

Senior Post

Living well and gracefully through the golden years

Westside Senior Center

Westside Senior Center

From renovations to numerous activities for the senior community

SEPTEMBER 2022
A MONTHLY MAGAZINE BY

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Senior Post

Living well and gracefully through the golden years



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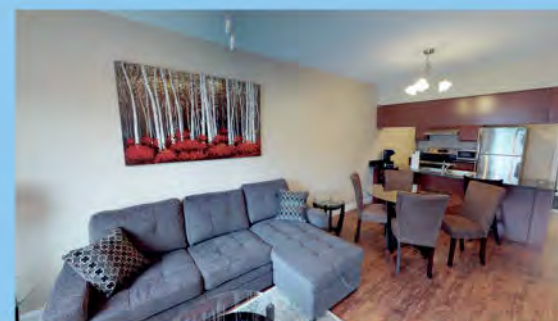
On the cover: Westside Senior Center, located behind Westover City Hall along Dupont Road in Westover.
Photo by Jade Ruggieri, The Dominion Post



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Senior Monongalians

5000 Green Bag Road, Morgantown • 304-296-9812

Westside Senior Center

500 Dupont Road, Westover • 304-296-6583

Preston County

Newburg Senior Center

100 Wolfe St., Newburg • 304-892-4662

North Preston Senior Center

WV Rt. 26, Bruceton Mills • 304-379-1165

Preston County Senior Citizens

108 Senior Center Drive, Kingwood • 304-329-0464

Rowlesburg Senior Center

44 Poplar St., Rowlesburg • 304-454-2012

Terra Alta Senior Center

212 E. Washington Ave., Terra Alta • 304-789-2415

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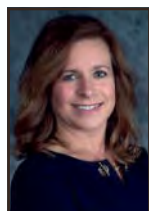
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VA aid and attendance pension



BY DOREEN SEAMON

for The Dominion Post

This year our article is following a hypothetical family through their lives to see what role estate planning had on their family. To review prior articles, go to SeamonLawOffices.com/Blog.

We have worked with the Smith family for years regarding long-term care Medicaid for an elderly parent, service-connected veterans' benefits for a son and estate planning for several family members. A few years ago, we helped Joe and Barb create a specific type of irrevocable trust to realign their assets to qualify for long-term care Medicaid and the Veterans' pension referred to as Aid and Attendance in the future.

Although many people begin using asset

protection trusts as they age to prepare for a diagnosis indicating they may have long-term care needs in the future, Joe and Barb did not create their asset protection trust until Joe was diagnosed with dementia. Joe had always known he would be fine with the local VA nursing home, which he was entitled to as a veteran, and Barb's family typically was healthy until a ripe old age. But with this diagnosis, they realized Joe might be able to live at home for quite some time, especially if Barb could afford to pay for some help so they reevaluated their previous decision.

The asset protection trust used to help veterans such as Joe must be created and funded at least three years prior to an application for the VA Aid and Attendance pension. Fortunately, it had been a little over three years so Joe and Barb could apply for the improved pension now known as Aid and Attendance. This pension is meant to reimburse the applicant for money they are spending out of their

income to pay for unreimbursed medical expenses. These expenses are typically paying for caregivers or care outside the home that is private pay such as a personal care home or assisted living.

Their granddaughter, Mary, has been helping Joe and Barb quite a bit. They pay her a small amount, but she feels guilty taking their money since she knows they are on a limited income. They were so excited to learn that is exactly what the Aid and Attendance is meant to help with. When a veteran is paying somebody for care, this pension can be used to reimburse the veteran. For example, Mary provides about three or four hours of care per day, they would like to pay her \$20 per hour, which would be about \$2,000 per month, but their current income is about \$2,500 per month before paying their health insurance premiums. Once they are approved for Aid and Attendance, they could be reimbursed up to the current maximum for a married couple, which is a little over \$2,400 per month.

That means Mary can help them, and they can pay her without Mary feeling guilty that she is taking her grandparents' money. Further, since the VA does not require the caregiver to have a specific certification as a caregiver, veterans can accept help from family and friends they are comfortable with or choose a professional caregiver. Eventually, Joe may need more assistance than Mary can provide, and they may find they need to use that money to pay a professional caregiver or towards the fees in a private pay facility.

Depending on how Joe's illness progresses over time, he may need care in a skilled care facility, so we will discuss how that would work with the trust next month. This is a great example that it is never too early to plan.

Doreen L. Seamon, J.D. is an attorney with Seamon Law Offices, PLLC. Her experience includes elder care and estate planning. She writes a regular column for Senior Post. Contact her at columns@dominionpost.com.

