

# Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Inc. Newsletter

## October 2025



### **HELLO AUTUMN!** *(Working with older adults, we never say Fall!)*

Along with the season comes beautiful colors in the trees and bushes, cooler, crisp air, and shorter days. Take time to slow down and enjoy this spectacular time of year!

There has been much concern about the state of our government lately. We hear about the stalemate with the Federal government and with our State government as well, causing shutdowns, stoppages, layoffs and who knows what else? What does this mean to our older adults who are dependent upon the help and services we provide?

As an Agency, we have been through this before, and it is not an easy situation in which to be. Our funding, which has been pretty much flatlined for years is now greatly reduced because of funding delays. With increasing costs for just about everything, it can be very difficult. We feel the same pressures as you do, trying to make ends meet.

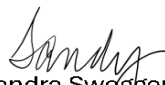
We are thankful that our services are recognized as essential, and that the Department of Aging found a way to provide partial funding to Agencies on Aging for a few months, something that didn't happen in the past during budget impasses. We don't know when we will receive future payments or if full funding will be restored.

However, our staff is committed to making sure our services continue. We know how important our services are to older adults, whether it be meals, in-home services, senior centers or transportation or more. We have learned from our past experiences, planned, cut and/or delayed any costs that we can, and for now, our services will continue. We may have to delay new requests for some services, but will do our best to serve those most vulnerable and in need.

How can you help? You can reach out to our State and Federal Legislators and ask them to please find a way to resolve their differences and pass a budget and one that includes increased funding for Agencies on Aging. Remind them that the older adult population is growing rapidly and more funding is needed to provide services that help seniors live independently and with dignity. Please realize that Mercer County's representatives have always been very supportive of programs and services for older adults, but right now we need them to encourage their peers to show that support as well. Let them know that you appreciate their support. You can click on this link, <https://bit.ly/4kn4Cwd>, to easily send your legislator a message.

I hope this eases your concerns in some small way. Know that we will do our best for as long as we can to make each day a little bit better for those we serve.

Enjoy every day!

  
Sandra Swogger  
Chief Executive Officer

# Watch Out for "Sweetheart Scams" in Online Dating

Source: FBI Internet Crime Report 2023 via IC3.gov

If you're exploring online dating later in life, romantic possibilities can be exciting—but beware: scammers often target older adults with "sweetheart scams" (also known as romance scams or catfishing).

These scams involve fake profiles designed to stir up emotional connections and then request money, often under the guise of emergencies or travel plans. In 2023 alone, over 6,700 adults aged 60+ lost nearly **\$367 million** to these scams, according to the FBI.

## Red flags of a sweetheart scammer include:

- Rushing the relationship and professing love quickly ("love bombing")
- Avoiding video chats or in-person meetings
- Asking you to move conversations off the dating site
- Claiming travel or job emergencies that prevent meeting
- Asking for money or gift cards

## How to protect yourself:

- Talk to a trusted friend if something feels off
- Reverse-image search their profile pics
- Never send money or personal info to someone you haven't met
- Insist on video chatting before getting emotionally invested
- Be cautious of anyone unwilling to meet in person

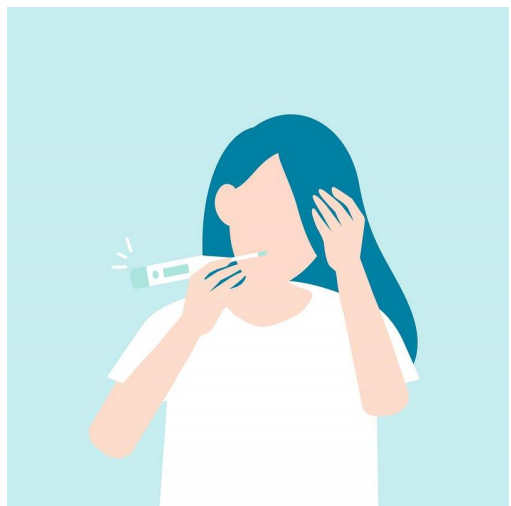
## Think you've been scammed?

- Report it to the dating app or site
- File a complaint at [IC3.gov](https://www.ic3.gov) and with the FTC
- Alert your bank and change all passwords
- Block the scammer on all platforms

Remember, there's no shame in being targeted—these scams are sophisticated. Speaking up helps others stay safe.



# Flu Season Is Here — Are You Protected?



Did you know it can take up to **two weeks** for the flu vaccine to become fully effective? That's why timing matters!

