

NEW HAMPSHIRE SUNDAY NEWS • MAY 9-10, 2026

Visit the **FREE SENIOR EXPO** in Nashua

Saturday, May 16 • Bishop Guertin High School • 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



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Visitors attend last year's Silver Linings Expo in Nashua. This year's event takes place Saturday, May 16, at Bishop Guertin High School.

UNION LEADER FILE



Don't miss this year's Silver Linings expos

Silver Linings: Senior Healthy Living Expo provides a face-to-face forum for attendees to hear directly from local experts, advocates and care providers.

These free events offer a one-stop opportunity for older adults to connect with experts, gather practical advice and ex-

plore resources to support every stage of retirement. Attendees can browse dozens of vendor booths featuring organizations focused on health care, housing, financial planning and travel, while also attending informative seminars on topics like Medicare, long-term care planning and navigating

today's travel challenges. Whether you're looking to simplify complex decisions, plan your next trip or just learn something new, the expo provides helpful guidance, demonstrations, personal connections and plenty of take-home resources in a welcoming, community-focused setting.

NASHUA

When: Saturday, May 16, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Where: Bishop Guertin High School, 194 Lund Road, Nashua.

SEACOAST

When: Saturday, Aug. 15, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Where: Exeter High School, 1 Blue Hawk Drive, Exeter.

MANCHESTER

When: Saturday, Oct. 24, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Where: Manchester Community College, 1066 Front St., Manchester.

ON THE COVER: About 30 people including Peggy Houlne of Merrimack perform a move during seated therapeutic yoga at the John O'Leary Adult Community Center in Merrimack on May 1. *David Lane/Union Leader*

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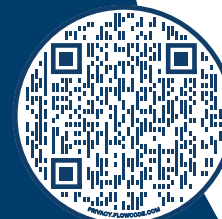
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Penny Roskoski participates in the seated therapeutic yoga class on May 1.



Mary Jane Warren, center, of Merrimack and her husband, Jack, attend the seated therapeutic yoga class.



DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER

About 30 people including John Monnelly of Manchester, foreground, perform seated therapeutic yoga at the John O'Leary Adult Community Center in Merrimack.



About 30 people perform a move during seated therapeutic yoga at the John O'Leary Adult Community Center in Merrimack.

Chair Yoga

A weekly dose of calm and focus

By Roberta Baker • Union Leader Staff

Thirty people in their 60s through 90s gathered on the last Friday in April at the O'Leary Adult Community Center in Merrimack for seated therapeutic yoga — their weekly dose of calm, focus, balance,

gentle breathing, movement and mindfulness while sitting comfortably in a chair.

For some, the 9 a.m. class helps to reduce their risk of falling. For others, it's a regular outing where they can meet up, chat and make friends.

For everyone, it's low-bar exercise

with little or no risk of pain, plus happy social interaction.

"People want to feel good about themselves," said the yoga instructor, Jay Gupta, a pharmacist who got into the ancient Asian meditative exercise as a teenager in India,

See *Yoga*, Page 4

All photos by David Lane/Union Leader

Yoga

From Page 3

and now teaches seated yoga to health care professionals and hospital and rehabilitation center patients, including veterans in wheelchairs at Manchester's VA Medical Center.

"Yoga is supposed to be a simple and powerful practice," not something "super-complicated and very bendy," said Gupta, who co-founded YogaCaps, a nonprofit to promote yoga as an alternative to taking a menu of medications, including for pain or sleep.

Yoga is for everybody, he said.

"If children start doing it, it's even better. Their bodies are already flex-

ible. At every stage of life, it has its own benefits."

His class in April combined slow and small body movements borrowed from different yoga schools and added sections with laughter.

"Start to wiggle your toes and see if you can feel the skin in between your toes," Gupta told his students seated on chairs.

"You're energizing your neurons and your toes. Now spread them out and lift them up. Keep your toes lifted and separated. Now start to relax your shoulders, arms and hands. Your eyes are gently closed. Relax your facial mus-

cles. No pains. All gains," he said.

Gupta has been teaching yoga for over 30 years. Some of his students have come to his classes for 20 years.

