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SELF-ESTEEM

FASHIONABLY FIT AT 50+

As we emerge from pandemic shutdowns, it might be time to update your wardrobe

By Courtney H. Diener-Stokes
For MediaNews Group

If you're leading up to or have hit age 50, you might be feeling like you're in a fashion predicament all of a sudden and find yourself questioning what's in your wardrobe.

Are my wedge sneakers still age-appropriate? Are skinny jeans too trendy for me? Is it OK to show a little cleavage?

These questions might lead you to feel out of touch with your personal sense of style and might even be doing a number on your level of self-confidence.

You could call it a fashion identity crisis of sorts. It might be especially applicable now that the U.S. is starting to open back up again and ease mask policies, which means you might come across more occasions where you have to trade in your comfy quarantine sweats for an outfit that has you feeling more put together, whether it's for dinner out at a restaurant, attending a wedding or a backyard cookout.

According to research published by the American Psychological Association in its Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, you're supposed to have a higher level of self-esteem as you age, which peaks at age 60. This might leave you wondering why in the world clothing choices now feel complicated at a time when you should be at your prime to feel the most comfortable in your own skin.

Feeling disconnected and unsure about what's currently in your wardrobe might very well be a part of your fashion evolution as you journey into finding a new sense of personal style for the second half of a century of your life.

The good news is that you're not alone, and with a little guidance from a local fashion expert, you will be well on your way to getting back to dressing with confidence instead of hesitance.

Juli Cleaver, owner of Bella Jules in West Reading, weighed in on the topic while she was on a business buying trip in California where she

FASHIONABLY FIT » PAGE 2



A community that has come together, while looking forward to growth and change.

We are not just a community; we are a safe place to call home. At Riddle Village, we are taking every precaution in this difficult time to ensure our residents, employees and caregivers are protected. At the same time, we are still working with those who understand a plan for the future and our extensive Lifecare contract offers peace of mind.

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When age 50+ pick out some fashionable accessories to tie into classic pieces in your wardrobe.

Fashionably fit

FROM PAGE 1

was scoping out the latest fashion trends.

One thing she highlighted that's big this season is bold shoulders and sleeve details. As we age, things like to sag, such as the skin under the arms, and these features can help curb any arm insecurities.

"Whether it is in a top or dress, it's a great way to add interest to your outfit," Cleaver said. "Plus the trend offers arm coverage for those who want it."

She also helped narrow down some good jean styles for those 50+ and suggested a way to style the look in order to elevate it.

"Skinny jeans will remain timeless, but straight, more relaxed jeans continue to increase in popularity and create an effortless vibe," she said. "A blazer or jacket is always a great staple piece to throw on for a polished look."

Cleaver said that color is

a big trend in clothes right now. It's something that can transcend age.

"Any age can experiment with adding new palettes to their wardrobe," she said.

She also pinpointed a dress style that is on-trend but isn't constricting for those who are waist-conscious.

"The tiered dress is versatile, comes in an array of lengths and is universally flattering no matter one's age," she said. "Pieces with volume also work for a range of ages — they are comfy while remaining chic and fashionable."

Cleaver has a suggestion for how to stay relevant with the trends without appearing that you're trying too hard to look younger.

"I feel it's good to dress in classics and then add in a trend, be it with a piece of clothing or accessory," she said. "When buying for the store and its customers, I try to focus on classics with a twist."

She refers to a "twist" as pieces that have a little extra something to them that make them relevant in fashion

but also can be worn for more than just one season.

In order to avoid buying clothing items you'll regret later, Cleaver suggests taking the time to try them on before purchasing. Also, when you're out shopping, she suggests not hesitating to ask for guidance.

"Pieces look so different on, and what you style it with can change the whole look," she said. "Ask for suggestions while shopping; that's a fun part of our job."

While some trends for the season, such as crop tops, are big right now, that doesn't necessarily mean they are easy for everyone to pull off. In those cases, Cleaver offers some guidance for when you have envy for a look but it's not necessarily right for your body type or you feel aged out of the trend.

"There are a lot of brands that do versions of trends that are more wearable," she said. "Ultimately you want to dress for your body and choose items you feel good wearing. After this past year especially, you want to bring joy back into dressing."



Around age 50 you might find yourself facing a fashion predicament.

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MILITARY



JEREMY LONG — READING EAGLE

Pennsylvania Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Mike Moy, center, is honored by Lt. Col Ken Smith, Army Aviation Support Facility commander, late last month as Moy prepares to retire from the Guard after 45 years of service. With Moy is his wife, Cyndee.

‘SELFLESS SERVICE’

Berks man retires as longest serving Pa. Army National Guard member

By Jeremy Long
 jlong@readingeagle.com
 @jeremymlong on Twitter

Sgt. 1st Class Mike Moy never wanted to join the Army.

He actually wanted to join the Navy, but he couldn't do what he wanted to do because he is color-blind.

So, he gave the Marine Corps a try. That did not suit him either.

Moy, a Bethel Township resident, turned to the Army and wanted to join the elite airborne troops but was talked into being a crew chief for aircraft instead, helicopters and airplanes.

