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Volume 44  
Number 32

Wednesday, January 14, 2026



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# Janesville native making inroads in songwriting industry

## Saupp's music gaining recognition with nomination at Josie Music Awards

By Andy Stine  
[astine@altoonamirror.com](mailto:astine@altoonamirror.com)

JANESVILLE — For many aspiring songwriters, the Grand Ole Opry is a destination not many get to experience.

Janesville native Ryan Saupp, 38, is now one of the outliers in the industry, going to the Opry for the 2025 Josie Music Awards in November.

The Josies, which celebrate the best in independent music in all genres, was formed in 2015.

Saupp was nominated for Song of the Year in the modern country/pop country category for his single, "This Country Life."

While he didn't win the award, being nominated and attending the awards ceremony was an incredible experience all its own.

"It is a strangely powerful building," Saupp said. "You feel the power of music at the Opry. The whole building has that feeling. It's not because of the awards. Just being there has a presence."

Saupp is described by IMC Productions as "an emerging independent songwriter from Clearfield County, Pennsylvania, whose heartfelt blend of country, folk, and Americana is quickly finding a global audience. A lifelong listener of storytellers like John Denver and Bob Dylan, Saupp has carved out a distinctive sound that bridges traditional songwriting with modern instrumentation."

Anyone who won awards at the event stood in the famed Grand Ole Opry circle, which is a 6-foot oak section cut from

the Opry's original location at the Ryman Auditorium. The circle is a symbol for the legendary performers that have played in the Nashville venue since the Grand Ole Opry was formed in 1925.

Saupp's music career began when he was in a band in high school at Moshannon Valley, but he doesn't have a lot of memories from that time.

"You're so nervous," Saupp said of his time in a band. "You start and go through the process, and it's gone. The memory never even forms because you're so focused on being terrified."

While his time in a band came and went, it was a case of restless nights and anxiety that led to Saupp becoming a songwriter.

"I was having trouble sleeping," he said. "It wasn't that I was overwhelmed, but you just have moments where you're sitting in quiet and trying to figure out life."

"I was trying to find a way to mitigate and relax, and find something that was mine. I wrote one (song) and I was satisfied with the first one. It was two or three weeks later, and I had a thought to do another one."

"I wasn't even done with the second one, and I was halfway done with the

third one. I said, 'Maybe I should let this ride a little bit.' Next thing I know, I have 14 done."

Saupp's first album, which was appropriately named *Sleepless Nights*, features songs about perseverance and the journey in life.

One shining moment was when Saupp's song, "The Lonesome Road," was played on Q94 with "The Professor" Jim Price.

Saupp said hearing his song on the FM radio waves was "surreal."

"Everything happened mostly organically," Saupp said. "My original thought was, 'I could sell these to somebody.' At the same time I can't prove that it's worth anything."

"I emailed Jim and said, 'Hey, I made this and it would be great to have it on there.' He wrote back and said, 'Yeah, we can do that.' He gave me the date. When it played, it checked a box that I didn't even know that I had."

Saupp said "The Lonesome Road" was inspired by his travels through the Appalachians.

"We often found ourselves at diners and truck stops to stretch our legs and grab a bite to eat. While you're there, most long-haul drivers are happy to tell you about



— Courtesy photo

Ryan Saupp stands at the Grand Ole Opry in November. Saupp was nominated for Song of the Year in the modern country/pop country category for his single, "This Country Life."

their lives and the stories they've lived," he said.

After spending so much time on the interstate, he became "fixated on how lonely the highway can be when you're traveling alone. That trip was where I really tried to put myself in the shoes of the long-haul drivers. It's hard to imagine spending days and weeks away from your friends and families. "The Lonesome Road" was written as a testament to the sacrifices they make for all of us."

### 'Bruises and Battles'

Saupp said he has a soft spot for another of his songs, "Bruises and Battles."

"It was one of the first three songs I wrote. I can look back on it as the one singular moment that changed my trajectory. I started writing music as a way to mitigate stress and to help fall asleep. ... Bruises and Battles was defining because it turned music writing from being

See **Saupp**/Page 5

### The Saupp file

**Name:** Ryan Saupp

**Age:** 38

**Residence:** Janesville, Clearfield County

**Education:** Moshannon Valley High School; DuBois Business College, associates degree in specialized business.

**Career:** Owns both an automotive shop and a computer repair company and works for an IT consulting firm that specializes in K-12 education.

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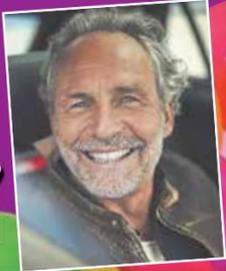
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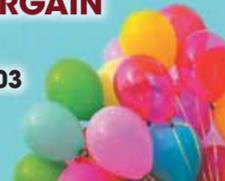
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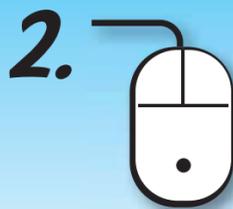
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Ron J., Ron S. Gilligan, & David C. Zentner will conduct a Public Auction for The Pennsylvania State University at the Lion Surplus Warehouse, 1 Services Rd. University Park, PA 16802 - [www.surplus.psu.edu](http://www.surplus.psu.edu) - 814-865-4371 - Find Us On Facebook at: Facebook/LionSurplus. All items are subject to prior sale to University departments. All items are sold "as is, where is". All sales are final and terms are cash, check, Visa/ Master Card. The University will not be responsible for the security of any items after the auctioneer has awarded the said items to the highest bidder. The University reserves the right to reject any and all bids on the vehicles. This is a very brief ad - please use above Web Site for updated photos of new equipment coming in until day of auction.

