

2024 SENIORS

OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

Turn your backyard into an oasis

Discover tricks of the trade to create a welcoming backyard for summer gatherings with family.

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Make your bucket list a reality

Seize the day and put your dreams in motion. Plus, tips for smooth sailing during summer travel

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SAVE ON RETIREMENT TAXES

Follow these strategies to minimize your tax hit when taking 401(k) distributions

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WELCOME TO SENIORS OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA! THIS NEW PUBLICATION PRESENTED BY THE MOUNTAINEER AND THE BILTMORE BEACON PROVIDES SENIORS HELPFUL AND RELEVANT TIPS AND STRATEGIES TO LIVE FULFILLING LIVES AS THEY AGE.

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2024 SENIORS

OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

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Caboose on the Baby Boomer Train

By Kathy Foster
Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community

By Kathy Foster Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community

I am the caboose on the Baby Boomer Train. I think about this now that I have turned sixty. The Boomers, the largest generational group in the history of this country, is the conversation of every senior living community.

Businesses include in their strategic planning, ways to serve this growing senior population — expected to reach 77 million in 2034 — for years into the future. And it is a different group of seniors than generations before of the same age. Everywhere I look there is an article about Active Aging and an abundance of advice on how to Age Well.

My grandmother looked like grandmothers looked (in my experience) when I was growing up. In all my memories of her, her hair was gray, then

white and fluffy. She was full figured and wore polyester pants and lived a more sedentary life compared to the active seniors of today.

When she hugged me, I was a captive in her bosom, and I felt loved and safe. She made me want to be a good girl. She cooked and cleaned and took care of day-to-day things. My mother on the other hand, her daughter, at age 80, wears stylish linen and cotton blend clothes, layered and accessorized with earrings and bracelets. In fact, we share clothes!

She is a widow living her own active life, taking classes, participating in a book club, hanging out at the local bookstore, and so much more. We live in the same town now and when I walk into a venue, they know her, and I, who have been here longer, feel like a visitor. She is an advertisement for Active Aging.



Kathy Foster and her mom, Judy

This only makes me pay more attention to how I am aging.

I want to be the safe hug for the younger generation, and I want to be really cool, too. I want to be healthy and active and have a voice that makes a difference for the generations to follow.

My aging well may look very different from my cohorts' aging well because we are unique in our experiences and how the current events at any given time in our Boomer existence affected us.

But we all have more choices than ever regarding the places we live and the activities that we engage in. It seems to me that so many people are focused on how to serve us, we have it pretty good, whether we are the first car or the caboose. This caboose will do all that she can to age well and encourage others to do the same.

Kathy Foster is the director of transitions at Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community.

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Aging gracefully in a natural way

By Claire Mager
Zoolies Natural Foods Market

My Mother use to say: "If you want to live, you have to grow old."

Sounds very funny, doesn't it? But while it is the truth, it's also the quality of life that counts.

Since we are in charge of our life, our daily well-being — plus keeping up with health conditions — is a concern.

Trying to overcome chronic diseases, many seniors are also saying they see a decline in their mental health, bone and joint mobility, and other autoimmune diseases

We wish to live long and stronger. An ever-changing array of pharmaceuticals makes big promises, but do they deliver the results they claim?

For centuries, man searched every corner of the globe for the fabled fountain of youth. The magic fountain was never found.

The years on the calendar will inevitably slide by. But there are ways to feel younger, and that's what counts.

Whether you're in your youth, middle age or walking into the sunset, your age isn't as simple as the number of trips you've made around the sun.

How Old Are You?

Age is a quality of mind
If you left your dreams behind
If hope is cold
If you no longer look ahead
If your ambitions fires are dead
Then you are old
But if from life you take the best,
And if in life you keep the jest,
If love you hold.
No Matter how the years go by
No matter how the birthdays fly
You are not old.
— H. S. Fritsch



Zoolies Natural Foods Market provides opportunities of hope as a partner to promote a healthy lifestyle. The Waynesville store — now in its 37th year — carries a wide variety of natural supplements, including Zoolies' own premium brand label made in the USA.

Natural supplements can help seniors maintain healthy functioning, sharpness and vitality as they get older. Supplements can also correct nutritional deficiencies as we age, which can otherwise decrease quality of life and lead to poor health outcomes.

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LeAnna DeBruijn, Zoolie Davis owner, Kelly Deese
Not pictured: Rose Schilling

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We're all in this together: *aging is both a personal and collective journey*

By Debra Campbell, MPH
Elder Living Solutions

Aging is both a public health phenomenon and a personal journey. It is a path that we don't necessarily choose, but chooses us.

Do we walk the path gracefully? How do we honor others on the path, and ahead of us on the path? How do we adjust to changes both in ourselves, and in the world around us? How do we integrate the losses that will inevitably come?

North Carolina is aging. N.C. Health News reported in April 2024 that in only seven years, North Carolina will have more residents 65 and older than those under 18.

Governor Roy Cooper signed an executive order titled "North Carolina's Commitment to Building an Age-Friendly State" on May 2, 2023. From this, a plan has been developed: All Ages, All Stages NC: A Roadmap to

Aging and Living Well.

It is an important step to have government organizations acknowledge this population shift and engage in dialogue about it, working together to lay the groundwork for aging well together.

Yet aging remains a personal journey in the midst of a larger population shift. As we navigate our own path of aging, taking time to ponder where we've been and creating priorities for the present and the future can help us on the journey.

Creating deeper connections with those younger and older than us adds meaning to each person's life. Journaling, writing down our life story, or important pieces of it, and telling our story will contribute to building a stronger bridge from the past to the future.

And ultimately, receiving support willingly when we need it, graciously allows others the opportunity to give, which then becomes an important part of their life story, too. So this personal

aging journey might actually be a journey of community — family, friends, and others — after all.

Contact Elder Living Solutions at 828-407-0878 or ElderLivingSolutionsAVL@gmail.com.



Helpful Aging Resources

- All Ages, All Stages NC: A Roadmap to Aging and Living Well www.ncdhs.gov/imstillhere
- Age Friendly Buncombe County www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/dss/adults/age-friendly.aspx
- Dementia Friendly WNC dementiafriendlywnc.org
- Sage-ing International www.sage-ing.org/



A Guide Along Your Path

- *Providing in-home consultation*
- *Planning for short-term & long-term needs*
- *Establishing goals to stay focused on what is important to you*
- *Connecting you with trusted local resources and professional partners*
- *Focusing on your happiness and wholeness at all stages of life's journey*
- *Providing my personal support and services to accomplish your goals*



Debra Berry Campbell MPH

ElderLivingSolutionsAVL@gmail.com | 828 407 0878

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Variables that can affect older drivers' ability to safely operate a vehicle

Driving is a responsibility that should never be taken lightly. The average small car weighs around 2,500 pounds, while SUVs and trucks can weigh as much as 6,000 pounds — underscoring just how dangerous the roads can be when fast-moving vehicles are being driven by drivers whose focus or physical abilities have been compromised.

