

WESTMORELAND COUNTY

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

INSIDE LINE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

THE SENIOR FUND

Honor the memory of a loved one or celebrate a special occasion with a gift to the Seniors' Fund. You will support our mission by enriching lives of the most needy, and the honoree will be notified that a tribute gift has been received. All tribute gifts are tax-deductible and can be made payable to "Community Foundation of Westmoreland County – Seniors' Fund". Please send to the attention of Denise Kummick, Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging, 200 South Main Street, Greensburg, PA 15601.

JOB TRAINING

If you are 55 years of age or older, a resident of Westmoreland County, and your income falls within the guidelines, you may be eligible for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) at Westmoreland County Community College. For more information, please call Mimi Owens or Rebecca

Dunn at 724-925-4066 or toll-free at 1-800-262-2103

CLASSICAL ELEGANCE

The Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging is pleased to announce that tickets are available for the Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra's "Classical Elegance!" concert on Saturday, March 14, 2009 at 8:00 p.m. at the Palace Theatre in Greensburg.

This performance features violinist, Kypros Markou and oboist Renate Sakins. Musical selections include Bach's "Concerto for Violin and Oboe", Stravinsky's "Pulcinella Suite" and Haydn's "Symphony No. 104, *London*".

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)

And a 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 February 13, 2009. You must be a Westmoreland County resident age 60 or older to receive these tickets.

ARE YOU READY

February 17, 2009 is quickly approaching and the full-power TV stations will only broadcast in digital. The DTV transition will affect those who watch free over-the-air television, through a rooftop antenna or "rabbit ears". You have three choices to be ready:

1. **Connect your analog TV to a digital-to-analog converter box.** The cost of a box is between \$40 and \$70. The U.S. Government is offering two \$40 coupons per household. For more information on the coupons, visit www.dtv2009.gov, or

call 1-888-388-2009.

Or:

- Buy a digital television (a TV with a built-in digital tuner).** However, this is not necessary unless you happen to be in the market for a new television set. **Or:**
- Subscribe to a paid TV service.** If you subscribe to a paid service such as cable or satellite TV, you should contact your provider to see what, if any, equipment you may need.

“SIMPLY GOOD EATING” MESSAGE COMES TO THE SENIOR CENTERS!

Starting this January, Penn State Cooperative Extension in Westmoreland County PA TRACKS Project will be bringing the “Simply Good Eating” nutrition education program to each of the thirteen Senior Centers in Westmoreland County.

This year’s ten week series includes topics such as: “Boning Up on Calcium”, “Eating for a Healthy Heart”, “Shopping and Cooking for One or Two”, “Using All of Our Resources”. The lesson about resources includes information on accessing all of the services available in Westmoreland County to make nutritious food available for seniors on a limited budget. And, in today’s economy, everyone

certainly finds this information useful!

The sessions include activities, educational games, and healthy recipe food tasting. Everyone has fun while learning!

The “Simply Good Eating” program will be starting in your local Senior Center on the following dates. No registration is necessary. Contact your local center for the exact times.

January 15	New Kensington Senior Center
January 16	Jeannette Senior Center
March 18	Herminie Senior Center
March 19	Laughlintown Senior Center
March 31	East Vandergrift Senior Center
April 3	New Alexandria Senior Center
June 8	Avonmore Senior Center
June 9	Mt. Pleasant Senior Center
June 24	Latrobe Senior Center
June 25	New Florence Senior Center
July 9	Monessen Senior Center
July 10	West Newton Senior Center
July 10	McKenna Senior Center

Many of the regular participants in the senior centers look forward to the PA TRACKS “Living Healthy” program each year. This past year, over 400 seniors participated in the sessions and enjoyed all of the fun and activities, while learning

the importance of healthy eating and keeping active. If you want more information about the program, call 724-837-1402 and ask for Antonia Redigan or Onedia Sedok.

FIBER FOCUS

January is National Fiber Focus Month. Getting plenty of fiber in your diet is important for good health. Fiber has important benefits including reducing cholesterol, improving blood sugar control, and lowering risk of heart disease. It has a positive effect on the digestive system by helping to maintain regularity and reduce risk of diverticulitis. A low-fat diet that contains plenty of fiber foods such as grains, fruits and vegetables may play an important role in reducing the risk of certain types of cancer.