"It was love at first sight," he said.

Moy retired on June 30 with just over 45 years of service in the Pennsylvania National Guard and 7,600 flight hours, including 1,200 combat flight hours. He is the longest-serving Guard member, said PA National Guard Acting State Public Affairs Officer Brad Rhen.

In 2018, Moy was awarded the Gen. William Moffat Reill Medal, which is given annually to the Pennsylvania National Guard airman who has served faithfully for the longest period.

Moy is not the type of person who seeks recognition, so when 200 of his friends, family and co-workers showed up at a picnic grove at Fort Indiantown Gap on June 25 he

was not enthusiastic.

"It's selfless service," he said. "I'm not the individual. This (picnic), I didn't want this. I just wanted to walk out the back door, shake everyone's hand, go home and hang up my hat."

Moy's last flight, on June 11, was a full circle flight. He enlisted in the military at North Philadelphia Airport and that is where his last flight was, too.

"I never thought there would be a last flight because you never do," Moy said. "It was a surreal experience that this is the last time I'm going to fly as a military crew member in an aircraft."

Moy, who turns 64 soon, is not retiring altogether. In



JEREMY LONG — READING EAGLE

As a crew chief, Sgt. 1st Class Mike Moy, was responsible for making sure the aircraft was flight worthy all the time.

SERVICE » PAGE 4

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Service

FROM PAGE 3

fact, he's looking for a civilian job in aviation.

"I like to joke that I spoil my family," Moy said. "They're used to having a roof over their heads, food on the table and clothes on their backs. And the job of a husband and father is to provide that. I'll just try to do the best I can."

Big shoes to fill

The mandatory retirement age is 60, but soldiers can get extensions for certain circumstances. Moy was able to get a few extensions.

"I don't consider it an accomplishment on my part," Moy said. "It's a blessing. The man upstairs has been looking out for me."

The reason Moy kept getting retirement extensions was because of his vast knowledge and experience, said Lt. Col. Ken Smith, Army Aviation Support Facility commander.

"We needed a person of Mike's caliber and experience to continue to help train our younger crew members that were about to go on a deployment," Smith said. "Then we realized we had nobody to stay here. I needed someone to stay here and continue to support the flight program."

"He has trained so many people that have come, done their initial training, seen them get their promotions and then seen them actually retire. And Mike is still here to carry that torch and train others in his stead."

It's not easy to replace a man of Moy's character and the one thing Smith will always remember is how much Moy loved his job.

"The man has a love of his job and it keeps him young," Smith said. "You look at him and he doesn't look any different than he did 15 years ago when I met him. The same attitude, the same level of energy, the same dedication. That's rare. That's what I'll remember."

"I never thought there would be a last flight because you never do. It was a surreal experience that this is the last time I'm going to fly as a military crew member in an aircraft."

As a crew chief, Moy was responsible for making sure the aircraft was flight worthy all the time and flying with the aircraft every flight.

"We always joke that the crew chief owns the aircraft and the pilot borrows it," Moy said.

Being responsible that an aircraft is maintained properly can be stressful. Moy enjoyed being thorough when maintaining the helicopter or going through the preflight checklist.

"I always looked at aircraft maintenance as if my family or Christ was going to get in this aircraft," he said. "I wanted it to be as safe and as perfect as possible."

It was the flying that made Moy fall in love with being a crew chief.

"I'm ready to retire and my office is a stinking helicopter. It's a Blackhawk, how cool is that?" he asked.

Plenty of action

Moy has been the crew chief on four Army aircraft.

The first one was a UH-1 Huey, the iconic helicopter from the Vietnam War era.

He was a crew chief on a UH-72 Lakota.

He spent most of his career as a crew chief for the UH-60 Blackhawk and some of his most rewarding missions were as crew chief on the C-23, a cargo airplane.

Each aircraft holds a special place in his heart and he has numerous stories to tell from his career.

Several years ago Moy and his crew were training for rescue-hoist operations with a Blackhawk when they were called to head north for flooding.

Moy and his crew rescued eight people, two dogs and a cat from the rooftops.

"As a guardsman that is

something in the back of your mind: You have to be ready at any time," he said. "The training kicked in."

Flying in the C-23, Moy gained an appreciation for the country's special forces. One mission included flying about 20 miles off the coast of Virginia at 1 a.m. where the special forces team jumped into the ocean.

"Who jumps 20 miles off into the Atlantic Ocean in pitch black darkness at 16,000 or 14,000 feet?" Moy said. "These guys are special and you wouldn't even know it."

Moy deployed three times to Iraq.

"We were responsible for moving thousands of tons of cargo and thousands of people," Moy said. "We kept them off of the military supply routes and we got them from point A to point B safely."

High praise

Chief Warrant Officer Dale Yoder is one of Moy's oldest friends in the Guard. The two met in 1982.

"Mike was my sergeant and my mentor when I joined the flight platoon," Yoder said. "Every task he's given he does an incredible job — father, soldier and human being. He honored me by allowing me to fly him on his last flight."