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Westside Senior Center

From renovations to numerous activities for the senior community

Story and photos by Jade Ruggieri, The Dominion Post

Tucked around the back of Westover City Hall, the Westside Senior Center is lively as it offers an abundance of activities for the senior community.

With a large dining room for events, a beautiful outside pavilion and a fitness center, anytime someone walks into Westside, they are met with friendly faces and welcoming hearts. Through recent renovations, the center installed new flooring, refreshed the walls with new paint and did minor repair work to the pavilion.

Completely volunteer-run, Cheryl Stasiak, and the other 14 board members ensure the center is providing a variety of events and activities for everyone to enjoy. The Westside Senior Center has a special place in Stasiak's heart as her mother was one of the original members when it opened in 2001.

"I really enjoy being around the people here," Stasiak said. "I try to get at the point where I know everyone's names. We have about 300 members and when people come in, I get to know them and consider them all friends, which is something I thoroughly enjoy."

Equipped with a full kitchen, Westside started a dinner and concert event once a month at the pavilion. This was done for people to sing, dance and socialize with others after the pandemic. Along with that, the center offers

bingo, knitting groups and card games.

"Seniors have a tendency, especially during COVID, to not do anything. We've been slowly trying to get them to come out and get involved in this community. All events are free, and we accept donations but we don't do it because of the cost, we do it because we want our community to know our center."

Stasiak said they are always trying to think of new activities. From a cornhole tournament to a farmer's market before Wednesday bingo, the center is growing to make its mark on the community.

The fitness center has cardio machines and nautilus weights along with a pool table. When there's a West Virginia University football or basketball game, there are watch parties held in the television room.

The center also does food collections for the local church pantry and provides care packages for troops abroad. Throughout the year, Westside Senior Center takes trips to festivals, fairs and cities.

"Our center gives the senior population a place to go where they feel safe and become part of a very good community atmosphere," Stasiak said. "As I've worked here, I have found that a lot of people become better friends, share different things such as vegetables from their gardens and give the feel-



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The Village
at Heritage Point

ing of community that I think is important for all of us.”

For those interested in learning more about the Westside Senior Center, visit westoverwv.org/westside-senior-center or call 304-296-6583.

“I think our center is one of the best-kept secrets,” Stasiak said. “We’d love for people to stop by for a tour and see what we can offer.”

Cheryl Stasiak sitting behind the bingo board at Westside Senior Center in Westover.
Photo by Jade Ruggieri/The Dominion Post



Metro Creative Connection

Senior citizens account for a significant percentage of the overall population. Estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau released in 2020 indicate the nation's 65-and-older population had grown by more than one-third over the preceding decade. By 2050, the number of senior citizens is expected to be close to 90 million. As of 2021, Statistics Canada reported there were roughly 7.1 million persons age 65 and older living in Canada.

People are living longer than ever, and as individuals age, the demand for senior services continues to grow and as does the need to be patient and respect the elderly. There are many ways to show seniors just how much they're appreciated.

1. Help with chores. Lend a hand with chores around the house that may have grown difficult for seniors. This can include mowing the lawn, weeding garden beds, shoveling snow, raking leaves, or even taking the garbage pails in and out on collection days.

2. Visit more often. Frequent visits are one of the simplest ways to show seniors you care. Whether seniors live in a private home or managed care facility, visitors brighten their days, especially if they no longer get out and

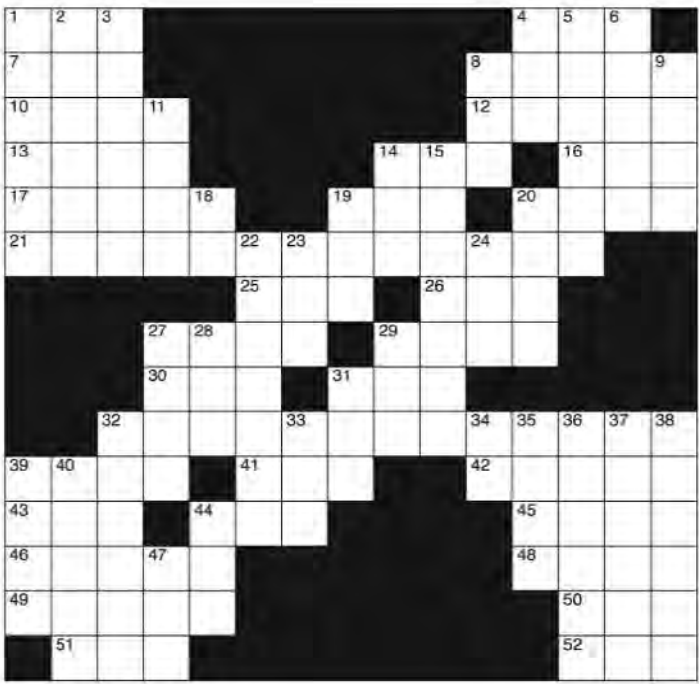
about as frequently as they once did. Spending time together and sharing stories can bring smiles to the faces of older adults.

