



Enriching the Lives of Older Adults in our Community



May 2025 Newsletter

The Benefits & Challenges of Pet Ownership

By: Wendy Smeltz, Center Manager

At 19 years old, not long after moving into his first apartment, my son announced that he got a dog. My shocked response, “Why did you get a dog?!” was fueled by a concern that caring for another living creature was a huge obligation for someone so young. I couldn’t argue with his response: “responsibility and companionship”.

Our furry friends offer companionship, unconditional love, and many lessons along the way.

Pets rely solely on their owners for their well-being. Providing their care often influences us in ways we don’t realize. Daily walks or playtime help pet owners get fresh air and exercise. A pet’s structured schedule around feeding, snack time, and walks can instill a sense of routine in the owner’s life, develop improved time management skills and lead to less stress throughout the day.

Even the moments of chaos that owning a pet often bring, like a puppy’s biting phase or a cat knocking things off tables, can lead to growth as individuals. We don’t just train our pets, we find ways to adapt, like storing items differently so they won’t be chewed or knocked down. Problem-solving builds patience and encourages us to think outside the box, boosting critical thinking skills.

The unconditional love that pets give us can be incredibly soothing, combatting feelings of loneliness and isolation. There may be times when we don’t see the importance of taking care of ourselves, eating healthy, or getting exercise, but caring for pets creates opportunities to nurture and be responsible for something other than ourselves. Pets can give us a sense of purpose and sometimes, a reason to get out of bed in the morning.

To begin a conversation about National Pet Month in

Continued on page 6



Easter egg dying was eggs-actly what we needed to brighten some rainy days last month! We also learned about some natural egg dying methods using things like red onion, turmeric, blueberries, and hibiscus tea.



The Center will be closed
Monday, May 26, 2025
for Memorial Day.

Important Update to Community Lunch.
Details and a *Thank You* on page 8.

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.

The Center: 517 Jefferson St., East Greenville, PA 18041 • 215.679.6550
Main Office: 452 Penn St., Pennsburg, PA 18073 • 215.679.4112 • www.theopenlink.org

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES in May (Monthly Activities - page 7)

RSVP: Sign up in the big room, call/text 215.679.6550, email center@theopenlink.org. See costs and RSVP dates below, if required. LL=Lower Level

SPECIAL LUNCH: CINCO DE MAYO* • Mon., May 5, 2025- 12:00 pm

We are having a fiesta! Learn about the history of the day and why it is celebrated more in the US than in Mexico. Educational and fun activities. Mexican-themed lunch: Taco bar, chips and salsa, sides, and a special dessert. **Cost \$3. RSVP by 5/2. *Space is limited.**



SOURDOUGH PRESENTATION • Tues., May 6, 2025 - 1:00 pm

Have you ever wondered what all the hype is about Sourdough? Center volunteer Lori D. will teach about the process she uses to bake this naturally leavened bread along with some of the health benefits she has learned. **Donations encouraged. RSVP by 5/5.**



PAPER PEONIES WORKSHOP • Thurs., May 8, 2025 - 12:30 pm

Help us create centerpieces for Mother's Day Afternoon Tea! Follow a step-by-step tutorial to make peony bouquets using coffee filters, food coloring, and pipe cleaners. Supplies Provided. **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**



BALANCE AND STRETCH with Phoenix PT • Wed., May. 14, 2025 - 12:45 pm

Farryn from Phoenix Physical Therapy returns to lead us in simple exercises you can do to improve balance and flexibility. All skill levels welcome! **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**



Phoenix P/T helps patients recover, recharge, and rise, whether it's to treat an injury, recover from illness, or recuperate from surgery. They are conveniently located right here in the Upper Perk Valley.

MOTHER'S DAY AFTERNOON TEA* • Thurs., May 15, 2025 - 1:00 pm

Continue to celebrate Mother's Day with an afternoon tea. (Please don't eat a big lunch before Tea!) We will enjoy finger foods, desserts, and assorted teas. Pearls, gloves and hats suggested but not required. All moms will be entered into a raffle for a self care basket for some much deserved pampering. **Cost: \$3. *RSVP req'd by 5/14.**



FRAUD PRESENTATION with TCAFCU • Tues., May 20, 2025 - 1:00 pm

Beth Biehl from Tri County Area Federal Credit Union will provide tools and strategies to help protect yourself from financial fraud with tips on how to keep your financial information safe. **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**



TCAFCU is a full-service financial institution that offers a broad range of benefits and financial solutions. Membership is open to anyone that lives or works in our community.

