

Senior Living

LNP
LancasterOnline

SPECIAL SECTION

HEALTH



Judy Savage, right, prepares mushroom bisque with Zeltha Ellis for attendees of a healthy cooking class Nov. 4 at Landis Place on King. The demonstration was part of Bright Side Opportunities Center's Strong Choices, Bright Futures program.

Words from the wise

Intergenerational program bonds residents of Garden Spot Village, students at Elizabethtown College

MARGARET GATES
MGATES@LNPNEWS.COM

After more than three decades in the classroom, it's no surprise that Conrad Kanagy would want to turn a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease into a learning experience for his students at Elizabethtown College.

"As my perspective on life was changing, I was forced to become older (at a younger age)," says the sociology professor, who was 52 when he received the diagnosis in 2017. "I was forced to have a perspective of the world that was more that of an elderly person."

He started to wonder how his experience could help students think outside of themselves and gain wisdom from an older generation. As luck would have it, he found an eager partner in Garden Spot Village, where a similar idea for intergenerational connection had been brewing for years.

Scott Miller, chief marketing officer for the New Holland retirement community, says he and CEO Steve Lindsey had been trying to find a way to help residents harvest the wisdom from their life experiences and share it with a younger generation, much like the esteemed elders in indigenous cultures.

The result is the wisdom course, a class that connects residents of Garden Spot Village and first-year students at Elizabethtown College.

Kanagy wrote the curriculum for the class, which launched in 2022.

As a society, we tend to segregate these generations, he says, "and yet they have so much in common."

How it works

Although interaction between the two age groups is at the heart of the course, there is prep work before that happens.

Kanagy's students start the fall semester watching the 1999 film "Tuesdays with Morrie," based on sportswriter Mitch Albom's book by the same name. It is a reflection on lessons Albom learns during weekly visits with his former sociology professor, who is terminally ill. The class also does some reading and reflecting about aging and myths about aging, Kanagy says.

For the Garden Spot Village residents, the class begins each May. While Kanagy taught the residents in the course's inaugural year, Miller and Garden Spot chaplain Karen Ann Carvis took over those duties last year.

Over the course of the summer, residents are given a variety of writing exercises that encourage them to review more than simply the facts of their lives.

"Just being old doesn't make you wise. You have to go through a process of introspection," says Len Reinsfelder, 74, a Garden Spot resident who is participating in the course for a second time this year. "The slow process leads to looking at not just facts, but what do those facts mean."

For Reinsfelder, part of that process was reflecting on a life-threatening bout with cancer 20 years ago and how it changed him.

"Nobody wants advice, but everyone is willing to listen to a story," Miller says. "We're getting papers that are five, 10, 15 pages long as people unpack all the stuff in their lives."

Everyone has a story.

Netherlands-born Tony der Kinderen, 84, worked in a pickle factory when he was 13 so he could earn enough money to

WISE, page 2

A BRIGHT IDEA

A city nonprofit takes its services on the road to promote positive aging

GAYLE JOHNSON | FOR LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

More than 400 people take exercise classes, get nutritional advice, participate in cooking demonstrations and gather for parties and celebrations at Bright Side Opportunities Center, a Lancaster nonprofit affiliated with Bright Side Baptist Church.

Linda Boudier isn't one of them.

Instead, the 76-year-old performs bicep curls and practices seated lunges some 11 miles away at Saint Peter Apartments in Columbia. Boudier, however, follows directions from a Bright Side instructor at the front of the building's community room as part of Strong Choices, Bright Futures, a new program that brings some of the organization's services to four Lancaster County apartment buildings and two community centers that cater to senior citizens.

"Going to this class has actually motivated me," says Boudier, who also walks outside. "I've always wished they'd bring an exercise class to our building."

Bonnie McSherry agrees. "This has been fantastic for us," says the Saint Peters resident coordinator. "People tell me their arthritis feels better after class."

Boudier and other residents

can thank Willonda McCloud, Bright Side's president and CEO, and Sally Winchell, the nonprofit's fitness director since 2014. They and employees Isiah Perry and Aida Rodriguez secured a \$90,000 grant from The Lancaster County Community Foundation last April to take Bright Side's fitness program on the road. The foundation awarded \$273,000 to six local groups tasked with providing positive aging, health care, mental wellness and accessibility, according to the foundation's website.

Winchell says she thought of the idea during a brainstorming session.

"All of a sudden it came to me. Let's take everything we do — fitness, nutrition and nutrition education counseling — straight to seniors," recalls the 67-year-old, who also serves as a Bright Side personal trainer. She then searched for people who would be able to develop relationships with

BRIGHT, page 5



Ellen Berfond, left and Bettina Heffner sample Judy Savage's homemade seed crackers during a cooking class at Landis Place on King.



IF YOU GO

Residents and seniors who live in these communities may attend the two weekly exercise classes, cooking demonstrations, parties and nutritional education sessions at sites covered by the grant. Contact Bright Side Opportunities at 717-509-1342 for more information.

Senior residences:

- Landis Place on King
239 W. King St., Lancaster
- Saint Peter Apartments
400 Union St., Columbia
- Church Street Towers
333 Church St., Lancaster
- Farnum Street East
33 E. Farnum St., Lancaster

Community spaces:

- Spanish American Civic Association
545 Pershing Ave., Lancaster
- Keystone Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services (Classes start in January)
2770 Old Philadelphia Pike, Lancaster

TAKING HIS TURN

● This woodworking resident at Quarryville Presbyterian Retirement Community finds his niche crafting custom pens.

Page 3



WINTER FUN

● From tech and exercise classes to volunteer work to the theater, there are plenty of ways to keep fit and busy when it's cold outside.

Page 4



DRY JANUARY

● How one wine lover uncorked some lasting effects after following this popular New Year's tradition for several years.

Page 6



WORDS OF WISDOM

EJ Rittersbach, 86

What she would have done differently

“Looking back on my life, I’m not sure I would have done anything differently, only because I trusted God to lead me all the way.”

