

Senior Post

Living well and gracefully through the golden years

**Morgantown Public Library
System's digital library &
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FEBRUARY 2023
A MONTHLY MAGAZINE BY

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Senior Post

Living well and gracefully through the golden years



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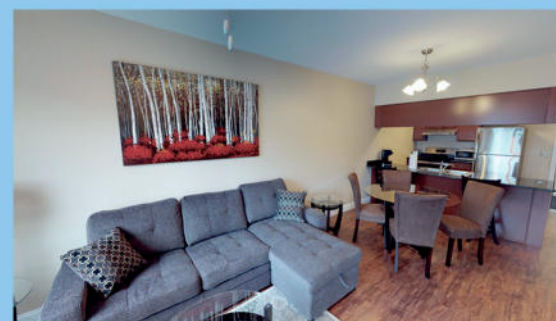
On the cover: Morgantown Public Library, located in downtown Morgantown. The Dominion Post file photo.



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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

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

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Westside Senior Center



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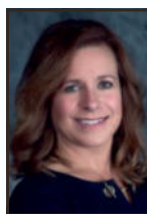
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5 reasons for seniors to celebrate in 2023



BY DOREEN SEAMON

for The Dominion Post

It has been a tumultuous few years. Amid a continuing pandemic, tense midterm elections and a war in Ukraine, we have grappled with more than our fair share

of grim news. However, with the new year upon us, there are several reasons for seniors to celebrate in 2023.

First, Social Security benefits are seeing their largest cost-of-living increase in 40 years. Social Security beneficiaries will find that their monthly checks are increasing by nearly 9% this year. For more than 65 million individuals currently receiving these benefits, payments will rise by about \$140 on average per month.

Second, Medicare Part B premiums are lower this year. For the first time in more than

10 years, Medicare Part B enrollees will see some of their costs decline. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) announced that the Medicare Part B basic monthly premium decreased by \$5.20 per month (a savings of \$62 for the year). In addition, the Medicare Part B annual deductible decreased by \$7 per month (a savings of \$84 for the year). Unfortunately, beneficiaries with higher incomes will pay higher monthly premiums.

Third, you can contribute more than ever to your retirement funds. The IRS is allowing record increases in 2023 for contributions to 401(k)s, Roth IRAs and traditional IRAs. If you are working and have a 401(k), 403(b), or 457 plan, you can contribute up to \$22,500 to that account in 2023. Working individuals who are 50 years and older can contribute another \$7,500. If you have a Roth IRA or IRA, you can now contribute \$6,500 in 2023 (up from \$6,000 in 2022).

Fourth, you don't have to wait months for

Medicare Part B coverage to begin. In the past, if you waited until the last three months of your Initial Enrollment Period (IEP) to enroll in Medicare, you would have to wait another two to three months before your coverage began.

But beginning this year, if you enroll in Medicare during the last three months of your IEP, your Medicare Part B coverage will begin on the first day of the month after you sign up. You will not have to wait several months to receive benefits.

If you sign up for Medicare during the General Enrollment Period, which runs from Jan. 1 to March 31, you used to face a coverage gap. Coverage did not begin until July 1. Starting this year, your coverage will start the first day of the month after you enroll.

Fifth, SSI and SSDI benefits are also seeing a boost. If you are a beneficiary of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), you

should have seen modest increases in your monthly benefits payouts before the new year. Beginning on Dec. 30, 2022, SSI individual recipients began receiving \$73 more a month while couples began receiving \$110 more in SSI benefits per month.

Meanwhile, SSDI benefits saw a monthly increase of about \$119 more on average for those who are not blind.

While most of these changes are positive for our senior readers, living on a limited budget can still be stressful. One of the best ways to protect your financial security is to plan ahead. If you don't have an estate plan that is up to date, or that was not drafted by an elder law attorney, the time to plan is now.

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

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Morgantown Public Library System's digital library & your tablet: A perfect pair

Kelly Funkhouser shows off the digital app that allows users to access library services from the Morgantown Public Library. Submitted photo.

BY EMILY SPARROW

Morgantown Public Library System

Whether you purchased one as a treat for yourself or received one as a gift this holiday season, tablets and e-readers are versatile devices that provide access to countless resources for professional development, education, creativity and entertainment.

To help you get the most out of your tablet, the Morgantown Public Library's digital library – brought to you in part by the Library Levy – provides an extensive collection of services that you can use for free with an active library card.