Older adults will not necessarily experience physical and cognitive issues that can affect their ability to safely operate a motor vehicle. However, the National Institute on Aging reports that certain variables affecting older adults could compromise their ability to drive.

- **Muscle/joint stiffness and weakness:** Aging can cause muscle and joint stiffness and weaken muscles. Stiffness, weakness and swelling in the joints can make it harder for drivers to turn their heads, effectively steer their vehicles and brake safely.



- **Diminishing eyesight:** Strong eyesight is essential to safe driving. As drivers get older, changes in their eyesight can make it harder to see pedestrians, fellow motorists, animals on roadways, and any movements outside of their direct line of

sight. Aging has been shown to cause a loss of peripheral vision by one to three degrees for every decade of life.

The National Institute on Aging urges drivers 60 and older to schedule a dilated eye exam every one to two years. Certain

issues affecting drivers' vision might be fixable, while others may need to avoid driving at night or when the sun is at its brightest, or giving up driving entirely.

- **Diminishing hearing:** Hearing loss can also affect a driver's ability to drive safely. Drivers must be able to hear horns and sirens from other vehicles as well as any noises coming from their own cars that could indicate a problem with the vehicle.

- **Medications:** Nearly 90 percent of adults 65 and older are currently taking a prescription medicine. Medications often produce side effects that can compromise a driver's ability to drive safely. Such effects include drowsiness, light-headedness and diminished alertness. Aging drivers should discuss medication side effects with their physicians and what, if anything, they can do to counter the effects of a given prescription on their driving abilities.



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Get lost and found again: an insider's guide on labyrinths in WNC

WNC is home to a plethora of labyrinths — at parks, churches, private gardens, spiritual retreats, you name it.

The historical record traces the origin of labyrinths to at least 3,000 years ago. Walking the serpentine path of a labyrinth is a form of meditation, contemplation and rebirth — serving as a physical manifestation of a mental and spiritual journey.

A bit of labyrinth etiquette for newcomers: labyrinths are intended to be walked slowly, or at least deliberately, and quietly if others are around. Check out the handiwork of the labyrinth designers and builders in WNC.

Lake Junaluska

• **Lake Junaluska Conference and Retreat Center.** A labyrinth design made from smooth flagstones set in a lush, grass lawn on the tranquil lake shore. Located beside Memorial Chapel at 20 Chapel Dr., Lake Junaluska.

Asheville

• **UNC-Asheville.** Stones create the shape of the labyrinth on a knoll beneath shade trees. Located above Weizenblatt Hall and below Ramsey Library at 1 University Heights, Asheville.

• **First Baptist Church of Asheville.** Located in the courtyard of the church to the left of the main entrance. The labyrinth is created from pavers in a large patio, making it easy to walk even

for those unsteady on their feet. 5 Oak St., Asheville.

• **St. Luke's Episcopal Church.** White stones form the labyrinth on a grass lawn. Located in the field, behind the pavilion. 219 Chunns Cove Rd., Asheville.

• **Unity Center.** This 50-foot diameter labyrinth is handicapped accessible, constructed from a hard pack white gravel surface between rows of bricks suitable for someone in a wheelchair. 2041 Old

Fanning Bridge Rd., Mills River.

Black Mountain

• **The Light Center.** A large labyrinth laid out on a white stone bed surface surrounded by a grove of trees is located behind the geodesic prayer dome. 2196 Hwy 9 South, Black Mountain. urlight.org/healing-labyrinth.

Fairview

• **The Labyrinth Center.** Large natural stones laid out on grass. 58 Dark Star Way, Fairview.

Hendersonville

• **Kanuga Conference Center.** A black design painted on a large white concrete circle, making it excellent for walking barefoot. 130 Kanuga Conference Dr., Hendersonville.

• **Holmes Educational State Forest.** Stones form the labyrinth outline over bare ground in a natural park setting. 1299 Crab Creek Rd., Hendersonville.



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Signs that a loved one may no longer be able to live alone



Assisted living facilities provide an invaluable service. When memory decline, a medical condition, or mobility challenges affect an individual's ability to live independently, assisted living facilities can ensure they get the help they need to live as fully and actively as possible.

It's not always easy to identify when a loved one may need to move into an assisted living facility.

Some individuals choose to do so on their own, but families often make such decisions together. Here are some signs that an individual may benefit from assisted living:

- Requiring routine reminders to take medication
- Noticeable changes in weight, including weight loss or gain
- Loss of mobility or increase in falls
- Signs that household maintenance is being neglected
- Difficulty with daily tasks like grooming and meal preparation
- Increased isolation
- Loss of interest in hobbies

Dementia or cognitive issues can create unique challenges for caregivers. When someone begins exhibiting dementia behaviors that compromise their safety and the safety of others, it's usually in their best interest to move to memory care.

Subtle behavior changes can make it difficult to know when someone is on the path to requiring memory care. Signs a loved one may need special-

ized memory care include:

- Wandering or getting lost
- Aggression
- Frequent forgetfulness
- Poor hygiene
- Difficulty socializing
- Changed eating habits
- Trouble participating in scheduled activities

To decide whether a person with dementia should stop living alone, try to figure out what stage of dementia they're in. At first, a senior may score well on memory tests and only have minor impairment, like forgetting difficult words or where they left their glasses.

But it's never too early to bring up these concerns. By discussing dementia early, you give your elderly parent or relative the opportunity to be a part of senior living conversations.

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Cut the clutter: garage storage solutions

Garages often become a catch-all storage wasteland for items that seemingly have no other home. Before long, clutter can overwhelm the garage.

Keeping it in check is easier when everything has a designated space where it can be easily returned to. Organizing a garage takes work, but the end result can improve the appearance, free up space, make work more efficient, and make it easier to find and use tools more readily. Here are some ways to get started on organizing your garage.



