

SENIOR Times

Age Well, Live Long!

Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
providing senior services in Fayette, Greene & Washington Counties

Est. 1974



Call your local Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging for services and supports for seniors.

Toll free 1-800-734-9603 or visit www.swpa-aaa.org

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Publisher:

Southwestern PA Area Agency
on Aging, Inc.,
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Human Services, Inc.

Editorial Staff:

Mary Harris
Kristen Jackson
Robbie Spaziani
Judi Dubs

Ads Manager:

Judi Dubs

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Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Corporate Office
888-300-2704 or 724-489-8080
Fax No: 724-483-9360
Fayette County Office
724-430-4603
Greene County Office
724-852-1510
Washington County Office
724-228-7080

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Apply for Home Heating and Energy Assistance, the **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**

provides cash grants to help Pennsylvanians pay their heating bills. The 2025-2026 LIHEAP season runs DECEMBER 3, 2025 THROUGH APRIL 10, 2026. Call the LIHEAP Hotline at 1-866-857-7095. You may also Call the Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging, Inc. for assistance at 724.489.8080 or 1.800.734.9603.



**LIHEAP helps with home
heating bills, because a warm
home is a safe and healthy home.**

dhs.pa.gov/LIHEAP



FARMER'S ALMANAC JANUARY 2026

Temp. 32° (2° below avg.); precip. 2.5" (1" below avg.). **1-10** Snowy east, sunny west; very cold. **11-20** Sunny east, isolated showers west; turning warmer. **21-24** Sunny, colder. **25-26** Snow and rain, chilly. **27-31** Sunny east, flurries west; cold.

Homestead Tax Exemption

The Taxpayer Relief Act, Act 1 of Special Session 1 of 2006, was signed into law on June 27, 2006. The Taxpayer Relief Act provides for property tax reduction allocations to be distributed by the Commonwealth to each school district. Property tax reduction will be through a "homestead or farmstead exclusion." Generally, most owner-occupied homes and farms are eligible for property tax reduction. Only a primary residence is

eligible for property tax relief.

Homeowners should contact their county assessment office for a copy of their county's homestead and farmstead application form. To receive school property tax relief for tax years beginning July 1 or January 1, an application for homestead or farmstead exclusions must be filed by the preceding March 1.

Source: <https://dced.pa.gov/>

The Senior Times extends a warm thank you to its donors

Thank you to those who choose the *Senior Times* as a means of remembering and paying tribute to their loved ones. Your generous contributions make this monthly publication possible.

The names of all contributors who support our mission to provide quality information to older adults in southwestern Pa. are acknowledged in this space, unless anonymity is requested.

Those who make donations of up to \$25 are recognized as "DONORS." Those who generously give between \$26 and \$49 receive "PATRONS" status. And individuals who donate \$50 or more are recognized as "SPONSORS" of the *Senior Times*.



In Memoriam

Dorothy B. Koratich

In Memory of
Michael P. Koratich;
Stephen A. Koratich;
Anthony Lingis, Jr.;
Teresa Bellish;
Rudy Marisa;
Harry Cancelmi;
Sylvia Tefft;
Martha Minor;
Dora Zimmerman



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

The Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging, Inc., Board of Directors will meet on the following dates in 2026:

January 6	June 2	December 1
March 3	September 1	
May 5	November 19	

The Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging, Inc., Advisory Council will meet on the following dates in 2026:

February 18	June 17	October 21
April 15	September 16	December 9

For the location and time of the meetings, contact Mary Harris, Executive Director, Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging, Inc., at 1-888-300-2704, Ext. 4420.

Donation Coupon

**Please use this coupon to make personal donations of support, as well as for recognitions of birthdays or special honors and for offering memorial tributes.*

Make your donation payable to: SWPA AAA

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Thank You

The official registration and financial information of the Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging, Inc., may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State Bureau of Charitable Organizations by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1 (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Medicare F Y I

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period

The Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period runs from January 1st through March 31st each year. If you are currently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can use this Open Enrollment period to switch to a different Medicare Advantage Plan, or you can drop your Medicare Advantage Plan and go to Original Medicare and a Part D prescription drug plan. Coverage for your new plan will begin on the first day of the following month. For example, if you enroll in January, your new plan will begin February 1st. Please note, the Medicare Advantage

Open Enrollment Period is only for people who have Medicare Advantage Plans. You cannot use this enrollment period to switch from one Part D prescription drug plan to another, or to switch from Original Medicare to Medicare Advantage. It is important to review your current plan yearly, to ensure it is still meeting your healthcare needs and budget. If you live in Fayette, Greene, or Washington Counties and have questions about Medicare, please contact the local PA MEDI coordinator at 724-489-8080 ext. 4438.



Community living option through the Domiciliary Care Program

The Domiciliary Care Program, or Dom Care, is a unique program offered through the Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging (SWPA AAA). Dom Care is commonly referred to as Foster Care for adults.

Living Alternative

Dom Care provides a quality alternative for those who are unable to live independently due to physical, mental or age-related impairments. The program offers consumers care and supervision within a family-type environment with a certified Dom Care Provider. Individuals receive room, board, personal care assistance, and emotional support.

Unlike large personal care homes, Dom Care homes are the individual providers' homes. Providers must be certified by the SWPA AAA to house one to three consumers at one time. The 2026 Dom Care rate to be paid to the Dom Care Provider is \$1,334.96 for an individual and \$2,333.00 for a couple. Dom Care consumers will receive a monthly spending stipend of \$293.94 per individual or \$505.40 for a couple in 2026.

Caregiving Opportunity

Dom Care Providers are currently in high demand. The program is seeking people residing in Fayette, Greene or Washington counties who are interested in the opportunity to become a certified Domiciliary Care provider. Providers must be at least 21 years old and demonstrate

that they have the experience and ability to care for people with physical, mental, and age-related disabilities.

Dom Care homes are certified annually to ensure they meet health and safety standards. Once certified, providers will be matched with consumers in need and will receive a monthly stipend for providing the necessary care.

Once the SWPA AAA matches a certified provider with an eligible individual, the individual will move into the provider's home. Providers are responsible for providing room and board, transportation for medical and other appointments, medication management, and preparation of healthy meals.