By visiting our webpage, www.mympls.org/download-it/, you can browse our digital library, which includes e-books, audiobooks, magazines, comics, music, movies, classes, virtual author talks and genealogical research tools. As you scroll through the digital library, you will see a description of each resource – some even include “show me” buttons with detailed tutorials describing how you can sign in, create a free account and use the service on your computer browser or by downloading an app on your tablet or phone.

Some of our exciting digital services include Kanopy, a streaming service offering movies, documentaries, TV shows and kids' media;

Hoopla, a collection of audiobooks, comics, e-books, movies, music and TV shows; Mango Languages, online lessons in over 70 languages; and Freegal, a music streaming platform. To help you conduct your own family history research, our digital library includes Ancestry Library Edition and HeritageQuest Online. While Ancestry Library Edition is the only digital library tool that must be used from the Morgantown Public Library, you can access HeritageQuest's local histories, census records and Revolutionary War information from the comfort of home.

Libby, our most popular digital collection, includes numerous e-books, audiobooks and magazines accompanied by librarian-curated reading guides. Once you log into Libby, you will see a few different ways to search for materials. You can sort based on subject, the newest additions to the collection, the most popular and what's available now. If you're feeling adventurous, you can select the “randomize” button to explore an assortment of titles. You can also click on the magnifying glass at the bottom of the screen to search using a keyword, author name, or specific title. Once you land on a material that interests you, you can choose whether you'd like to borrow the item for 7, 14, or 21 days. You will have the option to place a hold if an item isn't currently available, and you will receive a notification when it's ready to borrow.

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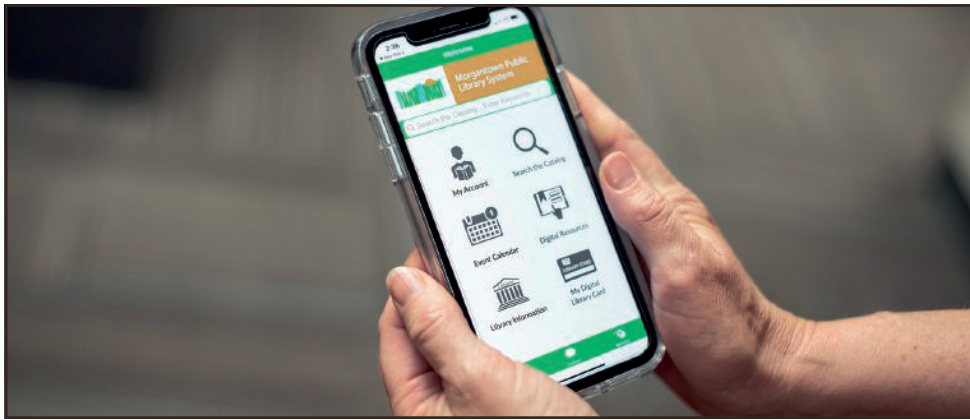
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The home page of the Morgantown Public Library app.

Submitted photo

The Morgantown Public Library System app is your shortcut to our website's most useful features, including our digital library. You can download our app for free on your phone or tablet through Google Play or the Apple App Store. Using our app, you can view your current checkouts, renew materials, place holds, browse the catalog, receive push notifications about your account and view the events calendar.

The "Additional Resources" section of the app will take you to some of our digital resources such as Libby, Kanopy, Hoopla, TumbleBooks, Mango Languages, and Freegal. In case you leave your physical card at home, the app houses a digital version of your library card. When you open the app, you will see three icons along the bottom of the screen – clicking the

chat bubble will give you the option to call or email us, and clicking the computer mouse will route you to our website. Truly a one-stop shop, the app includes a map of our locations and their hours under "Library Information."

If you would like any assistance equipping your tablet or device with our digital library services or app, stop by any Morgantown Public Library System location, visit our website at www.mympls.org, call us at 304-291-7425, or email us at ask@mympls.org. Our locations include the Arnettsville, Cheat Area, Clay-Battelle and Clinton District branches as well as the Morgantown Public Library and Aull Center downtown. Our staff members are ready to help you find your next favorite story – digital or otherwise.

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.



