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AN ADVOCATE OF INDEPENDENT LIVING IN LATER YEARS

Van Wert County Council on Aging

220 Fox Rd., Van Wert, OH 45891

Phone: (419)238-5011

www.vwcouncilonaging.com

Kevin Matthews, Executive Director

January – March 2017



Winter safety tips

At home... Check appliances, furnaces, portable heaters and fireplaces before using them for the first time. Keep all heat sources and vents clear of clutter. Never leave portable heaters unattended. Keep fire extinguishers on hand and make sure everyone knows how to use them. Check batteries in portable radios, flashlights, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Make sure smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are installed and working on every floor in your home. With winter comes shorter, darker days. Consider putting entry or garage lights on a timer or light sensor so they come on as soon as it gets dark each day. Inexpensive adapters are easy to install and can be purchased from your local home center.

Outdoors... Stay indoors during severe winter weather. If you do go out, dress warm and tell someone where you are going and when you'll be back. Make sure the path to your door, garage and mailbox are shoveled and free of debris. If possible, have someone shovel for you. Use salt to melt down icy sidewalks and steps or cover the ice with something gritty or non-slippery (sand, cat litter). Ideally you should sprinkle salt before or immediately after a storm. Allow yourself plenty of time to get where you need to go in winter weather. Taking your time will reduce your risk of falling, especially if you use an assistive walking device.

In the car... Have your car winterized before the first snow fall. Put an ice scraper in your car. Also check your wipers and wiper fluid. You may want to have an extra gallon cold weather formula wiper fluid on hand in your car or garage. Keep a hat, gloves, scarf and blanket in your car in the event you become stuck or stranded. Pay attention to travel warnings or advisories during winter weather. If you do go out, tell someone where you're going and take a cell phone with you.

Before weather emergencies... Have a 3-day supply of non-perishable food and water (one gallon per person per day). Don't forget supplies for your pet and any medications you might be taking. Know where to go for information about local weather emergencies, road or business closings (TV, radio). Know the difference between winter storm watches and warnings. Update phone numbers for local emergency officials, as well as nearby family, friends and neighbors. Remember to stay in contact with family during severe winter weather. If you have home health care service, plan ahead with your agency for emergency procedures.

AEP Stop Scams Tips

AEP Ohio, a unit of American Electric Power, is joining forces with more than 80 gas and electric utility companies across the United States and Canada to fight scams targeting customers. The companies have seen an uptick in the number of scam attempts across the country, especially around the holidays, and criminals are using more sophisticated tactics.

Criminals are posing as utility company representatives and threatening to shut off power unless immediate payment is made or personal information is given. AEP Ohio urges customers to be wary of suspicious phone calls demanding payment.

“AEP Ohio takes the security and privacy of our customers very seriously,” said Karen Sloneker, director of customer services and marketing. “Customers should watch for the warning signs associated with-- these types of scams and notify local law enforcement right away.

Signs of potential scam activities over the phone include:

- Threatening to shut off power unless an immediate payment is made;
- Telling customers they need a new electric meter, but must make a payment before the new meter is installed;
- Offering a discount on their AEP Ohio bill if they sign up for auto-pay; or
- Demanding that a deposit be paid immediately.

If AEP Ohio customers receive suspicious phone calls that meet any of the criteria above or feel threatened, they should immediately call local law enforcement and then AEP Ohio at 1-800-672-2231. Customers should never dial phone numbers provided by a suspicious caller.

AEP Ohio will never:

- Demand an immediate payment;
- Insist a payment be made with a prepaid credit card; or
- Ask a customer to meet a representative at another location to make a payment.



Van Wert Council on Aging and AARP offers free tax service

The Van Wert County Council on Aging in conjunction with AARP is offering free Tax-Aide to help low and moderate income taxpayers, with special attention to those 60 and older, file their personal tax returns. All AARP Tax-Aide Counselors have been certified by the Internal Revenue Service. The service will begin Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at the Van Wert Senior Center located at 220 Fox Rd. Tax-Aide representatives will be at the Van Wert County Council on Aging on Wednesday of each week thru tax season. Tax-Aide representatives are able to prepare Federal 1040, 1099, Schedule C, State and School returns, as well as a variety of many other tax forms. Clients must bring photo Identification and Social Security card, and last year's 2015 return. Walk-ins will not be available. To schedule your appointment contact the Council on Aging at 419-238-5011. Call early as the appointments fill up fast.

