Senior Post

Living well and gracefully through the golden years

Practices that can benefit mental health

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THE DOMINION Post

Did you know?

Social isolation affects many seniors. Social isolation produces various warning signs, including changes in personality, pulling away from social events, and failure to engage in self-care. According to Michigan Medicine, findings from a review of six years of data from the National Poll on Healthy Aging found more than one-third of people age 50 to 80 feel lonely, and nearly as many feel isolated. Feelings of loneliness were higher among those reporting fair or poor health and those not working or on disability.

Giving back is Spiker's goal

Preston County sheriff warns seniors of scams

BY JENIFFER GRAHAM
For the Dominion Post

Preston County Sheriff Scott Spiker said he got his start in law enforcement at the Kingwood City Police. He said he worked with them for five years before going to Fairmont State then West Virginia University.

"I was a bicycle cop there (at WVU) for a few years and then I went to work at the federal prison for 15 years at USP Hazelton and about five years at FPI in Morgantown," he said.

Spiker said he also volunteered and served as chief with the Newburg and Reedsville volunteer fire departments for a combined 25 years.

"I'm still a member of the water rescue team," he said. "I always wanted to go out and

Photos by Jeniffer Graham

Sheriff Scott Spiker stands next to one of his departments newest vehicles.

give back to the community. Every day was a different day," Spiker said.

Spiker said arresting criminals is not the only job a sheriff has. He said the sheriff is also responsible for the Sheriff's Tax Office.

"We collect all of the taxes in Preston County," he said. "Actually we're the county treasurers. A lot of people don't realize the amount of money you have to deal with. To do this, we also work with the assessor."

He said county residents can go online to check or pay their taxes. Spiker said residents can also go to the tax office located in the courthouse annex.

He said court security, litter control, civil process serving, and issuing concealed weapon permits are some of the responsibilities that also come under the Sheriff's Departments.

There is no shortage of work as a county sheriff. Spiker said his department received 650 calls in June.

"We have officers out 24 hours a day, 365 days a year," Spiker said. "I'm in the process of hiring three more deputies. We have several people who are retiring in the near future. We had 13 people take the test required for the job and nine passed it. Now we are down to four. Thanks to the county commission, we were able to raise the beginning salary to $52,000 and were able to give decent raises this year."

Spiker said one thing he would like to advise seniors about is scams. He said his department gets calls from people about different scams that show up online throughout in the county. Some of them when it's too late.

"Don't give information out over the phone," he said. "You can have a 329 number show up on your phone and it could be coming from another country There were people who gave $1,000 over the phone to a scammer. Don't give money or gift cards. Hang up and call the Attorney General's office at 1-800-368-8808 or email scams@wvago.gov. A digital report can also be filed at ago.wv.gov."

Spiker said, during a recent nationwide Drug Take Back in the county, his office collected 51 pounds of medication. Spiker said his office has a secure place in the lobby where people can still drop off medication they no longer want or need.

The Sheriff's Department can be reached at 304-329-1611.

Preston County Sheriff Scott Spiker, left, and School Resource Officer Mark Lewis

Hazards that compromise senior safety at home

BY METROCREATIVE

Homes are supposed to be sanctuaries where people can be comfortable and live independently. However, houses that are completely suitable for younger populations often harbor hidden threats that can compromise senior safety. At Heart Home Care notes aging in place remains a top priority for more than 90 percent of older Americans, but only 10 percent of modern homes feature the necessary modifications to safely support aging residents.

Falls pose a significant threat to seniors. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates falls are the leading cause of both fatal and non-fatal injuries among adults age 65 and older. More than 14 million seniors experience a fall each year. The Hospital for Special Surgery notes that around 60 percent of these incidents happen right in the home. Knowledge of the potential hazards lurking at home may help seniors identify the areas where they need to be especially cautious.

Bathroom surfaces

Bathrooms are notorious for posing an injury risk because of slippery surfaces. Wet tile and pooled water can be a recipe for hazardous conditions. These conditions are made even worse in spaces that are not equipped with non-skid mats or anchored grab bars.

Lighting

Inadequate lighting can be a hazard to seniors, many of whom experience diminished vision. Dimly lit staircases, bedrooms and dark hallways can impair spatial awareness. Without enough light, navigating the changes in flooring or obstacles can become a challenge.

