

Senior Lifestyles



**Fall / Winter
2024**

FREE

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What to know about RSV

(NAPSI)—You may remember the old saying, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” That’s never been more true than it is right now about good health and older adults, especially when it comes to protecting yourself during what is commonly known as respiratory disease season (fall through early spring).

Last year saw the devastating effects of an increase in COVID, flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and pneumonia on the wellbeing of older Americans. Fortunately, most people had access to vaccines for all but RSV last year. And in good news for this year, for the first time ever, there is a vaccine approved by FDA for preventing RSV in older adults.

• The Problem

RSV is a serious respiratory virus

whose full toll on seniors is just now being recognized. Each year, RSV results in up to 160,000 hospitalizations among people aged 65 and over and leads to as many as 10,000 deaths in older people in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

It can also prove serious for anyone with chronic conditions such as asthma, COPD, heart or other lung problems, certain autoimmune conditions and those receiving chemotherapy or radiation treatments. It is easily spread from contact with a contaminated surface as well as through the air (when someone infected sneezes or coughs), so anyone at any age can get it.

• A Solution

RSV vaccines are now approved and available throughout the U.S.

and the cost is covered fully for Medicare beneficiaries. These vaccines can truly protect your health across your lifespan as they are now available for adults aged 60 years or older, as well as for infants through maternal immunization.

• What Else You Should Know

It is always a good idea to review your health plan. When contacting Medicare, make certain that you are contacting the actual government agency itself. Only government agencies can use the .gov ending and the best number to use to reach trained Medicare experts is 1-800-633-4227. It’s easy to remember—it’s 1-800-Medicare.

The National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) created a re-



source outlining the five things to know about RSV to help get the word out about this important opportunity to protect the health of older adults. English and Spanish versions can be found at <https://www.nanasp.org/vaccines>.

It’s a good idea to talk to your pharmacist or healthcare provider about whether you should get the RSV vaccine, and any other recommended vaccines.

Become a Senior Companion volunteer



Photo courtesy of Homage Senior Services

74-year-old Mary Oyoo visits older adults in her community twice a week on behalf of Homage Senior Services, an organization with 50 years of experience that provides critical services to low-income older adults and people with disabilities in Snohomish County.

Oyoo is part of the Homage Senior Companion Program, which serves older adults and people with disabilities in King County

and Snohomish County by providing Senior Companions to preserve independence and allow isolated and disabled seniors to live in their homes longer.

Senior Companions provide companionship and transportation* to appointments and shopping, serve as walking companions, help organize tasks, and offer respite support for family caregivers.

*(The ability to drive is not a re-

quirement of volunteering).

This national service program is funded by a grant from AmeriCorps Seniors as a volunteer initiative for seniors.

“When I came here from Kenya, I came for greener pastures,” said Mary Oyoo, a widow and Lynnwood resident. “Yet I fell sick and was hospitalized. I received assistance, and as soon as I was well, I felt that I should give back.”

For the past eight years, Oyoo has served as a senior companion.

“Volunteering transformed me,” said Oyoo. “I learned that there are individuals facing challenges far greater than my own, yet they still find joy in life. While they are happy, they also need support, and I felt I could be one of the people to provide that help. Through my interactions with others, I’ve learned how to solve my problems, realizing that everyone has struggles.”

Homage Seeks Senior Companions as the Wait List Continues to Grow

“The need for compassionate companions has never been more pressing,” said Mary Ann Higgins, Senior Companion Program Coordinator at Homage Senior Services. “We have several folks on the waitlist and are experiencing an influx of more requests from older adults in our community. Having a trusted companion can significantly impact mental and emotional well-being. Our senior companions offer friendship and a listening ear. In addition, having our companions in the community each week is invaluable. They report back and let us know if something is going on. Maybe their client needs to be connected to a program or some other type of support. So this program extends the reach of Homage to individuals who can’t always come

into the building and ask for what they need.”

“My clients trust me,” said Oyoo. “When we are together, they’re happy, laughing, and telling me stories. We are friends.”

Requirements to become a Senior Companion Volunteer

Individuals must be at least 55 years old, available to volunteer at least 5 hours per week, meet income eligibility criteria**, and have a desire to help other seniors or individuals with disabilities.

Senior Companions must complete an application, submit a background check, and undergo an orientation before being matched with clients.

**Senior Companion volunteers must meet income eligibility criteria to receive a non-taxable hourly stipend, mileage reimbursement, paid holidays, ongoing training, and recognition for their invaluable service.

For those Seeking a Senior Companion

Senior Companion clients must be 60 or older or an adult of any age living with a disability.

Clients also must live in a house or independent apartment.

Please contact Homage at (425) 355-1138 or seniorcompanion@homage.org

FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A SENIOR COMPANION VOLUNTEER OR SIGNING UP FOR A SENIOR COMPANION, PLEASE VISIT:

<https://homage.org/health-wellness/senior-companion-program>

“Everyone deserves companionship and support,” said Homage CEO Keith Bell. “We encourage community members to consider volunteering for this rewarding opportunity as together, we can ensure that no one feels alone.”