Most often, consumers and providers grow to become like family. In the past, some providers have included consumers in family events and have even taken their consumers on family vacations.

More Information

For more information on opening your home and becoming a certified Dom Care provider, please call 724- 489-8083 or toll free at 1-800-411- 5655, or visit our web site at <https://www.swpa-aaa.org/in-home-services/community-living-arrangements-domiciliary-care>. Family, friends, hospitals, and social service agencies may initiate referrals by calling the Dom Care Program.



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Staying Safe This Winter

Practical Tips for Pennsylvania Seniors

Adreinne Walnoha from Havenside

Winter in Pennsylvania is a thing of beauty — bright snow, warm gatherings, and quiet indoor evenings. But it also brings some hazards that can affect your safety, mobility, and comfort. We've compiled a list of helpful pointers to help you stay safe and protected this winter. With a bit of preparation, you can make the most of the season and enjoy its beauty.

Before You Step Outside

Dress for the Weather

- Wear a warm coat and dress in layers to retain body heat.
- Cover all exposed skin. Mittens are more effective than gloves in keeping your hands warmer.
- Choose sturdy, non-slip boots with a good sole grip to prevent falls.

Keep Walkways Clear

Clearing porches and driveways prevents slips — a major winter risk. Shoveling snow is a strenuous activity. When possible, ask a neighbor, friend, or family member for help.

If you must shovel:

- Avoid shoveling during active snowfall or freezing rain.
- Take breaks — snow is heavier than it looks.
- Use tools like a snowblower or wheeled shovel to reduce strain.

Stocking Your Winter Pantry

A well-prepared pantry helps you stay safe indoors during storms or icy days.

What to Keep on Hand

- Canned goods: soups, vegetables, beans, fruit, tuna, chicken (any protein).
- Dry goods: pasta, rice, oatmeal, instant mashed potatoes.
- Ready-to-eat foods: granola bars, crackers, peanut butter, applesauce cups.
- Hydration essentials: bottled water, shelf-stable juices, electrolyte packets.
- Comfort items: tea, coffee, hot chocolate.
- Diet-specific needs: low-sodium options, diabetic-friendly snacks, gluten-free staples.

Outage-Friendly Foods

- Keep foods that do not require cooking: nuts, canned meals, protein bars.
- Store at least one gallon of water per person per day for three days.
- Keep a manual can opener within easy reach.

Medication & Household Essentials

- Maintain a two-week supply of prescription medications.
- Stock batteries, flashlights, pet food, and hygiene items.

A Safer, More Enjoyable Winter

With thoughtful preparation, you can enjoy peace of mind throughout the season. Small steps can protect your safety, comfort and wellbeing all winter long.

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freedom-transit.org



Veterans Spotlight

The VA provides a medical benefits package to all enrolled Veterans. This comprehensive plan provides a full range of preventive outpatient and inpatient services within the VA health care system. Also, once you enroll in the VA healthcare



system, you can be seen at any VA facility across the country. VA oper-

ates an annual enrollment system that helps manage the provision of

health care by tracking the overall beneficiary population. Addi-

tionally, the enrollment system ensures that eligible Veterans receive appropriate care. VA considers a variety of factors in determining Veterans's eligibility for enrollment, but once enrolled, a Veteran remains enrolled in the VA health care system. There are many ways a Veteran may qualify for top-notch health care at over 1,400 medical centers and clinics across the nation. The VA has highly trained physicians and clinicians, enabling it to provide care across many specialties. You may also be able to receive assistance with prescription medication. Please call your local VA office:

Fayette County
724-430-1241

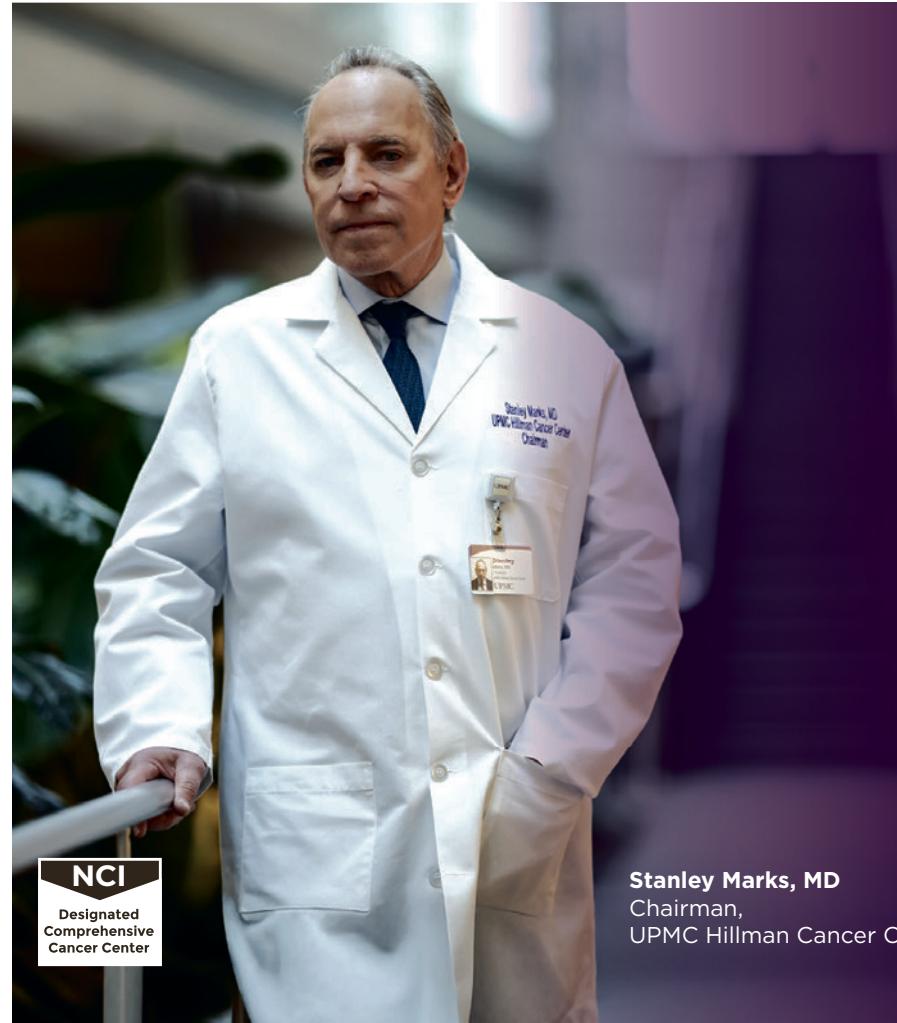
Greene County
724-825-5275

Washington County
724-228-6865



Did you know...

