

SENIOR LIFE

Spot of T - Lend a Hand

By Terry Alburger
Life Engagement Coordinator,
Brittany Pointe Estates

Hands tell a story. I remember back to when I was a teenager and playing tennis competitively, I had lots of calluses on my right hand. I wore them like a badge of honor! I knew that those calluses signified lots of hard work and I figured that the more calluses I had, the better a player I would grow to be.

Many times, your hands reflect the jobs you've had in the past, or they may reflect your hobbies or past-times. Gardeners sometimes can't seem to get the dirt out from their nails or can't seem to get all the dirt off the grooves of their fingers, no matter how hard they scrub. I experience this every year during spring and summer as I begin to work in my flower and vegetable gardens. Even though I wear gloves, I invariably end up with dirty hands. Once again, I don't mind – it's a sign that I worked hard.

Every set of hands tells a story. YOUR story. Whatever your profession, whatever your pas-

sions, they are reflected in your hands. And of course, they change throughout the years. One day I looked down at my hands and to my surprise, I saw the hands of my mother! How on earth did that happen, seemingly overnight? Time had taken their toll on my hands. Initially, I was upset. How can I possibly be old enough to have hands that look like THIS? Where were the young, supple hands of the 20-year-old who perpetually lives inside the confines of my skin? What happened to THAT person?

The good news is, she's still right here. My hands are most definitely a reflection of what I can only call a happy life well lived. My hands reflect lots of activity, hands that delved into every activity and hobby with a passion. Hands that played hard and enjoyed life along the way. These hands have played sports, have spent many hours playing the piano and guitar, have done more than their share of DIY projects for fun and out of necessity, and repaired houses on mission trips to Appalachia. These hands have boasted their

fair share of splinters, blisters, rashes (thanks to poison ivy!), scrapes and cuts. These hands have been dried out by the weather and even by excessive handwashing (during cold and flu season, and especially recently).

But the best thing about these hands is that, hopefully, they have been there for other people. I am eager and honored to lend a hand to anyone in need. Isn't that the best feature of hands? When we can reach out and grab hold of someone who needs us? Or when we can reach down and pull someone up, someone who needs uplifting?

Incidentally, I am honored to have my hands look like my mom's ... I can think of no one else I'd rather emulate. Hardworking, supportive and ever ready to offer her hands to me in aid, and most importantly, always extended to hold me up and sustain me no matter the circumstances. I can think of much worse things than to have "mom" hands. I relish the thought of using my hands to reach and support others. It reminds me of the lyrics to that oldie but goodie,



"Sweet Caroline" by Neil Diamond. "... Hands, touchin' hands, reachin' out, touchin,' me touchin' you..." The same hands that have worked hard, scrubbed, gardened, become calloused and hard, can be comforting, sustaining and nurturing beyond measure to those in need.

I feel a sense of security knowing how many pairs of hands have my back at all times. Remember to let your hands be there for

those in your life. And remember to give yourself a hand every now and again. You deserve it!

About Brittany Pointe Estates

Brittany Pointe Estates is a gracious Lansdale retirement community that reflects the charm of the region of France for which it is named. Situated in northern Montgomery County, residents of Brittany Pointe Estates senior

living community enjoy an abundance of shopping opportunities, cultural offerings, theaters, gourmet restaurants, and beautiful parks that are nearby. Many of the nation's top hospitals and health care providers are less than an hour away in Center City Philadelphia and the surrounding areas. It is located at 1001 S. Valley Forge Road, Lansdale, PA 19446 and you can call 267-657-3106 for information.

SENIOR LIFE

SageLife Offers Move for Life Program, Produces Positive Results for Seniors

Staying physically active is a key component of leading a longer and healthier life. Studies show older adults who work on their physical wellness can reduce the risk of disease and decrease instances of injuries and falls. Plus physical activity helps combat feelings of depression and isolation – and improves general quality of life.

SageLife, which operates active lifestyle, retirement

and supportive senior living communities in Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey and Massachusetts, offers an innovative, holistic program from Move for Life Physical Therapy that helps seniors maintain and improve their physical wellness.

The Move for Life Physical Therapy program at SageLife communities is a mix of one-on-one physical therapy, therapeutic exercise classes, educational lec-

tures, gait training, neuromuscular re-education and adaptive equipment training – all aimed at improving the three main aspects of physical fitness: mobility, strength and balance. All aspects of the program are tailored to each individual's abilities and goals.

More than two-thirds of residents participating in Move for Life maintained or improved their performance in three key mobility met-

rics: Up and Go Test (71%), Sit to Stand test (73%) and Reach Test (67%).

While these numbers are impressive, the concrete ways seniors' lives have improved through the program tell the true story of its success:

- "I went from using a walker to walking trails," said a resident from SageLife's community Plush Mills, in Wallingford, Pa.
- "I was taking medication

for shoulder pain. It eased it somewhat, but wasn't complete solution," said another Plush Mills resident. "After just 12 sessions (in the Move for Life program), no more pills and problem solved!"

- "I walk with confidence and can go greater distances without getting tired," said a resident at Daylesford Crossing in Paoli, Pa. "Everyday activities are easier and my balance has improved."
- A resident at The Maples

in Towson, Md., reported that his arms, shoulders and upper body are all stronger. "I've graduated from a wheelchair to a walker and I'm on my way to walking independently."

The Move for Life Physical Therapy Program is available to residents at Kyffin Grove in North Wales, Pa., in addition to Plush Mills, Daylesford Crossing and The Maples of Towson.

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SENIOR LIFE

Resetting Hopes for an Alzheimer’s Treatment Breakthrough

By Hugh Bleemer
*Outreach and Admissions Counselor,
The Hickman*

Worldwide, 47 million people have Alzheimer’s disease or related dementia, and that number is expected to double in the next 20 years. Aging is by far the biggest risk factor for developing Alzheimer’s – if everyone lived to be 85, one in two people would develop dementia. It’s the sixth leading cause of death in the U.S., and the Alzheimer’s Association estimates 5.8 million Americans are living with the disease.

Many drug companies, research institutions and the National Institute of Health have joined forces over the years to run studies that test a new drug’s ability to prevent Alzheimer’s disease. To date, the results have been overwhelmingly disappointing, but not a knockout punch to researchers.