Don't get snowed by holiday scams

(BPT) - Scams are unfortunately a fact of life these days. If it's not identity or data theft, it's credit breaches and scam phone calls. Many of us are getting scam texts, too. As the holidays roll in, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) wants you to know we are on the job, working to protect you and your mail and packages.

USPIS's new holiday campaign, Don't Get Snowed by Holiday Scams, alerts consumers about crimes that are on the rise this holiday season: counterfeit postage, phishing/smishing, mail and package theft, and letter carrier robberies. It's all about making sure your holiday season is merry, bright, and safe.

Counterfeit postage

Now is a great time to stock up on stamps so you have them on hand to mail your holiday cards and packages. Looking for Forever Stamps online? You may find some deceptively good deals out there. And that's the key word: Deceptive. Counterfeit stamps are appearing more and more. If you see stamps at 20% to 50% off their face value, it's a scam. Fraudsters target consumers online on social media platforms, third-party ecommerce sites, and pop-up ads. These fake, discounted stamps come in a variety of designs that are meant to mimic real postage.

Follow these tips to protect yourself:

- Buy your stamps at the post office or from approved postal providers, which include legitimate "big box" retailers.
- Report the sellers of counterfeit stamps at uspis.gov/report.

Phishing/smishing

What's that? You may have received a text or email about a package delivery gone wrong or unpaid

online postage charges. The subject line or headline usually is "Delivery Failure Notification" or something similar. These messages appear to be from the USPS or another government

entity, but they're not. They will likely contain a URL for you to click. If you do, it can activate a virus or lure you into providing personal financial information. If you get a text or email that uses poor grammar, has spelling errors, or asks you for payment or personal information of any kind, it is a scam.

Follow these tips to protect yourself:

- Don't click on any links.
- Block the sender.
- Delete the text or email immediately. If you choose to report it, send USPS-related phishing emails to spam@uspis.gov. You can also send USPS-related smishing texts to 7726. All other phishing/smishing attempts should be reported to the FTC or your local consumer affairs group(s).

Mail and package safety

Thieves are always lurking, getting ready for the busy holiday season, just like you! Your packages may arrive on time but may not truly reach their destination if they're plucked from the porch before you or your loved ones can get them inside. USPIS takes these cases of package theft very seriously and makes thousands of arrests each year. Thieves commonly cruise neighborhoods at times



when people are at work, but they can strike anytime.

Follow these tips to protect yourself:

- Don't leave letters and packages in your mailbox or at your door for any length of time. Use USPS Hold Mail service, a delivery locker, or ask a trusted neighbor to grab your package if you are going to be away.
- Request signature confirmation on packages and add package tracking.
- Don't send cash in the mail.
- * If you move, file a change of address with USPS at www.usps.com and let your financial institutions know as soon as possible.
- If you suspect you may be a victim of mail theft, report it at www.uspis.gov/report.

Letter carrier safety

Thieves are getting bolder. They're targeting letter carriers and stealing mail, packages, and even employee valuables. USPIS constantly strives to protect those who deliver to your door.

Postal inspectors are on the job, focusing on operations in high-risk areas, increasing awareness through education, and enforcing more than 200 laws designed to protect the nation's mailstream.

Recent operations have led to the arrests of individuals involved in postal-related crimes, and the Postal Inspection Service is committed to making sure every letter carrier returns home safely this holiday season and all year long.

Follow these tips to protect yourself (and your letter carriers!):

- If you see suspicious activity, call 9-1-1 immediately, then postal inspectors at 877-876-2455.
- Secure packages immediately after delivery.
- Have your local post office hold mail/deliveries if you are going to be away.
- Ensure valuables remain out of sight. Whether on your person or at your front door, your valuables are a target for thieves who are always on alert for their next opportunity.

For more information on what postal inspectors are doing to protect employees and customers, visit Project Safe Delivery - United States Postal Inspection Service (uspis.gov).

Holiday cheer is coming your way this season in the form of cards, letters, and packages. By working together to prevent scams and theft, we can all ensure the season is merry and bright.

Community Breakfast and Bingo Bash!

Everyone is welcome to the Community Breakfast at the Snohomish Senior Center the first Saturday of each month from 8:30-10:30 a.m. Menu includes pancakes or French toast, scrambled eggs, sausage links, biscuits and gravy, coffee or tea and juice... all for only a \$7 suggested donation! Bingo Bash is also the first Saturday of each month. Doors open at 4 p.m.; Early Bird at 5:15 p.m.; first game at 5:30 p.m. The cafe will be open! The Center is located at 506 Fourth St. in Snohomish.

Flower arranging

Every week you'll take home an artfully designed flower arrangement!

Learn about flower and color combinations and how to create varied arrangements. You'll also learn how to work with unexpected materials.

Lynnwood Trader Joe's supplies the flowers so each week is a surprise!

Bring a tool to cut flower stems and a vase, jar or plastic bag to take home your arrangement.

Wednesdays Dec. 4-18

at Lynnwood Senior Center, 19100 44th Ave. W from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. \$12 members, \$18 non-members. To register, call 425-670-5050 with code # 62457



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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Sudoku solution on page 9

Seniors can get in free to high school events

The Board of Directors and Snohomish School District recognizes the value of our community's senior citizens. In appreciation of your many years of generously supporting our students and schools, senior citizens in the Snohomish School District boundaries are invited to attend district home athletic events (regular season only) and drama productions free of charge.