3. Plan activities with seniors in mind. When organizing parties and special events, consider the needs of seniors on the guest list. Add music from their era to playlists or DJ requests. Seat seniors with mobility issues near exits and restrooms. Make sure to arrange for photos with the guest of honor to keep family history alive.

4. Thank seniors. Find any reason to thank a senior. Perhaps someone served in the military or volunteered their time with children. Celebrate accomplishments big and small with a simple “thank you.”

5. Prepare a meal. Invite a special senior over for a home-cooked meal with the family. Make it a regular occurrence on the calendar. If he or she cannot get out easily, bring a hot meal over to his or her place, instead.

Simple gestures of gratitude and appreciation can brighten a senior's day and let that person know he or she has not been forgotten.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Taxi
4. Cattle disease (abbr.)
7. Before the present
8. They burn in a grill
10. Enough (archaic)
12. “A Doll’s House” playwright
13. Long loop of cloth worn around the waist
14. Napoleonic Wars battle
16. Chinese surname
17. Fragrant essential oil
19. Follows sigma
20. Model
21. A place with many dining options
25. BBQ dish
26. Corn comes on it
27. A sheep in its second year
29. Triad
30. They ____
31. Actor DiCaprio
32. TV’s “Edith Bunker”
39. Sustenance
41. Man who behaves dishonorably
42. Cause a loud, harsh sound
43. A way to take in liquids
44. Gene type
45. The Miami mascot is one
46. Excessive fluid accumulation in tissues
48. Casino machine
49. Contains cerium
50. Something with a letter-like shape
51. Handwoven Scandinavian rug
52. Legendary actress Ruby

CLUES DOWN

1. Conqueror
2. Kin relation
3. Increases the value of
4. Pack
5. Popular nut
6. Dogs’ enemies
8. Former OSS
9. Unpleasant person
11. Come again?
14. Beverage container
15. Rock formation
18. Dorm official
19. The bill in a restaurant
20. Type of jug
22. Importance requiring swift action
23. Outfit
24. Small Eurasian deer
27. Weight used in China
28. A major division of geological time
29. Popular beverage
31. Confined condition (abbr.)
32. Practical joking
33. Pouchlike structure
34. Pound
35. Lilly and Manning are two
36. Stopped discussing
37. Baltimore ballplayer
38. Candymaker
39. One thousandth of a second (abbr.)
40. Northern sea duck
44. Partner to cheese
47. Cannot be found

Senior Monongalians - Events and activities

AMAZON SMILE & FOOTBALL SEASON - Amazon offers a special program to help people give back while they purchase their groceries, gifts, clothes, or even “back to school” needs. Amazon will donate a portion of your total purchase to the charity of your choice. To start doing this, go to Amazon Smile and then search for Senior Monongalians.

SENIOR PANTRY PROGRAM - What do you do when you need to pick up groceries? We jump in our cars and go to the grocery or corner store. It may seem like a weird question to ask. Although for our Home Delivered Meals clients getting grocery, household, or personal care necessities at the drop of a hat is usually impossible. Wanting to reach out a helping hand to these clients? Senior Monongalians has opened the Senior Pantry Program.

How does the pantry work? When a home delivered meal client has a need for a non-perishable item, hygiene, or even pet care items; they can fill out a request form and give it to their HDM driver. The driver brings it to the office and we see if we have or can get the item. Once the item is obtained, it will be delivered to the client by their meal delivery driver. The goal is to be able to fill the request within a couple days. This is an on-going program.

