

# Senior Post

*Living well and gracefully through the golden years*

**JUNE 2022**  
A MONTHLY MAGAZINE BY

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*On the cover: The staff of Village Caregiving. Left to right are: Toni McNett, Director; Betty Yoke, Caregiver; Olivia Loring, Caregiver; Steven Staffileno, Executive Director. Photo by Ron Rittenhouse, The Dominion Post.*



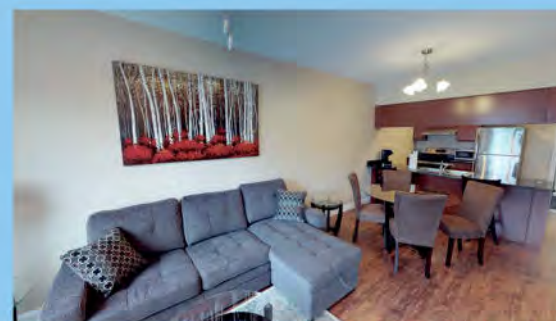
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## Senior centers and facilities

**Monongalia County  
BOPARC Senior  
Recreation Center**  
287 Eureka Drive, Morgantown  
304-296-7002

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

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

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

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



Westside Senior Center

**Preston County  
Newburg Senior Center**  
100 Wolfe St., Newburg  
304-892-4662

**North Preston Senior Center**  
WV Rt. 26, Bruceton Mills  
304-379-1165

**Preston County Senior Citizens**  
108 Senior Center Drive, Kingwood  
304-329-0464

**Rowlesburg Senior Center**  
44 Poplar St., Rowlesburg  
304-454-2012

**Terra Alta Senior Center**  
212 E. Washington Ave., Terra Alta  
304-789-2415

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

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

## Senior center activities

### Westside Senior Center

Westside Senior Center opened June 10, 2001, and is totally operated by volunteers. It is open from 9 a.m. to noon and 6-9 p.m. Monday through Friday at 500 Dupont Road, Westover.

Members are knitting scarves for veterans and active-duty military as part of Operation Gratitude's "Scarves for the Troops." Anyone is welcome to bring knitting needles and join in the project.

Food is collected every month for the Rock Forge Food Pantry.

Evenings are full of things to do. Monday and Friday, bring a musical instrument and play with the group. Tuesdays and Thursdays, there is card playing, and Wednesday evening is for bingo. There is also a well-equipped exercise room that includes a pool table.

### Assisted Living at Evergreen

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



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# Estate planning to adjust for lifetime gifts to a needy heir



**BY DOREEN SEAMON**  
for The Dominion Post

This year this article is following a hypothetical couple ("John" and "Sue") through their lives to see what role estate planning had on their family. To review prior articles, go to [SeamonLawOffices.com/Blog](http://SeamonLawOffices.com/Blog).

Our story follows a couple I refer to as "John" and "Sue." We initially worked together to establish their estate plan when they were young parents, and we updated their plan as their children grew up and they adopted their nephew who had autism. Now, they were back at the office with a new concern. As you might recall, their daughter Mary hit a rough patch in her twenties, but now she is in her thirties, in a good marriage, has a secure job, and is living well within her means. But given the past, they are still a little reluctant to fully trust Mary's decision-making and they are

worried there could be hard feelings between Mary and her younger brother, John Jr., when he realizes just how much his parents spent on Mary over the years.

Most parents realize that not every child is the same. Some children might need more financial support while others might need more emotional support, but this support of Mary was a little different. Mary's prior behavior resulted in quite a bit of financial support to such a significant level that John and Sue felt they should even things up a bit. They considered gifting Junior money now, but they worry they could need that money for their retirement.

I explained that we could incorporate language in their estate plan addressing the prior financial help as an advancement that essentially would be taken out of Mary's inheritance. They were uncertain as to what that meant, so we used the following as an example. If their estate was worth \$450,000 when they passed

away and they gave Mary \$50,000 during their lifetime as an advance on her inheritance, then when the estate is divided up, Junior would inherit \$250,000 while Mary would only inherit \$200,000 due to her previous gift that would be treated as an advance on her inheritance.