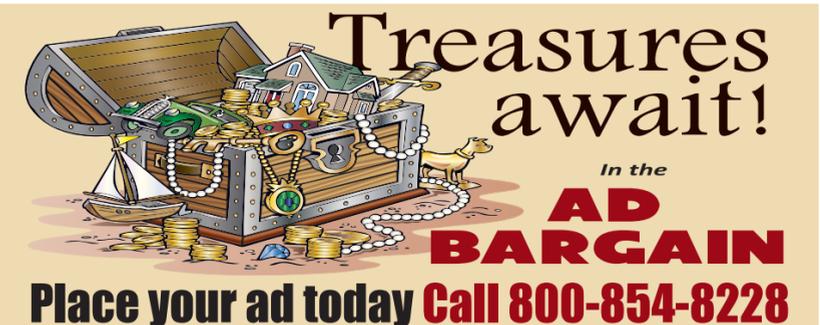
Caterpillar 257B2 skid steer loader w/ tracks (2,517 hrs.), Case 590 Super M+ Series 3 backhoe w/ Extendahoe (4,612 hrs.), 2010 JLG 600A 60' Lift -- Gas or Propane w/ 188 hrs., Hydraulic Rock Breaker & Tamper backhoe attachments, 2010 JLG 4394RT 40' gas lift w/ 92 hrs., 2010 JLG 4394RT 40' gas lift w/ 149.5 hrs., 2017 Bobcat Model 5600 Toolcat w/ 3,453 hrs., Bobcat Toolcat, 2005 GMC C6500 reefer box truck w/ 60,197 miles, Kubota RTV X1100C 4x4 diesel w/ cab & 2,734 hrs., Kubota RTV X1100C 4x4 diesel w/ cab & 3,734 hrs., Kubota RTV X1100C 4x4 diesel w/ cab & 5,079 hrs., 2014 Ford CNG Natural Gas 16-passenger bus w/ 230,830 miles, Dulevo 3000 street sweeper truck w/ 1,917 hrs.), Dulevo 850 street sweeper truck w/ 815 hrs., Winco generator, ExMark zero-turn mower, Polaris 4 x 4 Ranger, Toro 480 Turf Sweeper, Chevy 4x4 pickup truck w/ crew cab, Ford & Chevy work vans, Dodge minivan, Ventrac road broom attachment, Ventrac F3400Y w/ cab & snowblower (has pump issues - 629 hrs.), Floor model Milling Machines, Baileigh floor model Metal Break, large Miller welder, Grizzly Lathe, floor model metal lathe, Clausing Equiptop CSG-3A818 floor model machine, Generators, chain hoists, plus other equipment... miscellaneous scrap stainless steel, assorted copper wire, copper tubing, brass, aluminum, ...\*Items and vehicles will continue to be added to the sale's inventory. The University reserves the right to alter the sale inventory. All bidders must register to bid. Proper photo ID (driver's license, student ID, etc.) necessary to register. All fleet vehicles must be paid for with CASH, CASHIERS or CERTIFIED CHECK. A \$200 CASH deposit is required from the successful bidder on vehicles on the day of the auction. All vehicles are sold on an "as is, where is" basis. The University offers no warranties or guarantees, express or implied, including without limitation, the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. Food will be available on premises. Penn State University and the auctioneer will not be responsible in case of accidents. Auction will be conducted as per auctioneers terms and conditions. Verbal instructions on day of auction will supersede any written terms. Any or all discrepancies will be settled by the auctioneer and will be final. Items for auction can be viewed 7 AM - 9 AM the day of the auction and Thursday, January 22nd 7 AM - 4:30 PM. All purchased auction items must be picked up no later than Friday, January 30th.

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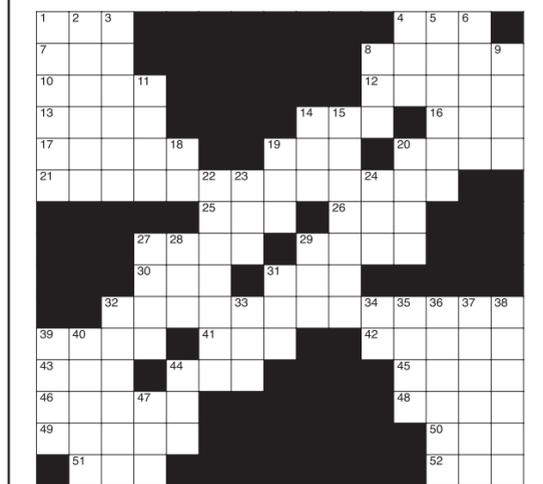
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**AD BARGAIN Crossword Puzzle**  
Solution on page 5



**CLUES ACROSS**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Former CIA  | 30. Actor DiCaprio                         |
| 4. Language  | 31. High schoolers' test                   |
| 7. Constrictor snake                                     | 32. Mr. October                            |
| 8. Demand  | 39. Sign of healing                        |
| 10. Rich man   | 41. One's grandmother                      |
| 12. Short-tailed marten                                  | 42. Entrap                                 |
| 13. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire                     | 43. One who simultaneously buys and sells  |
| 14. Superconducting super collider                       | 44. ___ Francisco                          |
| 16. International group of countries within the Americas | 45. Web-based data provider of marine life |
| 17. Sacred state for Muslims                             | 46. Type of snake                          |
| 19. Shock therapy  | 48. Dark mark or stain                     |
| 20. Engrave  | 49. Member of the Sali                     |
| 21. Localities   | 50. Former measure of length               |
| 25. Paddle   | 51. CNN's founder                          |
| 26. Periodical   | 52. Witness                                |
| 27. Dishonestly gained money                             |  |
| 29. Gain possession of                                   |  |

**CLUES DOWN**

- |                                     |                             |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Acquire                          | 24. Strong tree             |
| 2. Console                          | 27. Commoner                |
| 3. Hunting expedition               | 28. Electroencephalograph   |
| 4. Pie ___ mode                     | 29. ___ Mahal               |
| 5. Simple shoes for peasants        | 31. Congressman             |
| 6. Eurasian shrub                   | 32. Disorderly crowd        |
| 8. Reciprocal of a sine             | 33. 007's creator Fleming   |
| 9. Work together in harmony         | 34. Atomic #55              |
| 11. Grenade                         | 35. Part of a door          |
| 14. File extension                  | 36. Short-tail martens      |
| 15. Minute pores in a plant         | 37. Baltimore ballplayer    |
| 18. Medal of Honor                  | 38. Cuddle                  |
| 19. Make a mistake                  | 39. Gang in "The Outsiders" |
| 20. Advance slowly, as if by inches | 40. Of Croatia              |
| 22. Sandwich meat                   | 44. Body cavity             |
| 23. An awkward stupid person        | 47. Get free of             |

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'19 Jeep Cherokee - 3.2L, 4x4, 162K	'16 Ford Explorer - 3.5L, 4x4, 3rd Row, 162K
'19 Jeep Cherokee - 2.4L, FWD, 135K	'16 Jeep Patriot - 2.4L, 4x4, 103K
'18 Subaru Forester - 2.5L, AWD, 145K	'16 Nissan Rogue - 2.5L, FWD, 155K
'17 Mitsubishi Outlander Sport - 2.0L, AWD, 94K	'16 Hyundai Sonata - 2.4L, FWD, 176K
'17 Chevy Trax - 1.4L T, AWD, 145K	'15 Chevy Tahoe - 5.3L, 4x4, 116K
'17 Lincoln MKX - 3.7L, AWD, 102K	'14 Hyundai Santa Fe - 2.4L, AWD, 113K
'17 Ford Escape - 1.5L, 4x4, 62K	'14 Honda Pilot - 3.5L, 4x4, 3rd Row, 155K
'17 Subaru Crosstrek - 2.5L, AWD, 117K	'13 Hyundai Accent - 1.6L, FWD, 133K
'16 Mini Cooper Tradesman - 1.6L, AWD, 125K	'11 Chevy Traverse - 3.6L, AWD, 177K
'16 Chevy Equinox - 2.4L, AWD, 163K	'04 Chevy Silverado - 4.8L, 4x2, 79K

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**Paws & Claws**

**Spaying helps prevent cat overpopulation**

Between 100 and 150. That is the estimated number of kittens an unspayed cat can have in her lifetime. ABC Clinic Pet Refuge Animal Birth Control Clinic says in just one year, an unspayed cat who is allowed to roam outdoors can have three litters resulting in 12 kittens. One year later, those 12 kittens if kept unspayed, can have 144 offspring of their own. Such figures illustrate that the potential for feral cat overpopulation is high.