Twenty-one is an important number for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier guards--- Sentinels wear no symbols of rank as a sign of respect to those interred. When on duty, a Sentinel marches 21 steps down the black mat behind the monument's sarcophagus, then waits 21 seconds before taking another 21 steps back. Why 21? It represents the highest symbolic military honor, the 21-gun salute.



Stanley Marks, MD
Chairman,
UPMC Hillman Cancer Center

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Your Financial Future

Gary W. Boatman
MBA, CFP

The start of a new year is an excellent time for seniors to take a fresh look at their financial well-being. This prompts many people to make New Year's resolutions to improve this situation. Even small improvements such as reducing monthly expenses, paying down debt, reviewing insurance policies, or updating investment and retirement income plans can make a meaningful difference in long-term security. Many retirees are living longer, and the cost of healthcare,

housing, and everyday essentials continues to rise. Strengthening your financial condition now helps protect your independence, reduces stress, and ensures you can enjoy the experiences and relationships that matter most throughout the coming year.

However, most New Year's resolutions are not kept, and there are good reasons why. Many people set goals that are too vague or unrealistic, and without a clear plan, it's easy to lose motivation after a few weeks. Life gets busy, old habits return,



and unexpected events can knock even the best intentions off track. Seniors can improve their odds of success by choosing simple, manageable financial goals such as checking spending weekly or scheduling a mid-year financial review and by tracking progress in small steps. The key is consistency, not perfection, and the sooner you begin, the more confident you'll feel about your financial future.

The first step is to determine what your number one financial goal is. If you do not have an emergency fund to deal

with all the unexpected surprises, this could be a good place to start. The size of an emergency fund can vary widely. Some financial emergencies such as a new roof, furnace or auto can be very expensive. You may have to finance them if you cannot save enough. For most other emergencies, you should have a savings account built up to cover them. Renters still need an emergency fund, but it is often smaller than homeowners. Try to put away twenty or forty dollars a week to build up your funds. It must be quickly available and should be

safe money not exposed to stock market risk.

If you have taken on too much debt, you need to have a plan to reduce it. Start with credit card debt. It is the most expensive, often times over 20% interest. The goal should always be to pay off all credit cards every month. If you have this debt, always pay more than the minimum. If you have multiple cards with a balance pay more on the one with the highest interest rate, but it is important to keep paying at least the minimum on all other cards.

If you need to overcome these two financial obstacles or others, look at your budget. Carry a small notebook in your pocket or purse and write down what you are spending money on. It might surprise you. Two expenses that our parents

and grandparents did not have to deal with are cable television and cell phones. These can cost hundreds of dollars every month. Subscriptions are a new area where people do not often realize how much they are spending. There are some software apps that can help you spot these subscription expenses. Maybe getting more room in your budget is as simple as eating at home more often or watching the cost of buying coffee. Turning the thermostat down a few degrees or making sure that your tires are full of air can help at this time of year.

These are simple steps that you can take today if your goal is to improve your family's financial life. We will discuss future ideas in upcoming columns.

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The Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority (MMVTA) invites you to participate in a public survey to seek input

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on how service can be improved to best meet your needs.

This survey is the first public engagement activity offered through the Mid Mon Moves project. This important initiative is focused on evaluating the ten bus routes served by the MMVTA and considering new possibilities for our local transit network. Our goal is to improve transportation options for everyone in the Monongahela Valley by gathering input from community members like you on your needs and priorities; reviewing our fare structure; and refining routes and schedules to best address rider needs.

Take the survey here: midmonmoves.com/survey

Your participation is essential to making this effort a success. We encourage you to take this survey, share your insights, and invite your friends, family, and neighbors to take part in this important discussion. Together, we can shape a better future for transportation in our region.

Further project details can be found on the project website at www.midmonmoves.com.

Thank you for your ongoing support. We look forward to your involvement and to collaborating with you as we move forward with this project.



BBB Scam Alert: Watch out for fake coupons on social media

Everyone loves a good deal, and scammers know it. Counterfeit coupons are a popular way for scammers to steal your identity and money. These fake deals are tricking consumers on websites, social media platforms, and in texts and email inboxes. While motives and methods vary, phony coupons often mean serious losses for retailers, consumers, or both.

How the scam works

Usually, fake coupons are worth much more than real ones, offering steep discounts like 80% off. By using brands' official logos, it's nearly impossible to tell if it's fake or not.

In one variation of this scam, you may be scrolling on social media or checking your email and come across an ad with a coupon or promo code offering a major discount on products at a popular retail store. You click on the link and make a purchase using the promo code. After several days or weeks without your order being received, you find out that the website was fake and your order was never actually received. Your order's "tracking number" may tell you the package was delivered when, in reality, your order never existed. If you try to reach out to the company to get a refund, you may find that the company's website no longer exists or they refuse to respond to your emails and calls.

In another variation of this scam, you come across a

website, either through a web search or an ad on social media, for coupons from major retailers. In some cases, getting the "coupons" requires subscribing to a coupon service and paying a monthly membership fee. Once you sign up, the service promises to either send you digital coupons or paper coupons in the mail. You may never receive any coupons, or you might receive coupons that are fake. Plus, by signing up, you've handed over your personal details and possibly your credit card information to a dishonest stranger.

You may also come across coupons that offer deals in exchange for sharing a link on social media. Don't do it! The link leads to a third-party website where visitors enter personal information in exchange for the coupon. In most cases, after signing up, you never receive any coupons. Instead, you've given your personal details to scammers.

How to avoid coupon scams

- Don't fall for deals that are too good to be true. Be skeptical. If a coupon is valued near or above the retail price of an item, consider it a red flag.

