

Area Agency on Aging *Connections*

Penn Hills man assists county with senior center improvement project

By Daniel Casciato
For Pittsburgh Senior News

Jim Carnahan wants to see county senior centers improve their conditions. So when the Penn Hills resident was approached by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services Area Agency on Aging (ACAAA) to join the Senior Community Center Transformation Project, he didn't hesitate.

With his active volunteer background, Jim has been an invaluable resource. He also serves on the advisory board of the Allegheny County Housing Authority and the Advisory Committee of the Penn Hills Senior Center. "I think this is a good thing that the Agency on Aging is doing and I wanted to be part of this effort," says Jim, a retired accountant.

The project task is to create a system of community-based senior services that is:

- more accessible;
- more responsive to the changing demo-



Chuck LeClaire/Pittsburgh Senior News

Jim Carnahan in front of the Penn Hills Senior Center.

graphics of seniors, as well as their needs and interests (consumer-driven and directed); and

- more rationally funded, with a greater emphasis on quality.

To accomplish this task, three groups were established: a Steering Committee, a Community Advisory Board and a Senior Voices Leadership Team.

Jim, 78, is part of the Senior Voices team—seniors who have been meeting with researchers from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA). In August, GSPIA researchers began conducting senior focus groups to assure that county seniors are heard regarding what they are looking for in senior community center services, what their interests are, and where and how services should be delivered.

"Senior centers are very important to seniors," says Jim. "It helps seniors to get out of their homes and participate in many activities."

The entire process to transform the centers is expected to take another year.

"We've had some great input from a lot of people so far," says Jim. "We're moving along pretty good. But you can't do something like this overnight. It takes time."

To learn more, call SeniorLine at (412) 350-5460.
PSN

Allegheny County Department of Human Services Area Agency on Aging

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The Honorable Dan Onorato, Chief Executive of Allegheny County
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Serving the older adults of Allegheny County

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Contact Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging's SeniorLine at (412) 350-5460;
Toll Free – 1 (800) 344-4319; TDD – (412) 350-2727
or visit www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs/aaa



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Hill House Association Senior Services	(412) 392-4450	Seton Center, Inc.	(412) 344-4777
Jewish Community Center	(412) 521-8010	Vintage, Inc.	(412) 361-5003
Lemington Community Services	(412) 362-7301	* Ursuline Senior Services	(412) 683-0400
		(* Not a Senior Center)	