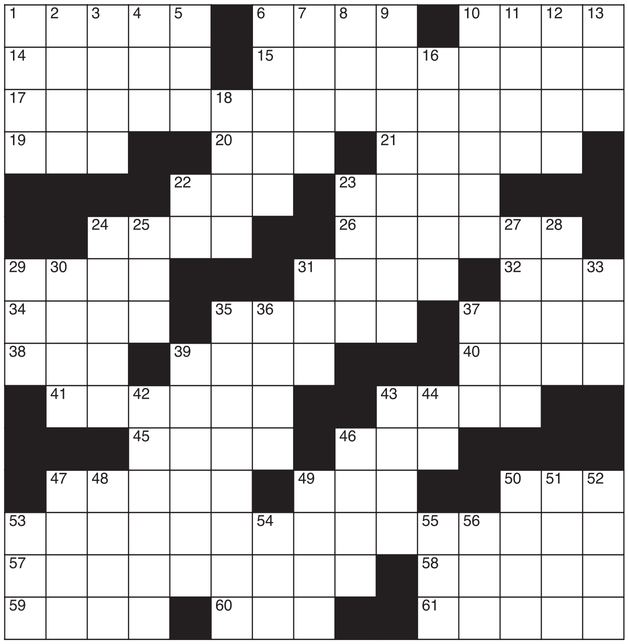
Tripping hazards

Many things can cause seniors to trip and fall. Loose area rugs, exposed electrical cords, cluttered hallways, and too much furniture can make it difficult to safely navigate a space.

Cooking hazards

The National Council on Aging says adults over 65 are 3.5 times more likely to die in residential fires than the general population. Cooking accidents and loose clothing or items catching fire near stovetops are a fire hazard. Seniors also may feel the cold more, and rely on space heaters or other less safe heating units to stay warm, which in turn increases the risk of a fire at home.

Many experts recommend a safety overhaul to secure a home for aging residents. Clearing all floor obstructions, securing loose carpets, installing bright lights, and anchoring heavy furniture are some steps that can be taken to keep a home a haven for older adults rather than a hazard.



CLUES ACROSS

1. Manila hemp plant
6. Turkish river
10. Something to read
14. In a way, initiated
15. Popular Apple TV series
17. King Charles is part of it
19. Earlier
20. Foot (Latin)
21. Zodiac sign
22. A browning of the skin
23. Remain as is
24. Turfs
26. It's used to slaughter animals
29. Volcanic crater
31. The mother of Jesus
32. One's life story
34. One-time Liverpool coach Slot
35. Counterparts
37. Jacob __, American journalist
38. Digital audiotape
39. River in South Africa
40. Kimono sashes
41. Rooting somewhere
43. American spy Aldrich
45. A way to call for
46. Taxi
47. Pancakes made of buckwheat flour
49. Swiss river
50. Popular type of video game (abbr.)
53. Have surgery
57. Formal withdrawal from a union
58. Performs spoken improv
59. Greek war god
60. 2,000 lbs.
61. Helps to evade capture

CLUES DOWN

1. Swedish rock group
2. "Friday Night Lights" director Peter
3. Currency exchange fee
4. Feline
5. Folk singer DiFranco
6. Ghastly pale from distress
7. Rapid eye movements
8. Monetary unit of Macao
9. Lawmakers
10. Colorless mineral
11. At some prior time
12. American protest singer
13. Opener
16. Seldom
18. Relaxing places
22. Touchdown
23. From end to end
24. Kids love him
25. Metal-bearing solid
27. Skin care product manufacturer
28. Thirteen
29. Angry
30. Member of a Semitic people
31. One-thousandth of an inch
33. Former CIA
35. Most lemony
36. Engage in
37. Mass of fish eggs
39. Food supplies
42. Backbones
43. American real estate investment firm
44. Megabyte
46. "Three Coins in the Fountain" songwriter
47. Dutch colonist
48. Full-grown pike fish
49. Emergency prep expert Edwards
50. Flute
51. Dismissive sound
52. Slang term for marijuana
53. Young women's association
54. Cosmopolitan city
55. Narrow isthmus in Thailand
56. Pointed end of a pen

Solution on page 9

Beyond a will: Planning for loved ones with disabilities

BY KRISTIN REEL, ESQ.

August is National Make-A-Will Month, an annual reminder that every adult should have a will – and more broadly, an estate plan – that outlines how their assets will be distributed and who will carry out their wishes.

One of the biggest misconceptions we encounter in estate planning is the belief that simply naming a loved one in your will is enough to protect their financial future.

For many family members and caregivers of individuals with disabilities, estate planning involves more than deciding who receives your assets. It also means understanding how the financial support you leave behind may interact with government benefit programs that help support their long-term needs. While an inheritance and public benefits often serve different purposes, both can play an important role in a person's financial security.

The goal isn't choosing one or the other – it's making sure both work together. Creating a will is only the first step. This National Make-A-Will Month, here are a few important considerations for families planning for the future.

When Good Intentions Create Unintended Consequences

Many individuals with disabilities rely on programs such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid to help pay for healthcare, housing, and everyday living expenses. Because these programs have financial eligibility requirements, families should understand how certain financial decisions may affect continued eligibility.

A common mistake we see is assuming that the way you pass on assets to a beneficiary doesn't matter.

However, the way assets are transferred matters just as much as the assets themselves. Whether transferred through a will, a life insurance policy, or another beneficiary designation, what many people don't realize is that receiving those assets directly could make beneficiaries ineligible for certain government benefits.