- Check the source of the coupon. If the coupon doesn't come from a recognized coupon distributor, the manufacturer, or a specific store, be wary. If you aren't sure about a coupon, visit the company's website directly

to look for the coupon on their official site or contact their customer service line to inquire about the coupon.

- Think before you click on links in emails. If you receive a coupon via email, hover your mouse over the link without clicking on it to see where it will take you. If the URL looks like a random assortment of letters and numbers, or if it is a shortened link that doesn't reveal where it's taking you, don't click it. Check the sender's email address to see if it is legitimate. Only visit official websites to avoid downloading malware onto your computer.

- Read coupons carefully. If a coupon doesn't have an expiration date, if it looks photocopied, or if it contains spelling and grammar errors, you're probably dealing with a fake.
- Don't trade personal information for perks. A real business will not ask for your personal information, such as your credit card number or bank account information, in exchange for a coupon or to enter a giveaway. Promotional offers that ask for personal information are usually scams. You shouldn't have to pay to receive a coupon either.
- Do a search for coupon scams. When in doubt, search the coupon offer along with the word "scam." This will often bring up similar offers that are fake and can help you determine whether a coupon is real or not.

Source: www.bbb.org

WVUMedicine
UNIONTOWN HOSPITAL

Living with Joint Pain: Q&A with Dr. Jason Kinney



Q: What are common sources of joint pain in older adults?

A: Joint pain can have multiple causes, including autoimmune diseases, gout, tendonitis, or bursitis. However, one of the most frequent sources of joint pain I see in patients is osteoarthritis, or the breakdown of cartilage over time, which commonly affects the hips and knees.

Q: When should someone experiencing joint pain seek treatment?

A: A patient should seek treatment if they experience severe and sudden joint pain, especially after a fall or trauma, if the joint shows signs of infection, including redness, swelling, being hot or tender to touch, or if the pain interferes with quality of life or activities of daily living.

Q: What is one thing you wish adults, who are dealing with joint pain, knew?

A: The first thing is that living a healthy lifestyle, exercising and stretching regularly, and maintaining a healthy weight can significantly help with joint pain and decrease the risk of osteoarthritis.

Something else I would highlight is the impact mental health conditions can have on pain levels. For example, depression and anxiety can increase pain sensitivity, reduce pain tolerance, and make people less active, which can lead to stiffness and muscle weakness. They can also interfere with sleep, worsening fatigue and making it harder to stick to treatment plans.

Q: What do you hear most often from your patients during their appointments?

A: I have many patients who suffered with severe hip and knee arthritis for many years without seeking help because they feared they would need surgery or that nothing could be done to help them because it was just "old age." Then, after they recover from surgery or have a positive response to nonoperative treatment, I often hear that they wish they had sought care much earlier.

If you are experiencing joint pain and want to speak with a skilled provider about the treatment plan that is right for you, schedule an appointment with Dr. Kinney today at **724-912-7533** or visit **WVUMedicine.org/Uniontown/Orthopedics** for more information.

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Recipe of the month



Two Bean Chili

This no-fuss chili is a great way to use ground beef and beans to make a tasty main dish. Chili can be served by itself, with crackers, cooked rice, or baked potato.



Ingredients

- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1/2 can (about 8 ounces) low-sodium kidney beans, drained
- 1/2 can (about 8 ounces) low-sodium vegetarian beans
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 2 1/2 cups low-sodium tomato juice
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Notes:

Tip for cooking with ground beef: The recommended safe minimum internal temperature for ground beef is 160 °F, as measured with a food thermometer.

Source: <https://www.myplate.gov>



Directions

1. In a medium-sized pot, brown ground beef over medium to high heat for 8 to 10 minutes. Drain fat.
2. Add kidney beans, vegetarian beans, onions, chili powder, tomato juice, and pepper.
3. Cook over low heat for about 40 minutes. Serve hot.

Alzheimer's Support Group Now Available in Greene County



Alzheimer's Support Group is presented by the Alzheimer's Association Greater Pittsburgh Chapter. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. at Blueprints, 58 East Greene Street, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

For more information, contact Lisa Pareso of UPMC Washington at paresolm2@upmc.edu.

Additional caregiver programs and resources are available at www.alz.org/pa. Caregivers may also connect with others online through ALZ Connected, the Alzheimer's Association's online community, at alzconnected.org.

Caregivers and family members affected by Alzheimer's disease are invited to participate in a new Alzheimer's Support Group in Greene County. The group offers a welcoming environment to build a support system with others who under-

stand the challenges of caregiving. Participants can discuss concerns, explore coping strategies, exchange practical information, share experiences, and learn about available community resources.

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**Sheryl R. Heid,
Attorney at Law**



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Insist on meeting his children.

Insist on facts.

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Build a support system with people who understand.

Alzheimer's Association® support groups, conducted by trained facilitators, are a safe place for people living with dementia and their care partners to:

- Develop a support system.
- Exchange practical information on challenges and possible solutions.
- Talk through issues and ways of coping.
- Share feelings, needs and concerns.
- Learn about community resources.

New Year's Resolutions

Almost half of all Americans make at least one New Year's resolution. Although we don't all follow through, the simple act of making a resolution can have positive effects on behavior change. Here are some of the most popular New Year's resolutions and tips on how you can successfully accomplish them.

Losing Weight

The most common resolution Americans make each year is to lose weight. As the new year approaches, people often dive headfirst into dieting fads, then pull back or lose control shortly after. If weight loss is your goal this year, consult with your doctor and use their professional advice to set realistic weight loss goals.

Also, remember the 3 Rs to make long-term dietary changes:

- Reflect on your current eating habits.
- Replace unhealthy eating habits with healthier ones.
- Reinforce these changes in your daily life.

Exercising More

Getting more exercise is another popular resolution that is often broken as people struggle to prioritize their fitness against work, family, and everyday life. Research shows that physical activity has immediate health benefits. Exercise can reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, and improve sleep quality. To learn more about how to boost your success in keeping this resolution, visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Move Your Way website.

