



The Beacon

Celebrate
Black
HISTORY
month

A Newsletter for Long-Term Care Residents

February 2025

Residents Seeking Support to Help Raise the PNA

Last month, petitions signed by 900-plus people, mostly nursing home residents, were sent to leaders in the Senate and Assembly urging them to support Assembly Bill A3908 and Senate Bill S3319, which would raise the personal needs allowance (PNA) from \$50 to \$140 a month.



Residents on Medicaid receive \$50 a month — only \$1.67 per day — to cover needs such as food, snacks, hair care, clothing, shoes, eyeglasses, cell phones, personal items, supplements or any other incidental expenses. New Jersey is one of the most expensive states to live in, and \$50 does not go far.

The effort to increase the PNA is led by nursing home residents.

What You Can Do To Help Make This Law:

- Reach out to legislators and tell them you support A3908/S3319.
- Sign or circulate a petition.
- Encourage other residents to join you.

If the LTCO has a Certified Volunteer Advocate in your nursing home, ask them how you can get involved.

You may also contact LTCO Community Engagement at 1-609-690-4740 or community@ltco.nj.gov to connect with residents who are leading this initiative.



What's Next?

Bill S3319 is currently sitting in the Senate Budget & Appropriations Committee. At press time, no hearing was scheduled. For more details and the latest updates, visit

<https://www.nj.gov/ooie/A3908.shtml>

BLACK HISTORY MONTH SPOTLIGHT

Madam C. J. Walker, America's first female self-made millionaire, built her fortune by developing a successful line of hair care products and cosmetics specifically for Black women. Born Sarah Breedlove in 1867, she overcame poverty and adversity to become a pioneering businesswoman. Walker used her wealth to support civil rights causes, education, and the arts. Her legacy as an entrepreneur and philanthropist continues to inspire.



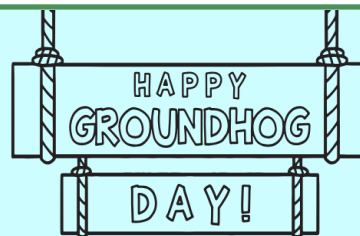
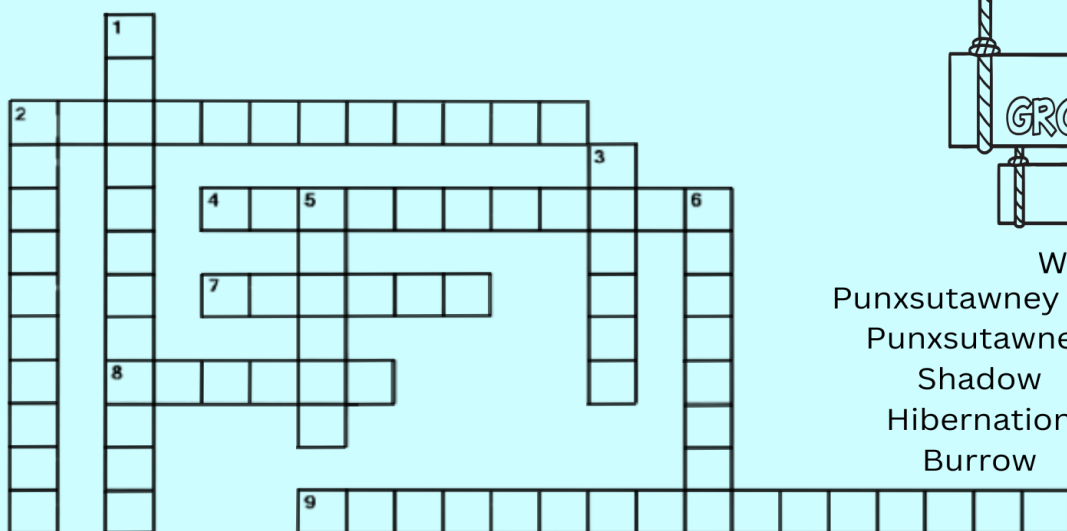
New Jersey Voices Ring Out at National Advocacy Organization

Congratulations to resident Ray DiFrancesco, who was recently elected to the Leadership Council of the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care.

Ray has served as his nursing home's Resident Council President and was the inaugural member of the LTCO's Community Engagement Program. He continues to play a key role in Community Engagement, which builds community with residents and amplifies their voices in policy and legislative deliberations that directly affect their lives. His background in marketing and advocacy, coupled with being a resident himself, give Ray unique insight into the issues residents face and how to advocate and communicate effectively about them.



New Jersey will be well-represented on the Leadership Council, which provides valuable input on policy and program decisions to the Governing Board of Consumer Voice, a leading national resident advocacy organization. LTCO Policy Director and Acting General Counsel Amy K. Brown was elected to the council along with Ray, and Gwen Orlowski, Executive Director of Disability Rights NJ, was already a council member.



Word Bank:

Punxsutawney Phil	Prediction
Punxsutawney	Winter
Shadow	Spring
Hibernation	No Shadow
Burrow	Candlemas Day

ACROSS

2. Weather Capital of the World
4. Resting state in which some animals pass the winter
7. The season of the year when plants begin to vegetate and grow
8. Six more weeks of winter
9. Weather forecasting groundhog

DOWN

1. Groundhog tradition stems from this early holiday
2. A statement made about the future
3. Coldest season of the year
5. A hole in the ground made by animals for shelter and habitation
6. Early spring



New Jersey Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Laurie Facciarossa Brewer, LTC Ombudsman

www.NJ.GOV/LTCO

FOLLOW US

