

Meet SNaP

Many communities are looking for innovative ways to meet their residents' needs.

One such effort is taking place in Penn National. In 2006 a nonprofit charitable organization was incorporated with the goal of supplying a support network for Penn National residents. It goes by the acronym of SNaP - Support Network at Penn National.

Services presently being offered include home maintenance, information, lifelong learning, transportation, assistance with technology, health support and social support. In many cases, volunteers actually provide the assistance. For more substantive needs, there is a cadre of preferred providers who have been vetted by the organization. In some cases they offer discounted rates.

Requesting assistance is made simple for members. They make one call to the Executive Director Donna Crissman, the only paid member of the organization, and she handles the arrangements.

President Richard Kiel says that SNaP has about 100 households with the number increasing as people witness the benefits of membership.

Crissman reported 152 recorded service calls over the last eight months. "We probably have 60 companies on the approved list," she said.

"Requests are not always something big," explained Crissman. "For instance, a couple needed their mattress flipped but physically couldn't do it. Volunteers went by and flipped it. We urge our members to call with any problem at all."

Aging in place is an important option for

an older population. "We offer assistance that can enable people to live at home longer," said board member Rosina Saitta.

In addition to services SNaP offers social activities. "In May of 2007," said Vice President Don Weber, "we started a group to provide a social life for widows and widowers. We call it SNaPbacks. The group goes out twice a month. The first outing is usually for dinner and the second is some other type of event. For the people who need this type of support, it has been a really good thing."

The volunteers are highly motivated. "I really love this community," Kiel said. "And we're trying to take the high quality of life here and make it better."

Saitta recalls, "When I first heard about SNaP, I thought this is just a fantastic idea. It is much like years ago when people looked out for one another. Since most people here are new, they don't have that kind of support, and we are trying to supply it."

"You see situations where the people are getting older and less able and they need simple things done," Weber said.

If you're a Penn National resident you can get more information at SNaP's Web site www.snapn.org or by calling 352-2612.



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