**Flu season typically begins in mid-September and can last through May**, with peak activity usually occurring between December and February.

## When's the best time to get vaccinated?

**Late September through October** is ideal to ensure you're protected before flu activity ramps up.

**Feeling under the weather?** Please stay home and rest to help prevent the spread of illness and protect others in your community.

Stay well this season—and don't forget to wash your hands regularly, stay hydrated, and get plenty of sleep!

# Are you a Grandparent Raising your Grandchild in Pennsylvania?

The PA Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Legal Line is here for you.



## 1-877-727-7529 Statewide

**SLC**  
Senior**LAW** Center  
Seeking Justice for Older People



Pennsylvania  
Department of Aging

**Redeem your 2025 Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program Vouchers before November 30th.**

**Printable Worksheets? Caregivers — we have you covered!**



Getting organized can be one of the BIGGEST challenges. Caregivers – we have you covered!

Visit the [pa.gov/CareKit](https://pa.gov/CareKit) to find printable worksheets to help with tasks like medication management, doctor visits, caregiver schedules, and so much more!



## Spotlight: Pennsylvania's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program (PTRR)

If you're a Pennsylvania resident who is 65 or older, a widow(er) 50+, or age 18+ with a disability — and your household income is \$46,520 or less — you may qualify for the **Property Tax/Rent Rebate (PTRR)**.

### What you can get

Rebates range from **\$380 to \$1,000**, depending on income.

### Who's eligible

You must meet both age/disability **and** income criteria:

- **Age / disability** • 65 and older • Widows or widowers age 50+ • Persons 18+ with a disability
- **Income** • Household income must be **\$46,520 or less** per year

### How to apply & deadline

- You can apply **online via myPATH**, by mail, or in person at any Mercer County Area Agency on Aging office.

The **2024 application deadline has been extended to December 31, 2025**

(applications postmarked by that date will be accepted.)

### Need help?

- Call the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue at **1-888-222-9190** for guidance.
  - Use the "Where's My Rebate?" tool to check your status  
(you'll need the primary applicant's SSN, date of birth, and application year)

**Important security tip:** The Department of Revenue will **never** ask for your bank account information over the phone. Be alert for scams, and report any suspicious calls to the Office of Attorney General.

**PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE  
APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO**

**DECEMBER 31, 2025**

**pa.gov/PTRR**





## 2025 Medicare Open Enrollment Period

When? October 15-December 7, 2025

What can you do during this period?

- Join, drop, or switch to another Medicare Advantage Plan with or without drug coverage (or add or drop drug coverage).
- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan or from a Medicare Advantage Plan to Original Medicare.
- Join, drop, or switch to another Medicare drug plan if you're in Original Medicare. New plan would start January 1, 2026 (the plan must get your enrollment request by December 7).



To make a free appointment to discuss your options, call PA MEDI at 724-662-6222.

## Medicare Changes for 2026: What We Know So Far

As we look ahead to 2026, Medicare beneficiaries should be aware of several important updates—particularly related to Medicare Part D, Medicare Advantage (MA) plans, and preventive care coverage. While cost changes for **Original Medicare (Parts A & B)** have not yet been announced, here's what we do know so far:

### Medicare Part D Updates

- \* **Out-of-Pocket Maximum:** The cap on annual out-of-pocket spending for Medicare Part D prescription drug plans will increase from **\$2,000 in 2025 to \$2,100 in 2026**.
- \* **Annual Deductible:** The standard deductible for Part D plans will rise from **\$590 in 2025 to \$615 in 2026**, as set by the federal government.

