



Enriching the Lives of Older Adults in our Community

## December 2024 Newsletter

### Embracing the Memories of Holiday Traditions

By Wendy Smeltz, Center Manager

The holiday season is upon us! The aroma of cookies baking, the fresh scent of pine, the warmth of cinnamon, orange and clove, or sweet peppermint can transport us to another place and time, to the memories of yesteryear.

Some of the greatest gifts the holidays give us are the long-lasting memories of the traditions we hold dear.

Traditions like Christmas and Hannukah celebrations are deeply significant; they connect us to our loved ones, community, and our past, and provide an opportunity to pass down values, stories and love to other generations.

Over time, holiday traditions can change or they are no longer possible, so it's normal to feel a sense of loss. Many people are trying to navigate the season as they experience health issues of their own or a loved one or while missing someone who is no longer here.

Reflecting on memories can be bittersweet, evoking both joy and sadness, but embracing the memories of holiday traditions can help us feel connected to loved ones and to our past. We encourage you to consider the moments of love and happiness that made your holidays special. Continue traditions that bring you joy and create new ones. Keep memories alive by sharing about them with others.

Join us to reminisce at *Fireside Chats* this month and for other opportunities to connect, like the Upper Perk Choir performance, a longtime tradition at The Center, plus a holiday singalong, and other activities. We thank you for being part of the memories made at The Center!

We hope you will embrace nostalgia this holiday season! Turn to page 6 for holiday traditions to reflect upon what makes this time of year memorable to you!



Bingo always brings out smiles at The Center! It's always fun, and checking out the prizes before the first number is called is a monthly tradition. Thanksgiving Food Bingo was a hit. This month, come out to Ugly Sweater Bingo!

**Holiday Hours**  
**Tuesday, Dec. 24 - CLOSED**  
**Wednesday, Dec. 25 - CLOSED**  
*Merry Christmas!*  
**Wednesday, Jan. 1 - CLOSED**  
*Happy New Year!*

**Hours of Operation:**  
**Monday - Friday 8:00 am to 4 pm**  
 The main room is closed during scheduled activities.  
 215.679.6550 | center@theopenlink.org

The Center, The Open Link's senior center location, offers opportunities to stay healthy, active, and connected. Programming focuses on nutrition, exercise, education, socialization, and enrichment, and is targeted to ages 60 and over, but open for adults of all ages.



The main office in Pennsburg provides community services to meet critical needs of individuals and families.

## SPECIAL ACTIVITIES in December See pg. 7 for monthly activities

To RSVP: Sign up in the big room, ask staff, call 215.679.6550, or email [center@theopenlink.org](mailto:center@theopenlink.org). See costs and RSVP dates below, if required.

### COOKIES WITH THE CHOIR • Friday, Dec. 6, 2024 - 1:00 pm

Featuring the Uptones, a select group of students in grades 9-12 from the Upper Perkiomen High School Choir, led by Dr. Mark Thomas. The Uptones have performed with the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall in New York, Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida, and more! **No Cost** - we will take a collection to donate to the UPHS Music Department. **RSVP by 12/5.**



### FIRESIDE CHATS: Christmas Stories of Our Lives • Tues, Dec. 10, 2024 - 12:45 pm

Hot chocolate and shared discussion by the fire as we share about holiday traditions, past and present. Our 6-week support group "Stories of Our Lives", led by The Center for Loss & Bereavement, comes to a close Dec. 3; here's another opportunity to come together in conversation. Everyone is welcome! You did not need to attend Stories to participate. **No Cost. RSVP by Mon., 12/9.**



### CRAFT: HOLIDAY TREE DÉCOR • Wed., Dec 11, 2024 - 1:00 pm

Create festive holiday décor using yarn and embellishments. All supplies will be provided, or bring items from your craft stash to use. **\$2 Suggested Donation. RSVP by 12/10.**



### GINGERBREAD COOKIE DECORATING • Thursday, Dec. 12, 2024 - 12:45 pm



Decorate festive gingerbread men (and women) while listening to Christmas music. Prizes will be awarded for the most creative, most traditional, and participants choice. **Donations welcome. RSVP by Wed., 12/11.**