For athletic events - Present your Golden Kla Ha Ya Club membership card at the gate. Athletic event schedules are available at www.wescoathletics.com.

For drama productions - Call the school to reserve your seat. Bring your membership card to pick up your ticket at will call. Your complimentary ticket will not be available at the box office without this prior arrangement. Snohomish High School - 360-563-4008; Glacier Peak High School - 360-563-7504

You can download the registration form at <https://www.sno.wednet.edu/klahaya>. Complete the form and mail or bring it to the Superintendent's Office (1601 Avenue D in Snohomish). You will be contacted when your membership card is available to pick up. Valid identification and age verification are required. You must pick up your card in person. Membership cards will not be mailed. Questions? Call the superintendent's office at 360-563-7280.

Crossword Theme: SPACE

ACROSS

1. House pest
6. Emergency responder, acr.
9. Meme dance moves
13. Below, prefix
14. Swimmer's distance
15. Not urban
16. Take a base
17. Grazing spot
18. Stressful or unnerving
19. *Clint Eastwood's "Space _____"
21. *First U.S. space station
23. Salty dog's domain
24. Fail to mention
25. Spermatozoa counterpart
28. Ukrainian person, e.g.
30. State of submission
35. Network of nerves
37. Muscle or strength
39. _____ Mara, Africa
40. Shapeless form
41. Cliffside dwelling
43. *Saturn's environs, sing.
44. Poetic feet
46. Darn a sock, e.g.
47. Per person
48. Rendezvouses
50. Mine entrance
52. After-tax amount
53. Litter's littlest
55. French vineyard
57. *Sun's outer layer, not beer brand
60. *Second S in ISS
64. Ancient Celtic priest
65. Sun kiss
67. "Mea _____," or "my fault"
68. *"From the Earth to the Moon" author
69. In the past
70. Judge
71. Education station
72. Order's partner
73. Food between meals

DOWN

1. Reduced Instruction Set Computer
2. "I'm _____ you!"
3. Not many (2 words)
4. Dungeness and snow, e.g.
5. *Circles of light around sun and moon
6. 90-degree pipes, e.g.
7. *_____ Jamison, the first African-American woman in space
8. Tetanus symptom
9. Two-fold
10. Diva's solo
11. Prickle on a wire
12. Sylvester Stallone's nickname
15. Johnny Cash's "Get _____"
20. Churchill/Roosevelt/Stalin meeting site
22. Model-builder's purchase
24. Gorge oneself
25. *Planet's path
26. Type of consonant
27. Skeleton, archaic
29. Attention-getting interjection
31. Like pink steak
32. Of the Orient
33. Jousting pole
34. *_____ -year
36. Opposite of flows
38. *Solar _____, sun's emission
42. Authoritative proclamation
45. Walked with long steps
49. *Solar System center
51. Parcels
54. Birth-related

| CROSSWORD | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | 23 | | | | 24 | | | | | | | |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | | 28 | | 29 | | | 30 | | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 |
| 35 | | | 36 | | 37 | | | 38 | | 39 | | | | |
| 40 | | | | | 41 | | | 42 | | 43 | | | | |
| 44 | | | | 45 | | 46 | | | | 47 | | | | |
| 48 | | | | | 49 | | 50 | | | 51 | | 52 | | |
| | | | | 53 | | 54 | | | 55 | | 56 | | | |
| | 57 | 58 | 59 | | | | | 60 | | | | 61 | 62 | 63 |
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| 71 | | | | | | 72 | | | | 73 | | | | |



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- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 56. One-eighty | 61. Pelvic parts |
| 57. Manitoba native | 62. Petroleum-exporting grp. |
| 58. Couple's pronoun | 63. Police informer |
| 59. Dorothy Hamill's turf | 64. VHS successor |
| 60. Jon of "Game of Thrones" | 66. Palindromic title |

Puzzle Solution on Page 10

What you should know about healthy aging



Proactive health management plays a huge role in helping people age happily and healthily.

By Heidi Schwarzwald, MD

(NAPSI)—Seniors, caregivers and their families and support systems should prioritize certain steps to promote healthy aging—many of which can happen from the comfort and convenience of their homes—including the following:

1. **Improve your lifestyle:** Improving lifestyle is crucial with age, with 95% of adults over 65 having one or more chronic conditions—diseases heavily influenced by lifestyle decisions that can be prevented with the right education, support and personal health engagement. Giving up smoking, changing your diet, cutting out alcohol, and moving your body are all incredibly important.

2. **“Know your numbers,”** get routine testing: Early detection is vital for controlling chronic disease progression. Seniors should regularly track key health indicators, such as blood pressure, weight, cholesterol levels, and blood sugar, and get screened for the most common yet debilitating diseases, such as heart disease, kidney disease, COPD, and diabetes.