The class was Beverly Rigoli's third visit. Rigoli recently moved to Merrimack to live with her son and daughter-in-law. She tried chair yoga while living in Littleton, Mass.

"It's very relaxing," she said. "I like the breathing exercise and the feel of muscles I haven't used in a while. The people here are very friendly and inclusive. They want you to enjoy it, too. I don't want to sit home and watch television and movies."

Mary Jane Warren, 79, of Merrimack discovered seated yoga 20 years ago.

"It's calming and it's exercising without even knowing it. You move every muscle in your body without knowing it."

John and Geri Monnelly of Manchester have been regulars for 13 years, starting with Geri's class for cancer survivors.

"It makes you feel at peace and ready to start the day," said Geri. "It makes you concentrate on your breathing, which you don't always do."

"It's something you can do on your own time," John said. On your

own, outside of class, "You can shrug your shoulders and move your head" whenever you change activities or locations or watch television.

John Szyszlo, 65, of Merrimack, a tech executive and avid hiker, took up chair yoga to speed recovery from a shoulder injury. "It ended up being a gateway," he said. "Now we're (also) doing yoga classes at the Y."

Gupta regards yoga also as a tool for "deprescribing," or decreasing the number of drugs that patients take routinely. Its slow-motion, gentle, mindful movements

can help reduce hypertension, depression, anxiety, insomnia and the symptoms of PTSD, he said. An eight-week study of the effects of one hour of seated yoga each week found a statistically significant decline in depression and fear of falling — which increases the risk of falling, according to YogaCaps.

"A whole host of medical conditions can be managed better," said Gupta.

The free weekly class in seated yoga at Merrimack's O'Leary Center is open to anyone. Voluntary donations support YogaCaps.

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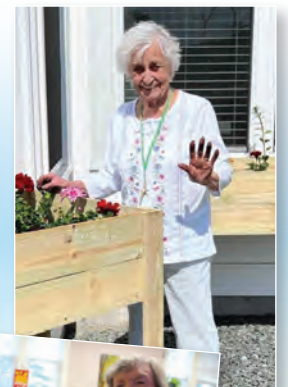
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— Joan LeBaron

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— Ed Walkonen

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— Ray Conway and Family



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University of
New Hampshire



At OLLI, lifelong learning reboots active lives

By Roberta Baker
Union Leader Staff

Eleanor Strang, formerly a librarian in Salem, Mass., is proof that sharing a personal passion can inspire that interest in others. And it can reinvigorate lives, including your own.

Her proving ground is OLLI at UNH, the University of New Hampshire's chapter of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, where Strang has taught mini history courses since 2012, on topics such as the Underground Railroad, Loyalists, Acadians and the Boston Massacre.

Her recent class, "Samuel Sewall: From Salem Witch Trial Judge to Anti-Slavery," drew around 25 OLLI regulars and newcomers to UNH Manchester on April 27. The talk covered the life and struggles of a judge who presided over the notorious witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass., in the late 1600s — 19 of which resulted in death by hanging, one in death by pressing. The experience changed Sewall's life and steered him toward redemption.

"I'm so happy to see so many people interested in Puritan history," Strang said as she surveyed the room.

Strang is a favorite presenter at OLLI, whose members, age 50 and older, take spring and fall courses in Manchester, Concord, Portsmouth and North Conway. These courses can help attendees acquire a new skill or interest, nourish a curiosity and have a subject

“

"It's much more than a program, more than going to class. It's a community of people who come together to share passions and thought."

TONIANN LEAVITT
director of OLLI at UNH

come alive as if they're still students in college. There are no pre-requisites, tests, grades, homework or term papers.

Barbara Macrae of Concord joined OLLI in 2014.

"It makes my life a little more interesting and gives me something to look forward to," Macrae said. "In the winter it gets you out of the house and enriches your day. It's taking time for yourself."

"We do this because we learn something every time," said Beverly Gere of Bedford, who takes classes through OLLI with her husband, Bill.