Who she looked up to

“My mom. She had the same drive and ambition that I seem to have. ... Another person I looked up to is the first woman I worked for when I was 17. She said, ‘Young lady, the more you know, the better off you’re going to be.’ ”

On taking risks

“Get failure out of your mind and call it education.”

What she’s most proud of

“I learned the jobs of two different men that had been with the company both 25 years but were not team players. And our leadership at the time said, ‘If you’re not a team player we don’t want you.’ So that’s when they came to me and said, ‘Can you do his job, and can you



EJ Rittersbach works in the Garden Spot Village thrift shop, Share & Care.

do his job?’ And that’s when I said, ‘If I can read, I can do it.’ ”

What she’s learned about the younger generation

“They can learn from us, but we can also learn from them. There are things they can teach us, especially as we age. I think I’ve learned to be more tolerant.”

Len Reinsfelder, 74

On dealing with illness

“I had cancer 20 years ago. ... It was pretty serious. It looked like I wasn’t going to make it at 52. ... We all are taught that every day is a gift and it’s special. Here I am 20 years later, and each day is a gift, and it gives you an extra appreciation.”

The most special thing you want to leave your family when you die

“If you stop and think, I couldn’t come up with anything. It’s just all stuff. Stuff that’s important to me might end up in a Dumpster. Leave them with a sense of self-worth, loving themselves and a sense of service. So, spirit instead of stuff.”

On wisdom

“Just being old doesn’t make you wise. You have to go through a process of introspection.”

On family

“Growing up, my family we kind of everybody went their own way. As I grew up and had a family of my own, I like to keep them close. Every year for 30-plus years, we always do a family vacation. ... It’s just a chance to get folks who don’t all sit together all the time ... to spend a week together and go do something



Len Reinsfelder volunteers at Elanco Library.

different. ... The greatest gift is time together.”

What he’s learned about the younger generation

“I think (there is a) stereotype of college campus kids and, of course, they have a stereotype of the dottering old fools at retirement communities ... They are really busy, hard-working kids trying to figure out where they’re going. If kids are going to learn lessons, they’re not as likely to listen to their parents or grandparents. They’re more likely to respond if there’s a story. These kids actually seem to be listening.”

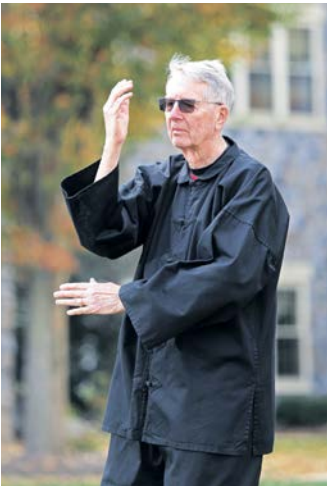
TONY DER KINDEREN, 84

What he’s most proud of

“I’m proud of the fact that I was able to do much better than my parents, because we were dirt poor. ... Many times, we didn’t have nothing to eat. The church had to help us out. My parents really never did really, really well. My father was very insistent that we get educated. I was able to obtain a degree by crawling and scratching, not always having the money. I always had to work.”

Is there something in your childhood that made you who you are today?

“I have grown into the person I am today. ... When I grew up it was a very innocent time. We didn’t have the internet. All we had was radio and the newspaper. All the information came from our parents. How to behave and how to live your life and what to do sort of came from the bubble that you live in — your friends and family. ... As I went on and got to be in my 20s and became an adult, it was very different than being a funky teenager. You say OK, I’m an adult now. I’m more responsible. When I became in my 30s, you become even more secure. Then after you reach your 40s, you say, whoa, you know, when I was in my 20s I was so naïve. And then you reach 50, you don’t care anymore, you just don’t care what people think about you. By that time most people learn what your abilities are. Everybody has positives and negatives — things you can’t



Tony der Kinderen practices tai chi outside the wellness center at Garden Spot Village.

do and things you’re really good at. And you learn to concentrate on those things your good at, and you go with that and you say, ‘You know, take me for whatever I am.’ You become very comfortable. I think a lot of people reach those same stages.”

On taking risks

“If you don’t take risks, I think you live a mundane life. ... You’re born with a certain personality, but you can bend. I thrived on challenge. Life is not a rehearsal. You can’t say, ‘Well, someday I will do that.’ It’s just tick tock, tick tock, and someday never comes.”

VINNY TENNIS | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER PHOTOS

Wise

Continued from 1 go to Scout camp.

EJ Rittersbach, 86, got her first job at age 17 at the Farm Journal, a Philadelphia-based agricultural magazine. She worked her way up to vice president of her department and, 69 years later, still works part time for the company.

Don Horning, 82, a New Holland resident who will soon move into Garden Spot Village, noticed a pattern in his life while taking the course.

“My story leaned heavily on mentors and the surprise results from mentors who I didn’t even know were mentoring me,” he says. “People will come into your life on a regular basis that you don’t expect will have an influence on you.”

For the college students, some of those people with unexpected influence could be the residents they encounter in the wisdom course.

The generations meet up several times in the fall so students can draw the wisdom out of their older counterparts and eventually tell their stories in a final presentation.

Making connections

On a crisp October afternoon, Miller pulls onto the Elizabethtown College campus with a small busload of Garden Spot Village residents. In a roomy classroom with round tables, they get reacquainted with Kanagy’s students and hear about their recent trip to nearby Masonic Village, where they worked with residents who cannot live independently.

Later, they head to the student center for lunch and casual conversation.

Heather Carrington, a transfer student from Bucks County majoring in communications and Japanese, cracks open her homework to discuss the origins of the language with an inquisitive Horning.

Ava Sierra, a freshman from Philadelphia, chats with der Kinderen and Rittersbach about her care packages, her Puerto Rican heritage and the fact that Spanish is her least favorite class.