Start with cleaning and culling

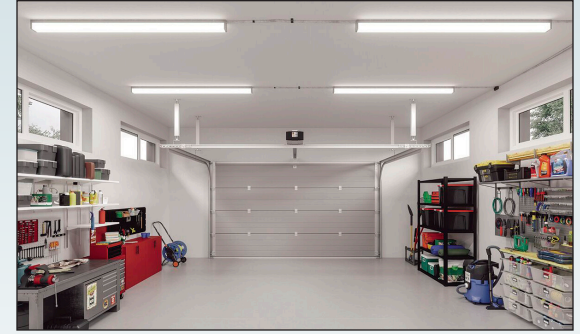
One of the first steps when organizing a garage is to thoroughly analyze what is needed and what can be removed from the garage. If items belong elsewhere, such as in a shed or the basement, move these items first. Discard damaged or broken items.

Next, move on to tools or gear that hasn't been used in some time. Will you use it again? If the item has been collecting dust for years, you likely already know the answer to that question.

Pile all items in the driveway so you have a clean slate with which to start. Measure the room to figure out the dimensions so you'll know how much wall space is available for storage.

Storage options

The ultimate goal of a garage storage renovation is to make floor space available. Lifting items off the floor makes access easier, and protects items should there be a flood or leaks. A combination of wall shelves, overhead shelves, cabinets, and wall hooks can help homeowners create more floor area.



Some items should be stored out of sight and beyond the reach of children and pets. Cabinets and containers can be used and locked to secure materials, such as fertilizers, paints, solvents, and other chemicals.

Overhead storage can be reserved for items that aren't used frequently, such as seasonal decorations or luggage. Magnets, pegboards, or organization bins and systems can be used to corral small or errant items like hand tools, fasteners and more.

It's important to ensure that shelves and hooks are heavy-duty and able to withstand the weight of pressure put on them.

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Summer adventures for seniors in Western North Carolina

By Ardenwoods Retirement Community

As spring's flowers give way to the more temperate summer months, Western North Carolina emerges as a haven for seniors seeking enriching experiences amidst the backdrop of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

With its verdant forests, majestic vistas and vibrant cultural scene, this region beckons older adults to embark on a journey of exploration, relaxation, and rejuvenation. From scenic hikes to cultural adventures, there's a wealth of opportunities awaiting seniors in WNC.

Take a Hike

Western North Carolina boasts an abundance of natural treasures, making it an ideal destination for seniors eager to reconnect with the great outdoors. Whether it's a leisurely drive along the Blue Ridge Parkway, known for its panoramic vistas and breathtaking overlooks, or a more challenging hike in the Pisgah National Forest, there's a road or trail suited for every level of mobility.

Seniors can immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of nature, enjoying the crisp mountain air and reveling in the beauty that is WNC.

Retirement communities, like Ardenwoods located between Asheville and Hendersonville, offer residents and their families brisk hiking opportunities with the convenience of onsite trails with amazing mountain views. Ardenwoods boasts miles of walking and hiking trails just steps from residents' apartments. Walking and hiking remain some of the best exercise seniors can do to maintain mobility and mental acuity.

Artistic Inspiration

Beyond its natural splendor, Western North Carolina is a hub of cultural vitality and artistic expression. Seniors can explore the vibrant city of Asheville, renowned for its eclectic arts scene and rich cultural heritage. From world-class museums and the robust craft scene to the historic splendor of the Biltmore Estate, there's no shortage of cultural experiences to delight the senses.

Seniors can delve into the region's thriving artisanal community, with opportunities to visit local galleries, studios, and craft markets showcasing the work of talented artisans and craftspeople. Whether it's admiring handcrafted pottery, sampling artisanal cheeses, or perusing unique works of art, there's endless inspiration to be found in Western North Carolina's creative landscape.



Culinary Delights and Farm-to-Table Experiences

Summer in Western North Carolina is truly a feast for the senses, particularly for seniors with a passion for gastronomy. The region's robust farm-to-table culture ensures that fresh, locally sourced ingredients take center stage, in many local restaurants and eateries. Visitors and locals alike can dine at acclaimed restaurants specializing in just about every type of cuisine, indulge in farm-fresh produce at local farmers' markets, or embark on culinary tours highlighting the best of the region's food scene.

For those eager to take a deeper dive into the region's farm-to-table scene, Both Asheville and Hendersonville offer opportunities for immersive culinary experiences. Whether picking your own at local farms and orchards, participating in cooking classes led by skilled chefs, or

enjoying al fresco dining, there is no limit to the world-class culinary experiences available in WNC. Each bite is a celebration of the region's agricultural heritage and culinary innovation, giving adventurous diners lasting memories of unique flavors and gastronomic indulgence.

Wellness Retreats and Serene Escapes

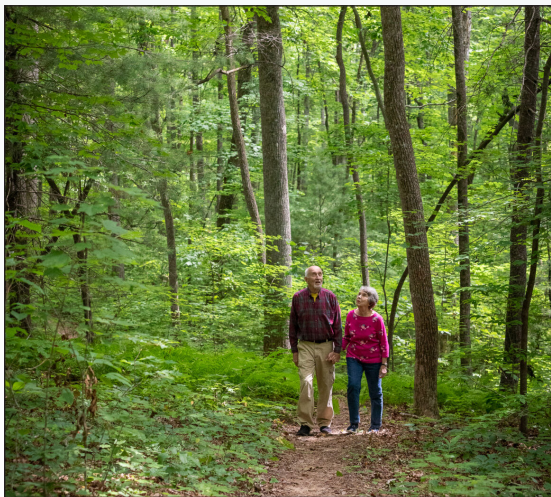
Although summer activities can lean toward adventure, Western North Carolina also offers seniors ample opportunities for relaxation and rejuvenation. From tranquil spa retreats nestled in the mountains to local yoga workshops, there are myriad ways for seniors to relax and prioritize their health and well-being.

Whether it's unwinding with a soothing massage, practicing mindfulness in a serene setting, or simply taking time to reconnect with oneself in nature, WNC provides the perfect backdrop for holistic rejuvenation. Seniors can embrace summer as a time of self-care and renewal, leaving them refreshed, revitalized, and ready to embrace other adventures along the Blue Ridge.

Seizing the Spirit of Summer

For most, summer in WNC is a time of exploration and adventure, and particularly for seniors eager to capture all that this charming region has to offer. From outdoor adventures among some of the most breathtaking scenery in the world to cultural experiences that ignite the imagination, there's something for everyone to enjoy in and around Western North Carolina.