### Preventive Care Update

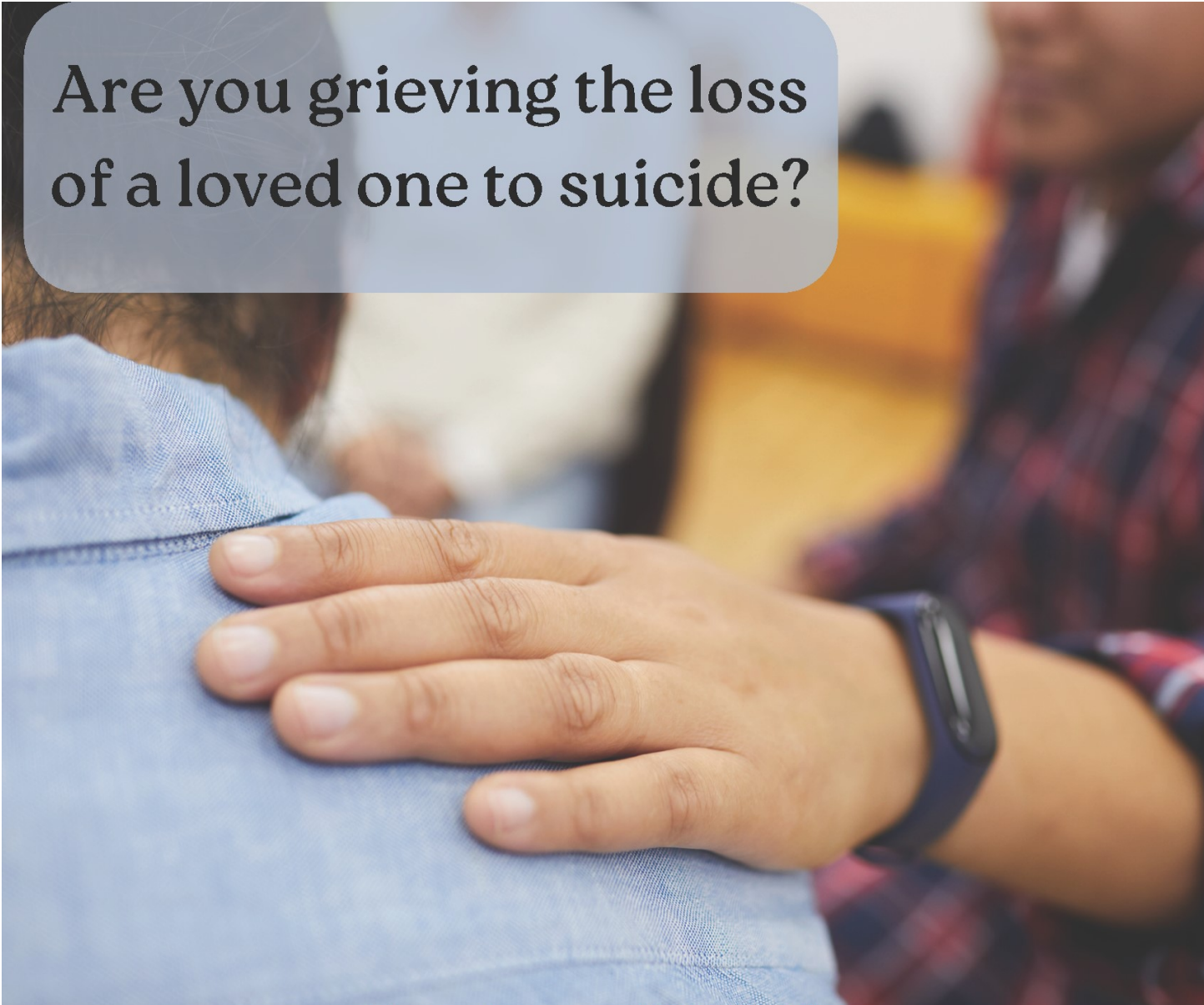
- \* **Colorectal Cancer Screening:** Medicare has lowered the minimum age for covered colorectal cancer screenings from **50 to 45**, aligning with updated recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. This change aims to support earlier detection and better health outcomes.

### Medicare Advantage (MA) Plan Requirements

- \* **New Mid-Year Benefit Notice:** Starting **January 1, 2026**, Medicare Advantage plans will be required to mail a **mid-year notice** to enrollees between **June 30 and July 31**. This notice must include details about **supplemental benefits** available during the plan year that the member has **not yet used**, helping enrollees make the most of their benefits.

### Aetna Plan Name Change

- \* Aetna has announced that it will be **renaming most of its Medicare Advantage plans** beginning in 2026. More information will be provided as details become available, but members should be on the lookout for communications from Aetna regarding these changes.



Are you grieving the loss  
of a loved one to suicide?

## **Survivors of Suicide Bereavement Support Group in Mercer County**

**Where:** Hermitage City Building  
Room 301  
800 North Hermitage Rd  
Hermitage, PA 16148

**When:** 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the Month

**Time:** 5:00 PM

Facilitators are trained to help those with a loss by suicide and want to help others cope with the loss of loved ones.

**Must be at least 18 years old to attend**  
For more information contact Anna @ Mercer County  
Behavioral Health 724-662-1550 EXT. 190



[Facebook.com/roarcentermccda](https://www.facebook.com/roarcentermccda)

**October**  
**8<sup>th</sup> @ 11 am**

# GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

ARE YOU A GRANDPARENT RAISING YOUR  
GRANDCHILDREN AND COULD USE SOME SUPPORT?  
BE PART OF THE CONVERSATION!