The leading target of many studies and panels is focusing on a protein fragment in the brain known as beta amyloid. Scientists and drug makers think the beta amyloid works this way – Amyloid accumulates in the brain and then tau a tangled, spaghetti-like protein appears causing neu-

rons (i.e. nerve cells) to die. One study showed that Alzheimer’s could be stopped if treatment began before symptoms emerged. For five years, on average, a group of volunteers received monthly infusions or injections of one of two experimental drugs, along with annual blood tests, brain scans, spinal taps and cognitive tests. According to the study’s result: the anti-amyloid drugs did nothing to slow or stop cognitive decline in the group of volunteers.

However, researchers believe the study may have been successful if the doses of medication were increased and they had used younger patients.

The failed study, along with the dawning realization that Alzheimer’s unfolds over decades, have put the entire field on a reset. Researchers need to develop and test interventions that can be used much earlier and discover new targets beyond the amyloid and tau proteins. In addition, they need to fund large, interdisciplinary, big data collaborations.

Dr. Richard Hodes, Director of the National Institute on Aging said, “Out of the 46 current pharmacological trials, 30 have targets other than amyloid. We are



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well on our way to moving toward these other potential targets.”

Even though recent experimental treatments haven’t produced any new drugs, they still have helped researchers learn more about the brain and the disease. Heather Snyder, Senior Director

of Medical and Scientific Operations for the Alzheimer’s Association says, “We are absolutely committed to making sure no stone is left unturned and that all avenues are pursued.” Stay tuned!

Promoting Senior Wellness

is provided by The Hickman Friends Senior Community of West Chester. A Quaker personal care home in West Chester. This column was written by Hugh Bleemer, Outreach and Admissions Counselor. www.thehickman.org

SENIOR LIFE

Your Medicare Minute - Ask Lu

What does Medicare cost?

On November 8, 2019, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the 2020 premiums, deductibles, and co-insurance amounts for the Medicare Part A and Part B programs.

Each year the Medicare premiums, deductibles, and copayment rates are adjusted according to the Social Security Act. For 2020, the Medicare Part B monthly premiums and the annual deduct-

ible are higher than the 2019 amounts. The standard monthly premium for Medicare Part B enrollees will be \$144.60 for 2020, an increase of \$9.10 from \$135.50 in 2019. The annual deductible for all Medicare Part B beneficiaries is \$198 in 2020, an increase of \$13 from the annual deductible of \$185 in 2019.

You can also experience “income related assessments” if you are single and your income is over \$87,000 and \$174,000 for a married couple.

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SENIOR LIFE

Green Hills Manor to Host Caregiver Support Group March 18

Sessions are free and open to the public. Caregivers of individuals with any debilitating disease are now welcome

SHILLINGTON, PA. » Green Hills Manor at The Heritage, the personal and memory care community on the campus of The Heritage of Green Hills, will host monthly support groups for caregivers of individuals suffering from dementia, as well as other debilitating diseases. The groups are held on the third Wednesday of each month. Upcoming dates include: Wednesday, March 18, 2020 Wednesday, April 15, 2020 “Any individual caring for a loved one with a debilitating disease is welcome to attend to find emotional support,” said Melissa Oley, marketing and admissions liaison for Green Hills Manor. “Recently, we have had attendees caring for in-

dividuals with Parkinson’s disease, and they found the group very helpful.” The caregiver support groups take place on the third Wednesday of each month from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Held in conjunction with the Delaware Valley Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association, the sessions are free and open to the public. “The support groups will provide a safe, confidential, supportive environment for participants to develop informal mutual support and social relationships,” Oley continued. “The groups also educate participants about dementia and help them develop the skills and confidence to solve caregiving challenges.” The support groups will be conducted by trained Alzheimer’s Association facilitators and held at Green Hills Manor, which is located at 10 Tranquility Lane, Shillington, Pa., just off Morgantown Road/Route 10 across from The Flying Hills Golf Course.

For more information, contact Melissa Oley at 484-755-3228 or moley@heritagegh.com. **About Green Hills Manor** Located on 78 acres of rolling hills in Berks County, Pennsylvania, on the campus of The Heritage of Green Hills, Green Hills Manor is a gracious, personal care community focused on helping residents reach their highest level of independence. Green Hills Manor provides a wealth of healthcare and support services to provide residents with a perfect blend of comfort, security and care. The community’s Well by Design program provides customized wellness plans and an on-site health services navigator who coordinates all health-related services to help residents stay well. Families benefit from the peace of mind that comes with 24-hour personalized care and professional licensed nurses on-site.



Green Hills Manor at The Heritage of Green Hills.

SENIOR LIFE

Wesley Enhanced Living Certified as a Great Place to Work® For Third Year in a Row

WARMINSTER, PA » Great Place to Work Institute has honored Wesley Enhanced Living with certification as a Great Place to Work. The certification process considered results from more than 1,000 employee surveys from seven Wesley Enhanced Living locations throughout Bucks, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. Great Place to Work is a nationally recognized independent arbiter of the best places to work in the country, showcasing outstanding workplace cultures and environments. The independent research and consulting firm evaluated more

than 60 elements of team members’ experience on the job, including employee pride in the organization’s community impact. “Earning this recognition for the third year in a row is special,” said Jeff Petty, president and chief executive officer of Wesley Enhanced Living. “Our team is composed of a strong and diverse group of individuals who push forward our mission of making a positive, compelling difference each day. Being recognized as a Great Place to Work highlights the extraordinary efforts of our staff.” This marks the third consecutive year Wesley En-

hanced Living has earned the Great Place to Work certification. Additionally, Wesley Enhanced Living was recently named as a 2019 Best Workplace in Aging Services by Great Place to Work and ranked by FORTUNE magazine as the sixth best place to work in the country in the Senior Housing and Care category amongst large employers. “We applaud Wesley Enhanced Living for seeking certification and releasing its employees’ feedback,” said Dr. Jacquelyn Kung, of Great Place to Work’s senior care affiliate Activated Insights. “These ratings measure its capacity to earn its

own employees’ trust and create a great workplace for high performance.” **About Wesley Enhanced Living (WEL)** The non-profit Wesley Enhanced Living (WEL) continuing care communities have a dedicated mission to deliver a purpose-filled life to residents. Serving over 1,200 residents with more than 1,100 employees throughout Pennsylvania, the Wesley Enhanced Living communities located in Bucks, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties provide various combi-

nations of independent living, personal care services, memory care, and rehabilitation and skilled nursing services. Wesley Enhanced Living has been named as a Best Workplace in Aging Services™ in 2018 and 2019, as well as a Great Place to Work® in 2018, 2019 and 2020. **About Great Place to Work®** Great Place to Work is the global authority on high-trust, high-performance workplace cultures. Through its certification programs, Great Place to Work recognizes outstand-

ing workplace cultures and produces the annual Fortune “100 Best Companies to Work For®” and Great Place to Work Best Workplaces lists for Millennials, Women, Diversity, Small & Medium Companies, industries and, internationally, countries and regions. Through its culture consulting services, Great Place to Work helps clients create great workplaces that outpace peers on key business metrics like revenue growth, profitability, retention and stock performance. Learn more at Greatplacetowork.com and on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.



