



January 15, 2026

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

Happy New Year!

Wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy 2026! We hope everyone has recovered from the holidays! We had a successful 2025, and would like to thank everyone who supported us during the year!

Planning for the Future*

The start of a New Year, and a good time to ask - Do you have your [Advance Directives](#) completed? Advance Directives are guides for our care when we can't speak for ourselves. The Medical Power of Attorney allows you to appoint an agent to act on your behalf if you are unable to make decisions. The Living Will is a guide for your end-of-life care. Making these arrangements does not take away your authority. They enhance it by passing your wishes to someone who will carry them out. Anyone of legal age wants to consider completing Directives. Our lives can change in a heartbeat. Start the New Year on a positive note, and complete the Directives!

What If I Don't Have Advance Directives?

States' laws on health care surrogacy vary. Court action may be needed if your situation warrants medical care and you are unable to give or deny consent, or there may be a designated hierarchy in your state's statutes for surrogate care. Contact your local [Legal Aid](#) office or [State Bar](#) for information on your state's regulations. "[Designating a Health Care Surrogate](#)" (AARP) offers more information as well and a [search by state page](#). You may want to consult an attorney for your specific situation or with any questions.

Today's Scammers

Last year, scams reported to the [Federal Trade Commission](#) by adults 60+ reached close to \$2.4 billion. Scams aren't changing very much, but the way they are conducted is changing. Scammers are getting more sophisticated. Scammers modify scams as technology changes. Artificial Intelligence has opened more scam doors, utilizing the ability to use voice clips to impersonate a family member and videos to create highly realistic-looking images. Scammers are more aggressive. Threats of law enforcement coming to your door, threats of utility termination, threats to seize your property and accounts are all tools used by scammers. They may even come to your door. Don't engage. Don't click on links. Don't call numbers on suspicious emails or texts. Report scams or attempted scams. [Be cautious!](#)

Identity Theft Awareness Week

January 26 – 30 has been designated as [Identity Theft Awareness Week](#). The [Federal Trade Commission](#) offers resources, tips, and videos for consumers. Don't share account information. Don't share passwords. Protect your Social Security number and Medicare number. If you get a call, text, or email requesting any personal information, do not respond. For tax questions, call the IRS directly at 1 800 829-1040. You can find additional contact information for your IRS questions or issues on the [USA.gov website](#). If you are contacted about deliveries or other issues, do not respond. Contact the business or agency directly. Look up the number. Do NOT use the contact information listed in the text, email, or phone message.



Income Tax Time

Like it or not, it's time to start preparing to file income taxes. It can be overwhelming. The Internal Revenue Service has information on "[How to file your taxes: Step by step](#)" that can help you get ready. Do you need to file taxes? Can you do it yourself with a software program or do you need help? Read about the "[7 Big Changes for the 2026 Tax Season](#)". You may want to consider consulting a tax professional regarding your financial situation and the tax law changes.

Winter Health and Grandma's Remedies*

Folk remedies are passed down from generation to generation and are found in all cultures. Some are a bit odd (burying cut potatoes under a full moon for warts), some are dangerous (taking a mixture of sugar and kerosene for a cough), and some have merit (hot tea with honey). My grandmother swore that honey mixed with vinegar and water helped with many other ills. WebMD's article "[Honey and Vinegar: Are There Health Benefits?](#)" says that Granny's recipe had some benefits! You can access the podcast "[Dirty Socks, Goose Fat, & Hot Toddlies: Cold Remedies from the Folklore Archive](#)" from the Reuther Library at Wayne State University in Michigan for more information on home remedies. Read (or listen) and enjoy, but consult your primary health care provider regarding the use of alternative therapies, as there may be interactions with medications and or contraindications for your specific health issues. Or they may be downright dangerous or unhealthy. (These references and those listed in Timely Resources for Readers do NOT constitute medical advice!)

Why Do It?

We're probably familiar with Nike's tag line "Just Do It". They have recently updated that slogan to "Why Do It?", focusing on empowering today's young athletes. I would suggest that older adults adopt this slogan as a rallying cry to embrace aging! Focus on remaining active, staying engaged, and continuing to learn. Our volunteer editor, Jeanette Wojcik, will take a Deeper Dive into "Why Do It?" for January's Deeper Dive and give us some motivation.