After lunch, the students get down to business and ask their prepared questions:

Who did you look up to?

What are you most proud of?

Was there something in your childhood that made you who you are today?

What would you have done differently in your life?

“I dreamt of being an airline pilot,” der Kinderen says. “My life just took a different direction. ... There are a lot of things I didn’t achieve.”



MARGARET GATES

Garden Spot Village resident Tony der Kinderen, left, answers questions about his life while Elizabethtown College students Evan Spencer and Ava Sierra take notes.

He didn’t follow his dream, in part because his family could not afford flying lessons. In the long run, however, he says he’s glad he didn’t choose an airline career because it would have required too much time away from home. An electronics company eventually subsidized his college education, and he ended up with a fulfilling career in IT, he says.

Horning jumps into the conversation to highlight a lesson about dreams in der Kinderen’s story.

“He just told you it’s not important,” Horning tells the students. “He didn’t achieve his dream, and he’s happy he didn’t. You all come with majors — a dream and your majors. What percentage of the people are not going to spend their whole life in one major? I don’t know. But it’s OK. ... It’s reality. It’s not failure, it’s finding your way.”

Lowering anxiety

Reassurance is a big by-product of the wisdom course.

“I have a real passion for young people today,” Rittersbach says, explaining why she participates in the course. “I think our younger people need to have the older generation be a part of their lives and to try to help them through some of the struggles that they go through. ... They have to know that it’s OK to make mistakes as you’re growing up. You get over it. It’s all right.”

Kanagy says Covid, politics and other worries have created an anxious younger generation. During the first year of the wisdom course, one of the first questions students asked was, “Are you afraid to die?”

Since interacting with the older generation, however, student anxiety has lessened, he says.

“There’s this resilience they see in the older generation that’s been through so much,” Kanagy says. “(The students) don’t have the baggage, the history with these folks. They can be pretty open without being judged.”

And that’s not all. While Kanagy anticipated that the main value of the course would be the wisdom passed on from the older residents, there was something much greater.

“It was the relationships that went alongside of it that were so powerful,” he says. “Watching those develop just reminded me, our deepest needs as human beings are to be loved, to know we’re lovable and to belong.”

The Garden Spot Village residents will return to the college in November to hear the students’ final presentations, but it likely won’t be the last time some of them cross paths.

Rittersbach remains in contact with several students from the first class and even returned to campus last school year to watch one of them play on the women’s basketball team.

Junior Alyssa Gauntlett has stayed in touch with der Kinderen since both participated in the class two years ago. He is clearly delighted when she drops by to visit and catch up during the residents’ most recent trip to the college.

Der Kinderen says the class has given him the opportunity to understand what young people think, to hear their concerns, and to realize they are not so different from his own concerns at that age. Gauntlett has learned much the same.

“My family is really close,” she says. “I spent a lot of time with my grandparents, and I always valued that relationship. You have something to learn from everybody.”

Even the teacher has something to learn.

Since his diagnosis, Kanagy says he has been bolder in the classroom and more willing to share the wisdom that comes from his experience. In September, Elizabethtown College announced that it was eliminating three majors, including sociology. Kanagy has said he will be retiring at the end of the school year.

“I’m not ready to let this class go. I’m hoping that there’s opportunity to stay engaged with this course,” Kanagy says. “I think I have found hope in seeing these relationships develop and in recognizing that even though I am aging prematurely I have something to offer students yet that perhaps I didn’t when I was 30 or 40.”

Gauntlett, his former student, offers one simple takeaway from the course that may be helpful in these uncertain times: “Everything kind of works out.”



JFS Wealth Advisors

JFSWA.com

Protect Your Family’s Wealth

Your family’s wealth represents more than money – it’s your life’s work and the foundation for future generations. At JFS Wealth Advisors, our experienced team can help you navigate complex estate planning decisions with knowledge and care.

Our integrated estate planning services include:

- Incorporation of life insurance
- Strategic gift and tax planning
- Professional trustee solutions
- Buy-sell agreement structuring

Estate Planning for Family. Business. Legacy.

Find an estate planning & trusts advisor who can help preserve and protect your family’s wealth.

1853 William Penn Way, Lancaster, PA 17601 • 717.975.0509

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURE INFORMATION
Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk. Therefore, there can be no assurance that the future performance of any specific investment or investment strategy (including the investments and/or investment strategies recommended and/or undertaken by JFS Wealth Advisors, LLC (“JFS”)), or any consulting services, will be profitable, equal any historical performance level(s), be suitable for your portfolio or individual situation, or prove successful. JFS is neither a law firm, nor a certified public accounting firm, and no portion of its services should be construed as legal or accounting advice.

Moreover, you should not assume that any discussion or information contained in this document serves as the receipt of, or as a substitute for, personalized investment advice from JFS. A copy of our current written disclosure Brochure discussing our advisory services and fees is available upon request or at www.jfswa.com. The scope of the services to be provided depends upon the needs and requests of the client and the terms of the engagement.



COMING SOON!



LIMITED AVAILABILITY

Cedar Heights Apartments at United Zion Retirement Community will Feature:

- Open Floor Plans
- Multiple Apartment Layouts
- Patio or Balcony
- Custom Selection Process

- Housekeeping Services
- New Common Spaces
- Great Views
- 725-1,170 square feet

CALL 717-627-8421 OR VISIT UZRC.ORG

FOR MORE INFORMATION



THE WRITE STUFF

Quarryville Presbyterian resident carves out his niche, turning pens in the community woodshop

REBECCA LOGAN
FOR LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

It all starts with an unassuming little block of olive wood.

Leroy Armstrong stands that up on a drill press, scrunches his brow in deep concentration and lowers the bit down into the block. Tiny wood shavings fly. He raises the bit, then repeats the process, pushing deeper into the block each time.

“I go down and bring it right back, so that the stuff doesn’t bind in the drill and crack the wood,” he says.