GET SUPPORT, BE SUPPORT

## DISCUSS ADVOCACY

## AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

JOIN PEGGY TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER WHILE DISCUSSING  
WHAT'S HELPFUL AND WHAT IS NOT, DISCUSS GAPS IN  
SERVICES TO ADVOCATE FOR CHANGE

## WHERE: ROAR CENTER

## HOSTED BY PEGGY BOBBIE

912 E STATE ST SHARON  
(724)308-6222





Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

# **ADULT DAY SERVICES**

*220 N. Buhl Farm Drive, Hermitage, PA 16148*

For every person enrolled in an adult day care program,  
two people get their lives back:  
the Individual and the Caregiver.

Visiting a Center will prove that life does not end with a diagnosis.  
Adult Day Services can serve as the cornerstone  
of community-based long-term living.

Adult Day Care Programs are designed  
to serve adults experiencing a decrease in  
physical, mental and social functioning.

The Adult Day environment  
recognizes and attends to emotional and intellectual needs,  
as well as physical needs.

If you think this program  
can help you and your loved one,  
call 724-981-7950 or email [adc@mercercountyaging.org](mailto:adc@mercercountyaging.org).

Open Monday through Friday.



# WE'RE HIRING!



## Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Are you looking to make a difference?  
Consider joining our team and make a difference in the lives of  
older adults in Mercer County.

### Full-time and part-time positions available:

- Care Manager
- Protective Services Investigator
- Ombudsman (advocate for long term care residents)
- PA MEDI Coordinator (insurance counseling)
- Senior Center Aide

**If you are passionate about improving the lives of others,  
we want to hear from you!**

**For more information about our mission, services or job  
offerings, check our website at  
[www.mercercountyaging.org](http://www.mercercountyaging.org) or scan the QR Code.  
Call 724-662-6222 or email [admin@mercercountyaging.org](mailto:admin@mercercountyaging.org)  
We can't wait to meet you!**





# CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

***MERCER COUNTY AREA  
AGENCY ON AGING, INC.***

## **Are you caring for an aging person?**

Please consider joining the Caregiver Support Group. The support group will provide education, support, and resources to caregivers.



**Feeling isolated,  
burnt out, or  
stressed with  
caring for your  
loved one? Come  
join our support  
group!**

**Meetings held the  
second  
Wednesday of the  
month at 5:00pm**

**Please call to reserve  
your seat by calling:**

**(724)458-6844**

**Support Group Meetings**

**Location:**

**Grove City Senior**

**Community Center**

**301 South Broad Street**

**Grove City, PA 16127**



COMMUNITY  
COUNSELING CENTER  
OF MERCER COUNTY

# HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS WALK

Homelessness doesn't  
discriminate.

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FRIDAY  
NOVEMBER 14TH

CHECK IN BY 11:45AM

WALK BEGINS AT 12:00PM

AT 133 SOUTH IRVINE AVENUE  
SHARON, PA 16146

VENDORS SET UP AT 11:00AM  
AT 195 WEST CONNELLY BLVD  
SHARON, PA 16146

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*Lace up your sneakers and  
join us for our Homelessness  
Awareness Walk—a great  
way to learn about all of the  
community resources in  
Mercer County!*

**REGISTER TO BE A VENDOR AT  
HOSPITALITY@CCCMER.ORG**

**NO PREREGISTRATION REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE  
WALK**

**FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS EMAIL [HOSPITALITY@CCCMER.ORG](mailto:HOSPITALITY@CCCMER.ORG)**





# Free Library Books by Mail Service!

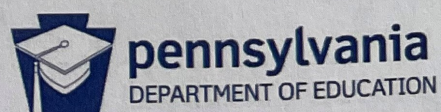
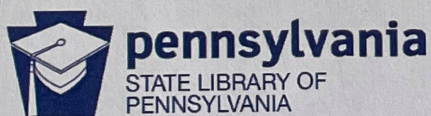
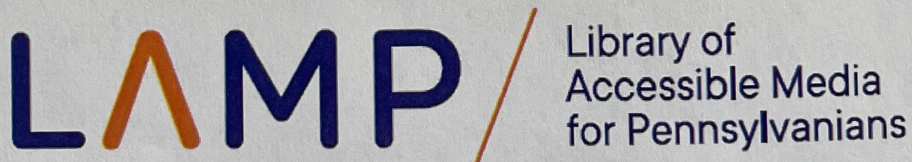
Free public library services are available to eligible Pennsylvania residents who have difficulty reading standard print because of a visual, physical, or reading disability.