COA Lunch-on Café

Tired of trying to figure out what to have for lunch? Come on out to the COA for lunch, meals are served daily at 11:00am. Meals are a great value at \$2.50 and that includes your drink choice of ice tea, milk or water. Just call the COA at 419-238-5011 by 3pm the day before you wish to eat to make a reservation. Come on out enjoy a great lunch and visit with others and best of all you do not have to do any dishes. Menus are available at the COA.

Need a Warm Up

What is one of the best ways to warm up on these cold mornings? Come out to the COA for line dancing then stay for an exercise class. Every Tuesday at 9am we have line dancing, then at 10:15 we have an exercise class that focuses on balance and ways to keep moving. Come out and keep moving .

Trendy Thursday

The fourth Thursday of every month we are going to be doing something special here at the COA. We will be doing something special at 9:30 in the morning so we should be done in time for lunch. So come out and let's have some fun. Be sure to order a lunch so after our Trendy Thursday, stay for some lunch and make new friends. We will be thinking of some fun things we can do. It might be a craft, nails, sharing stories, come on out and enjoy some Trendy Thursday time.

Tip Social Security/ Medicare will never call you for information you will receive a letter.

Holiday Closings

Monday January 2, 2017 closed for New Year's Day

Monday January 16, 2017 closed for Martin Luther King Jr Day

Monday February 20, 2017 closed for President's Day



Daylight Savings Time

Summer is right around the corner and daylight savings time begins Sunday March 12, 2017. You will want to turn your clocks ahead one hour before you go to bed on Saturday.

Tip: Poll done by the US Department of Transportation indicated that American's liked daylight savings time because "there is more light in the evenings so you can do more in the evening"

Walking

Do you enjoy walking and with the cold weather don't want to walk outside. Feel free to come in and walk the great room here at the COA. You can walk the perimeter or weave between tables. It is a great place to walk and best of all you are out of the weather.

Tip: It is recommended that we should walk 10,000 steps per day which equals approximately 5 miles.

Lunch & Learn

Wednesday January 18, 2017 Stay Healthy during flu season & Prevent Theft in your Home

Wednesday February 15, 2017 No Falls & Be Fire Safe & Fire Smart

Wednesday March 15, 2017 Weather Safety with Rick McCoy

LEGAL AID

February 10, 2017 Rebecca Steinhauser with Legal Aid of Northwestern Ohio will be at the Van Wert County Council on Aging. Rebecca will be taking appointments in the morning for clients that would need legal aid. You must call to sign up for an appointment if you would like to speak with Rebecca.



Let's Dance

February 23, 2017 put on your dancing shoes and let's dance. The Council on Aging will be hosting a dance with all of your favorite music from 2pm to 4pm on Thursday February 23. We will be serving light refreshments. Put on your dancing shoes, bring your friends and have fun. There is no charge for the dance, so come out and have a dancing time. Let's make this an afternoon to remember.

The Van Wert COA Memorial Fund

When a loved one passes, keeping their memory alive is a way of honoring their life and finding comfort in your own life as a survivor. Your gift toward the Memorial Fund helps to ensure that additional services for older generations are able to be provided. Monies raised by our memorial funds are distributed toward seniors in need.

Please Consider Your Gift to the Van Wert COA Memorial Fund. No gift is too large or too small. The Memorial Fund is managed by the VW COA Board of Directors. Gifts can be made directly to the Van Wert COA or can be bequeathed in one's will or trust. For more information contact Kevin Matthews, Executive Director at the Van Wert Council on Aging.

VAN WERT COUNTY COUNCIL ON AGING
220 Fox Rd.
Van Wert, OH 45891

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The mission of the Van Wert County Council on Aging is to assist older adults, age 60 and over, to live their lives with independence and dignity for as long as possible in the environment of their homes. The Van Wert County Council on Aging operates the Van Wert Senior Center.

The Van Wert County Council on Aging is supported by the Senior Services Tax Levies from Van Wert County, Title IIIB of the Older Americans Act administered by PSA3 Area Agency of Aging, United Way of Van Wert County, the Van Wert County Foundation, Transportation Contracts, Donations and Contributions.

The Van Wert County Council on Aging serves clients without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex or disability. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Services provided by the Van Wert County Council on Aging include: Chore Services, Outreach, Information & Referral, Socialization, and Transportation.