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CRAFT: SPRING DÉCOR* • Wed., May 21, 2025 - 1:00 pm

Turn a simple wax warmer into a cozy birds nest that will make a lovely addition to your spring decorations. Supplies provided. Donated embellishments always welcome! **Cost: \$3. RSVP by Tues, May 20. *Space is limited.**



Thurs., May 22, 2025 is our monthly visit from Fiji the Therapy Dog and her owner Monica, when we'll celebrate Fiji's fourth birthday! See page 7 for details.

AARP DRIVER REFRESHER COURSE • Fri., May 23, 2025 - 9:30 am-2:00 pm (LL)

Refresh your driving skills and renew your certification. Course designed for drivers who have taken the course. **AARP Members: \$20. Non-Members: \$25. RSVP required by Thurs, 5/22. *Check with your agent for possible insurance discounts. 30-min break for lunch. Sign-up for Community Lunch when you register or by 5/22. Bring check to AARP, driver's license.**



ELVIS TRIBUTE with JEFF KRICK, JR.* • Thurs., May 29, 2025 - 1:00 pm

Jeff Krick, Jr. has been performing professionally since age 16 as a successful and endearing "Elvis Tribute Artist". Join your friends at The Center for a special performance. You'll think The King himself has returned for this exclusive show. 45-min. performance followed by an opportunity for photos. **Cost: \$5. RSVP required by 5/28. *Space is limited, sign-up now!**



GARDENING 101 with MONTCO • Fri., May 30, 2025 - 1:00 pm

Gardening is good exercise, it can reduce stress, and improve your diet when you eat what you grow. Shanita Fields, Community Health Educator from Montgomery County Office of Public Health will help us get started, from choosing a site to companion planting and crop rotation, she will give us the info we need to start growing our very own vegetables! **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**



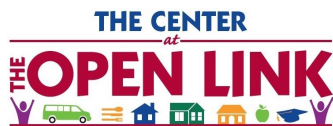
Father's Day Root Beer Floats ▪ Thurs, 6/12 - 12:45 pm

Juneteenth - Center CLOSED ▪ Thurs, 6/19

Veggie Cooking Demo w/ Mont. Co. ▪ Tues, 6/24 - 1:00 pm

Community Connections Info Session ▪ Fri, 6/27 - 12:45 pm

*Most costs are anonymous, suggested donations. Some programming may incur required costs or payment in advance.



517 Jefferson St., East Greenville
Call/Text: 215.679.6550 or Email:
center@theopenlink.org

\$2 Sugg. Donation for 60+
Adults <60 = \$4.90 or see staff.



RSVP required 24 hours in advance.
Sign up by 12 pm the weekday before.





Monday - Friday
Served at 12 pm
Doors open at 11:30 am.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Menus created by a registered dietician. *Substitutions available upon request.			1 Baked Chicken w/ Chicken Gravy Traditional Stuffing Carrots & Peas	2 Pepper & Onion Cheese Omelet Cran-Apple Compote Hash Browns
5 Special Lunch 	6 BBQ Chicken Thigh Mixed Veggies Baked Beans	7 French Onion Meatloaf Green Beans Mashed Potatoes	8 Sliced Roast Beef w/ Gravy Mashed Potatoes Green Beans	9 Cheesy Omelet Sauteed Spinach & Carrots Warm Apples
12 Chicken Marsala Buttery Herb Red Skinned Potatoes Green Beans	13 Ground Beef & Bean Chili Carrots, Cauliflower, Broccoli Sweet Corn	14 Chicken & Veggies w/ Mild Tomato Curry Sauce Peas Brown Rice	15 Sliced Beef Merlot Whipped Sweet Potatoes Roasted Beets	16 Crabcake & Mac & Cheese Scalloped Tomatoes Broccoli
19 Asian Garlic Chicken Fried Brown Rice Stir Fry Veggies	20 Baked Ziti Brussels Sprouts Spiced Peaches	21 Maple Glazed Chicken Sugar Snap Peas Mashed Sweet Potatoes	22 Italian Pulled Pork Mashed Potatoes Mixed Vegetables	23 Rice & Spinach Stuffed Fish w/ Dill Sauce Broccoli Herb Couscous
26  Memorial Day	27 Baked Fish w/ Italian Parsley Cream Sauce Italian Blend Veggies Orzo	28 Manicotti w/ Meat Sauce Broccoli Warm Pears w/ Oats	29 Baked Chicken w/ Chicken Gravy Traditional Stuffing Carrots & Peas	30 Pepper & Onion Cheese Omelet Cran-Apple Compote Hash Browns