That still happens on occasion. But, more frequently, Armstrong moves through the entire process of making wooden pens with ease. He’s made quite a few, though he’s lost exact count of how many.

Where’d he learn to make pens?

“On YouTube, like everybody else,” he says.

Armstrong is a bit of a celebrity among fellow wood-working enthusiasts who live at Quarryville Presbyterian Retirement Community and take advantage of the woodshop there. That shop recently went through a major overhaul thanks to residents who took it upon themselves to organize and modernize.

Quarryville Presbyterian contributed things like painting the floor. A new sawdust collection system was installed. Outdated machinery has been replaced, with some residents donating some of the updated versions. A couple of pieces still need upgrades. Money raised by pens and other wood projects sold at the community gift shop are helping toward the woodworkers’ cause.

Their shop is immaculate. And it smells like what a cologne maker could only hope for if trying to replicate the rustic scent of wood-working.

Once Armstrong drills the hole and squares it off, he moves on to the lathe. Wood spins. Armstrong shapes it with a file. In a matter of minutes, what had been square is now curved, and showing off a striking grain. Fellow woodworkers look on with admiration.

“Most all the tools in the shop are made to make square cuts,” says resident Lynn Coomes. “And you have a pattern. This thing? This lathe that he’s working on? That’s where an artist comes in. It’s just amazing what he can do.”

Armstrong then moves on to sanding, working his way through a set of sandpaper with increasingly finer grains.

The fun part is when I put the first coat of super glue on it,” he says.

If you’re making a skeptical face right about now, Armstrong does not blame you.

“I did the same thing. I thought, ‘It’s going to stick to the paper,’” he says. “It doesn’t.”

Without the glue, the wood would get darker with use, he says. He prefers to prevent that by using around eight or nine coats. He swipes glue on with a cloth as the pen spins. Then he smooths that, too. Finally, it’s on to the hardware innards, which he typically orders from Penn State Industries and secures with a press. Voila, another pen is ready for the gift shop.

Armstrong enjoys his time in the wood shop.



LOGAN GEHMAN | FOR LNP/LANCASTERONLINE PHOTOS



Top: Leroy Armstrong starts creating a pen by drilling a hole in a block of olive wood. After putting the wood on a lathe, above, he shapes it with a file, sands it and coats it with super glue to preserve its color.

“The real reason? My buddies. We have a good time,” Armstrong says. “Now, we joke around, but we do not play around. We are very safety conscious.”

Armstrong and Barry Smith are keepers of the woodshop keys — or, more accurately, badge codes. If a resident wants to work in the woodshop, they must first go through an orientation with one of those two.

“That orientation is only to see if they know how to run the equipment. If they don’t, we will teach them,” Armstrong says. “It’s not to keep people out. If someone wanted to be here and had never used a single one of these tools, we’d take them and teach them.”

Smith, who used to farm in the Rawlinsville area, says the woodworkers learn from each other.

“I like working with the other fellas,” he says. “We might be working on something, and they might have a way that we can do it better.”

On this particular day, the men in the shop — sometimes there are women — have varied careers behind them such as military, custodial, trucking and sales.

Armstrong was a chemist with DuPont — the company

that transferred him to the East Coast and away from his Texas roots.

“If I had nothing else to do, I would rather turn pens than anything else,” he says. “But you can only sell so many of them at the store.”

Armstrong takes on other projects like crosses, bowls and wood elephants. But making pens is his preference.

“It’s just fun to do,” he says. “You take an old dirty piece of wood and turn it into something pretty.”

“This lathe that he’s working on? That’s where an artist comes in. It’s just amazing what he can do.”

— Lynn Coomes,
on fellow Quarryville Presbyterian
Retirement Community resident
Leroy Armstrong



One of Leroy Armstrong’s finished wooden pens. Selling them at Quarryville Presbyterian Retirement Community’s gift shop helps fund improvements to the community woodshop.

PURSUE A HOME ALL YOUR OWN IN DOWNTOWN LITITZ

Who said anything about downsizing?

- Two Walkable Campuses
- Carriage Homes, Cottages, Townhomes & Apartments
- Convenient in-town living
- Life Plan Offerings

With the area’s widest array of home styles and floor plans, discover a maintenance-free lifestyle that accommodates your needs, preferences, and budget.

Our wait list continues to grow, so plan ahead for your future now! Stop by our model home or call **717-625-6151** for a personal appointment.

MORAVIAN MANOR COMMUNITIES

300 W. Lemon Street, Lititz • 717-625-6151 • moravianmanorcommunities.org

Tour Our Available 1-Bedroom Apartments

Have more time to do the things you love!

With fantastic amenities and on-site conveniences, experience a healthy, active retirement at a Luthercare community.

LuthercareSM
Together in Community

www.Luthercare.org • 717.626.8376

Lititz, PA | Columbia, PA | Lebanon, PA

Independent Living • Personal Care • Skilled Nursing Care
Memory Support • Rehab to Home • Home Care

Luthercare complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

9 ways to stay busy and fit this winter

KARYL CARMIGNANI
FOR LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

While it may be tempting to hunker down indoors for the winter months, Lancaster County offers a wealth of activities for older adults at little or no cost.

It's no secret that staying active and engaged has countless health benefits, including improving mood, maintaining a healthy weight, boosting energy, increasing strength and stamina, and reducing disease, according to the Mayo Clinic. Whether interests lie the theater, physical activity or self-improvement, there is a plethora of pleasurable possibilities worth pursuing this season.

Here are just a few:

1 Check out your local library. Libraries offer oodles of programs to engage the community, including perennial writing classes and book groups as well as programs geared toward seniors like “Bits and Bytes: Online Safety for Seniors.” Patrons can access books, books on tape, e-books, large-print books, DVDs and many other resources. Lancasterlibraries.org provides a list of county libraries to find one near you.