Moy was always the one to keep the crew's spirits up, Yoder said, usually through a good, clean dad joke.

"He always was happy," Yoder said. "He always had a smile and a good thing and kind word to say."

It's because of that thoroughness that the flight facility has such a good safety record, Yoder said.

"He's one of the most professional people I've known," Yoder said. "When I go out to the aircraft and he says it's ready, it's ready."

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LEADERSHIP

Riddle Village appoints new president/CEO

Riddle Village

Riddle Village Retirement Community in Media, Delaware County, announced the appointment of Kimberly Foster-Roguszewski as its new president/CEO following the retirement of Robert G. Bertollette on June 30.

Bob served as the president/CEO for 25 years and will be missed by residents and staff. However, he said he is pleased to be pass the baton to Kim, who has worked alongside him throughout his career at Riddle Village.

"I am very pleased and honored to leave Riddle Village in the very capable hands of Kim Roguszewski, as she will begin her journey as our new president/CEO," Bob said. "Thank you to the residents, family members, associates and board members for the pleasure of serving and for leaving your footprints on my heart. My hope is I did the same in return."

Kim is already well-known and respected at Riddle Village. She has held many different titles over the last 26 years and has taken on more responsibilities as the years have passed.

She started at Riddle Village as a staff accountant, then became the assistant director of accounting in 1996, the director of accounting in 1997, the CFO in 2000 and the executive vice president in 2019.

Several people were interviewed for the CEO position, but it was an easy decision for a special board committee, which included several residents, to select Kim.

The committee unanimously agreed that the residents would be best served under Kim's leadership.



COURTESY OF RIDDLE VILLAGE

Kimberly Foster-Roguszewski is the new president/CEO of Riddle Village Retirement Community.

Not only is the committee and the entire community excited about the new leadership, but Kim herself is also looking forward to what the future holds at Riddle Village.

"I have been involved in the growth of Riddle Village for a long time, and as our industry changes, we need to make sure we are changing along with it," she said. "That will keep Riddle Village strong in every aspect. Our residents deserve the very best, and I intend to help lead our team to provide just that. We will never be everything to everyone and that is OK."

"However, I am committed to working every day to make sure we are the best, our residents are always proud to say they are part of our community, and our staff know that they are part of a team that is respected, cared for, and supported."

When asked if there is anything she wishes to communicate to our com-

munity about stepping into this new role, Kim talks of being confident in the future of Riddle Village and her role here.

"When I walked into Riddle Village 26 years ago as a relatively new college graduate, I could never have imagined I would someday be named the CEO," she said. "Today, I cannot imagine being anywhere else or doing anything else. I am truly honored to be given the opportunity to continue my career right where it started in a place, I consider my second home."

"After many years of working under Bob Bertollette, our current CEO, and being mentored by some truly amazing individuals, I am confident that I can help continue to make Riddle Village a unique, strong organization. I look forward to spending more time with residents and staff, listening to their opinions, sharing in their lives, and helping them in any way I can."

"I want to thank each of you that have reached out to congratulate me, gave me a reassuring hug, shared your invaluable advice, warmth, and kindness. I will do everything in my power to make you proud."

As we look to the future at Riddle Village, we are very confident that our community will continue to thrive and be a luxurious and comfortable home to our residents.

We want to wish Kim good luck in her new role at Riddle Village and extend our greatest appreciation to Bob for all he has done for us as he enters his well-deserved retirement. Riddle Village would not be the community it is today without either of you!

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MEDICARE

Medicare benefits enrollment counseling program gets a new name

MediaNews Group

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging announced that as of July 1, the PA State Health Insurance Assistance Program, formerly known as AP-PRISE, has been renamed Pennsylvania Medicare Education and Decision Insight, or PA MEDI.

Pennsylvania's Medicare beneficiaries will receive the same services under the same program, just under a new name.

PDA's Education and Outreach Office (EEO) embarked on a rebranding process to improve public awareness of the program and of the valuable services it provides to Pennsylvania's Medicare-eligible

individuals, their families and caregivers to assist them in making informed health insurance decisions that optimize cost-savings and access to health care and benefits.

PA MEDI provides free, confidential, objective and easy-to-understand information about Medicare Advantage Plans, prescription drug plans and Medicare Supplement plans, Medicare appeals, and allows Medicare beneficiaries to compare plans and costs to determine what best meets their needs.

"The new brand presents a unique opportunity for the program to grow, innovate and connect with beneficiaries and organizations; tap into new popula-

tions; and to better accommodate the needs of beneficiaries," said Susan Neff, PA MEDI director. "The new brand also supports the vision to be the known and trusted community resource for unbiased Medicare information. We welcome beneficiaries to call the PA MEDI Helpline at 800-783-7067 for Medicare-related questions."

The program's services are provided through Pennsylvania's 52 Area Agencies on Aging by a network of almost 800 trained counselors in the commonwealth, many of whom are volunteers.

Many PA MEDI volunteer counselors started off as Medicare beneficiaries with questions or concerns

about their coverage who, after receiving assistance through PA MEDI, wanted to learn more about how they could share that knowledge with others. PA MEDI volunteer counselors receive free training about Medicare, Medicaid, Medicare Advantage, Medigap, Medicare prescription drug coverage, appeals, fraud, abuse and more.

