

## LOCAL PEERS ATTEND PEER DAY

Two PEERs from Christ the King Manor's Assisted Living Facility, Donna Beck and Lucille Fisher, were among 50 other PEERs attending the Northwest Regional PEER Day June 23. They were accompanied by Debbie Mohny, Activities Director at their Assisted Living Facility, and Sue Kordish and Jeanne Urban, ombudsmen with the Clearfield County Area Agency on Aging, Inc..

PEERs are Pennsylvania's Empowered Expert Residents who act as advocates for themselves and for their fellow residents within long-term care facilities, such as nursing and personal care homes. The PEER Project is a partnership of residents, staff, facility administrators, and ombudsmen that encourages these shareholders to work together within the facility to resolve concerns before they become more intense problems. The PEER Project trains residents to be advocates who enhance the quality of care and the quality of life inside the facility, making a difference one resident at a time. There are more than 1500 PEERs in the state, with 201 PEERs in the Northwest region. Fifty-seven of Pennsylvania's 67 counties have participating facilities.

PEER Day, the first for the Northwest Region, was organized by the Clarion and Jefferson County AAAs to recognize the residents who serve as PEERs in 18 northern counties and was held at the Heritage House, Brookville. The theme for the luncheon was "Be the Sunshine in Your Home." A representative PEER from each facility spoke briefly about the projects and activities their local group had organized.

Following the luncheon, Dr. Iseli Krauss, retired professor of psychology at Clarion University, spoke about the importance of laughter. Entertainment was provided by Diane Marino, a guitarist and music therapist, who engaged the audience in singing old favorites from decades past.

Each participating PEER received a teddy bear favor and a bag filled with useful items for residents. PEERs vied for a host of give-away gifts including mugs, fleece coverlets, cookies, sunglasses, and backpacks. Each county in the northwest region donated a gift basket which was raffled off.

Guests attending included Diane Welsh of State Representative Sam Smith's office, Jefferson County Commissioners Paul Corbett and Jeff Pisarchek, Brookville Mayor Chip Wonderling, and Theresa Campisi and Jan Brown of the Pennsylvania State Long-Term Ombudsman Office.

For more information on the PEER Project, interested residents or facilities should contact the Clearfield County Area Agency on Aging, Inc. 765-2696 or 1-800-225-8571.



*Local PEERs from Christ the King Manor's Assisted Living Facility recently attended the first Northwest Region PEER Day at Heritage House in Brookville. They joined 50 of their peers to celebrate the contributions PEERs make to the lives of long-term care facility residents and to the community. Shown left to right are PEER Lucille M. Fischer, Activities Director Debbie Mohny and PEER Donna Beck.*