Ardenwoods retirement community in Buncombe County is a celebration of healthy, active living. Learn more at ardenwoodsretire.com.



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Turn your backyard into a welcoming oasis

One lasting effect of the pandemic is a heightened appreciation for gathering outdoors.

A backyard renovation can cost anywhere from \$5,000 to \$50,000. But even if you aren't ready to go hog wild, here are some options to pick and chose from to upgrade your backyard entertaining spaces — whether it's for entertaining or relaxing with a book.



Establish various seating areas

Ample seating is a must when welcoming guests into your home. Open layouts make it easier to add seating without feeling cramped, so homeowners whose properties feature such design schemes may find it easier to accommodate more guests than homes with more traditional, compartmentalized layouts.

When arranging seating, aim to create multiple seating areas so guests can speak privately to one another if they so desire. Multiple seating areas also ensure more than one conversation can take place at a time. That's especially useful when hosting a game watch, as some guests may come for the game while others may be more interested in socializing than the score.

Designate spaces for children

Kids are typically part of the equation when entertaining at home, so it's important that hosts create spaces for them as well. A basement or children's playroom can do the trick. If the weather outside is welcoming, a fenced-in backyard with games and a trampoline can provide the perfect space for kids to have fun while the adults get to engage in conversation and catch

up with friends and family apart from boisterous youngsters.

Add lighting

Outdoor spaces can be enjoyed no matter the hour when there is ample lighting. Outdoor lighting not only sheds light on entertaining spaces, but also makes spaces safer and more secure. Outdoor lighting options include professionally installed, hardwired lights on the home itself or accent lighting that draws attention to trees or architectural structures on the property. Lights come in all types and price points.

Light paths and frequently traveled areas with solar-powered lights that stick in the ground to help direct guests between outdoor spaces. Cafe lights add a cozy and warm vibe, whether zigzagging between trees or strung along deck railings or eaves. Or place cement posts inside decorative planters and then string lights between the posts. This way the lighting can be moved around as desired.



Invest in an outdoor cooking area

Grilling, smoking and even making brick oven pizzas outdoors is a major component of backyard entertaining. Outdoor kitchens can increase the convenience of prepping, cooking and serving food outdoors. Grills and other cooking gear can be built into weather-resistant counters and cabinetry.

Incorporate a water feature

The sound of trickling or bubbling water can make surroundings more serene. A low-maintenance water feature can help to create a calming

ambiance. A fountain that does not require a collection pond will reduce the chance it becomes a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Locating the fountain out of the sun can keep algae growth at a minimum.



Install a pergola

A pergola or another structure is the perfect way to add privacy to a gathering spot and create more shade and weather protection when Mother Nature does not want to cooperate.

Add some music

Thanks to wireless Bluetooth speakers, it's easy to have music piped right into the backyard. Set up a wireless speaker in an inconspicuous spot, such as inside a planter or in the rafters of a gazebo.

Lounging spots

A comfortable outdoor loveseat or chairs may be a focal point of the yard, but build in some additional cozy spots specifically for lounging around. Nestle a hammock in a quiet corner of the yard, or enhance a chaise lounge with throw pillows and a large umbrella for napping.



Must-have items for summer entertaining in the backyard

Summer entertaining season is in full swing, from hosting neighborhood cookouts to visits from the grandkids. Consider these features to kick your summer soirees up a notch.



Fire features

The days when summer hosts only needed a few extra lawn chairs and some burgers and dogs on the grill are long gone. Though those items still have a place at backyard barbecues, summer parties have taken a step up.

Fire features, whether it's a stand-alone fire pit, one built into a patio or a gas-powered fire table, are now wildly popular. Fire features provide a

welcome place to relax and converse with guests after the sun goes down. And much to kids' delight, a fire feature also paves the way for some post-meal s'mores.

Games

Summer entertaining season might be all about relaxation, but games can up the fun factor at backyard gatherings. Cornhole is a wildly popular game, and customized cornhole boards can help hosts come across as party professionals.

Ladder toss, bocce and wiffle ball are some additional games that can make



the festivities more fun. Hosts who don't have a pool also can invest in an inflatable pool big enough to fit all the kids who will be coming to the party. Croquette is a classic that all ages can play together.

Outdoor storage cabinet

Hosts can save themselves the stress and effort of walking in and out for dinnerware and other table accessories by investing in a sturdy outdoor storage cabinet. As meal time draws near, hosts will appreciate that all the plates, napkins, utensils, and placemats are already outside. The top of the storage cabinet can double as a small but convenient buffet station for sides that aren't being cooked over an open flame.

Projector and screen

A projector and screen can really up the ante on summer entertaining, turning a backyard barbecue into a great place to watch a game or cuddle up after dinner for a movie night under the stars. Projectors and screens won't bust

the budget, but those who have more to spend may want to consider an outdoor television.

Outdoor televisions are built to handle the glare of the summer sun, but a retractable awning may be a good safety net for hosts who plan to spend many a weekend afternoon outside watching games or movies with family and friends.



How to make a backyard safe for dogs

Dogs, particularly puppies, can be full of boundless energy. Channeling that energy into exercise with long walks or play sessions can help stem dogs' propensity to get into trouble around the house as they burn off extra adrenaline. Pets who don't have an energy outlet may chew off-limits objects or get into other mischief.

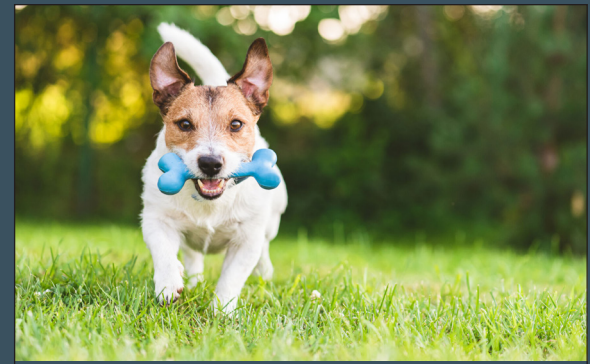
Letting dogs run around in the yard, whether on their own or chasing tossed tennis balls, is an ideal way to provide exercise and tire out pups. But it's vital that pups have a dog-friendly yard.

- **Use safe lawn care products:** Contact with chemically treated lawns can cause a number of health issues for dogs, such as allergies or intestinal upset. Look for organic products as a safer alternatives than chemical-based products, or keep animals out of the yard for at least a

day after fertilizing and treating.