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SENIOR LIFE

When it's time

Pa. ranks high for accidents involving seniors, but 'taking-the-keys' conversation is emotional

By Conway Lynch
MediaNews Group

For Americans, there is no greater expression of independence than driving.

The moment we get our license to drive is the moment our freedom is actualized. We can go where we want when we want. The ability to drive is not only an expression of freedom but is essential to the lifestyles of millions of Americans.

There's no wonder why the conversation surrounding "taking the keys" is one that elicits so much contention.

The reality is that Pennsylvania ranks very high for accidents involving drivers older than 65. But does that mean seniors should lose their right to drive? Is there a point in one's life when they must hang up the keys for good? Many care providers and driving professionals say no.

Cheryl Anderson, Well By Design Director at The Heritage at Green Hills, Cumru Township, said: "Over 70% of the independent living residents at The Heritage of Green Hills still drive."

Anderson attributes that statistic to the vibrant, active environment that keeps residents healthy and strong. The Heritage of Green Hills also offers educational programs for residents to help them stay safe on the road, including the AAA course "Driving for Mature Adults" and a "Drive Sharp Course."

Stay behind wheel
Continuing education certainly seems to be one of the best ways seniors can confidently stay behind the wheel, and the owner of Brandt's Driving School, headquartered in Johnstown, Cambria County, with operations in

the greater Berks region, agrees.

Timothy Brandt has more than 30 years of experience teaching and evaluating drivers of all different ages and capabilities. He believes all drivers are unique, including all senior drivers.

"Age has nothing to do with it," Brandt said. "Many people remain healthy well into their 90s. Age is just a number."

This claim seems to hold some truth. Last month, TV's "Inside Edition" uploaded a video to its YouTube account showing the world 107-year-old Joe Newman, who is still driving. Newman has been driving for 90 years, and he shows no signs of stopping aside from at red lights and stop signs.

How can seniors who've lost some ability get back on the road confidently? The answer is rehabilitation.

Stay on road

Brandt is one of the 16 certified driver rehabilitation specialists in the state. While he does accept that some cognitive issues may lead to a loss of ability, he champions the idea that all drivers should get a chance to stay on the road.

Before a behind-the-wheel driving evaluation takes place, there are a number of cognitive tests to check older drivers' reaction times, memory and other abilities. But Brandt believes the true test is a road test.

"For me not to let them in the car is a disservice," he said. "No matter how well you do on the cognitive test, I'll get you on the road."

Like any test, practice must come first if there is going to be any success. Brandt and his team provide seniors with training. This training is essential, he



BILL UHRICH — MEDIANEWS GROUP

Sigrid "Sigi" Schmidt, 82, is ready to roar off on her Suzuki Burgman 400 touring scooter as Cheryl Anderson, Well By Design Director at the Heritage at Green Hills, readies Sigi's helmet.

said, because it might illuminate the source of any issues behind the wheel.

"Physically, people change," Brandt said. "There could be issues with vision, strength or neck rotation."

Once instructors pinpoint an issue, they can take the necessary steps to fix it. This may include hand controls, spinner knobs and even voice-activated assistance.

Yet the fact remains that our state ranks high for accidents involving drivers over the age of 65.

While all the professionals agreed that the first step is training and evaluation, they also arrived at the same conclusion: there

comes a time when some drivers must hang up the keys for good.

'Ease into it'

Wendy Kershner, territory manager for Comfort Keepers, West Lawn, said when that time comes, she said, "it's best to ease into it."

Kershner accepts that this will never be an easy topic to discuss with loved ones, but she feels strongly that it's a matter of safety not only for the driver but for everyone else on the road.

Kershner said loved ones must follow their guts in broaching the topic.

"You have to ask yourself: 'Would you be comfortable putting your grandchildren in the car with them?'" she said.

Driver's doctor

Both Kershner and Brandt agree that the best way to approach the issue is through the driver's doctor.

"People trust their doctors," Brandt said. "They respect what they have to say."

As difficult as it may be to approach this topic, it's one that must be tackled. If you're finding dents in the car, scratches, paint exchanges or any other damage, it may be time to talk to your loved ones. This is es-

pecially important if they've been diagnosed with dementia or other conditions that could affect their judgment.

Don't let the struggling seniors in your life put themselves or others at risk. Help them understand that you're coming from a place of love, care and concern. Approach it gently, Kershner said.

Try to give the situation a positive spin, Brand said.

Driving a car can be a job or a lifelong occupation.

He said: "You've had a great career, but there comes a time to retire."



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SENIOR LIFE

In his 90s and feelin' fine

Life for actor Richard Lee, 92, still very much a bowl of cherries

By Marylouise Sholly
MediaNews Group

Local actor Richard Lee knows when to insert a pithy quote.

One of his favorites is from Oscar Wilde: "Life is too important to be taken seriously."

A life mingled with joy and grief, Lee holds on to the silver lining as he looks ahead. Having fun is an important part of his own philosophy.

Having recently purchased a red Corvette and found himself a new dog, Lee is one busy, productive, cheerful guy, and life — at age 92 — is still very much a bowl of cherries.

"He's everyone's favorite person," said daughter, Monica Lee. "He is quite an inspiration, and he's having a fun time. He's perfectly healthy and he's doing great. He's very much like Betty White."

One of Lee's personal favorite quotes is from George Herbert, who said "In age, I bud again."

In full flower

As a man in his 90s, Lee is in full flower.

Born in the Germantown section of Philadelphia, he lives in Flourtown, Montgomery County. It's just north of the city, Lee said, adding that he's lived in the same house since 1960.

Recently, Lee finished writing his memoirs.

