



February 16, 2024

If you see an asterisk (\*) by an article heading, there is additional information in the *Timely Resources for Readers* section of the newsletter.

### Income Tax Time

Free tax preparation is available for qualifying taxpayers through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. Pick up your Drop-Off Packet at the Ohio County Public Library, 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Wheeling outside the parking lot entrance to the library. Packets are in a container by the door. Assistance is available from January 29 through April 8, 2024. Call 304 232-8985 for hours and information. Find [other VITA sites](#).

### Scams

- A **Income Tax Scam**: Speaking of Income Tax Time! Malware Bytes warns consumers of seeking on-line assistance as scammers will lure people in with fake websites. If you need tax assistance, call the IRS or seek assistance from an accountant. Make sure the number is legitimate. Want to learn more? [Read the article](#) to learn how to make your income tax time safer.
- A **Gift Card Scams**: There seems to be an uptick in gift card scams. Scammers will say they are somebody that you know or trust. One friend received an email from their “priest”. Another received an email from someone “in government” requesting gift cards for a cause. Yet another received a phone call asking for gift cards to pay for a utility. Do NOT buy gift cards for these contacts! Delete the email and report it as ‘spam’. Don’t answer the phone. Keep in mind that phone numbers can be spoofed so don’t trust that the displayed number is the real business. Don’t fall for this one!
- A **Fake Border Patrol Agents or Fake Customs Agents**: Scammers send you a recorded message saying illegal items were shipped in your name and have been intercepted or they may say a warrant is out for your arrest. They demand payment for more information using gift cards (see above), cryptocurrency, wire transfers, or they will ask for your bank account info or Social Security number. Don’t fall for this. It’s a scam. Read about this on the [Federal Trade Commission website](#) or the [U.S. Customs and Border Protection website](#).
- A **More on Artificial Intelligence**: It is getting increasingly difficult to tell what is “real” and what is “fake” or a “lie”. We have recently read of the AI-generated fake Biden robocalls in New Hampshire. We’ve heard of the romance scams with your “dream date” generated through AI. Free apps allow anyone to create AI-generated images. Do not accept information at face value. ASK questions. Do NOT assume that what you read or see is true. Check out resources that have a solid reputation. Do NOT rely on social media for your information. Question what is put before you.

### Emergency Food Supply\*

We never know when we may need a supply of food that is shelf stable. Weather emergencies (ice, snow, thunderstorms, tornadoes) may make it impossible to get out or there may be power outages. The food should be able to be eaten without being heated in case we can’t cook. Think about peanut butter, crackers, nuts, canned tuna/salmon/turkey/chicken. Don’t forget pet food. Make sure containers are easily opened. (Pop-tops are best.) Allow one gallon of water per day for each person and each pet. Make sure to rotate your supplies so food doesn’t expire. What do we need? Learn about [Food Safety in an Emergency](#).



### **Brain & Life Magazine Disorders Pages**

Brain & Life magazine (hard copy and e-zine), published by the American Academy of Neurology, is a [free magazine](#) that focuses on issues related to neurological disorders. Their [online disorders pages](#) provide information and resources on common brain disorders.

### **Spring Countdown**

It's only about a month until spring with March 19 marking the beginning of the season. It's the time when many of us start thinking about our gardens and the [Old Farmer's Almanac](#) offers a great deal of information on planting. Gardening serves a few purposes. It not only puts some fresh, tasty veggies and fruits on our tables, it also offers many of us an opportunity for self-care. Your local Extension office can help with information, soil testing, and other gardening / farming services. (You can check out the [WVU Extension site](#) for gardening tips.)

### **National Sports Brain Bank at UPMC\***

UPMC started a National Sports Brain Bank last year with Jerome Bettis and Merrill Hoge becoming among the first to participate with commitments from Dr. Joseph Maroon and Dr. Regis Haid. Pitt is planning to "study anyone from professional athletes to recreational athletes who participated in an array of contact sports". Read more about the [National Sports Brain Bank](#) and learn how to participate.

### **AARP Community Challenge Grant**

The AARP Community Challenge provides small grants to fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages. In 2024, the AARP Community Challenge will be accepting applications for three different grant opportunities. You can find [information on grant opportunities and the application](#) on the website. Apply by 5:00 pm (EST) on March 6, 2024.

### **Bob Hicks Memorial Scholarship**

The Seeing Hand Inc has announced the availability of the [Bob Hicks Memorial Scholarship](#). Those who are 17 – 23 years old, are visually impaired, and reside in a county served by The Seeing Hand Inc may apply. Read about the requirements on the website.

### **OH: Heating Assistance is Available**

The Home Energy Assistance Program helps Ohioans at or below 175% of poverty with home energy bills. The last day to apply for the regular HEAP benefit is May 31, 2024. For more information or for assistance with HEAP benefits, contact your local senior center or the Community Action Commission at 740 695-0293.