Assisted Living at Evergreen in Morgantown, WV

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

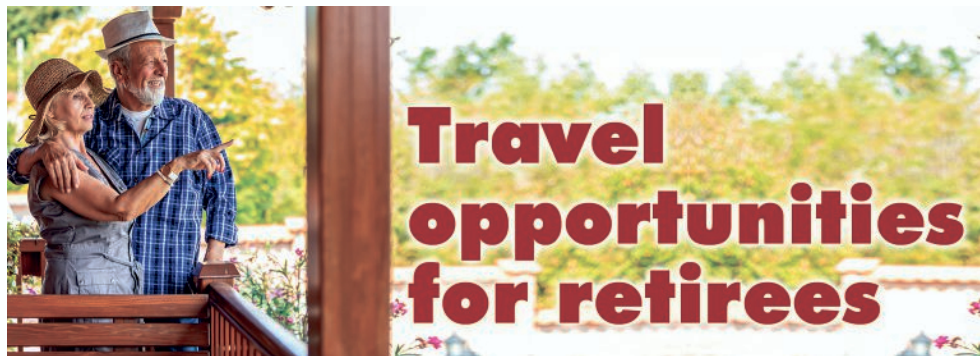
The Suites at Heritage Point
 1 Heritage Point, Morgantown
 304-285-5575

Harmony at Morgantown
 50 Harmony Drive, Morgantown
 304-503-4349

Preston County
PineRidge
(formerly Heartland)
 300 Miller Road, Kingwood
 304-329-3195



PineRidge



Metro Creative Connection

Travel opportunities for retirees

Cruising

Retirement provides individuals with ample time to engage in activities they enjoy. Many seniors spend that newfound free time relaxing and seeing the sights.

Seniors are a travel-friendly demographic. The World Tourism Organization says that, in 1999, more than 593 million international travelers were age 60 years and older. Seniors are projected to take two billion trips annually by 2050. As Baby Boomers and Generation Xers continue to retire, a larger portion of the overall population will have time to travel.

When seniors plan trips, they have many ways to get around in style.

Cruising can be an ideal way for older adults to travel. Cruise ships depart from ports across the world and travelers can choose from an array of itineraries. People can travel on cruises that are at sea for as few as three to five days to others that are out for weeks at a time.

One reason seniors enjoy cruising is because it's all-inclusive with little extra planning required. Step aboard a cruise ship and enjoy a floating hotel complete with food, lodging, entertainment, shopping, gambling, and much more. Organized excursions at ports of call can add to the thrill of cruising.

Guided tours

Escorted tours are another option seniors

may want to consider. By working with reputable tour operators, seniors can engage in affordable, safe and comfortable tours via bus, train or other modes of travel. Tour companies take the work out of the trips by handling the details and showcasing the best locales. Tour experts know when to schedule meals and sightseeing to avoid the crowds so that everyone can sit back and relax on their adventures.

RV excursions

Travel by recreational vehicle is a great way for individuals with time on their hands to see the sights up close and personal. When RVing, the time spent traveling is the adventure, and the destination is simply the cherry on top.

The RV industry exploded during the pandemic because it provided a safe way to enjoy a vacation and get away from home. MAR-VAC Michigan RV & Campgrounds says currently more than nine million households own an RV in the United States. There's no age limit to buying an RV, although the RV Industry Association says the average owner is 48-years-old and married.

RV-friendly campsites and parks enable travelers to mingle with each other, providing affordable and fun ways to travel.

Timeshares

Seniors who got in on the timeshare bandwagon early in life can choose to enjoy their travel years even further. The timeshare model enables buyers to purchase the right to use particular homes, condos, hotel rooms, resorts, or other accommodations for specific periods of time. For example, some timeshare agreements are for one week each year in a designated location. Seniors with more time on their hands may want to revisit timeshare agreements to increase the frequency in which they can use properties or to find timeshare companies that enable swapping properties with others so that different locales can be enjoyed.

Visiting family

Retirees may aspire to spend more time with family members who do not live nearby. Families may want to consider mother-daughter residences or properties with small guest houses so that seniors can stay in the residences when visiting but have some privacy at the same time.

Seniors have many travel options, and retirement is the ideal time to get out and enjoy time away from home.



Metro Creative Connection

The human body is a marvel. How the body transforms over the course of an individual's life is one of its more remarkable qualities, and those changes never cease, even as individuals near retirement age.

The changes associated with aging include physical transformations but also more subtle shifts the naked eye cannot see. For example, metabolism slows as individuals grow older, and aging also can lead to a decrease in bone density and muscle mass. These changes affect how men and women at or nearing retirement age should approach their diets in recognition of the various ways their nutritional needs change at this point in their lives. Any modifications to a diet should first be discussed with a physician, but the following are some ways aging adults can use

diet to combat age-related changes to their bodies.

