

# WESTMORELAND COUNTY

## AREA AGENCY ON AGING

# INSIDE LINE

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Fall 2014

### 2014 HEALTH AND EDUCATION EXPO OCTOBER 29, 2014

The Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging, under the auspices of the Westmoreland County Human Services Department, Westmoreland Casemanagement and Supports, Inc., Westmoreland Community Action, and the Westmoreland County Board of Commissioners are proud to sponsor the 2014 HEALTH AND EDUCATION EXPO. Seniors, caregivers, persons with disabilities and the general public are welcome to attend.

There will be many activities, free health screenings and information, light refreshments, giveaways, free parking and a live radio broadcast by 1480 WCNS. A variety of vendors are participating, providing their assistance and information to address every health and care issue imaginable. Those attending will have access to a spinal screen, oxygen levels, vision and hearing screens, flu and pneumonia shots, massages, reiki and reflexology – **ALL FOR FREE.**

Also, **JENNIFER ANTKOWIAK** (Caregiver Coach, TV news anchor, author) will be presenting “Don’t Stress! Coping with Caregiver Stress” at 10:30 a.m.

Mark your calendar for:

**Wednesday, October 29, 2014**

**9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**Ramada Hotel & Conference Center  
100 Ramada Inn Drive, Greensburg, PA**

Come anytime, stay as long as you like and bring a friend. No pre-registration is required.

Need a ride??? If you’re 65 or older or disabled, you may be eligible for discounted public transportation.

If you’re a Westmoreland County resident age 65 or older, you’re eligible for a 95% discount for transportation to this event through Westmoreland Transit’s Senior Shared-Ride program in conjunction with the Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging’s Priority Transportation program. You must be pre-registered for both programs, and your trip must be scheduled in advance. Contact the Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging for more information at 724-830-4444 or 1-800-442-8000.

If you’re a disabled Westmoreland County resident, Westmoreland Transit has the Americans with Disabilities Complementary Paratransit Program and the Persons with Disabilities Transportation Program. Call WCTA at 1-800-242-2706 for further information.

You don’t want to miss this once-a-year OPPORTUNITY to obtain all this valuable information in one place. For more details, contact the Area Agency on Aging at 724-830-4444 or 1-800-442-8000.

### “MEDICARE 101”

Are you new to Medicare? The following presentations being offered by APPRISE, the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, will help to answer many of your questions concerning basic Medicare. The program is free, but seating is limited. Please call 724-925-4204 to register.

- WCCC – Bushy Run, Export  
September 30, 2014 from 4 to 6 pm.  
Registration code: PRDX 5019-90
- WCCC – Laurel, Latrobe  
October 7, 2014 from 2 to 4 pm.  
Registration code: PRDX 5019-60

- WCCC – Youngwood  
October 9, 2014 from 2 to 4 pm.  
Registration code: PRDX 5019-01

Don’t forget! Medicare open enrollment period is October 16, 2014 through December 7, 2014. APPRISE can help you compare and review insurance plans, compare prescription costs and help explain things so that you can make the right decision. The services are free and confidential. Call 724-925-4213 for more information and/or an appointment.

### TCHAIKOVSKY FESTIVAL

The Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging is pleased to announce that tickets are available for the Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra’s “Tchaikovsky Festival” concert on Saturday, November 1, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. at the Palace Theatre in Greensburg.

This performance features cellist, Mark Kosower and musical selections include the Waltz from Sleeping Beauty, Rococo Variations and Pezzo Capriccioso.

Tickets will be distributed by a random drawing. Please send your request with the following information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Number of tickets (1 or 2)
- Self-addressed, stamped envelope to:  
Jean Healey  
Westmoreland County  
Area Agency on Aging  
200 S. Main Street  
Greensburg, PA 15601-3110

Your request must be postmarked no later than October 3, 2014. You must be a Westmoreland County resident age 60 or older to receive these tickets.

## AVOIDING ANEMIA

by The National Institutes of Health

If you're feeling constantly exhausted and sluggish, you might have a condition called anemia. Anemia is a common blood disorder that many people develop at some point in their lives.

Many types of anemia are mild and short term. But the condition can become serious if left untreated for a long time. The good news is that anemia often can be prevented and easily corrected by getting enough iron.