No stranger to writing, Lee and his late wife had written more than 20 non-fiction reference books over the years, many of them for high school students, such as "Careers for Car Buffs and Other Free-wheeling Types."

Lee retired just last year from a career in advertising and promotional writing, having started in the 1950s at ad agencies in and around Philadelphia.

A member of Toastmasters International, Lee has also been the subject of a

number of podcasts.

"The present is very active," he said.

In 1945, Lee was drafted five days before the end of World War II.

He became a second lieutenant, serving in Tokyo after the war, in charge of repairing utilities.

"It was very transformative for a 19-year-old kid," Lee said of his military time.

A 1951 graduate of the College of William and Mary with a degree in English, Lee said he wasn't looking forward to a career in teaching, and felt like he had no prospects.

"I was pretty good in school, but too busy with extracurricular activities to be an academician," Lee said. "A fellow student and I wrote a college musical comedy called 'The Backdrop Club.' A frat brother and I did the script."

Acting avocation

The enjoyment he found in that endeavor pointed the way to an acting avocation.

Lee wrote for the college's literary magazine, becoming the editor in his senior year.

"Since I decided I didn't want to be a teacher, I wound up in advertising and worked for seven different ad agencies in and around Philadelphia," Lee said. "In its way, it was a great life."

In 1989, at the age of 30, Lee left advertising, saying it was a young people's game.

But when asked for help by a friend, Lee did some freelance advertising, turning it into a career he stayed with for the next 30 years.

Of his business associate, Lee said: "He's a youngster. He's only 72."

That was one career, Lee said, and the other was a combination career with his wife, Mary Price Lee.

"Between us, we wrote 21 books over 35 years: all career and copy books for high schools," Lee said. "It

was not your bestseller type of book. Most were sold to school directors and high-school counselors.

"They were modest sales, but they helped pay the rent," Lee said. "So that was my second track of employment."

A member of the Classic Car Club of America, he has also been a judge at several car shows.

Lee has owned more than 40 vintage automobiles — one at a time, he adds — and has been in more than 40 plays, so far.

"I've been interested in theater all my life and wanted to be a part of the theater, but I didn't want to starve in New York while waiting on tables and waiting for that big part to come," Lee said.

Theater group

Instead, he poured his creative spirit into an all-volunteer theater group.

"We don't get paid, but, boy, do we have fun," Lee said. "We do some pretty good plays and have done over 45 plays."

"I like comedy and I have a flair for comedy," Lee said. "I love entertaining people, if I can. I've played just about everything under the sun, but with an emphasis on comedy."

When Lee's wife, Mary, became ill, and passed six years ago, the world got dark for awhile.

"Since she passed away, life has changed a lot," Lee said. "That put a stop to theater, at least for the past several years. I couldn't make the rehearsals because of Mary's illness."

"Our three children had grown and flown, but fortunately, they all live within 15 miles. They are a big part of my support system," Lee said. "Loneliness can be a big problem for older people, but it's a problem I don't have because I've formulated my own network."

Over the years, he's lost a lot of friends, Monica said,



Richard Lee and daughter, Monika, together at a summer festival last year.



Richard Lee, 92, by his newest acquisition, a 1992 red Corvette convertible. Lee has owned more than 40 vintage cars over the years and he has been a judge at vintage car shows.

but then he's made new ones.

"As people pass, you don't have any choice," Monica said. "You either stay melancholy or you move on, so he's made new friends."

Richard and Mary had been married for 58 years at the time of her passing.

"Since my wife's death, I've had to re-invent my life, and so I have a large support system of friends," Lee said. "We had a wonderful life and I enjoyed a great deal of it."

"I came to grips with the fact that she was much more a 'people person' than I was. I've tried to emulate her character as a way of keeping her with me," he said.

Support network

Lee's support network includes son Richard "Rick" Manning Lee, recently retired from the grocery business; daughter Barbara, an activist and fundraiser; and daughter Monica, who started her own business, a wholesaling company; and one granddaughter.

Last spring, Lee tried out for Agatha Christie's "Witness For The Prosecution."

"I didn't get the part, so I got myself a dog," Lee said. "Sylvia is a six-year-old rescue and she's my buddy."

He's also part of a group that meets to read plays, saying: "If we can't act in them, we can read them."



Richard Lee wears the hat of the Mad Hatter, his costume to celebrate his 90th birthday.

"He's in tons of activities," Monica said. "He's always double-booked; he's very popular."

Lee enjoys watching vintage films and driving his 1992 bright red convertible.

"One of my mantras is: 'Do what you did yesterday, because, essentially, if you can do what you did yesterday, today, then you should be able to do it again tomorrow!'" Lee said.

Lee does his own housework, does some yoga and stretching at home, and walks the dog religiously, he said.

"So I get a good bit of exercise," he said. "I also eat a lot of salads: You don't have to heat them and they're

easy to fix. And I pay attention to nutrition and keep my weight down."

"I'm still able to drive and getting around is very important: It's a gift," Lee said. "I know how slender is the thread I hang by."

He's acted in major roles recently at Allens Lane Art Center Theater in Philadelphia.

"So my life at this stage is doing what I did yesterday and trying to add a little to it," Lee said. "I was fortunate recently to get a part as a geezer in 'You Can't Take It With You.' -I played Grandpa and I enjoyed it immensely, because I like to leave 'em laughing."



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Laurie Rofini, Chester County Historical Society

Women and men from southeastern Pennsylvania helped American women get their right to vote. The Pennsylvania Woman's Rights Convention, held in West Chester, was the first in the state.

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the group? Will there be any free days or afternoons? Will you change seats every day? When you get off the bus, can you leave personal belongings behind? How many people will be on the tour?

With Faith Woodward, Director of Admissions and Marketing at Barclay Friends—to learn more, please call 610-696-5211 or visit our website, <http://bf.kendal.org/>.

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SENIOR LIFE

Heritage Hotties silver poms cheerleaders give debut performance

SHILLINGTON » The Heritage Hotties, a silver poms cheerleading team made up of residents of The Heritage of Green Hills, a healthy life plan community in Shillington, gave its debut performance on Feb. 24.