According to Shelter Animals Counts, nearly 2.9 million felines entered rescues and shelters across the country in the United States in 2024. About 275,000 of them were euthanized. Cat overpopulation can be controlled if people learn more about how to keep cats safe and happy, which starts with spaying.

**What is spaying?**  
Spaying is a surgical procedure that removes the ovaries and sometimes uterus of a female cat with the intention of preventing reproduction. VCA Animal Hospitals characterize spaying as a major surgical procedure that requires placing the cat under general anesthesia. Most cats are able to return home within 12 to 24 hours of surgery. Even though spaying is considered a major operation, the risk of complications is very low. Spaying is a routine procedure.

**What are the advantages to spaying?**  
Small Door Veterinary says there are many advantages to spaying a cat, which can help with population control, reduce risk of reproductive disease, eliminate heat cycles, and help head off unwanted behaviors like roaming to find a mate. Spaying eliminates the risk of ovarian and uterine cancers and the risk of breast cancer. VCA says cats spayed before their first heat cycle have a less than 1 percent chance of developing breast cancer.

**At what age should a cat be spayed?**  
Today's Veterinary Practice says for owned cats, the optimal age to spay is four to five months of age to catch the cat before its first estrus cycle. For cats in shelters, the optimal age could be as early as eight weeks of age. An older cat also can be spayed if it is adopted and hasn't been altered. It's always best to speak with a veterinarian about spay choices to protect the health of the animal.

Spaying felines at an early age can reduce the large numbers of cats entering shelters and even prevent an assortment of health issues.

# SAUPP: way...to share a story with the world

(Continued from Page 1)  
 a stress release into a way for me to share a story with the world," he said. He said the song started out in a completely different direction than how it ended up. "In 2022, I was ejected from a motorcycle in a high-speed collision with a deer," he said, and the song was supposed to be a reflection of that moment. "The two lyrics that really started the development of the song were 'every scar tells a story' and 'still chasing the thrill,'" he said. "As the song became more defined it became less about a single incident and more of a reflection on perseverance."

"We all have moments that define our lives. Not all of the battles we face are physical. I've weathered the test' was meant to be symbolic of the mental and emotional struggles. 'Stronger than ever' was designed to show growth through struggle," he explained. "At that point the correlation to the Phoenix became the core of the song. The lyrics 'Been through the fire ... Danced with the flames ... I'll rise from the ashes' is the basis of the Phoenix," he said, noting that's where most people seem to relate to the song. "Life hasn't gone perfect for anyone but we can

all pick out those moments where we overcame the struggle to become something greater than we were," Saupp said. Saupp's album plus a single released last year named, "Bull's Fiddle," can be found on Apple, iTunes, YouTube and Spotify. "Bull's Fiddle" was inspired by the legend-

ary Norwegian violinist Ole Bornemann Bull and received recognition at the 2025 Pennsylvania Heritage Songwriting Competition and has since gone on to earn international radio play on independent country stations across North America, Europe and Oceania, according to Saupp.



## CAST Presents 'Improv for Everyone' class

The Clearfield Arts Studio Theatre Inc. will host a free improvisation class at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 16. Improv for Everyone, taught by Dawn Deppe, is an interactive class open to everyone. Participants of all experience levels will explore creativity, build confidence and connect through laughter and play. Designed for beginners and seasoned performers

alike, the class emphasizes a low-pressure, supportive environment where participants can discover the joy of improvisation. No prior experience is required. The class will be held at the CAST Building, 112 E. Locust St., Clearfield. For more information, visit ClearfieldArts.org or follow CAST on social media.

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battery. Accessories like the heater, defroster and headlights draw extra power, leaving the battery with fewer opportunities to recover between drives. Even if a battery survives the winter, its internal components may have weakened. Corrosion on terminals, minor voltage drops and reduced reserve capacity can affect performance as temperatures rise. **Signs Your Battery May Need Attention** Subtle changes often

indicate a battery is starting to fail. Slow engine cranking, dim headlights or interior lights that flicker when the car starts are common warning signs. Electronics such as the radio, touchscreen or power windows may behave inconsistently.

If you experience clicking noises when turning the key or see dashboard battery warnings, the battery may be struggling to hold a charge. Some issues can be related to the charging system or alternator, so it's important to check the entire electrical system if symptoms persist.

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## Obituaries

### Carolyn "Carol" Marie Kokoskie

**Carolyn "Carol" Marie Kokoskie, 87, peacefully went home to be with the Lord early in the morning of January 8, 2026, at UPMC Hospital, Altoona, PA.**