They liked that idea, but now they were worried about whether Mary would be upset when she found out that she was not getting the same inheritance as her brother. That question is a little more difficult, but in my experience, it is best to be honest with Mary now, while they are living and can have that discussion rather than it be a surprise for Mary after they die. If Mary chooses to do so, she could always repay them the advance while they are living to make the inheritances even again. I reminded them that the money they gifted to Mary was part of their savings, so in addition to the \$50,000, they also lost the potential interest on that money. They hadn't

thought about that, but then Sue recalled reading about the Rule of 72 where a 10% annual return would double your initial investment every seven years. They did not want to consider that in their advancement language, but it did give them more confidence in their decision and in a future conversation with Mary to explain the decision.

Fortunately, the couple was relatively young and healthy when they gifted to Mary, but for seniors, giving away assets or using assets to pay for another person's bills, may have serious consequences when it comes to long-term care (ie. nursing home) and Medicaid qualification. Senior citizens should discuss gifting plans with their elder law attorney prior to making such gifts.

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



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Ron Rittenhouse/The Dominion Post

The staff of Village Caregiving include, from left, Toni McNett, director; Betty Yoke and Olivia Loring, caregivers; and Steven Staffileno, executive director.

## Village Caregiving adds nurse for better service to clients, caregivers

BY JENIFFER GRAHAM

for The Dominion Post

For two years, the staff at Village Caregiving has served the residents of Monongalia, Preston and Marion County. During that time it has grown and now has a new office on University Avenue.

Steven Staffileno, executive director of Village Caregiving, said the family-owned and operated business has added a licensed registered nurse to the staff. He said the addition of the nurse will help the staff put together more extensive and beneficial care-giving plans and assessments for clients.

"She's here to be a resource to both clients and caregivers. She will help us make sure we are providing our clients with the best care possible," he said.

Village Caregiving offers a variety of non-medical home health services to include daily living assistance with personal care activities such as bathing, eating, toileting, grooming, hygiene, light housework assistance, meal prep, transportation to appointments and help with errands that supplement personal care.

"As a whole, we currently have nearly 100 caregivers," Staffileno said. "We are

always looking to bring on quality caregivers. We still do extensive training and offer competitive pay."

He said background checks are done on all Village Caregiving employees from the national level (FBI) down to the local level (WVCARES, state police, abuse registries, etc.). They are also screened for drugs, insured, bonded, experienced and trained. Each caregiver is carefully matched with a client based on individual care needs and personalities.

Staffileno said Village Caregiving also provides in-home care for veterans who qualify for the homemakers program through the VA. The VA Homemaker and Home Health Aide program is for veterans who need skilled services, case management and help with activities of daily living (ADLs) such as ambulation, bathing, dressing, grooming, mobility, feeding and medication reminders.

Village Caregiving also works with clients using the West Virginia Aged and Disabled Waiver (ADW), which the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources classifies as a long-term care alternative that provides services that enable an individual to remain

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- Dressing and undressing
- Turning, transferring, exercising, and walking
- Self-administered medication reminders
- Errands and shopping • Caring for pets
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- Background checked
- Trained
- Experienced

#### Benefits:

- Consistency in caregivers
- 24/7 in-home care available
- No deposit required
- No contract required
- Managers available at all times
- RN visits available

#### Village Caregiving accepts:

- Private payment
- Medicaid aged & disabled waiver
- Veterans homemaker benefits
- Long-term care insurance
- Various others, call for details

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- Nights
- Weekends
- Holidays



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at or return home rather than receive nursing home care.

Village Caregiving accepts private pay as well. Staffileno said they have the most competitive rates for private pay clients at \$22 per hour, adding Village Caregiving does not require contracts, deposits, or hourly minimums to establish services.

"Our process is very simple, transparent and based on common sense," he said. "We will help provide a custom weekly schedule for anyone who calls us. There is no upfront pay. We bill for services rendered."