Thirteen members of the squad performed an enthusiastic routine set to the Bobby Day classic “Rockin’ Robin.” The Heritage Hotties squad was formed when a group of residents saw the feel-good movie “Poms,” and thought it would be fun to start a team of their own, like the heroines

in the film. Luckily, resident Carol Lauer’s granddaughter is Elizabeth Lavanga, the former Berks Catholic Varsity Cheer Captain. The pre-med student at Penn State offered to help organize a team over her break as a community-service project. Lavanga also put together choreography that would be beneficial for seniors.

“Elizabeth did a great job of using Heritage’s model of health and wellness through activity and fun to inspire her routine,” says Cheryl Ander-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Karol Page (left) and Chris Blatt (right) perform a routine to Bobby Day’s “Rockin’ Robin” as part of the debut performance of the Heritage Hotties silver poms cheerleading squad at The Heritage of Green Hills.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Three Generations of Cheer: Kathy Lavanga leads the Heritage Hotties silver poms cheerleading squad in their debut performance at The Heritage of Green Hills. Lavanga’s daughter, Elizabeth Lavanga, choreographed the dance. Kathy’s mother, Carol Lauer, is a member of the team and a resident at the healthy life plan community in Shillington.

son, the community’s Well By Design Director. “She planned movements that help with balance, stretching, memory and endurance.”

Now members of the Heritage Hotties squad suit up in matching “Cheer by your own rules” T-shirts every Monday

to practice, move, laugh and have a great time together shaking their blue and gold poms.

The team is open to all residents, including those who prefer to cheer from a seated position. Enthusiasm is the only requirement. Some mem-

bers of the Heritage Hotties have cheerleading experience from high school and college.

Others, like Carol Lauer, are completely new to the sport.

“I’m glad to do it, because I wanted to be (a cheerleader) when I was in high school and I never got the chance,” Lauer

said. “The Heritage of Green Hills is a great place. We get up and around. We do things and we laugh about it. It’s just nice.”

After the performance, the team and their fans enjoyed a screening of the film “Poms” and ice cream sundaes.

SENIOR LIFE

Plush Mills Installs State-of-the-Art Food Digester to Divert Waste From Landfill, Prevent Carbon Emissions

Senior living community has diverted 4.5 tons of waste from landfill in just three months

WALLINGFORD » Plush Mills, SageLife’s sophisticated active lifestyle and supportive senior living community,

has installed a brand new BioHitech Food Digester in a plan to go “greener” and to prevent unnecessary waste in their day-to-day operations.

“We serve a lot of meals each day,” said Paul Rosen, General Manager at Plush Mills. “The problem is, with a lot of food comes a lot of

waste; this technology will help us reduce that waste and support the environment at the same time.”

A product of Gold Medal Environmental, a company in Sewell, NJ, the machine breaks down food waste through aerobic digestion, a combination of heat, water, oxygen and natural mi-

crobes. The digestion process turns the waste into an organic liquid that is disposed of naturally down the drain.

In three short months, Plush Mills has diverted over 4.5 tons of waste from ending up in a landfill. “Not only does the machine help divert waste — over 100

pounds each day — from the landfill, but it also cuts down on the use of plastic bags for trash,” said Rosen. “Additionally, fewer garbage pick-ups means carbon emissions in the air,” he concluded.

About Plush Mills

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Plush Mills is a SageLife community. SageLife is the new definition of senior living, rooted in a dedication to building communities that empower people to age successfully. Find out more about Plush Mills at www.plushmills.com.

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SENIOR LIFE

How to not let hearing loss impact your life and relationships

(BPT) - Pauletta B., a woman with hearing loss, became increasingly embarrassed by having to ask people to repeat themselves so she could understand them. At first, she just smiled and pretended she could hear what they said. Ultimately, her worsening hearing loss forced her to retire early from the job she loved.

Hearing well is essential to communication. Diminished hearing can negatively affect your relationships and your career, as well as your sense of self-esteem and ability to stay mentally sharp. The constant effort of straining to understand others may fatigue the brain, often leading those suffering from hearing loss to withdraw from life. Hearing loss keeps people from enjoying life to the fullest.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hearing loss is the third most common chronic physical condition in the U.S., and according to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, 1 in 3 people 65 years old and older and half of those 75 and older have hearing loss.

Because it can be gradual, those experiencing hearing loss may try to ignore or deny their difficulties for years. Embarrassment about having to ask others to repeat themselves causes some to pretend they've heard what was said when they really haven't.

For people who've tried hearing aid after hearing aid without improvement, the daily frustration is very real. Those with hearing loss struggle to hear conversation, particularly in environments with ambient noise. Talking on the phone is challenging, as they might have fallen into



Hearing well is essential to communication. Diminished hearing can negatively affect your relationships and your career, as well as your sense of self-esteem and ability to stay mentally sharp.

the habit of trying to read lips. As hearing loss progresses, many keep trying the newest hearing aids in an attempt to improve their situation.

Stories of real couples coping with one spouse's hearing loss - and how they regained hearing with cochlear implants - are explored in a new video series on YouTube called "The Sound of Love: Couples Share Ups and Downs of Hearing Loss Journeys" produced by Cochlear.

In the story of Pauletta and Chuck, Pauletta reveals that her growing inability to hear people speaking not only led her to retire from her job, but stopped her from going to church. She felt embarrassed about

her condition and coped by withdrawing from social situations.

Being able to hear again thanks to cochlear implants has helped Pauletta regain her sense of belonging to the community - and she was even surprised to hear their cat lapping a dish of water! Pauletta said that she and Chuck were once again communicating on a deeper level, and her daily frustrations of straining to hear others speak were gone.

Cochlear implants are surgically implanted medical devices which help many people with moderate to profound hearing loss in both ears who do not receive enough benefit from hearing aids. Unlike hear-

ing aids, most cochlear implants are covered by Medicare, and are also covered by many insurance plans, including Medicaid.* Cochlear implant technology is not just another hearing aid. Cochlear implants replace the function of the inner ear and can help you regain the ability to hear conversations, music and other sounds clearly.

Unsure if you or someone you love is experiencing hearing loss? Common signs to look for include:

- * Often asking people to repeat themselves
- * Difficulty hearing over background noise, like at restaurants
- * Feeling frustrated that other people seem to mumble when they speak

* Turning up the TV volume too loud for others

If you recognize any of these signs, you may want to get your hearing tested. If you've already tried hearing aids with little success, it may be time to consider further options. You will need to have your hearing tested by a hearing implant specialist to determine if you are a candidate for a cochlear implant. Don't let your hearing loss stand in the way of living a richer, fuller life.