2 Help the show go on — and enjoy it too. Consider volunteering for the Fulton Theatre downtown. Fulton ambassadors work as ushers, greeters or ticket scanners and may watch productions for free. The theater also offers a \$2 discount on show tickets for seniors.

3 Get moving. When the mercury dips, taking a nice power walk may not be front of mind. But walking in malls can be a great alternative for people to get that heart rate up, as it is flat, unobstructed terrain and toasty warm. Early risers can hit Park City Center at 8:45 for a 1.3-mile lap around the “wheel and spokes” of the mall even before the shops open. Bring a friend and chat your way through a stimulating stroll — and have a cup of coffee when you're finished.

4 Hit the gym. Many local gyms provide pickleball courts, a sport that offers physical activity along with mental and social stimulation. (There are also scores of outdoor courts throughout the county, but bundle up!) Gym membership can be low-cost for seniors or included in health care plans. For example, United Healthcare — offered as supplemental Medicare coverage — includes its Renew Active gym membership reimbursement plan in the premiums. At Universal Athletic Club on Oregon Pike, one of several county



FILE PHOTO



FILE PHOTO



FILE PHOTO



GETTY IMAGES

Clockwise from top: Volunteer at Fulton Theatre, take music lessons through a senior center, take an AARP tech class or walk the mall like Sharon Lilley of Mountville, shown at Park City in August.

locations that welcome Renew Active participants, membership includes classes, pool access and afternoon pickleball. Other gyms partner with Silver Sneakers, which also provides a variety of classes to help seniors stay limber and strong.

as well as a calendar of events. Classes include yoga, bingo, painting, hand drumming and menu planning, with activities accommodating different mobility levels. Virtual Connections, the agency's virtual senior center, offers everything from art and music lessons to tai chi and technology classes in the comfort of your own home. All you need is an internet connection and a computer, laptop or tablet. Participants can pick up art supplies and loan musical instruments from their nearest senior center at no charge.

Visit lancoaging.org for more information.

6 Exercise the gray matter. Engage your brain by taking free classes through select Pennsylvania universities. For instance, some Penn State University campuses offer tuition-free undergraduate courses for seniors. Penn State Harrisburg will offer tuition-free classes to seniors through the spring 2025 term. Millersville University allows seniors 62 and older to audit online or in-person classes. For details, visit their website's adult learning programs page, millersville.edu/universitycollege/adult-learning.

7 Take in a movie. Keep an eye on the Big Screen Classics at Penn Cinema in Lititz, and enjoy a movie for just \$5. Get in the holiday spirit with “White Christmas” on the big screen Dec. 15 and 16.

8 Jump on the tech train. If you can't tell an emoji from a GIF, or TikTok from Instagram, or artificial intelligence from authentic news, there's a free Zoom class just for you. Senior Planet from AARP offers hourlong classes — both in person and online — on finance, fitness, computers and technology. Check it out at seniorplanet.org/classes or call 888-713-3495.

9 Be a blessing to others. Many organizations seek seasoned seniors to help out in the community. Menonite Central Committee has volunteer opportunities close to home and around the world. Visit mcc.org for details. Water Street Mission is another organization that transforms lives by providing emergency shelter and residential programs for people facing homelessness. Get started at wsm.org. Lancaster General Health offers an array of volunteer opportunities. Contact their Volunteer Services at 717-544-4863. Whether you contribute your time, talent or treasure, you will be improving the lives of folks in Lancaster County and beyond.

5 Check out the Lancaster County Office of Aging. The office of aging is a valuable resource for an array of services and classes offered online and in person. The website is easy to navigate, with a full list of senior centers near you

5 Social Security benefit changes coming in 2025

RACHEL CHRISTIAN
BANKRATE.COM

If you're retired or planning to retire soon, it's important to have a plan for your retirement income. For most people, Social Security will play a significant role in this plan, so staying up to date on the latest benefits information is crucial.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) recently announced several key changes to the program for 2025, including its annual cost of living adjustment (COLA).

More than 72.5 million people depend on one of Social Security's benefit programs, so annual changes to the program and its payouts are always highly anticipated.

This year's cost-of-living adjustment is lower than

last year's 3.2% increase. Still, any additional income is a welcome boost for beneficiaries who live on fixed incomes. (If you need help developing a plan for your retirement income, you may want to consider hiring a financial advisor.)

Here are some key changes to Social Security happening next year — and what you need to know.

1. Cost of living adjustment rises

The SSA has announced that benefit checks will rise 2.5% in 2025. The 2.5% adjustment will amount to an average increase of \$50 in monthly benefits for retired workers on Social Security beginning in January.

Specifically, the average check for retired workers will increase from \$1,927

to \$1,976. For a couple with both partners receiving benefits, the estimated payment will increase from \$3,014 to \$3,089.

The SSA has linked COLA adjustments to the Consumer Price Index for urban wage earners and clerical workers (CPI-W) since 1975. To determine the COLA, the SSA compares the third-quarter CPI-W of the previous year to the third-quarter CPI-W of the current year. The COLA is then adjusted based on the percentage change in CPI-W from one year to the next.

2. Maximum taxable earnings going up

In 2024, the maximum earnings subject to Social Security taxes was \$168,600. This means workers paying into the system are taxed on wages up to this amount, typically at the 6.2% rate. In 2025, the maximum earnings will increase to \$176,100, meaning more of a worker's income will be subject to the tax. This adjustment is due to an increase in average wages in the U.S.

3. Maximum Social Security benefit also set to increase

The maximum Social Security benefit for a worker retiring at full retirement age will increase from \$3,822 in 2024 to \$4,018 in 2025. This maximum applies to those retiring at the full retirement age, which is 67 for anyone born after 1960.

The maximum benefit will be lower for those who retire before the full retirement age because benefits are re-

BENEFITS, page 5

TO BUILD A
VIBRANT COMMUNITY,
IT TAKES A
VILLAGE.