OLLI offers more than 320 courses yearly, on subjects as diverse as Canadian art and history, Paris and New York in the 1920s and 1930s, Ukrainian-style egg decorating, Alfred Hitchcock's movies, science fiction, memoir writing, pop and rock music from the '60s and '70s, the

See OLLI, Page 8



Above: Eleanor Strang of Derry teaches a class on Samuel Sewall at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in Manchester in April.

At left: People listen to a presentation during the Samuel Sewall class.

DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER

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OLLI

From Page 6

state's covered bridges, its war memorials and forgotten plane wrecks, steel drum playing, bagel making and kayaking on the Contoocook.

There are shared interest groups for the capital, Greater Manchester, the Seacoast and the Mount Washington Valley region. They offer a summer ice cream trail, hiking, book and movie clubs, and dining meetups.

Annual membership costs \$50 a year (\$25 for the first year for UNH grads, staff or faculty) and courses run \$25 to \$55.

OLLI has more than 850 members who attend peer-led programs in person or via Zoom.

"It's much more than a program, more than going to class. It's a community of people who come together to share passions and thoughts," said Toniann Leavitt, director of OLLI at UNH. Members can participate by teaching a class, serving as a class assistant and planning events, she said.

"I've had people tell me it saves their life and gives them a purpose in retirement," Leavitt said. "It gives them an opportunity to pursue an area of interest they might not have had an opportunity" to enjoy while they were working. "Retirement is not just ending your career. It's starting a whole

new chapter of life."

The organization, currently with 125 chapters, was created by Bernard Osher, a philanthropist who recognized the value of lifelong learning and community engagement for older adults.

Research cited by OLLI shows that lifelong learning and social connection improve cognitive health, physical health and well-being, personal fulfillment and quality of life.

To join or find out more, go to unh.edu/OLLI or call 603-862-6554.

In addition to OLLI, any New Hampshire resident age 65 and older can take two UNH courses, not for credit, for free each year.



DAVID LANE/UNION LEADER

Jim and Leonora Isaak of Londonderry attend the Samuel Sewall class at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in Manchester.



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If peripheral neuropathy is limiting what you can do—or who you can be—Trend Acupuncture is here to help you move forward with confidence, comfort, and renewed possibility.

There are three common types of peripheral neuropathy. Idiopathic neuropathy occurs when no clear medical cause can be identified, leaving patients frustrated and often told they must simply “live with it.” Chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy (CIPN) develops as a side effect of cancer treatments and can persist long after chemotherapy ends. Diabetic neuropathy is caused by long-term blood sugar imbalance and is one of the most common and debilitating complications of diabetes.

At Trend Acupuncture, patients struggling with peripheral neuropathy find something different—hope backed by thoughtful care and measurable results. Led by Dr. Kristen Markwith, Trend Acupuncture blends time-tested acupuncture with modern, innovative techniques designed to calm irritated nerves, reduce inflammation, improve circulation, and support nerve healing. This integrative approach allows many patients to experience long-lasting improvement rather than short-term symptom management.

Trend Acupuncture’s goal is simple but powerful: to decrease neuropathy symptoms so people can get back to living life the way they want to live it. That may mean walking without fear of falling, sleeping through the night without burning pain, returning to work comfortably, or enjoying time with family without constant distraction from discomfort.

Patients consistently describe Trend Acupuncture as a warm, friendly, and genuinely caring office. Dr. Markwith and her team take the time to truly listen, understand each patient’s story, and create individualized care plans focused on real-world outcomes. No rushing. No dismissing concerns. Just compassionate, attentive care centered on restoring quality of life.