To learn more about PA MEDI or becoming a volunteer or to find an open enrollment event in your area, call the PA MEDI Helpline at 800-783-7067, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or go www.aging.pa.gov/aging-services/medicare-counseling/Pages/default.aspx.



Susan Neff

SUBMITTED PHOTO

INTERNSHIP

White Horse Village takes part in Leading Age Summer Enrichment Program

White Horse Village

White Horse Village in Newtown Square is excited to be taking part in the LeadingAge Summer Enrichment Program by hosting two Penn State University student interns: Gongbah Massaquoi from Trainer, Delaware County, and Robert Phinn from Yardley, Bucks County.

The program is a 10-week immersive internship hosted at a LeadingAge member organization, with a goal to provide leadership opportunities in aging services for stu-

"I've already learned so many different aspects of healthcare. My team members here are so willing to share their experiences and advice with me."

dents.

"Our industry has abundant career opportunities in many fields, such as marketing, facilities management, social work, administration, and more," said White Horse Village President and CEO Len Weiser. "We are happy to provide this advanced level of hands-on experience to these two very bright individuals."

Although Massaquoi and Phinn are both majoring in health policy and administration at Penn State, their career aspirations are quite different.

Massaquoi, who is interning with White Horse's healthcare team, is considering going for an MBA in

healthcare administration or becoming a nurse.

"I've already learned so many different aspects of healthcare," she said. "My team members here are so willing to share their experiences and advice with me. I feel comfortable asking any question I have."

Phinn, working with White Horse's mission enhancement team, is leaning more toward the business side of the industry.

"Working side-by-side with sales counselors on everything from handling leads to going on tours has taught me so much about

the entire sales cycle," he said. "But in addition to that, I've really enjoyed getting to know the residents. Learning their life stories, past and present, has been a privilege."

Beyond the business side to the program, both Massaquoi and Phinn have quickly become valued members of the White Horse Village team.

"They have both really fit in with our team members," Weiser said. "It has been our sincere pleasure hosting them."

Situated on 96 acres in southeastern Pennsylv-

nia, White Horse Village is an active senior living community offering a full range of living options and healthcare services. The community creates opportunities for extraordinary living in a vibrant, diverse community through personal growth, connectedness and relationships.

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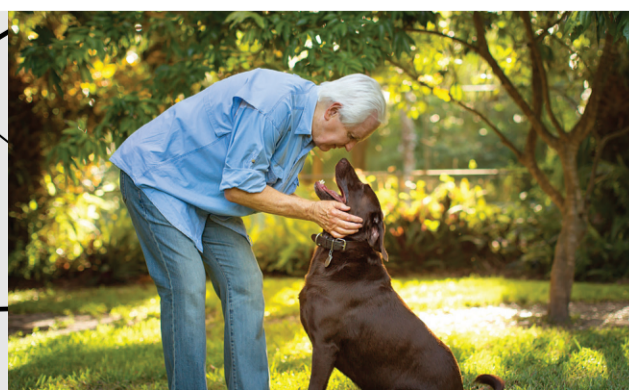
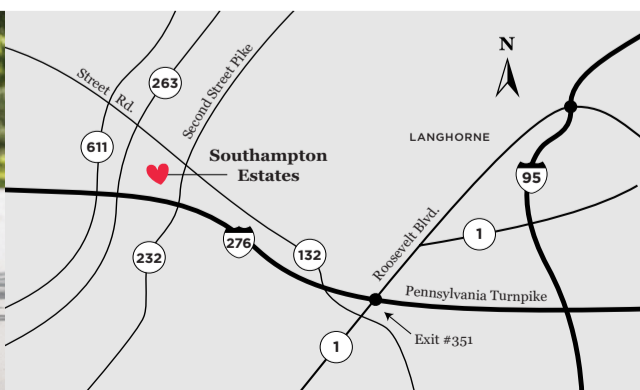
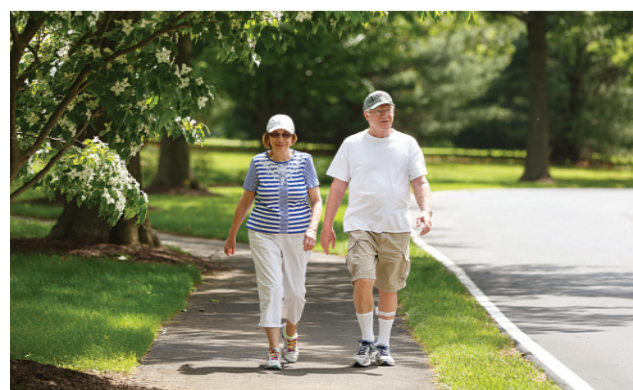
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PROMOTING SENIOR WELLNESS

Studies show music may have a positive effect on dementia

By Samantha Gordon
Communications and Outreach
Manager, The Hickman

Did you know more studies are coming out on the positive effects between music and dementia? But we might wonder, how is that possible? Music has a certain effect on the brain that can correlate between the song and memory. It poses as a powerful and distinctive stimulus for dementia patients. Allowing their brain to make a positive connection from experience.