In many states, Medicaid programs include resource limits for eligibility purposes. Certain long-term care Medicaid programs, for example, often apply a $2,000 countable asset limit for single applicants, although the rules vary by state and program. That means, someone who unexpectedly receives assets above that threshold may lose eligibility until those assets are spent down and they requalify – a process that can interrupt benefits they rely on every day.

Even decisions made with the best intentions can create challenges if these issues aren't considered in advance. Fortunately, thoughtful planning can often help families avoid those unintended consequences.

Providing Financial Support While Protecting Benefits

At this point, you might be wondering: "So, what is the best way to support my loved ones financially without affecting the benefits they depend on?"

The good news is there are actually several options.

Often, families planning to leave assets to someone with a disability choose a third-party special needs trust (SNT), which allows those assets to be managed for the beneficiary while helping preserve eligibility for certain government benefits.

A SNT doesn't have to do all the work. Some families also use an ABLE account alongside the trust to provide beneficiaries with greater independence when paying for routine expenses.

The key differences are that a special needs trust is designed to protect larger assets and provide longterm financial support, while an ABLE account gives beneficiaries more independence for day-to-day purchases. Instead of asking a trustee to pay for every streaming subscription, or transportation expense, or other routine purchases, beneficiaries can use their ABLE account to pay for many everyday qualified disability expenses directly. Used together, these tools can help families balance financial flexibility with long-term planning.

Planning Ahead for Life's Uncertainties

In working with many families over the years, one thing I've learned is that life rarely unfolds exactly as we expect. Life events, changes in health, and unexpected circumstances can all affect a person's future needs. That's why we encourage families not to wait until a crisis occurs before beginning these conversations.

Increasingly, we're seeing more estate plans include special needs trust provisions designed to address future changes in a beneficiary's circumstances. These provisions give families flexibility if a beneficiary's future needs change, helping avoid last-minute revisions during a difficult time.

It's also important to periodically review your estate plan and beneficiary designations to make sure they continue to reflect your family's needs.

Planning ahead doesn't mean expecting the worst. It means giving your family more options if life takes an unexpected turn.

Protecting Independence for Years to Come

National Make-A-Will Month reminds us that writing a will isn't simply about deciding who inherits your assets – it's about making intentional decisions for the people you love. For families supporting an individual with a disability, thoughtful planning can help ensure an inheritance becomes a source of longterm security rather than an unintended financial burden. Because every family's circumstances are different, it's important to work with qualified legal, tax, and financial advisors when evaluating available planning options.

Ultimately, one of the greatest gifts you can leave isn't simply financial support, it's a plan designed to support your loved one's financial security, government benefits, and independence for years to come.

Kristin Reel serves as Vice President and Trust Legal Counsel for United Bank Wealth Management. She brings more than a decade of experience in estate planning and the administration of estates and trusts, with a focus on helping clients navigate complex trust and estate matters. Prior to joining United, Kristin practiced law exclusively in the areas of estate planning and estate and trust administration. She earned her Juris Doctor from the West Virginia University College of Law and holds a Bachelor of Arts in criminology from West Virginia University. Kristin is licensed to practice law in West Virginia and Washington, D.C.

Did you know?

According to the National Institutes of Health, the average older adult takes approximately four prescription medications every day, with 40 percent of adults age 65 and older taking five daily medications. Managing medications can be complicated, particularly when they are prescribed by different medical professionals. Many doctors utilize electronic medical records and may have access to all of the prescription medications prescribed to each patient. This can be helpful as it removes the guessing game and self-reporting necessary to manage prescriptions. It also may help providers avoid giving a medication that can interact negatively with another prescription a patient is already taking. Doctors may initiate conversations with patients about their prescriptions and review which are current and which are not. At this point, patients can go over any questions they may have about their medications. Medical offices also may utilize patient portal apps to facilitate communication and scheduling between patients and providers. Through these patient portals, people can message their health care teams and ask for more information about medical care and prescription medications, especially if questions come up after an office visit. Such portals are another tool patients can use to take a more active role in their own health care.

Practices that can benefit seniors' mental health

BY METROCREATIVE

Making an effort to maintain and safeguard mental health is a key component of a healthy lifestyle, and that's as true for seniors as it is for children, young adults and men and women in middle age. Seniors can embrace a number of practices and habits to safeguard their mental health well into their golden years.

• Spend more time with family. Spending time with family members can be especially beneficial for adults 70 and older. According to a 2023 study published in the Journals of Gerontology: Series B, adults without family ties had worse mental health and were less likely to engage socially than older adults who were close to their family. The researchers behind the study noted those benefits are not affected by distance, as even the older adults who lived far away from their family members but maintained strong social ties to their families enjoyed higher levels of mental health and social participation than seniors with no such connections.

• Exercise regularly. Routine exercise also can have a profound impact on seniors' mental health. The Anxiety & Depression Association of America reports that evidence supports the notion that exercise can shift attitude, mindset and mood in a positive way. Another study found that adults who participated in a regular physical activity program experienced reduced rates of long-term and acute depression.