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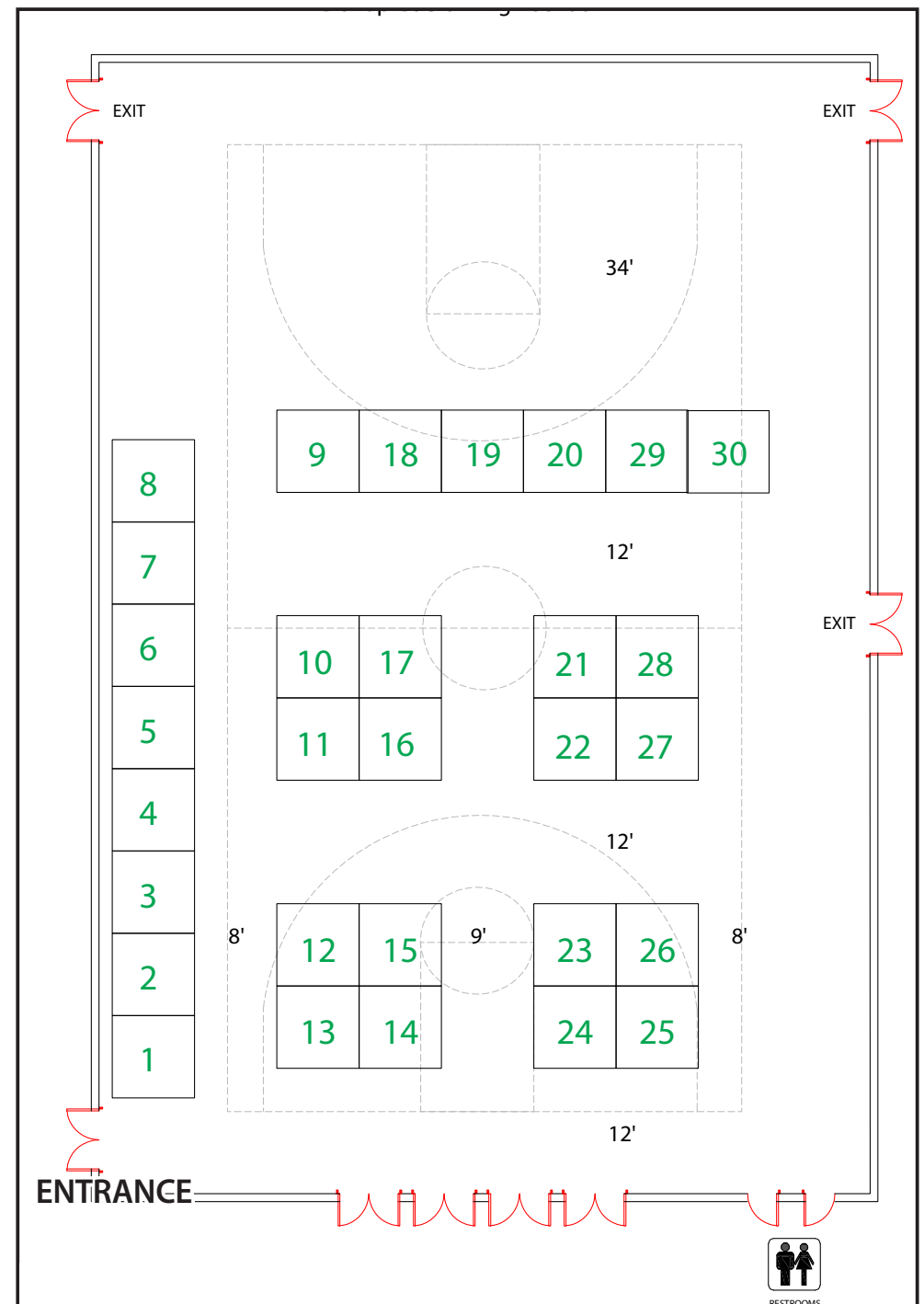
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| 3. FCP Live-In | 19. Minuteman Medical Inc. |
| 4. Granite State Senior Games Inc. | 20. Oasis Senior Advisors - Silver Assist |
| 5. CaptionCall | 21. Visiting Angels |
| 6. YogaCaps, Inc. | 22. 360 SHS |
| 7. St. Joseph Hospital | 23. Forever |
| 8. Focused Eye Care | 24. Langdon Place of Nashua |
| 9. New York Life Insurance Company | 25. Five Star Bath Solutions |
| 10. Malloy Horizons | 26. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) |
| 11. EXP Realty | 27. Renmar DME |
| 12. Strategic Caring Solutions | 28. HearingLife |
| 13. Silverstone Living | 29. NBT Bank |
| 14. Encompass Health | 30. New Hampshire Prostate Cancer Coalition |
| 15. Independent Aging Solutions, LLC | |
| 16. Bird's Nest Auctions | |



SCHEDULE

9:45 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

The Perils of “Polypharmacy”

What are the implications of taking multiple medications?
Join this session to help detect concerns and learn practical
interventions to reduce the risks.