Tasty and nutritious meals complete with side items, bread, 1% milk, coffee, and tea.
The Center serves a monthly Special Meal; dietary requirements may not be met, donations benefit The Center.
Come for the meal. Stay for friends and fellowship.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
 Tech Support by Appt. See page 8	 Blood Pressure Checks Most Thursdays, approx. 12 pm, courtesy of Family Caregivers Network		1 10:00 Cardio Drumming* w/ Tribe Nutrition 12:00 Community Lunch <i>Rain Date for Baby Goats Meet & Greet 4/29</i>	2 9:00 Chair Yoga 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards
5  9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 12:00 Special Lunch* CINCO DE MAYO No Afternoon Activities	6  10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards 1:00 Sourdough Presentation w/ Lori	7  9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 10:00 Sew Many Projects 12:00 Community Lunch 1:00 Participant Mtg	8 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Paper Peonies Workshop 	9  9:00 Chair Yoga 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 1:00 Trivia Time 12:30 Billiards
12 <i>No Morning Activities</i> 12:00 Community Lunch <i>No Afternoon Activities</i>	13 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards (LL)	14  <i>No Walkercise</i> 10:00 WOW 10:00 Sew Many Projects 12:00 Community Lunch 12:45 Phoenix P/T Balance & Stretch	15 12:00 Community Lunch 1:00 Mother's Day Afternoon Tea* 	16  9:00 Chair Yoga 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards 1:00 Bingo
19  9:00 Walkercise 10:00 Stamp Club 10:00 WOW 10:00 Book Club 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Afternoon Activities	20  10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards 1:00 Financial Fraud Prevention w/ TCAFCU	21 9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 10:00 Sew Many Projects 12:00 Community Lunch 1:00 Craft: Spring Décor* 	22 12:00 Community Lunch 12:45 Birthday Party for Fiji the Therapy Dog 	23  9:00 Chair Yoga 9:30 AARP Driver's Safety Course* 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards
26  <i>Memorial Day</i>	27 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Billiards 	28  9:00 Walkercise 10:00 WOW 10:00 Sew Many Projects 12:00 Community Lunch 12:30 Birthday Party	29 12:00 Community Lunch 1:00 Elvis Tribute w/ Jeff Krick, Jr.* 	30  9:00 Chair Yoga 10:15 Tai Chi 12:00 Community Lunch 1:00 Gardening 101 w/ MontCo HHS 12:30 Billiards

Sign up separately for all programs you plan to attend (Community Lunch and activities).
Call, text, email, or use the sign up in the Big Room

Enriching the lives of older adults in our community.

May, I asked some of you to share what you consider to be the benefits and challenges of pet ownership. Your responses were heartwarming. Comfort, motivation, entertainment, joy, and companionship were some of the benefits. Challenges included the cost of vet bills, medicine, and food, especially for an animal on a special diet, barking, pet hair, grooming, changing the litter box, the smell, being tied down, not having a fenced yard, and the importance of training. There are many challenges, but everyone agreed they are not burdens, they just come with the territory, and you are willing to give up some novelties to provide your pets with proper care.

Some of you shared that you don't have pets due to reasons listed or because of mobility or health issues, or lack of transportation. For someone attracted to the joys of pet ownership, but concerned about the obstacles, maybe you can consider a cat or small, low-maintenance dog breed, or a small pet like a dwarf hamster. Other options are to foster animals temporarily or volunteer at a local animal shelter or farm. Did you know that many home care agencies include pet care in their services, like walking dogs, feeding, and changing litter? Still, if owning a pet is not feasible, perhaps you can offer to take a neighbor's dog for walks or care for a loved one's pet while they travel. Local parks are great places to observe and interact with dogs and their owners. Many dogs need to say hello and get pets from everyone they pass.

Studies show that the simple act of petting an animal can release endorphins and create a calming effect. Pet owners, cherish your pets! For those without a furry friend - look for chances to experience gentle pets, soft purrs, tail wags, nose boops, and belly rubs, which can brighten your day! And join us for visits from Fiji the therapy dog. This month we celebrate her fourth birthday! We invite everyone to share pet ownership joys and benefits, challenges and obstacles, and photos, on May's Pet Wall at The Center, where you'll also find valuable information from the Humane Society, and an excellent article, "Pet Ownership and Poverty" by Brooke Harvey, The Open Link's Nutrition Services Manager.

If you're curious how my son managed as a dog owner, his dog Skyler is happy and healthy. She has been by his side through many ups and downs over the last 8 years, has helped him gain responsibility, and provides companionship.

HEALTH & WELLNESS CLASSES 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. Follow along with videos or participant led resistance and 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.

