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WELCOME TO SENIORS



Welcome to the inaugural edition of *Seniors: The Southwestern Mountains Senior Resource Guide of North Carolina*. We are thrilled to offer this publication full of essential information and resources older adults and caregivers need to face the unique challenges and opportunities that we all experience as we age.

We understand how difficult, but rewarding, the aging process can be. There are many resources within our region that are ready to assist throughout this journey of life.

Understanding and navigating

challenges and changes that can come with aging can be daunting, whether you are experiencing them yourself or caring for a loved one. This resource directory is intended to help connect older adults and their caregivers to resources in one easy-to-navigate publication.

Thank you to all the businesses and organizations that have helped to make the Senior Resource Guide a reality.

The Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging considers it an honor and a privilege to serve the older adult population that call our wonderful mountains home.

Sarajane Melton

Director of the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging



This publication is definitely the most valuable 'one-stop' guide for resources pertaining to aging. We are very pleased to partner with the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging to make this much-needed resource possible for our region.

If you are interested in advertising in this annual publication, please contact me at The Mountaineer Publishing Company at plilly@themountaineer.com or 828-452-0661.

Paula Lilly

Seniors Marketing & Advertising
Director with The Mountaineer
Publishing Company



As we embarked on the inaugural issue of *Seniors*, the goal was simple but profound: to support and empower seniors and their caregivers as they navigate the journey of aging.

Across our region, hundreds of caring individuals have dedicated their lives to the calling of helping our cherished older adults. Witnessing their passion, love and commitment during the production of this publication, it is clear there is no better place for seniors to call home.

Becky Johnson

Seniors Editor with The Mountaineer
Publishing Company

This publication would not be possible without the leadership of Patsy Davis, executive director of Mountain Projects, who developed and promoted the idea. We thank her for her vision.

Seniors: The Southwestern Mountains Senior Resource Guide of North Carolina was produced in partnership by the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging and The Mountaineer Publishing Company. Free copies are available at numerous locations that serve older adults throughout Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, Graham, Clay and Cherokee counties. To request copies of this publication, please contact 828-586-1962.



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Deal me in

Engage, connect and grow with your local senior center

The local senior center has become Kathy Jones' home away from home. From standing card games and crafting sessions to ice-cream socials and special outings, nary a day goes by without Jones finding something that piques her interest at the Haywood County Senior Resource Center.

"That's what I love about it — every senior center has something going on all day, every day, five days a week," Jones said.

But it wasn't until her husband of more than 50 years passed away that she realized just how important the emotional and social safety net was to her. After a week of grieving, she got dressed, put on her jewelry and make-up, and resumed her old routine by heading for the senior center.

"Everybody came over and hugged me and

gave condolences. They are my family. I don't know how I would've survived without it," Jones said. "Otherwise, I could see myself up there on the side of a mountain staying in my pajamas watching TV all myself. It has been a Godsend."

Jones' experience is shared by hundreds of

Center. "It means that I have a reason to prepare myself for the day."

Enrichment programs fill the calendar at senior centers, from craft workshops and book discussions to fitness and computer classes.

"We are a lot more than meals and bingo," said Jennifer Hollifield, the director of the Macon County Senior Center.

While meals and bingo are no doubt perennial favorites, Hollifield is always introducing seniors to new pastimes, like jewelry making and painting, as well as fun ways to keep active, like tai chi, line dancing and Zumba. Senior centers

provide a safe and welcoming environment to experience something you haven't done before.

"Part of it is you got to try it," Hollifield said. "There is always something going on and happening here. Just show up at the front door,

"It is a hard subject nobody really wants to talk about but they walk us through those difficult conversations we need to have with our loved ones."

other seniors across the region who rely on the programs, activities and outreach of their local senior center.

"The social interaction is vital," said Dottie Hoche, a regular at the Jackson County Senior

we'll talk to you about what we have, and you can see if it is for you."

Senior centers regularly host educational talks, like navigating Medicare, avoiding falls or how to use your smart phone. Some programs tackle aging topics that can otherwise be difficult to confront on your own, like Hospice Care 101.

"It is a hard subject nobody really wants to talk about but they walk us through those difficult conversations we need to have with our loved ones," Hollifield said.

Aside from organized activities, senior centers are good places for interaction with other seniors. Most have computer access, workout equipment, reading libraries, and game cupboards.

Senior centers will also cater to the interests of participants and facilitate new activities where there's a demand. Jones actually kick-started a weekly mahjong game after

teaching a few other regulars how to play.

"They all stuck with it and started branching out and teaching their friends to play and before you know it, everybody is playing mahjong," Jones said.

Field trips and outings offered by senior centers run the gamut from outlet shopping trips to picnic hikes to tourist attractions.

"We are always going here there and everywhere," Jones said. "We hop on the bus and don't have to worry about driving, so you can chit-chat with the people around you and look at the gorgeous scenery."

Senior centers provide more than a social outlet. They also serve as a clearinghouse to connect seniors with resources, support services and assistance.

"It's a one-stop-shop where seniors can connect with any services in the community they need," said Lindsy Cauley, the program coordinator for the Jackson County Senior Center.

You can find out about senior meal programs and transit, connect with support groups and respite care, or learn about volunteer opportunities to stay engaged in your community. Health programs, from hearing screenings to blood pressure checks, are also offered periodically.

Jones encouraged fellow seniors to give their local senior center a try, and they'll fit in before they know it.

"We are all in the same boat. We all need the socialization. We all understand where you're coming from," Jones said. "We were all the new ones at some point. Our motto every day is the more the merrier."

See the directory listings for senior center locations in your county. For those who can't drive or find a ride on their own, the local transit program in each county provides transportation to and from the senior centers daily.



Congregate meals

Mid-day meals are served at one or more locations in each county, serving up a nutritious meal alongside the camaraderie of other seniors.

"All of the meals sites in our region provide so much more than just a meal," said Jeanne Mathews, aging program coordinator with the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging. "Not only are we providing a nutritious meal for our people, but also a safe place for them to be able to get out and socialize with other seniors and be a part of the community."

Low-income seniors are eligible for free or reduced meals. However, many seniors who don't qualify gladly pay the minimal out-of-pocket cost to enjoy congregate dining for the social interaction it provides.

Seniors can enjoy activities and programs along with their meal, including games, crafts, and guest speakers on special topics. Meal sites also provide educational outreach, from health screenings to nutrition counseling, and keep seniors informed about other resources in the community.

"Nutrition providers play a critical role in linking older people to other services that can assist them," Mathews said.

Seniors who are unable to drive can get a ride to meal locations with their local county transit program, for a nominal fee each way or for free if they qualify.

"We pick them up at their home, and when they are through, we take them home," said Branton Loftis, director of Swain County Transit.

See the directory listings for congregate meal locations and transit providers in your county.



"Not only are we providing a nutritious meal for our older adults, but also a safe place for them to be able to get out and socialize with other older adults and be a part of the community."

Home-delivered meals

Every county has a home-delivered meal program, providing hot mid-day meals five days a week for seniors age 60 and over. Seniors don't have to be entirely home-bound to qualify.

"Home-delivered meals provide a nutritional meal that they might otherwise not be able to prepare for themselves, or when they are unable to go out and get food to prepare," said Jeanne Mathews, aging program coordinator with the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging. "They can help older adults to remain in their own home, and prevent or delay entry into long-term care."

Some seniors may only need home-delivered meals for a short period while recovering from a surgery or illness. Older adults being cared for at home by a family member or spouse are eligible for home delivered meals as well, so there's one less thing on the caregiver's plate each day.

"Home-delivered meals may allow a caregiver to continue to work, since they do not have to worry about their loved one's noon-time meal," Mathews said.

Volunteers who deliver the meals are a vital lifeline, often providing the only social interaction that an isolated older adult has each day. Volunteering to deliver meals is a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

See the directory listings for your county to inquire about volunteering or receiving home delivered meals.



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Not sure how you'll get to the doctor, beauty parlor or pharmacy? Look no farther than the transit program in your county for low-cost, door-to-door transportation.

"We take people to the laundromat, the grocery store, the post office — all for a buck a stop. You can't beat that," said Branton Loftis, director of Swain County Transit.

Transit programs operate vans and shuttles, picking up and dropping off other riders along the way. The extra stops make the trip a little longer, but it is a welcome chance to socialize with others.

"Our riders talk about how much of a lifesaver it is to escape the isolation of being alone, not only interacting with the transit drivers but the other riders on the van," Loftis said.

Transit drivers get to know their regular riders, who can always count on a friendly smile and 'hello' when they board.

"Our drivers really form a relationship with the people they transport," said Si Simmons, director of Haywood Transit. "For our seniors, these drivers may be their one and only contact some days. Our drivers take a lot of pride in what they do."

Many riders use the transit system to get to their local senior center for programs and activities. Some take transit five days a week to enjoy the congregate meals served at senior meal sites.

"It encourages me to get up and get out, instead of staying home all the time," said Jean Dyer, a transit rider in Haywood County.

County transit also makes trips out-of-county. "We are constantly bouncing between Sylva

and Haywood, and any given week we are in Asheville at some point — to the VA, to a doctor, or even to the airport," Loftis said.

The out-of-county fee is higher than the rate for in-county trips, but seniors with medically-necessary appointments can qualify for assistance.

Riders are encouraged to call in ride requests in advance, ideally two-to-three days ahead and 24-hours at a minimum, so that the trip can be worked into the schedule. Some seniors may be reluctant to use their transit program, for fear they are making someone go to extra trouble by picking them up. But that's what the transit drivers are here for, Loftis said.

"It is no trouble at all. That's what we do, and it's our pleasure," Loftis said.



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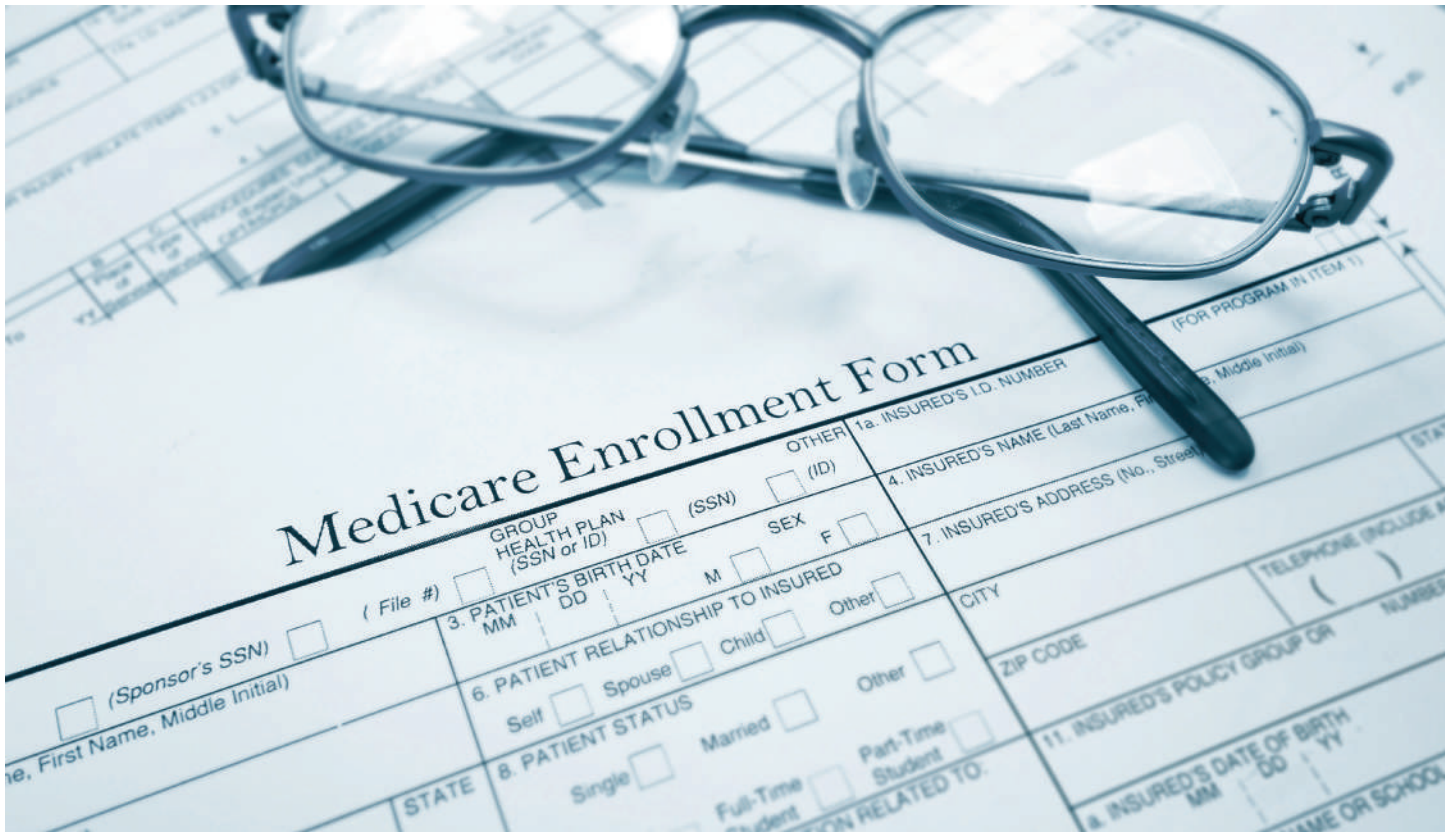
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Deciphering the Medicare maze

If there's one rite of passage universally shared by all seniors, it's Medicare.