Jay Gupta, RPh, MSc, 340B ACE, MTM Specialist, C-IAYT, YogaCaps, Inc.

10:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.

How to Prepare for Diminished Capacity and Illness

Catherine Cournoyer Strategic Caring Solutions VP, Senior Care Advisor

11:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

Safe Steps: Bathroom Safety for Seniors

Christina Cox, Five Star Bath Solutions

Free Chair Yoga Class at the event!

Fall Prevention with Chair Yoga

Join a short chair yoga session based on a researched protocol developed by Jay Gupta, shown to significantly reduce fall risk in older adults. No special clothing or equipment is needed, and the class is fully seated.

Register for free at unionleader.com/seniorexpo

Prevent identity theft at free shredding events around the state

Provided by AARP

Every day, millions of Americans lose their hard-earned money to identity theft and other types of scams.

In 2024 alone, 18 million people from communities across the nation lost \$47 billion to identity theft. That's a new victim every 1.7 seconds.

Identity theft criminals don't take breaks. Protecting your personal information can help reduce your risk of identity theft.

One way to do this is to dispose of your personal information securely. That is why AARP New

Hampshire is offering you the opportunity to attend three free shredding events in May and June.

Bring your documents for shredding — bank statements, canceled checks, credit card junk mail and receipts with identifying information. Limit: three bags or boxes per vehicle. No magazines or newspapers will be accepted.

Documents should be free of large binder clips and plastic; staples and paper clips don't need to be removed. All papers will be shredded on-site in the mobile shredding truck.

Here are the details for the three document-shredding events:

Salem

Ingram Senior Center
Thursday, May 21, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Raymond

M&T Bank
Friday, June 12, 9 a.m. to noon

Concord

Service Credit Union
Saturday, June 27, 9 a.m. to noon



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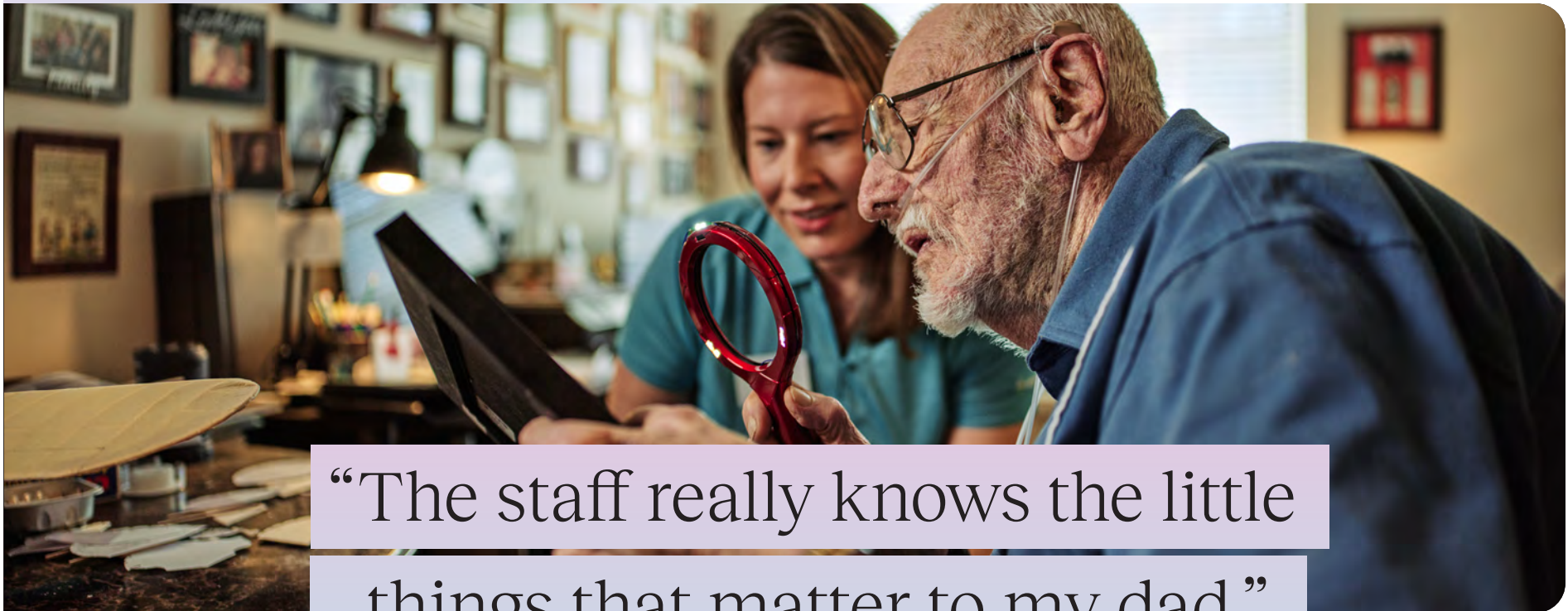
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DMITRY BERKUT/GETTY