Quitting Smoking

Another popular resolution is quitting smoking. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it's never too late to quit. There are plenty of tools to help you through quitting such as over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapy products can make it easier to break a nicotine habit, but it's always best to start by reaching out to your family doctor for advice.

Focusing on Self-Care

Whether you want to spend more time reading, spending more quality time with your family, learning a new skill, or taking up a new hobby, the new year provides you with a great opportunity to set goals for self-improvement.

Tips for Success

- If you plan to make New Year's resolutions this year, limit the number of resolutions you make so



that you can focus on making changes that are the most important to you.

- Choose a specific, realistic goal and break it down into small, achievable steps.
- Write your goals down and seek support through your friends and family to hold yourself accountable.
- Don't be discouraged if you slip up from time to time; view setbacks as an opportunity to renew your resolve to achieving your goals.

Source: <https://www.dhs.gov>

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- Limited Weekly Fixed Route Services to Pittsburgh and Morgantown.
- Daily Shaded Ride Service (curb to curb service by appointment) to those who qualify.

If you need a ride, call **(724) 628-7433**. Visit our newly updated, user friendly website to stay up-to-date with the latest bus schedules, cancellations, and delays at www.factbus.com. Follow us on Facebook: FACT-Fayette Area Coordinated Transportation.

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Making a Difference

Project Snowman Shares Warm Wishes this Holiday Season

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging's Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman would like to thank the community for making the sixth annual Project Snowman a rousing success!

Thanks to your generosity, every Nursing Home, Personal Care Home, and Dom Care resident residing in Fayette, Greene, and Washington Counties received a specially crafted message on Christmas morning.

Each year as many as 60% of long-term care residents never receive a single visitor, causing feelings of isolation from others. Project Snowman is a way to strengthen connections between the

resident and the community, building bridges and helping residents to find their voice.

People of all ages reached out hoping to spread some holiday cheer. This year cards were received from a variety of people, groups, and organizations including businesses, churches, civic organizations, schools, senior centers, and a great outpouring of support from families and individuals too! The exact number of cards received will be shared in a future issue of the *Senior Times*, so stay tuned.

Project Snowman would also like to thank those special someone who contributed to our first ever Project

Snowman Holiday Dinner! Through a very generous donation, Project Snowman was able to provide a holiday feast at not one, but two, personal care homes in Washington County! The residents of these homes wanted us to share with the community their thanks for the very generous support.

For over 40 years, the National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program has worked to promote residents' rights. The local Ombudsman program provides information on how to find a facility and conducts community education sessions. The program also supports residents and their families and offers one-on-one consultation regarding

long-term care concerns.

If you or someone you know in a long-term care setting needs confidential assistance from the Ombudsman, please visit the Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging's website at <http://www.swpa-aaa.org> or call the Ombudsman closest to you:

Fayette and Greene County:
1-855-450-2274

Washington County:
1-844-507-8898

Always remember that Ombudsman services are confidential and free!

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Contact Kristen at 1-888-300-2704, ext. 4405
kjackson@swpa-aaa.org



SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA
AREA AGENCY ON AGING



Pennsylvania
Department of Aging

Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less



A new year often signifies a fresh start for many people. For some, this means setting health goals, such as losing weight, following a healthier diet, and starting an exercise routine. Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less is an online weight management program that uses strategies proven to work for weight loss and maintenance. Each les-

son informs, empowers, and motivates participants to live mindfully as they make choices about eating and physical activity. The program is delivered in an interactive online format with a live instructor. Instructors are Registered Dietitian Nutritionists and are trained to engage participants in and outside of class effectively. The class meets online once per week for 1-hour for 15 weeks. New classes start the week of January 5, 2026. Participants must have access to a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone with internet access. If you are 60 years of age or older and reside in Fayette, Greene, or Washington county, you are eligible to enroll in Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less. If you have any questions or would like to register, call Kristen at 1-888-300-2704 ext. 4405.

Caregiver's Corner

Self-Care for Caregivers

Being a caregiver is an extraordinary act of love, patience, and dedication, but it can also be one of the most demanding roles a person will ever undertake. Caregivers often manage complex responsibilities such as coordinating medical appointments, administering medications, assisting with daily living tasks, and offering continual emotional support. These duties can quickly become overwhelming, especially when paired with work, family obligations, and personal commitments. Over time, the physical and emotional weight of caregiving can lead to stress, exhaustion, and feelings of isolation, making it difficult for caregivers to maintain balance in their own lives.

Because caregiving requires so much energy and compassion, self-care becomes essential—not optional. When caregivers consistently put the needs of others before their own, they risk burnout, decreased health, and emotional fatigue. Taking time to rest, eat well, exercise, and stay connected to supportive friends or family can significantly improve a caregiver's resilience. These moments of replenishment help

reduce stress and allow caregivers to approach their responsibilities with renewed patience and clarity. Just as importantly, acknowledging personal limits and seeking help when needed are acts of strength, not weakness.

Ultimately, caring for oneself enhances the quality of care provided to others. A caregiver who is rested, supported, and emotionally balanced is better equipped to offer steady, compassionate, and effective care. By prioritizing their own well-being, caregivers not only protect their own health but also create a more stable, nurturing environment for the person they support. Recognizing that self-care is a vital part of the caregiving journey allows caregivers to sustain their role with heart, strength, and endurance.

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Do you feel overwhelmed or need assistance with caregiving? Join our virtual coffee talk from the comfort of your own home!

We explore different topics pertaining to caregiving such as wellness and burnout, dementia, legal services, insurance counseling, getting organized, tips for new caregivers and more!

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Access Code:
369-829-805



Upcoming In-Person Caregiver Groups

For questions regarding the Caregiver Support Program or Caregiver Support Groups, please call 1-800-734-9603.

The SWPA AAA invites all caregivers to its upcoming meetings.

Open to the Public!