Medicare ads start pummeling your mailbox well before the milestone of 65, but they just make the daunting process even more confusing.

"How do you choose when there are 28 drug plans in North Carolina?" said Denise Cross, Director of Cherokee County Senior Services. "When something is confusing, we tend to put it off until later. But sometimes later is too late."

Even the enrollment windows for Medicare parts are hard to keep straight. Some you have to opt-in to, some trigger additional enrollment windows, some are automatic but only in some cases. And they can all come back to bite you if don't sign up in time.

Luckily, there's a program to help seniors sort through the mountain of Medicare decisions. It's called the Seniors Health Insurance Information Program, or SHIIP for short.

"We walk people through 'What is Medicare? What are all the options? What are the ins-and-outs?'" Cross said.

Every county in the region has a SHIIP office, and it's free to make an appointment for a

"When something is confusing, we tend to put it off until later. But sometimes later is too late."

Medicare consultation. Being proactive up front can save you heartache later.

"People can make wrong choices or not even know they need to be making them at all," said

Alison Woodard, Swain County SHIIP Coordinator. "If you make a mistake in the beginning, you are locked in for a period of time. You can't fix it."

Woodard has been helping fellow seniors through the SHIIP program for 14 years, and was a social worker in Swain County before that. She can cut through the Medicare maze like a hot knife through butter.

"I even get calls at home and stopped in the grocery store and the post office. People have gotten to know about SHIIP because we have helped their friends, and their relatives, and so on," Woodard said.

She can dig up things you didn't even know you needed to know.

"That's the secret — knowing where to find it," Woodard said.

Article continues on page 16

What to keep in mind

One of the biggest Medicare pitfalls is choosing the wrong prescription drug plan. Each plan — all 28 of them — have their own formulary for what medicines are covered. Woodard recalled one man on kidney dialysis who picked a plan on his own, only to learn later that some of his medicine wasn't covered.

"It was very expensive, but there wasn't anything I could do. If you enroll in a plan that doesn't work, you can't change it until the next open enrollment period," Woodard said.

Some seniors might not get a prescription drug plan at all.

"They think 'Oh I don't take any drugs, so I don't need a drug plan. If you go too long without one, you get penalized by a higher rate when you try to get one later,'" Woodard said.

SHIIP counselors can help you figure out which drug plans include your medications.

The same precaution is needed when picking a health coverage plan under Medicare. Think ahead to all the doctors you might need to see in the coming year. Are they in network for the Medicare plan you're considering? It's even trickier in the rural far western counties, where seniors travel into Georgia, Tennessee and South Carolina for medical care.

"A plan might look great on TV, but sometimes it might not be the best choice for you," Cross said.

Another decision point is supplemental insurance. Should you get it? Is it worth it? What if you're still working? And what is Medicare Advantage all about?

SHIIP counselors won't advise seniors what plan to pick or what choice to make, and they can't actually sign you up. But you will be armed with facts to arrive at your own decision.

"We are unbiased and will help you look at all the options," Cross said.

"A plan might look great on TV, but sometimes it might not be the best choice for you."

Enrolling in Medicare

Dive into Medicare fact-finding well before you turn 65. The initial enrollment window runs from three months before and three months after the month you turn 65 — a seven month window in all.

If you wait until after your birthday, you'll have a longer waiting period until coverage kicks-in, and if you miss the window all together you'll be penalized by higher premiums when you eventually enroll. If you rush to enroll before the window closes, however, and you make a choice too hastily, you could regret it.

So be proactive, study those plans and contact your local SHIIP office for help. See the directory listings for the SHIIP contact in each county.



The **Clay County Senior Center** is a multi-purpose facility which houses programs for older adults such as Congregate Meals, Home-Delivered Meals, Health & Wellness, Medicare/SHIIP Counseling, Operation Fan/Heat Relief, Senior Companion, and Volunteerism.

The Senior Center provides a wide variety of classes and activities to help our seniors stay active and healthy: Woodcarving, Bridge, Wellness Workout, Rummikub, Dominos, Needlecrafts, Tablet Tutors, Wii Bowling, Hand & Foot, Corn Hole, Yoga, Mah Jong, 5D Beading, Oil Painting, Bingo, and Line Dancing. The Senior Center also has a pool table, shuffleboard table, treadmill, exercise bike and computer lab available for participant use as well as jigsaw puzzles, a reading library and an Information Station filled with useful materials for older adults.

Last but not least, Clay County Senior Center was certified by the State of North Carolina Division of Aging & Adult Services as a Senior Center of Merit in 2010 & a Senior Center of Excellence in 2015.



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How Medicaid can help seniors

While Medicare is the program seniors are most familiar with, Medicaid can offer a host of additional benefits, from transportation to doctor's appointments to heating assistance. To qualify, seniors must meet income requirements, and have some sort of disability or need for long-term care.

For eligibility, contact your local Department of Social Services. See the directory listings for county contact numbers.

Energy Programs

The Crisis Intervention Program provides assistance in the event of a heating or cooling crisis that poses a life-threatening or health-related emergency, when timely assistance is not available from any other source.

The Low Income Energy Assistance Programs provides for a one-time payment to help eligible households pay their heating bills. Eligible households must have a person age 60 or older.

Assisted Living

The Special Assistance Program for residents of assisted living facilities provides a cash supplement to help pay for room and board in residential facilities. To be eligible, individuals must be age 65 or older or disabled.

Skilled Nursing Facilities

Medicaid benefits can help cover the cost of long-term care in a skilled nursing facility, based on an income versus cost-of-care formula. The recipient must be able to use some of their income to help pay for the cost of care, and Medicaid will pay the remainder directly to the facility.

Medicare Savings Programs

This program helps low-income seniors on Medicare pay for their premiums, deductibles and coinsurance.

Medical Transportation

Qualifying seniors can get help paying for transportation to and from their medical appointments, typically in partnership with the transit program in your county.

In-Home Care

The Special Assistance In-Home Program provides a cash supplement to provide in-home care in lieu of entering a long-term care facility. The program helps cover support services and living expenses to allow people to remain in their homes.

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Calling for Back-Up

Many seniors need help with daily tasks or routine care in their homes, from bathing and feeding to cooking and cleaning. But it isn't always easy to know when to ask for help, and what type of help you may need.

"In-home care can make daily life a lot better and a lot easier," said Darlene McElrath, senior services coordinator with Mountain Projects in Haywood County. "But it can be difficult because they feel like one piece at a time, their independence is being taken away."

It may also feel awkward to have a stranger coming into your home initially, but having someone to socialize with is often one of the greatest benefits.

"Sometimes that is the only person the older adult may see in a whole week, and the human contact is very important," McElrath said. "They become great friends, and that is almost more important than the care. It also provides a safety check for people who might live alone and don't have anyone around."

In-home care could even be getting someone to run errands.

"If someone doesn't drive or has no one to pick up groceries or their medication, they shouldn't have to go into a nursing home because of that," McElrath said.

There are several different types and levels of in-home care available to those in need. Depending on your situation, the cost of in-home care may be covered or partly covered. Some programs are for low-income seniors. Others are for any senior if the assistance is deemed necessary to avoid going to a long-term care facility.

"Each type of care has its own eligibility requirements and is meant to serve a specific target population, but all have the same goal of keeping older adults in need of help at home in a safe environment," said Kim Marion, Community Alternatives Program supervisor with Haywood County Health and Human Services.

Case managers work with seniors to understand their unique situation and then pair them

up with programs they may be eligible for.

"We listen to their needs and listen to their story and try to figure out what options may be available for them," Marion said.

Every county has a program to help seniors navigate in-home care options.

"We assess the individual and their ability to take care of themselves, what they can do for themselves, whether they have support in place to help them, their environment and their

mental health and social health," said Christine Crisp with the Graham County Department of Public Health.

If there's a program that's a match, Crisp will find it.

"We literally beat the bushes and beg until we exhaust all efforts," Crisp said.

Seniors who ultimately aren't eligible for assistance can always hire an in-home care provider on their own.

"I listen to their needs and listen to their story and try to figure out what options are best for them."



Who to call

Community Alternatives Program. This program provides an “alternative” for low-income older adults with disabilities who would otherwise require placement in a long-term care facility, by staying in their own home or caregiver’s home. See the directory listings for the contact in your county.

Private pay. Those who don’t qualify for support can get a referral for private in-home care providers to hire on their own. See the directory listings for your county, or contact your local senior services agency for vetted lists of providers.

Home health. Seniors in need of medical care or treatment in their home could be eligible for insurance coverage. Referrals must be done by a doctor.

Special Assistance In-Home Program. Low income adults at risk of being admitted to long-term care facility, but prefer to live at home, may be eligible for a cash supplement and support services.

Options Counselor. If you don’t know where to start, the designated Options Counselor for your county can get you pointed in the right direction. See the contact list accompanying the article on page 26.

Types of in-home care

In-Home Aide, Level 1:

Also known as home management assistance, this level of care offers help with light-housekeeping and chores, like laundry, cooking and cleaning, as well as running errands. There is no direct physical contact with the client.

In-Home Aide level 2:

Also known as personal care, services can include bathing, feeding, dressing and toileting. It does not include medical care.

Home Health:

Home health provides clinical care in the home, like medication management, changing bandages or therapy. Home health must be part of a care plan prescribed by a physician.



To improve the health status of Haywood County, its individuals and families through educational programs, grants, scholarships or leadership opportunities. The Foundation focuses on unmet health needs of the community.

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Safe and Sound

Getting around inevitably becomes more difficult as we age. If routine daily life — like getting to the mailbox or taking a shower — becomes insurmountable, home modifications can help.

“It can keep them from having to go into a nursing home or moving in with family members,” said Vivian Bumgarner, housing rehabilitation director with Mountain Projects.

Every county has a home modification assistance program. Sometimes, the fix can be as simple as grab bars in the bathroom, down the hall or by the bed.

“Some people say, ‘I can’t take a shower anymore because I can’t hold myself up,’ but a grab bar to hold on to makes the difference,” said

Bumgarner. “Our goal is safety.”

Ramps are one of the most common home modifications following a fall, a broken hip, a surgery or a stroke.

“They go from the hospital to rehab, and they gotta have a ramp before they can come back home,” Bumgarner said.

Seniors can also get help with home repairs and weatherization to make their home more liveable, or help installing smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, including ones with strobe lights for the hearing impaired. Seniors who apply could be placed on a waiting list, depending on need-based priority rankings. See the directory listings for home modification assistance in your county.



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Supportive programs provide daytime supervision

An adult day program may be the perfect solution for older adults who are unable to be home alone during the day.