According to recent findings from the U.S. Surgeon General, cited by the American Heart Association this month, loneliness can increase the risk of degenerative heart valve diseases by 19% to 23%.

In older adults, loneliness can 'break your heart,' research shows

By **Roberta Baker**
Union Leader Staff

Twice a month, Joanne and Ken Calder, retirees who live in Goffstown, each deliver groceries to four to eight homebound seniors, a service they've provided for the past 10 to 20 years as volunteers through The CareGivers, a program of NH Catholic Charities.

It's nourishment for body and spirit. For the frail adults who live alone, it may be the only in-person contact they have

all month. For them, it's a godsend.

"They're very grateful," said Ken. "There are people who can't thank you enough."

"It's just so rewarding," said Joanne. "You're making contact with some people who are truly isolated and have little or no contact with family or the outside world. After a while, they're looking forward to the visit. I often stay to talk. A lot of hugs. A lot of catching up. It's a really nice connection that works both ways."

For their clients, it's a life changer, and may well be a lifesaver. There's a link between high levels of loneliness and functionally broken hearts.

According to recent findings from the U.S. Surgeon General, cited by the American Heart Association this month, loneliness can increase the risk of degenerative heart valve diseases by 19% to 23%, according to a study of more than 450,000 adults in the United Kingdom

See **Loneliness**, Page 15



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Loneliness

From Page 14

over 14 years. It's not social isolation per se.

"You can be lonely even when you're surrounded by others if those connections aren't meaningful or fulfilling," Crystal Wiley Cene, a professor of medicine and public health and chief administrative officer and associate chief medical officer for health equity at the University of California, San Diego, said in a report on the study.

"Loneliness represents a mismatch between the connections a person desires and what they have."

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, social isolation greatly increases

the risk of loneliness, but there's a key distinction. Social isolation means not having relationships, contact with or support from others. Loneliness is feeling alone, disconnected or not close to others.

According to the CDC, 1 in 3 U.S. adults report feeling lonely, and 1 in 4 report not having social and emotional support.

Roughly 1 in 4 New Hampshire seniors live alone, according to the U.S. Census. Less than four years from now, the percentage of Granite Staters 65 or older is predicted to pass 30%, according to the New Hampshire State Commis-

sion on Aging.

"Loneliness is about quality of relationships, but not the quantity," said James Wilkie, executive director of The CareGivers, which serves over 500 seniors in 14 New Hampshire communities, including Greater Manchester, Nashua and Merrimack.

"You can go to the common room (of your building) every day, but you go back to your apartment and feel lonely. You can be lonely even if you're surrounded by people because the quality of the relationship is not there."

Currently, 393 volunteers for The CareGiv-

"You can be lonely even when you're surrounded by others if those connections aren't meaningful or fulfilling."