WASHINGTON

First Christian Church
Gathering Room
615 East Beau St.
Washington, PA 15301

TUESDAY
JANUARY

6

FROM 1:00
TO 2:00 PM

WASHINGTON ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Miraculous Medal CCD Activities Center
280 Hallam Ave.,
Washington, PA 15301

THURSDAY
JANUARY

8

FROM 6:00
TO 7:00 PM

FAYETTE COUNTY

Fayette County Community Action Agency,
Building B Board Room
137 N. Beeson Ave.,
Uniontown, PA 15401

FRIDAY
JANUARY

9

FROM 1:00
TO 2:00 PM

GREENE COUNTY ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Blue Prints Office
Conference Room
58 E. Greene Street
Waynesburg, PA 15370

WEDNESDAY
JANUARY

14

FROM 1:00
TO 2:00 PM

MON VALLEY

SPHS Board Room
300 Chamber Plaza,
Charleroi, PA 15022

MONDAY
JANUARY

19

FROM 1:00
TO 2:00 PM

PARKINSON'S

Abundant Life Church
1239 Brownfield Rd.
Uniontown, PA 15401

TUESDAY
JANUARY

27

FROM 1:00
TO 2:00 PM

GRANDPARENT'S SUPPORT GROUP

SPHS Board Room 300
Chamber Plaza,
Charleroi, PA 15022

WEDNESDAY
JANUARY

28

FROM 1:00
TO 2:00 PM

We hope to see you there!

National Clean off Your Desk Day

by Cindy Bartolotta

It's hard to keep your desk cleaned. It almost seems a waste of time. Why put everything away just to pull it out and use it the next day. Find these items that are normally found on your desk.

BINDERCLIPS	MARKERS
CALENDAR	MOUSE
CELL PHONE	MOUSEPAD
COFFEE MUG	OUTBOX
DESKTOP	PAPERCLIPS
EMAILS	PENCILS
FILES	PENS
FLOWERS	PHOTOGRAPHS
FOLDERS	POSTIT NOTES
HARD DRIVES	PRINTERS
HIGHLIGHTERS	TELEPHONE
INBOX	
KEYBOARD	
LAPTOP	
LUNCH	

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

January 12



See answers on page 19

Foot and ankle pain can make everyday life harder.

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To make an appointment call 724-632-6801.



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Senior Community Center Notes

FAYETTE COUNTY

BROWNFIELD

291 Banning Road
Dawson, PA 15428
724-529-2530

-Corrine McKnight

... Happy New Year!... Our center meets on Wednesdays at 10 a.m... Our activities include dartball at 10 a.m., assembling jigsaw puzzles and Wii bowling... We enjoy lunches provided by SWPA Area Agency on Aging... On the first Wednesday of each month, we hold our monthly meeting... On the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, ten games of bingo are called... On the third Wednesday of each month, we enjoy cake to celebrate birthdays... Happy January birthdays to Thomas Williams, Janet Frick and Sue Lacey...

CENTER ON THE HILL

100 Summit Road
Belle Vernon, PA 15012
724-930-8512

-Rick Swaney

... Happy New Year!... On Jan. 5, bingo will be called to kick off the New Year... Mark your calendars for weeks filled with fun and fellowship... On Mondays, bingo is called at 10 a.m. and Euchre is played at 12:30 p.m. Both are open to the public, so bring a friend.

Stop by and join the fun!... Join us Tuesday through Friday mornings to assemble puzzles, read a book or just enjoy a cup of coffee and fellowship followed by lunch... On Wednesdays, we enjoy our weekly Jam Session at 11 a.m. Bring your instruments and your singing voice and join the group. If you don't play an instrument

or sing very well, that's ok, come enjoy the talent!... On Thursdays, Pinochle Club plays at 12:30 p.m. They are currently looking for more members. Come out and have some fun... One Thursday per month, the Canasta Club plays. Call Darlene Ondrejko at 724-929-7263 for more details...

Stop by and see Roxi at the beauty shop on Thursdays during normal center hours for cuts, wash and sets. Need a perm or color, call to make an appointment at 724-930-8512... Lunch is served Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. We would love to have you dine in with us. If you are interested in lunch, please call the Center at 724-930-8512 the day before to make your reservation... We are here to serve you, our local senior community. Let us know if there are topics you would like to learn more about, and we will seek out speakers. If you have a hobby or activity you would like to share or get a group together to share, let us know. Help us grow and better serve our community... Let's kick off the New Year with fun and fellowship...

MASONTOWN

22 S. Main Street
Masontown, PA 15461
724-583-7822

-Donella Blair & Laurie

Crawford

... Happy New Year!... We're excited to start the New Year with both new friendships and familiar faces. Come join us for our daily activities, including guest speakers on a variety of topics and performances by our awesome bands... Lunch is served Monday through Friday with a suggested donation of \$2. Please re-

member to call the day before to reserve your meal... We are looking forward to kicking off our hoagie sale on Jan 20. Help us reach our goal and take a chance at winning a prize for selling the most hoagies... We look forward to seeing everyone soon... Have an awesome New Year!...

MOUNTAIN CITIZENS

Box 105
Farmington, PA 15437
724-329-4260

-Wanda Sherry

... Welcome to January 2026 in the beautiful Laurel Highlands and surrounding areas... During the winter months, when Uniontown School District is closed, our center will be closed as well... Our center opens on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. and lunch is served at 11:30 a.m.... On Tuesdays and Thursdays, we enjoy exercises with Virgil and Pam Chambers at 9:15 a.m. to get the body moving... Also, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, bingo is called unless there are special activities planned... On the second Tuesday of each month, we celebrate members birthdays by decorating a birthday table and enjoying birthday cake. This month our birthday table will be decorated by two volunteers. Happy January birthdays to Lela Jean Knapp, Sue Marietta, Colbey Maroski, Lois Rose, Doc Sherry, Teresa Steimer, Harry Thomas, and Sharon Tissue... On Jan. 13, Michelle from Humana will provide information on health insurance to our members... On Jan. 29, we will welcome special music by Peter Livingood... Our center has an ongoing

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Director of Nursing

Vincent Ripepi, D.O.
Medical Director

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Steven Esser, MD

General Surgery:
Prakorb Isariyawongse, MD

Gastroenterology:
Nicholas Bellicini, DO
Mark Cedar, DO
Bridger Clarke, MD
Jungmin Lee, MD
Lisa Oliva, DO
Theresa Schuerle, DO

SPARTAN HEALTH

Ophthalmology:

Thomas Findlan, DO
Angela Gauthier, MD
Nisha Dhawlikar Gosai, MD

Anagha Medsinge, MD
Julia Kisin Polat, MD
Aaron Wang, MD

Orthopaedic Surgery:

Derrick Fluhme, MD
Greg Habib, DO
Patrick McCullough, MD
Anthony Mustovish, DO
Ari Pressman, MD
Vince Ripepi, DO

Orthopedic/Spine:
Jocelyn Idema, DO

Podiatry:
Khoi Vo, DPM

Pain Management:
Anthony Cuneo, MD

Senior Community Center Notes

flea market for members and guests to shop. You never know what treasures you might find at a reasonable price... Our center accepts used batteries for recycling...