Adult day care programs provide respite for families who need a safe, supervised setting for their loved one to stay, whether they need to work or just need time off from their role as a caregiver.

Participants can attend five days a week, or just a day or two.

Participants are engaged in a variety of activities during the day, including arts and crafts, exercise, games, music and special programs. Staff provides assistance based on each individual's level of need.

Adult day programs offer an alternative to assisted living facilities by bridging gaps in caregiver's week, cost less than most in-home care, and offers an outlet for social interaction.

There are currently three adult day programs

in the seven western counties. They often have a waiting list:

- Adult Day Program, Jackson County. 828-586-5441.
- Care Connection Adult Day Program, Macon

County. 828-349-2058.

- Maple Leaf Adult Day Respite, Haywood County. 828-456-9488.

(Maple Leaf is also classified as Adult Day Health, which means they have a Residential Nurse on staff.)



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Support Services Offered by Area Agency on Aging

There are dozens of local, state and federal programs that make seniors' lives better, safer, happier and more secure. The Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging is an umbrella organization that connects this vast network of resources across the seven western counties of North Carolina.

Here are a few programs offered by the Area Agency on Aging not yet touched on in this publication. For more information on any of these programs, call the AAA at 828-586-1962 or visit regiona.org/aaa-2.

Senior Legal Support

There's a host of legal documents that are important for seniors to have on hand, from a living will to power of attorney. The Area Agency on Aging provides funding for an older adult to prepare a single legal document of their choice.

"That could be a will or a healthcare power of attorney or some other document an older adult needs to have," said Sarajane Melton, director of the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging. "Some folks just simply can't afford it, so we provide the financial means for them to be able to do it."

There is no income qualification to be eligible for the service, however, there is an application process.

The AAA connects seniors to an elder law attorney in their county to prepare the document they need and then picks up the bill.

"The legal paperwork is done confidentially between the attorney and the older adult and the attorney then invoices us," Melton said.

Melton said the service is intended to get seniors thinking about the future and help them get their affairs in place should the unexpected arise.

"We feel like it is so important for folks' wishes to be expressed, and the best way to make sure they are carried out is to have a written legal document that specifies it," Melton said.

Senior Medicare Patrol

Medicare scams are a big business, with an estimated \$9 billion in Medicare fraud and abuse carried out in the U.S. each year.

Scams often involve billing senior's Medicare accounts for services or products they didn't authorize. Denise Cross, Director for Cherokee County Senior Services, recounted a case where a medical company sent an older gentleman a set of \$2,000 braces in the mail that he never ordered.

"They fraudulently billed his insurance without his permission," Cross said.

Luckily, the man studied his quarterly Medicare statements closely enough to catch it. But many cases can go undetected.

Senior Medicare Patrol aims to inform seniors about the potential for scams and red flags to look for.

"We do workshops to help folks understand their Medicare statements and how you could potentially catch a charge that was billed to you that shouldn't have been," Melton said. "It's giving them the tools to be able to understand their Medicare summary notice."

The Area Agency on Aging also serves as clearing-house to help seniors avoid other types of scams. If you've been a victim of a Medicare scam, the AAA can point you to the proper entity to investigate and rectify it.

Article continues on page 24



Larry Reeves kicks off an Elder Abuse Awareness Walk in Haywood County, one of eight hosted across the seven-county service area of the Southwestern Commission, making it the largest simultaneous elder abuse awareness event in the country.

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Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging

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Carolina by providing services and assistance through

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Family Caregiver Support Program

Information and Resources

Legal Services Program

Project Care

For more information please call the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging
@ 828-586-1962 or visit us online @ www.regiona.org



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Family Caregiver Support

Caring for a loved one is both rewarding and taxing. A program is available through the Area Agency on Aging to provide extra support to those caring for someone age 60 and over, someone with dementia, or a relative child under age 18.

The program empowers caregivers through educational outreach and provides a \$500 respite voucher for the caregiver to hire help. How they choose to use the voucher is flexible.

“Sometimes people are going out of town for a weekend or going on vacation, and they need someone to come into the home,” said Kellie Dula, family caregiver support specialist with the AAA. “You could have someone stay a few hours a day for a whole week, or come for an entire weekend.”

Dula cited one case where a woman was getting cataract surgery on both eyes, and wasn’t going to be able to take care of her husband as she normally did during her recovery. In other cases, the caregiver may need someone to stay with their loved one while

going to an appointment or shopping. Sometimes people just need a break.

The caregiver can hire someone of their choice, even a neighbor or friend. Most counties have a list of vetted in-home aid providers available through their senior services department.

Dula also offers a six-week caregiver support class called “Building Better Caregivers.”

“It covers things like how to handle stress, dealing with difficult behaviors and taking care of yourself,” Dula said.

Long-term Care Ombudsman

If you have a concern involving a long-term care facility, the Area Agency on Aging can help mediate or resolve the issue through its ombudsman program. The ombudsman serves as the liaison for the Long-Term Care Community Advisory Committee in each of the seven western counties.

“They are advocates for residents of long-term care facilities to ensure that their rights are honored

and protected and that residents receive the quality of care they deserve,” said Larry Reeves, long-term care ombudsman with the AAA.

Complaints can be shared anonymously, or Reeves can work with families and the facility on specific situations.

“My goal is always that complaints get resolved in ways that are realistic and reasonable,” Reeves said.

Long-term care facilities include nursing homes, assisted living facilities and family care homes.



Hundreds of seniors from the seven western counties attend a fun and informative senior expo hosted annually by the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging at Western Carolina University.



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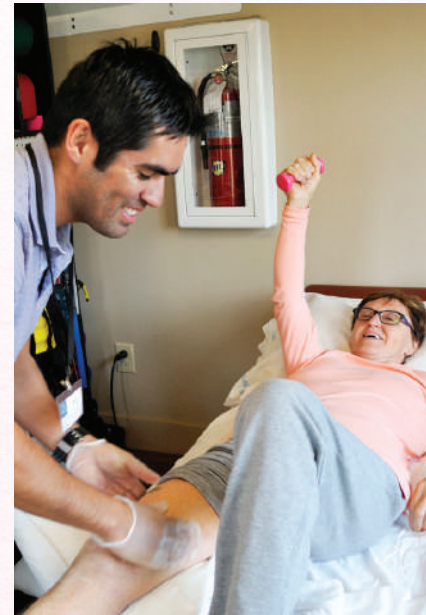
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Adjust your routine and environment to make your home aging-friendly

Losing your independence can be one of the most difficult aspects of aging.

Simple tasks like changing a lightbulb or the sheets become a challenge. Hearing or vision loss can make it difficult to schedule appointments over the phone or read your mail. Even basic household affairs can become overwhelming, from keeping up with daily medicines to managing your bills.

Sometimes, the barriers to remaining in your own home are too great to overcome. But in many cases, altering your routine and modifying your environment can allow you to age in place more comfortably.

“Sometimes it’s just thinking about doing things in a different way,” said Jeanne Mathews, aging program coordinator with the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging. “Plan ahead, be creative and don’t be afraid to ask for help.”

It is normal to feel frustrated, sad or scared, however, when you can’t do the things you used to do.

One of Mathews’ roles is helping seniors evaluate the barriers they are facing and connect them with

resources and assistance that can help. Every county has a designated Options Counselor that will discuss your unique circumstances and help you navigate the maze of programs and services available in your community.

“Take a look at your home and think accessibility while you are still able to make those modifications without it being a crisis.”

Many counties maintain a list of vetted private in-home aid providers who will assist with specific needs — whether it’s help with laundry and running errands or bathing and cooking.

“I have passed out our list for a thousand reasons,”

said Phyllis Phillips, the Options Counselor with the Jackson County Department on Aging. “When somebody calls and says, ‘Where do I find this?’, if there is a service for it, I can tell them where to find it.”

Perhaps family caregivers are going out of town and need someone to come into the home a few hours each day. Or someone has started using a walker and needs a ramp for their front door or other home modifications. Or they need transportation to out-of-county appointments.

“They can still drive around town, but can’t get themselves to a doctor in Asheville,” Philips said.

Options Counselors can also direct older adults toward resources they might not realize exist, like a medical equipment loaner closet with everything from elevated toilet seats to walkers.

For family members embarking on the journey of caring for a loved one at home for the first time, Options Counselors can help them navigate their new role.

“Often, it is people who have just become caregiv-

ers,” said Kellie Dula, family caregiver support program specialist with the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging. “They’ve moved their parents in, or are bringing a spouse home from the hospital.”

Mathews recommends taking a proactive approach, by identifying barriers and coming up with aging-in-place strategies and solutions. Assess your home and daily routine as if you suddenly lost mobility from a stroke. Can you get through the bathroom door with a walker? Do you need a walk-in shower instead of stepping over the side of a tub?

“Take a look at your home and think accessibility while you are still able to make those modifications without it being a crisis,” Mathews said. “It is so much better to take care of that before hand than not being able to get into the bathroom when you come home from the hospital.”

It’s also a good idea to be familiar with programs and services in your community ahead of time.

“Often, we don’t want to know about it until we need it, and then we don’t know where to look for it,” Mathews said. “Make yourself aware of what services are available in your county so if something happens you aren’t scrambling.”

“They can still drive around town, but can’t get themselves to a doctor in Asheville.”

Be willing to change

Adapting your routine and being receptive to new ways of doing things is the key to successful aging in place. If you can’t access all your shelves anymore, rearrange your cabinets. If reaching in and out of the oven has become difficult, countertop ovens are a great alternative. If you find yourself forgetting to order more heating oil or pay bills, set up a home management center to keep track of your affairs and stay organized.

Assess your home

Going room by room, objectively analyze how to make your environment aging-friendly. Maybe you need to relocate your laundry from the basement to the main floor, add a phone jack within reach of your bedside table, install bathroom grab bars or put in a ramp to your front door. Be on the look-out for tripping hazards, like bath mats without a rubber backing or lips where there’s a transition between flooring types.

Aginginplace.org has an excellent online tool that walks you through each room in your house with strategies and modifications to make life easier. Develop a plan that you can implement in phases, or at the very least have ready to roll out if you need it.

Article continues on page 28



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Get help

You don't have to navigate aging alone. Options Counselors will discuss your individual circumstances and help you connect with the various types of assistance and resources that are available for aging in place. Call the number listed for your county and ask to set up an appointment with the Options Counselor.

Clay County: 828-586-1962

Cherokee County: 828-586-1962

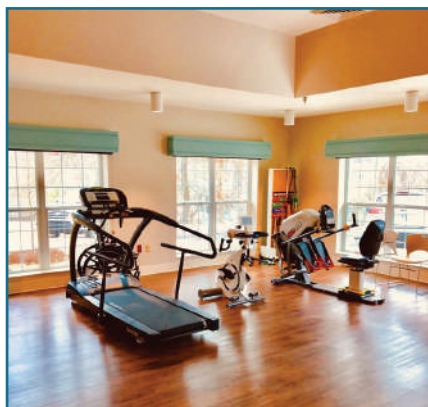
Graham County: 828-586-1962

Haywood County: 828-492-4098

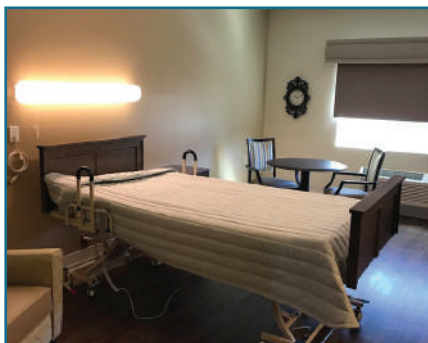
Jackson County: 828-631-8039

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Long-term care provides many benefits and comes in many forms

Can I remain on my own, and for how much longer? It's one of the most difficult choices faced by seniors, one that's often accompanied by a sense of loss and fear of change.

"For someone who is giving away their independence and privacy, that is a big decision," said Christine Crisp with the Graham County Public Health Department. "They have worked very hard to have what they have. It is theirs, and they want to keep it, and they want to be there."