*Covered for Medicare beneficiaries who meet CMS criteria for coverage. Coverage for adult Medicaid recipients varies according to state specific guidelines. Contact your insurance provider or hearing

implant specialist to determine your eligibility for coverage.

Please seek advice from your health professional about treatments for hearing loss. Outcomes may vary, and your health professional will advise you about the factors which could affect your outcome. Always read the instructions for use. Not all products are available in all countries. Please contact your local Cochlear representative for product information. Views expressed are those of the individual. Consult your health professional to determine if you are a candidate for Cochlear technology.



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4 steps to market-proof your retirement

(BPT) - People often underestimate the financial implications that timing can have on retirement. Consider this scenario: You retire confidently with \$1 million, but immediately get hit with a huge stock-market decline.

“A major mistake I see people make is to assume that their investment returns will be average every year of retirement,” says Daniel M. Keady, CFP®, chief financial planning strategist at TIAA. “Retire when the market is up and it can bolster your portfolio for the years ahead. But if you retire in a year when the market is down, a fixed withdrawal plan may eventually come up short and you can run out of money in retirement.”

A market downturn around the time of retirement is a serious risk that can greatly affect your quality of life and hard-earned retirement.

And while it is impossible to guarantee you retire in a strong economic market, there are steps you can take to help protect yourself and your financial future, regardless of what happens with the market.

Keady offers four tips for protecting yourself against a market downturn in retirement:

Build up your income for the future

If you’re young or just starting out, consider investing in mutual funds and slowly build an income through annuities. An annuity is a financial product that can generate regular income payments in retirement for your entire life, no matter how long you live. You can begin to invest in an annuity through your employer, if available, or you can purchase one on your own. The more you build up in the annuity over the course of your life, the less you will have to worry about volatility or a down-



There are steps you can take to help protect yourself and your financial future.

turn close to retirement.

“When this happens,” says Keady, “you can convert a portion of your savings into an immediate annuity, which may help reduce sequence of returns risk and cover essential expenses throughout your lifetime, regardless of what happens in the market.”

TIAA offers fixed annuities that are guaranteed to grow every day during your savings years regardless of market fluctuations and provide guaranteed monthly payments that never run out.

Follow a long-term strategy

The best investment strategy is a long-term one. If you buy and sell your investments frequently, you’re likely to buy and sell based

on panic or excitement. Instead, being proactive can partially protect you from the impact of a future volatile market by rebalancing your portfolio back to your risk level regularly.

Plan for longevity

The other risk in retirement is longevity. More than half of 65-year-old men will live beyond age 85 and one in three is expected to live to at least age 90, while nearly two-thirds of 65-year-old women are expected to live to age 85 and almost half will live to age 90[i]. Unfortunately for many, their savings will not be adequate. Be sure to take your life expectancy into account when planning for retirement.

Consider Social Security Add up your Social Se-

curity income, pension income and lifetime annuity income. If you run into issues of market volatility or longevity, will this be enough? Delaying retirement and Social Security claims for a few years to get a bigger future inflation-adjusted check can help add lifetime annuity income and may reduce the risk to your retirement income.

The idea of saving enough money for retirement can be overwhelming, and on top of that, sudden volatility close to retirement can drastically reduce quality of life in retirement. Follow these tips to help protect yourself and secure a source of income in

retirement.

[i] Society of Actuaries <https://www.longevityillustrator.org/>

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Social Security Matters

By **AMAC Russell Gloor**
Certified Social Security Advisor,

Association of Mature American Citizens

Ask Rusty – What Will My Widow’s Benefit Be?

Dear Rusty: My husband just started receiving Social Security Disability in June. He is diagnosed with a terminal disease that likely he will rapidly succumb to. He will be 65 in Oct 2019. I turned 62 July 2019. I was his caregiver when he was at death’s door and was pulled back to 75% full life on immunotherapy. We see him starting to go downhill again; it creeps, then starts moving rapidly with the symptoms. I will be the caregiver again for round 2 that has no brakes to stop it this time - no do over. After he passes, when does the disability SS amount stop and what amount starts coming to me in my name as his widow, at my age? Signed: Survivor under age 65

Dear Survivor: Please know that you have my sympathy for what you and your husband are going through. Let me at least try to ease your anxiety by answering your Social Security questions.

Your husband’s disability benefit will cease in the month he passes. Although, depending upon the date, he may receive a disability payment for the month he passes (it would be received the following month), that payment, if received, will need to be returned to Social Security (SS). Social Security will only pay up to the last full month your husband is



alive. The funeral home is supposed to notify Social Security of your husband’s passing, but you should verify that they will be doing that. Your benefit as your husband’s survivor will be based upon the SS disability amount your husband was receiving at his death.

Although your survivor benefit will be based upon the amount your husband was receiving, if you take it before you reach your full retirement age (FRA) the survivor benefit will be reduced. Your full retirement age for the widow’s benefit is 66 plus 2 months (versus your normal FRA of 66 ½). You have a choice to take the reduced survivor benefit early (before your FRA), or wait until your FRA to claim the full amount your husband was collecting at his death. If you claim your widow’s benefit early, the reduction will be about

4.75% for each year earlier than your FRA that you claim it. Your survivor benefit reaches maximum at your widow’s FRA. You must apply for your widow’s benefit in person with Social Security and you should contact your local office by phone first to make an appointment. You can easily find your local SS office contact information at this link: www.ssa.gov/locator.

Taken at age 62, the survivor benefit will be reduced by about 20%. When to claim your survivor benefit might be influenced by whether you are eligible for Social Security benefits from your own lifetime work record. If you are eligible for your own benefit, you should look at what your own benefit will be at age 70. If it will be more than your survivor benefit, you should make sure to file a “restricted application”

for survivor benefits to allow your own benefit to continue to grow. It will grow until you are 70, at which time you would switch from the lower survivor benefit to your own (you get whichever benefit is higher). Your decision on when to claim the survivor benefit might also be influenced by your plans for working. Since you have not yet reached your normal full retirement age (66 + 6 months), any Social Security benefit you claim before that (including your survivor benefit) will be subject to Social Security’s earnings test. The “earnings limit” for 2019 is \$17,640 (changes annually) and if you exceed that, Social Security will take back benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. The earnings limit will be in effect until you reach your normal full retirement age, at which point it goes away. Once again, you have my sympathy for the difficulties you are experiencing, but fortunately your Social Security widow’s benefit will be available to you when your husband passes.