3. **Get screened for cognitive changes:** Many aging adults don’t know they’re experiencing cog-

nitive decline but will recognize and get frustrated by certain changes (e.g., memory loss, attention deficit, loneliness and depression). Unfortunately, a lot of this decline is untracked—the Alzheimer’s Association’s “2024 Alzheimer’s

Disease Facts and Figures Report” states that 54% of people who believe they have cognitive decline have not consulted a healthcare professional.

Getting the proper behavioral health screenings for mental health issues and cognitive impairment is thus incredibly important for seniors, as is getting connected to the right support and health care providers to help seniors take the next best action.

4. **Understand your medications:** Not taking medications correctly (or at all) can cause a snowball effect of unmanaged health conditions, while certain combinations of drugs—including common over-the-counter medications and supplements—can lead to avoidable interactions, emergency room visits, and hospitalizations. Getting a comprehensive medication review is one of the most important steps seniors can take to stay on the right track with their health and adhere to their care plans.

At Signify, during In-Home Health Evaluations (IHE), clinicians and members review prescribed medications, and those taken over-the-counter. After a visit, clinicians will refer seniors back to their doctor and specialty physicians if they have any concerns that

adjustments might be necessary. See if you are eligible for a no-cost IHE at HelloSignify.com.

5. **Get connected to your primary care doctor:** Staying engaged with your primary care doctor can have a huge effect on improving your overall health. However, it can be easier said than done. One in five Americans lives in a rural area and often has a harder time accessing health care services. Fortunately, IHEs can help them stay engaged from their home.

While not replacing your regular doctor, the IHE is an added touchpoint. When clinicians meet with you where you live, they can better understand your medical, social, and environmental needs, help to bridge any gaps in your care and give you the information you need to age healthily.

By scheduling an IHE via HelloSignify.com, at no out-of-pocket cost to eligible health plan members, Signify Health clinicians help seniors understand symptoms they shouldn’t ignore, be the eyes and ears in the home when family or care support can’t be there, and help encourage members to improve their lifestyle to age healthily.

Learn more and see if you’re eligible:

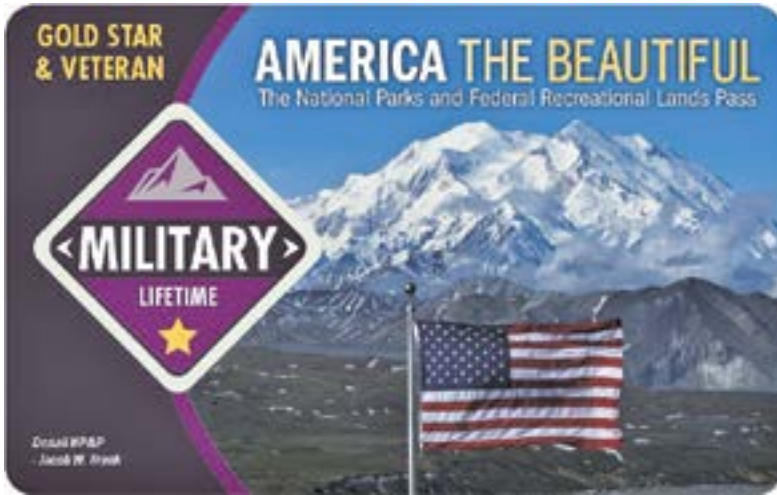
If you or a loved one is interested in engaging more in your health as you age, keep these things in mind and visit HelloSignify.com, the self-scheduling portal, to see if you’re eligible for an In-Home Health Evaluation.

• Dr. Schwarzwald is Chief Medical Officer at Signify Health, a CVS Health Company.

Sudoku SOLUTION for page 7

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| 1 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 7 |
| 6 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 2 |
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Lifetime pass available for Veterans and Gold Star Families to access public lands



Lifetime pass provides free entrance to national parks, wildlife refuges and other public lands for Veterans of the U.S. Armed Services and Gold Star families.

Crossword Puzzle Solution for page 8

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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Veterans of the U.S. Armed Services and Gold Star Families can obtain a free lifetime pass to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands, including national parks, wildlife refuges, and forests.

“We have a sacred obligation to America’s veterans. This lifetime pass is a small demonstration of our nation’s gratitude and support for those who have selflessly served in the U.S. Armed Forces,” said U.S. Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland, whose father served during the Vietnam War. “I’m proud the Department of the Interior can provide veterans and Gold Star Families opportunities for recreation, education and enjoyment from our country’s treasured lands.”

“Our national forests and grasslands represent so much of the beauty of the nation our brave service members have sacrificed so much for,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “Though they can never be fully repaid, by connecting the families of the fallen and those who served with these iconic places, we can, in a small way, say thank you.”

“The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and our federal teammates are proud to honor our veterans with free lifetime access to more than 2,000 federal recreation areas across the nation,” said Lieutenant General (LTG) Scott Spellmon, Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“This is a small token of appreciation for veterans who have bravely dedicated their lives to defending our freedom. This pass conveys our immense gratitude and respect for those who have given so much,” said National Park Service Director

Chuck Sams. “As a veteran, I know firsthand the many sacrifices that members of the Armed Forces and their families have made in service to our country, and I am thrilled that Gold Star Families and military veterans can now enjoy lifetime access to national parks and other public lands.”