CRYSTAL WILEY CENE

professor of medicine and public health, University of California, San Diego

ers, including about 150 regulars who devote roughly 3.5 hours a month, deliver groceries to up to 360 clients, transportation to medical appointments for 190 clients, and weekly phone calls to many, who, "All they want is reassurance, a social visit by phone," said Wilkie. Their

families may live far away or have infrequent contact.

When volunteers reach out, "It may be the only birthday call or card they get," he said.

Chronic loneliness is a stressor to the body and brain, affecting physical and mental health. Research shows there are

links between loneliness and heart disease, dementia, anxiety, depression and early death.

The U.S. Surgeon General reported last year that social isolation can be as dangerous to an older adult as smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day.

In addition to witnessing loneliness in clients who are isolated and craving someone to talk to, Wilkie said, CareGivers volunteers notice other needs that should be met.

"The need is greater than the resources," he said.

To volunteer or receive services from The CareGivers, call 603-622-4948 or go to caregiversnh.org.



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To learn more, contact Catherine Cournoyer, VP/Senior Care Advisor, at 603.934.0440 or Cournoyer@StrategicCaringSolutions.com.



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Older adults can rebuild social lives through hobbies

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Metro Creative Connection

The threat posed by social isolation has been known to medical researchers and health care professionals for years, but the issue gained wider attention during the pandemic.

Restrictions on social gatherings during the pandemic opened millions of people's eyes to the ill effects of social isolation, and while that threat proved temporary for the majority of people across the globe, many seniors continue to live largely isolated lives.

According to the Mayo Clinic, depression, anxiety, increased risk of suicide, and various chronic health problems are some of the outcomes associated with loneliness.

That's a troubling assessment that becomes even more disconcerting when considering a general decline in socialization as evidenced by the 2021 American Perspec-

tives Survey.

Survey participants indicated they have fewer close friendships than they once did, speak with their friends less often and rely less on friends for personal support.

That's challenging for adults of all ages, but it can be especially difficult for aging adults, who may be dealing with the loss of a spouse or other close confidantes they would otherwise rely on when confronting personal problems.

Hobbies that promote socialization can help aging adults reestablish friendships and build new ones, paying dividends that can have a profound impact on their overall health.

With that in mind, adults who feel as though their social circles are shrinking in mid-life or in retirement can look to these activities as means to rebuilding their social lives.

Book club: A book club offers multiple benefits



PROVIDED BY METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

There are many ways for men and women to get out of the house and socialize with others their age, a worthy endeavor that can be highly beneficial to adults' overall health.

to adults. Book clubs are inherently social and tend to bring like-minded individuals together, which can help build new and lasting friendships that extend be-

yond weekly discussions. A 2021 study published in the journal *Neurology* also linked regular reading to a lower risk of developing dementia.

Sports: Sports provide another avenue to socialize with like-minded individuals. Golf is not a team sport, but it is typically played in groups of two

or four, making it an ideal activity for adults with free time on their hands to get out and about and meet other people.

Leagues for softball, bowling and pickleball also provide opportunities to socialize, and many adults are participating in such leagues for that very reason.

A CivicScience study released in 2025 found that 49% of adults who planned to participate in adult recreational sports leagues were doing so for social interaction and the chance to make friends.

Travel: Travel can provide another means for aging adults to make friends. Group tours to foreign countries, day trips to local attractions arranged by township recreational offices or even overseas trips with friends you've fallen out of touch with can be a great means to build new friendships and reinvigorate old ones, all the while getting you out of the house.

Caring for grandchildren brings joy — but balance is key for seniors

Provided by Metro Creative Connection

Spending time with grandchildren can make seniors feel young and valued. Grandparents are often asked to step in as caregivers to the youngsters they love. The U.S. Department of Labor reports 2.74 million children in the United States were being raised by a grandparent in 2021, the most recent year for data.

Chasing around a toddler or

school-aged child can affect seniors differently than it affects parents in their 20s or 30s. Effectively and safely managing the physical and emotional toll of caring for grandchildren may come down to emphasizing balance.