Ask Rusty – Understanding the Family Maximum

Dear Rusty: My husband passed away when our children were 3 and 5 years old. I received benefits for myself, our two children and my 14-year-old son from a previous relationship. When my 14-year-old son turned 18, the amount he received stopped and was added to ours, keeping the total family amount the same. Then in July of this year my youngest daughter turned 16 so I fell off with that amount now going to my kids. Again, the total family amount stayed the same - \$625.00 each for my daughter and son. The very next month in August, my youngest son turned 18 so of course, he fell off. I called Social Security and the representative said that she couldn’t guarantee that my son’s full amount will go to my daughter. It turns out that none did, decreasing the family amount by \$625.00. My question is why was the family amount reduced when she still has 2 years before she turns 18?

Signed: Confused Survivor

Dear Confused: I understand your confusion – let me clarify what happened in your situation: Social Security (SS) sets a “Family Maximum” amount, which is the most all eligible family members combined can receive from a worker’s (your husband’s) record. SS uses a rather complex formula to compute the Family Maximum amount, but it comes out to be somewhere between 150% and 180% of your husband’s “primary insurance amount” (or “PIA,” what he was entitled to when he passed). The family maximum is in effect whenever there are multiple beneficiaries on a worker’s record.

The benefits you were personally receiving were “child in care” benefits which entitled you, as a surviving spouse with a minor child, to collect 75% of the benefit your husband was receiving, or entitled to receive, at his death. Child in care benefits stop when the youngest child reaches 16 years of age. Each of your 3 minor children were also entitled to receive 75% of their deceased father’s (or stepfather’s) benefit amount. Minor children can receive 75% of the deceased parent’s benefit until they reach 18 years of age (or 19 if still in high school). However, all benefits are subject to the “family maximum.” The total of benefits paid to all survivors of the deceased is limited to that family maximum and, if that amount is reached, all eligible survivors share equally in that family maximum amount. Then as each survivor becomes ineligible due to their age, the remaining survivors each receive a proportional share of the family maximum amount, but that adjustment cannot result in an individual’s benefit being more than they are otherwise entitled to (their maximum individual benefit of 75% of your husband’s PIA).

When your oldest son turned 18 and became ineligible, the sum of benefits due all remaining survivors was still more than the family maximum, so the family maximum amount was equally divided among the remaining eligible survivors. Then, when your el-

igibility for child-in-care benefits ceased when your youngest turned 16, your two remaining minor children each received either a) their equal share of the family maximum, or b) 75% of their father’s PIA (their normal entitlement as a surviving minor child). When your youngest son turned 18 and became ineligible, your youngest daughter was then eligible to receive only her full benefit as a minor surviving child (75% of your husband’s benefit), which she can continue to receive until she is 18 (or 19 if still in high school). So, as you can see, the family maximum isn’t an amount which is fully available to any survivor, it is an amount that restricts the total amount which can be paid to all when there are multiple eligible survivors.

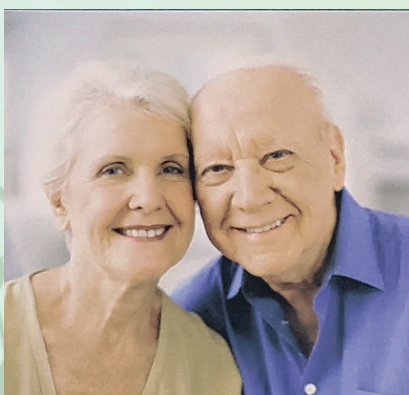
Please note that at age 60 you are once again eligible for a surviving spouse benefit, which will be based upon 100% of the benefit your husband was entitled to at his death, subject, of course, to normal reductions and earnings restrictions for claiming benefits before your full retirement age.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website or email us.

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6 menopause myths debunked

(BPT) - Many previously taboo subjects - like menopause - are more openly talked about today. But instead of discussing the real experience of menopause, it's often used as a punchline - like jokes about hot flashes. Myths about this stage of a woman's life abound, making it hard to sort fact from fiction.

Here are some popular menopause myths best laid to rest - even if there's a grain of truth to some of them.

Myth #1: Hot flashes and mood swings are the only symptoms

Many other symptoms are experienced during perimenopause and menopause. Though easy to dismiss as unrelated, each of the following are common menopause symptoms. (Thankfully, most of them are temporary.)

Fatigue - Sleeplessness and night sweats, due to your body's decline in estrogen, may add to your overall feeling of tiredness.