Born May 21, 1937, in Houtzdale, PA, she was the daughter of Frank and Mary (Kasubick) Redzensky. Carol graduated from Moshannon Valley High School in Houtzdale in 1956; the first graduating class of the joint Houtzdale and Madera school. On November 28, 1959, she married the love of her life, Lawrence Kokoskie, at Saint Barbara's Church in Houtzdale, officiated by Father Steve Katerzinski. They recently celebrated 66 years of marriage. Larry passed away only a month ago. While in high school, Carol was an active member in band and chorus. She later became a charter member and officer in both the Moshannon Valley PTA and Moshannon Valley Music Association. After high school, Carol attended nursing school at the Altoona Hospital but withdrew from the program when she contracted rheumatic fever. She later graduated with a certificate in cosmetology from the Altoona Beauty School; something that came in handy in order to cut the hair of five rambunctious sons. Eventually, Carol supported Larry's growing State Farm Insurance agency by obtaining various insurance certificates and licenses, working with him in their home office until they both retired almost 20 years ago. Carol, along with Sandy Harlow, were the glue that held the office together and made sure that each and every client were taken care of. Carol was active with her sons in the Bucktail Council of the Boy Scouts of America, having received the annual award of merit for Active Voluntary Service and Commitment. In the 1970's, when a citizen's committee approached the Houtzdale Borough and Woodward Township to establish a recreation authority, Carol, along with several local citizens, were the founding members of the Houtzdale-Woodward Recreation Authority. Carol served as the board secretary until it was reorganized in 2015. Carol was also part of the group that helped establish the new Houtzdale Woodward Recreation Park; she enjoyed walks around the park and seeing families take advantage of the picnic tables, pavilions, playground, basketball courts, and baseball fields. Carol embraced her Catholic faith and was a member of Christ the King Church in Houtzdale where she was a member of the Catholic Daughters of America, the Altar and Rosary Society, and was a Eucharistic minister. Welcoming Carol into heaven were her husband; parents; infant twin brothers, Anthony and Thaddeus; nephew Brian Christoff, brother-in-law Patrick Christoff, Sr.; and her daughter-in-law, Jennifer Kokoskie. She is survived by her five sons: Jeffrey (Sharon) Kokoskie of Bellefonte, PA; Gregory (Vicki) Kokoskie of Madison, AL; Timothy Kokoskie (and friend Nannette McKinney) of Charles Town, WV; Anthony Kokoskie of York, PA; and Christopher (Sussie) Kokoskie of Frederick, MD. Also surviving are seven grandchildren: Marisa (Terry) Laskowsky, Michael (Megan) Kokoskie, Lauren (Jacob) Lee, Jenna, Emma, Natalie, and Adam Kokoskie; three great-grandchildren: Dakota and Hunter Laskowsky, and Elora Kokoskie; one great-great-grandson, Sutton Laskowsky; and numerous nieces and nephews, who always saw her as their favorite aunt. Her sister, Barbara Christoff of Frederick, MD also survives. She is also survived by two former daughters-in-laws, Trudy Ferrell and Kim Borowski. In recent years, Carol was blessed with the care and friendship of many wonderful caregivers, to whom she was deeply grateful: Mary Luksic, Jennie Iraca, Pauline Elder, Tracey Shaw, and Linda Gardner, and most recently, the wonderful staff at the cardiac thoracic ICU at UPMC Altoona. She also appreciated the many neighbors who checked in or offered help: Dennis Colton; Dennis and Gail Francisco; Todd and Karen Weld; Father Joe Staszewski; and Joe Dugan and family. Carol will be remembered as a caring daughter, loving sister, dedicated wife, doting aunt, extraordinary mother, and awesome "Mom-Mom." She thoroughly enjoyed tending to her flower and vegetable garden, but in time, being confined to a wheelchair no longer made that possible. Carol loved to read and send out greeting cards to family and friends for any occasion, and most especially, for no reason at all. She was very precise and skilled when sewing, whether making outfits for her son's GI Joe's, dresses for her granddaughter's dolls, repairing or altering her sons' clothes as they grew, or making something stylish. But Carol especially enjoyed cooking and baking. Throughout her adult life, she collected quite a library of cookbooks. The bookshelves at home were filled with many Polish cookbooks, whose recipes she tried and adapted to suit her needs. She was fiercely proud of her Polish heritage and helped to shape her specialties of cookies, along with nut, poppyseed, and coconut rolls, chicken and Haluska soup, pigs-in-the-blanket, and pierogies. Carol felt that being in the kitchen was her "therapy." As her health deteriorated and she could no longer stand safely, she adapted by becoming an excellent "executive chef." While one of her caregivers or granddaughters would tend to the stove, she planned the menu, prepped the food, and gave word at the precise time items were to be added to whatever was simmering on the stove. Carol's greatest joy in life was watching and guiding her growing family. She thoroughly cherished her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She enjoyed teaching them to sew and bake, or watching their eyes light up after tasting something from her kitchen. They would listen attentively to the stories from the past, and were always eager to hear more stories from "the old days," and laughed at the pictures of the clothes they wore back then. Visitation for Carol was held, with vigil given by Father Zab Amar at Kruse-Spewock Funeral Home in Ramey, PA

### Lynn Robbins

**Lynn Robbins, 66, of Olanta, passed away Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at Penn Highlands Clearfield.**

Lynn was born April 14, 1959, to James V. and Cartha C. (Tubbs) Robbins. He grew up on the family farm, where he later established his home and raised his own children. When he came back from a trip, he would sit at the top of the hill before he went down his driveway and take a few minutes to soak in the view of it. There was nowhere he'd rather be. Over the years, Lynn hunted many different places. In his final days, one of his favorite places was the tree shanty that he built overlooking the south end of his property. Another one of Lynn's great passions was his business. He began cutting mine props at the age of fourteen and would grow this humble endeavor into Robbins Lumber, a vertically integrated operation of multiple log trucks, a sawmill, and dry kilns.

Above all of this, though, he was a family man. He loved his family fiercely. His hugs were so tight that he likely fractured some ribs over the years. He loved to laugh, to eat good food, and to tell stories. Many people agreed that he was likely the best storyteller that ever lived. He never met a stranger and could have a good time chatting with anyone. His absence leaves a hole that no legacy could ever fill. To say he will be missed would be like saying that you would miss the sun if it didn't rise tomorrow. However, like he often said, "As sure as God made little green apples, the sun is gonna rise tomorrow." When it does, we know Lynn will be looking down on the family farm, soaking in the view. Lynn is survived by his wife of 43 years, Roberta "Bert" (Welch) Robbins; his three children: David Robbins (Kristen), Janet Rosenberg (Jake), and Bradley Robbins; his grandchildren, Matthew Robbins, Jackson Robbins, Abigail Clements, Jayla Robbins, Peyton Robbins, and Scarlett Robbins; his brother, Dennis Robbins (Faith); and his niece and nephew, Christy Daubs (Shawn) and James Robbins (Becky). He was preceded in death by his parents. Services will be private, and the family is grateful for the kindness and condolences shared. There will be a Celebration of Life this summer announced where everybody can celebrate Lynn's life.

### Eileen C. (Johnston) Lowder

**Eileen C. (Johnston) Lowder, 76, of Mill Hall and formerly of West Decatur, died Wednesday, January 7, 2026, at CentreCare, Bellefonte.**

Eileen was born on May 28, 1949, in Clearfield, a daughter of the late Jack E. and Dorothy I. (Shimmel) Johnston. She was a 1967 graduate of the Philipsburg - Osceola Area High School. She was married on April 6, 1968, in Clearfield, to Ronald R. "Ronnie" Lowder, who preceded her in death on January 9, 2025. Eileen was employed as a bookkeeper with a number of area businesses throughout her working career. Early in her career, she was employed at the accounting office of Robert J. Kanour, formerly located in Philipsburg. She was then employed with B. & B. Motor Carriers, formerly of Osceola Mills and E.M. Brown, formerly of Clearfield. Later in her career, she accepted a bookkeeping position with Philipsburg True Value and remained with them until her retirement in 2020. Eileen was a member of the former Mt. Hope Church, RD Clearfield; and a member of the Clearfield Loyal Order of Moose, Lodge #97, Morrisdale. Among her favorite pastimes, she enjoyed making ceramics, reading and tending to her yardwork and flower garden. She also enjoyed donating to the local food banks. She was preceded in death by a sister, Lorraine Kiesel, in addition to her parents and husband. She is survived by two daughters, Nina L. Cowart and her husband Devlon L., of Mill Hall and Jodi L. Ennis and her husband, John Robert "Bobby," of North Carolina; three grandchildren: Talia and Wesley Cowart, of Mill Hall, and Darian Ennis, of North Carolina; two sisters, Deborah Reed and her husband, John, of Lexington, South Carolina and Shirley Dixon and her husband, Dean, of West Decatur, Pa.; one brother, Jack Johnston and his wife, Wanda, of RD Clearfield; and numerous other extended family members. A funeral service was held at the Beezer-Heath Funeral Home & Cremation Services, 719 E. Spruce Street, Philipsburg, with Pastor Chester Marshall, officiating.