We need your help gathering pantry items. Those that would like to help can make donations of needed items. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Please specify that monetary donations are for the Senior Pantry Program. Before shopping for items, please call 304-296-9812 for a list of most needed items. **Among the most asked for are: brooms, mops, bucket, bathtub grab bars, wash cloths, towels, and pet care items.**

INDOOR DINING - LUNCH - Seniors are invited to join us for a hot, delicious lunch in our lunchroom. Current lunch capacity is limited to 35 people per day. Lunch is served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Adults aged 60 or older are eligible to eat on a donation basis. A suggested donation is \$2.00. Lunch is available on a first come, first serve basis. Menus are available on our Facebook page, our website: www.seniormons.org, and at Senior Monongalians’ office. All menus are subject to change without notice. If you are interested in our nutrition program, please call us in advance prior to your first visit. 304-296-9812

GRAB & GO LUNCH - Grab & Go lunches are available for those who do not feel comfortable eating in an indoor setting. To reserve your lunch, call 304-296-9812 by 10:30 a.m. At 11:30 a.m., pull up to our front door and an employee will bring your lunch out to you. Older adults aged 60 or older eat at a donation basis. A suggested donation is \$2.00. Menus can be found on our website, Facebook page, or at our agency.

If you are interested in this program, please call us **in advance** to register prior to your first meal. Menus are available on our Facebook page, our website: www.seniormons.org, and at Senior Monongalians’ office. All menus are subject to change without notice.

HOME DELIVERED MEALS - The HDM program offers a hot, nutritious meal, delivered to your door Tuesday through Friday. You may also be able to receive frozen meals to cover Saturday, Sunday and Monday. As part of this program, our drivers make a “wellness check” contact with the client.

Who is eligible to receive meals? Monongalia County residents 60 years of age or older. This service can be used on a long-term or a temporary basis. The HDM program is on a donation basis. If you have questions or would like to enroll in the Home Delivered Meals program, call 304-296-9812.

DAILY ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

POOL - Monday through Friday 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. • Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.

COMPUTER LAB - Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. • Must sign consent form.

DOMINOES - Tuesday and Thursday 1:00 - 3:45 p.m. • Nutrition Room or Library

MAHJONG - Monday and Wednesday 8:00 - 11:00 a.m., 1:00 - 3:45 p.m. • Nutrition Room or Library

SPONSORED BINGO - Every Friday 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

SENIOR SPONSORED BINGO - TBD

EXERCISE ROOM - UNLESS RESERVED - Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

VITAL SIGNS CLINIC - Wednesday 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. • Nutrition Room

One of our registered nurses will be available to check your blood pressure, pulse and weight. These items are monitored and recorded for your convenience to share with your doctor or for your personal monitoring.

LIBRARY - UNLESS RESERVED - Daily 8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

SUMMER BIBLE STUDY FELLOWSHIP FOR WOMEN - Each Thursday 1:00 - 2:30 p.m., Non-denominational • Conference Room

****NEW** CANASTA GROUP** - 1st Thursday of every month from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

We invite you to join this fun, social card group. Library or Nutrition Room

GROUP EXERCISE - 2nd Wednesday of each month, 11:00 to 11:30 a.m.

(Continued on page 11)

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IT'S TIME TO SPEAK WITH YOUR MEDICARE ADVISOR

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Seniors may have questions about Medicare such as:

- I'm new to Medicare, what are my options?
- I don't know if I'm on the right prescription plan?
- I am a Veteran. What benefits do I have?
- I'm on Medicare and Medicaid. Am I receiving all that I'm entitled to?

We can help:

- Understanding Medicare 101
- Turning 65
- Free reviews of your current coverage
- New to Medicare
- Free review to find the right plan for you
- Annual Enrollment Period: October 15 - December 7, 2022
- Loss of Employer Coverage
- Free reviews of your current coverage - call for an appointment

Senior Benefits:

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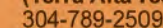
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COVID finally paid us an unwelcome visit



BY IRENE MARINELLI
for The Dominion Post

For a number of years, August has been a special month for us; a time for family visits, a time for our scattered children and all the grandchildren to get together here at our home. It has always been the month when we catch up with each other's lives. This August turned out quite differently. We will always remember it as the year August brought the plague into our home and scattered the family.

Our son, James and his wife, Eir-Anne had been staying with us since June. They were off visiting Eir-Anne's family when our daughter, Beth and our two grandchildren flew from their California home to stay with us for 10 days. Her husband, Matt, would join us later. The plan was for all our adult children

and the grandkids to get together at our home for a few days of fun, swimming, board games, grilling and eating out on the patio. Unfortunately, this year it was not to be.

COVID hit our home very soon after Beth and the grandkids, Sadie and Jasper, arrived. The day after their arrival Sadie complained of a sore throat. The next morning she took a COVID test. It came out positive. That was the beginning of a strange, exhausting turn to this family visit to which everyone had looked forward with great anticipation. We immediately informed all our children about the positive COVID test so none of them would come to the COVID House, as we eventually began to call our home. Rob and I, along with Beth, Sadie and Jasper were in complete quarantine.