■ **Prioritize protein.** The authors of a 2010 study published in the journal *Current Opinion in Nutrition and Metabolic Care* recommended that older adults consume between 25 and 30 grams of protein with each meal. The researchers behind the study concluded that such consumption could limit inactivity-mediated losses of muscle mass and function.

■ **Overcome reduced production of vitamin D.** WebMD notes that people over 65 typically experience a decrease in natural production of vitamin D. Vitamin D is not naturally found in many foods, so aging men and women may need to rely on supplementation to ensure their bodies get enough of it. Vitamin D helps with anti-inflammation, immune system support

and muscle function, among other benefits. So it's vital that aging men and women find ways to get sufficient vitamin D.

■ **Consume ample dietary fiber.** The National Resource Center on Nutrition & Aging notes that fiber plays an important role in the health of older adults. Fiber has been linked with heart health, healthy digestion, feeling full, and preventing constipation, which the online medical resource Healthline notes is a common health problem among the elderly. Though the NRCNA notes that older adults need slightly less fiber than their younger counterparts, it's still a vital component of a nutritious diet. The feeling of fullness that fiber consumption can provide also is significant, as it can ensure adults who aren't burning as many calories as they used to aren't overeating in order to feel satisfied.

That can make it easier for such adults to maintain a healthy weight.

■ **Monitor intake of vitamin B12.** The NRCNA notes that vitamin B12 is involved in a host of important functions in the body, including nerve function and the formation of red blood cells. Vitamin B12 is most easily found in animal products, which many aging men and women must largely avoid due to other health concerns. In such instances, men and women can discuss supplementation with their physicians as well as alternative food sources of B12, such as fortified cereals, salmon and other items.

Bodily changes related to aging increase the likelihood that men and women will need to alter their diets in order to maintain their overall health.



BY LISA ELLISON
for The Dominion Post

Linda Carney, 65, experienced a mild stroke about two months ago and credits Preston Memorial HomeCare team for rehabilitating her.

Carney described the services she received in physical therapy, occupational therapy and nursing care. The care team “goes into people’s homes,” Carney said. She’d like others to know the important work home health care professionals do.

“These ladies also travel to other counties. It’s unbelievable what these folks do and what they have provided for me,” she said.

Carney said her stroke was “mild with left-sided face drooping, and limited use of left arm and left leg,” but acknowledged hers was not as severe as some strokes people have. At one point during Carney’s care, the care team was monitoring her blood pressure and heart. Team member Carrie noticed that she “wasn’t looking good.” Carney had not felt well the night before and also had some numbness.

“Carrie immediately called my doctor who put an order in for a stress test and medications to relax my blood vessels. This could have actually saved my life.”

“They are phenomenal at keeping track of everything and the specific schedule,” Carney said. “They use a computer to keep everything monitored well such as blood pressure or pain changes, temperature, oxygen levels, to see if anything is going on.”

Carney said she “could not have gotten any better care despite that each of the team members has eight to 10 patients they visit.”

She also wanted people to know “about this program and its quality of help that is out there for them.”

It was especially important to Carney to recover because she provides the care for her 93-year-old father. Carney had gone to pick her brother up from the airport when she suffered the stroke.

“When I looked at my phone, I knew something was happening to me. I looked up ‘stroke’ and my symptoms didn’t appear to be that bad. I have severe neck and back pain, so I thought ‘it’s not that bad.’ I drove myself to Morgantown while having this stroke.”

When she called the doctor’s office, she was told to “get someone to drive her to the ER immediately.” She still thought her symptoms weren’t that bad.

When she was doing rehabilitation at Preston Memo-

rial, she knew she “needed to get out of there to care for my dad by the time my brother leaves.” She said, “The ladies were here the next week; that was a comfort.”

Carney was a teacher with the Garrett County Board of Education. She said she was “worried about intelligence and functioning. I already had viral encephalitis and all this rehab stuff prior to the stroke, which was three times as bad. The physical therapist had given a couple tests to check my cognitive function” and also put an app on her phone to practice memory, word recall and other cognitive abilities.”

She worried about her ability to function as an individual, but also because she was the caretaker for her father who depended on her.

“Now we are both going to be ... Your mind races with all the bad things.”