Wheeling Parkinson's Support Group

The Wheeling Parkinson's Support Group will meet on January 23, 2026 at Family Service Upper Ohio Valley (Ohio County Senior Center), 2200 Main Street, Wheeling WV, at 10:30 am. Guest speakers will be Carol Zombotti and Sara Alig from West Liberty University's Speech-Language Pathology Clinic. Parking is available. There are [other Parkinson's support groups](#) available.

Other Support Groups

Support groups offer education, support, socialization, and an outlet for those dealing with specific issues or health conditions. Some groups are for the care receiver, and some are for those providing care. Groups may be in-person, virtual, or hybrid. They may be held at any time of day. Groups include parenting groups, grief support, dementia support, cancer support, Myasthenia Gravis support, and support for mental health issues. Contact us for information on support resources.

Vaccinations, Boosters, Flu Shots

Talk to your primary health care provider about vaccinations that will benefit you, and check with your insurance plan regarding coverage. This is [the list of recommended vaccinations for adults currently on the CDC website](#). Reports have indicated that those older adults with Medicare who request vaccinations will [still have coverage](#).

**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.

OHIO

Belmont County: 1st Thursday at 11am at Senior Services of Belmont County, akoegler1995@gmail.com

Guernsey County: 3rd Wednesday at 3pm Stacey.clark-frame@altercareonline.net

Jefferson County: 3rd Thursday at 3pm at Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce,
starr.decariarx@gmail.com

Harrison County: 4th Wednesday at 3pm at Cadiz Senior Center Starr.decariarx@gmail.com

WEST VIRGINIA:

Brooke County: 2nd Monday at 2pm at the Brooke County Senior Center Chris Orris at
corris@valleyhospice.org

Ohio County Adult Services Coalition: 3rd Tuesday at 2:00pm at the Ohio County Public Library, 52-16th Street, Wheeling tblanchard@theicgroup.com

Marshall County Senior Coalition: 2nd Weds at 2:30pm at Marshall County Senior Center
corris@valleyhospice.org

Timely Resources for Readers**A Planning for the Future***

- The [West Virginia Center for End-of-Life Care](#) has information on Advance Directives as well as the forms needed
- Download your state's form online from one of these national organizations: [AARP](#) or the [National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization](#).
- The [American Bar Association](#) has information on other states' Advance Directives, and additional information to consider
- Consumers can also complete a [Psychiatric or Mental Health Advanced Directive](#).

A What If I Don't Have Advance Directives*

- The West Virginia Center for End-of-Life Care offers information on [West Virginia's health care surrogacy law](#).
- A companion article that describes health care surrogacy: [Being a Surrogate Healthcare Decision Maker](#)

A Winter Health and Grandma's Remedies*

- Mother Earth News offers "[5 Homemade Cold Remedies: Old Fashioned Cold Remedies That Work](#)"
- "[Old Time Remedies](#)" is an interesting read as is "[Appalachian Folk Magic: Generations of 'Granny Witchcraft' and Spiritual Work](#)" from the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage" which explores the tradition of using plants for healing.
- "[Appalachian Home Remedies: Do They Work?](#)" adds more information
- These articles are NOT medical recommendations. Keep in mind – people worked with what they had (materials and knowledge). There was no pharmacy down the street! Consult your primary health care provider for information regarding the use of alternative remedies, any contraindications, and any interactions with other medications.

All information presented is for educational purposes only.

WITH OUR BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY AND PEACEFUL NEW YEAR!

Altenheim Retirement Community

Founded 1891

Our cottages are situated adjacent to our Main House 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

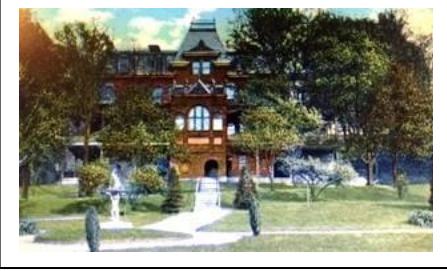
Lawn care, snow removal, general maintenance, general repairs included in monthly rent

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 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 and 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

<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.