Each lifetime pass covers entrance fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle (or passholder and up to three adults at sites that charge per person) at national parks and national wildlife refuges, as well as standard amenity fees at national forests and grasslands, and at lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Veterans can present one of the four forms of acceptable ID (Department of Defense ID Card, Veteran Health ID (VHIC), Veteran ID Card, or veteran’s designation on a state-issued US driver’s license or ID card) at participating federal recreation areas that normally charge an entrance fee. Gold Star Families obtain information, self-certify they qualify and download a voucher on [NPS.gov](https://www.nps.gov).

Federal recreational land management agencies also offer additional lifetime passes, including a Senior Pass for US citizens or permanent residents over age 62 and an Access Pass for US citizens or permanent residents with a permanent disability. More information is available on [NPS.gov](https://www.nps.gov).

The Interior Department and other federal land agencies also offer fee-free entrance days for everyone throughout the year including the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., Veterans Day and more.

Reasons to start a fitness program

(NAPSI)—Because physical activity and healthy aging go hand in hand, getting started with a fitness program included in your health plan can do more than help you maintain your health as you age.

“Movement truly is medicine,” says Dr. Jaynie Bjornaraa, physical therapist, fitness professional, adjunct professor, and senior vice president of rehabilitation services and digital fitness solutions at American Specialty Health (ASH).

Dr. Bjornaraa oversees the Silver&Fit® Healthy Aging and Exercise program for ASH, ensuring that its members get evidence-based recommendations when starting their fitness routines. She helped develop the program’s onboarding feature, which sets members on individual fitness journeys based on their needs. Fitness levels, exercise goals, and personal preferences all factor into a tailored 14-day workout plan.

“Research has shown that active movement is the best way to prevent and improve chronic disease. And the great thing about exercise is that it benefits your cognitive health—memory and mood—as much as it affects your physical well-being,” according to Dr. Bjornaraa.

She offers this short list of other benefits a thoughtful fitness program can provide:

1. Improved Health Being physically active can reduce your risk of disease, strengthen your bones and muscles, help you manage weight, and boost your mental well-being.

2. Preventive Care Physical fitness can help prevent certain

high-risk scenarios such as serious injury from falls, which is the leading cause of accidental death in older adults.

3. Social Interaction Some programs offer links to connect with clubs and free group fitness classes online for various types and levels of workouts.

4. Health Rewards Incentives for tracking your activity through a fitness program can earn various awards as well help you work with your medical provider to better manage any chronic disease.

5. Personal Coaching Connecting with a health coach during regularly scheduled sessions through a fitness-focused plan can help you achieve a variety of wellness goals.

6. Cost Savings Fitness-focused plans often include low-cost access to fitness centers and exercise videos for a wider variety of workout choices.

7. Quality of Life A thoughtfully designed program will help members develop a workout plan, which can help you stay mobile and maintain their independence.

Even for individuals who don’t currently engage in fitness activities, Dr. Bjornaraa says it’s never too late to start.

“You can be 80 years old,” she said. “Whenever you decide to start an exercise routine, you’ll notice the health improvements quickly add up. However, starting slow and staying consistent is the key to building fitness levels and a good program can help you steadily reach your goals.”

It’s important that your health plan supports your long-term health—and fitness. If you’re con-

*See FITNESS PROGRAM
on page 13*

Briefs

70's Bingo Night

Monroe Community Senior Center will host a special Bingo Night Saturday, January 25 at 5 p.m. featuring FT DJ Lamar.

\$20 includes admission and loaded nachos. Beer, wine and margaritas will be available for purchase. \$5 bingo packets will be sold at the door. Prizes and \$50/50 raffle.

All ages welcome.

Reserve your spot at www.mcsc.org or call 360-794-6359. The center is located at 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe.

Courageous Conversations

Join an expert from Hospice of the Northwest for a presentation about Courageous Conversations on end of life decisions Dec. 11 from 2-3 p.m. at the Lake Stevens Library, 2211 Grade Rd.

It's never easy to tell a loved one what your end of life wishes are, and the end of life is never an easy subject for a child to bring up with a parent. This course will get you on the right path to accomplish those sometimes difficult conversations. In this session you will learn how to start that "Courageous Conversation" whether you are the adult or the child, and you will be provided the tools to help determine exactly what you want as well as what you don't want.

For more information call 425-334-1900.

Craft, Chat, Chill

Do you need an art workspace? Do you have half-finished projects? Would you like a bit of company while you finish your work? Join a community of adult artists and crafters. Bring your drawing,

knitting, embroidery, watercolors, scrapbooking or any project you'd like to finish. There are tables, chairs and a sink. You bring your supplies. Come for coffee, conversation and encouragement!

If you have usable craft supplies leftover from previous projects, please donate them for fellow artists! There will be a free table set up to donate or take items.

December 19 from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at the Mukilteo Library, 4675 Harbour Pte. Blvd. in Mukilteo.

For more information call 425-493-8202.

