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AN ADVOCATE OF INDEPENDENT LIVING IN LATER YEARS

Van Wert County Council on Aging

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Kevin Matthews, Executive Director

January – March 2018

Healthy New Year's Resolutions

The New Year means new starts. While the old faithful standbys still exist, we can all greatly benefit from making healthy resolutions – especially those that help prevent illness and injury.

*Participate in cognitive health activities: Mental health is an important aspect of health that we tend to overlook. Keep your mind engaged and stimulated through a language class, book club or by playing brain games and trivia on the computer.

*Exercise: Exercise doesn't have to be exhausting and it certainly doesn't have to feel like work. Classes like Zumba, yoga, line dancing not only increase physical health, but also widen your social circle. Remember you can always come to the Senior Center for classes or just to walk.

*Eat more fresh foods: Make a promise to eat fresher, eating healthy fruits and vegetables and you will see a noticeable difference in the way you look and feel.

*Schedule regular checkups: Unfortunately with age comes an increased risk of illness and complications such as high blood pressure, osteoporosis and other medical conditions. Making sure that you schedule a regular annual checkup can help in early detection and prevention.

Not only will these New Year's resolutions improve your mental and physical health, they will provide social opportunities and benefit your life in multiple ways.

Medicare Drug Plans and the Donut Hole

According to Medicare, the Part D (drug plans) donut hole is expected to be eliminated in 2020. For those that are unaware of what the donut hole is, it is a situation in which after an individual reaches their drug plans deductible, the consumer then pays 25% of the cost of the drugs, while the Part D plan pays the rest, until the total you and your plan spend on your drugs reaches \$2,800. Once a person reaches this limit, they then have hit the coverage gap referred to as the "donut hole," and are now responsible for the full cost of the drugs until the total a person has spent for their drugs reaches the yearly out-of-pocket spending limit of \$4,550. After this, a person is then covered under Part D Catastrophic coverage. However the actual elimination of the donut hole in 2020 needs some clarification. While the hole is essentially closed, consumers on expensive medicines will still be faced with costs. In 2020, after an individual meets the drug plans initial coverage limit, generic and name brand drugs will then cost the consumer 25% of the retail cost of the medicine. Your drug plan and the manufacturers of the medication will share in paying the costs for the remaining 75% cost of the drugs. For more information regarding this information or other Medicare or consumer related questions feel free to contact us at (419) 238-5011.

Holiday Closings

Monday January 1, 2018 New Year's Day

Monday January 15, 2018 Martin Luther King Day

Monday February 19, 2018 Presidents Day

Friday March 30, 2018 Good Friday

If you would like this newsletter e-mailed to you please let the front office know. Also, this newsletter and archived newsletters can be viewed on our website.



Something Funny

Hospital regulations require a wheelchair for patients being discharged. However, while working as a student nurse, I found one elderly gentleman--already dressed and sitting on the bed with a suitcase at his feet--who insisted he didn't need my help to leave the hospital. After a chat about rules being rules, he reluctantly let me wheel him to the elevator. On the way down I asked him if his wife was meeting him. "I don't know," he said. "She's still upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her hospital gown."



Puzzle Competition

The last puzzle competition was a lot of fun. Let's do it again. The week of January 22, 2018 will be the time frame. Here is how this will work. You find a partner and at your convenience come in and you will put two puzzles together your partner will do the same thing. Each person will do the same two puzzles. You will be timed by the front office, each person's time will be added together and the team with the best time wins! You have all week to do this, so grab a partner let the front office know who is on your team and let's have some fun.



Dance March 8, 2018

Back by popular demand the COA will be having a dance on Thursday March 8, 2018 from 1pm - 3pm with doors opening at 12:30pm. Music will be provided by Melvin Mullins and light refreshments will be provided. So put on your dancing shoes and come have some fun or just come and socialize.

NEW TIME * Toe Nail Clinic * NEW TIME

The third Thursday of each month at the COA the nurses from Community Health Professionals come to trim toe nails. The toe nail clinic starts at 9:30 am and goes until 11:30 am; the fee is still only \$10.00. You must call 419-238-5011 to make a reservation.