### CHRISTMAS SING-A-LONG • Wed., Dec. 18, 2024 - 12:45 pm

We are pleased to welcome back Rich, Beth, Nick, and Tom who go by 'R.E.N.T.' for entertainment at this month's birthday party. Earlier this year they performed popular tunes for us on bass fiddle, violin, guitar, and mandolin. They're returning to sing some of our favorite Christmas carols! **Donations Encouraged. RSVP required Tues., 12/17.**



When attending an activity, please consider also signing up for lunch at 12 pm. Menus are prepared by a registered dietician and meals meet 1/3 of Recommended Dietary Allowances for older adults. Community Lunch is made possible in part by the Montgomery County Office of Aging Services (MCOAS). Lunch is no cost for anyone 60 and over. Anonymous donations are encouraged but not required, and benefit MCOSS to help support programming for seniors, such as congregate lunch at The Center. (For anyone under 60, Community Lunch is \$4.83 paid to The Center, or talk to staff about a reduced fee.) \*The Center also serves a monthly special meal; dietary requirements are not necessarily met and donations benefit The Center at The Open Link.



## SPECIAL ACTIVITIES in December See pg. 7 for monthly activities

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### BREAKFAST FOR LUNCH • Thursday, Dec. 19, 2024 - 12:00 pm

December's special lunch is a delightful holiday breakfast. **Menu:** Egg Casserole, Sausage, Bacon, Pastries, Coffee, Breakfast Punch, and more! **\$3 Suggested Donation to The Center. RSVP required by Wed., 12/18. Optional: Bring a mug stuffed with your favorite wrapped candy for a fun exchange game!**



### HOLIDAY LUNCH • Monday, Dec. 23, 2024 - 12:00 pm



**Menu:** Roast Beef with burgundy gravy, red bliss mashed potatoes, green beans, and dessert. Community Lunch is always no cost, donations to MCOSS encouraged. **RSVP required by Fri., 12/20. Holiday Lunch is followed by a special bonus bingo!**

### BONUS BINGO hosted by TCAFCU • Monday, Dec., 23, 2024 - 12:45 pm

Beth Biehl from Tri County Area Federal Credit Union has a gift for The Center, a second Bingo in December! Join us after our holiday lunch for this special bingo. **\$1 to play the whole time. RSVP encouraged. (RSVP separately for the Holiday Lunch at 12 pm.)**



TCAFCU has been a part of our community since 1949 and they exist to educate, empower and encourage members to realize their potential and achieve their goals. If you live, work, worship, go to school, or own a business in one of the townships or boroughs, you are eligible to become a member!

### REINDEER GAMES • Thursday, Dec. 26, 2024 - 12:30 pm

Choose from the many activities set up around the room: Bocce, Corn Hole, Card games like Uno or Skip-Bo, Coloring, Puzzles, and more! Light Refreshments. **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**



### SHOW & TELL: CHRISTMAS GIFTS • Fri., Dec. 27, 2024 - 12:45 pm



Bring your favorite Christmas gift to show others, or share about a favorite gift you received as a child, or about any special memory of giving or receiving gifts. Light refreshments. **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**

### NEW YEAR'S EVE TOAST & DESSERT • Tues, Dec. 31, 2024 - 12:30 pm

Join us for a toast to end the year and a look back at 2024. **Donations Welcome. RSVP encouraged. Sign up separately for lunch at 12 pm - Menu: Crabcakes & Mac & Cheese.**

Here's to a bright New Year and a fond farewell to the old. Here's to the things that are yet to come and to the memories that we hold.

*happy new year* - from your friends at The Center





517 Jefferson St., East Greenville  
 The Center: 215.679.6550  
 Main Office: 215.679.4112

For adults 60 years old & over, contributions are encouraged but not required. (Under 60=\$4.85 or see staff)



2024






**M E N U**

Tasty and nutritious meal, side items, bread, 1% milk, coffee, tea



Monday - Friday  
 Served at 12 pm

RSVP by 11 am, Doors open 11:30  
 (Earlier RSVPs for special meals)



















Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 <b>Lasagna Rollup</b> Peas Cauliflower	3 <b>Crab Cake w/ Mac &amp; Cheese</b> Stewed Tomatoes Broccoli & Cauliflower	4 <b>Southwest Chicken Thigh</b> Salsa Rice & Black Beans Corn w/ Peppers	5 <b>Rigatoni w/ Meat Sauce</b> Peas Warm Peaches	6 <b>Sliced Turkey w/ Roasted Garlic Gravy &amp; Onions</b> Whipped Sweet Potatoes Brussels Sprouts
9 <b>Sweet and Sour Chicken</b> Broccoli & Carrots Brown Rice	10  <b>Lemon &amp; Capers Baked Fish</b> Carrot Coins Buttered Wide Noodles	11 <b>Cheddar Burger w/ Caramelized Onions</b> Broccoli & Corn Red Bliss Potatoes	12  <b>Tortellini w/ Peas &amp; Garlic Butter Sauce</b> Green Beans Warm Sliced Peaches	13 <b>Sliced BBQ Beef</b> Sweet Corn w/ Peppers Collard Greens
16 <b>Stuffed Shells</b> Brussels Sprouts w/ Diced Carrots Warm Apples	17 <b>Garlic Dijon Chicken Thighs</b> Collard Greens Honey Whipped Sweet Potatoes	18  <b>Meatballs with Onion Gravy</b> Potato Cubes Green Beans <i>12:45 B-day Party, Singalong</i>	19  <b>Special Breakfast for Lunch</b> Egg Casserole, Bacon, Sausage, Pastries <b>RSVP by 12/18</b>	20 <b>Spanish Omelet</b> Cinnamon Oatmeal Warm Cranberry Pears
23  <b>Holiday Lunch</b> <b>Roast Beef w/ Burgundy Gravy</b> Green Beans, Potatoes <b>RSVP by 12/20</b>	24  <i>happy holidays from The Center</i>	25 	26 <b>Salisbury Steak</b> Broccoli Roasted Peppers 	27 <b>Swiss &amp; Ham Omelet</b> Sautéed Spinach w/ Carrots Hashbrowns 
30 <b>Chicken Florentine</b> Bowtie Noodles Peas & Carrots	31  <b>Crab Cake w/ Mac &amp; Cheese</b> Stewed Tomatoes Broccoli & Cauliflower	<p><i>Lunch donations benefit Montgomery County Office of Aging Services (MCOAS).</i></p> <p><b>*Menus are created by a registered dietician and meet 1/3 of Recommended Dietary Allowances.</b></p> <p><b>Substitutions available upon request</b>  <i>Let staff know when you sign up if you need an alternative meal, and tell us what you do not eat. Alternate meal options are limited.</i></p>		

*Come for the meal. Stay for friends and fellowship.*



# ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Check newsletter for RSVP dates and details.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>2</b> 9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Afternoon Activities	<b>3</b>  10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL) 1:00 <b>Stories of Our Lives</b> <i>(pre-registration required)</i>	<b>4</b> 9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 10:00 Quilters (LL) 12:00 Community Lunch	<b>5</b> 12:00 Community Lunch	<b>6</b> 9:00 Chair Yoga & Joy 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL) 1:00 <b>Cookies w/ the Choir</b>
<b>9</b>  9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 10:00 <b>Stamp Club</b> (LL) 12:00 Community Lunch  <i>No Afternoon Activities</i>	<b>10</b> 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL) 12:45 <b>Christmas Stories of Our Lives</b> 	<b>11</b> 9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 10:00 Quilters (LL) 12:00 Community Lunch 1:00 <b>Craft: Christmas Tree Décor</b>	<b>12</b>  10:00 <b>Cardio Drumming w/ Tribe Nutrition*</b> 12:00 Community Lunch 12:45 <b>Gingerbread Cookie Decorating</b> 	<b>13</b>  9:00 Chair Yoga & Peace 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL) 1:00 <b>Trivia Time: All In The Family</b>
<b>16</b> 9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Afternoon Activities	<b>17</b>  10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL)	<b>18</b>  9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 10:00 Quilters (LL) 12:00 Community Lunch 12:45 <b>Birthday Party w/ Christmas Singalong</b>	<b>19</b> 12:00 <b>Breakfast for Lunch (Special Lunch)</b> 	<b>20</b> 9:00 Chair Yoga & Light 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL) 1:00 <b>Ugly Sweater Bingo</b>
<b>23</b>  12:00 <b>Holiday Lunch</b> 12:45 <b>Bonus Bingo w/ Beth from TCAFCU</b> <i>No Afternoon Activities</i>	<b>24</b>  	<b>25</b> 	<b>26</b> 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 <b>Reindeer Games</b> 	<b>27</b> 9:00 Chair Yoga 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL) 12:45 <b>Show &amp; Tell</b> 
<b>30</b> 9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Afternoon Activities  <i>(No December Book Club)</i>	<b>31</b>  10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL) 12:30 <b>New Year's Eve Toast &amp; Dessert</b>	<b>Tech Support</b> By Appointment 		 <b>Blood Pressure Checks</b> Most Thursdays, approx. 12 pm, courtesy of <i>Family Caregivers Network</i>