Brethren Village has so many ways to live a vibrant life, both physically and socially. From lifestyle and culture to dining and socialization, all available on our beautiful Lititz campus. And, of course, we have dozens of floor plans and financial options. See for yourself; call 717.581.4227 to tour our community.

Life Plan Community | Ideal Location to Call Home | bv.org

MILLERSVILLE AREA
MEALS
ON
WHEELS

121 North George Street
Millersville, PA 17551
717-872-2415
office@mamow.org
Visit our website:
www.mamow.org

Delivering Healthy Meals to
the Homebound for 36 years in the
Penn Manor School District
Call 717-872-2415
or visit our website www.mamow.org for
Meal Service or Volunteer Opportunities



Residents at Landis Place on King attend a healthy cooking demonstration led by Judy Savage, second from left, as part of the Strong Choices, Bright Futures program.

Bright: Program for seniors

Continued from 1 seniors. The grant paid for fitness certifications.

“This allows us to expand our program beyond bricks and mortar,” McCloud says. “If we can bring health and fitness to seniors in the community, it’s a benefit.”

These traveling programs also are available to senior citizens who don’t live in the buildings where classes and parties occur, Winchell says. Anyone may attend, if space is available.

Most exercise classes began in October with plans for nutritional counseling, cooking demos and parties. The program’s goal is to have about 25 participants at each location, Winchell says.

Director of merriment

Fancy a party featuring the Kentucky Derby? Participants might decorate hats, play horse-racing board games and sip mock mint julep cocktails?

Kathy Kirk loves to throw parties. “Social aspects are a successful part of aging,” says Kirk, who now holds the title of director of merriment for Strong Choices.

Kirk, who with her husband trains with Winchell, pays attention to details. For instance, she will gather clippings from her garden to make each guest a personal flower arrangement for a party.

“It’s fun for me,” Kirk says.

For a staff get-together,

for instance, Kirk hosted a Chinese tea party.

Those who attend exercise class Dec. 6 at Landis Place on King may stay to sample various cheeses. Other parties will have themes, Kirk says. “If you can make it fun, people will come back,” she says.

Eat this, not that

Judy Savage didn’t plan a career in food preparation. The Rhode Island School of Design graduate tumbled into nutrition after her daughter, born 30 years ago, needed immediate surgery after birth for an intestinal blockage.

Savage pursued her career in food service by earning several food preparation certificates and working for a few wholesale companies in the area. She also began providing cooking tips.

Savage met Winchell through fitness classes at Bright Side.

“It’s not one recipe,” Savage says about making healthier food. “It’s a concept.”

For example, Savage planned a creamy mushroom bisque, nutritious salad, a salad dressing, seed crackers and two smoothies — one green and one fruit — to prepare and share with those attending the first cooking class Nov. 4 at Landis Place on King.

She created recipe variations to accommodate several anticipated attendees, including vegans, those allergic to nuts, those who

don’t eat gluten and those who need low-fiber offerings.

“I want people to think creatively about their limitations,” Savage says.

Strong Choices will also feature additional nutritional education through Winchell’s company, Nutrifreak.

“We talk about how to read food labels,” Winchell says.

For now, though, participants at most locations gather twice a week for exercise classes.

Debbie Logan, who lives at Landis Place on King, no longer worries that she will injure herself lifting weights because she now does so under Winchell’s twice-weekly supervision.

“I was always concerned I would hurt myself,” the 68-year-old says.

Logan rides her bicycle and hikes, but calls weightlifting a “necessary evil” to battle osteoporosis.

Bringing fitness, nutrition and fun into his apartment building suits Richard Adair, who also lives at Landis Place on King. Adair already takes tai chi classes in Lititz once a week. Strong Choices’ professionalism, however, struck the 84-year-old.

“I’m quite impressed with the variety of exercises,” Adair says.

Although the grant money covers only one year, Winchell is looking for ways to raise money to continue Strong Choices.

“We really want to keep this going,” she says.

How good nutrition became family tradition for Strong Choices chef

GAYLE JOHNSON
FOR LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

Bright Side Opportunities Center, a Lancaster nonprofit, is taking cooking demonstrations on the road through Strong Choices, Bright Futures, a new program that brings some of the organization’s fitness and health services to four senior residences and two community centers in Lancaster County.

Preparing foods in a healthy way doesn’t mean forcing stiff or arthritic fingers to chop vegetables for an hour. Instead, says Judy Savage, a Lancaster food specialist and entrepreneur, take short cuts.

Walk into Savage’s kitchen, and the aroma of roasted vegetables wafts through the room — butternut squash, onions, apples, garlic, carrots and others. Savage scoops the squash into a soup pot and squeezes the remaining vegetables with her fingers before she adds them, spices, coconut milk and a soup base into the pot. Lemon juice and an immersion blender finish the job — and now Savage has meals for her husband, son, father-in-law and guests for several days.

How do you take nutrition into everyday life?” asks Savage, who plunged into a career in food preparation about 30 years ago when severe tomato and other allergies meant Savage’s daughter couldn’t eat the same foods as her two older brothers.

Savage’s mother, Norine Boyd, a former home economics teacher, experimented in her New Jersey kitchen until she created a spaghetti sauce and ketchup that appealed to the entire family.

Boyd and Savage turned those recipes into a company: Nomato by Norine. The company’s tomato-free ketchup and a tomato-free marinara sauce are available through Amazon, at Shady Maple Farm Market, and on the company’s website, www.nomato.com. Several Stauffers of Kissell Hill stores carry the marinara sauce.

Boyd, who moved the business to Lancaster in 2016, died in 2021. Savage



Roasted Butternut Squash Bisque.

keeps the company going and also suggests ways people can make healthy eating choices.

For seniors, Savage recommends nutritious soups and smoothies because they are easy to swallow.

She developed this recipe from several sources.

ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH BISQUE

Makes about 10 servings.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium butternut squash
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium or large onion
- 1 medium or large unpeeled apple
- 2 medium carrots
- 1/2 head of garlic
- 1 can organic coconut milk
- 2 cups nondairy milk of your choice (Savage likes oat or hemp)
- 2 cups vegetable or chicken stock (Or substitute water and a soup base, such as 2 teaspoons Better Than Bouillon brand)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to season squash and to taste
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon dry thyme, rubbed
- 1 bay Leaf
- Juice of 1 lemon

To serve:

- Nutmeg

- Plain yogurt or vegan alternative.
- 1 tablespoon fresh chopped parsley

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 425 F.
2. Cut the squash in half vertically, brush the cut faces lightly with olive oil, sprinkle lightly with salt and place face down on a large baking sheet. Cut the onion in half, leaving on the peel, and place face down with the squash. Add the cleaned and trimmed carrots, whole. Place the pan in the preheated oven and roast for 40 to 50 minutes.
3. Cut the apple and add it to the pan with the unpeeled garlic halfway through the cook time.
4. Remove the vegetables from the oven and cool for 15 to 20 minutes.
5. Remove the seeds from the squash and scoop the squash into a large stock pot, removing the skin with your fingers. Continue using your fingers to remove the onion skin, apple peel and core and garlic peel, and add all roasted vegetables to the pot.
6. Add the coconut milk and other liquids, and puree all together with an immersion blender until smooth. You can puree the ingredients in a blender in batches.
7. Heat the soup at medium temperature on the stovetop while adding the seasonings (salt, thyme, ginger, smoked paprika, bay leaf). Stir frequently while heating to prevent sticking.
8. Adjust the thickness using vegetable or chicken stock, Squash water content will vary, and you may find it needs a little liquid.
9. When the soup is hot, add the lemon juice and turn off the heat.
10. Adjust the seasonings to taste, using salt and pepper. (Savage likes a dash of cayenne pepper)
11. Serve each bowl with a generous tablespoon of plant-based or your preferred yogurt, a light sprinkle of ground nutmeg and a dash of chopped parsley.

Benefits: Social Security changes for 2025

Continued from 4 duced in such cases. On the flip side, those who retire after the full retirement age can increase their maximum benefit by delaying retirement.

4. Benefit for spouses, disabled workers increasing

The average benefit will increase across the board in 2025, and that includes benefits for people such as widows, widowers and the disabled. Here’s how those figures break out:

— The SSA says the average widowed mother with two children will see an increase from \$3,669 to \$3,761.

— Aged widows and widowers living alone will see their benefits increase from \$1,788 to \$1,832.

— The benefit will increase for a disabled worker with a spouse and one or

more children from \$2,757 to \$2,826.

Of course, those are averages, and individual situations may differ.

5. Earnings test exempt amounts adjusted

If you receive Social Security retirement benefits before reaching full retirement age, the program may reduce your benefits if your earnings exceed certain limits. This is known as the retirement earnings test, and it can claim a serious chunk of your benefits if you are still working. In 2025, the retirement earnings test exempt amounts will be as follows:

If you start collecting Social Security before full retirement age, you can earn up to \$1,950 per month (\$23,400 per year) in 2025 before the SSA will start withholding benefits, at the rate of \$1 in benefits for every \$2 above the limit. In

2024, the maximum exempt earnings were \$1,860 per month (\$22,320 per year).

In the year you reach full retirement age, this rule still applies but only up until the month you hit full retirement age and with much more forgiving terms. In 2025, you can earn up to \$5,180 per month (\$62,160 per year) before benefits are withheld, at the rate of \$1 in benefits for every \$3 earned above the limit (in-

stead of every \$2). In 2024, the threshold was \$4,960 per month (\$59,520 per year).

Bottom line

The 2025 Social Security COLA provides retirees and others with an increase in their benefits. However, this isn’t the only change to the program. Other levels and thresholds have also been adjusted to reflect ongoing cost increases.



PLEASANT VIEW
COMMUNITIES

Life at **Pleasant View** blends a relaxing, care-free lifestyle with opportunities to explore passions and interests, all while knowing expert care is available if needed.

NEW COTTAGES COMING SOON!
Reserve yours today!

717-664-6644
pvcommunities.org





Older Adult Services



Thinking about your future? Let UDS help you prepare to age in place in your home.

UDS has a variety of programs to help you **LIVE YOUR POSSIBILITY:**

- **Resource Call Center** - Helping you to identify and guide you to the services and supports you need
- **Care Management** - Ensuring you are receiving the health and social supports you need to stay healthy
- **CAPABLE** - Educating adults ages 60 or better to help them live safely in their home as they age
- **Home Modifications** - Grab bars, accessible showers, ramps, and other adaptations to help you remain safe in your home
- **Wellness Calls** - Daily check-in calls or conversation calls help older adults stay connected

CALL US TODAY
888-837-4235
udservices.org





Connect with us

Facebook, X & Instagram

LancasterOnline

Soon time for another round of Dry January

KARYL CARMIGNANI
FOR LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

If you drink alcohol, one way to ring in the new year in a healthy, mindful way is to partake in Dry January — a chance for “sober-curious” drinkers to trade in their boozy beverages for alcohol-free drinks for 31 days.

Dry January started in 2013 as a health initiative of the British charity Alcohol Change UK. The movement spread across the pond, where 35% of Americans participated in skipping the booze for the entire month of January 2022, an increase from 21% in 2019, according to food and drink research firm CGA.

While Dry January may be gaining in popularity, binge drinking is on the rise in older adults, says Janelle Glick, corporate wellness dietitian with Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health. She explains in an email that binge drinking is defined as four or more drinks for women and five or more drinks for men in a two-hour period. A larger percentage of adults 65 and older drink more days of the month than those age 18-64, she says.

“Over time, alcohol misuse, including binge drinking episodes, contributes to liver disease and other chronic diseases like cancer of the head and neck, esophageal, liver, breast and colorectal cancers,” Glick writes.