### Duane F. Misiura

**Duane F. Misiura, 81, of Hollidaysburg and formerly of Lilly, passed away peacefully with family at his side on Wednesday, January 7, 2026.**

He was born on Sunday, April 2, 1944 in Cassandra, the son of the late Stanley and Edna (Biglin) Misiura. He married the love of his life, Diane M. Leahey on August 10th 1974 at St. Brigid's Catholic Church in Lilly. He is survived by his loving wife of 51 years; their children: Christine (Vincent) Capone; Duane (Jen Koehle) Misiura; Melissa (Larry) Wade; and grandchildren: Sage and Jude Capone; Damon and Kaley Misiura; Sierra and Skylar Wade; brother, J. William Misiura; sister, Kathy (Dave) Brown; sisters-in-law: Pattie (Ed) Grove and Mary (Jim) Kozak; as well as several nieces and nephews. Duane was a 1962 graduate of Lilly-Washington High School and then proudly served in the U.S. Army as an Engineer Equipment Mechanic at Fort Benning, Georgia. After completing his active-duty service, her served with the Railroad Battalion of the Army Reserve in Altoona. He started his 36-year career with the railroad as an apprentice on the Pennsylvania Railroad, and after subsequent mergers, with Penn Central, Conrail, and Norfolk Southern, he retired as a General Foreman of Maintenance. A member of Our Lady of the Alleghenies Catholic Church and the Lilly Knights of Columbus (3rd degree). Duane dedicated most of his life to public service. He was Assistant Fire Chief and Building Committee Chairman for the Lilly Fire Company, earning life membership. He also served as an EMT for the Lilly Area Ambulance Association where he also served as the building chairman and sole treasurer for 27 years. He was a member of the Lilly American Legion Post 628, the Honor Guard and served as a Junior Vice-Commander. Duane honored God, country, family and community throughout his life. His greatest joy and source of pride were his grandchildren. With hard work, self-reliance and knowledge born of experience, he built his house, home and family. He was always willing and able to solve a problem and assist with a project; his wisdom and generosity immeasurable. Duane loved his family fiercely, and they him. Friends will be received from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Sunday at the Gibbons-Houser Funeral Home, Inc., 301 Church Street, Gallitzin. A Funeral Mass was held at Our Lady of the Alleghenies Roman Catholic Church 608 Main St, Lilly, Fr. Matthew Reese, celebrant. Military Rites by local Veterans Organizations, Interment: St. Brigid Cemetery, Lilly

Obituaries Courtesy of: Heath's Funeral Home;  
 Bennett & Houser Funeral Home, Inc;  
 Kruse-Spewock Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc;  
 McQuown Funeral; Gibbons Funeral Homes  
 Beezer-Heath Funeral Home & Cremation Services

# LAST CHANCE



## Altoona Mirror Season of Sharing



Mirror photos by Patrick Waksunski  
 Top: Riders experience riding outside. Bottom: Aiden Andrews, 10, of Duncansville hangs a ring as part of an activity while riding Romeo JAC.

**HISTORY:** The Altoona Mirror Season of Sharing is a holiday fundraiser that aims to combine the power of the local newspaper, the expertise of the Central Pennsylvania Community Foundation and the generosity of our central Pennsylvania readers.

Season of Sharing has become a holiday tradition, and the money raised benefits a specific charity or charities each year.

Over the past 20 years, Season of Sharing has raised more than \$468,512 for local charities, with last year's total of \$74,244 to the Central PA Humane Society.

**PAST RECIPIENTS:**

- 2005 U.S. Armed Forces Mothers
- 2006 Brian Morden Foundation
- 2007 Shriners Hospitals for Children
- 2008 Gloria Gates Memorial Foundation
- 2009 Food for Families Soup Kitchen
- 2010 Zack Hinich Foundation
- 2011 Big Brothers Big Sisters of Blair County
- 2012 Home Nursing Agency's Healing Patch
- 2013 Miracle League of Blair County
- 2014 Mountain Lion Backpack Program
- 2015 Family Services Teen Center & Shelter
- 2016 Salvation Army Emergency

**Disaster Services**

- 2017 Hurricane Relief (Florida Keys, Houston, Puerto Rico)
- 2018 Blair County Suicide Prevention Task Force
- 2019 Skills Of Central PA
- 2020 Altoona Food Bank
- 2021 Blair County Library System
- 2022 St. Vincent De Paul Assumption Chapel Food Pantry
- 2023 Sweat For Vets
- 2024 Central PA Humane Society

**THIS YEAR'S RECIPIENT:** Dreams Go On provides therapeutic horseback riding sessions to adults and children who are physically challenged, receive mental health, behavioral health or family therapy services. Certified instructors and dedicated volunteers teach responsibility, trust, rules, patience, compassion, self-confidence, teamwork, and safety.

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Horseback riding also helps those with mental difficulties. The unique relationship that forms between horse and rider can lead to an increase in confidence, patience and self-esteem.

**HOW TO DONATE:** The first and easiest way is to fill out the coupon below and mail it along with an envelope to the address listed below.

You can also drop off the coupon and your contribution at the Altoona Mirror, 301 Cayuga Ave., Altoona PA 16602.

The funds raised through the Season of Sharing will be administered by the Central Pennsylvania Community Foundation. 100% of the donations to the Season of Sharing will go directly to that year's charity.

Of course, donations to the Season of Sharing are tax deductible. Deadline for donations is Jan. 31.

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## Altoona Mirror Season of Sharing

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# Altoona Mirror Plus!



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026



Courtesy photos  
Michelle (Lenhart) Randazzo speaks at a conference.

## Trained for success

Former Altoona basketball champion attributes career accomplishments to athletic background

By COLETTE COSTLOW  
ccostlow@altoonamirror.com

After adding a new position to her list of career accomplishments, city native Michelle (Lenhart) Randazzo said she has her decorated career with the Altoona Area High School basketball team to thank.

Randazzo was recently named the new chief financial officer for Daimler Truck North America.

Throughout her educational career, Randazzo, 48, was a player on the girls basketball teams, dedicating her free time to the court. She's best known in Blair County for winning the 1995 state championship, which earned her a Division I scholarship to play at Marshall University.

Randazzo said being a youth sports athlete was "fundamental" for her future, teaching her how to be disciplined and value teamwork.

As a competitive person, "that didn't leave the day I stepped off the court," she said, adding that she uses that drive to conduct business today.

### Court classic

According to her mother, Kathy Lenhart, both Randazzo and her sister, Karen (Lenhart) Dop, inherited their athletic genes from their father.

Bob Lenhart played streetball throughout his life, she said, so it was no surprise that Randazzo and Dop also found a love and talent for basketball from an early age.

Randazzo has always given "100% to everything she does," especially in basketball, her mother said.

At Geesey Park, Randazzo spent more time playing pick-up games than her father, even though she defined herself as an introvert and preferred alone time.

Randazzo made a lot of

friends while playing at Geesey Park, she said, continuing to play basketball for Saint Mary's Catholic School, coached by Walter Crum, and winning the 1989 state championship game at Bishop Guilfoyle.

"Having teammates was something I loved, and being close to a group of girls and building true friendships I have to this day is something I value in life," Randazzo said.

It was her competitive nature and desire for accomplishment, however, that kept her on the court.

Playing one year for the Keith Junior High School girls basketball team, former coach Jeff Wagner said Randazzo was a "dedicated" student athlete.

"I was very pleased she ended up at the school I worked for," he added.