\* Attendance requirements. Please refer to the newsletter for RSVP details.  
 Programming in main room unless otherwise specified. LL=Lower Level

*The Center at The Open Link - Enriching the lives of older adults in our community.*



## What are your favorite Holiday Traditions?



- Decorating the tree
- Assembling a train set
- Christmas pageants
- Cutting down a tree
- Reading stories
- Writing holiday cards
- Watching parades
- Lighting a menorah
- Building gingerbread houses
- Baking cookies
- Caroling
- Leaving cookies for Santa
- Helping others
- Open a gift on Christmas Eve
- Singing *Silent Night* by candlelight
- Looking at Christmas lights
- A favorite holiday dish or dessert
- A favorite gift (received or given)
- Eating cookies left for Santa
- Visit a department store
- Watching holiday specials on TV

Did you make homemade cards, paper chains, or popcorn garland? Did you have a tinsel tree? What memory stands out more - *finding* gifts under the tree on Christmas morning or *hiding* gifts Christmas Eve? Did you hide an 'Elf on the Shelf' or a pickle in a tree? Did you ever find a coin in your Christmas pudding? Do you have an important cultural tradition like the Italian *Feast of the Seven Fishes*? When did you learn the truth about Santa?

**Have you ever written down the things that make the holidays unique and memorable to you?**

**Pick up a questionnaire at The Center to help you capture your memories on paper!**



## HEALTH & WELLNESS AT THE CENTER

Register for each class one time, then come as your schedule allows. Be active, stay healthy, and make connections!



### Ongoing Classes at The Center



**Walkercise** – Mon & Wed, 9–9:30 AM. Come stretch those morning muscles! A great way to start your day and get your heart pumping stronger. Participants in this class follow a 30-minute video and enjoy good conversation while moving their feet!

**WOW (Women on Weights)** – Mon & Wed, 10–11:00 AM. A strength training program designed for mid-life and older women. Certified instructor Jane Oswald leads in resistance training, balance training, and flexibility exercises. “Grow Stronger With Us!”

**Tai Chi** – Tues & Fri, 10:15–11:15 AM. Gentle physical exercises and stretches. Accessible for everyone, can be done seated or using a chair for support. This class follows the popular videos from the Happy Thought Tai Chi Program, developed by Mark Cashatt.

**Chair Yoga** – Fri, 9–10:00 AM. Certified instructor Sarah Thayer has a passion for making yoga accessible for everyone! Explore breathing exercises and relaxing meditations, enhance strength, flexibility, and balance – all with the support of a chair.

**Special Yoga themes this month: Dec. 3 Joy ~ Dec. 13 Peace ~ Dec. 20 Light**

See page 7 for our a **Cardio Drumming** class hosted by Tribe Nutrition.

Classes targeted for ages 60+. Open to ALL ages!

\$2 Suggested Donation per Class.

Your first class is always free!



## ONGOING MONTHLY ACTIVITIES for December

To RSVP: Sign up in the big room, ask staff, call 215.679.6550, or email center@theopenlink.org. See costs and RSVP dates below, if required.

### STAMP CLUB • Mon., Dec. 9, 2024 - 10:00 am (held in the Lower Level)



Stamp collectors meet the second Monday of each month to show, share, and trade stamps.