Music and the brain

Ever heard a song come on the radio that you have not heard in years or used to listen to as a child, and you might experience an invisible light bulb light-up in your brain when you recognize the song?

The emotional experience you associated with that type of song allows you to make a memorable connection. Whether it reminds you of a friend, a vacation or a wedding, there is a social meaning behind it.

Musical memory has been studied to show that it can last in the brain and after someone experiences memory impairment.

Music and dementia

Whether it is singing, playing an instrument or simply listening to a song, studies have shown that even those with severe Alzheimer's disease are still able to recognize and perform all with the help of music.

However, once the music stops, so does the individual. For example, if they are dancing, and the music ends, their motor abil-



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It has been proven that individuals with dementia have a positive outcome in their behavior or mood when associating with music and song.

ity might end too. Many refer to it as "first in, last out," the associations we make with songs growing up can still be with us into our senior years. This is because it creates a sense of familiarity in the brain with the song.

Music and the mind

It has been proven that individuals with dementia have a positive outcome in their behavior or mood when associating with music and song. Something as simple as playing a song can diminish depression and anxiety in an individual, as well as improve their cognition and attention.

For instance, someone with dementia might be singing a song and recall names of family or friends in short recall occurrences. Even if it is temporary, it

may allow for a positive effect on the mind and make a big impact on the individual.

More studies are being done today to learn about the correlation between dementia and music and the positive aspects it presents to these types of individuals, allowing a better quality of life and a great song to listen to. For more information, check out the film "Alive Inside."

Promoting Senior Wellness is provided by The Hickman, a Quaker-affiliated licensed personal care home in West Chester. The Hickman does not promote and is not affiliated with the film "Alive Inside." Contact Samanta Gordon at sgordon@thehickman.org or www.thehickman.org.



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PAGODA HILLCLIMB



BEN HASTY — READING EAGLE
Robert R. Oswald Sr. with his 1958 Volkswagen Beetle.



BEN HASTY — READING EAGLE
Robert R. Oswald Sr., 85, gets into his 1958 Volkswagen Beetle, which he raced up Duryea Drive for the final time during the Pagoda Hillclimb.

CHECKERED FLAG

85-year-old makes final race up Duryea Drive

By Karen Shuey
kshuey@readingeagle.com
@KarenShueyRE on Twitter

Robert Oswald Sr. has always had a thing for hills.

In particular, going up them. As a kid he would pedal his heart out on his bike, making the grueling climb up Mount Penn to watch speedy drivers make the same ascent as part of the annual Duryea Hillclimb.

As an adult, after watching others race for years, he decided to put his own skills to the test.

In 1971 Oswald made that first trip up the steep slope, maneuvering its sharp turns in the driver's seat of a modified 1958 Volkswa-

gen Beetle. His unmitigated confidence in his familiarity with the route left him shocked that he failed to take home a trophy.

"I was looking for a challenge, but I think I was a little overconfident that first time," the Lower Alsace Township resident said. "I was genuinely surprised that I didn't win. And, somehow or another, I ended up getting sucked in for the rest of my life."

Recently, the now-85-year-old marked that day 50 years ago by speeding up the mountain once more as he competed in the Pagoda Hillclimb. The Pagoda Hillclimb is a slightly shortened version of the Duryea Hillclimb. The race was his last.

"I guess it's kind of fitting that this is my last race," he said. "I've come to the conclusion that all good things must come to an end. It's time to retire from racing because it just gets harder as I get older."

Oswald said it will be hard to walk away.

Racing has been a big part of his life for so long. Before he even got started in competing against the clock on uphill courses, Oswald said he dabbled in drag and dirt track racing. But those took a backseat when he tried hillclimbing.

Hillclimbing, he said, presented the biggest challenge and best reward.

Over the years he became a familiar face on the courses that were sanctioned by the Pennsylvania Hillclimb Association. And the wins started to accumulate.

"I did eventually win," he said. "As a matter of fact, for many years, I had the most confirmed wins of anyone in the Pennsylvania Hillclimb Association."

His record wasn't the only thing to improve with time. Os-



BEN HASTY — READING EAGLE
Robert R. Oswald Sr. gets ready for his final Pagoda Hillclimb.

wald, who earned his living as a journeyman patternmaker during the week, would spend his spare time building his own Volkswagen Sports Racer to compete on the hillclimb circuit.

Oswald said he ended up selling that car when he made a career change that would keep him oc-

cupied on the weekends and away from the competition.

"I was away from it for a little while," he said. "I became a long-haul driver and didn't have the weekends free as much to compete. But I came back in 1996 and have been running races ever

HILL CLIMB » PAGE 2

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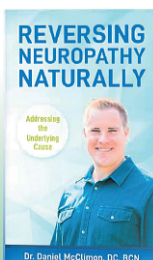


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BEN HASTY — READING EAGLE

Pagoda Hillclimb racer Robert R. Oswald Sr. says, "I've come to the conclusion that all good things must come to an end."