Fiber is found in plant foods and comes in two forms. Soluble fiber is the part that dissolves in water and may help in lowering cholesterol as part of a low-fat diet. Examples include oatmeal, broccoli, bananas and citrus fruits. Insoluble fiber is the roughage part that doesn’t dissolve in water. This type of fiber promotes regularity and may help reduce your risk of certain types of cancer as part of a low-fat diet. Examples include wheat bran, corn bran and brown rice. Some points to remember when adding fiber to your diet include:

- Increase fiber slowly to prevent digestive problems.
- Drink plenty of water (about 8 glasses a day).
- Try a variety of fiber-rich foods to increase nutrient sources.

The following recipe has 12 grams of fiber per serving (about 2 cups) and promises to warm you up in the winter months. Enjoy!

White Chicken Chili

1 can (10 ounces) white chunk chicken
 3 cups cooked white beans
 1 can (14.5 ounces) low-sodium diced tomatoes
 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
 1 medium onion, chopped
 ½ medium green pepper, chopped
 1 medium red pepper, chopped
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 2 teaspoons chili powder
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 Cayenne pepper, to taste
 6 tablespoons shredded reduced-fat Monterey Jack cheese
 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

In a large soup pot, add the chicken, beans, tomatoes and chicken broth. Cover and simmer over medium heat. Meanwhile, spray a nonstick frying pan with cooking spray. Add the onions, peppers and garlic and sauté until the vegetables are soft, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the onion and pepper mixture to the soup pot. Stir in the chili powder,

cumin, oregano and, as desired, cayenne pepper. Simmer for about 10 minutes, or until all the vegetables are soft. Ladle into bowls. Sprinkle each serving with 1 tablespoon cheese and 1 teaspoon cilantro. Serves 6.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We are updating our Inside Line mailing list. Please let us know if you are moving, receive more than one newsletter, or wish to be removed from the mailing list. Undeliverable and unwanted mailings expend our valuable resources. To update our records, call 724-830-4444 or 1-800-442-8000. Thank you.

HEART FACTS

by The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute

The heart works 24 hours a day, pumping oxygen- and nutrient-rich blood to the body. Blood is supplied to the heart through its coronary arteries. In coronary heart disease (CHD), plaques or fatty substances build up inside the walls of the arteries. The plaques also attract blood components, which stick to the artery wall lining, called atherosclerosis. The process develops gradually, over many years. It often begins early in life, even in childhood.

The fatty buildup or plaque can break open and lead to the formation of a

blood clot that seals the break. The clot reduces blood flow. The cycle of fatty buildup, plaque rupture, and blood clot formation causes the coronary arteries to narrow, reducing blood flow.

When too little blood reaches the heart, the condition is called ischemia. Chest pain, or angina, may occur. The pain can vary in occurrence and be mild and intermittent, or more pronounced and steady. It can be severe enough to make normal everyday activities difficult. The same inadequate blood supply also may cause no symptoms, a condition called silent ischemia.

If a blood clot suddenly cuts off most or all blood supply to the heart, a heart attack results. Cells in the heart muscle that do not receive enough oxygen-carrying blood begin to die. The more time that passes without treatment to restore blood flow, the greater the damage to the heart.

A heart attack is a frightening event, and you probably don't want to think about it. But, if you learn the signs of a heart attack and what steps to take, you can save a life – maybe your own.

Many heart attacks start slowly, as a mild pain or discomfort. If you feel such a symptom, you may not be sure what's wrong. Your symptoms may even come and go. Even those who have had a heart attack may

not recognize their symptoms because the next attack can have entirely different ones. Warning signs of a heart attack are:

- **Chest discomfort** in the center of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back. The discomfort can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body**, which can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- **Shortness of breath** comes along with chest discomfort. But it also can occur before chest discomfort.
- **Other symptoms** may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness.