- **Fence off the yard:** Off-leash running and bounding through the yard will make any dog smile. However, a fence is a must-have to ensure a dog doesn't become an escape artist. Be sure the fence is high enough so that the pup cannot jump over it. Burying chicken wire in the dirt beneath the lower edge of the fence also can help prevent dogs who like to dig from exiting by crawling underneath the fence.

- **Keep the yard tidy:** Inspect the yard regularly to make sure nothing is around that can prove harmful, whether it's poison ivy, felled branches or broken fence panels. Also, keep shrubs and grass trimmed to reduce flea and tick populations on the property.



- **Avoid poisonous plants:** Certain plants can be dangerous if they're consumed by curious pups. Chrysanthemums, peonies, irises, and hydrangeas are some plants that can be poisonous.

Living well with dementia: yes, it is possible!

By Dr. Cindy Keehn
Engaging Dementia Effectively

Just because the term “dementia” landed in your medical chart, it does not mean you have to stop living. Despite the rampant “gloom and doom” scenarios that loom over this condition, there is still a quality of life to be enjoyed by you and your loved ones.

Yes, your brain is changing in ways you cannot control. Yes, some dreams for your future may change, but not all have to die. This is a new era for people living with dementia (PLwD) with many new emerging supports that focus on quality living.

Consider for a moment, what brings the “quality” to your life? Merriam-Webster defines quality of life as the “overall enjoyment of life.” Is it in relationships with those you love and the time spend interacting with them? Maybe it's doing the things you want to do or continuing what you've always done. Maybe providing some positive impact back to humankind. All these are possible despite dementia.

Did you know there are cruise trips and travel agencies specifically working with PLwD and their caregiv-



ers? There are “brain cafes” to engage PLwD regularly for fun and growth. There are multiple volunteer opportunities to provide purpose and focus. PLwD can be involved in promoting Dementia Friendly cities. I know a woman who became Mrs. Colorado Springs in 2022 using her early-onset Alzheimer's disease as her platform!

The key is focusing on and using the skills and abilities that remain. Gain an understanding of the process of brain change and learn from this to better

communicate. It is up to those who can adapt to do so and guide the PLwD along that journey.

The Alzheimer's Association reports life expectancy anywhere from 4 to 20 years after a diagnosis of dementia. Since over 120 diseases can cause dementia symptoms the condition is variable in its presentation and progression.

Sadly, no medical cure exists to stop the process. New research studies suggest the benefit of lifestyle changes, especially regular moderate exercise, a MIND diet, and ample sleep, to improve brain function. An annual cognitive screening (thanks to Medicare), and greater community and media awareness encourage earlier diagnosis where current symptomatic meds can help.

Cindy Keen of Engaging Dementia Effectively is a certified trainer of the Positive Approach® to Care program, developed by Teepa Snow (www.teepasnow.com). The approach strives to use the skills retained by the person with dementia while supportively adding the caregiver's skill for what is no longer available. Visit www.engagingdementiaeffectively.com to learn more and schedule an appointment.

The challenges with dementia are REAL. How can i help?



Dr. Cindy Keehn PT DPT CDP and PAC
Certified Indep Trainer & Consultant

Speaker, Educator, Staff Trainer, Family Consultant

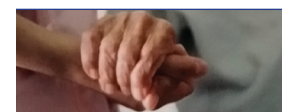
The first 30 minutes are FREE as I gain an understanding of your situation. We can then meet by phone, video or in person, with just us or with anyone who is involved. I want to help you develop practice skills and strategy to improve everyone's quality of life while on this journey!

Certified through Positive Approach to Care® as an Independent Trainer and Consultant, Cindy is Passionate to increase awareness, understanding, and skills for those with the challenges of working with someone living with dementia.

Cindy@engagingdementiaeffectively.com
www.engagingdementiaeffectively.com
828.276.3416
serving Western NC area and beyond



Engaging
DEMENTIA
Effectively!



PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR
BETTER OUTCOMES

Those who are grieving have a place to go

By Colton T. Sankey

Haywood Hospice & Palliative Care



Colton T. Sankey

On the second Wednesday of every month at 3:30 p.m. when the Coffee Cup Café closes, the doors reopen to welcome a community of people who have been brought together through their shared loss.

A grief group organized by chaplain, Patrick Davis and his staff from Haywood Hospice and Palliative Care, meets and the healing begins.

I was invited to the group to observe for a school project and was astonished by the sense of community and compassion that I experienced.

Upon entering the Coffee Cup Café there's a sense of familiarity, almost a feeling of coming home that came over me. The feeling came from the warmth of the people gathered to share this space.

The opening ceremony joined everyone in gentle sound and movement.

I then had the honor of listening to individuals who had gathered there that day explain who they had lost and where they are in their journey through that loss.

Some had lost spouses, children or parents, siblings or other loved ones, but what mattered most was that they felt the same thing deep down. They were grieving the love and time they had lost with their cherished ones but luckily, they didn't have to do this alone.

I had the pleasure of speaking with

a woman who had been attending regularly since its inception a year ago.

Although nothing could replace the loved one she had lost, she had found a new sense of belonging within this group. She had made lifelong friends who truly understood her when she thought nobody could again. She explained that she still experiences her grief every day but knowing that her community is there by her side makes the struggle possible and worthwhile.

It's my hope that writing this piece brings some attention to the good work being done by some deeply caring individuals in our community.

I also hope that anyone reading this who is grieving without support considers contacting this group to find some solace and companionship.

If you are grieving you may feel alone now, but I implore you to reach out and find your community because you need them and they need you.

For more information on hospice services, contact Haywood Hospice at 828-452-5039.



You are not alone.

If you are struggling with the loss of a loved one, please join us for one or more of our free outreach programs:

Grief Gatherings at the Coffee Cup Café

Every second Wednesday of the month at 3:30 p.m.

Weekly Book Club for Grief & Loss

Thursdays from 12-1:00 p.m.

Heartwood Space @ Grace Church in the Mountains,
394 N. Haywood Street

“A Brief Pause” Radio Message with Chaplain Patrick Davis

An encouraging word each week for griever
—featured on WPTL Radio every Sunday at 8:45 a.m.

“Captured in Time” Creative Healing Jewelry Workshop

Studio3 School of Jewelry Arts in Canton

August 17 from 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Create a key chain memento of your loved one.

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For more information, call us at 828-452-5039

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6 ways to show seniors they're appreciated

People are living longer than ever, and as individuals age, the demand for senior services continues to grow — as does the need to be patient and respect the elderly. There are many ways to show seniors just how much they're appreciated.