Anemia arises when your body doesn't have enough healthy red blood cells. You may either have too few red blood cells or they may be lacking in an iron-rich protein called hemoglobin. Red blood cells are responsible for delivering oxygen throughout your body, and hemoglobin is the protein that carries the oxygen.

When the number of red blood cells or your hemoglobin level is too low, your body doesn't get all of the oxygen it needs, and that can make you feel very tired. You may also have other symptoms, such as shortness of breath, dizziness, headaches, pale skin, or cold hands and feet.

The most common type of anemia occurs when your body lacks iron. This condition is called iron-deficiency anemia, and it often arises if you don't have enough iron in your diet. Your body needs iron and other nutrients to make hemoglobin and healthy red blood cells. So it's important to get a regular supply of iron as well as vitamin B12, folate and protein. You can get these nutrients by eating a balanced diet or taking dietary supplements.

Another common cause of iron-deficiency anemia is blood loss, which might arise from injury, childbirth or surgery. Women of child-bearing age are at risk for iron-deficiency anemia due to blood loss from menstrual periods.

Women also need extra iron during pregnancy. Dr. Harvey Luksenburg, a specialist in blood diseases at NIH, says that if anemia isn't treated during pregnancy, women can give birth to iron-deficient children. This lack of iron can affect a child's growth rate and brain development.

"Women who feel symptoms of sluggishness and fatigue may be iron deficient," Luksenburg says. "Even if you've lived with it a long time, get it checked. I've seen startling changes when women were put on iron supplements.

Some say they've never felt better".

Many people living with anemia may not realize they have it. They might have mild symptoms or none at all. A doctor can determine whether you have anemia by a simple blood test.

Common types of anemia can be prevented and treated by eating iron-rich foods. The best sources are red meat (especially beef and liver), poultry, fish and shellfish. Other foods high in iron include peas, lentils, beans, tofu, dark green leafy vegetables such as spinach, dried fruits such as prunes and raisins and iron-fortified cereals and breads.

NIH researchers are studying how to treat rarer, more severe forms of anemia. Some types can be treated with medicines. Severe cases may require blood transfusions or surgery.

If you don't get enough iron from your food, ask your doctor about taking iron dietary supplements. The body absorbs iron better from meat and fish than from vegetables. If you're a vegetarian, consult a health care provider to make sure you're getting enough iron.

Making healthy lifestyle choices, including a nutritious, iron-rich diet, can help prevent common types of anemia so you can have more energy and feel your best.

## EARN WHILE YOU LEARN: JOB TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) at Westmoreland County Community College offers paid training for unemployed, job-willing residents who are 55 years-of-age and older, and who meet income eligibility guidelines. Public agencies, government offices, or 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organizations serve as training sites for program participants who can update skills and learn new skills while continuing their job search.

Positions are available throughout Westmoreland County, earn \$7.25 per hour, and average 20 hours per week. For more information, please call Mimi Owens or Rebecca Dunn at 724-925-4066 or toll-free at 1-800-262-2103 extension 4066.

### Available Training Opportunities

**Clerical Assistant:** Update office skills.

**Dietary Aide:** Learn safe food preparation techniques.

**Direct Care Worker:** If you are interested in the Home Health Care field, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) may be able to provide training.

**Library Aide:** Individuals should possess an inquisitive, helpful attitude and customer service focus.

**Custodial/Maintenance Assistant:** Learn methods of professional cleaning, grounds keeping, and maintenance.

**Retail Associate:** Learn customer service, cash handling, and display techniques.

**Teacher's Aide:** Assist in pre-school children's center.

## PATRIOT DAY

In the United States, Patriot Day occurs annually on September 11th, designated in memory of the 2,977 people killed in the 9/11/01 terrorist attacks. Initially, the day was titled The Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the Victims of the Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001.

Approved by a vote of 407-0 on October 25, 2001, the Joint Resolution called for the President to designate the day each year as Patriot Day. President Bush signed the resolution into law on December 18th as a discretionary day of remembrance.

On this day, the President requests that the American flag be flown at half-staff at individual American homes, at the White House and on all US government buildings and establishments, at home and abroad. A moment of silence is also suggested, at 8:46 a.m., which was the time when the first plane struck the World Trade Center.