Massage

Get a wonderful hand, foot and head/neck massage at the Monroe Community Senior Center. Massages are scheduled the first and third Thursdays of the month from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Massage therapy is a form of manual therapy that involves moving soft tissues in the body to reduce stress, ease muscle tension and promote relaxation and overall well-being.

15 minute sessions are \$20 for members and \$25 for guests.

Call 360-794-6359. The center is located at 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe.

MedShed calls for equipment donors

The MedShed of Snohomish is in need of durable medical equipment that is in good condition, especially wheelchairs, rolling or front wheel walkers, canes, raised toilet seats, pull-ups of all sizes (unopened), shower chairs and bedside commodes.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Med-

Shed is located at 210 Ave. B, in the parking lot of the Snohomish Evangelical Church. 360-213-1600.

Drive-thru Christmas Dinner

Christmas Dinner will be ham and all the fixins! This drive-thru pick-up dinner will be Friday, Dec. 20 from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. and is \$10 per person, all ages welcome. To reserve your dinners, call 360-794-6359.

Monroe Community Senior Center, 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe.

Chair Yoga

Modified for the chair, this instructor led class was created for those with limited mobility. Chair Yoga incorporates all the benefits of Yoga such as: healthier, stronger, more relaxed you; improved flexibility; great sense of calm and well-being; and increased oxygen intake.

Monroe Community Senior Center, 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe every Monday at 10 a.m.

Fee is \$3 per class for members, \$5 for non-members. (purchase an 11-class punch card for \$30).

Wear comfortable clothes, no perfumes or colognes please.

For more information call 360-794-6359.

Homage Mental Health Support

Homage Senior Services is partnering with Monroe Community Senior Center to offer FREE 50 minute, one-on-one counseling sessions for those aged 60+ by a Licensed Mental Health Counselor. Sessions are held the second and fourth Fridays of the month.

Please call Erica to make your ap-

pointment, 425-740-3790.

Board Game and Puzzle Swap

Calling all puzzle aficionados and board game enthusiasts!

Is your closet bulging with board games? Have you put together every puzzle you have and are looking for something new? Bring your gently used board games and puzzles to swap with others in the community Jan. 25 from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Monroe Library, 1070 Village Way in Monroe.

Swapped puzzles and board games must be complete, with no missing pieces, in the original vendor's box and in overall good condition.

For more information call 360-794-7851.

Ballard Locks Walk

Explore the captivating blend of engineering marvel and natural beauty as you walk through the locks' lush gardens and scenic waterfront. Watch boats navigate the locks and enjoy views of the salmon ladder, where you might spot migrating fish. The cooler December weather adds a crisp charm to the historic surroundings, making it a perfect time for a peaceful and informative hike. Ideal for all ages, this outing offers a unique opportunity to experience Seattle's maritime heritage and winter tranquility.

Dress warmly and prepare for a delightful, scenic walk!

Mostly level 2.5 mile round trip.

Lynnwood Senior Center, 19000 44th Ave. W. Cost is \$14 members, \$20 non-members. To register call 425-670-5050, code # 62991

Importance of socializing for seniors

Seniors deserve to enjoy their golden years. One of the best ways seniors can enjoy these years is through active aging.

Active aging is a concept that focuses on promoting the health and security of seniors. The goal is to enhance the quality of life of aging seniors.

Socializing is an important aspect of active aging, especially for seniors who live independently. Why is socializing so important for seniors? It offers them many benefits.

- Improved Mental Health

Older adults are at risk for depression. One reason seniors are at risk for depression is isolation. Isolation and loneliness can lead seniors to experience feelings of despair.

Socialization can help combat feelings of loneliness. Seniors can feel loved and valued by interacting with family and friends. It helps

them affirm their sense of worth.

It's a good idea to plan social events for seniors. Even a simple phone call to check in with a senior can go a long way.

- Reduced Stress

There's no doubt that stress is bad for seniors. It can affect their mental and physical health. Connecting with others can help reduce stress.

Less stress can mean better health. Seniors may be able to experience heart health. Lower stress can help boost the immune system.

Seniors who have less stress may be able to sleep better. Seniors with strong social ties have a support system. They can use their support system as an outlet to express worries and fears.

- More Physical Activity

Socialization can help older adults partake more in physical ac-



tivity. Exercising alone can get boring.

Socialization is a great way to increase older adults' enjoyment of physical activity. Having a workout buddy is a great strategy. Sharing the experience with a friend can make exercise feel less like work and more like fun.

Instead of walking alone, seniors should join group fitness classes. Together, they can motivate each other to reach their fitness goals.

- Better Cognitive Performance

Interacting with others is a great way for seniors to keep their minds sharp. Independent living doesn't mean being alone.

Seniors can play card or board games with each other. These ac-

tivities can help keep their cognitive function strong.

Do you have an older loved one who wants to be independent, but you worry about their safety? Your loved one can live in a senior living community.

This type of community offers different living options for adults 55 and over. It also offers them different forms of socialization.

Seniors benefit from socialization. It's an important part of active aging. Seniors who interact with others experience better mental and physical health.

Source: Articlecity.com (originally posted on: <https://www.connect55.com/importance-of-socializing-for-seniors/>)

Fitness program *Continued from page 11*



It's not a stretch of the imagination: Regular exercise can help your mental as well as your physical health.