• Incorporate travel into your golden years. Working professionals have long expressed an intention to travel more during retirement, and doing so may have an even bigger impact than seniors realize. According to a joint report from the Global Coalition on Aging and the Transamerica Institute¨ released in 2025, regular travel has been shown to lower Alzheimer's risk by up to 47 percent, a benefit researchers link to culturally enriching activities like visiting museums and exploring historical landmarks. The same report also notes that travel helps to address loneliness and social isolation, which are mental health issues that the senior population is especially vulnerable to, particularly during retirement.

• Volunteer. The Mayo Clinic Health System notes that volunteering can boost mental health in a number of ways. Volunteering has been found to reduce stress and increase positive, relaxed feelings. The Mayo Clinic also notes that volunteering leads to lower rates of anxiety and depression, particularly among adults 65 and older.

Mental health is part of a healthy lifestyle. Seniors can look to various practices to protect their mental health and reduce their risk for conditions such as social isolation, loneliness and depression that affect a great number of older adults.

What seniors should know about anxiety

BY METROCREATIVE

Discussions surrounding older adults and health often focus on seniors' physical health. That's understandable, as age-related issues affecting the body can add up over time, making it vital that seniors emphasize a physically active lifestyle that can reduce their risk for an assortment of medical conditions.

But mental health also is an important consideration for older adults, many of whom may be struggling. Anxiety is one mental health issue that affects a significant percentage of older adults. A 2024 study published in the Journal of General and Family Medicine noted that the global prevalence of anxiety symptoms among older adults is 28 percent. That means nearly one in three older adults is experiencing symptoms of anxiety. With so many seniors potentially confronting anxiety, it can be helpful to older adults and their loved ones to learn about the condition, its causes and its signs and symptoms.

Defining anxiety

The National Council on Aging notes that anxiety is a natural response to many life stressors. But when anxious feelings overwhelm an individual and make daily life more difficult, a person may be experiencing an anxiety disorder. According to the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry (AAGP), anxiety disorders cause feelings of fear, worry, apprehension, or dread.

What distinguishes anxiety from an anxiety disorder?

The American Psychiatric Association notes occasional anxiety is a normal part of life. But occasional anxiety comes and goes rather quickly, whereas an anxiety disorder is marked by a more persistent level of anxiety that's harder to control. In addition, an anxiety disorder can affect how people interact with others, how they work, and even their overall well-being.

Are there different types of anxiety?

Yes. The AAGP notes that anxiety may be a specific phobia in which a person harbors an intense and irrational fear of a place, thing or event. Social anxiety is another type of disorder that occurs when an individual feels overwhelmingly anxious and self-conscious in the typical social situations people encounter each day. Generalized anxiety disorder is marked by constant worry even when there is little or nothing to cause concern. These are just some of the various types of anxiety.

What causes an anxiety disorder?

The AAGP notes a number of factors can contribute to an anxiety disorder, including:

- Extreme stress or trauma
- Bereavement and complicated or chronic grief, which may be of particular concern for older adults dealing with the death of a spouse or a longtime friend
- Consumption of alcohol, caffeine or drugs, including prescription or over-the-counter medication
- A separate medical condition or illness
- Neurodegenerative disorders, such as dementia

How do I know if I or a loved one is experiencing an anxiety disorder?

Seniors are urged to speak to a health care professional if they feel they are overwhelmed by anxiety. Family members also can learn to look for signs of anxiety disorder, which the AAGP notes include:

- Excessive worry or fear
- Refusing to engage in routine activities or being overly preoccupied with routine
- Avoiding social situations
- Excessive concern about safety
- Physical symptoms such as a racing heart, shallow breathing, trembling, nausea, and/or sweating
- Difficulty sleeping or poor sleep
- Muscle tension, feeling weak and shaky
- Hoarding, which the Cleveland Clinic notes is a distinct mental health condition but also a sign of an underlying anxiety disorder
- Depression
- Self-medication with alcohol or other central nervous system depressants, including benzodiazepines and barbiturates

There are many ways to treat anxiety disorders in older adults, so seniors should not hesitate to open a dialogue with a health care professional if they feel they are dealing with excessive anxiety. More information can be found at aagponline.org.