You can reduce your risk of having a heart attack even if you already have coronary heart disease (CHD) or have had a previous heart attack. The key is to take steps to prevent or control your heart disease risk factors. The six key steps to reduce your risk of having a heart attack are:

- **Stop smoking**
- **Lower high blood pressure**
- **Reduce high blood cholesterol**

- **Aim for a healthy weight**
- **Be physically active each day**
- **Manage diabetes**

For more information regarding heart disease, contact the local Westmoreland American Heart Association at 724-837-5468 or online at www.americanheart.org.

THE POWER OF LOVE

How often do you hug or sit close and hold each other's hands? It can be good for your health. Between loving partners, between parents and children, or even between close friends, physical affection can help the brain, the heart and other body systems.

At the center of how our bodies respond to love and affection is a hormone called oxytocin. Most of our oxytocin is made in the area of the brain called the hypothalamus. Some is released into our bloodstream but much of its effect is thought to reside in the brain.

Oxytocin makes us feel good when we're close to family and other loved ones, including pets. It does this by acting through what scientists call the dopamine reward system. Dopamine is a brain chemical that plays a crucial part in how we perceive pleasure. Problems with the system can lead to serious depression and other mental illness.

Oxytocin does more than make us feel good. It lowers the levels of stress hormones in the body, reducing blood pressure, improving mood, increasing tolerance for pain and perhaps even speeding how fast wounds heal. It also seems to play an important role in our relationships. It's been linked, for example, to how much we trust others.

Researchers have found that physical contact affects oxytocin levels and that people who get lots of hugs and other warm contact at home tend to have the highest levels of oxytocin in the laboratory. They believe that frequent warm contact may somehow prime the oxytocin system and make it quicker to turn on whenever there's warm contact, even in a laboratory. The same is true for mothers and infants; they both produce higher levels of oxytocin when they have lots of warm contact with each other.

We may not yet fully understand how love and affection develop between people – or how love affects our health – but research is giving us some guidance. Give those you love all the affection you can. It can't hurt, and it may bring a bounty of health benefits.

DOMICILIARY CARE HOME PROVIDERS NEEDED IN WESTMORELAND COUNTY

A Dom Care home is a private residential home

certified by the *Area Agency on Aging (AAA)*. Every home provides a 24-hour supervised living arrangement for individuals referred by the AAA. The program is for individuals who do not need nursing home or hospital care but do have mental, physical, or emotional impairment(s) that prevent them from living independently. All Dom Care homes retain a home-like setting and will have no more than three (3) dependent care residents at one time. Each consumer is provided a single or double occupancy bedroom.

The goals of Dom Care are:

- To provide a safe, supportive, community-based living arrangement for individuals who cannot live independently in the community;
- To encourage and assist individuals in improving or maintaining their current level of functioning in a home-like setting;
- To provide an alternative to institutionalization.

The AAA certifies Dom Care homes after complying with regulations established by the *PA Department of Aging*. The homes are monitored and inspected on a regular basis to ensure local fire and safety standards and Dom Care home standards.

If you are interested in learning more, call us at 724-830-4444 or toll-free 1-800-442-8000.

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY

The Super Bowl was first played on January 15, 1967 as part of an agreement between the NFL and its younger rival, the American Football League (AFL) in which each league's championship team would play each other in an "AFL-NFL World Championship Game". After the leagues merged in 1970, the Super Bowl became the NFL's championship game.

INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program offers free tax help to lower income, elderly, persons with disabilities and non-English speaking taxpayers. Taxpayers are reminded to maintain accurate records, bring this year's tax package, income interest and dividend statements, and copies of last year's federal and state tax returns when they seek tax help. The locations are listed as follows:

McKenna Senior Center
Greensburg, PA 15601
Mondays, 10:00am-2:00pm
(closed February 16)

Maplewood United Presbyterian Church
Greensburg, PA 15601
Tuesdays, 10:00am-2:00pm

WCCC
Youngwood, PA 15697
Thursdays, 10:00am-2:00pm
(closed April 9)

Our Lady of Grace Church
Greensburg, PA 15601
Fridays, 10:00am-2:00pm
(closed April 10)