1. Help with chores

Lend a hand with chores around the house that may have grown difficult for seniors. This can include mowing the lawn, weeding garden beds, shoveling snow, raking leaves, or even taking the garbage pails in and out on collection days.

2. Visit more often

Frequent visits are one of the simplest ways to show seniors you care. Whether seniors live in a private home or managed care facility, visitors brighten their days, especially if they no longer get out and about as frequently as they

once did. Spending time together and sharing stories can bring smiles to the faces of older adults.

3. Plan activities with seniors in mind

When organizing parties and special events, consider the needs of seniors on the guest list. Add music from their era to playlists or DJ requests. Seat seniors with mobility issues near exits and restrooms. Make sure to arrange for photos with the guest of honor to keep family history alive.

4. Thank seniors

Find any reason to thank a senior. Perhaps someone served in the military or volunteered their time with children. Celebrate accomplishments big and small with a simple "thank you."

5. Prepare a meal

Invite a special senior over for a home-



cooked meal with the family. Make it a regular occurrence on the calendar.

6. Call regularly

Pick up the phone just to say hello. It's exciting for seniors, especially those who live alone, to hear the phone ring.

But often, the only time the phone rings is when it's a telemarketer calling. Set a reminder and make it part of your routine to call the seniors in your life. A morning phone call in particular is helpful for seniors to get their day off to a good start.

To keep your life in motion

Issues like knee, hip, foot and shoulder injuries can rob you of the activities you enjoy most. From sports medicine to joint repair or replacement, we're here to address the pain and get you moving again, close to home.

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How to help aging adults adapt to technology

Technology may have pervaded every part of life in the 21st century, but it wasn't so long ago that phones were still attached to walls and people had to watch their favorite shows and films exclusively on televisions instead of having the option to watch them on devices like smartphones and tablets.

The transition to life in the technology age has been a difficult adjustment for some seniors. For those who have had a hard time adapting to technology, their families can try these strategies to make that transition go more smoothly.

Go over product manuals

Older adults are less likely to learn through experimentation than they are by reading instructions in the manual. When helping seniors learn to use new devices, go over the owner's manual with them as you set up the device. Mark important pages in the manual so seniors know where to go for quick answers if they experience any issues logging in or using certain apps.

Look for senior-specific devices

Seniors make up an enormous segment of the population, and tech companies have recognized that there's a market for products designed specifically for seniors. When shopping for devices, look for those that with large menus, bright screens, bigger buttons, amplified sounds, easily accessible navigation tools and other simplified features.

Be patient

Some seniors are excited by the prospect of learning to use new technology, while others may be hesitant. Patience is essential when working with an aging loved one who's intimidated by technology. Take the time to explain apps and features and don't take it for granted that seniors will know how to use a device or recognize what a device can do.

The Haywood County Senior Resource Center offers monthly drop-in help sessions for iPad and Android. Call 828-356-2800 for days and times.



Elderflower Adult Day Center



Holistic eldercare in a farm-based community setting in beautiful Fairview, NC.

Adult Day services often support the needs of working caregivers and offer the opportunity for loved-ones to engage with life and feel secure while family caregivers work or tend to their own lives.

At Elderflower Adult Day Center, our mission is to provide adult day services that mentally and physically enrich our aging population's daily lives through connection to nature, integrative medicine, and a thriving multi-generational community.

Pre-Register Today! www.elderflowercommunity.org

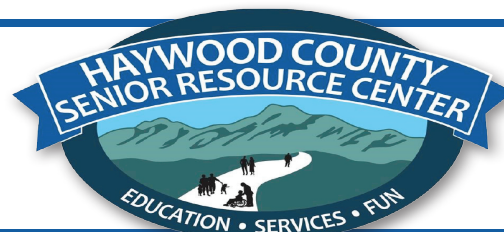


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- Senior Companion Program
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- Ensure Nutrition Program
- Haywood/Jackson Volunteer Center
- Disability Partners
- Vaya Health - Geriatric Team

- Information & Assistance
- Caregiver List for Haywood County
- Nutrition Meal Sites
- Phone Assurance Program
- Project Lifesaver
- In-Home Services
- MemoryCare
- Creative Living Programs/Trips

81 Elmwood Way, Waynesville, N.C.
www.haywoodseniors.org
Facebook: **Haywood County Senior Resource Center**



Carolina
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ASSOCIATES

Carolina Internal Medicine Associates Opens New Satellite Office



We are happy to announce the opening of our office at 44 Haywood Park Drive. We are neighbors with the Coffee Cup Cafe. Dr. James Weaver along with Lisa Reeves, FNP-C began seeing patients on Jan. 1, 2024. Lisa Reeves is currently taking new patients. Lisa was born and raised here in WNC. She obtained her nursing license in 1998 and completed her master degree in 2021 at East Tennessee State University. To schedule an appointment with her, call 828-258-0397.

44 Haywood Park Drive | Clyde, NC 28803 | 828.258.0397

Ad33128

Make your dog a better leash-walker

Walking your dog should be an enjoyable way to get some exercise and fresh air while spending time with your pooch. But if your dog pulls and tugs at his leash, those walks aren't so fun.

Here's a few strategies to remedy common leash issues.

Pulling

The vast assortment of collars and harnesses billed as "no pull" suggests the issue of dogs pulling on the leash is common. Dogs on leashes that are too long may be distracted and pull more readily. Start out with a short leash and only allow a longer slack when the dog has exhibited an ability to walk diligently on the shorter leash.



Rather than punish bad behavior like pulling, many dog trainers recommend rewarding the good behavior, such as walking without pulling at your side. This praise can be delivered verbally and with plenty of treats.

Lunging and leash reactivity

Dogs may behave differently on a leash than they do when off them. Most dogs who lunge at passersby or bark or snarl may actually crave the attention of other companions but not have the social skills to engage in a proper meet and greet. Should the dog be off-leash, they may not behave in the same way.

Lunging and other behaviors may stem from aggression, but it's more likely a cause of fear. It's a "I'll-get-that-thing-before-it-gets-me" mentality designed to make the feared person, dog or object go away.

A leash also may cause frustration that the dog can't get to a desired pet or person, and the animal loses emotional control.

A trainer can help owners learn to distract the dog on the leash from others with high quality treats. Strategies to remove leash tension also can cut down on leash reactivity.

Right equipment

Dog owners can experiment with gear to make leash-walking go more smoothly. Traditional collars may put too much pressure on a dog's throat, particularly those who pull. A harness can be a better option.