7 Foods That Could Enhance Your Mood By Lorne Marr

Food is so much more than simply fuel to keep your body going. Obviously, at its base, that's what it does however it can also bring people a lot of joy. Sure, there's the bliss that comes from eating something so scrumptious it feels like tiny angels dancing on your tongue, but this is about more than just taste.

The natural effects in certain foods can reduce your stress levels, combat depression and ease anxiety. The added bonus is that a lot of them are downright delicious.

1. Chocolate

Many people are going to think is the best news of all! Chocolate makes you happy and science backs up that claim. Experts believe the antioxidants in chocolate help reduce stress hormones, like cortisol. But, feel free to completely ignore the science, and just take away that chocolate is good for you – in moderation.

2. Carbs

Despite what you may have heard, carbs don't make you fat, but they *can* make you happy. In a recent study, people who spent a year on a low-carb diet of only 20–40 grams of carbs per day experienced more depression, anxiety and anger than people on low-fat, high-carb diets. The study drew a correlation between carbs and serotonin production. Serotonin is a huge booster to your happiness. Bread, is there anything it can't do?

3. Fruits and Vegetables

Let's face it, this is a no brainer. We all know fruits and vegetables are good for every part of our bodies, brains and emotions. Studies have found that antioxidants in fruits and vegetables lower one's risk of depression. Folate found in beans, citrus and dark greens, like spinach, can affect the neurotransmitters that impact mood.

4. Fish

We've always heard that fish was brain food, now we know it can make you happier, too. Oily, fatty fish and muscles are full of omega-3s, which alter brain chemicals like dopamine and serotonin. Dopamine is a chemical released in response to pleasurable experiences, while low levels of serotonin are linked with depression and aggression.

5. Saffron

A study aimed at the symptoms of PMS found that women taking a dose of saffron said their mood swings and depression were reduced by half. Earlier studies showed that saffron had natural antidepressant qualities comparable to pharmaceutical antidepressants like Prozac.

6. Coconut

Coconut is a natural stress reliever in aroma alone. It lowers heart rate and can lower blood pressure, at the same time, while also enhancing alertness and soothing responses to stress.

7. Tea

Tired? Feeling a little fuzzy? Grab yourself some caffeinated black, green or oolong tea and you may experience a more alert state of mind. Researchers believe theanine — an amino acid in these tea varieties — may work in conjunction with caffeine to boost attention and focus. There is a bit of catch, though: if you want to truly reap the benefits, the study's results suggest drinking five to six cups of tea daily, so you'll also be running back and forth to the bathroom all day.

So, there you have seven different foods – most of which are also delicious and, for the most part, healthy – that will give you a natural boost and enhance your mood *Lorne Marr is a fitness enthusiast and blogger. Visit his site at <http://lornemarrfitafter45>*

Tips for Staying Safe on Social Networks

Social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter can be a great way to stay in touch, share photos and broadcast what's on your mind. Unfortunately they're also a great way for cyber criminals to find out information about you. The federal government has provided some tips for safer social networking.

These can be found on GetCyberSafe.ca:

- Check out the privacy and security settings and use them to control who sees what. If someone you don't know tries to “friend” you, ignore it. There's no way to be sure they are who they say they are.
- Before you post pictures, think about whether they give away too much information about you. For example, does that shot show your street name or license plate in the background? Avoid geotagging photos. Most smartphones and many digital cameras automatically attach the exact location where a photo was taken, which can give away your address or let criminals know that you're on vacation, making your home a target for break-in.
- Don't mention things like going away on vacation, big purchases or events that include your address in your status updates.
- Never include banking information – not even the name of your bank.

Visit GetCyberSafe.ca for more information about social networking, including types of scams to look out for. Remember, taking simple precautions online can protect you from major headaches down the road.

If you would like more information regarding internet or e-mail safety precautions or help with any other consumer related issues do not hesitate to contact us at 419-238-5011

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.

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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.