SMITHFIELD COLONIALS

14 Water Street
Smithfield, PA 15478
724-564-2934

-Janice Woods

... Happy New Year and best wishes for great things to come!... We will start the month off by celebrating birthdays and anniversaries, congratulations to all. Then take a chance on Louise's 50/50 and work off some of those holiday calories with Janice and her dancing pool noodles. Join us at Jamie Lynn's on Jan. 13 for break-

fast and good stories about the holidays... On Jan. 15, we will welcome **Deborah Marella** who will present a program on dementia and Alzheimer's. We will also take a chance on **Elaine's** basket raffle and **Louise's** 50/50... On Jan. 22, Steve will be back with our favorite game of Crazy Bingo... On Jan. 29, we will enjoy Fun Day. Come join us and have some fun... We meet on Thursdays at 10 a.m. We'll leave the light on for you...

GREENE COUNTY

CARMICHAELS

125 Municipal Road
Carmichaels, PA 15320
724-491-2011

-Stacy Stroman

... Whether you come for

the coffee, the company, or the cozy atmosphere, there's something for everyone at our center... We're open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Bingo is called at 11 a.m., lunch is served at 11:30 a.m., and exercise equipment is available for use... On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, we enjoy playing pool in the mornings... Be sure to call 724-491-2011 to reserve your lunch the day prior...

JEFFERSON

190 Washington Street
Jefferson, PA 15344
-Colleen Valosen

... As seniors, each new year is precious and the ability to have things to look forward to is priceless... On Jan. 7,

get ready for Trivia Day. Each table will be a team, and the questions will continue until time runs out. Think about joining us and bringing all that useless trivia knowledge with you... On Jan. 14, we thought trying National Hat Day on for size. Each of us will be wearing a favorite hat while **Mrs. Fulk's** high school class will be dropping in with their creative activities and games... Greene County is very fortunate to have a dedicated group of individuals (one of whom is one of our members) who performs Civil War reenactments. Our center will be the location for a reenactment on Jan. 21. Plan to stop in and peek into the past with us. Bring along a handmade blanket or quilt that day as we thought we'd feature them as we survive a freezing camp experience (indoors, of course). Homemade soup will probably be welcome

that day too, just saying. Thanks to **Roger Doty** for helping with the planning of this special day... On Jan. 28, we will pull out those soft indoor snowballs and aim them at our friends! We'll be wearing lots of white, enjoying some yummy hot chocolate, and playing a game or two... So, whether you'd like to show off your trivia skills, favorite hat, handmade quilt or snowball-throwing skills, we have a place for you. If not, make sure you visit a center near you. Make being part of a center one of your New Year's resolutions... Have a happy, healthy 2026!...

MT. MORRIS

Box 43
Mt. Morris, PA 15449
724-324-5396

-Stacy Stroman

... Let's celebrate the charm of winter together! We enjoy warm beverages and plenty of friendly conversations at our center... We are open on Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to

2 p.m... Each week we have delicious coffee and donuts available... Fellowship begins at 10 a.m... Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m... On Mondays, we enjoy line dancing from 6 to 7 p.m. at no cost... On Jan. 9, a Special Bingo will be called from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Two paper cards for \$1. Winner takes half... Please be sure to call 724-324-5396 to reserve your lunch as we continue to grow and want to ensure that everyone receives a meal... Don't forget to bring a buddy...

WAYNESBURG

1505 Morris Street
Waynesburg, PA 15370
724-627-6366

Betty Grove

... We hope you are all doing well!... Remember to listen to WANB and WPXI channel 11 for center closures related to inclement weather. Don't forget to use your emergency frozen meals if home-delivered meals are canceled due to weather to

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Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

This project was supported, in part by grant number 2201PA0000, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.



pennsylvania
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Senior Community Center Notes



keep our volunteers safe... On Mondays and Thursdays, we enjoy **On The Move** exercise classes at 12:15 p.m... On Tuesdays, line dancing lessons are from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.... On Wednesdays, we enjoy yoga at 12:30 p.m... On Fridays, Tai Chi class is held at 12:30 p.m... On the first Thursday of the month, we enjoy DVDs of oldies music from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m... On the second Thursday of the month, we enjoy movies from 2 to 4 p.m... On the third Thursday of the month, we enjoy Game Day from 2 to 5 p.m... Stay warm and safe... Until next time...

931 Main Street
Bentleyville, PA 15314
724-239-5887

-Hannah Burns

... January has arrived with crisp air, quiet mornings, and a promise of renewal... As we settle into a new year, here's what's happening at the Center... Lunch is served Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. Please make your reservations a day in advance to reserve your meal... On Mondays, we enjoy chair exercise at 11:30 a.m... On Jan. 5, we will hold our monthly meeting at 12:15 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend to find out what will be going on in the Center!... On Jan. 6, **Pat Gavazzi** will conduct blood pressure screenings at 10:30 a.m... On Jan. 8, **Jamie**

from Amedisys will host a round table discussion at 10:30 a.m... On Jan. 14, Fairway Florals will host a wintery craft at 12 p.m. Call the Center for more information and to sign up... On Jan. 15 and 26, **BrIDGET** from SeniorLIFE will host Grocery Bingo at 10:30 a.m... On Jan. 15 at 12:30 p.m., we will enjoy bowling with our friends from Beth Center Senior Center at Bentleyville Lanes. Come play a couple games or just cheer us on... On Jan. 22, we will decorate sugar cookies after lunch. Stop down or call the Center to sign up!... On Jan. 29, we will enjoy Game Day at 10:30 a.m. Join us for cards, dominos, Yahtzee, scrabble, or bring a new game for us to try out!...