Hill climb

FROM PAGE 1

since."

Oswald now has two cars. A modified Volkswagen Beetle that harkens back to his early racing career and a Volkswagen Karmann Ghia that boasts a 250-horsepower engine. But he said he mostly competes with the Beetle these days, given his age.

Oswald said the competition is something he still enjoys. And part of that enjoyment is seeing how they have become a family affair over the years with his wife, his three sons, his daughter, his grandson and his granddaughter getting in on the action.

"My wife, Norma, wanted me to mention that she did beat me twice," he said seconds after she could be heard yelling something in the background during the phone interview. "It's been kind of cool having all the kids get into it as well."

Oswald, who said he has never had an accident dur-

ing all these years of racing, had been preparing for quite some time to let the younger generation keep the tradition alive.

But when the Pagoda Hillclimb was canceled last year because of the coronavirus pandemic, he said he knew he had to stick it out for one more year.

"I was gonna run it for the final time last year, but there was no race last year," he said. "Actually, I originally said I was going to race until I was 80. But once I turned 80 I was still doing pretty good, so then I began saying I was gonna race until I was 90."

"But I realize now that I'm just not going to make it."

After a knee replacement and three back surgeries, Oswald said he's just not as agile of a driver as he used to be.

"It kind of gets me a little emotional," he said as his voice broke off, "ending something that you've done for 50 years. But you have to know when you can no longer do some of the things that you used to do."

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SPOT OF T

Sometimes a difficult decision can bring a sense of peace

By Terry Alburger

Historically, bars have always signified captivity. Jails have bars, animal enclosures at the zoos have bars, even bird cages are made up of bars. They are all designed to keep the inhabitants confined. It is ironic to say, but the addition of bars to my life has brought freedom.

The bars in question are in the form of an aluminum fence surrounding my backyard. And the aforementioned freedom is that of my pup, Koda.

In the 9 months since we got her, she has always been at the end of a 20-foot leash while outside in the yard. An energetic Lab, she loves to romp and play, but it was always within reach of her tether.

Needless to say, we did a lot of walking around our good-sized backyard to allow her to play and do the things a pup needs to do. In rain, sleet or snow we were out with her; during storms and during sunshine, daytime or night, a dog must do what a dog must do.

We grappled with the decision to get a fence. We are on great terms with our neighbors and enjoy the openness of the yard. But ultimately, we considered Koda's wellbeing and quality of life. So, in her case, confinement meant freedom. There is nothing happier than a Labrador retriever with room to run and fetch and romp.

Confinement. Sometimes it is a lifesaver. Sometimes it is the only option. Sometimes you may be on the fence, so to speak. Confin-



PXHERE

Grappling with a difficult decision is hard, but when the decision is made and you know it's the right one, it can bring a sense of peace.

ing sick people to a hospital, or those with addiction problems to a rehabilitation center, or even just a toddler to a daycare — sometimes the best option is not the easiest decision to make.

But if you are charged with the well-being of an individual who needs help, the decision must indeed be made. Knowing it is not forever, but for the duration of the need makes it a bit easier.

We are all faced with difficult decisions, none more difficult than doing what is best for those we love by making tough choices. It is in those difficult moments when our love is truly tested. If confinement is what is necessary in creating a safe space for those we love, then it is most definitely the right thing to do.

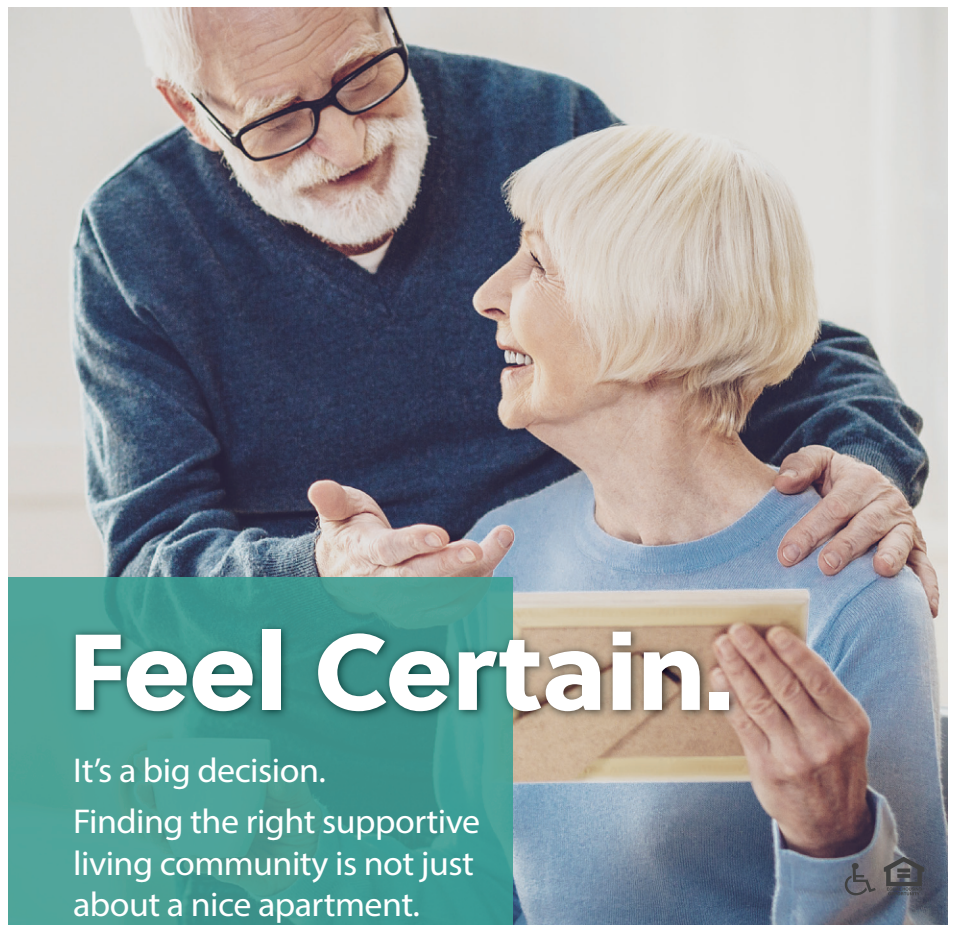
Recently my family had to make that choice for a loved one, and it is truly an excruciating decision. But, knowing it was the