Randazzo was significantly influenced by her coaches, including Crum and Wagner, she said, as their lessons taught her how to show respect and lead with integrity in the workplace.

In the mid-90s, Randazzo was the point guard for the Altoona Area High School Lady Lions varsity team.

The highlight of her tenure came in 1995 when the Lady Lions traveled to Hershey and won the state championship title. That season, they won 21 of 22 games, averaging 65 points per game.

Randazzo said she played with "such an amazing group of teammates" that year, adding that she and two others subsequently landed D1 basketball scholarships.

### New directions

Playing DI basketball at Marshall University was different for Randazzo, considering that the crowds were larger and the stakes were higher.

"You're on a stage much larger than what you're used to in high school," she said.

Traveling to play sports was enjoyable for Randazzo, as she visited Colorado to play against the Colorado Buffaloes in the 1997 NCAA Tournament.

It was an amazing experience "and a highlight from my basketball career" to play against the final 64 teams in the tournament, she said.

But being a student athlete can be both "rewarding and challenging," since it equates to two full-time careers in school and sports simultaneously.

Randazzo's love of numbers drove her to pursue a business administration degree with a specialization in finance during her time off the court at Marshall University.

"Math came easily to me," she said, predicting that she could use her strengths in her career while loving what she did every day.

Finishing her undergraduate college degree in three years, Randazzo obtained her MBA at Saint Francis University, working as a graduate assistant in Shield's School of Business.

Randazzo said she learned a lot from an educational perspective, understanding how to apply Dean Randy Frye's lessons in the business world.

Frye called Randazzo an ambitious and terrific student.

In the MBA program, Frye can tell if a student will succeed in the future, and Randazzo was one of those individuals.

Randazzo values her education and now sees it as "one of the best success factors I had starting" in her future career.

Fresh out of graduate school, Randazzo secured a job at Ward Transport and Logistics LLC before moving on to Daimler Truck North America, which manufactures and sells commercial vehicles.

At Daimler, she worked as the manager of revenue

and product cost control for more than 20 years, conducting both national and international assignments.

Outside of work, Randazzo married fellow Altoona Area graduate Marco Randazzo, whose family runs Mama Randazzo's Pizzeria, and had two children together: Luca, 13, and Bella, 9. They currently reside in Charlotte, North Carolina.

### Chief financial officer

On Jan 1, Randazzo was officially named chief financial officer of Daimler Truck North America, succeeding former CFO Stefan Kurschner.

Being named company CFO is an "honor" for Randazzo, and she is looking forward to getting started.

"I had instrumental mentors that guided me and helped me see opportunities," she said, adding that she gives back by mentoring employees and helping them "find their way."

Being an ambitious person, Randazzo said she never planned a specific career path, but when she understood that becoming a CFO was possible, she worked hard and ultimately earned the position.

"I learned early on in my career that I must be an advocate for myself because it's up to me to drive my career," she said. "No one else will do that for me."



Michelle Randazzo is pictured playing basketball for Marshall University.

Becoming a CFO is "quite an achievement for a local girl from Altoona," Frye said.

Randazzo's success also doesn't surprise Wagner, as he knows she is a focused and dedicated person.

As for Randazzo's parents, her mother said they're very proud of her accomplishment, because she set goals for herself a long time ago.

Randazzo has always been an "achiever," Kathy Lenhart said, working hard at her job while balancing home life.

Randazzo said success means "bringing the best version of myself every day," whether she's at work supporting her team or being a good wife and

mom. Randazzo said she couldn't be as successful in her professional life if it weren't for her husband's support.

"Success is being happy and fulfilled in both my personal and professional life," she said.

On April 11, the 1995 and 1996 Altoona Area High School Lady Lions varsity girls basketball teams will be inducted into the Blair County Hall of Fame, as Randazzo and Dop will be recognized for their contributions to the teams.

Randazzo said "it'll be great to see my team" when she returns to Blair County for the ceremony.

Mirror Staff Writer Colette Costlow is at 814-946-7414.



Courtesy photos

This picture of the 1994-95 Altoona Area High School Lady Lions championship team is included in the Blair County Hall of Fame.

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# Health & Wellness

**Anesthesiologist-led research improves care for patients of all ages - Page 2**

**Break the resolution cycle:**  
How simple solutions can transform 2026 - Page 4

**5 simple ways to fight the winter blues - Page 5**

# Anesthesiologist-led research improves care for patients of all ages

Opioid overdose deaths among people 65 and older have surged by 9,000% in less than a decade. Most children fast longer than needed before surgery. And women who have C-sections may have pain that disrupts sleep for months. These were among the findings - aimed at exploring trends that could improve care for patients of all ages - unveiled at ANESTHESIOLOGY® 2025, the annual meeting of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA).

"These studies highlight how anesthesiologists can make health care safer, more comfortable and more effective at every age," said ASA President Patrick Giam, M.D., FASA. "From reducing and monitoring opioid use in older people, to ensuring parents safely and appropriately give their children clear liquids before surgery, to easing pain after C-sections so mothers can sleep and recover, anesthesiologist-led research continues to drive innovation and improve outcomes in medicine."

Here are a few of the important findings anesthesiologists presented at ANESTHESIOLOGY 2025.

**Adults 65 Years and Older Not Immune to the Opioid Epidemic**

While the opioid epidemic previously affected mostly younger people, seniors are now experiencing surging opioid overdose rates. In fact, overdose deaths in people age 65 and older from fentanyl mixed with stimulants have risen by 9,000% in less than a decade, according to an analysis of more than 400,000 fentanyl-related deaths collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Nearly half of the deaths involved mixing fentanyl with stimulants, such as cocaine or methamphetamines. Older adults are especially at risk because many have chronic health conditions, take multiple medications and metabolize drugs more slowly, according to Gab Pasia, M.A., lead author of the study and a medical student at the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine.

While opioids are effective for pain control, they should be used sparingly, especially in older people, researchers cautioned. They note that anesthesiologists and other pain medicine specialists should choose other pain management methods when possible and carefully monitor older patients when prescribing opioids. That includes educating them and their caregivers on overdose prevention tools such as naloxone.

**Children Fast From Clear Liquids Much Longer Before Surgery Than Guidelines Recommend**

More than two-thirds of children and nearly 80% of infants forgo clear liquids before surgery for at least twice as long as guidelines recommend, according to a study of more than 71,000 children aged 17 or younger.

Healthy infants and children may safely drink clear liquids until two hours before receiving anesthesia, according to current ASA guidelines. Yet researchers found that on average, children over a year old go without clear fluids for nearly nine hours before surgery - more than four times longer than needed. Infants go without clear fluids

on average more than six hours before surgery.

Parents may worry about giving their child anything to drink before surgery due to the risk of liquid entering the lungs, but allowing children to drink clear liquids up to two hours before surgery is generally safe and helps prevent problems such as dehydration and low blood sugar, according to Alexander Nagrebetsky, M.D., M.Sc., senior author of the study and an anesthesiologist and intensivist at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston and assistant professor at Harvard Medical School, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Parents should talk with their anesthesiologist before surgery to confirm the latest fasting guidance and ensure their child stays hydrated and safe. For example, most children are encouraged to drink water or sugar-containing clear liquids, such as fruit juices without pulp or those with electrolytes, for up to two hours before the start of the procedure, Dr. Nagrebetsky noted.