Considering adding fitness to your routine, be sure to work with doctors before starting any new exercise regimen.

Finally, once you've started a fitness plan, make the most of it.

Stay committed to a lifestyle of fitness. Regular attendance in exercise classes and engaging in your wellness will go a long way to help you maintain and improve your health.

Activities to keep your mind sharp

Did you know: approximately 30% of those aged over 65 in the U.S. tend to report having done no physical activities in the past 30 days? This is concerning because physical activities amongst others are needed to keep the brain active and functioning well.

So what is an example of a good

activity for seniors to do? And how can they keep their minds acute?

- Creative Hobbies

One of the best activities for seniors to do in order to encourage healthy brain functions is to get creative. Hobbies such as painting,

See ACTIVITIES on page 16

Briefs

Quil Ceda Holiday Lights trip

Almost eight million holiday lights brighten the skies at spectacular Tulalip Lights! This is the largest display in Washington State and is a sight to see! (This light display runs through November 23 to January 12).

The Monroe Community Senior Center will be taking a day trip to see the lights and have dinner at the Olive Garden on Wednesday, Dec. 18. Bus departs at 4:30 p.m., 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe. Transportation fee is \$12 members, \$17 guests. Cost of dinner is on your own.

Make your reservations now! Fee must be paid at time of reservation by phone or in person. 360-794-6359.

Open Mic Night

Whether it's a poem, some jokes or singing a song, the goal is entertainment and family fun all night long!

Tuesday, Dec. 17 from 3-5 p.m. at Cogir of Mill Creek Senior Living Community, 14905 Bothell-Everett Hwy. in Mill Creek.

All are welcome! For questions, or to RSVP please call Jackie at 425-338-1580.

Silver Screeners Cinema Club

Silver Screeners Cinema Club is a free senior outreach program presented by Scarecrow Video, convening the elder community with movies. In addition to providing access to its vast film library, Scarecrow's movie experts lead post-film discussions with Silver Screeners program audiences.

The Dec. 5 film will be *The Thin*

Man (1934). 10 a.m. to Noon at the Mukilteo Library, 4675 Harbour Pt. Blvd.

Coffee, tea and popcorn will be provided. Feel free to bring other snacks, a cushion, or a blanket to make your movie experience most comfortable!

Cookie Days

Do you bake delicious cookies? Join in at the Monroe Community Center every second Tuesday of the month for Cookie Day. Bring in a batch of your best cookies to share with the members, volunteers and staff!

Please call for more information, 360-794-6359. The center is located at 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe. (Sponsored by Dollars & Sense Bookkeeping).

Acupuncture

Traditional Chinese Medicine explains acupuncture as a technique for balancing the flow of energy or life force, known as chi or qi (chee) believed to flow through pathway (meridians) in your body.

Acupuncture sessions are offered at Monroe Community Senior Center, 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the first Friday and third Monday of the month. Cost is \$20 members, guests are \$25 for a 30 minute session.

Call today to make your appointment, 360-794-6359.

Facials at the Senior Center

Make an appointment for Thursday, Jan. 9 or Thursday, Feb. 13 for a facial at the Monroe Community Senior Center, 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe.

Cleanse, exfoliate, mask and moisturize by Indulge Yourself Spa of Monroe. Cost is \$55 members, \$60 non-members.

Call 360-794-6359 now to make your appointment.

Learn to Line Dance

In this easy, upbeat class, you'll move to a wide variety of music including Rock & Roll, Hip Hop, Salsa, Cha Cha, Country Western, and more. Exercise never felt like such fun! This class is for people of all experience and ability levels.

Tuesday and Thursday Dec. 3-19 from 11:10 a.m. to Noon. Lynwood Senior Center, 19000 44th Ave. W. Cost is \$36 members, \$48 non-members. To register call 425-670-5050, code # 62500

Manicures at the Senior Center

Make an appointment for Thursday, Jan. 23 or Thursday, Feb. 27 for a regular or gel manicure at the Monroe Community Senior Center, 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe.

Trimming, shaping, buffing, cuticles, massage and polish by Indulge Yourself Spa of Monroe. Cost is \$25 members, \$30 non-members (gel manicure is \$10 extra).

Call 360-794-6359 now to make your appointment.

Holiday Feast

This free holiday feast is open to all seniors and those in need of a meal and is provided by the Everett Police Officers Association. Servings will be at Noon and also at 2 p.m. on Sunday, December 15 at the Carl Gipson Center, 3025 Lombard Ave. in Everett. Please RSVP at the front desk or call 425-818-2784.

Preplanning for the end of life

The start of the New Year is a good opportunity to consider how prepared you or your family are for the end of life. While the subject is hard, the difficulties faced by our loved ones, and ourselves can be much easier.

Thursday, Jan. 9 at 1 p.m. at the Monroe Community Senior Center, 276 Sky River Parkway in Monroe.

Cost is \$8 members, \$12 non-members.

Call 360-794-6359 now to RSVP.

Busy Bee Quilters

Busy Bee Quilters are a local guild that is now meeting at the South Lake Stevens Grange on the 3rd Thursday of each month.

