dixie Carlisle was its first director. Then in 2002, Nancy Dodd took over the duties as center director until transferring to the Long Neck center in 2005.

In 2002, a partnership with P.M.S. Properties, LLC and CHEER offered a 3,600 square foot center in Lewes to be called Harbour Lights. This replaced the outgrown Huling Cove facility in May, 2003. It is located on Woods Edge Drive in the center of the Harbour Town apartment complex and consists of a banquet room, fitness center, kitchen, and offices.

MILTON

The Milton CHEER Center actually began in Slaughter Neck Church in 1974 where it remained for several years. Francine Shockley was its direc-



tor until the center moved to the old Betts Feed Store on Reynolds Road.

In 2011, CHEER opened the new Milton Healthy Lifestyle Center that was geared towards boomers, with exercise and wellness programs, a social networking club, inter-generational projects and evening hours. The new 6,000 square foot building on Broadkill Road features a large banquet hall that can be divided in half for smaller gatherings, a commercial kitchen, office space and fitness center. It is available to the public for rental.



OCEAN VIEW

Ocean View was the CHEER Center that relocated the most. The original center had its first meeting in August 1992 at the Church of Christ. The name of the Ocean View center changed to Coastal Leisure Senior Center when folks from Bethany were added. In a few months, the



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Centers

Continued From Page 24

center out grew the facility and moved into the town hall where it remained for five years as their numbers grew beyond the capacity of the building.

The next move was to the old Kwik Chek Restaurant. State Representative Gerald Hocker renovated the building as much as possible and let the group use it for free from 1998 to 2005. The roof leaked when it rained, and buckets were used to catch the water. One day, a lady drove her car right through the restaurant front window. CHEER fixed it and the center went on.

Rep. Hocker's generous gift to CHEER allowed the organization to establish a capital campaign and raise enough money to build a new senior center. The land for the building was donated by Pret Dyer and Gary McCrea (aka P.M.S Properties). The location was perfect as the donors were building a 55-plus community across a shared parking lot.

Today's Coastal Leisure Center opened its doors on Thursday, August 25, 2005 with a ribbon cutting and celebration of the new 6,000 square foot building. It houses a fitness center, commercial kitchen, meeting rooms and banquet hall that can be divided to accommodate smaller gatherings.

In August 2017, LaRed Health Center opened its first satellite office in the Ocean View center in a partnership with CHEER to make health care more accessible to Sussex Countians.

ROXANA

Originally called Centreville, the town was renamed Roxana in the second half of the 19th century. It is said that the town's



name was derived by combining the first names of two cousins, Roxie and Ann Wilgus, who were members of a prominent local family that operated a store and other businesses in the community at the time.

The Pyle Center (present location of CHEER) came to be in the early 1970s via a donation by the late Edward W. Pyle. His vision was of a community center that would host state services as well as non-profit community services. Today, the CHEER Center and the Pyle Child Care Center share the building with the state. The state provides public health, social services, family services, and emergency services. There is even a mammography van that provides its services to the community as pre-scheduled. The Lower Sussex Little League ball park is adjacent to the property as well. It hosts a Little League World Series annually that draws thousands to the small community of Roxana. They also host a Challenger Division which is an adaptive baseball program for boys and girls with physical and developmental challenges.

The CHEER Center portion of the building houses a small commercial kitchen and large meeting room for members to enjoy activities and meals.

(Editor's Note: For more personal memories of each center's members, read the featured center's article, in the upcoming months' issues of CHEER's Happenings Newsletter.)

10th Annual CHEER Car Show Aug. 1

The 10th Annual CHEER Car, Truck & Bike Show will be held on Saturday, August 1, 2020 at the Warren L. & Charles C. Allen CHEER Community Center located at 20520 Sand Hill Road, east of Georgetown. This year's theme will be celebrating "A Decade of Classics."

Last year, the CHEER Nutrition Program provided over 314,000 meals to over 4,500 seniors across Sussex County. This event will raise money for CHEER's "Cooking for Sussex Seniors" Capital Campaign and its other programs and services for the seniors of Sussex County.

CHEER is also featuring its famous CHEER Gourmet Champagne Brunch during the show featuring steamed shrimp, prime rib, vegetables, and breakfast foods. Tickets for the Brunch are \$25 over age 10,

and \$10 for children 10 and under. It is open to the public and tickets are available at the door.

Trophies will be awarded in several categories and the first 125 cars registered will receive Dash Plaques. All vehicles must be registered and positioned by 10 a.m. or will not be judged. Cars will be exhibited from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. The public is invited to enjoy this free exhibition of vehicles.

Vehicle registration is \$35 per vehicle which includes one free brunch ticket (or pay \$50 per vehicle and get two brunch tickets). Registration for vehicles is open until July 27th or you can be registered by going to www.cheerde.com and click on Events. For more information, contact Carmel Rickenbach at 302-515-3048.

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When The Time is Right...

We are all living in a different time right now. Sheltering in place and keeping our distance from others when we go out for necessary errands has put your special events and activities on hold for now.

This will not last forever and CHEER Hospitality wants you to know we will be here for you when the time is right and you are ready.

Plan your once-in-a-lifetime outdoor or indoor wedding ceremony/reception at our newly renovated CHEER Community Center. Marilyn's Catering can provide a customized, unique and affordable menu to make your day even more special.

If your special event is smaller such as a bridal shower, baby shower, graduation, retirement, etc., you may wish to take advantage of the space at one of the CHEER Activity Centers located in:

Greenwood • Lewes • Long Neck • Milton • Ocean View



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