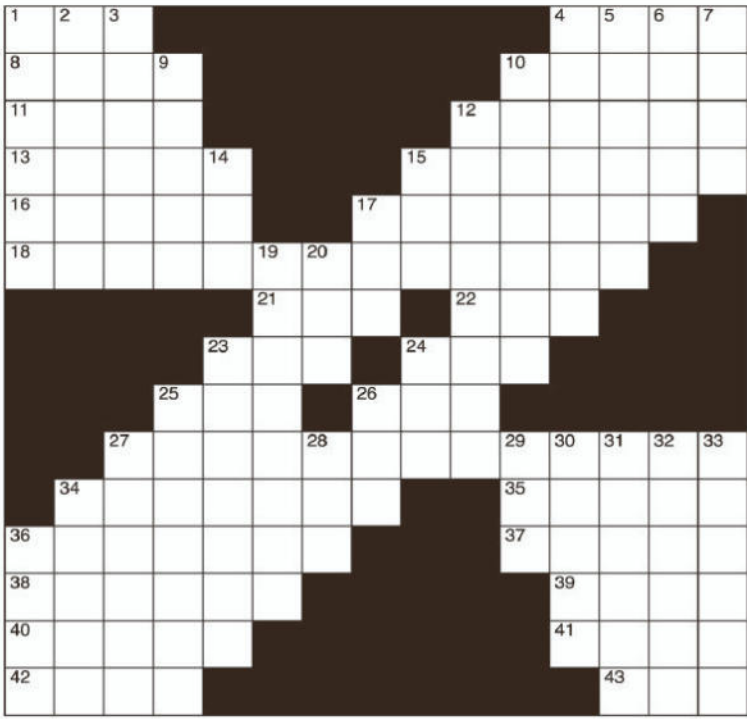
When she found out the stroke had not hurt her cognitive ability, she felt less stressed. She was proud to have been recently dismissed by occupational therapy. The OT found another app for her “called Brainia that has short games, math, memory, similarities, faces and names, homophones, one on theater that shows a face and you try to remember the name,” Carney said.

Carney has done educational testing for the last eight years and been a special education teacher. She said she did “testing for the kids and wrote the results, contacted parents, attended IEP meetings with parents, did academic observations on students and had tutored in reading at our local Appleseed Tutoring with Alex Stinard.”

Carney also enjoys acrylic painting on ceramics, but says, “I just dabble and would never call myself an artist.” Carney was asked if she saw differences in her artwork from before having had the stroke. “I don’t see a lot of differences now, but I did with the viral encephalitis. One lady at the hospital wanted me to do some art things, but I was too scared to mess with that at the hospital. I cried all the time though I am not a big-time crier. I hated that. Now I’m over that.”

Carney had nothing but positive comments about her care team that included Carrie (a nurse who caught the symptoms and helped get tests and medications to resolve that), Tish and Debbie (physical therapists), Hope, Brianna and Sarah (occupational therapists).

Carney said she walks a lot, eats mainly as a vegetarian, but she did have “lots of stress and anxiety with a divorce. I’m not physically overweight, but could be a little less weight and have a stronger immune system. You don’t look at me and say, ‘she’s going to have a heart attack or stroke.’”



CLUES ACROSS

1. Tax collector

4. Fishes without the line touching water

8. Brooklyn hoopsters

10. Actress Lathan

11. A metric for athletes

12. Food storage location

13. Colossus

15. Desolations

16. Accustom to something unpleasant

17. __ Kubrick, filmmaker

18. You might ask this at Thanksgiving

21. Arkansas city

22. Gave food to

23. Request
24. V-shaped open trough

25. Make lively

26. It accompanies feather

27. Blonde bombshell

34. One who revolves

35. Bluish greens

36. Charity

37. Having the shape of a cube

38. Unwind

39. Believed by some to be the supreme being

40. Checks or guides

41. Leak slowly through

42. Top-quality

43. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

1. Part of your foot

2. It’s at the back of the eyeball

3. Where things stand

4. Offered

5. Contains pollen

6. Boisterous get-together

7. Asserts out loud

9. They’re in the sky

10. Canonized

12. A politician’s official stances

14. It can catch fish

15. British thermal unit

17. Helps little firms

19. Where patients go for treatment
20. Large red deer

23. Pokes holes in

24. “Star Wars” hero Solo

25. One in a hospital

26. Scandinavian god of battle

27. Famous cat

28. __ Angeles: City of Angels

29. Type of drug (abbr.)

30. City along the Rhine

31. Animal disease

32. Martini ingredients

33. Get away

34. Rare species of rodent

36. Suppress



Medicare Part D prescription coverage mandatory

BY LISA ELLISON

for The Dominion Post

Medicare prescription drug coverage, also known as Medicare Part D, is mandatory or enrollees will be penalized. Late enrollment is used as a process to calculate the fines.