All materials are mailed postage free from the library, to your doorstep, and back again. Available materials include:

- Audio Books
- Audio Magazines
- Audio Playback Equipment
- Digital Audiobook Downloads
- Braille Books and Downloads
- Audio Described DVD Movies
- Large Print Books
- Wi-fi Hotspots



For more information or to learn if you qualify, contact **LAMP: Library of Accessible Media for Pennsylvanians** by calling **800.242.0586** or visiting **MyLAMP.org**.





# 2025 MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

## Questions about your Medicare?

We are here to  
**HELP**

### Open Enrollment Dates



Join, switch or drop  
Medicare Advantage or  
Prescription Drug Plans.

Call Mercer Co.  
Area Agency on Aging, Inc.  
at 724-662-6222 to schedule a  
free plan comparison!

Call the PA MEDI Helpline,  
Monday - Friday, 8AM - 5PM

**1-800-783-7067**

**Understanding Medicare can  
be difficult.**

PA MEDI counselors are specially trained staff and volunteers who can answer your questions and provide you with nonbiased, objective, easy-to-understand information about Medicare.

They can help you:

- Make informed choices about Medicare coverage options, Medigap policies and Medicare Advantage Plans
- Understand Medicare eligibility & enrollment
- Understand what services are covered under Medicare Parts A and B and your Medicare Summary Notice
- Understand your Medicare Prescription Drug (Part D) benefit
- Apply for Medicare Savings Programs to save you money... and more!



**pennsylvania**

Medicare Education and Decision Insight

This advertisement is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1.9 million with 100% funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.





Did you know you could learn to crochet at the Shenango Valley Senior Center?

Call 724-981-7950 for more information.



# Extra Scheduled AWESOME CLASS

## BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS



**October 16, 2025**

**1:00PM-3:00PM**

**Contact Us**

**724-346-5777 Ext 160**

Attend this AWESOME class facilitated by  
PA CareerLink Mercer County  
and earn a complete computer set up!

## Senior Resources

**AARP ([www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org))**— The National site for AARP a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization for people, ages 50 and older. Call 1-888-687-2277

**Benefits Checkup ([www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org))**— An online questionnaire to help search for a list of all state and federal benefits.

**COMPASS (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Application for Social Services [[www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us)])**— Enables Pennsylvania citizens to apply for social service programs online. Call 1-800-692-7462.

**Medicare ([www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov))**—The official government site for Medicare consumer information. Call 1-800-633-4227

## Mental Health Services

Do you need to talk to someone about loneliness or depression?

Locally:

Mercer County Crisis:

724-662-2227

Community Counseling Center Warm Line:

724-981-1741

1-866-853-7758

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

Dial 988 –or- 1-800-273-8255

Veteran Crisis Line: Call 988 then press 1.

## Have You Visited Your Local Senior Center Yet?

Your local senior center is a great place to connect, stay active, and enjoy a warm meal. Whether you're looking to socialize, try a new activity, or just enjoy some friendly company, there's something for everyone.

Drop by today — you might be surprised how welcoming it feels!

<b>PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE</b>		
<b>ELIGIBILITY</b>		
Call: 800-225-7223		
	PAGE	PACENET
Age 65+		
PA Resident for at least 90 days		
Individual Income	under 14,500	between 14,500-33,500
Married Income	under 17,700	between 17,700-41,500

### Local Volunteer Opportunities:

Mercer County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.  
724-662-6222

American Red Cross 1-800-422-7677

Meals on Wheels 724-342-2042

United Way of Mercer County 724-981-1884

Mercer County Food Bank 724-981-0353

## MCAAA, Inc. Contact Information:

[www.mercercountyaging.org](http://www.mercercountyaging.org)



### Administration / Care Management / Older Adult Protective Services

133 N. Pitt Street, Mercer, PA 16137  
724-662-6222

### Greenville Senior Community Center

45 Alan Avenue, Greenville, PA 16125  
724-588-3155

### Grove City Senior Community Center

301 S. Broad Street, Grove City, PA 16127  
724-458-6844

### McQuiston Center by the Park

29 Railroad Street, Sandy Lake, PA 16145  
724-376-3608

### Shenango Valley Senior Center and Adult Day Care

220 N. Buhl Farm Drive, Hermitage, PA 16148  
724-981-7950