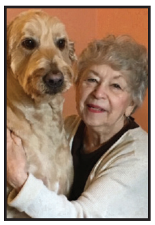
Solution to puzzle on page 5

A	B	A	C	A		A	R	A	S		B	O	O	K
B	E	G	A	N		S	E	V	E	R	A	N	C	E
B	R	I	T	I	S	H	M	O	N	A	R	C	H	Y
A	G	O			P	E	S		A	R	I	E	S	
				T	A	N		S	T	E	T			
		S	O	D	S			P	O	L	E	A	X	
M	A	A	R				M	A	R	Y		B	I	O
A	R	N	E		T	W	I	N	S		R	I	I	S
D	A	T		V	A	A	L				O	B	I	S
	B	A	S	I	N	G			A	M	E	S		
			P	A	G	E		C	A	B				
	B	L	I	N	I		A	A	R			F	P	S
G	O	U	N	D	E	R	T	H	E	K	N	I	F	E
S	E	C	E	S	S	I	O	N		R	I	F	F	S
A	R	E	S		T	O	N			A	B	E	T	S

Lessons learned from a summer garden

BY IRENE MARINELLI
For The Dominion Post

"And now in age I bud again."
— George Herbert



Gardening has long been known for its health benefits. When we dig, plant, weed or harvest our bodies go through an exercise routine. Like any exercise routine, the garden demands we walk, bend, twist and reach.The difference of course, is that we do these gardening chores in bright, beneficent sunshine with perhaps a gentle breeze blowing, a blue sky above and the good smell of the earth below. If we are wise enough not to overdo these gardening chores, our bodies, even in age, respond well to garden exercise while we gain an extra bit of vitamin D from the sunshine. Not only does a garden give us healthy exercise, but it can also teach some valuable lessons if we listen and look carefully.

A garden requires attention and care, in much the same way our relationships require these things. As the garden thrives and grows with love and care, so do the relationships we treasure. The strongest of plants can die from complete neglect and so can the best friendships. Our gardens teach us to make sure we keep in touch with our far-flung family as well as valued friends. Even in retirement we can be busy with daily chores and commitments that seem to pop up on the calendar. We need to take time to check on our gardens and also take time to contact the people in our lives we cherish and value. Research has long pointed to the importance of a social network as we grow older.

One morning I was out early dead-heading the spent roses on several rose bushes.I thought again, as I often do when working among my flowers how, when a plant passes its bloom time, it seems to be making room for the next season's plants to flower. Perennials and annuals all have their blooming time. They seem to take turns enjoying the richness of life, then, when their time is over, ushering in other blooming plants that will also have their time to shine. So it is with our lives as well. We too have life-seasons that pass, one to another. No plant, no flower tries to live beyond its season. So it is with us: youth cannot last into middle age, nor can our middle age continue into our elder years. No matter how much the advertisements try to convince us we can "stay young" or "keep that youthful glow" by buying their products, we cannot go back to seasons that have been lived through.

Another lesson is perseverance. I suspect even the best gardeners sometimes have unforeseen problems with their flowers or crops. Gardens are open to a variety of failures. Some we can control, while others are unsolvable. Much like our garden plants, we too run afoul of problems, some of our own making. Perfection is not, nor ever will be a constant in our lives. From time to time we humans may encounter failure. We make mistakes. Any worthy gardener will consider the problem facing his gardens and try hard to find a solution so that particular problem does not come back again. He tries to solve the problem without self-blame. So it is with us in our lives. Giving up is not a viable option. We make mistakes. We try to find a different path, a way to fix what has been damaged. A garden teaches patience and resilience.

SENIOR CENTERS AND FACILITIES

Monongalia County

Clay-Battelle Senior Center
5977 Mason Dixon Hwy., Blacksville • 304-432-8177

Core Senior Center
98 Pedler Run Road, Core • 304-879-5452

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

Westside Senior Center
500 Dupont Road, Westover • 304-296-6583

Westside Senior Center, Westover

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

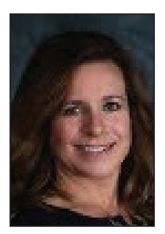
Tunnelton Senior Citizens
1266 Senior Drive, Tunnelton • 304-568-2151

Valley District Senior Center
54 W. Highland Ave., Masontown • 304-864-6465

How TV shows can encourage thoughtful end-of-life planning

BY DOREEN SEAMON
For The Dominion Post

Thinking about the end of our lives can be challenging, but recent trends show that more people are beginning to address this important topic. Interestingly, certain television shows help facilitate these conversations.



A survey conducted by End Well and the Norman Lear Center Media Impact Project at USC found that viewers who watch shows with thoughtful end-of-life storylines are more likely to take practical steps toward planning. This includes discussing their wishes with loved ones and completing advance directives—documents outlining healthcare preferences.

Why This Matters

While nearly 90% of Americans recognize the importance of discussing end-of-life wishes, only about 27% have had these conversations. This gap indicates a significant need for open dialogue. Engaging in these discussions ensures your values are honored and reduces stress for your family.

By presenting end-of-life topics in relatable ways, shows can help normalize these conversations. If a TV show can inspire planning, it's worth considering how we might take action.

Common Hesitations

Even with positive nudges from media many people still find reasons to avoid end-of-life planning:

■ Conversations about death can feel heavy, making it tempting to avoid them.

■ Not knowing where to begin can be overwhelming, but starting with simple questions can help.

■ Busy schedules can make it hard to find time for these discussions, yet even short conversations can be valuable.

■ Some cultural beliefs may discourage discussions about death, but open conversations can bridge that gap.

