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Northampton County Celebrates the 2026 Outstanding Senior Award Honorees

By Kelly Prentice

Northampton County, PA—Northampton County recognized 11 extraordinary individuals and one outstanding community group at the annual Outstanding Senior Awards Ceremony on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at the Charles Chrin Community Center in Palmer Township. This annual celebration honors senior citizens whose leadership, service, and dedication have significantly elevated the Northampton County community.

“These individuals make a significant difference every day in our communities,” said County Executive Tara M. Zrinski. “Their efforts have reached every corner of this county—from mentoring young adults to cooking for dozens of people, from assisting Habitat for Humanity with homes, to supporting the mental health of our community members.”

This year's Outstanding Senior Award honorees are:

Breaking Bread Kitchen Crusaders (Bangor)—Since 2013, The (BBK) has been a quiet but powerful force of care in Bangor, serving over 200 meals monthly with amazing dedication and compassion.

Attorney William Agnew (Nazareth Borough)—He has led the effort to “keep Bushkill Township rural” by preserving its character against a proposed sewer line.

Mark Atwood (Lower Nazareth)—He has dedicated his life to “paying it forward” through extensive service to his church and community, impacting many through his compassion and acts of kindness.

Frank Chisesi (Bethlehem Township)—He has dedicated himself to extensive volunteer service, leadership in his church and community, and a 32 year career in the fire department, serving 12 years as Chief.

John Diacogiannis (Hanover Township)—His decades of dedicated service have profoundly shaped Hanover Township and the Lehigh Valley through responsible development, fiscal stability, and enhanced public safety.

Donald Eckhart (Walnutport)—He has profoundly impacted his community through decades of dedicated teaching, environmental stewardship, and active volunteerism.

Richard Elterich (Bethlehem)—He leverages his professional expertise and compassionate spirit to anchor his community through decades of dedicated volunteer service.

Mary Ellen Ernie (Bushkill Township)—She is a pillar of her community, consistently dedicating her time and effort to serve others through her church and various volunteer roles.

Reverend Keven Fetterhoff (Cherryville)—He leads with compassion, providing essential aid and support services to families in need through his church initiatives.

Janice Frits (Easton)—She has consistently demonstrated a deep commitment to service, actively contributing her time and recourses to her church and numerous community organizations since 2006.

Mary Neher (Hellertown)—She is recognized for her extensive volunteer work and compassionate service across her community and in her personal life, notably providing in-home care for the elderly and leading local organizations.

Barbara Sandbrook (Nazareth)—A formal nurse, continues to dedicate herself to her community by leading volunteer groups, supporting literacy initiatives, and aiding those in need.

The event celebrated the vital roles senior citizens play in building stronger, more compassionate communities. Each honoree's story reflects years, often decades of tireless, often unsung effort.

For more information on the Outstanding Senior Awards of senior services in Northampton County, please contact the Northampton County Area Agency on Aging at 610-829-4540.



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