Moderation mode

While the two-martini lunch of the 1960s may not be sensible for seniors any longer, wine remains a popular choice. The American Heart Association says that “light-to-moderate intake of regular amounts” of alcohol is recommended in the scientific literature to benefit cardiovascular and general health. But more is not better — excessive or binge drinking is detrimental to one’s health.

Red wine — namely cabernet and merlot — is considered the healthy go-to, but other studies

have suggested that beer or spirits also provide benefits, suggesting that “the drink type is not important,” according to the AHA. Drinking portions and patterns are important.

It can be a challenge to parse the conflicting reports about the benefits and risks of alcohol. The Harvard School of Public Health says that booze is “both tonic and poison” and that “the difference lies mostly in the dose.” Moderate drinking, typically defined as one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men, seems to benefit the heart and circulatory system; heavy drinking can cause a cascade of physical and mental issues.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism says that the latest research on drinking among older adults highlights “a complex interplay between its potential benefits and risks.”

The downside

While many of us may have been eager to “party like it’s 1999” back in the day, to quote a hit song by Prince, drinking patterns may change in our 50s, 60s and beyond. Suddenly, those late nights, jagged sleeps and groggy mornings lose their allure. Good thing, since drinking alcohol can take a significant toll on the mind and body over time.

“As we age, alcohol consumption can make existing health problems worse and have dangerous interaction with some medications,” explains the National Institute on Aging.

Glick says that many over-the-counter medications interact with alcohol, including aspirin, acetaminophen, cold and allergy medicine, cough syrup, sleeping pills and pain medication.

Health conditions such as osteoporosis, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, ulcers, memory loss and mood disorders can be exacerbated by booze. Not to mention the potential for falls, fractures



GETTY IMAGES

and car accidents among buzzed seniors.

Tolerance for alcohol may diminish as we age, according to the Mayo Clinic, due to “the decrease in the activation level of specific liver enzymes” in older people. The liver processes everything we put into our bodies, and alcohol can inhibit those processes.

While drinking in moderation may not kill brain cells per se, it can cause brain atrophy — or shrinkage — in the hippocampus. This area of the brain is associated with memory and reasoning, and the amount of shrinkage appears to be directly related to how much a person drinks, according to a 2017 study in the peer-reviewed British Medical Journal.

“Often people think alcohol helps them deal with stress, but alcohol is a stress on the body,” Glick says, noting that Dry January can help one “learn better coping mechanisms” for stress.

Genes also play a role in one’s penchant for alcohol, as well as how it affects the cardiovascular system, according to the Harvard School of Public Health.

The downsides of alcohol may inspire people to give Dry January a whirl. Glick says the benefits from doing Dry January include better quality of sleep, improved

digestion, weight loss, improved energy levels and blood glucose levels, a better relationship with alcohol (and possibly people), improved libido and no hangovers.

Some good news

It’s not all gloom and doom for those who chose to imbibe.

The National Council of Aging cites research indicating the positive effects of red wine on health are based on the presence of antioxidants that help keep the risk of heart disease and stroke at bay.

However, Glick says people should seek antioxidants from food like peanuts, cocoa and berries rather than alcohol.

Wine is also a component of the Mediterranean diet associated with good mental and heart health.

While it is not recommended to take up drinking for the health benefits, the adage “drink in moderation — or not at all” holds true.

Betsy Chamberlin, 86, of Lititz says she drinks red wine every day from 5 p.m. until supper around 7 p.m. She says she switches to water the rest of the evening.

“We have snacks with our wine and work on a puzzle,” she says.

While she has no desire to do Dry January, her wine habit doesn’t seem to slow her down on the pickleball courts or in her other activities.

Cheers to this New Year’s tradition

KARYL CARMIGNANI
FOR LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

I have been doing Dry January for years.

I was an ardent Chardonnay consumer the other 11 months — not a fan of red, despite its healthy reputation. It was important to me to check in with my “relationship” with vino — and make sure I could still quit if I wanted to. It always felt good coming off of the extra drink-friendly holidays to hit control/alt/delete on my wine consumption. I would feel a little twitchy the first few days, but soon my “new normal” felt, well, normal.

By week four, it was easy to tack on a week or two to the dry month, making Valentine’s Day my cut off some years. I drank much less for the following few months, but was back to my usual two to three glasses of wine several nights a week by spring.

During Dry January I became a “sommelier” of seltzer water, filling the fridge with several different flavors. My ongoing favorite is Waterloo’s ginger citrus — the crisp effervescence is deeply thirst quenching. Hot tea on a cold night was another choice beverage. One trick I discovered to ensure success was to move the wine glasses out of sight for the month.

Two years ago, I even added on no social media during Dry January. Now THAT was a challenge. But I read six books as I cleansed my liver and felt great after 31 days sober and sane.

The biggest surprise came in Dry January 2024, when I extended it to my birthday in May. I have since had a few glasses over the year, but by and large, Dry January has stuck with me all year. While I’m still waiting for the big weight loss, I can say that I sleep better now than I did as an infant. But saving money—and lots of it—has been the most noticeable change.

Cheers to that!



Discover

the new nature of senior living



CORNWALL
MANOR

- Continuing Care Retirement Community nestled on 200 wooded acres
- Located in Central Pennsylvania
- Onsite continuum of health care
- Selection of quality homes & apartments
- Many amenities and services available
- Short drive from Lancaster

Cornwall Manor - The new nature of senior living

1 Boyd Street, Cornwall, PA | 717-274-8092 | cornwallmanor.org



You worked hard to get here!

Now it’s your time to enjoy independent living complemented by amenities, dining options, entertainment, enrichment and outstanding community life.

Become part of a community that supports your interests and provides opportunities to stay well and thrive.

Leave the chores behind and enjoy the worry-free lifestyle at The Long Community.



PRESBYTERIAN
SENIOR LIVING
The Long Community

No Entrance Fee Approach Rental Apartments
Lancaster, PA • 717.381.4914
www.psl.org/long