■ Many people wait until health declines to plan, but proactive steps ensure thoughtful choices.

Practical Steps to Overcome Barriers

The good news is that many barriers can be addressed. Here are practical strategies to help you and your loved ones engage in meaningful planning:

1. Start Early and Keep It Simple: Begin conversations with straightforward questions, such as:

• "What medical treatments would you want if you couldn't speak for yourself?"

• "Who would you trust to make decisions for you if needed?"

2. Use TV as a Conversation Starter: If you watch a show with an end-of-life storyline, take a moment to discuss, "What would we want in this situation?" This can encourage thoughtful reflection.

3. Take Small Steps: Planning doesn't have to happen all at once. Break it down into manageable parts, such as discussing your values or reviewing your advance directive over time.

4. Normalize the Conversation: Integrate end-of-life topics into everyday discussions. Share your thoughts with family and friends, making it part of regular life.

5. Check In Regularly: Your preferences and life changes, revisit your plans as needed.

Why It's Worth the Effort

While planning for end-of-life care may seem daunting, it can ultimately serve as a gift to yourself and your loved ones. Here are some reasons to consider:

■ Clear wishes mean family members won't have to guess about your preferences.

■ Planning helps ensure the care you receive reflects your wishes.

■ Knowing you've prepared can ease anxiety for you and your family.

■ Planning isn't just about death; it's about ensuring that your legacy reflects the life you've built.

The End Well survey reminds us that the stories we watch can influence our everyday lives. While television can spark these important conversations, it's up to us to carry them forward. Today could be a great opportunity to discuss this with a trusted friend, family member, or healthcare provider. Planning for the end of life is ultimately about living well and ensuring that your wishes are respected.

Doreen Seamon is an estate and elder law attorney serving both WV and PA. She has dedicated her practice to helping our community plan for their future while protecting their loved ones and their assets. She can be reached at Doreen@SeamonLawOffices.com.

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES

Westside Senior Center

The volunteer-operated center is open from 9 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday at 500 Dupont Road in Westover. Our exercise room is available when the center is open.

BINGO: Bingo every Wednesday at 6 p.m. Doors open at 4 p.m. and kitchen open at 5 p.m. No reserved tables. Cards are $5 each (e.g. - 4 cards are $20 and 6 cards are $30). Concessions.

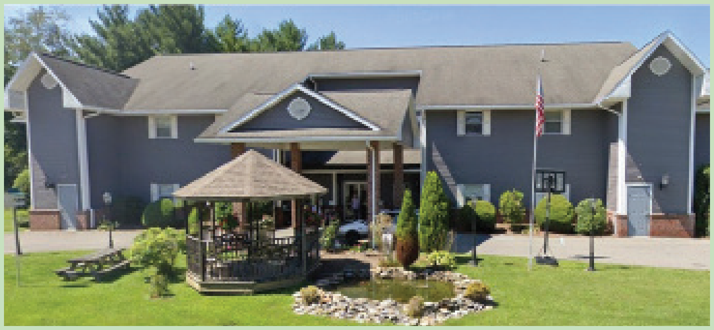
CARDS AND GAMES: Tuesday and Thursday mornings are especially active for our card plays and anyone is invited to join in. Playing usually starts around 9:30.

DULCIMERS: They get together on Tuesday mornings to play and practice. They welcome anyone who would like to learn also. Judy Werner leads this group, and it is enjoyable to just sit and listen.

LINE DANCING: We now have line dancing classes on Wednesday morning at 10:15 a.m. The classes are designed for beginners, but all are welcome.

Assisted Living at Evergreen

Assisted Living at Evergreen is an alternative to nursing home care. A variety of specially developed leisure activities include outings to Oglebay, holiday dinners and parties and weekly shopping trips. Housekeeping and personal laundry services are available. There are community areas, dining and family rooms, an activity center and a gazebo with fish pond for outdoor relaxing.



Assisted Living at Evergreen, Morgantown

SENIOR MONONGALIANS

SEPTEMBER EVENTS and SPEAKERS

Tuesday, September 1 at 11 a.m.

■ **September Birthday Party**

Tori is hosting our monthly Birthday Party. Join us as we celebrate all those born in September. Enjoy yummy treats and cool down with a fizzy cup of punch.

Wednesday, September 2

■ **Line Dancing**

The Line Dancing class for this week has been CANCELED.

Friday, September 4 at 10 a.m.

■ **Bingo with Renaissance Care**

Keri from Renaissance Care will lead a few games of bingo and will award prizes to the winners. Bring your friends along to add to the spring time fun. Stick around to possibly win a little extra spending cash during our 50/50 Cash Cover All game. It is $2 per person to play. Proceeds benefit Senior Monongalians.

Monday, September 7

■ **CLOSED for Labor Day**

Friday, September 11 at 10 a.m.

■ **Bingo with Amedisys**

Matt from Amedisys will host a few games of bingo and will award prizes to the winners. Bring a friend or two to join in the fun. Be sure to stick around and play our 50/50 Cash Cover All game. You could walk away with a little extra spending cash.