Eventually, staying in your own home may no longer be the best option, however. There are many advantages when transitioning to a long-term care facility.

"They don't have to worry about paying their bills, or finding a way to get to the drug store, or finding someone to take them to the beauty parlor. They don't have to worry about their next meal. There is always someone to call on for help," Crisp said.

Enjoying the camaraderie of other seniors is also an attractive benefit.

"You have folks who live in very isolated areas who don't see anyone all day long," Crisp said. "In

a long-term care facility, you would never be alone."

Crisp is a caseworker with the Community Alternatives Program, a service that connects seniors with in-home assistance that allows them to stay in their own home as long as possible — whether it's help with light-house work or bathing. There are also resources to help with home modifications, like building ramps and installing grab bars to allow older adults to age in place.

But sometimes, barriers to remaining at home are too great to overcome. Deciding whether it's time to transition to a long-term care facility is ultimately a personal journey, and it can be hard for seniors and their caregivers to weigh the pros and cons objectively.

"There can be denial that someone needs more assistance than they think they do. That denial can be difficult to overcome," Crisp said.

In some cases, there's ample time to look down the road and choose the type of long-term care facility that's right for your situation, such as seniors with an early diagnosis of dementia. In other cases, a decision has to be made quickly, like in the event of a

stroke or the unexpected death of a spouse who was serving as the primary caregiver for their partner.

Crisp advises families to start a conversation about the future sooner rather than later.

"Think about it now when you are able to have a plan. Communicate with your family about what your wishes are, so when the time comes everyone will know what you want," Crisp said.

How to choose a long-term care facility

Long-term care facilities come in many forms, with each offering a different level of care or environment. Explore the long-term care options in your community, including making an appointment to visit and tour the facilities, so you'll be informed about your options should the time come.

Article continues on page 30

Skilled Nursing

Also known as skilled-nursing facilities, nursing homes provide the highest level of medical care, with the most comprehensive range of services and supervision. Both personal care and medical care is provided 24 hours a day by trained staff, although the level of care can range from mild to intensive. Skilled nursing facilities also offer short-term care and rehab for seniors recovering from surgery, illness or hospitalization.

Independent Living

Independent living is designed for seniors who need less help with day-to-day tasks, but wish to live in proximity to others and enjoy an easier lifestyle. Residents are mostly self-sufficient in their daily routines, but meals and housekeeping can be provided. The setting is typically apartment or duplex-style housing, where seniors have access to social interaction and group activities in common areas.



Assisted Living

Assisted living offers a middle ground for seniors who need extra support but maintain some level of independence. Seniors have access to assistance when needed, such as light personal care like bathing, with 24-hour support staff on-call. Staff are able to assist with medication maintenance, while access to more specialized medical care and therapy can be arranged. Services typically include housekeeping, laundry and meals, along with group activities and programs that provide social interaction with the other residents.

Family Care Homes

Family Care Homes, provide a shared residential setting for a small group of older adults with full-time caretakers. These residential homes provide lodging, meals, supervision and assistance with daily living activities, including personal care. Nursing and medical care usually are not provided on site.



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Finding comfort and compassion during the end-of-life journey

End-of-life care for those facing a terminal illness or serious chronic health issue is both emotionally and physically trying. Planning ahead can make this difficult time less stressful for loved ones and the patient receiving care.

There are several factors to consider when choosing end-of-life care, including the older person's desire to pursue life-extending or curative treatments, how long they have left to live, and the preferred setting for care.

Two common approaches are palliative care and hospice care. While each has distinct differences, both strive to optimize quality of life by bringing together a multidisciplinary team to provide emotional and social support alongside coordinated medical care.

A customized care plan is created with a team of doctors, nurses, social workers, spiritual advisors, trained volunteers and other specialists in collaboration with the patient and caregivers. Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance typically cover hos-

pice and palliative care services.

Three primary providers of hospice and palliative care in the region are:

- CarePartners, affiliated with Mission Health.
- Duke Lifepoint, affiliated with Haywood Regional Medical Center, Harris Regional and Swain County Hospital.
- Four Seasons, an independent non-profit specializing in end-of-life care.

Services are not tied to a specific place and can be carried out in the setting of your choice: a hospital, long-term care facility or your own home. Know the options for end-of-life care and discuss your wishes with family or caregivers ahead of time.

Palliative Care

Palliative Care differs from hospice by continuing to provide curative treatment for a serious or

chronic illness. Also unlike hospice care, palliative care services do not require a specific duration for life expectancy.

Palliative care is an approach to managing chronic, often declining, health problems for patients who are perhaps not ready for hospice. Palliative care can be provided along with curative treatment and may begin at the time of diagnosis.

The palliative care consultation team helps patients and caregivers understand their choices for medical treatment, while also focusing on quality of life and lessening discomfort.

If medical specialists believe ongoing treatment is no longer helping, palliative care can transition to hospice care, or the palliative care approach can be tailored to place a greater emphasis on relief from the symptoms, pain and stress of the condition alongside continuing treatments.

Article continues on page 32

Hospice Care

At some point, it may not be possible to cure a serious illness, or a patient may choose not to undergo certain treatments. A patient electing for hospice ends medical attempts to cure or slow the disease, and the focus becomes making the patient's final days as comfortable as possible.

Hospice care comes into play when someone has a projected life expectancy of six months or less, but it does not mean giving up. Hospice care focuses on the individual, not just the illness, honoring life's final journey with a legacy of compassion, dignity, comfort and caring.

While treatment aimed at curing a terminal illness is ceased, it does not mean discontinuing all treatment. A patient with cancer may choose not to end chemotherapy treatments, but may continue taking their normal medications for other conditions.

In hospice care, family members take an active role in caring for the day-to-day needs of the patient, but they are not alone. The hospice team coaches family members on how to care for the dying person and even provides respite care when caregivers need a break. It is also possible to leave hospice care for a while and then return later if the healthcare provider still believes that the patient has less than six months to live.



Medicare got you asking questions?

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The Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) has experts specially trained to answer your Medicare questions and to help you with other insurance issues important to seniors, such as:

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- *preventing Medicare billing fraud and abuse*
- *choosing a Medicare supplement plan*
- *long-term care insurance*



In Macon County, call the Crawford Senior Center at 828-349-2059 to talk to a trained SHIIP counselor or schedule a one-on-one meeting.

Get your affairs in order to stave off conflict later

Aging seems to bring on an array of complex legal questions to navigate. Who will safeguard your retirement accounts if you're no longer able? Make healthcare decisions on your behalf? Keep up with the bills and file your taxes?

Elder law attorneys can help ensure the proper legal documents are in place so that your wishes will be executed by someone you trust. The most common tool is a power of attorney that spells out who will handle your affairs, how much power they will have and when that power will take effect.

Sometimes, older adults will assign power of attorney to only one child or relative. Other times, it makes sense to divide specific roles among more than one person. Perhaps one child lives nearby and is better suited to oversee your healthcare and handle routine bills, while another child more versed in finances is best suited to manage your investment portfolio.

Yet other decisions, like whether to sell the house to pay for long-term care, can require mutual consensus among multiple children through a dual power of attorney.

Often, older adults worry about offending one of their children by granting another child power of attorney. However, the most important consideration should be choosing someone who is capable, trustworthy, and will respect your wishes should you become incapacitated.

Powers of attorney can be structured many ways and can be layered to achieve your goals. For example, you could create a durable financial power of attorney with limited powers and two assigned agents acting jointly and severally.

While an elder law attorney will walk you through the options, familiarize yourself with some of the legal terms you'll encounter to make the most of your consultations.

Successor Power of Attorney

A successor power of attorney names someone to assume the role if the principle agent dies, becomes incapacitated, or is no longer able or willing to serve.



Financial Power of Attorney

Generally speaking, this authorizes someone to handle financial transactions on your behalf. It can include managing your bank accounts, paying bills, overseeing investments and retirement accounts, selling property, and filing your tax returns. This can be someone different than your healthcare power of attorney.

Durable Power of Attorney

A durable power of attorney stays in place if you become incapacitated, unlike a general power of attorney that ends if you are unable to make your own decisions. Without a durable power of attorney, family members must get a court order naming a guardian to handle your affairs, which can lead to conflict.

Healthcare Power of Attorney

This authorizes someone to make healthcare decisions on your behalf if you are unable to do so. When arranging your care, your agent is legally bound to follow your treatment preferences. A healthcare power of attorney is often executed as part of an "advance directive," which includes a living will spelling out the type of care you wish you receive in different circumstances.

Springing Power of Attorney

A springing power of attorney only becomes effective if you are incapacitated. It should clearly spell out the trigger that "springs" the document to become valid, or court interpretation may be necessary.

Article continues on page 34

Joint Power of Attorney

Also known as a dual power of attorney, two agents can be required to act together in all decisions. A joint power of attorney limits the sole authority of one person to act independently, providing a measure of oversight. But it can also create hardships by requiring two people to be available to sign checks or carry out simple tasks like canceling a cable service, and cause conflict should disagreements arise.

Joint and Independent Power of Attorney

This approach allows two or more agents to act individually without the other, known as “acting jointly and severally.” If one is unavailable and a bill must be paid, they can still do so, and vice-versa.

Likewise, distinct powers can be assigned to each agent. For example, either could have authority to handle routine affairs without the other signing off, while only one may have authority to manage investments, and both could be required to agree on major decisions like selling property.

Limited Power of Attorney

Powers of attorney can be limited to specific tasks, like only paying medical bills or only having access to certain bank accounts, as opposed to a general power of attorney that grants broad oversight and management of all your financial affairs. Limited powers of attorney can be used to assign distinct roles to different children depending on their skill set and availability.

Prepare for the unexpected

Ensure healthcare and financial arrangements are in place before serious illness or a healthcare crisis with this checklist for getting your affairs in order.

- Start discussions early with your loved one while everyone can still help make decisions.
- Create documents that communicate healthcare, financial management, and end-of-life wishes for yourself and the people you care for, with legal advice as needed.

- Review plans regularly, and update documents as circumstances change.

- Put important papers in one place. Make sure a trusted family member or friend knows the location and any instructions.

- Make copies of healthcare directives to be placed in all medical files.

- Give permission in advance for a doctor or lawyer to talk directly with a caregiver as needed.



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9 ways to make social connections and overcome isolation

Larry Reeves often thinks about the sage wisdom of his grandfather who lived to the amazing age of 108 when asked the secret to such a long life.

“You just need something to do tomorrow,” his grandfather told him. “It doesn’t have to be much, just something.”

For seniors struggling with social isolation, however, one day stretches into the next, with nothing to break the monotony — and nothing to do tomorrow.

“The twin sister of isolation is loneliness,” said Reeves, the long-term care ombudsman for the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging. “The biggest question we have is how do you overcome loneliness? There are no easy answers to that. When it comes to older adults, many of them are lonely.”

Isolation and loneliness often go hand-in-hand with aging. Even residents of long-term care facilities surrounded by other seniors and staff caregivers experience loneliness.

“Since loneliness is an emotional feeling, it is possible to experience loneliness even around other people. We all have that sense or feeling of nobody cares about me, nobody is aware of things happening within me that cause me to be lonely,” Reeves said.

“Be open to new things. Be willing to find ways to connect.”

The underlying causes of loneliness are varied: loss of independence, fear of the future, being cut off from family, grief over lost loved ones, diminished hearing or eyesight and a loss of self esteem.

“Aging can be a lonely experience,” Reeves said. “It deals with, ‘I used to be able to, but I can’t anymore. I used to look good, but I don’t anymore.’ Loneliness really just beats a person up on the inside.”

Those experiencing isolation and loneliness are far from alone, however.

“We are a retirement destination, and growing older faster than other parts of the state,” Reeves said.

That makes for an abundance of outlets and avenues to connect with other seniors who might be feeling the same way and engage with the larger community.

“Be open to new things. Be willing to find ways to connect,” Reeves said. “Everyone is a potential friend if you can look at them that way.”