best option for all involved made it a bit easier.

Watching my pup romp in my backyard, undeterred by a cumbersome leash, made me realize just how right our decision had been where my family member was concerned.

In her situation, she truly doesn't realize she is confined, just that she has a warm, safe and smaller environment in which to live. She seems very content to roam through the area, saying hello to her friends and to loving staff members who truly care for her.

Confined? Yes, I suppose you have to say that. But prisoner? No way. She is a guest, and a VIP guest at that. Her family and friends visit often. It is a blessing to know that this loved one, once threatened by the hustle and bustle of this overwhelmingly fast-paced existence, will now live out her days in peace in the small haven that is her world.



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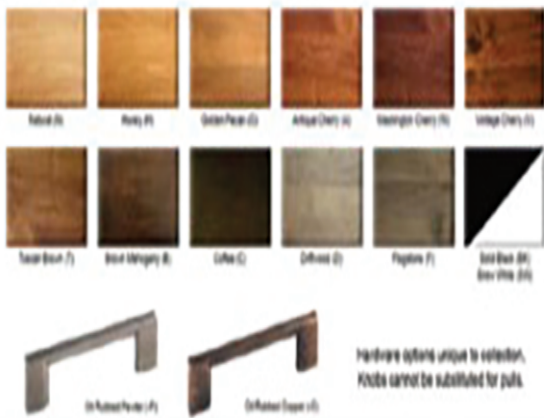
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TECHNOLOGY

SageLife senior living offers smart home technology to keep seniors safe

SageLife

For many people, smart home technology is a nice convenience, but for seniors, it can be the difference between living independently and needing support services.

Echo Lake, SageLife's innovative senior living community in Malvern, has begun installing smart home technology in some of its apartments, helping residents live better, safer and more independent lives.

"We see this as a way of limiting falls, staying connected with family and friends, and allowing residents access that they may have felt limited in before," said SageLife Founder and President Kelly Andress.

Offerings include phone-based apps for temperature automation, voice-command control of appliances and lighting and improved door accessibility.

One Echo Lake resident who is benefiting from the community's new smart home offering is Steve Cushmore, who was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease four years ago.

Before the technology was installed, the flame-retardant front door of his apartment had been difficult for him to manage while using his special upright walker. Now he uses a remote control to open and close the door, allowing him to bring his walker inside with ease.

"I'm really grateful for the smart technology now," he said. "I am going to be independent for a much longer period of time than I thought."

Cushmore uses Ama-



Echo Lake senior living community in Malvern offers smart home technology in its units. COURTESY OF SAGELIFE

zon's virtual assistant Alexa to turn his lights on and off without letting go of his walker, allowing him to remain balanced and stable at home — when he's not out and about in the community, using his walker to make sure he gets in his daily 10,000 steps.

While he's exercising, Cushmore's smart thermostat is adjusting the temperature in his home accordingly.

"The smart thermostat is one of my favorites," explained Amanda Schwartz, move-in/mar-

keting coordinator at Echo Lake. "It will learn your habits. If you like cooler temps for sleeping, the thermostat will dial down at bedtime and increasing the temperature just before you get up.

"This technology can be accessed from your phone, allowing you to change the temperature in your apartment from anywhere. If you've been out for a walk on a hot day, just a few taps on your smartphone and your apartment will be nice and cool when you step inside. Also, if you're

out and wondering if you turned your lights off, just check your phone."

Other residents and their families are excited about this offering and the value it will add to quality of life at Echo Lake.

"We just started rolling this out and already we have other residents asking for this technology because they clearly see the benefit of it," Andress said.