Friday, September 18 at 10 a.m.

■ **Bingo with Cornerstone Caregiving**

Jessica from Cornerstone Caregiving will lead a few games of bingo and will award prizes to the winners. Grab a friend or two and come into the air-conditioned fun of bingo. Be sure to stick around to be a part of our 50/50 Cash "Cover All:" game. It's $2 to play and half of the entry fees will benefit the activities and festive luncheons offered by Senior Monongalians.

Friday, September 25 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

■ **SENIOR EXPO**

We invite you to join us for our annual Health and information fair. Our center and the mall corridor will be filled with businesses, agencies, and organizations that offer products or services for older adults, their families, and caregivers. The Senior Expo will also feature: a seasonal vaccine clinic, raffles & door prizes, a performance by Pam & Barry Duets, and a lunch is available. Check out our Facebook page for more information.

• Keep checking Facebook for updates •

MON BINGO

Introducing Morgantown's newest monthly bingo event. Mon Bingo is a great way to have fun, possibly win a pocket full of cash, and help out a vital local nonprofit. Senior Monongalians provides essential programs and services to older adults and their families throughout Monongalia County. Mon Bingo features 20 games of bingo with a cash jackpot per game. Your initial pack is $20. Additional packs are $10 each, limit 2 extra packs per person. Players will also have the chance to win a 50/50 cash raffle, instant winner pop tab tickets, and a separate 50/50 cash "cover all" game ($5 per bingo card).

Don't worry about grabbing something to eat because Mon Bingo has a concession window featuring hot dogs, snacks, and more. The concession window will be open one hour before games begin and will stay open throughout the event. Doors will open at 5 p.m. The first game will begin at 6 p.m. This event is open to adults 18 years and older only.

See you there!

TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Our brand-new vehicle is wheelchair accessible and can hold several riders. Additional routes will be added as the program grows. Riders must be or become registered clients of Senior Monongalians. To check your eligibility or to get more information regarding this program, call 304-296-9812.

With the ever-rising costs of fuel and maintenance on our vehicles, we ask for a donation to help defray some of these costs. The suggested donation is $2 per day.

SENIOR PANTRY PROGRAM and SENIOR PAWS

Grabbing odds and ends at the grocery store or placing an order over the internet is just a normal part of the day for most of us. Although, for our home-bound clients getting groceries, household items, personal care necessities, or pet food at the drop of a hat is usually impossible. Want to reach out a helping hand to these seniors? Senior Monongalians has opened the Senior Pantry Program and Senior Paws.

SENIOR MONONGALIANS

How does the Pantry and Senior Paws work? When a home-bound 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. 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 purchase needed items. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Please specify that monetary donations are for the Senior Pantry Program. Feel free to call the office at 304-296-9812 for a list of most needed items.

INDOOR DINING - LUNCH

Seniors are invited to join us for a delicious and nutritious lunch in our lunchroom. 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 of your first visit. 304-296-9812

HOME DELIVERED MEALS PROGRAM

The goal of our Home Delivered Meals Program is to provide a nutritious meal to seniors who are home bound. Drivers also perform a well check as they speak to meal recipients. Deliveries take place Tuesday through Friday. Clients will receive a hot meal on each of these days. A cold meal will be included on Fridays to be used for the following Monday. This will ensure that clients will have a meal during the work week.

Who is eligible to receive meals? Monongalia county residents at least 60 years of age or older and meet other requirements. This service can be used on a long-term or a temporary basis. The HDM program is a donation-based service. Currently, the HDM program is on a waitlist. As clients discontinue meal delivery, those on the waitlist will be contacted. If you are interested in the home delivered program, call 304-296-9812.

DAILY ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

Subject to change without notice

POOL TABLES

Monday: 8 to 9:45 a.m., 12:30 to 3:45 p.m.
Tuesday: 12:30 to 3:45 p.m.
Wednesday: 8 to 9:45 a.m., 12:30 to 1:45 p.m.
Thursday: 12:30 to 3:45 p.m.
Friday: 12:30 to 3:45 p.m.

COMPUTER LAB

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.
Must sign consent form

MAHJONG

Monday & Wednesday
12:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.
Nutrition Room

SPONSORED BINGO

Every Friday
10 – 11 am

50/50 COVER ALL CASH BINGO GAME

Fridays: 10:45 a.m.

This is a fundraiser for the activities and programs offered by Senior Monongalians. This game is $2 to play and only one bingo card will be used per person. The total amount collected will be split equally, 50% benefitting Senior Monongalians and 50% becoming the bingo jackpot. If there is more than one good bingo, the winners will split the bingo jackpot. Invite your friends and spread the word.

EXERCISE ROOM

Must sign a release form.
Call for availability, 304-296-9812.

OTHER SERVICES

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.

SENIOR EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

If you are a senior and find yourself in need of emergency assistance, the following is a list of locations where heating, food, pet food, and other emergency help can be obtained.