**Cesarean Delivery Linked to Higher Risk of Pain and Sleep Problems After Childbirth**

Women who have a cesarean delivery (C-section) may be more likely to experience ongoing pain and sleep problems after childbirth compared to those who have a vagi-

nal delivery, according to a nationwide analysis of more than 1.5 million mothers.

Individuals who had C-sections are 16% more likely to be diagnosed with a new sleep disorder in the first year after giving birth, compared to those who have vaginal births, according to Moe Takenoshita, M.B.B.Ch., lead author of the study and a postdoctoral scholar in the department of anesthesia at Stanford University Center for Academic Medicine, Palo Alto, California. Additionally, in interviews with 41 mothers who had C-sections, more than two-thirds said the pain disrupted their sleep and activities of daily living.

New mothers, especially those recovering from C-sections, should manage their pain to help them get better sleep and discuss any concerns with their physician. Getting regular exercise as appropriate, sleeping when the baby sleeps and avoiding caffeine late in the day can also help.

To learn more about the importance of physician-led anesthesia care - including how anesthesiologists keep patients safe before, during and after surgery - and explore the latest advances in the specialty, visit: <https://www.asahq.org/madeforthismoment/>.



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# Break the resolution cycle:

## How simple solutions can transform 2026

Like every year, many of us make New Year's resolutions and try to stick to them, but broad, all-or-nothing changes often set us up for failure and can make mental health struggles even worse.

Dr. Robin Miller, an integrative medicine physician and founder of Triune Integrative Medicine in Medford, Oregon, puts it plainly:

"I don't know about you, but every year I make New Year's resolutions only to abandon them a month or two later. So instead of resolutions, how about solutions?"

Psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner and Learning to Achieve Wellness owner Lillian Ingram agrees.

"In 2026, take a new approach to goal setting, and embark on a solution-based focus toward your goals," she says. "You're still going to set your goals. You're still going to

take steps. But let's build out those steps."

Solutions are simple, achievable and measurable rather than big and intimidating resolutions. For example, rather than making a resolution to lose a certain amount of weight by a certain date, set a simpler solution to reduce calorie or sugar intake each day, or eat more whole grains. Instead of joining a gym and burning out by February, choose to walk every day. Each step we take - both literal and figurative - can then be followed by the next to add up to something realistic and achievable.

For people diagnosed with mental health conditions like major depressive disorder, a solutions approach may be more effective for them particularly given that setting and attaining goals can be overwhelming

and could even worsen mental health. For those who are considering medication therapy or are unhappy with their current treatment, a solution-oriented step could be having a conversation with a healthcare provider about the GeneSight® Test. "It's a way for you and your provider to choose a medication that may be more compatible to your unique genetic makeup," said Dr. Miller.

"It's a simple genetic test done with a cheek swab," continues Dr. Miller. "It analyzes, in part, how your genes may affect your outcomes with medications commonly prescribed to treat depression, anxiety, ADHD, and other mental health conditions. The test helps inform you about how your genetics may impact your outcomes with the included mental health medications.

This information can be used as a part of a comprehensive medical assessment to help inform treatment decisions. What better way to start the new year than with the possibility of feeling well again?"

In the new year, for any goal-setting exercise, Ingram suggests deciding what steps are needed rather than thinking about what we need to do to "fix ourselves." She recommends asking: "What resources do you have? What connections do you have? What community support do you already have?"

"You're going to build upon those foundations, those which already exist, to reach your goals," she explains. "And that's what's going to change 2026 and make it the most positive, best, solution-based year ever."

## New Year, New You: Start by Checking in on Your Hearing

Each January brings a clean slate, a time to focus on health, happiness, and the habits that help you feel your best. You probably schedule your annual physical, book your dental cleaning, and maybe even make a few resolutions for better self-care. But here's one that often gets overlooked: **your hearing health.**

**Start tackling your resolutions for 2026 by getting your hearing checked!  
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## 5 simple ways to fight the winter blues

**H**ave you noticed that you feel a little low during the winter months? You're not alone. As daylight hours shorten and temperatures drop, many people experience lower energy and mood, often called the "winter blues."

Luckily, there are easy steps you can take to lift your spirits, so you can continue to feel energetic no matter how cold and dark it is outside. Check out these five simple tips from Registered Dietitian and Nutritionist Dawn Jackson Blatner that can help keep the winter blues away this season.

### Move in ways that feel good

Moving during the colder months is key to keeping yourself happy and healthy during the winter. You don't have to incorporate an intensive workout. Instead, focus on moving your body in a way that feels comfortable to you. Stretching, dancing, yoga or a brisk walk around your neighborhood can boost your circulation and mood throughout the dark and cold months of the year.

### Prevent energy crashes by limiting added sugar

Added sugars in your food and drinks may temporarily boost your energy. However, the sudden spike in blood sugar can quickly lead to a "sugar crash," leaving you tired and irritable. This winter, be mindful of what you're eating and limit added sugars, so you can prevent energy crashes and mood dips throughout your day.

### Reset your rhythm with light therapy

The short and dark winter days can disrupt your circadian rhythm, leading to poor sleep, lower energy and even a grumpy disposition. Consider starting your day by sipping a cup of coffee in front of a light therapy lamp. A light therapy lamp mimics natural sunlight, which can help reset your body's rhythm when daylight is short. Just 15 minutes a day can make a difference! If a lamp isn't available, bundle up and go on a morning walk because even cloudy natural light can support your sleep-wake cycle.

### Stay connected

It can be challenging to see your friends and family when the weather is cold, rainy and snowy. However, staying connected with your loved ones is vital to maintaining high spirits during the dark winter months. Get into the habit of making quick phone calls to catch up, sharing a meal or planning a fun activity to nurture your relationships and keep feelings of isolation at bay.

### Start your morning with vitamin-rich meals

Starting the day with a meal that fuels your body and lifts your mood is a simple yet effective way to weather the winter months. When choosing a breakfast recipe, look for meals that are rich in Vitamin D - which strengthens immune cells so

Continued on Page 7

## STRUGGLING WITH RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS?



If you have been diagnosed with moderate to severe RA, you may be eligible to take part in a clinical trial to test a potential new treatment for this disease.

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# When access to care matters most

## How CRNAs keep rural America safe and healthy

In small towns and rural communities across the United States, access to health care can mean the difference between life and death. On National Rural Health Day (Nov. 20), the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) recognizes the dedicated health professionals who serve these regions - and the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) who are often the key to ensuring safe, timely care close to home.

“On average, rural trauma victims must travel twice as far as urban residents to reach the nearest hospital,” said Jeff Molter, MBA, MSN, CRNA, president of AANA. “Because of this and other health disparities, nearly 60% of trauma deaths occur in rural America - even though only 20% of Americans live there. CRNAs, also known as nurse anesthesiologists or nurse anesthetists, play a vital role in ensuring patients receive the anesthesia and pain management care they need when and where they need it most.”