Village Caregiving is located at 3437 University Ave., Suite 2 Morgantown. For more information go to [www.villagecaregiving.com](http://www.villagecaregiving.com) or call 304-241-4980.

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## Assisted living and residential care communities

### Monongalia County Evergreen Assisted Living

3705 Collins Ferry Road  
Morgantown • 304-598-8401

### Morgantown Health and Rehab (formerly Golden Living Center)

1379 Van Voorhis Road  
Morgantown • 304-599-9480

### Madison Center

161 Bakers Ridge Road  
Morgantown • 304-285-0692

### Mapleshire Nursing and Rehab Center

30 Mon General Drive  
Morgantown • 304-285-2720

### Sundale

800 J.D. Anderson Drive  
Morgantown • 304-599-0497

### The Suites at Heritage Point

1 Heritage Point  
Morgantown • 304-285-5575

### Preston County PineRidge

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# Senior Monongalians - Events and activities

**DONATE WITH AMAZON SMILE** - Summer and travel season is almost upon us. Your shopping list grows ever longer as you think about the clothes you'll need, the gifts for graduation and birthdays, and those vacation necessities. Or maybe you have embraced shopping online for almost everything. As you go to Amazon to make those important purchases, why not sign up for Amazon Smile. Amazon Smile is the place to designate your favorite charity and have a percentage of your total purchase donated to that charity. Senior Monongalians is on the list of local charities that you can choose. By utilizing Amazon Smile, the programs and services offered to the older adults of Monongalia County and their families will continue to thrive.

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

**How will the pantry work?** When a home delivered meal client has a need for a non-perishable item, hygiene, or even pet care items; they can fill out a request form and give it to their HDM driver. The driver brings it to the office and we see if we have or can get the item. Once the item is obtained, it will be delivered to the client by their meal delivery driver. The goal is to be able to fill the request within a couple days. This is an on-going program. With that said, we need your help gathering pantry items. Those that would like to help can make donations of needed items. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Please specify that monetary donations are for the Senior Pantry Program. Before shopping for items, please call 304-296-9812 for a list of most needed items. **Among the most asked for are: brooms, mops, bucket, bathtub grab bars, wash cloths, towels, and pet care items.**

**INDOOR DINING LUNCH** - Seniors are invited to join us for a hot, delicious lunch in our lunchroom. Current lunch capacity is limited to 35 people per day. Lunch is served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Adults aged 60 or older are eligible to eat on a donation basis. A suggested donation is \$2.00. Lunch is available on a first come, first serve basis. Menus are available on our Facebook page, our website: [www.seniormons.org](http://www.seniormons.org), and at Senior Monongalians' office. All menus are subject to change without notice.

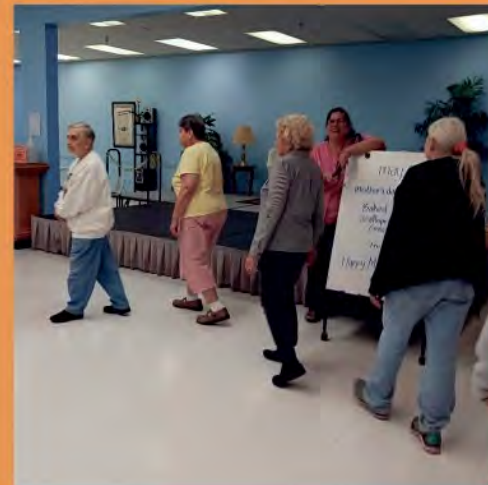
**GRAB & GO LUNCH STILL AVAILABLE** - For those who are more comfortable eating their lunch at home and/or tired of cooking, we offer a Grab & Go lunch program to adults aged 60 years or older. This service is offered Monday through Friday. Reservations are required. Make your reservation by calling 304-296-9812, from 8:00 until 10:30 a.m. A staff member will bring your hot lunch to your curbside. Grab & Go lunch is at a donation basis. A suggested donation is \$2.00. Menus are available on our Facebook page, our website: [www.seniormons.org](http://www.seniormons.org), and at Senior Monongalians. All menus are subject to change without notice.