### CARDIO DRUMMING w/ Tribe Nutrition • Thurs., Dec 12, 2024 - 10:00 am



Fun full body workout that combines music and movement using a fitness ball, bucket, and drumsticks (provided by The Center or bring your own). Can be done standing or sitting. **Donations encouraged. RSVP required by 12/11. \*Space is limited.**



### TRIVIA TIME • Fri., Dec. 13, 2024 - 1:00 pm

Theme: *All in the Family*. Question topics include history, science, pop culture, science, and more! Join a team and come up with answers together. **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**



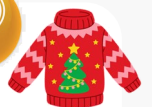
### BIRTHDAY PARTY & SINGALONG\* • Wed., Dec. 18, 2024 - 12:45 pm

Everyone is invited to sing *Happy Birthday* to special guests with December birthdays and to enjoy cake! **No Cost. RSVP encouraged by 12/17. (Sign up for Lunch separately.)**



**\*December birthdays get a treat this month - a holiday singalong! See page 2 for details.**

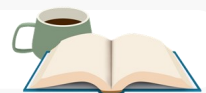
### UGLY SWEATER BINGO w/ Genesis • Fri., Dec. 20, 2024 - 1:00 pm



Our special guest hosts are Christine Mihalek from Sanatoga Court and Mandee Murphy from Pennsburg Manor, both Genesis HealthCare facilities, are providing refreshments, prizes, and fun! Doors open at 12:30 pm. **Wear your ugly sweater for a chance to win a special prize! \$1 to play the whole time. RSVP encouraged.**

**Genesis** Genesis is a provider of short-term post-acute, rehabilitation, skilled nursing and long-term care services with a wide variety of living options and professional clinical services.

**BOOK CLUB** is taking a break in December but will return in the new year!



## HOLIDAY COMMUNITY EVENTS



There are many wonderful holiday events right here in our community! Pick up a schedule at The Center, which includes dates and times of holiday bazaars, the UPV Christmas Tree Lighting, Hometown Christmas Parade, and more! You can even plan an outing with friends!



# CENTER UPDATES:

## TECH SUPPORT

Do you need help learning about your smartphone, laptop, tablet, smartwatch, or other device? Meet one-on-one with a patient and knowledgeable Volunteer Tech Coach. Call, email, or see a staff person to complete a [Tech Support Request Form](#) to let us know what kind of help you need and what type of device you have, get a Tech Support F.A.Q. and reserve your time slot.

### What kind of assistance is available?

- Basic device usage (getting apps, setting up voicemail, setting alarms, etc.)
- Social Media (Facebook, Instagram)
- GPS/Navigation
- & so much more!



## MONDAY COMMUNITY MEAL

Monday, December 2 • 6 pm

Different hosts every month. There is no cost for this meal. Ask Center staff for the menus!

**Pennsburg UCC** - Sit-down meal

**New Goshenhoppen UCC** - Take-out meal

## WINTER WEATHER POLICY



The Open Link (main office and The Center) follow the Upper Perkiomen School District for guidance on winter weather closures.

**UPSD Buildings Closed = Center Closed**

**UPSD 2-Hr Delay = Center opens at 10 am**

*(The activity schedule would begin at 10 am.)*



In the event of a closure or delay, you can always call for updates. Our phone greeting is updated for holidays and weather-related closures.

# EXTRA! EXTRA!

Stay updated. Check this section for news and information.



**Applications available at The Center.**

***Please let Center staff know if you need assistance.***

Statewide Toll-Free Hotline  
1-866-857-7095

Apply online at  
[www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us)

## Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program

The LIHEAP program helps families and individuals pay their heating bills. LIHEAP is a grant; you do not have to repay it.

- Apply between Nov. 4, 2024 and Apr. 4, 2025
- You don't have to be on public assistance
- You don't need to have an unpaid heating bill
- You can either rent or own your home

Payments are made to the utility company or fuel provider.

Grants are available for heating bills and crisis situations such as broken heating equipment or leaking lines. If you have a heating emergency, you should contact your county assistance office. *Staff at The Open Link can help!*

2024-25 Income Guidelines	
Household Size	Annual Income
1	\$22,590
2	\$30,660
Each Additional Person Add \$8,070	



[www.facebook.com/groups/centerattheopenlink.org](http://www.facebook.com/groups/centerattheopenlink.org)

*The Center at The Open Link is partially funded by Montgomery County Office of Aging Services. Additional funding comes from grants, foundations, community sponsorship, and generous community members.*



Montgomery County  
Department of  
Health and Human Services