Catholic Charities
827 Fairmont Road, Suite 203, Westover | 304-292-6597

Christian Help, Inc.
219 Walnut St., Morgantown | 304-291-0221

DHHR
Monongalia County
114 S. High St., Morgantown | 304-285-3175
Preston County
18351 Veterans Memorial Hwy., Kingwood | 304-329-4340

North Central West Virginia Community Action
Marion County
215 Scott Place, Fairmont | 304-363-4367
Preston County
428 Morgantown St., Kingwood | 304-363-2170

The Connecting Link
235 High St., Morgantown | 304-296-3300

Salvation Army - Monongalia County
1264 University Ave., Morgantown | 304-296-3525

Salvation Army - Preston County
124 Morgan St., Kingwood | 304-329-1245

Catholic Community Charities - Preston County
304-329-3644
The Raymond Wolfe Center is the only food pantry in Preston County that has specialized diet foods (diabetic, salt free, etc.). It also has some pet food available. Call to check availability.

The following locations are for Preston County residents only:

Wesley United Methodist Church
304-329-0707

St. Vincent DePaul Helpline
304-329-6229

Heat for Preston (January - March only)
304-329-2316

Terra Alta Council of Churches (Terra Alta residents only)
304-789-2509

Heart health in seniors: Why it matters and where to find support in Morgantown

BY APRIL L. WINTERMOYER
For The Dominion Post

Heart health becomes increasingly important as people age. For seniors, maintaining a healthy heart is closely tied to independence, mobility, and overall quality of life. Cardiovascular disease remains one of the leading health concerns among older adults, but many risk factors can be managed through healthy habits, regular medical care, and access to community resources.

As the body ages, the heart and blood vessels naturally change. Seniors may face higher risks for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and heart failure. These conditions can develop quietly, making preventive care especially important. Regular screenings and early treatment can help reduce the risk of serious events such as heart attacks and strokes.

Lifestyle choices also play a major role in heart health. A balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins can support cardiovascular wellness. Fortunately, we have a large number of farmer's markets this time of year!

Gentle physical activity such as walking, stretching, or low-impact exercise can improve circulation and help maintain a healthy weight. Just as important are stress management, medication adherence, and routine checkups with a healthcare provider.

For seniors in Morgantown, several local resources may help support heart health:

• WVU Medicine Heart and Vascular Institute — Provides specialized cardiovascular care, diagnostics, treatment, and follow-up services.

• Mon Health Heart & Vascular

Center — Offers heart and vascular services, including evaluation and treatment for a range of cardiac conditions.

• Local senior centers — May offer exercise classes, wellness programs, nutrition education, and social support that promote heart-healthy living.For exercise choices, consider silver sneaker programs through your Medicare benefit, the senior centers DO offer exercise, and there are many options for free videos through Facebook or cable television stations.

• Primary care providers and community clinics — Can help manage blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, and other conditions that affect heart health.

• American Heart Association resources — Provide education and prevention tools that may be helpful for seniors and caregivers.

The key to better heart health is prevention, awareness, and access to care. Seniors who stay active, eat well, monitor chronic conditions, and use local healthcare resources can greatly improve their chances of living longer, healthier lives.

April Wintermoyer is the Owner and Operations Manager of Right at Home in North Central West Virginia and the upper Ohio Valley. You can reach her at 304-296-6600 or at april@rahcares4u.net

MetroCreative photo

Heart health becomes increasingly important as people age.

ADVERTISEMENT

Why you need dental insurance in retirement.

Many Americans are fortunate to have dental coverage for their entire working life, through employer-provided benefits. When those benefits end with retirement, paying dental bills out-of-pocket can come as a shock, leading people to put off or even go without care.

Simply put — without dental insurance, there may be an important gap in your healthcare coverage.

When you're comparing plans ...

- Look for coverage that helps pay for major services. Some plans may limit the number of procedures – or pay for preventive care only.
- Look for coverage with no deductibles. Some plans may require you to pay hundreds out of pocket before benefits are paid.
- Shop for coverage with no annual maximum on cash benefits. Some plans have annual maximums of $1,000.

Medicare doesn't pay for dental care.[1]

That's right. As good as Medicare is, it was never meant to cover everything. That means if you want protection, you need to purchase individual insurance.

Early detection can prevent small problems from becoming expensive ones.

The best way to prevent large dental bills is preventive care. The American Dental Association recommends checkups twice a year.

Previous dental work can wear out.

Even if you've had quality dental work in the past, you shouldn't take your dental health for granted. In fact, your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.[2]

Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.

Consider these national average costs of treatment ... $274 for a checkup ... $299 for a filling ... $1,471 for a crown.[3] Unexpected bills like this can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

[1] "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2025. [2] "Aging changes in teeth and gums", medlineplus.gov, 4/17/2022. [3] FairHealth, Inc. National average dental fees. Data current as of July 2025; subject to change.

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