**HOME DELIVERED MEALS** - Do you worry that your older loved one is getting a good meal each day? Have you had a surgery or illness that sidelined you? Is COVID concerns curbing your grocery shopping and eating out? If you answered yes to any of these questions, our Home Delivered Meal (HDM) program may be an option. The HDM program offers a hot, nutritious meal, delivered to your door Tuesday through Friday. You may also be able to receive frozen meals for Saturday, Sunday and Monday. As part of this program, our drivers make a "wellness check" contact with the client.

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

**ZOOM TRANSPORTATION TO SENIOR MONONGALIANS** - Would you like to participate in the activities that we offer, but are unable to get here? Are the public bus routes too far away or too complicated to figure out? Have you decided that you would rather have someone else drive? The ZOOM ride service is the answer. People are able to call to set up a schedule to come into the center. The service is available Monday - Friday. The ZOOM driver will pick you up at your home and drop you off at our front door. This may allow you to participate in activities or have lunch at the center. After lunch, the ZOOM driver will pick you up and return you to your home. This service is free to Monongalia County adults aged 60 and older. If you have questions or would like to sign up for the ZOOM transportation, call 304-296-9812.

**MOTHER'S DAY RECAP** - On Friday, May 6th, Senior Monongalians hosted their annual Mother's Day Celebration. This year's celebration included a variety of activities that kept ladies busy from mid-morning into the afternoon. First, the ladies kicked their creativity into overdrive with a Flowerpot Decorating Craft. Our kitchen staff cooked up a delicious meal for those joining us for lunch. Then the ladies had fun with five rounds of Cake Walk. Five different ladies won a cake as they played this twist on musical chairs. The day ended with a fun Tea Party. Staff members helped out by serving the tea and goodies. Everyone had a wonderful time. **Special thanks to our staff. They joined in to help out with all of these special activities.**





# Senior Monongalians Events and activities (continued)

## DAILY ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

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

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

**DOMINOES** - Tuesday and Thursday 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.  
Nutrition Room or Library, 6 sets

**MAHJONG** - Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:00 - 11:00 a.m., 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.  
Nutrition Room or Library

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

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

**GROUP EXERCISE WITH NATHAN** - Second Wednesday each month

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

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

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

**SUMMER BIBLE STUDY FELLOWSHIP FOR WOMEN** - Starting June 2<sup>nd</sup>, each Thursday 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

## SPECIAL EVENTS (Subject to change)

### WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15th - WORLD ELDER ABUSE DAY

MVB Bank will host an important discussion about elder abuse. What constitutes as abuse? What to do if you or someone you know is a victim of abuse. Ways to prevent elder abuse.

### FRIDAY, JUNE 17th - FATHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

Calling all men, join us for a tribute to dear old dads, honorary dads, and those men that mean a lot to us. WV Caring will be hosting an ice cream social. More information will be released on our Facebook page as we get closer to the event. Hope to see you there!

### FRIDAY, JUNE 24th - FREE BASELINE HEARING TEST - 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Beltone will be available to conduct free baseline hearing tests and answer your questions on good hearing. Appointments are preferred. Make your appointment by calling 304-296-2241.

## WAYS TO CONTACT OR FOLLOW SENIOR MONONGALIANS

**WEBSITE:** www.seniormons.org • **FACEBOOK:** Senior Monongalians • **PHONE:** 304-296-9812

**MAILING ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 653, Morgantown, WV 26507 • **LOCATION:** Mountaineer Mall