Article continues on page 36

Connect with your Senior Center

Your local senior center is a hub of programs and activities, including exercise classes, book discussions, craft workshops and weekly game times. Hear from guest speakers on topics like Medicare drug plans, how to use a smartphone or decluttering your home. Try new activities like line dancing or Tai Chi. Or sign-up for a senior group outing — from outlet shopping trips to hikes — with transportation provided.

Senior centers are also a place to simply hang out. You can get on the computer, use the exercise equipment, or read from the lending library.

Join a Club

Connect with like-minded seniors by finding a club to match your interests, including gardening, chess, quilting, woodcarving, photography, astronomy, hiking, fishing, cycling, creative writing, model trains, and much more. Clubs are eager to share with newcomers, so it's a great way to explore a new hobby, whether it's learning to knit or diving into the world of HAM radio. Some clubs are community service oriented, like the Kiwanis Club or Lion's Club. Passionate about a cause? Look for advocacy groups or join a political party. Your local newspaper is one source for club meetings and programs.

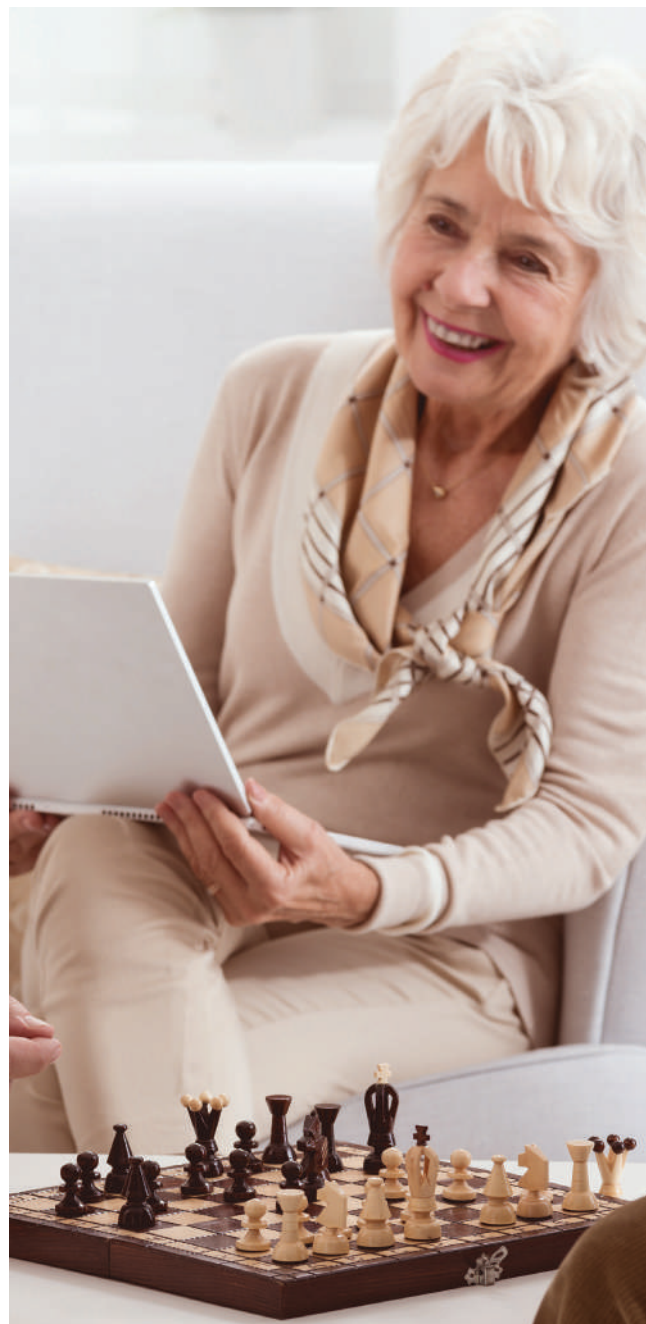
Find a Support Group

The loss of a loved one — a spouse, a child or your last surviving sibling — can be a particularly lonely time. Bereavement support groups can help during this difficult time. There are also support groups for caregivers of loved ones with dementia, as well as support groups for various health conditions. See the directory for support groups by county. Some churches offer support groups as well.

Partake in Senior Games

Senior games only come around once a year, but provide fertile ground for making new acquaintances. You don't have to be an athlete to join the senior games, which include games like shuffleboard and ping-pong or the simple-but-fun football distance toss. SilverArts is held alongside Senior Games, with categories for visual and performing arts, from painting, pottery and poetry to singing and dancing. Check with your local senior center or recreation department for Senior Games and Silver Arts information.

“Open up your mind and look at other experiences that will enrich your life.”



Article continues on page 38



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Volunteer

Volunteering is not only a great way to make new friends, but is also a path to personal fulfillment.

“Many times volunteers receive more than they give,” said John Chicoine with the Haywood/Jackson Volunteer Center. “You are participating in the community and making it a better place to live.”

Volunteer roles take many forms. You can volunteer at a thrift store, your favorite charity, your local library, a food pantry, or tutoring kids. If you can’t commit to a regular schedule, help with holiday toy drives or packing Thanksgiving baskets for families in need. Love the outdoors? Help with stream clean-ups, trail maintenance, water sampling or ecological monitoring.

Don’t feel limited by your existing skill set or knowledge area, Chicoine said. “Open up your mind and look at other experiences that will enrich your life,” Chicoine said.

There is a huge demand for volunteers to help other seniors, like making weekly phone calls to home-bound seniors or distributing home-delivered meals.

“You may be the only person they see all day, or all week,” Chicoine said.

It can be as simple as visiting patients in long-term care facilities and helping them read their mail and write letters to family.

“Those are teeny tiny things, but for somebody it means the world,” Chicoine said.

Find a Church

Belonging to a faith congregation is like having a huge extended family.

“Healthy, vibrant churches offer their members a deep sense of belonging,” said Joselyn Schaefer, rector with Grace Church in the Mountains in Waynesville.

Many churches have their own support groups, engage in community service projects and host educational programs. They also serve as a social safety net in times of need.

“You have a community there to pray for you, and bring you food, and support you in life’s ups and downs,” Schaefer said.

It can take a few months to start feeling at home with a new church, so make sure to give it enough time.

“I recommend talking to the church pastor early on who can help you connect with others with similar interests, share about the ministries of the church and work to connect you in meaningful ways with others,” Schaefer said.

Attend Senior Meals

Eating alone can get tiresome, and fixing a meal for one can seem like too much trouble. Enjoy a hot lunch served in the company of others, known as senior congregate meals. All seniors are welcome to eat for a small cost, while low-income seniors can qualify for free meals. See the directory listings for meal locations in your county.

Discover your community college

Your local community college offers a wealth of continuing education classes, short courses and workshops to broaden your horizons. Try a new craft like pottery, weaving, soap-making or glassblowing. Keep your brain active with an intro language course or computer class. Pick up a new hobby like photography or piano.

Southwestern Community College offers short courses on everything from Couponing and Wine Tasting to Bonsai Care and Essential Oils.

You can make your own finished products, like a dulcimer, ax, knife, quilt, or even an upholstered item at Haywood Community College. At Tri-County Community College, courses include puppy training, genealogy, cake decorating and making natural insect repellent.

Head to the Dog Park

If your community has a dog park, they are prime spots to socialize. Your dog provides the perfect opener for striking up conversation. Many dog owners go to the dog park around the same time each day, so you can gradually get to know other regulars.





Improve your quality of life and remain independent through fitness

Get ready, Laura Rodi told herself, bracing for the grumbling she usually gets when it's floor work time in her stretch and strength class.

"Down there? We have to get down there?" her seniors ask, the floor seeming to get further away by the second.

It wasn't the getting down part that Rodi was most interested in, however.

"You want to be able to get up off the floor if you find yourself there," Rodi said.

Many seniors can't get up on one knee, plant the other foot on the floor, and rise into a standing position. But a little practice can change that.

"You want to move every joint through its full range of motion every day, or that range of motion begins to shrink," Rodi said. "If you don't use it, you lose it. It starts to go away the day you stop doing it."

A fitness decline can happen before you realize it. If there's nowhere you have to be, it's easy

to slip into a sedentary lifestyle, which inevitably takes its toll on quality of life. It gets harder to put on your shirt, snap your bra, carry bags of groceries or cut your own toenails.

"When people can't reach their feet, they have someone else do it for them, but then that range of motion minimizes," Rodi said. The result is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

"The less you do, the less you are able to do," she said.

Along with joint mobility, muscle strength is equally important to remain independent — a point Rodi often stresses during squat routines in her fitness classes at the Jackson County Senior Center.

"When you lose your ability to get yourself up out of a chair, what happens?" Rodi said. "When it's put that way, they say 'OK buddy, let's do some more.'"

Exercise that maintains muscle strength and balance is the best protection against falls, which can have life altering consequences. Falling and

breaking a hip is the top reason seniors go into long-term care facilities.

Aging often brings the inevitable surgery or two and can side-line physical activity for a few weeks or months. If you're out of shape going into it, recovery will be longer, more painful and take more physical therapy.

"Starting from that point is so difficult," Rodi said.

Often, seniors with back pain, arthritis or other aches are afraid to exercise, fearing they will make it worse.

"It's actually the opposite. The more you move, typically the better you feel," Rodi said. "The beauty is you can feel yourself getting better at it. It's like 'Hey, I can turn my neck and see behind me when I am backing up now. I didn't use to be able to do that.'"

Article continues on page 40

Get in a routine

Whether it's walking at a local track, going to the gym or doing balance exercises at the kitchen counter, setting aside specific days and times for your fitness routine is critical to success. Rodi compares it to taking medicine at the same time each day. "You have to take your medicine, you have to take your exercise," Rodi said. Some doctors will even write a prescription for exercise to convince seniors they have to do it.

Exercise at home

If you can't get out or simply aren't a joiner, develop a fitness routine you can do at home.

"You don't need fancy clothes or a gym — you don't need anything but you," Rodi said.

A home-based fitness plan can include basic exercises like rising up on your toes at the kitchen counter, doing squats, and balancing on one leg. Put a straight-backed chair in front of the TV for doing repetitions of leg lifts and arm raises or use a stretch band and hand-weights. Buy an exercise bike for the living room or videos to follow along with.

Check with your local senior center or ask your doctor for hand-outs on joint mobility, balance and strength exercises you can do from home.

Try a class

Check with your local senior center or fitness center to see what exercise classes they offer. And don't be afraid to try something new, like Tai Chi or a Zumba dance class.

"It doesn't matter if you are good at it. You may feel self-conscious at first and think people are looking at you, but the room is full of people thinking the same thing. They are more worried about you looking at them," Rodi said. "Everybody was a first-timer at some point."

Buddy up

Enlist a friend or relative to join you in an exercise routine, like meeting up to walk. The peer pressure to show up will help keep you accountable.

"It definitely helps to have a buddy. If you are meeting your friend, you'll be there," Rodi said. Check with your local senior center for indoor facilities made available for walking during winter months.

Pick something you like

If possible, choose an activity you enjoy. Schedule your gym time when you can watch your favorite TV show while on the treadmill, join a hiking club, or take a yoga class.

"If you hate it, it is not something you are going to look forward to or even show up to on a regular basis," Rodi said.

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How to recognize dementia and get help

More than 10,000 seniors in the seven western counties of WNC are living with a form of dementia, affecting more than 5 percent of those over age 60 and more than 25 percent of those over 80.

But how do you know when that missed hair appointment or lost cell phone is an early sign of dementia or just a normal part of aging?

“It is normal for your thinking to be slower as we age. It is normal to forget someone’s name if you see them out of context, or what you entered a room for,” said Dr. Lisa Verges, a geriatric psychiatrist based in Waynesville and one of the region’s leading dementia experts. “Misplacing your keys is not necessarily a problem, but forgetting what they are for, that is a problem.”

If you’re concerned that you’re becoming more forgetful than normal, ask your doctor about a Mini-Mental State Examination, which will provide a baseline for cognitive functioning. Be aware, however, that those truly experiencing early signs of dementia are often in denial.