Protect your body. Grandparents should rely on strollers, high chairs and step stools to minimize heavy lifting. When a child wants to be held, a senior can sit on the couch or a chair

and have the child climb up to them.

Incorporate downtime. Seniors should schedule quiet time so they can get a physical and mental break. Whether this time involves reading books or engaging in easy crafts, ensuring there are blocks of time for rest is essential.

Conduct a safety check. It's important for a home to be safe for kids and seniors alike. Removing breakable items and

covering up sharp edges on furniture and other hard surfaces can protect grandparents and grandkids.

Establish some boundaries. Grandparents should establish clear communication with their own children regarding their expectations. It's important to define a schedule that works for the senior, and he or she should be honest about how much they can manage.

Know the rules. Grandparents

should discuss what parents expect regarding screen time, naps, food and more. A united front from parents and grandparents can reduce the need to negotiate with headstrong children.

Make a backup plan. Seniors should emphasize to their children that they need to have a backup caregiver available for when they are not able to watch the grandchildren. Seniors deserve days off.

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Simple steps to reduce medication risks for seniors

Provided by
 Metro Creative Connection

Polypharmacy, or the practice of managing multiple medications, is a part of life for a significant percentage of seniors. Many prescription and over-the-counter drugs are essential for maintaining health and managing chronic conditions. However, the chemical complexity of mixing so many drugs can lead to dangerous outcomes if one isn't careful.

Older adults take more medications than any other age group. A report conducted by Age Wave and The John A. Hartford Foundation found that the average senior takes four medications, but more than 15% take eight or more.

Some medications can create further conditions or worsen existing conditions. Data from the Agency for Healthcare Research Quality show that 15.9% of older adults use inappropriate medication.

Structured medication management is essential for seniors' safety. Here's how to safely navigate taking multiple medications at once.

• **Conduct a medication audit.** Take all of the medications and supplements you use to a primary care physician or pharmacist to discuss potential interactions and if any prescriptions can be canceled. Research from Clarest Health indicates that patients taking five to nine medications have a 50%



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Managing medications becomes more complex as seniors typically take multiple drugs and supplements to maintain health.

chance of experiencing a significant adverse drug event.

• **Talk about deprescribing.** Speak with a doctor about the process of tapering off medications that may no longer be necessary or are resulting in more harm than benefit.

• **Use one pharmacy.** Always fill prescriptions from the same pharmacy. Modern systems are equipped with safeguards to flag certain drug-to-drug interactions automatically. Also, the pharmacist is often an underutilized resource. Ask questions and figure out if he or she can conduct a medication review to ensure a regimen for taking medications is as complication-free as possible.

• **Utilize smart systems.** Rely on smart pill dispensers that unlock only at the correct time to manage high-risk medications. Other pill orga-

nizers and digital apps can set reminders to take medications at the appropriate times. An app like Medisafe will notify family members if a dose is missed.

• **Link doses to actions.** Make medications an automatic part of your day by linking them to activities, like morning pills taken with a cup of coffee or evening pills when you eat dinner.

• **Use visual cues.** Keep pill organizers in a visible spot so you remember to take the medication.

• **Ask for help.** If managing medications has become a tall order, ask a friend, family member or a visiting nurse or aide to assist with medication management.

• **Update your list.** Always maintain a current list of the medications and supplements you are taking, and bring it along to every new medical appointment for further review.

Several Hundred New Hampshire Nursing Home Residents are Experiencing Severe Medicaid Cuts



Despite bipartisan efforts by Gov. Ayotte and legislators to shore up Medicaid funding, care in many nursing homes, including Holy Cross Health Care Center in Manchester, took severe cuts January 1.

Sister Jacqueline, a former school principal, is among Holy Cross residents affected, as her care funding was cut 11.74%, or \$31.14 per day. Holy Cross was among 19 hard-hit nursing homes where daily care cuts were no less than \$10.47 per resident and as much as \$45.89 for another small nonprofit.

The state budget cannot be balanced through such cuts.

For more information, see

[savenhseniors.com](https://www.savenhseniors.com)

PLEASE ask state legislators to provide more care funding in the 2026 legislative session for our most vulnerable Granite Staters.

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