**EMAIL QUESTIONS TO:** gmullens@seniormons.org

### WV COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline: 833-734-0965

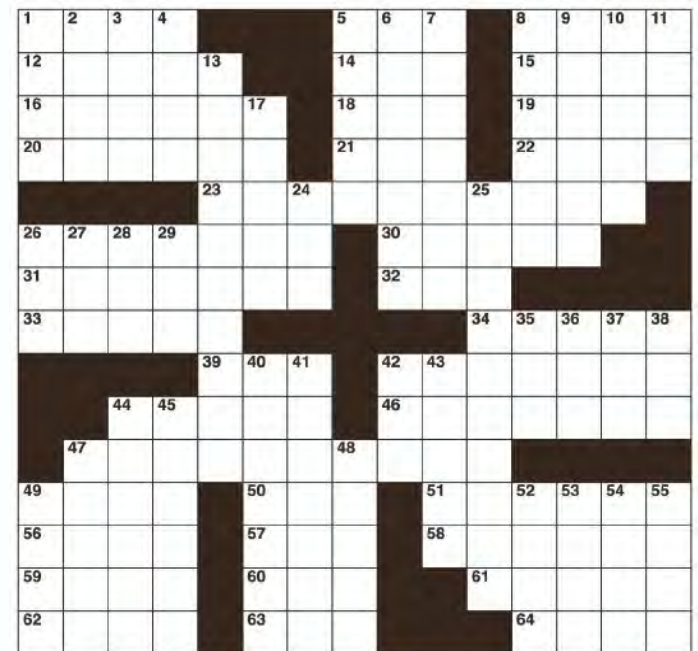
West Virginia-based individuals will provide information about COVID-19 vaccine schedules. Seniors without a computer should use this number to register for the COVID-19 vaccine. The hotline is available Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Hotline is not available on Sunday.

### WV Emotional Support Hotline: 844-435-7498

West Virginia-based counselors are available 24/7 to provide immediate help for West Virginians of any age who are struggling with stress, fears, anxiety, and/or an addiction.

### WV United Way-sponsored information and support hotline: 2-1-1 (a three-digit phone number)

Dial 2-1-1 to speak with West Virginia-based individuals who are trained to provide information and support in the areas of COVID-19, finances, health, housing, food, disabilities and domestic concerns.



## CLUES ACROSS

- |                                    |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Orator's podium                 | 34. Status quo              |
| 5. UK-Netherlands gas pipeline     | 39. Mimic                   |
| 8. Partner to "oohs"               | 42. Fur-lined cloak         |
| 12. African antelope               | 44. Ancient foreigner       |
| 14. Indigenous Thai person         | 46. In an angry way         |
| 15. Monetary unit of Angola        | 47. Ill-intentioned         |
| 16. Becomes less intense           | 49. Monetary unit of Serbia |
| 18. Insurance mascot               | 50. S. American plant       |
| 19. Tech hub __ Alto               | 51. One or the other        |
| 20. Actress Tomei                  | 56. An alias for Thor       |
| 21. Airborne (abbr.)               | 57. Gratuity                |
| 22. Type of smart watch            | 58. In a painful way        |
| 23. Natives                        | 59. French commune          |
| 26. Incompetent person             | 60. Promotional materials   |
| 30. Rare Hawaiian geese            | 61. Greek city              |
| 31. Unspoken relationships         | 62. Assistant               |
| 32. Passports and licenses are two | 63. Confederate general     |
| 33. Claw                           | 64. Former NJ governor      |

## CLUES DOWN

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Used by gymnasts                              | 29. Congress investigative body (abbr.)      |
| 2. "Luther" actor Idris                          | 35. Stop standing                            |
| 3. Broad volcanic crater                         | 36. Utilize                                  |
| 4. Not for                                       | 37. Sign language                            |
| 5. Blur  | 38. Famed ESPN broadcaster Bob               |
| 6. Tots  | 40. Being of central importance              |
| 7. Acted leisurely                               | 41. Ruin environment                         |
| 8. About the Alps                                | 42. Dessert dish                             |
| 9. Gets out of bed                               | 43. Sea eagles                               |
| 10. Town in "The Iliad"                          | 44. Fertilized                               |
| 11. Welsh given name                             | 45. Jerry's friend Benes                     |
| 13. Remove salt                                  | 47. Indian river                             |
| 17. Fencing sword                                | 48. Pass into a specified state or condition |
| 24. Mental disorder concerning body odor (abbr.) | 49. Nocturnal rodent                         |
| 25. Keeps a house cozy                           | 52. A way to travel                          |
| 26. Ballplayer's accessory                       | 53. Iron-containing compound                 |
| 27. Southwestern Russian city                    | 54. Ancient Greek City                       |
| 28. Pro sports league                            | 55. NFL signal caller Matt                   |





Submitted photo.