A day meeting is from Noon to 2 p.m.-ish with a night meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Visitors are always welcome. The Grange is located at 2109 103rd Ave. SE in Lake Stevens.

For more information call Diane Coombs at 425-334-3341.

Living with Change

The Living With Change group offers comfort and support, helping each other through our painful journeys of losing a loved one – whether a family member or other loss, whether recent, anticipated, or in the past. Dealing with sorrow is a difficult experience, and sharing our stories eases our grief.

New attendees are warmly welcomed with sympathy and understanding. Everyone is free to participate or just listen.

Meet the second and fourth Wednesdays from 1:00-2:30pm. at the Snohomish Senior Center, 506 Fourth Street in Snohomish. 360-568-0934.

Take a trip to Niagara Falls, Mackinac Island & The Grand Hotel

Take a trip to Mackinac Island, Niagara Falls and the Grand Hotel September 19-26, 2025. This is a unique vacation spot boasting fine dining, historic sites, and exciting attractions. Cost is \$4075 per person based on double occupancy.



Niagara Falls

- New England Rails and Trails: October 8-16, 2025. Boston, Vermont, Mt. WA Cog, Portland Maine and much more! Cost is \$4575 per person based on double occupancy. Book today by calling the Monroe Community Senior Center at 360-794-6351 or email programs@mccsc.org for more information.

Other trips to consider:

- Washington DC Cherry Blossoms: April 7-12, 2025. The White House, DC City Tour, Smithsonian, US Naval Academy and many more stops! Cost is \$3675 per person based on double occupancy.

Caregiver Program

Are you caring for an elderly parent, neighbor or friend? Are you checking in with them for their health, safety and wellbeing?

You may be eligible for Supplemental Services provided by the Family Care-

giver Support Program. Call The Stilly Center at 360-653-4551 ext. 103 for Intake and Screening process. Supplemental Services include home delivered meals, massage and house cleaning at no cost.

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Wintertide Festival and Bingo

The Carl Gipson Center invites you to their Wintertide Festival and the 3rd Annual Wintertide Bingo on Saturday, December 14.

The Wintertide Festival will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will feature live music, crafts, activities, holiday bazaar, lunch and so much more. Please bring non-perishable food items for donation to the Everett Community Food Bank.

Wintertide Bingo card sales will start at 4 p.m. and the first game begins at 4:30 p.m.

Enter the Ugly Sweater Contest for your chance to win \$50!

There will also be a 50/50 raffle for \$4 and a Cake Walk during bingo intermission.



The Carl Gipson Center is located at 3025 Lombard Avenue in Everett. For more information call 425-818-2784

Activities Continued from page 13

drawing, or sculpting help to stimulate different parts of the brain. They also assist in reducing stress and building self-esteem and confidence.

Creative activities often have the added bonus of keeping the hands dextrous too. Whether this is by molding, playing a musical instrument, or crafting, being creative has endless benefits for seniors.

- Reading

For some, reading might mean several short articles from a newspaper, while others will be able to persevere with challenging novels.

Reading is important for the brain because it helps cognitive skills and it can also recover forgotten vocabulary. After they've read an article or chapter, ask your loved one to retell what they learned or read about.

In this way, reading can also help to stimulate short-term memory skills.

Many older people struggle with lifting heavier hardback books, which can discourage them from reading. Try suggesting lighter-weight books, or even investing in an e-reader that will allow your loved one to read easily and comfortably.

- Outdoor Trips

An additional way for seniors to help keep their minds sharp is by taking trips outside of their living quarters. One of the best senior activities to do is a trip to a museum, gallery, arts center, or theatre.

You can adjust this activity according to whatever your loved one's interests and passions are.

Taking a trip out of their home has many benefits. First, a change of scene can revitalize elderly people, not to mention the fresh air and exercise of walking they'll be able to take part in.

Next, the stimulation of a mu-

seum or gallery helps to engage the brain and disrupt the monotony of day to day life. Your loved one will also undoubtedly take great pleasure from spending some quality time with you.

Therefore, if they have the capacity to leave their residence for a few hours, try to make the most of this.

- Get Puzzling

Sudokus and crosswords are two popular choices, but there are plenty of other options available.

Puzzle books can be a great source of entertainment, and often include a wide variety of challenges that encourage problem-solving.

What's more, puzzles don't have to be a solo activity. Jigsaws, bingo, or quizzes are good examples of ways your loved one can exercise their brain while enjoying the company of others. Chess and other types of board games are also a fun way to pass the afternoon with friends.

- Stay Sociable

If you are currently at the stage of deciding which type of living option is best suited to your loved one, consider the social benefits of assisted living. Being part of a community with their peers can do wonders for the brain, as isolation can often lead to rapid declines in mental functions.

Regardless of their living situation, it is important for seniors to be connected with others. Visits in person are ideal, but if time and distance make this difficult, video calls or phone calls are the next best option.

Talking to others sharpens the brain, so if your loved one can get involved with volunteering or a different kind of social activity, this is a fantastic opportunity to keep the mind thriving.

Source: Articlecity.com (originally posted on retreatseniorliving.com)