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BETH CENTER

PO Box 151, 316 Station St
Vestaburg, PA 15368
724-377-0000

-Renee Presto

... Just like that another year has come and gone! Resolutions are being made, some being kept and some not. Our resolution for the Center is to have the best year yet! We are hoping to have more people come and enjoy the Center... We would like to start the New Year out by saying thank you to everyone who has supported us this past year... It is unbelievable how time flies when you are having fun, and that is exactly what is happening at the Center... Lunch is served Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. Please make your reservation a day in advance to reserve your meal... On Jan.

7, **BrIDGET** from SeniorLIFE will host Grocery Bingo at 10:30 a.m. It's always a good time when **BrIDGET** is here... On Jan. 12, we will hold our monthly meeting at 12 p.m... On Jan. 14 and 21, we will enjoy craft days at 10:30 a.m. We love crafts here at the Center... On Jan. 21 **Travis** from ARC will present a program at 12:15 p.m... On Jan. 28, **Jamie** from Amedisys will host her monthly senior talk at 10:30 a.m... On Tuesdays, we enjoy game day with a movie playing... On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, exercise classes are held at 7 p.m... Please stop in and check us out, make some friends, and start the New Year off in a fun and positive way... Cheers to a New Year and another chance for us to get it right!...

BURGETTSTOWN

200 Senior Way
Burgettstown, PA 15021
724-947-9524

-Kristin Frazier

... Happy New Year! Wishing everyone a happy, healthy 2026!... On Jan. 2, get ready for some holiday duck race fun at 10:30 a.m... On Jan. 8, **Joni** from Amertas Health will visit the Center at 10:30 a.m... On Jan. 14, **BrIDGET** from SeniorLIFE will host Grocery Bingo at 10:30 a.m. and help us celebrate birthdays... On Jan. 22, **Courtney Brode** from Encompass Health will visit the Center at 10:30 a.m... On Mondays and Wednesdays, Silver Sneakers® starts at 1:15 p.m... On Mondays and Fridays, pool is played at 12 p.m... On Tuesdays, we hold Bible study at 10:30 a.m... On Wednesdays, 500 Bid is played at 12 p.m... On Thursdays, Euchre is played at noon... On Fridays, bingo is called at 12 p.m and Silver Sneakers® starts at 2 p.m... Lunch is served at 11:30 a.m. Please call 724-947-9524 a day in advance to make your lunch reservation...



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Senior Community Center Notes



Word Search Answers from page 12

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

and more! Bring your cell phone, tablet, or computer to try them out. The cost is \$5 for member and \$8 for non-members. Register by Jan. 27...

RIVERSIDE PLACE
303 Chamber Plaza
Charleroi, PA 15022
724-483-5800

-Alexis Lovas

... Happy New Year!... January will probably be cold and snowy. If you need to shovel around your home, please take it slow, or maybe pay a neighbor to help... On Jan. 12, we will enjoy a trip to the mall... On Jan. 16, we will be making and selling our famous subs for \$8 and they are delicious... **Bobby Shawn** will be singing for us this month. Dancing to his tunes is sure to warm you

up. Call the Center for more information... On Mondays and Wednesdays, we warm up with Zumba class... On Tuesdays, we enjoy playing the card game Golf. We welcome new players... On Wednesdays, the heat is on while Big Bingo is called. We would love to add new people in the New Year...

On Thursdays, we enjoy craft day. We welcome new crafters and new ideas... On Fridays, Euchre is played... Keep in touch for any other news or updates... Peace to you in 2026...

VENETIA COMMUNITY CENTER
800 Venetia Road
Venetia, PA 15367
724-228-6996

-Shawn Arent

... January is the perfect time to reset, recharge, and renew your focus on what truly matters. It is wonderful time of the year... We invite all seniors in the area to join us on the second and fourth Thursday of each month... Our doors open at 11 a.m. and lunch is served at 12 p.m. Our planned activity will start at 12:30 p.m... Anyone 60 and over is welcome to come and enjoy the delicious food as well as the activities that follow... On Jan. 8, bingo will be called... On Jan. 22, we will have a special visitor... For more information or to make a lunch reservation/cancellation, please call 724-228-6996. Reservations should be made no later than two

you... Please follow us at Venetia Senior Center on Facebook for any updates and menu postings... Hope to see you soon!... Stay warm...

WASHINGTON
69 W. Maiden Street
Washington, PA 15301
724-222-8566

-Amy Mieczkowski

... Hello 2026!... Join us for some of that old time rock and roll with Music Bingo on Jan. 7 at 12:15 p.m... On

for Social Club at 12:15 p.m... On Jan. 21, we will enjoy our monthly matinee. We will watch "Breakfast at Tiffany's" starring **Audrey Hepburn** and **George Peppard**... We will be selling soup again this year for our Souper Bowl. The cost is \$10 for a quart. Call **Amy** at 724-222-8655 for details... Check out our weekly activities... On Mondays, Silver Sneakers with muscle is played at 12:30 p.m... On Tuesdays, Euchre is played at 12 p.m... On Wednesdays, Bible study is held at 9:30 a.m... On Thursdays, Silver Sneakers with cardio, muscle strength and yoga starts at 9 a.m. and the Card Club plays 500 Bid at 12:30 p.m... On Fridays, bingo is called after lunch... We wish you a year filled with new hopes, new joys, and new beginnings... Happy New Year!...



FREE TO OLDER ADULTS



and

TAI CHI
for Arthritis

1 YMCA Drive, Uniontown

Call 724-438-2584 for more information or to register

Enhance®Fitness and Tai Chi for Arthritis are group exercise programs for older adults that use simple, easy-to-learn movements that motivate individuals to get and stay moving (particularly those with arthritis).

Enhance®Fitness reduces the risk of falling and incorporates strength training to keep you strong and healthy.

SPACE IS LIMITED - CLASSES FILLING FAST - REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.



Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging



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*Even after the ball drops,
our Advocacy for you doesn't STOP!*



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