**BY JENIFFER GRAHAM**  
for The Dominion Post

KINGWOOD — One of Preston County's remaining World War II veterans is the oldest member of the Preston County Honor Guard.

"I'm slowing down a bit," Foster Huffman, 97, said. "I've been a member of the Honor Guard for 35 years. When I went into the service I took an oath to serve. We (veterans) are not like politicians, we remember our oath."

"I grew up in Preston County during the Depression. We didn't have much money. My dad worked a team of horses on the county roads and found work where he could so he could pay his taxes," he said.

Huffman said he was the oldest child and he, his four sisters and three brothers helped with the chores.

"My dad owned a farm about a half mile off of Lance Ridge Road. I used to plow the garden with a team of horses," he said. "We grew buckwheat and ate buckwheat cakes all winter. I had three uncles who would take me hunting. They helped look after me."

Huffman joined the Navy in 1943 and served on an aircraft carrier during World War II from 1943-46.

An aircraft carrier is a naval vessel that serves as a seagoing airbase. It is equipped with a full-length flight deck and facilities for carrying, arming, deploying and recovering aircraft.

Huffman said after completing boot camp his carrier was stationed in the Atlantic until the Normandy invasion; then it was sent to Africa.

He said during his time on the carrier he spent a year or so on deck force and maintenance, then he was switched over to gunners mate.

"I took care of the bomb magazine — the area we stored the bombs," Huffman said.

He said after Africa the aircraft carrier went back to dry dock to be overhauled. Huffman said from there they went to the Pacific and traveled over the place.

"Our planes went out but we weren't close to any battles," he said. "We watched for submarines. They are the biggest threat to carriers so we couldn't go out without three escorts (ships that traveled with the aircraft carrier)."

Huffman said he was impressed when the aircraft carrier he was aboard went through the Panama Canal.

"We went through it twice," he said. "Going through that was something to see. There was only a few inches of space on both sides of the ship."

Huffman said he will remember on place he visited forever.

"I'll never forget Pearl Harbor. I will always remember the Arizona," he said. "It's there as a museum. One thousand sailors are buried there. It was never raised."

Huffman said he is proud to be a member of the Preston County Honor guard and is proud of the crew with whom he serves.

"They are the best we've ever had," he said. "They are the very best."



Metro Creative Connection

Seniors may have more time for leisure and recreation than working adults, and the summer months provide ample opportunities to get active. After months of chilly temperatures, seniors in various parts of the country may be eager to get outdoors and enjoy some fun in the sun.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults age 65 and older get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week. There are plenty of ways for active seniors to meet this exercise goal and have some fun along the way. The following are some good starting points.

■ **Join or start a walking club.** Walking is a great way to stay in shape and work the mind as well. View new sights along the way by changing the route each time you go. Walking with friends can pass the time and provide the motivation to keep going.

■ **Catch a sporting event.** Attending a sporting event can be an entertaining way to spend several hours, and that includes amateur and recreational sports. Catch a grandchild's swim meet or a baseball game for an action-packed way to connect with loved ones and get out.

■ **Take a fishing charter.** Casting a rod from a dock or pier is perfectly acceptable, but securing a spot on a fishing charter is a great way to spend hours out on the water enjoying the scenery and the sport of fishing. Plus, there's the added benefit of enjoying the fruits of your labors by cooking the day's

catch for dinner once you arrive home.

■ **Be a tourist.** Many cities and towns have their own tourism boards and showcase interesting spots that have historical significance or appeal to other interests. Be a tourist for the day, even in an area with which you are familiar. Hop on a trolley or sightseeing bus to view the town as an outsider.