Sadie was isolated in one of the bedrooms. Jasper was the next to test positive and he stayed in isolation in another bedroom. Two days later Beth's test showed the positive pink

line. Then began the treadmill of trips up and down the stairs to the three bedrooms where the COVID-positive visitors stayed in isolation. Obviously, no one was permitted to come downstairs for any reason, not even wearing a mask. Eventually I lost count of the trips upstairs to put meals on a small table outside the door of each bedroom, then back upstairs to take down the trays of empty dishes. The days seemed to spin into a round of cooking, carrying trays upstairs, then back down, then filling and emptying the dishwasher. Three very sad people were in isolation in three closed-door bedrooms. Understandably, the mood in the house was rather dark. I wondered if Rob and I would be pulled down into the murky shadow-land of the plague along with the rest.

Finally, the day came when everyone tested negative for COVID. Matt returned to our house from a family wedding and a short visit with his family in upstate New York. In another

couple of days they all flew home to California. Even those last two days before they left we only got together with Beth, Sadie and Jasper outside on the patio.

So what did we learn from this strange experience? Living in the same house while caring for the family members infected with COVID for all those days, Rob and I were understandably concerned about our own health. Yet we remained COVID-free. We experienced no symptoms in all that time and we both tested negative on two COVID tests taken six days apart. COVID knows no boundaries. If the members of our family had not had the COVID vaccine and boosters, surely some of us would have been hospitalized, or worse. The vaccine has again proven to be the best weapon in our continued fight against this plague.

Irene Marinelli writes a regular column for Senior Post. Contact her at columns@dominionpost.com.

Senior Monongalians Events and activities (continued from pg. 8)

SPECIAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES (Subject to change)

FRIDAY, SEPT. 2nd at 10:00 a.m. - SPONSORED BINGO - Play a few games of bingo and possibly win a prize or two.

MONDAY, SEPT. 5th - CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY

TUESDAY, SEPT. 6th at 10:30 a.m. - DISASTER PREPAREDNESS - Jess from Red Cross will discuss the types of "disasters" that we could face in our local community. She will also give us tips and steps that we can take to help us be prepared in case of a disaster.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 9th at 10:00 a.m. - BINGO WITH HIGHMARK - Tiffany from Highmark will lead bingo and distribute prizes to the winners. This event is free.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 13th at 10:30 a.m. - MVB BANK PRESENTATION - Jeremy from MVB Bank returns to discuss a financial related topic facing older adults.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 16th at 10:00 a.m. - BINGO WITH ASSISTED LIVING WITH EVERGREEN - Roberta from Assisted Living with Evergreen will lead a few games of bingo and will award prizes to the winners.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 20th at 10:20 a.m. - MEDICAID FRAUD PATROL - The goal of the Medicaid Fraud Patrol is to prevent overbilling and fraud with your health bills. Learn how to play an active role in saving on your medical bills.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 23rd at 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. - FREE HEARING SCREENINGS WITH BELTONE HEARING AID COMPANY - Jodi from Beltone Hearing Aid Company will conduct free baseline hearing screenings and will answer questions that you have regarding good hearing. Appointments are preferred. Make your appointment by calling 304-366-2241.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 23rd at 10:00 a.m. - BINGO WITH BELTONE - A representative from the Beltone Hearing Aid Company will lead a few games of bingo and will award prizes to the winners.

WAYS TO CONTACT OR FOLLOW SENIOR MONONGALIANS

WEBSITE: www.seniormons.org • **FACEBOOK:** Senior Monongalians • **PHONE:** 304-296-9812 • **MAILING ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 653, Morgantown, WV 26507

LOCATION: Mountaineer Mall • **EMAIL QUESTIONS TO:** gmullens@seniormons.org

COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline: 833-734-0965 West Virginia-based individuals will provide information about COVID-19 vaccine schedules. Seniors without a computer should use this number to register for the COVID-19 vaccine. The hotline is available Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Hotline is not available on Sunday.

WV Emotional Support Hotline: 844-435-7498 West Virginia-based counselors are available 24/7 to provide immediate help for West Virginians of any age who are struggling with stress, fears, anxiety, and/or an addiction.

WV United Way-sponsored information and support hotline: 2-1-1 (a three-digit phone number) Dial 2-1-1 to speak with West Virginia-based individuals who are trained to provide information and support in the areas of COVID-19, finances, health, housing, food, disabilities and domestic concerns.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE JOINT OR MUSCLE PAIN?



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treatment plan to improve your quality of life. Our expert providers are specially trained to diagnose diseases of the bones, joints, muscles, and surrounding tissues. We're committed to providing you with the best possible care for chronic conditions like arthritis.

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