Gentle leaders are a type of head gear that enables pet owners to redirect their dogs more readily. Because they resemble muzzles, some owners may hesitate to use them despite their efficacy. Front clip harnesses and correctional collars might help as well. Consult with a veterinarian or trainer for the best options.

Enhance your quality of life with healthy aging options

As individuals progress through life, maintaining an active lifestyle becomes increasingly crucial. There are a diverse range of programs tailored to healthy aging that you can pursue. Let's explore how these options can enhance your quality of life:

• **Exercise Classes:** Group exercise classes are thoughtfully designed to keep participants moving and engaged. Whether you prefer in-person sessions or online workouts, there are options for everyone. These classes not only strengthen the body but also improve balance and boost flexibility.

• **Falls Prevention:** Falls pose a significant concern for adults aged 65 and older. Falls prevention programs focus on balance and coordination, reducing the risk of falls and enhancing overall well-being.

• **Pickleball:** Pickleball is a great way to stay fit, have a good time, and make friends. Benefits include improvement



to your physical fitness, a boost to your mental health, plus it enhances your social wellness.

• **Clubs and Social Activities:** Local organizations provide an array of

clubs and events for healthy agers. Examples include including Mahjong, walking clubs, health talks, and more. These provide connection, fun, and education.

• **Coaching or Training:** Dedicated health coaches provide personalized guidance, assisting individuals in setting and achieving fitness goals. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced exerciser, the coaches are there to support you every step of the way.

One way to achieve these goals is the YMCA of Western North Carolina where their focus is on helping you stay healthy longer. You can join their community, connect with friends, and embrace a vibrant lifestyle.

The Y is committed to inclusivity, regardless of financial circumstances. As a nonprofit organization with donor support, income-based rates are available. Additionally, the YMCA partners with several third-party insurance providers for membership benefits. Estimate your personalized rate and learn more about offerings at visitingymcawnc.org/membership/join.



**SUPPORTING
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HEALTH
AND
HAPPINESS**



The YMCA is a community-based nonprofit that serves your spirit, mind, and body and helps you become your best self. We have a wide variety of programs for every stage of your health journey.

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- And so much more!

STOP IN FOR A TOUR TODAY!

📍 Members have access to all 7 local YMCAs and more nationwide.

Financial assistance available thanks to community support.

ymcawnc.org

Breathe easier with a well-functioning CPAP

By Mountaineer Oxygen

Replacing CPAP masks and supplies is crucial for effective therapy.

Regular replacement prevents bacterial growth and maintains hygiene, reducing the risk of respiratory infections.

It also ensures therapy efficacy by preventing air leaks caused by worn-out seals, which can disrupt sleep and worsen symptoms of sleep apnea. Comfort is another key factor: worn-out headgear or nasal pillows can cause discomfort and skin irritation, hindering consistent CPAP usage.

Additionally, CPAP equipment durability declines with use, leading to issues like cracks in tubes or clogged filters, which compromise airflow and strain the machine's motor. By replacing components as recommended, users can prolong the lifespan of their

CPAP device and avoid costly repairs or replacements.

Untreated sleep apnea poses serious health risks, including hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and impaired glucose metabolism. Consistent use of clean, well-maintained CPAP equipment is essential for managing these risks and achieving optimal treatment outcomes.



Cut costs when dining out

With more free time on their hands, eating out is a favorite pastime of many retirees, but it can quickly devour a budget for those on fixed incomes. Here's some tips to save money while dining out.



- Dine out for breakfast or lunch when meals tend to be less expensive than during dinner hours.
- Consider splitting meals or ordering appetizers instead of entrees.
- Stick to one course rather than filling up on an appetizer, salad and then having too much leftover food for the main course.
- Drink at home whenever possible. Wine, beer or cocktails at a restaurant will almost always cost you more than if you have drinks at home before heading out.
- Look for coupons or special discount days when seniors can enjoy a percentage off the tab.
- Opt for inexpensive foods and save the high-end meals for special occasions.

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Tips to prevent pickleball injuries

Pickleball is thriving, and is a particularly popular social sport among seniors. To avoid injuries when playing pickleball, follow these strategies.

- **Gear up:** Wear athletic shoes with ample traction to reduce the chance of slipping or falling. The right racket also can reduce risk for elbow injuries. Look for a light-to-medium weight, comfortable grip and a large sweet spot.



- **Loosen up before playing:** Taking the court right after getting out of the car is a recipe for injury. Arrive five to 10 minutes before a game and use that time to loosen up. A short walk and some subsequent stretches can help players make sure their bodies are not too tight to play. Brief warm-up exercises and stretching can reduce muscle tension and make the body less vulnerable to injury.

- **Hydrate before, during and after a game:** Water cushions the joints, which helps athletes maintain their flexibility, reducing risk. Remaining flexible can reduce athletes' risk for sprains and strains, which are the leading cause of pickleball injuries.

- **Embrace physical activity:** Pickleball can be a great workout, and players can reduce their injury risk by staying physically active even when they are not playing. Leg exercises can help build lower body strength, but strength exercises that focus on the upper body also can reduce injury risk.

Catch the pickleball craze

The Waynesville Recreation Center offers pickleball lessons from 9 a.m.-noon every Monday.

The Waynesville Recreation Center also offers pickleball open play from 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday and 3-5 p.m. on Saturdays.

The gym at Waynesville's Old Armory has several open play pickleball sessions:

- experts from 7-9 a.m. Monday-Saturday; 9 a.m-noon Saturday
- all levels from 9 a.m.-noon Monday-Friday; 1-3 p.m. Saturday; 3-5 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday; 5-8 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday.

Call 828-456-2030 to schedule lessons or to learn about daily, monthly, quarterly and annual membership options.

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How to make a bucket list a reality

A bucket list is a plan for living life to its fullest and prioritizing opportunities to engage in activities you've always wanted to do — but didn't have the time or money to do earlier in life. Here are some tips for putting bucket list plans into action.

- **Brainstorm:** Stop and think about what you really want to experience in your lifetime. Leave factors like money or proximity out of it. No ideas are off-limits. This is your opportunity to brainstorm, and nothing is too crazy or silly.

- **Put it on paper:** Write the bucket list in a comfortable or inspiring place, which may help ideas flow more freely. The place might be a cozy nook at a bookstore or a quiet spot on the beach.

- **Sky is the limit:** Choose things that are meaningful to you as well as ideas that are frivolous and fun. Make your list a mix of each, and don't take



yourself too seriously.