An advisor, such as Mike Cilella, may assist in Part D enrollment. Additionally, an individual may use the Medicare handbook, which explains Medicare Part D, along with A, B and C. Cilella wants to help seniors better understand Medicare Part D.

Medicare Part D can be chosen as a free-standing option from the carriers an enrollee has with traditional Medicare (Part A and Part

B). The other option is to have the Medicare Advantage Plan, which includes coverage for prescription drugs.

The benefit of speaking with a consulting agent is that a member's prescription prices can be compared in the marketplace for the member's benefit.

"This means every plan should fit your individual needs and, conversely, every plan is different with different formularies. The formularies cover your prescriptions differently," Cilella said.

"Veterans with their Veterans Administration (VA) drug coverage can get Medicare Advantage plans that are medical coverage only, and continue to get their prescriptions

from the VA," Cilella said.

These drug plans all have drug formularies or tiers into which they are ranked and classified. Most have five tiers. Tier One and Tier Two are usually older prescriptions that are available in generic forms with little to no copays. Medications in higher tiers, such as Tiers Three, Four and Five will have higher copays.

For example, many Tier Three prescriptions have a copay of \$47.

Members can use their plan's mail-order service to experience further savings.

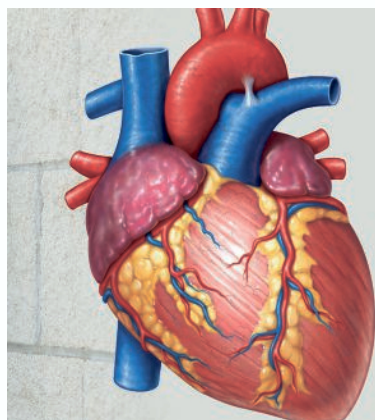
Mail-order prescriptions are usually shipped in a three-month supply at a lower cost to the member.

"An example of the Tier Three monthly cost of \$47 would be approximately \$120 for a three-month supply," Cilella said.

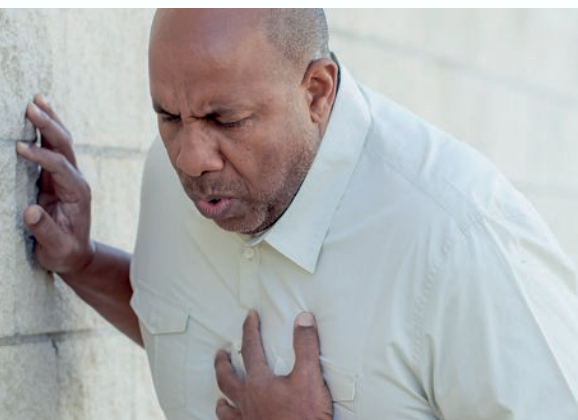
Additionally, members can purchase their medications from prescription drug savings programs, such as Good Rx.

These prescription savings programs feature lower than copay prices compared to the member's prescription drug plans. For instance, suppose a particular drug has a plan copay of \$47, Cilella said, "Yet on Good Rx, the same medication has a cost range to the member of \$4.50 to \$12.50. This is a significant savings over the course of a year."

Seniors with Medicare questions may reach Cilella at 304-988-5552 or mcilella@BOST-benefits



Early warning signs for heart disease



Metro Creative Connection

Cardiovascular disease claims more lives across the globe every year than any other disease or condition, and many of those fatalities are credited to heart disease. Though the terms "cardiovascular disease" and "heart disease" are often used interchangeably, the National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute notes that, while all heart diseases are cardiovascular diseases, not all cardiovascular diseases are heart diseases. This is an important distinction, especially as adults discuss heart and cardiovascular health with their physicians.

The NHLBI reports that more than one in 10 American adults have been diagnosed with heart disease, which underscores the serious threat posed by the various conditions that fall under the

umbrella of the condition. Though NHLBI data indicates around 630,000 Americans die from heart diseases each year, many of those deaths are preventable. The same goes for Canada, where data from the Canadian Chronic Disease Surveillance System indicates that every hour roughly 14 Canadian adults age 20 and over with diagnosed heart disease lose their lives.