“The biggest problem is self awareness. They truly and honestly believe they are fine, and they get angry and defensive when you bring it up,” Verges

said. “If you really want to be honest with yourself, take your spouse when you talk to your doctor.”

A bright or intelligent person can score perfectly on the cognitive functioning test, but family members can shed light on day-to-day realities — like getting lost on the way home from the grocery store or routinely forgetting to pay bills.

“If you know good and well there is more to the story, you may have to send your list of concerns to the doctor privately,” she said.

While Alzheimer’s is the most common form of dementia, it’s not the only type.

“Dementia is an umbrella term. It means cognitive functional decline from a previous level,” Verges said.

Dementia can be a slow process. The average life-expectancy following a diagnosis is eight to 10 years. The first few years are often mild, and possible to manage at home. But as the disease progresses, family caregivers will find it increasingly difficult to cope. Around 60 percent of caregivers will die first.

“They wear out before the person they are taking care of,” said Larry Reeves, the long-term care ombudsman for the Southwestern Commission Area Agency on Aging. “You don’t go the doctor. You

can’t get off on the weekend. You are always listening for the door to open or the alarm to go off — and it wears you out.”

Verges said it’s critical for caregivers to give themselves permission to take a break, both physically and emotionally, by arranging for respite care.

“You may need respite care for your loved one occasionally to fulfill your own needs for social interaction. Your loved one isn’t going to be able to be your companion in the same way they were before,” Verges said.

It’s also important to have difficult conversations about the future care plans, and accept that the time may come when a dementia patient can no longer stay home.

“Don’t promise your loved ones, ‘I’ll never place you,’” Verges said. “I’ve told my own kids that I don’t want them to turn their life upside down. If I say 15 or 20 years from now ‘Don’t ever place me in a nursing home,’ know that I’m not at my best then. Listen to me now.”

Article continues on page 42

Coping as a caregiver

There are several resources available to help caregivers of loved ones with dementia.

Project CARE: This program, which stands for Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty, provides funding for respite care to give caregivers a break. Contact Nancy Hogan with Land of Sky Regional Council at 828-251-7432.

In-home aid: Get help with everything from light housekeeping and errands to personal care like bathing, which can be particularly important when a caregiver is elderly themselves. See the directory listings for in-home care providers or call your local senior center to get pointed in the right direction.

Home-delivered meals: Enrolling in a home-delivered meal service can lighten the load for caregivers with their hands full. See the directory listings for home-delivered meal information by county.

Adult day program: For those in the early stages of dementia, caregivers can enroll their loved on in a daytime adult day program for time off. Check the directory listings to see if there’s an adult day program in your county.

Support groups: Check the directory listings for a dementia caregiver, family caregiver and lifespan support groups in your area.



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Project Lifesaver

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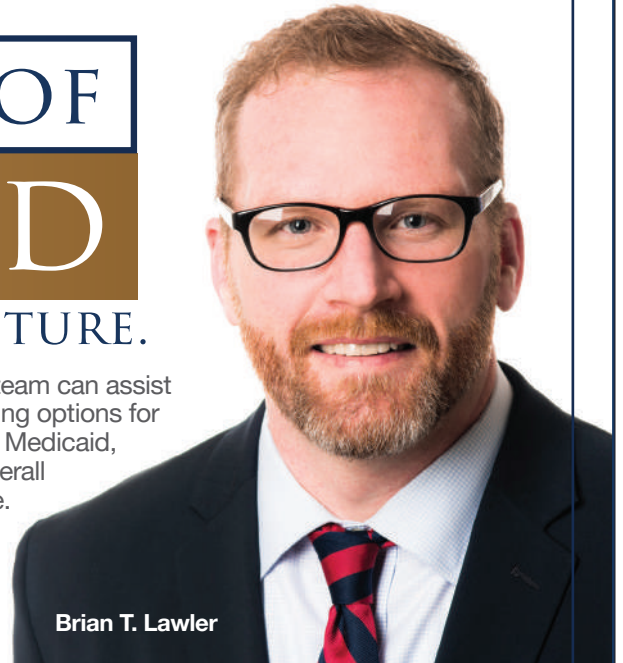
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Southwestern Commission

Area Agency on Aging

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SENIOR CENTERS

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828-321-4505

Unaka Site

14945 Joe Brown Hwy., Murphy
828-835-8313

CHEROKEE

SENIOR CENTERS

**John Welch Senior Center,
Eastern Band of Cherokee
Indians**

302 Airport Road, Marble
828-835-9741

SENIOR MEALS

Penland Senior Center

69 Alpine St., Murphy
828-837-2467

www.cherokeeconomy-nc.gov

Hiwassee Dam Site

7829 Highway 294, Murphy
828-644-0300

Andrews Sunshine Center

54 Park St., Andrews
828-321-4505

Unaka Site

14945 Joe Brown Hwy., Murphy
828-835-8313

**John Welch Senior Center,
Eastern Band of Cherokee
Indians**

302 Airport Road, Marble
828-835-9741

Home Delivered Meals

828-837-2467

www.cherokeeconomy-nc.gov

TRANSIT

Cherokee County Transit

77 Hardin St., Murphy
828-837-1789

www.cherokeeconomy-nc.gov

MEDICARE

**Seniors Health Insurance
Information Program (SHIIP)**

Cherokee County Senior Services
69 Alpine St., Murphy
828-837-2467

HOME MODIFICATIONS

Four Square Community Action

61 Milton Mashburn Dr., Andrews
828-321-4475

www.foursquarecommunityactioninc.com

SUPPORT GROUPS

Dementia Support Group

Murphy Rehab & Nursing
2 p.m. third Tuesday of month
828-835-7588

LEGAL AND ESTATE PLANNING

Stricker Law Firm

102 Hiwassee St., Murphy
828-835-7373 | Strickerlaw.com

MEDICAID

Department of Social Services

4800 W U.S. Highway 64, Murphy
828-837-7455

EBCI

Cherokee Tribal Resources

A health resource directory for enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is available at cherokee-phhs.com/resource-guide

PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL PRACTICES

Smoky Mountain Foot Clinic

9 Drew Taylor Rd., Murphy
828-835-8389

Smokymountainfootclinic.com



CLAY

HEALTHCARE

Clay County Public Department

345 Courthouse Dr., Hayesville
828-389-8052 | www.clayhdnc.us

HOME HEALTH AND IN-HOME SERVICES

Community Alternatives Program: Clay County Health Department

828-389-8052

Good Shepherd Home Health

6950 HWY 64 West, Brasstown
828-837-4260

Clay County Department of Social Services

119 Courthouse Dr., Hayesville
828-389-6301

Mountain Home Health Services

115 Mountain Home
Nursing Lane, Hayesville
828-389-8106

Western Home Healthcare

40 Main St., Hayesville
828-369-0752

SKILLED NURSING AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Bridging the Gap

Family Care Home

56 W Vineyard Lane, Hayesville

828-389-8817

Clay County Care Center

86 Valley Hideaway Dr., Hayesville
828-389-9941

centers.consulatehealthcare.com

Hayesville House

480 Old Hwy 64W, Hayesville
828-389-8700

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Clay County Senior Center

196 Ritter Rd., Hayesville
828-389-9271 | www.seniors.claync.us

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who live near the patients they care for.

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Hospice Care
Bereavement Support
Clinical Research

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CLAY

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Southwestern Commission

Area Agency on Aging

125 Bonnie Lane, Sylva
828-586-1962 | regiona.org/aaa

SENIOR CENTERS

Clay County Senior Center

196 Ritter Rd., Hayesville
828-389-9271 | www.seniors.claync.us

SENIOR MEALS

Clay County Senior Center

196 Ritter Rd., Hayesville
828-389-9271 | www.seniors.claync.us

Home Delivered Meals

828-837-2467
www.cherokeecounty-nc.gov

TRANSIT

Clay County Transportation

391 Courthouse Dr., Hayesville
828-389-0644
claycountytransportation.com

MEDICARE

Seniors Health Insurance

Information Program (SHIIP)

Clay County Senior Center
196 Ritter Rd., Hayesville
828-389-9271 | www.seniors.claync.us

MEDICAID

Clay County Department of Social Services

119 Courthouse Dr., Hayesville
828-389-6301 | www.dss.claync.us

HOME MODIFICATIONS

Four Square

Community Action

828-321-4475
www.foursquarecommunityactioninc.com

SUPPORT GROUPS

Caregiver Support Group

Clay County Care Center
3 p.m. second Monday of month
828-230-3664

IF YOU NEED TRANSPORTATION, TRY US!

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120154

GRAHAM COUNTY SENIOR CENTER

Serving the senior citizens of Graham County

Weekly activities held at the senior center include:

Bingo • Nursing Home Visits • Dancing
Music • Crafts • Card games
Exercise Classes • Board Games
Pound Exercise - Mondays 6:30 pm
at the Community Center

Monthly activities include:

Book mobile service
Health & Nutrition workshops
Out of town shopping trips
Out of town day Spa & beauty shop trips

Lunch is served Mon - Fri at 11:30 am

• day ahead meal reservation required •

185 West Fort Hill Rd • 12 N Main St (Mailing)
Robbinsville NC 28771

Phone 828-479-7977 • Fax: 828-479-7640
wanda.hill@grahamcounty.org

121240

HEALTHCARE

Smoky Mountain Urgent Care

21 South Main St., Robbinsville
828-479-7682

Graham County Public Health Department

191 P and J Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-7900

www.health.grahamcounty.org

HOME HEALTH AND IN-HOME SERVICES

Community Alternatives Program: Graham County Health Department

828-479-7900

Mountain Home Health Services

115 Mountain Home Nursing Lane, Hayesville
828-389-8106

Sawyer's Home Care

533 Sweetwater Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-4948

Turning Point Services

416 Rodney Orr Bypass, Robbinsville
828-479-9470

SKILLED NURSING AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Graham Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center

811 Snowbird Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-8421

www.grahamnursing.com

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Graham County Senior Center

185 West Fort Hill Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-7977

grahamcounty.org/senior-center

Southwestern Commission

Area Agency on Aging

125 Bonnie Lane, Sylva
828-586-1962 | regiona.org/aaa

SENIOR CENTERS

Graham County Senior Center

185 West Fort Hill Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-7977

grahamcounty.org/senior-center

Snowbird Senior Center,

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

157 Jackson Branch Rd., Robbinsville
828-346-6746

SENIOR MEALS

Graham County Senior Center

185 West Fort Hill Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-7977

grahamcounty.org/senior-center

Snowbird Senior Center,

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

157 Jackson Branch Rd., Robbinsville
828-346-6746

Home Delivered Meals

828-837-2467

www.cherokee-county-nc.gov

TRANSIT

Graham County Transit

201 West Fort Hill Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-4129

grahamcountytransit.org

MEDICARE

Seniors Health Insurance

Information Program (SHIIP)

Graham County Senior Center
185 West Fort Hill Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-7977

grahamcounty.org/senior-center

MEDICAID

Graham County Social Services

191 P And J Rd., Robbinsville
828-479-7911

grahamcounty.org/social-services

HOME MODIFICATIONS

Four Square

Community Action

828-321-4475

www.foursquarecommunityactioninc.com

EBCI

Cherokee Tribal Resources

A health resource directory for enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is available at cherokee-phhs.com/resource-guide