■ **Spend time swimming.** Swimming is a low-impact activity that can work the body in many different ways. Devote time to doing a few laps in the pool. Or make a day of going to a lake or another body of water to wade out and enjoy some strokes in nature. Stick to swimming areas that are monitored by lifeguards for optimal safety.

■ **Tend to a garden.** Gardening is a great form of light exercise that can produce rewarding results. If you don't have a garden or enough space for one at home, many neighborhoods have community gardens in which you can secure a plot.

■ **Visit a fair or farmer's market.** The warm weather months are a peak time for outdoor activities, including various community fairs and farmer's markets. Chances are you can find a farmer's market nearby most days of the week, but especially on the weekend. A town market or state fair is a great way to get out and walk, play games of chance or enjoy some live entertainment. Check your community calendar for local events.

Active seniors can embrace long, warm summer days to enjoy plenty of time away from home.





# Reaping the rewards of a long life



**BY IRENE MARINELLI**  
for The Dominion Post

*"In youth we learn, in age we understand."*

~ Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach

We all age. The alternative to aging is, of course, dying, a poor alternative at best and one most of us are not eager to experience. So, since we all eventually age if death does not take us, it seems important to age well. But what does that actually mean in the reality of living in this century? Where is our place? What are our goals, if any, and are there facets of aging that can lift the spirit and continue to teach us?

When we reach our seventh eighth and even ninth decades, we have lived, not one life, but many. Each epoch of our long lives can be viewed as a "new life." Ours is the only species on the planet that has been given the gift of contemplation. We can look back on our lives, and we can look ahead to the coming

years. This contemplative ability can be a gift or a burden, depending on how we use it. There's little to be gained by revisiting our past mistakes, our history of "should-haves" and "could-haves." The life that contained those errors in judgment failures or misunderstandings is over. We are in another life, another era. The only good thing about reviewing past mistakes is the lessons we've hopefully learned from them. This does not point to a continuous rotation of our failures. The value of contemplative recollection of our past mistakes is learning not to repeat them. That's it, no self-recrimination necessary.

Stereotypes are alive and well and living in our society. Consciously or subconsciously, we tend to herd people together in our minds. Whether or not they fit the mold as individuals seems to make little difference. There is no reason why our society should paint all its older citizens with the same brush. How do we counter this ageism? Only by not allowing it into our lives. This does not have anything to do with keeping up with the young. We do not have to "dress young" or "talk the talk" or flit

around spending every waking hour in some form of activity until we drop. Instead, it has everything to do with the unburdening of the negativity society has thrown upon our shoulders; it has to do with our ability to manage the daily rigors of our lives. It has more to do with our mental state than our mental acuity: we may forget names and places, but we can consider the worth of new ideas, make time for reading and quiet contemplation. We can still be eager learners, thinkers, doers.

There may be health problems, relationship issues, other difficulties; but aren't there problems, although different in nature, in all eras of our lives? At a certain point we arrive at the age where our days are not wholly run by the clock and our calendars not filled with chicken-scratched commitments. These are

the years of unscripted life.

No, I don't awaken each morning singing, full of energy and jubilation, and I suspect you don't either, my gentle reader. But I am thankful the hours of the opening day are my own to fill or not, as I choose. Certainly, there are commitments, but again, the choice is mine.

There is another blessing in growing old: appreciation. We appreciate and better understand the incredibly swift passage of time. We look to whatever years we may have left with an appreciation not present in our youth, when time was an endlessly flowing river and it seemed our lives would go on forever.

*Irene Marinelli writes a regular column for Senior Post. Contact her at [columns@dominionpost.com](mailto:columns@dominionpost.com).*

## Senior emergency assistance

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

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

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

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

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

**Salvation Army**  
**Monongalia County**  
1264 University Ave., Morgantown  
304-296-3525  
**Preston County**  
124 Morgan St., Kingwood  
304-329-1245

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

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

*The following locations are for Preston County residents only.*  
**Wesley United Methodist Church**  
304-329-0707

**St. Vincent DePaul Helpline**  
304-329-6229

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

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

### PUZZLE SOLUTION

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