Kirby Smith, president and founder of SunKirb Ideas, installs the equipment in homes at Echo Lake. He also creates the accounts needed and pro-

grams the devices for the residents so they are user-friendly from the start. Then he teaches residents how to use the technology in their homes to improve their lives.

"There's a belief out there that people who are aging can't use smart technology," Smith said. "But I've found that this group picks it up right away."

"It's not complicated," Cushmore said. "It's pretty easy to use. All you have to do is talk to Alexa."

Echo Lake offers independent living, assisted living and memory care,

allowing residents to age comfortably in place. Residents enjoy the benefits of SageLife's signature "Move for Life" program, which improves strength, balance, and flexibility — key components for aging well.

The community's 25-acre campus connects to extensive walking trails and includes a rooftop pub, dining room, maker spaces, club rooms, a sports simulation lounge, state-of-the-art fitness center, putting green, gardening beds and a Pickle Ball and basketball court. Learn more at www.livingatecholake.com.



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WELL-BEING

CAN VIRTUAL REALITY HELP SENIORS? STUDY HOPES TO FIND OUT

By Terry Spencer
The Associated Press

POMPANO BEACH, FLA. » Terry Colli and three other residents of the John Knox Village senior community got a trip via computer to the International Space Station in the kickoff to a Stanford University study on whether virtual reality can improve the emotional well-being of older people.

Donning 1-pound headsets with video and sound, the four could imagine floating weightless with astronauts and get a 360-degree tour of the station. In other programs, residents can take virtual visits to Paris, Venice, Egypt or elsewhere around the globe; attend a car rally, skydive or go on a hike.

“I feel great,” said Colli, 73, and a former spokesman for the Canadian embassy in Washington. “It is amazing. It is like you are really there.”

Stanford’s Virtual Human Interaction Lab will be working with John Knox’s 1,200 residents, who will have ready access to the equipment under the supervision of staff members. The goal is to see whether virtual reality can improve their mood, strengthen their relationships with staff and make them more receptive to technology. Other senior communities in the United States and elsewhere will soon be added by the California university.

Virtual reality works by making what the person sees and hears track with what they are doing. In a VR trip to Paris, for example, a participant might turn to the left and see the Eiffel Tower with a musician playing in the foreground, and then turn right and find two people conversing.



Andrea Hipskind, a resident of John Knox Village, wears goggles as a virtual reality image of sky diving is projected on a screen.

If the participant moves toward one, that sound increases while the other diminishes.

“There is a fair amount of previously published research by academic labs around the world that shows VR, when administered properly, can help reduce anxiety, improve mood, and reduce pain,” said Jeremy Bailenson, the Stanford lab’s founding director. “This particular study is focused on how using VR might reduce the residents’ feelings of isolation from the outside world — all the more important after the isolation we all faced during the pandemic.”

During the demonstration at the suburban Fort Lauderdale community, Colli, Anne Selby, 77; Mark Levey, 64; and Hugh Root, 92, moved their heads from left to right and up and down as they got individual tours of the space station.

“It really felt like you were traveling — and not alone either,” said Levey, a former federal government worker. “In some of the video, there are people.”

Selby, an artist, said that she felt a bit nauseated as

she moved through the space station because it was so realistic, but that she was able to cope by taking deep breaths.

“Regardless of my age, I was right in the middle of it,” she said.

Root, a retired insurance salesman, was blunt: “It blows my mind.”

Chris Brickler, CEO of MyndVR, the Dallas company that provided the equipment, said volunteers will be screened to assure they are mentally suitable for using virtual reality, and each attendant has an abort button if the person becomes overwhelmed by the experience. John Knox’s residents include people and couples who live alone, in assisted living and with full-time nursing.

“As we age, we feel there is a disconnect sometimes that can happen when there is a lack of mobility,” Brickler said. “We can’t travel as much as we want, we can’t connect with nature as much as we want, can’t have connections with animals.”

“All sorts of connections get lost and our four walls start shrinking in. What we have tried to do is create a platform where we



Gloria Gantes adjusts the goggles of resident John Dalsimer as he participates in a virtual reality study at John Knox Village in Pompano Beach, Fla.



Residents of John Knox Village wear goggles as they participate in a virtual reality study;

can bring the world back.”

Monica McAfee, John Knox’s chief marketing and innovation officer, said the community’s administrators believe VR helps residents — it’s been used on a limited basis there for three years — but Stanford’s study “will provide the empirical data.”

For example, she said, they want to know if VR can help residents with dementia who suffer from sundowning — severe mood downswings that be-

gin at dusk.

“Is this a way to redirect them to enjoy something?” she said.

Northern Ohio University associate philosophy professor Erica Neely, who studies the ethics of technology, said it’s important that Stanford is getting fully informed consent, screening participants and making sure they aren’t using VR alone, especially at first. She is not involved in the study.

“We definitely don’t

want anyone to get stuck in the experience if they become distressed and can’t figure out how to turn it off,” she said.

“The fact that there is a companion/caretaker who can go with (the participant) is utter genius. ... The idea of ‘Well, we don’t necessarily have people with diminished capacities wandering around by themselves through physical space — maybe we can do the same for virtual space’ was a really good one.”

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