### **WV: Mobile Food Pantry**

The Ohio County Mobile Food Pantry will be at Wheeling Island Gaming on March 19 and May 23, 2024 from 11:00am – 12:30pm. There will be new traffic patterns. Go to the [Mountaineer Food Bank website](#) for other Mobile Food Pantry stops in WV. Find other food pantry locations at the [Feeding America website](#). (Note: You can help with food insecurity by donating food or money to your local food pantries, soup kitchens, food outreach ministries, or Blessing Boxes.)

### **With Our Thanks**

Thank you to our Guest Editor Jeanette Wojcik for the February 9 issue.



## Timely Resources

### Up & Coming

\*March is Social Work Month

\*March 14, 2024 – FREE workshop: *A Brave New World: Communication & Ethics*, 9am – 10am, Altmeyer Funeral Home, 154 Kruger Street, Wheeling. Approved for one CEU for WV Social Workers by WV Board of Social Work, IAP. Register at <https://altmeyerfuneralhomes.com/blog/ce-workshop-for-wv-social-workers/>

\*May 7, 2024 – Senior Support Fair, Ohio Valley Mall, St Clairsville OH. Exhibitors will provide information on services and resources available to older adults and caregivers. This is one of the special events of the Belmont County Adult Services Coalition. Keep an eye out for details!

### Local Adult Services Coalitions

Adult Services Coalitions offer networking and educational opportunities for professionals who serve older adults. Meeting dates, times, and contacts are listed below.

Please note: There have been some changes in the Ohio Valley Adult Services Coalitions.

#### OHIO

Belmont County: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 11am at Senior Services of Belmont County, 67650 Oakview Drive, St Clairsville OH [akoegler1995@gmail.com](mailto:akoegler1995@gmail.com)

Guernsey County: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 3pm [Stacey.clark-frame@altercareonline.net](mailto:Stacey.clark-frame@altercareonline.net)

Jefferson County: 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 3pm at Prime Time in Steubenville OH [starr.decariarx@gmail.com](mailto:starr.decariarx@gmail.com)

Harrison County: 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at 3pm at the Cadiz Senior Center, Cadiz OH

[tblanchard@theicgroup.com](mailto:tblanchard@theicgroup.com)

#### WEST VIRGINIA:

Hancock County: no longer active

Brooke County: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 2pm at the Brooke County Senior Center, Follansbee WV Chris Orris at [corris@valleyhospice.org](mailto:corris@valleyhospice.org)

Ohio County Adult Services Coalition: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 1:00 at Vance Memorial Church, Wheeling WV, [tblanchard@theicgroup.com](mailto:tblanchard@theicgroup.com)

Marshall County Senior Coalition: 2<sup>nd</sup> Weds at 2:30pm at Marshall County Senior Center, Moundsville WV, [corris@valleyhospice.org](mailto:corris@valleyhospice.org)

### Vaccinations, Boosters, Flu Shots

- The CDC offers [information on vaccinations](#) which are appropriate to age and health conditions.
- Covid vaccinations, boosters, annual flu shots, RSV vaccinations, shingles vaccines, TDAP (tetanus) vaccinations, and others are available at most pharmacies.
- Vaccinations are covered by Medicare *for those with prescription coverage*.
- Check with your physician for any contraindications.

## Timely Resources for Readers

#### A **Emergency Food Supply**

Ready.gov offers [information on preparing for emergencies](#). There is a section on suggested food items.

#### A **National Sports Brain Bank**

KDKA Pittsburgh did [a story on Jon Burnett](#) who retired about 5 years ago and was recently diagnosed with probable Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy or CTE. Mr. Burnett has committed to be a donor.



## Altenheim Retirement Community

Founded 1891

*Our cottages are situated adjacent to our Administrative Building at 1387 National Road, Wheeling*

*Conveniently located close to medical care, churches, shopping, restaurants, recreation*

Offering 8 independent cottages for those who are 65 and older

Two bedroom, two bath, living room, kitchen room, dining room

Stove, refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave, washer and dryer are included

Lawn care, snow removal, general maintenance, general repairs included in monthly rent

Utilities are not included

Pets considered ~ call for our pet policy

### **We are accepting applications!**

Contact George A. Dakovic, Executive Director at [gam.dakovic@gmail.com](mailto:gam.dakovic@gmail.com) or 304 281-8797



## Altenheim Resource Services

*Altenheim Resource Services, a division of Altenheim Retirement Community for over 25 years*

Empowering older adults, caregivers, & advocates with information on aging, services, and resources

Free & confidential information with no geographic limitations

Let us be YOUR GATEWAY TO CARE FOR OLDER ADULTS!

Ann Koegler, M.A., L.S.W., Resource Services Coordinator [Akoegler1995@gmail.com](mailto:Akoegler1995@gmail.com)

<https://www.altenheimcommunity.com>

Information on Altenheim, Resource Services, calendar of events, blog, and a photo gallery

**Contact us at 304 280-8701 with questions about resources and issues concerning older adults and caregiving.**