The day is not to be confused with "Patriot's Day," which is celebrated on April 19th as a civic holiday observed in the North-East US. It commemorates the anniversaries of some important events in US history, including the Battle of Lexington and Concord (which started the Revolutionary War), and is observed mainly with various re-enactments.

## INSIDE LINE STAFF

Jean Healey, *Editor*

Sharon Casario,  
*Production Assistant*

## GRIPPED BY GOUT

by the National Institutes of Health

Sudden, painful swelling at the base of the big toe is often the first warning sign of gout. It can affect other joints as well. Without treatment, gout can lead to severe joint damage and make it hard for you to move. The good news is most types of gout are treatable, especially if caught early.

About 4% of adults in the U.S. have been diagnosed with gout. It's a form of arthritis and, in fact, the second most common form after osteoarthritis. And it's a growing problem.

Experts suspect the climbing rates of obesity and high blood pressure are partly to blame for the rise in gout. Gout has also been linked to other medical conditions, such as kidney problems, diabetes, and heart disease.

Gout is caused by tiny needle-like crystals that build up in the joints, leading to sudden inflammation and intense pain. The crystals are made of uric acid, a substance that normally dissolves in the blood and passes out of the body in urine. But in people with gout, high blood levels of uric acid allow crystals to form in the joints and sometimes in the kidneys, where they create kidney stones.

Uric acid comes from the break-down of substances called purines. Purines are naturally found in your body's tissues and in many foods. Eating purine-rich foods, such as organ meats, mussels, and mushrooms can bring on or worsen a gout attack. Alcohol or stress can also trigger an episode.

Gout primarily affects men who are middle aged or older. Postmenopausal women are at risk too, especially if they are obese or have high blood pressure or unhealthy dietary habits, such as drinking large amounts of alcohol or sugary soda.

The risk also rises if you have a family member with gout or if you take certain medicines, such as water pills (diuretics) or low-dose aspirin.

Early gout attacks tend to fade within a week. It may be months or even years before the next attack hits. But over time, gout may appear more often and last longer if left untreated.

Most people with gout can control their symptoms through lifestyle changes and medications. Non-steroidal anti-

inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) can ease the swelling and pain of sudden attacks. Oral or injected steroids and a drug called colchicine can also help.

If frequent gout attacks become a problem, doctors may prescribe uric acid-lowering medicines. But once begun, these drugs often must be taken long term.

If gout is left untreated, it can eventually lead to damage and deformity of the joints, a condition called chronic gout. In general, chronic gout arises only after many years of suffering.

If you have repeated attacks of pain and swelling in your joints, talk to a health care provider. The earlier you're diagnosed and treated, along with making healthy lifestyle changes, the better off you'll be.

## LOCAL vs. NATIONAL

- For every two jobs national retailers bring to a community, three jobs are lost as a result of local businesses closing down.
- When you shop locally owned businesses, your money is recirculated over and over and creates up to 75% more tax revenue to our community and state.
- Independent businesses raise the standard of living in your community because they take their profits and buy products and services from other local businesses, thus creating more and more tax revenues needed for the community to thrive.
- Millions of dollars of tax revenue subsidies handed to chains by financially starved local governments drain even more tax revenue from our community and state.
- Blighted empty shopping areas are created in your community when chain stores relocate to a more lucrative shopping center, or leave altogether. Literally hundreds of big stores are abandoned each year across the United States.
- Independent businesses are unique enterprises that contribute to the character of our community by offering a more diverse selection of goods and services.
- Independent businesses provide meaningful service with a personal touch. It matters to them that you are

satisfied and will come back again.

- Carefully planned predatory pricing practices have allowed national chains to establish virtual monopolies as they drive local competition out of business. And then they raise their prices.

So make a difference and:

- Make a decision to find and patronize a locally owned business, whenever possible.
- For every \$100 spent in independently owned stores, \$68 returns to the community through taxes, payroll, and other expenditures. If you spend that in a national chain, only \$43 stays here. Spend it online and nothing comes home.
- Tell your associates, family, and friends what is happening and why. We all create our communities. Let's create strong and vibrant communities as a legacy for those who follow.