HAYWOOD

HEALTHCARE

Haywood Regional Medical Center, Duke LifePoint

262 Leroy George Dr., Clyde
828-456-7311

www.myhaywoodregional.com

Urgent Care West, Duke LifePoint

556 Hazelwood Ave., Waynesville
828-452-8890

www.myhaywoodregional.com

Urgent Care Canton, Duke LifePoint

55 Buckeye Cove Rd., Canton
828-648-0282

www.myhaywoodregional.com

Mission My Care Now

360 Hospital Dr., Clyde
828-213-4444

missionhealth.org/mission-my-care-now

Blue Ridge Community Health

490 Hospital Dr., Clyde
828-246-6372

Haywood Health and Human Services

157 Paragon Parkway, Clyde
828-452-6675

www.haywoodcountync.gov

HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE

Haywood Hospice & Palliative Care

43 Bowman Dr., Waynesville
828-452-5039

lhcgroupp.com/locations/haywood-hospice-and-palliative-care/

HOME HEALTH AND IN-HOME SERVICES

Community Alternatives Program: Haywood Health and Human Services Department

828-356-2810

BAYADA Home Health

50 S. Main St., Waynesville
828-452-0010

CarePartners Home Health, Mission

88 Waynesville Plaza, Waynesville
828-452-3600

missionhealth.org/services-treatments/home-health

Home Care Services of Haywood Regional Medical Center

18B Bowman Dr., Waynesville
828-452-8292

lhcgroupp.com/locations/home-care-services-of-haywood-regional-medical-center

Interim Healthcare

2 Walden Ridge Dr., Asheville
828-274-2082

Mountain Projects

2177 Asheville Rd., Waynesville
828-452-1447 | mountainprojects.org

No Boundaries Integrated Services

6 Elysina Ave., Waynesville
828-456-7930

Turning Point Services

367 Dellwood Rd., Waynesville
828-452-7832

Western Home Healthcare

754 S. Haywood St., Waynesville
800-429-0369

SKILLED NURSING AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Autumn Care Nursing and Rehabilitation

360 Old Balsam Rd., Waynesville
828-456-7381

Creekside Villas Retirement, assisted living facility

465 Boyd Ave., Waynesville
828-456-9240 | Haywoodlodge.com

Haywood House

27 N. Main St., Canton
828-276-1004

Haywood Lodge & Retirement Center

251 Shelton St., Waynesville
828-456-8365 | Haywoodlodge.com

Haywood Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

516 Wall St., Waynesville
828-452-3154

www.savaseniorcare.com

Maggie Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation

75 Fisher Loop, Maggie Valley
828-926-4326

www.maggievalleyrehab.com

Pigeon Valley Assisted Living

55 Lake Dr., Canton
828-648-2044
www.silverbluffvillage.com/pigeon-valley

Silver Bluff Village

100 Silver Bluff Dr., Canton
828-648-2044

www.silverbluffvillage.com

Silver Bluff Rehab

100 Silver Bluff Dr., Canton
828-549-1550

www.silverbluffvillage.com

HAYWOOD

SKILLED NURSING AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Smoky Mountain Health and Rehabilitation Center

1349 Crabtree Rd., Waynesville

828-454-9260

www.smokymountaincare.com

Spicewood Cottages: Elms, Oaks, and Willows

39 Loving Way, Clyde

828-452-0238

www.haywoodlodge.com

Chestnut Park Retirement Center

84 Chestnut Park Dr., Waynesville

828-456-5858

McCracken Rest Home

203 McCracken St., Waynesville

828-456-9004

Richland Community Care

290 Killian St., Waynesville

828-452-0456

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Senior Resource Center

81 Elmwood Way, Waynesville

828-452-2370

www.haywoodseniors.org

Mountain Projects

2177 Asheville Rd., Waynesville

828-452-1447 | Mountainprojects.org

Southwestern Commission

Area Agency on Aging

125 Bonnie Lane, Sylva

828-586-1962 | regiona.org/aaa

SENIOR CENTERS

Senior Resource Center

81 Elmwood Way, Waynesville

828-452-2370

www.haywoodseniors.org

Canton Senior Center

1 Pigeon St., Canton

828-648-8173

[mountainprojects.org/index.php/](http://mountainprojects.org/index.php/canton-senior-center)

canton-senior-center



AUTUMN CARE OF WAYNESVILLE

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828.418.6486

1 Chapel of Faith Drive, Candler, NC

www.aSimpleCremationWNC.com

HAYWOOD

SENIOR MEALS

Waynesville Armory

39 Boundary St., Waynesville
828-452-7029

Canton Senior Center

1 Pigeon St., Canton
828-648-8173

Maggie Valley Community Services Building

3987 Soco Rd., Maggie Valley
828-926-3099 ext. 110

Haywood County Home Delivered Meals

828-356-2442
mow.haywoodnc.net

TRANSIT

Haywood Transit

50 Armory Dr., Clyde
828-565-0362
www.haywoodtransit.com

MEDICARE

Seniors Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP)

Mountain Projects/Haywood Senior Resource Center
81 Elmwood Way, Waynesville
828-356-2800
haywoodseniors.org/shiip

Medicare Insurance Plan Helpline

Haywood Regional Medical Center
855.582.5181
www.myhaywoodregional.com

MEDICAID

Haywood County Health and Human Services

157 Paragon Parkway, Clyde
828-452-6620
www.haywoodcountync.gov

HOME MODIFICATIONS

Mountain Projects

2177 Asheville Rd., Waynesville
828-452-1447
mountainprojects.org/index.php/housing-rehabilitation

ADULT DAY PROGRAM

Maple Leaf Adult Respite

63 Elmwood Way, Waynesville
828-356-2236
www.haywoodcountync.gov



Fifty years ago you fought for our freedom. Now I can help you win your independence.

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Billy Case
Residential & Commercial
Broker Associate, ABR, CRS, GRI



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HAYWOOD

SUPPORT GROUPS

Dementia Support Group

Senior Recourse Center
4:30 p.m., 4th Tuesday of month
828-926-0018

Parkinson's Support Group

Senior Recourse Center
2 p.m., last Wednesday of month
828-356-2800

Bereavement Support Group

Senior Recourse Center
10:30 a.m., third Tuesday of month
828-452-5039

Women's Cancer Support Group

Haywood Regional Health & Fitness
4 p.m. third Tuesday of the month
703-609-9107

EBCI

Cherokee Tribal Resources

A health resource directory for enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is available at cherokee-phhs.com/resource-guide

FINANCIAL ADVISORS

Marty Sohovich,

Ameriprise Financial

1200 S. Main St., Waynesville
828-452-0494
Ameripriseadvisors.com/
Marty.sohovich

BURIAL SERVICES

A Simple Cremation

89 Chapel of Faith Drive, Candler
828-418-6486
Asimplecremationwnc.com

HEARING, VISION AND DENTAL

Hearing Life Care Center

286 North Haywood St., Waynesville
828-558-4450 | Hearinglife.com

Michael Gillespie

Family Dentistry

611 S Haywood St., Waynesville
828-456-9007 | Drgillespie.com

Mountain Audiology

61 Haywood Park Dr., Suite B, Clyde
828-627-1950 | Mtnaudio.com

Mountain Eye Associates

486 Hospital Dr., Clyde
1898 S. Main St., Waynesville
828-452-5816 • 828-456-2015
Mountaineeyassociates.com

INSURANCE

Apply 4 Medical 2 Day

1525 S. Main Street, Waynesville
828-246-9950 | apply4medical2day.com

Asset Protection Network

900 Hendersonville Rd., Suite 201A, Asheville | 828-274-7655
www.assetprotectionnetwork.net

Smoky Mountain Group,

Byron Matthews

96 Buckeye Branch Dr., Clyde
828-648-9984
Smokymountaingroup.com

LEGAL AND ESTATE PLANNING

Norris Elder Services

177 N. Main St., Waynesville
828-452-2256
Norriselderservices.com

Rick Queen

48 S. Main St., Waynesville
828-452-3132 | Rickqueenpa.com

The Van Winkle Law Firm

11 North Market St., Asheville
828-258-2991 | Vwlawfirm.com

Griffin & Shaefer

370 N. Main St., Waynesville
828-456-9436 | Wnclawfirm.com

MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Carolina Breathing Solutions

755 S. Haywood St., Waynesville
828-452-1919
Carolinabreathingsolutions.com

Mountaineer Oxygen

42 Branner Ave., Waynesville
828-926-0208
Mountaineeroxygenservices.com

NON-PROFITS

Haywood Healthcare Foundation

262 Leroy George Dr., Clyde
828-452-8343
Haywoodhealthcarefoundation.org

PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL PRACTICES

Comprehensive Pain Consultants

90 Haywood Office Park, Waynesville
828-483-4438 | Cpcdoctors.com

Smoky Mountain Foot Clinic

289 Access Rd., Waynesville
828-452-4343
Smokymountainfootclinic.com

REAL ESTATE

Billy Case, Beverly Hanks

74 N. Main St., Waynesville
828-508-4527
www.beverly-hanks.com/agents/billycase

JACKSON

HEALTHCARE

Harris Regional Hospital, Duke LifePoint

68 Hospital Rd., Sylva
828-586-7000

Harris Regional Hospital Urgent Care

176 Walmart Plaza, Sylva
828-631-9462

Mountain View Physicians Urgent Care

98 Cope Creek Rd., Sylva
828-586-7925

Jackson County Health Department

538 Scotts Creek Rd., Sylva
828-586-8994

Blue Ridge Community Health
293 Hospital Rd., Sylva
828-477-4334

HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE

Harris Palliative Care and Hospice

81 Medical Park Loop; Suite 204, Sylva
828-631-1702

HOME HEALTH AND IN-HOME SERVICES

Community Alternatives Program: Health Keeperz

52 Colonial Square, Sylva
828-471-5230 | healthkeeperz.com

Harris Home Health

26 Westcare Drive, Suite 303, Sylva
828-586-7410

DisAbility Partners

525 Mineral Springs Rd., Sylva
828-631-1167 | Disabilitypartners.org

Turning Point Services

1 University Dr., Killian 205, Cullowhee
828-227-33180

SKILLED NURSING AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Vero Health & Rehab of Sylva

417 Cloverdale Rd., Sylva
828-631-1600 | www.mountain.care

Morningstar Assisted Living

95 Morning Star Dr., Sylva
828-586-4002

Skyland Care Center

193 Asheville Hwy., Sylva
828-586-8935
Skylandcarecenternc.com

The Hermitage

185 Brickfarm Rd., Sylva
828-586-9070

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Jackson County

Department on Aging

100 County Services Park, Sylva
828-631-8039
www.aging.jacksonnc.org

Southwestern Commission

Area Agency on Aging

125 Bonnie Lane, Sylva
828-586-1962 | regiona.org/aaa

Mountain Projects

25 Schulman St., Sylva
828-586-2345 | mountainprojects.org

SENIOR CENTERS

Jackson County Senior Center

100 County Services Park, Sylva
828-586-5494 | www.aging.jacksonnc.org/jackson-county-senior-center

Cashiers Senior Center

217 Frank Allen Rd., Cashiers
828-745-6856
www.aging.jacksonnc.org

SENIOR MEALS

Jackson County Senior Center

100 County Services Park, Sylva
828-586-5494
www.aging.jacksonnc.org

Cashiers Senior Center

217 Frank Allen Rd., Cashiers
828-745-6856
www.aging.jacksonnc.org

Home Delivered Meals

828-837-2467
www.cherokeeconomy-nc.gov

TRANSIT

Jackson County Transit

1148 Haywood Rd., Sylva
828-586-0233
www.jacksoncountyttransit.com

MEDICARE

Seniors Health Insurance

Information Program (SHIIP)

Jackson County Department on Aging
100 County Services Park, Sylva
828-631-8037
www.aging.jacksonnc.org

MEDICAID

Jackson County Department of Social Services

15 Griffin St., Sylva
828-586-5546

HOME MODIFICATIONS

Mountain Projects

25 Schulman St., Sylva
828-586-2345
mountainprojects.org/index.php/housing-rehabilitation

Project C.A.R.E.

Community Action to Reach Elderly
100 County Services Park, Sylva
828-631-8040
www.aging.jacksonnc.org/project-care-fire

JACKSON

ADULT DAY PROGRAM

Jackson County Adult

Day Program

100 County Services Park, Sylva

828-586-5441

www.aging.jacksonnc.org

SUPPORT GROUPS

Dementia Support Group

3 p.m. second Tuesday of month

828-227-7165

Bereavement Support Group

10:30 a.m. every Tuesday and Friday

828-450-7575

Breast Cancer Support Group

828-631-8100

Tremor Support Group

2 p.m. third Wednesday of month

828.736.3165

EBCI

Cherokee Tribal Resources

A health resource directory for enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is available at cherokee-phhs.com/resource-guide

FINANCIAL ADVISORS

Justin Castle, Edward Jones

454 E. Main St., Sylva

828-586-2292

www.edwardjones.com/justin-castle

HEARING, VISION AND DENTAL

Mountain Eye Associates

137 Medical Park Loop, Sylva

828-477-4572

Mountaineerassociates.com

NON-PROFITS

Great Smokies Health Foundation

1134A Skyland Dr., Sylva

828-507-2270

greatsmokieshealthfoundation.com

PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL PRACTICES

Smoky Mountain Foot Clinic

32 Asheville Hwy., Sylva

828-586-8950

Smokymountainfootclinic.com



A birthday party for Jackson County residents age 90 and over.