Westmoreland Mall
Greensburg, PA 15601
Fridays, 3:00pm-7:00pm
(closed April 10)

Westmoreland Multi-Service Center
Mount Pleasant, PA 15666
Tuesdays, 9:00am-1:00pm
By Appt (724-547-4593)

Scottdale Library
Scottdale, PA 15683
Thursdays, 12:00pm-4:00pm
By Appt (724-887-6140)

Jeannette Senior Center
Jeannette, PA 15644
Wednesdays, 9:00am-1:00pm

St. Regis Catholic Church
Trafford, PA 15085
Alternating Mondays, 9:00am-1:00pm
Feb. 2, 16, March 2, 16, 30 and April 13

West Hempfield Presbyterian Church
Irwin, PA 15642
Mondays, 10:00am-2:00pm

North Huntingdon Townhouse
North Huntingdon, PA 15642
Tuesdays & Thursdays,
9:00am-1:00pm

United Church of Christ
Manor, PA 15665
Feb 17 & March 17, 10:00am-2:00pm

Herminie Senior Center
Herminie, PA 15637
Wednesdays, 9:00am-12:00pm

WCCC's Laurel Center, Room 6001
Latrobe, PA 15650
Mondays, 9:00am-1:00pm
By Appt (724-539-3390)

Ligonier YMCA
Ligonier, PA 15658
Tuesdays, 9:00am-2:00pm
By Appt (724-238-7580)

Latrobe Senior Center
Latrobe, PA 15650
Tuesdays, 9:00am-12:00pm and
12:30-1:30pm
By Appt (724-539-0237)

New Alexandria Senior Center

Community Center Building
New Alexandria, PA 15670
Thursdays, 9:00am-1:30pm
By Appt (724-668-7055)

Aluminum City Terrace Activity Center

New Kensington, PA 15068
Mondays, 8:30am-12:00pm
(Beginning Feb. 9)

Alle Kiski Valley Senior Citizens Center

New Kensington, PA 15068
Tuesdays, 8:30am-12:00pm &
Fridays, 12:00pm-4:00pm
(closed April 10)

WCCC's Alle-Kiski Center

New Kensington, PA 15068
Wednesdays, 3:00pm-7:00pm

People's Library

Main Branch
New Kensington, PA 15068
Thursdays, 1:00pm-5:00pm

People's Library

Lower Burrell, PA 15068
Mondays, 1:00pm-5:00pm

Avonmore Senior Citizens Center

Avonmore, PA 15618
Wednesdays, 8:30am-12:00pm
By Appt (724-697-4014)

Vandergrift Senior Citizens Center

Vandergrift, PA 15690
Thursdays, 8:30am-12:00pm

East Vandergrift Senior Citizens Center

East Vandergrift, PA 15629
Fridays, 8:30am-12:30pm
(closed April 10)

Senator Logan's Office

New Kensington, PA 15068
Tuesdays, 1:00pm-4:00pm
By Appt (724-334-1143)

Export American Legion

Export, PA 15632
Alternating Fridays, 9:00am-1:00pm
Feb. 6, 20, March 6, 20 and April 3

Cloverleaf Community Center

Delmont, PA 15626
Alternating Fridays, 9:00am-1:30pm
Feb. 13, 27, March 13, 27 and April 10

Clover Ridge Community Club House

Murrysville, PA 15668
Thursdays & Fridays, 10:00am-3:00pm

By Appt (724-325-1715)

Murrysville Senior Center

Murrysville, PA 15668
Fridays, 8:30am-1:30pm
By Appt (724-327-7673)
(closed April 10)

West Newton Senior Citizens Center

West Newton, PA 15089
Mondays & Fridays, 9:00am-1:00pm
By Appt (724-872-4976)
(closed February 16 and April 10)

Monessen Senior Center

Monessen, PA 15062
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00am-12:00pm
By Appt (724-684-6105)

**INSIDE LINE
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INSIDE LINE is published bimonthly by the Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging, 200 South Main Street, Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601 (Phone 830-4444), the Westmoreland County Commissioners and the PA Department of Aging.