## THE FIRST WORLD SERIES WAS PLAYED OCTOBER 1903

The 1903 World Series, the first modern World Series to be played in Major League Baseball, matched the Boston American League club against the Pittsburgh Pirates in a best-of-nine series, with Boston winning the last four, to prevail five games to three.

Pittsburgh pitcher Sam Leever injured his shoulder while trap-shooting, so his teammate Deacon Phillippe had to pitch five complete games for Pittsburgh. Phillippe won three of his games, but it was not enough to overcome the club from the new American League. Boston pitchers Bill Dinneen and Cy Young led Boston to victory.

Honus Wagner, bothered by injuries, batted only 6 for 27 (.222) in the Series and committed six errors. The shortstop was deeply distraught by his performance. The following spring, Wagner (who led the league in 1903 in batting average) refused to send his portrait to a "Hall of Fame" for batting champions. "I was too bum last year," he wrote. "I was a joke in that Boston-Pittsburgh Series. What does it profit a man to hammer along and make a few hits when they are not needed only to fall down when it comes to a pinch? I would be ashamed to have my picture up now."

## SENIOR CENTERS PLAN BUS TRIPS

- **Appalachian Vittles** on Saturday, September 13, 2014. Cost is \$105.00 and departs 7 am from West Newton Fire Hall, 100 Riverside Drive. Sites include the Historic Arthurdale for sweet breads and pastries, McGrew House for soup and salad, Preston County Inn for buckwheat cakes, sausage and baked steak, Preston Community Arts Center for golden delicious apple bread pudding and Allegheny Treenware for pepperoni rolls.
- **Canton Ohio** on Saturday, November 8, 2014. Cost is \$85.00 and departs

7 am from West Newton Fire Hall, 100 Riverside Drive. Activities include touring the Pro Football Hall of Fame, McKinley Museum for a buffet luncheon and tour, and Canton Museum of Art's ChrisKindl Shops for arts and crafts by 100 juried vendors.

Full payment is your reservation. Cancellation refund only if you replace yourself. More information by calling West Newton Senior Center Director, Lou Ann Petronick at 724-872-4976 or cell 412-576-5456.

- **Nashville Tennessee** at Christmas Time with White Star Tours, December 1-5, 2014. Cost is \$749.00 per person with \$300.00 deposit due with each reservation and balance

due by 10/15/14. Package includes: Overnight lodging to and from Nashville, visit to The Hermitage (home of Andrew Jackson), stay at Opryland Hotel (2 nights) with breakfasts and country Christmas dinner show included. Visit to the "Ice" exhibit and the Grand Ole Opry House, where the Radio City Rockettes will dance. The show features 'The Twelve Days of Christmas', Parade of the Wooden Soldiers and the Living Nativity. And finally, a guided tour of Nashville.

For reservations and information contact Judy Holden, Valley Senior Center of Ligonier Supervisor at 724-238-7942.

## Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging

Historic Troutman's Center  
200 South Main Street  
Greensburg, PA 15601

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## MACY'S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE

The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, held in New York City, has been one of the nation's star attractions for 90 years. With roughly four million people crowding the streets and more than 50 million viewers enjoying the festivities on television, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade has become a world-famous tradition for those who gather with friends and family each year to give thanks during the holiday season.

In the 1920s many of Macy's department store employees were second-generation immigrants. Proud of their

new American heritage, they wanted to celebrate the American holiday of Thanksgiving with the type of festival their parents had loved in Europe.

The first parade, originally known as the Macy's Christmas Parade, took place in 1924. Macy's employees marched six miles from Harlem to Herald Square dressed in vibrant costumes. Their floats were pulled by horses and accompanied by marching bands and live animals from the Central Park Zoo. The parade was such a success that Macy's declared it would become an annual event. The only exception occurred during World War II, when the parade was suspended from 1942 to 1944. Balloons were recycled into rubber and donated

to the war effort. New Yorkers were so excited with the return of the parade in 1945 that more than two million people attended, and the parade still runs on the same route today.

Many popular comic and cartoon characters have been featured as parade balloons. Felix the Cat was the first official parade balloon in 1927. The character with the most balloons throughout the years is Charles Schulz's Snoopy, which has gone through six balloon changes since his debut in 1968.

Today, the parade boasts a variety of giant character balloons, floats, marching bands, celebrity performers, and of course, Santa Claus.