

FREE INCOME TAX SERVICES

The PEAK Center will be one of several local sites for free Federal and State tax preparation. The tax service is provided by volunteers who have been trained through AARP-TCE. The trained volunteers will be available here beginning Feb. 2 through April 13 by appointment only. If time permits, tax preparers or other trained volunteers will also complete the Pennsylvania Property Tax and Rent Rebate Application.

Since The Peak Center's mission is to serve the local mature adult population, preference in scheduling appointments will be given to those who have low to moderate household income, generally below \$49,000. Also, if you have self-employed income, it should be below \$10,000.

To your appointment, bring:

- A copy of last year's tax return
- Social Security statement, Social Security card or a photo ID
- All forms, booklets and 2011 year-end financial statements
- Since both signatures are needed to file electronically, you and your spouse must come to the appointment
- For assistance in completing the PA Property Tax and Rent Rebate application, bring paid receipts for last year's property taxes or rent receipts.

Appointments can be scheduled at the Member Services Office or by calling The PEAK Center at 215-362-7432, starting on Monday, January 16, 2011. No appointments will be made before this date. Appointments will be available on Thursday and Fridays, beginning February 2 through April 13.

VOLUNTEERS WILL BE NEEDED AS

GREETERS for the FREE INCOME TAX SERVICE at the PEAK Center

Are you looking for a way to meet new people? No experience is necessary. If you would be interested in helping for one or more 3-hour shifts on a Thursday or Friday, beginning February 3 through April 13, 2011, please call Carol at The PEAK Center at 215-362-7432.

Update

2010 Property Tax and Rebate

Property Tax and Rent Rebate applications for the 2011 tax year are not available yet. We expect to have a supply by the end of January. If you qualify for this program, you can receive a rebate up to \$ 650. In general you must be 65 by Dec. 31, 2011, with a maximum household income level of \$35,000 for a homeowner and \$15,000 for people who rent. Widows and widowers age 50 or older and people with disabilities over 18 may also qualify. In computing income, only 50% of Social Security and Railroad retirement benefits are counted. Call Carol for more information.

LIHEAP ASSISTANCE FOR 2011-2012

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) opened for applications as of November 1, 2011 for the current heating season. This program helps low-income families pay their heating bills. LIHEAP is a grant; you don't have to pay it back.

NEW Income Guidelines 2011-2012 for Homeowners and Renters

Household Size	Maximum Income
1	\$16,335
2	\$22,065
3	\$27,795
4	\$33,525

Add \$5,730 for each additional person

Apply online at: www.compass.state.pa.us or pick up an application at The PEAK Center. Applicants may also call toll-free (866) 857-7095. If you need help completing the application, call Carol Costlow at 215-362-7432.

ARE YOU GETTING ALL THE SUPPORT YOU NEED?

Let us help you find out if you qualify for:

- Help in paying for prescription drugs-Extra Help and/or PACE/PACENET
- Property Tax and Rent Rebates
- SNAP (formerly Food Stamps)
- Medical Assistance – Medicaid
- Or one of the many other social support programs which are available to mature adults in Montgomery County.

Benefits Check-up is an innovative computer program that will help identify sources of support for which you may qualify. It takes about 30 minutes to enter information into the computer to check hundreds of entitlement programs. Don't miss out! For an appointment or more information call Carol at 215-362-7432.

Consumer Updates

Apprise – Tuesdays, 9:30 AM-11:30 AM, by appointment- The Apprise Medical insurance counseling program covers questions about Medicare benefits, Medigap insurance & Medicaid. To make an appointment, call Bob Sykes at 215-362-1076.

Legal Counseling- Tuesday, January 24 at 12:00 PM- By appointment only – Register at the Member Services Office.

DO YOU NEED HELP CHOOSING AMONG ELECTRIC SUPPLIERS?

It has been almost a year since PECO customers were given the right to choose a different energy supplier. If you would like help in searching for alternative energy suppliers using the computer or evaluating offers you've received in the mail, you can make an appointment to see Carol, Consumer Resources Coordinator, 215-363-7432.

HELPFUL CONSUMER INFORMATION AVAILABLE

Are you looking for helpful information to help you make a major consumer decision? Consider using the website publications.usa.gov to find publications on many of consumer topics.

You'll find hundreds of free or very low cost publications to read online, download in PDF format, or order in print.

They also offer a small but growing number of e-books to download to your e-reader.

You'll find helpful tips about preventing identity theft and avoiding scams and frauds, consumer purchases, problems and filing a consumer complaint, consumer protection laws, along with many other useful topics. Here is just a sample of the topics available:

- 2011 Consumer Action Handbook**
- Green Vehicle Guide**
- Nine Ways to Lower Your Auto Insurance Costs**
- Fuel Economy Guide**

Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors

MAC

Come and make your voice heard!

Be part of a volunteer team to make a difference at your Senior Center!!

Join the Member Advisory Committee!!!

Next Meeting time: Wednesday, January, 18th 1:00 – 2:00 PM

MAC is looking for a few good men and women to meet every other month at the Peak Center to:

- Share concerns that arise.
- Suggest solutions to problems.
- Find ways to improve the Center for everyone.
- Become a volunteer in your Senior Center.

Contact the Health and Wellness Program Coordinator if you are interested in being a part of this noble effort.

SAVE THE DATES FOR UPCOMING PEAK PERFORMANCES

February 17th @ 1:30 PM
Magic of the Gustafsons Magicomedy Show

March 16th @ 1:30 PM
Reel Colleens: Irish Dancing Group

April 20th @ 1:30 PM
Rhinesmith-Smith Duo: Classical Instrumental and Vocal

AARP Safe Driving Classes

The standard 8 hour class will be offered on Wednesday & Thursday, March. 7th and 8th, 9AM-1 PM. Attendance both days is required to complete course.

Pre-register at the Welcome Center. \$12 for AARP members & spouses.

\$14 for non-AARP members. Please stop in or mail your check before class. Checks Only, NO CASH.

Make your check payable to AARP. Please have your AARP membership number ready when you register and bring your AARP card to class.

GENEALOGY CLUB

At The PEAK Center

Whether you're a beginner or a longtime genealogist, join this group to share your experiences or learn how to navigate the internet and other sources to satisfy your curiosity about your family tree.

Please join the Genealogy Club

Thursday, January 12 & Thursday, January 26 At 1:00pm

Please contact the Welcome Center to sign up
215-362-7432