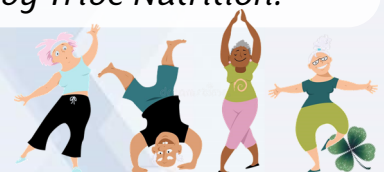
Chair Yoga – Fri, 9–10:00 AM. Certified instructor Sarah Thayer has a passion for making yoga accessible for everyone! Explore breathing exercises and relaxing meditations, enhance strength, flexibility, and balance – all with the support of a chair.

*See page 7 for monthly **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 May

RSVP: Sign up in the big room, call/text 215.679.6550, email center@theopenlink.org. See costs and RSVP dates below, if required. LL=Lower Level



CARDIO DRUMMING w/ Tribe Nutrition* • Thurs., May 1, 2025 - 10 am

Fun full body workout that combines music and movement using a fitness ball, bucket, and drumsticks. Can be done standing or sitting. **Donations encouraged. RSVP req'd by 4/30.**

***Space is limited.** Tribe Nutrition offers a variety of protein shakes and hosts fun and fitness activities.



TRIVIA TIME - Theme: NATURE • Fri., May. 9, 2025 - 1:00 pm

Questions will cover music, movies, folk tales, phrases, and more. It's Spring and Mother Nature is awake! Questions will be all about the natural world. Come up with answers together, join a team that day, small prizes for the winning team. **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**

BINGO • Fri., May. 16, 2025 - 1:00 pm



We will celebrate National 'Do Something Good for Your Neighbor Day' with a fun twist on BINGO! Doors open at 12:30 pm for light refreshments and fellowship. Small prizes, big fun. **\$1 to play the whole time. RSVP encouraged.**



STAMP CLUB • Mon., May 19, 2025 - 10:00 am (LL)

This month the third Monday (normally the second). Show, share, and trade stamps.

BOOK CLUB • Mon., May 19, 2025 - 10:00 am (LL)

Sourdough by Robin Sloan. A delicious and funny novel about an overworked and under-socialized software engineer discovering her calling and a community as a baker.



RSVP not required. Limited number of books available at The Center for no cost.

BIRTHDAY PARTY for FIJI • Thurs., May 22, 2025 - 12:45 pm

Our monthly visit with Fiji, an official AKC Canine Good Citizen Therapy Dog and her owner Monica will be a special 4th birthday celebration! **No Cost. RSVP encouraged.**



MAY BIRTHDAY PARTY • Wed., May 28, 2025 - 12:30 pm

Celebrate special May birthday guests with cake and activities. **RSVP encouraged by 5/27.**

AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES • Most Mondays, 12:30. Join Mahjong or start an activity.

BILLIARDS • Tuesdays & Fridays, 12:30 pm. All skill levels welcome. (LL)

SEW MANY PROJECTS • Wednesdays, 10 am to 2 pm. Crafters welcome! (LL)



CENTER UPDATES:

Tech Support Available

Last month's Smartphone Info Session with Randy Bapst of *Golden Tech Care* provided great tips and valuable information. Randy has also joined our Tech Coach Team! If you have more questions about your phone or another device, we are here to help!

Contact front desk to reserve a one-hour time slot, tell us about your device and the questions you have. We'll use this information to connect you to the right Tech Coach who has knowledge in that area. Volunteers have assisted with retrieving lost passwords, using smart-watches, social media, GPS navigation/maps, and much more. They can help you too!



MONDAY COMMUNITY MEAL

Monday, May 5 • 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



IMPORTANT UPDATE

Lunch RSVPs are now required 24 hours in advance.

Reminder:

Lunch signups are now required: by 12 noon the weekday before.

This change helps The Center run more efficiently so we can serve you better! If you *think* you would like to attend lunch, please RSVP 24 hours in advance. Then if you can't make it on the day of lunch, just give us a call to cancel!

EXTRA! EXTRA!

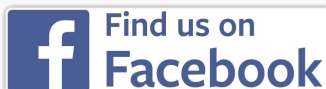
Participant Meeting

We want to hear your opinions on existing programs and suggestions for new and improved activities. These quarterly meetings are also a good opportunity for you to hear about future Center plans and find out how you can get involved. Your feedback and ideas are welcome! The next meeting will be held: **Wednesday, May 7th at 1:00 pm**. RSVP is not needed. Light refreshments will be provided. This month, we'll review the suggested names for the Lower Level and the recent Community Lunch Survey.



We Appreciate Your Willingness to Adjust

Last month The Center made what felt like a big change that would require a lot of getting used to - for staff and participants. The RSVP process for Community Lunch was modified to 24-hours notice after being able to call until 11 am the same day for many years. Hopefully this has not caused any of you too much frustration. It has helped staff tremendously when preparing for a popular meal or a lunch that is followed by a well-attended activity. We would like to say THANK YOU for your understanding and adaptability!



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