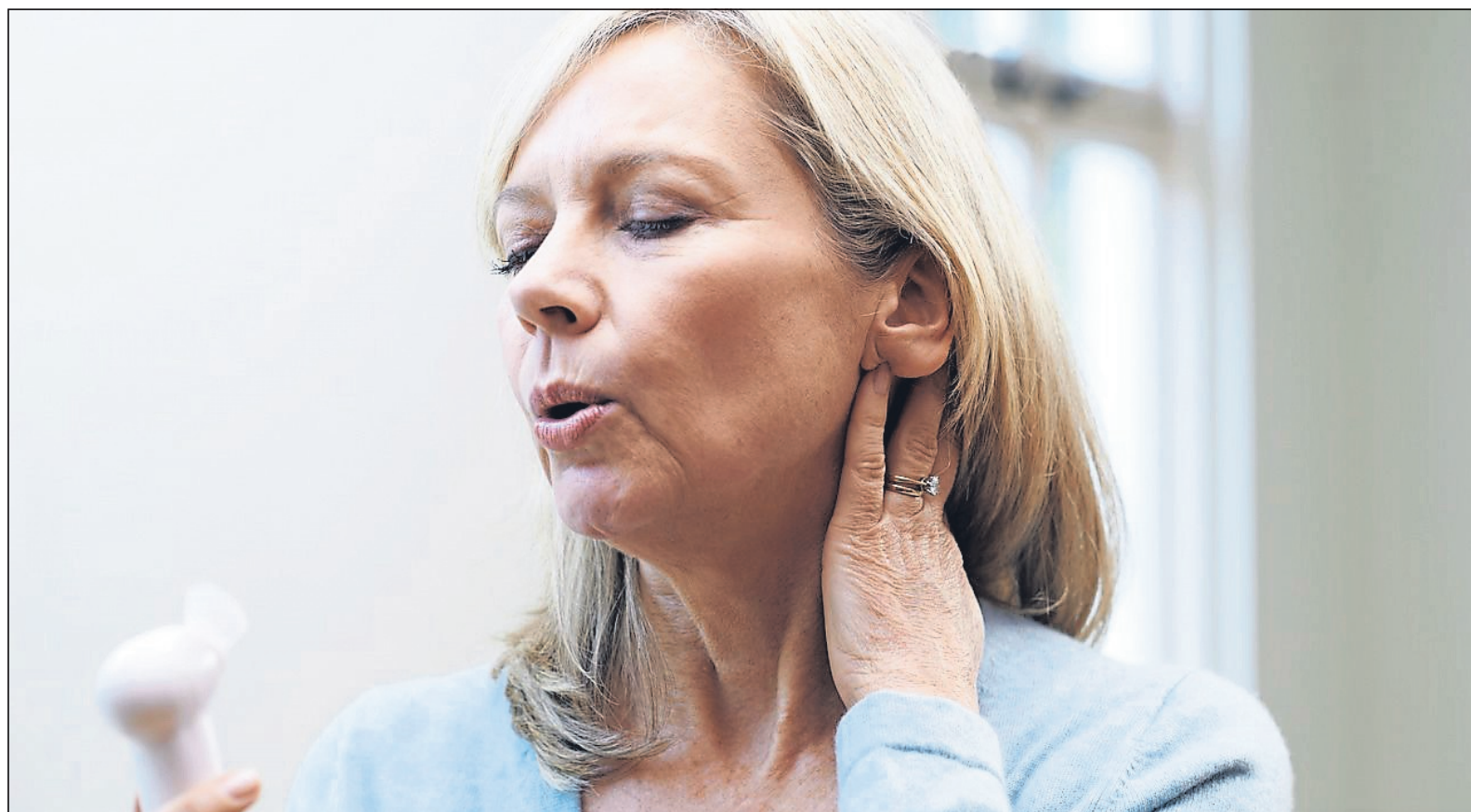
Brain fog - If you're having trouble remembering things or concentrating during the day, you're not going crazy, and it's not necessarily just a sign of aging.

Weight gain - While some weight gain may be due to the fact that your metabolism is slowing down, it can also be due in part to hormonal changes your body is going through.

Thinning hair and dryer skin - It's not your imagination. Changes in your estrogen levels can affect the look and feel of your skin and hair.

Myth #2: It's all about the hot flashes

Popular belief is that every woman experiences hot flashes. While it's true



Model used for illustrative purposes only

For any symptoms causing concern, it's best to talk to your doctor.

that hot flashes are experienced by about 75% of women, not everyone has them - and not all at the same point during the menopause journey. And they're not exactly a laughing matter, as anyone who has experienced them knows. Hot flashes at night also cause night sweats, which can be seriously disruptive to your sleep.

Myth #3: Your experience will be just like your mom's

Your experience of menopause may be completely different from your mother's, your sister's - or anyone else's. While it's helpful to compare notes and learn from other women, don't expect your

symptoms to be identical - and there's nothing wrong with you if they're not.

Myth #4: One day you just stop menstruating

The truth is, perimenopause can last years, with a variety of symptoms as your body changes. Your menstrual cycle may become less regular gradually or change drastically, but it is a process rather than a specific date on the calendar. If you haven't been menstruating for months and you experience bleeding, however, see your doctor to make certain it's just a normal part of your menopause journey.

Myth #5: There's nothing you can do about mood

swings

It's easy to believe that your hormones dictate your wild mood swings from irritability and anger to anxiety or weepiness, and that it's just a part of what happens as your estrogen levels decline. If you do experience unpredictable mood swings, you're not alone - nearly 1 in 4 women in perimenopause have experienced them, but there are steps you can take:

Amp up self-care: Take time to de-stress and pursue activities that help you feel better.

Boost your health: Catch up on wellness exams, focus on nutrition and get more exercise.

Try products from Kindra such as The Core Dietary Supplement, made from French maritime pine bark extract and ashwagandha extract, which can help relieve seven common menopause symptoms including mood swings, hot flashes and more.

Myth #6: Decline in your sex life is inevitable

Many assume that with menopause comes less interest in and enjoyment of sex. While it is true some women experience a decreased libido, along with vaginal dryness that can make intercourse uncomfortable, it does not mean your sex life is over. You can improve how you feel with Kindra's Daily Vagi-

nal Lotion and Applicator, which leaves sensitive vaginal skin feeling soothed and comfortable. It is gynecologically tested, made with clinically tested ingredients, plus it's estrogen-free, paraben-free and fragrance-free. The easy-to-use applicator is mess-free, and targets the spots that most need moisture.

For any symptoms causing concern, it's best to talk to your doctor. To learn more about products to help you get through menopause, get expert advice, and to connect with other women who have experienced similar symptoms, visit OurKindra.com.

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2. Repairing and re-educating your nerves.
3. Increasing the blood flow in your feet or hands.
4. Increasing your balance and mobility.



**Beacon of Life Chiropractic
& Neuropathy Specialists**

70 Buckwalter Rd., Suite 412
Royersford, PA 19468

Doctor supervised program



**Get Relief with No Surgery, Shots, or Addictive and Dangerous Medications
100% Non-Invasive – No Side Effects**

"To me it's been a miracle. I can wear regular shoes again. I don't have the burning, pins & needles now. I am thrilled." - Leah M.

"Before the program I never knew how hard I was pushing the brake pedal. Now, I can feel the pressure." - Tony Z.

"At night, I couldn't sleep well because my feet were shocking me. They aren't doing it now and I can sleep all the way through." - Cheryl G.



FREE SEMINAR DETAILS

Date: March 24, 2020 Time: 11:30 am

(610) 906 - 0636

SEATING IS LIMITED
CALL TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION TODAY

**Dr. Daniel McClimon, DC, BCN
Board Certified Neuropathy Specialist**

Spare yourself wishing you'd done it sooner.

We hear it often. New residents settle in and then, realizing what they've got here, they say, "I wish we'd done this sooner." That's because Bellingham is filled with supportive friends, daily adventures and a secure plan – and that makes their lives even more fun and fulfilling.

Discover Bellingham

Call **610-798-3190** to schedule a chat about community life and learn about our upcoming events.



1615 East Boot Road | West Chester, PA 19380
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