### What is a CRNA?

CRNAs are advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) who specialize in anesthesia and pain management. They deliver care before, during, and after surgical, therapeutic, diagnostic, and obstetrical procedures.

With more than 150 years of trusted service, CRNAs are highly trained clinicians who provide the full range of anesthesia services in every type of health care setting - from large hospitals to rural critical access facilities.

### The Health Care Challenges Facing Rural America

Rural areas face a variety of health care barriers - including hospital closures, workforce shortages, and long travel distances to care.

According to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs more than one-third of veterans with service-connected disabilities live in rural areas. The U.S. Department of Agriculture also notes that rural communities have a higher proportion of older adults, many of whom live with chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and heart failure.

Without local CRNAs, many of these patients would have to travel hours for essential surgical or anesthesia care. When emergencies happen, those hours can make all the difference.



### CRNAs: The Lifeline of Rural Health Care

CRNAs safely administer more than 58 million anesthetics each year and represent over 80% of anesthesia providers in rural U.S. counties, according to AANA. In many small hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers, CRNAs are the sole anesthesia providers, supporting critical services like obstetrics, surgery, trauma stabilization, and pain management.

Their presence keeps lifesaving care within reach, helping rural hospitals stay open and their communities healthy, resilient, and self-sufficient.

“Working as a CRNA in rural settings shows just how critical our role is in medicine,” Molter said. “When we can practice to the full extent of our education and training, we help bridge health care gaps

and deliver care to people who need it most. It’s why we celebrate and advocate for CRNAs who keep rural America safe and strong.”

### Learn More

To learn more about the essential role of CRNAs in rural and other health care settings - or to explore how to become a CRNA - visit [AANA.com](http://AANA.com).



Amateur photographers may email photos for consideration to: [community@altoonamirror.com](mailto:community@altoonamirror.com).

Photos must be high-resolution and in JPEG format.

Photo submissions must include details and a daytime phone number to be considered. Submissions will be chosen based on composition and creativity!

# Suffering in Silence

## Older Adults Need to Speak Up About Their Mental Health

**C**onnie Thomas, a 77-year-old woman from Altamont, Illinois, has navigated a long journey with her mental health. Decades ago, Thomas was diagnosed with breast cancer. Living with her diagnosis and its results was not only physically challenging but it also brought mental struggles, including depression. She managed her mental health with medication for many years. But after retirement and feeling a loss of purpose, Thomas once again experienced symptoms of depression.

It's not unusual for older adults like Thomas to struggle with mental health issues. In fact, according to the National Council on Aging, 20% of people aged 55 and older suffer from some kind of mental health concern. After a lifetime of caring for families, raising children and serving their communities, many seniors put their own needs last, including their mental health. This can mean suffering in silence, sometimes for years.

Thomas knew better. She knew from

her experience how important it is to talk about mental health, whether it's with friends, family or your doctor. That conversation can open the door to new options. In Connie's case, her primary care clinician offered her the GeneSight® test, a genetic test that provides additional insights into how her genes may affect medication outcomes with certain mental health medications. These results gave her clinician more information to consider when developing her treatment plan.

Finding a mental health medication that works: A frustrating process

It's fairly common for medications that once worked to manage mental health issues like depression to stop working. According to Johns Hopkins Medicine, "symptoms return for up to 33% of people using antidepressants."

Finding a medication for depression or anxiety that works can be a frustrating game of trial and error. Medications work differently for everyone, and there are

many reasons why one may be effective for some but not for others. Your genes may hold a clue, as they can play a role in affecting medication outcomes. A simple cheek swab can help clinicians understand which medications may require dose adjustments, be less likely to work, or have an increased risk of side effects based on your genetics.

### Informed Choices

That's why resources like the GeneSight® test are so important. The GeneSight test is a genetic test that shows health care providers how your genes may affect your outcomes with certain mental health medications, including medications that treat depression and anxiety. This information may help clinicians make more informed decisions about medication selection or dosing.

Thomas' GeneSight test results helped her doctor decide that a lower dose of her

medication may be helpful. With that adjustment, she says she is feeling better than she has in many years.

Feel empowered to take care of your mental health

Thomas shares that in her older adult community, she sees many people struggling with depression and yet unable to talk about their mental health.

"I see how unhappy they are, inwardly and outwardly," she says. "I try to reach out, to acknowledge that they are suffering and to encourage them to talk to someone."

She hopes telling her story will encourage others like her to talk about their mental health and then take the next step in reaching out to a health care provider. As Thomas learned, any prescribing clinician treating mental health, like her primary care clinician, can order the GeneSight test.

To learn more about the test, talk with your clinician or visit [GeneSight.com](http://GeneSight.com).

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they can defend against harmful bacteria - and Vitamin E - which acts as an antioxidant to reduce oxidative stress and protects your cells from damage.

Try this Shiitake Mushroom & Red Bell Pepper Frittata with Smoked Salmon recipe using Eggland's Best eggs. These eggs contain six times more Vitamin D and 10 times more Vitamin E compared to ordinary eggs to help support your energy, mood and overall wellness all winter long.

### Shiitake Mushroom & Red Bell Pepper Frittata with Smoked Salmon

Prep time: 12 minutes; Cook time: 12 minutes; Yield: 14

Ingredients

- \* 6 Eggland's Best eggs, large
- \* 2 tablespoons olive oil
- \* 6 ounces shiitake mushrooms stems minced fine, caps sliced 1/4" wide
- \* 6 ounces red bell pepper, seeded and cut into 1-inch pieces
- \* 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- \* 3 tablespoons milk, preferably almond or oat milk
- \* 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme, divided
- \* 1/4 teaspoon salt
- \* 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- \* 4 ounces smoked salmon, coarsely chopped
- \* 2 tablespoons Greek yogurt

### Preparation

1. Heat a 10-inch skillet with sloped sides over medium heat. Add olive oil. After 30 seconds, add mushroom caps and bell pepper. Cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

2. Preheat broiler.

3. In a medium bowl, beat together eggs, milk, 1 tablespoon of thyme, and salt and pepper. Stir in smoked salmon. Set aside.

4. Add turmeric and black pepper to the skillet, stirring for a few seconds. Stop stirring and pour egg mixture into skillet over vegetables. Mix well.

5. With a spatula, press vegetables down into an even layer under egg mixture. Cook without stirring until eggs are set on bottom, about 5 minutes. (Center will be wet.) Transfer to broiler. Broil 4-5 inches from heat source for 2 minutes or until eggs are set.

6. Cut into wedges.

7. Drop on spoonfuls of yogurt and sprinkle the remaining one tablespoon thyme over frittata before serving.

Recipe Notes: Crimini mushrooms may replace the shiitake mushrooms but with less savoriness. Two teaspoons dried thyme may replace the fresh thyme. Crush the dried herb for extra aroma. Lox that is not salty may replace the smoked salmon.

Just a few simple tweaks to your day can help you fight the winter blues, so you can continue to thrive no matter the weather.

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- Thomas Jefferson



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