MACON

HEALTHCARE

Angel Medical Center,

Mission Health

120 Riverview St., Franklin

828-524-8411

[missionhealth.org/
member-hospitals/angel](http://missionhealth.org/member-hospitals/angel)

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital,

Mission Health

190 Hospital Dr., Highlands

828-526-1200

[missionhealth.org/member-hospitals/
highlands-cashiers](http://missionhealth.org/member-hospitals/highlands-cashiers)

Mission My Care Now,

urgent care

190 Riverview St., Franklin

828-369-4427

[missionhealth.org/
mission-my-care-now](http://missionhealth.org/mission-my-care-now)

Smoky Mountain Urgent Care

195 Franklin Plaza, Franklin

828-634-7745

Franklin Community Based VA Outpatient Clinic

647 Wayah St., Franklin

828-369-1781

Community Care Clinic of Franklin

1830 Lakeside Dr., Franklin

828-349-2085

Community Care Clinic of Highlands-Cashiers

52 Aunt Dora Dr., Highlands

828-526-1991

Macon County Public Health

1830 Lakeside Dr., Franklin

828-349-2081

[www.maconnc.org/
health-department.html](http://www.maconnc.org/health-department.html)

HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE

CarePartners Hospice & Palliative Care, MissionHealth

170 Church St., Franklin

828-369-4206

[missionhealth.org/
member-hospitals/angel/](http://missionhealth.org/member-hospitals/angel/)

Four Seasons

171 Hospital Dr., Suite 600, Highlands

828-526-2552

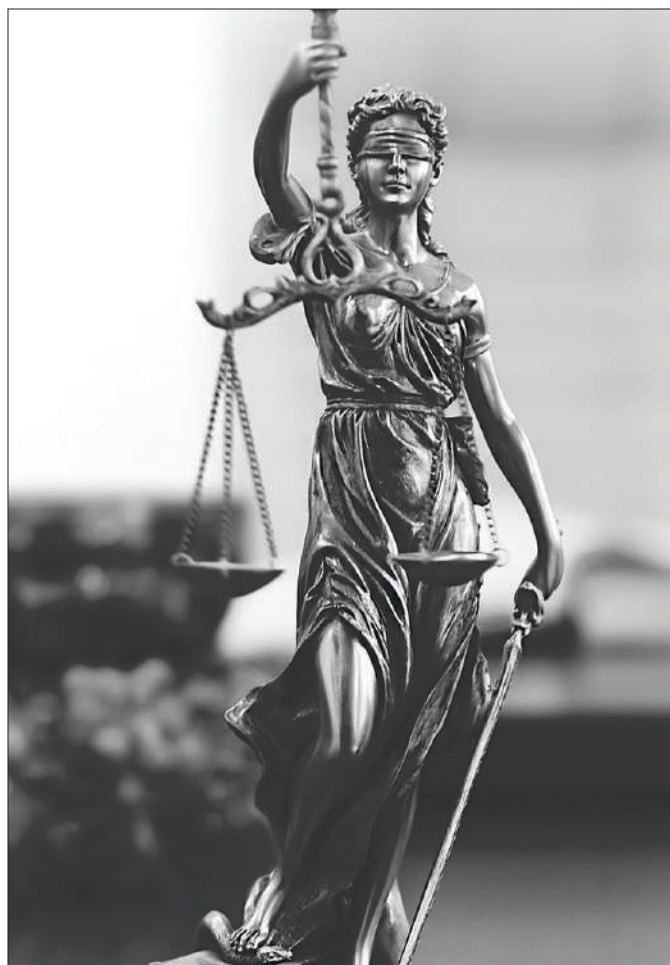
SECU Hospice House,

Four Seasons

272 Maple St., Franklin

828-524-6375

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Medicaid Approval*

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- Medicaid Application Preparation
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- Guardianships
- Living Wills

Estate Planning

- Supplemental Special Needs Trusts
- Irrevocable Trusts
- Revocable Trusts
- Probate
- Wills

Murphy Office

102 Hiwassee Street, Murphy, NC 28906 | 828.835.7373

Attorney Larry G. Simonds, Jr.

Attorney Marguerite Eubanks Stricker

Belmont Office

12 Kenwood Street, Belmont, NC 28012 | 704.829.8034

Attorney Andrew M. Brandt

www.strickerlaw.com

120530

HOME HEALTH AND IN-HOME SERVICES

Community Alternatives Program: Care Partners

Home Health
828-369-4206

CarePartners Home Health, Angel

170 Church St., Franklin
828-369-4206
[missionhealth.org/
services-treatments/home-health/](http://missionhealth.org/services-treatments/home-health/)

Comfort Keepers

35 East Main St., Franklin
828-524-1102

Companion Health Care

243 Sloan Rd., Franklin,
828-524-6444

Home Care Specialists In The Mountains

232 Cunningham Rd., Suite 2, Franklin
828-349-9500

Mountain Home Health Services

14 West Palmer St., Franklin
828-524-0178

My Choice Home Care

348 South Fifth St., Suite 209,
Highlands | 828-200-9000

Turning Point Services

133 E. Palmer St., Suite 203, Franklin
828-349-4757

SKILLED NURSING AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Chestnut Hill of Highlands

64 Clubhouse Trail, Highlands
828-787-2114

Eckerd Living Center

250 Hospital Dr., Highlands
828-526-1315

Franklin House

186 One Center Court, Franklin
828-363-9965

Grandview Manor Care Center

150 Crisp St., Franklin
828-524-4425

Macon Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation

3195 Old Murphy Rd., Franklin
828-524-7806 | www.maconvalley.com

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Macon County Senior Services

108 Wayah St., Franklin
828-349-2058
[www.maconnc.org/
dss-senior-services.html](http://www.maconnc.org/dss-senior-services.html)

Southwestern Commission

Area Agency on Aging
125 Bonnie Lane, Sylva
828-586-1962 | regiona.org/aaa

SENIOR CENTER

Crawford Senior Center

108 Wayah St., Franklin
828-349-2058
[www.maconnc.org/
dss-senior-services.html](http://www.maconnc.org/dss-senior-services.html)

SENIOR MEALS

Community Resource Center

108 Wayah St., Franklin
828-349-2058
[www.maconnc.org/
dss-senior-services.html](http://www.maconnc.org/dss-senior-services.html)

Home Delivered Meals

828-837-2467
www.cherokeeconomy-nc.gov

TRANSIT

Macon County Transit

36 Pannell Lane, Franklin
828-349-2565
www.maconnc.org/transit.html

MEDICARE

Seniors Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP)

Macon County Senior Services
108 Wayah St., Franklin
828-349-2059



Seniors from across the seven western counties attend a Senior Celebration at WCU in September.

MACON

MEDICAID

Macon County Department of Social Services

1832 Lakeside Dr., Franklin
828-349-2124
www.maconnc.org/dss-family.html

HOME MODIFICATIONS

Macon Program for Progress

82 East Orchard View Lane, Franklin
828-524-4471

ADULT DAY PROGRAM

Care Connection

Adult Day Program

108 Wayah St., Franklin
828-369-5845
www.maconnc.org/dss-senior-services.html

SUPPORT GROUPS

Bereavement Support Group

828-369-4206 or 828-692-6178

Caregiver Support Group

3 p.m. first Thursday of month
828-349-2058

Dementia Support Group

2 p.m. second and fourth
Wednesday of month
828-524-3119

Diabetes Support Group

4 p.m. third Thursday of the month
828-349-6688

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

10 a.m. fourth Tuesday of month
828-421-2972

Stroke Support Group

3:30 p.m. first Wednesday of the month
828-348-6641

HEARING, VISION AND DENTAL

Mountain Audiology

175 East Main St., Suite F, Franklin
828-634-1710 | Mtnaudio.com

PHYSICIANS AND MEDICAL PRACTICES

Comprehensive Pain Consultants

120 Riverview St., Franklin
828-483-4438 | cpcdoctors.com

Smoky Mountain Foot Clinic

188 Georgia Rd., Franklin
828-349-4534
Smokymountainfootclinic.com



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Referral Fax: 828.483.5808

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HEALTHCARE

Swain Community Hospital, Duke LifePoint

45 Plateau St., Bryson City
828-488-2155

Smoky Mountain Urgent Care

80 Veterans Blvd., Bryson City
828-538-4549

Swain County Caring Corner

81 Academy St., Bryson City
828-341-1998

www.swaincaringcorner.org

Swain County Health Department

545 Center St., Bryson City
828-488-3198

www.swaincountync.gov/health-home

HOME HEALTH AND IN-HOME SERVICES

Community Alternatives Program: Health Keeperz

52 Colonial Square, Sylva
828-471-5230 | healthkeeperz.com

PRN Nursing Services

89 Slope St., Bryson City
828-488-0915

Health Department

545 Center St., Bryson City
878-488-3198

SKILLED NURSING AND ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

Bryson Senior Living

314 Hughes Branch Rd., Bryson City
828-488-0024

Mountain View Manor

Nursing Center

410 Buckner Branch Rd., Bryson City
828-488-2101

Tsali Care Center

10 Echota Church Rd., Cherokee
828-497-5048

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

Swain County Senior Center

125 Brendle St., Bryson City
828-488-3047

Southwestern Commission

Area Agency on Aging

125 Bonnie Lane, Sylva
828-586-1962 | regiona.org/aaa

SENIOR CENTERS

Swain County Senior Center

125 Brendle St., Bryson City
828-488-3047

Tsali Manor, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

133 Tsali Manor St., Cherokee
828-497-4471

SENIOR MEALS

Swain County Senior Center

125 Brendle St., Bryson City
828-488-3047

Tsali Manor, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

133 Tsali Manor St., Cherokee
828-497-4471

TRANSIT

Swain Public Transit

125 Brendle St., Bryson City
828-488-3213

MEDICARE

Seniors Health Insurance

Information Program (SHIIP)

Swain County Cooperative Extension
60 Almond School Rd., Bryson City
828-488-3848

MEDICAID

Department of Social Services

80 Academy St., Bryson City
828-488-6921

[www.swaincountync.gov/dss/
dss-adult-services.html](http://www.swaincountync.gov/dss/dss-adult-services.html)

HOME MODIFICATIONS

Four Square

Community Action

828-321-4475
www.foursquarecommunityactioninc.com

SUPPORT GROUPS

Dementia Support Group

Tsali Manor Senior Center
5:30 p.m. first Tuesday of month
828-359-6294

EBCI

Cherokee Tribal Resources

A health resource directory for enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is available at cherokee-phhs.com/resource-guide

NON-PROFITS

Great Smokies

Health Foundation

1134A Skyland Dr., Sylva
828-507-2270
greatsmokieshealthfoundation.com



RICK QUEEN, P.A.

ATTORNEY AT LAW



- WILLS • TRUSTS
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- LIVING WILLS
- TRUSTEE SERVICES
- TRUST & ESTATE
ADMINISTRATION (PROBATE)
- LONG-TERM CARE PLANNING

From wills to complex trusts and business planning, Rick develops relationships with clients, their financial advisors and families to assist with preparing comprehensive plans.

Rick is a Western North Carolina native and attended Western Carolina University and Wake Forest University School of Law. Rick is a veteran who served as a pilot and officer in the United States Marine Corps. Licensed in 2000, admitted in NC Supreme Court, US District Court, US 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, & US Tax Court.

Representing all of Western North Carolina, including Haywood, Jackson, Swain, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, and Macon counties.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT RICK QUEEN:

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