- **Divide the bucket list by time:** Are there items you can check off in a particular season, such as skiing

the Alps? If your bucket list involves things that require more mobility, those should be done sooner rather than later. Categorizing the list by

seasons and periods of your life can make it easier to prioritize certain activities over others.

- **Consider your companion:** Some things on your bucket list may involve treating family to a trip, an adventure with a childhood friend or an activity with a special grandchild. Others may be solo pursuits. Share your plans with possible companions to see if they're interested, then begin to coordinate with their schedules.

- **Start saving:** Set aside a budget for funding bucket list activities. Bucket lists may include some costly activities, so start saving now so money does not stand in your way. Open a savings account specifically for funding bucket list excursions and set up automatic deposits.

Bucket lists can encourage people to live life to the fullest and it's never too early to get started on a list of your own.

Traveling this summer? 6 tips for seniors for smooth sailing

One of the perks of getting older is more time to travel, and today's seniors are big travelers. Before setting off on that next globe trotting adventure, review these travel safety tips to ensure a seamless trip.

1. **Pack copies of important documents.** In the event paperwork is lost while traveling, request copies of prescriptions and/or statements of medical conditions from each physician and medical treatment center so you have a second set. Keep copies of your passport, driver's license, insurance cards, travel tickets, and other documents as well. Divide the duplicate set between two pieces of luggage.

2. **Don't advertise your absence:** It may be tempting to upload photos of your beachside vacation to social media as you are immersed in paradise. In addition, have a neighbor periodically pick up your mail and set lights on timers to give the impression you are home even when you're not.

3. **Get travel insurance:** Travel insurance is inexpensive compared to the cost of a trip, and can protect against trip delays and cancellations due to a fall or getting sick.

4. **Write down phone numbers:** With smart phones, we rarely dial numbers of family members anymore, and it's easy

to forget them over time. Jot down important ones on a note-card in case your phone is lost, so you can call home for help if needed.

5. **Share your itinerary:** Keep loved ones apprised of your general travel itinerary, especially if you are traveling solo. Keep a mobile phone on you at all times.

6. **Protect your immunity:** The pandemic may be over, but Covid is still out there. Being sick away from home and your own doctors is never ideal. Get a booster if you're overdue at least three weeks before your trip and mask on the airplane when in close quarters.



Time to tap the money in your 401(K)? Take a quick dive into how the taxes work

By H&R Block

How is a 401(k) withdrawal — also called a 401(k) distribution — taxed?

The answer here depends on your situation and reason for taking a distribution. Whether you're moving money to a new retirement plan, taking money out for retirement, or making a withdrawal to pay expenses, you'll want to understand the tax implications of your 401(k) distribution.

Moving the money to a new plan, such as an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or a new employer 401(k) is known as a rollover.

Moving your retirement savings through a direct rollover to a traditional IRA or a different 401(k), it isn't taxable. If your plan sends you the money first (an indirect rollover), there's more to the story.

Let's assume, you're not rolling over your 401(k), and it is simply time to use the funds from your retirement accounts. Read on and we'll outline everything else you need to know about taxes on a 401(k) distribution.

When can you withdraw from a 401(k)?

Retirement plans are designed so that you can use the money when you reach retirement. For this reason, rules restrict you from taking distributions before age 59½.

You can take money out before you reach that age. However, an early withdrawal generally means you'll have a 10% additional tax penalty unless you meet one of the exceptions, such as an emergency withdrawal of up to \$1,000, if permitted by your plan.



If you're taking out funds from your retirement account prior to age 59½ and exceptions apply, use IRS Form 5329 to report the amount of 10% additional tax you owe on an early distribution or to claim an exception to the 10% additional tax.

401(k) distribution tax form

When you take a distribution from your 401(k), your retirement plan will send you a Form 1099-R. This tax form shows how much you withdrew overall and the federal and state taxes withheld from the distribution if applicable. This tax form for 401(k) distribution is sent when you've made a distribution of \$10 or more.

How does a 401(k) withdrawal affect your tax return?

Once you start withdrawing from your traditional 401(k), your withdrawals are usually taxed as ordinary taxable income. That said, you'll report the taxable part of your distribution directly on your Form 1040 for any tax year that you make a distribution.

Taxes on 401(k) withdrawal

The tax rate for your 401(k) distributions will depend on which federal tax bracket you are in at the time of withdrawal. You have to pay taxes on the money you withdraw because you didn't pay income taxes on it when you contributed (put money into the account).

Here are some important reminders when it comes to 401(k) withdrawal rules:

- If you are retired, you have to start taking a required minimum distribution from your Traditional 401(k) account at a certain age. Find out more about Required Minimum Distribution rules.
- If you don't take the required minimum distribution, the Internal Revenue Service can assess a penalty of 25% of the amount not distributed. The penalty may be reduced to 10% if you take a corrective distribution and meet other requirements.
- You can withdraw more than the minimum from your 401(k) plan.
- There are special calculations if you paid taxes on part of your contributions to a traditional 401(k).
- Keep in mind, the tax considerations for a Roth 401(k) or Roth IRA are different. To see the difference side-by-side, check out this table from the IRS.



Do you pay taxes twice on 401(k) withdrawals?

No, you don't pay income tax twice on 401(k) withdrawals. With the 20% withholding on your distribution, you're essentially paying part of your taxes upfront.

Depending on your tax situation, the amount withheld might not be enough to cover your full tax liability. In that case, you'll have to pay the rest of the tax when you file your return.

If the opposite is true and you've paid more than you owe, you'll get a little back at tax time. Either way, you would not pay the same tax twice on your 401(k) withdrawal.

Does a 401(k) withdrawal affect your Social Security benefits?

The short answer is no, taking a distribution from your 401(k) does not impact your eligibility for (or the amount of) your Social Security benefits. Since a 401(k) comes from an employer and Social Security comes from the government, these two sources of income are completely separate. However, a 401(k) withdrawal can affect your adjusted gross income (AGI) and therefore how much of your Social Security is taxed.

Don't leave money on the table

File your taxes, report your distribution, and get every credit and deduction you deserve. Our tax pros can help you file in person or virtually.

Tax laws for retirement savings accounts can get complicated. Need more help navigating 401(k) distribution taxes or other retirement account questions?

Contact the Waynesville H&R Block office at 828-452-2495 to maximize your tax savings. www.hrblock.com/local-tax-offices/north-carolina/waynesville.

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