

Food Rescues and Resources Available to Help Families in Need

By Senator Scavello

PEN ARGYL - The COVID-19 pandemic has created enormous financial strains on many families who were suddenly left without jobs during the governor's extensive business shutdown orders. As lawmakers continue to look for ways to repair the damage done to our economy, a number of community partners are stepping up to help families impacted by COVID-19 through food rescues and other charitable food efforts.

The Department of Agriculture recently highlighted the efforts of food rescue organizations that work to recover unused food before it goes to waste so they can provide these goods to food banks and other charitable food efforts. Feeding Pennsylvania also maintains a list of member food banks available to serve residents of all 67 counties in Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Network also has compiled a list by region of food resources available to help families in need during COVID-19, and they recently launched a new Healthy Pantry Toolkit to help food pantries better meet the needs of visitors.

LIHEAP Recovery Crisis Program Opens

By Senator Scavello

PEN ARGYL - Low-income families who are struggling with energy costs during the COVID-19 pandemic may qualify for assistance from the new Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Recovery Crisis Program. The application period opens today and will run through August 31, or until all available funding for the program is spent.

The program will offer a crisis benefit and a supplemental payment made directly to utility companies or fuel providers to help offset costs for home utilities. Funding is available for homeowners and renters who meet income guidelines and maximum benefit will be \$800 per household.

Income limits, application information and more information are available here <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/LIHEAP.aspx>.



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We'll be using Zoom to host this meeting. You will need access to a computer so that you can see and hear us. A microphone or headset is important. A webcam is optional (but nice to have). You may want to test your settings a few minutes prior to joining us.

Join us for a live, virtual information session on April 29th.

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Ken Field

Owner of Slate Belt Energy Services

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times

Do a Split

You may not be familiar with the term mini split heat pump or air conditioner but you have definitely seen one somewhere. The term sounds a little technical but the systems are basically a replacement for window air conditioners. One part of the system mounts on a wall (usually) and the other part goes outside usually on the ground. They do the same job as a window air conditioner but they also can produce heat. The big benefit is that they are very quiet. With most of the loud parts separated by a wall there is nearly no sound at all from the indoor unit. There are different efficiency levels available and some even qualify for the utility rebates. Because they are a permanently mounted unit, installation requires a contractor to connect the copper tubes that go between the indoor and outdoor units and also for the electrical wiring.

But once the initial startup is done, there is not much maintenance that needs to be done.

Unlike central air conditioners, a contractor cannot check the refrigerant charge and determine correct operation. These systems are much more like a window unit in that they usually have no leakage that would require the checking or 'topping off' that people sometimes ask for. There are air filters in the unit that is mounted on the wall and they are easily removable to wash. That is the most important maintenance task for the homeowner. These filters are made of a very fine mesh and most have an electrostatic charge to make them attract and hold dust particles as the air passes through. When they are clogged, they can impede the operation of the unit just like a clogged air filter in a furnace can. Once they are removed and washed in the sink, they can be reinserted in the unit. The only other item to check periodically is the fins on the outdoor unit. With this type of unit the heat transfer coil on the outside looks like the radiator in your car and it can get dirty. It is usually in the rear on this type of unit so it is less prone to get dirty than a typical central system outdoor unit that has fins all the way around its perimeter. As long as those couple things are checked and cleaned periodically, you should get 20 years out of a mini split system with no problems. There are a few that I installed nearly 30 years ago that are still in operation but most have failed by that age and been replaced.

Ken Field is the owner of Field's Service, Inc. and Slate Belt Energy Services. He has over 40 years of experience in heating, air conditioning and is certificated by RESNET and BPI in various areas of energy conservation. He can be reached at 610-599-8832 or at www.SlateBeltEnergy.com

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Certificate of Appreciation for a Gracedale RN

By Becky Bartlett

NAZARETH - 2020 Engineer Battalion 337th of the National Guard presented Teresa Bauer, a Registered Nurse at Gracedale with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition for all her "support tutelage and supervision of the Medical Strike Team" during the Guard's two-week deployment at Gracedale.

Thirty-four members of the National Guard were deployed at Gracedale from April 27th – May 10th. The team included twenty medics working as CNAs, 1 Registered Nurse, ten general purpose personal and three leaders to oversee operations. The troops primarily assisted with non-Covid-19 residents.

Since family members are not currently allowed to visit the facility, the residents very much enjoyed the time they got to spend with members of the National Guard and are grateful for all their help.

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Grants

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Pen Argyl Borough – ADA Access Improvements to the Pen Argyl Municipal Building

Roseto Borough – Faith Christian School new floors and bathroom
Plainfield Township - Automated License Plate Reader System
Project- Slate Belt Regional Police Department

East Allen Township - East Allen Twp. Crack Sealing Machine Acquisition

Upper Mount Bethel Township - North Bangor Fire Company Generator Purchase

Upper Mount Bethel Township - UMBT Fire Company QRS Vehicle Purchase

Bushkill Township - Bushkill Township Multi-Purpose Police Vehicles

Northampton County - Northampton County Forensic Center Lodox Radiology Lab



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