Education is one of the ways in which deaths due to heart disease can be prevented. That's especially true when individuals learn to recognize warning signs of the disease and take prompt action once such indicators appear.

■ **Chest pain:** Discomfort between the neck and upper abdomen is characterized as chest pain, which does not necessarily indicate the

presence of heart disease. However, the experts at Mount Sinai indicate that chest pain is the most common symptom of poor blood flow to the heart or a heart attack. Chest pain may occur because the heart isn't getting enough oxygen or blood. It's important that individuals recognize that the intensity of pain in the chest does not indicate the severity of the problem. That means that even mild discomfort in the chest should be brought to the attention of a physician immediately.

■ **Shortness of breath:** Shortness of breath can occur because the heart isn't pumping blood as well as it should, thus causing blood to back up in the veins that go from the lungs to the heart. Mount Sinai notes that this results in fluid leaking into the lungs, thus producing shortness of breath. Shortness of breath can occur at any time, including

when individuals are active or at rest.

■ **Coughing or wheezing:** Another indicator of fluid buildup in the lungs related to the heart is persistent coughing or wheezing. When coughing, individuals may spit up a pink or bloody mucus.

■ **Swelling in the lower legs:** Mount Sinai notes that swelling in the legs, ankles or feet is another indicator of heart troubles. One of the byproducts of a poorly functioning heart is slower blood flow, and that reduction in flow can cause a backup in the veins of the legs. That backup can cause fluid to build up in the tissues, which leads to swelling.

Heart disease is a significant threat to public health. Learning to recognize signs of the disease can save an untold number of lives.



BY IRENE MARINELLI
for The Dominion Post

It does not seem like an exaggeration to say most people want to find happiness. Contentment also seems like an important component in being able to live a good life. So, what is the difference between these two: happiness and contentment. If we were to go with a dictionary definition it would define happiness simply as “the state of being happy.” The dictionary defines contentment as: “in a state of satisfaction.” Fortunate are those whose lives include both happiness and contentment.

Both contentment and happiness can be elusive. In our culture we tend to look for, or even run after, happiness. It’s out there somewhere if only we can find it and capture it to be with us forever. The reality is that no one can or even should always be happy. It’s a good thing life hands us problems we need to solve, disappointments we need to deal with and even some frightening experiences we need

to overcome. It keeps our minds sharp, our values high and it assures our gratitude for the good things that come into our lives. But the question remains: how do we find happiness and bring it into our lives?

Happiness and contentment go together. Both must come from within if they are to last. They are gifts only we can give ourselves. Neither is out there waiting to be captured and kept, like a bird in a cage. If we are content (“in a state of satisfaction”) then it stands to reason we have opened ourselves to happiness (“a state of being happy”).

Contentment can mean different things to different people. It might be found in nature, in close family connections, in a highly satisfactory job, and certainly in self-awareness. That last, self-awareness, seems like perhaps the most important component of true contentment. In order to be content with the life we are living we definitely need to be aware of who we are, of our own values and of the things that are most important to us. Happiness comes and goes, but a true state of contentment, if we fully embrace the way we live, that can be sustainable.

Contentment needs to embrace change. If someone has been blessed with good health and plenty of resources for easy living, then suddenly that person must deal with a drastic change, like divorce or a debilitating illness, contentment can seem like an illusion. Bringing contentment back into that kind of situation requires embracing the changes and digging deep inside to find gratitude for what is left and strength to change what can be changed or to accept whatever cannot be changed. Not an easy task.

Do we ever ask ourselves, what was it that brought those times of happiness? What is it that would make us most content? For myself, times of happiness almost always involved either nature or people I cherish. Contentment, for me, goes hand-in-hand with peace. One does not exist without the other. Stress is

a great killer of peace in our homes and our relationships. As for me, I can only find contentment when there is a sense of peace and harmony in my relationships with those I love and in my home. Naturally, that ideal situation does not always exist and so contentment is lost for a while, but never permanently.

As we age, many changes will spill into our lives. Some will shake our happiness, steal our peaceful sense of contentment. We can regain both of these by reaching deep for gratitude, having well defined self-awareness and finding strength to make adjustments and changes wherever possible

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

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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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



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855-WVU-CARE

or visit WVUMedicine.org/JointCenter

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