



December 9, 2025

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



Wishing our readers a blessed holiday season and a healthy and peaceful 2026!

#### **Altenheim Resource Services Holiday Hours**

Altenheim Resource Services will be closed on December 25 and December 26, 2025. We will also be closed on January 1 and January 2, 2026. Don't hesitate to contact us. We will return your call!

#### **What Can We Do to Help Over the Holidays?**

There are many opportunities to help others during the holidays. Adopt a child or donate to an Angel Tree program. Donate to a reputable organization that helps your favorite cause. (You can check the charity on CharityNavigator or GuideStar.) Donate food or money to a food bank or donate money or food, kitty litter, blankets, towels, and toys to your local animal shelter. Volunteer your time with organizations that "speak to you". Contact local nursing homes or schools for opportunities to give or to volunteer. Don't stop when the holidays are over! Continue to be generous. (Your time and your talents are valuable contributions.) Stay active. It's good for others, and it's good for you!

#### **The Holidays Aren't Happy for Everyone**

Some people are fountains of joy during the holiday season. Their happiness knows no limits and they are compelled to share that cheerfulness. Please be aware that not all people are in the same zone. Financial difficulties, fractured families, illness, grief, or discomfort in social situations may be weighing on someone. Some people simply aren't thrilled about the holidays. The article "[When the Holidays Aren't Joyful](#)" adds some points for consideration. Be sensitive to those who may not find the same level of joy in the holidays.

#### **Take Care of Yourself**

Regardless of your feelings about the holidays, it can be a stressful time. Shopping, caregiving, working, and outside activities can all deplete the energy supply! [Take care of yourself](#). Breathe. Delegate. If you need to [modify a holiday tradition](#), do it. [Self-care](#) isn't selfish. It's healthy!

#### **Holiday Scams**

Consumers need to be extra cautious during the holiday season. Scammers will try to con people through [delivery scams](#). Online ordering has become more popular, so delivery scams ramp up during the holidays. Porch pirates are thieves who steal merchandise from your house. [Charity scams](#) take advantage of our generosity. Many people can't afford food, much less gifts, so charity scammers are playing on the generosity of those who are willing to give. [Romance scams](#) take advantage of those who are lonely and reach out through social media for companionship. Internet 'connections' may not be as they appear. Then there are [hard-to-believe prices](#). If prices are hard to believe, just remember – if it sounds too good to be true, it probably isn't true. For those who buy for kids, be cautious of [counterfeit toys](#). Be careful this holiday season!



## Timely Resources

### Shopping Safety Tips

It's the time of year when our thoughts are going 500 miles an hour, and we may not be paying attention to what is going on around us. Be sure to be attentive to your environment when you're shopping or running errands. What type of vehicle is parked next to you? Is there anyone walking through the parking lot? Cover your packages as best as you can and make sure you lock your car doors when you make your next stop. Have keys ready to unlock your car. Don't start looking for them when you are at your car door. Lock your car doors as soon as you get in the car. Watch how you carry a purse or backpack. Don't make it easy for a thief to grab your items.

### Winter Safety Tips

We also need to pay attention to safety hazards that can result from the nasty winter weather. (I hate winter, by the way.) Do you have shoes with a firm grip? Do you dress in layers to help you stay warm? Do you have a supply of ice melt for sidewalks and driveways? Do you have supplies in-house in case you need water or food? Did you have your heating system checked? Did you check and [winterize your car](#)? Do you have a safety kit for your car? There are a lot of things to remember to be winter safe. Here are [some tips](#). Pay attention to weather reports. You may want to invest in an emergency radio. The American Red Cross offers [winter storm safety tips](#). This [checklist](#) can help you get organized.

### Solo Agers

Have you heard of 'solo agers'? Solo agers are adults who are aging alone. "In 1950, just 9% of all US adults lived by themselves", according to the AARP article "[More Adults Are Living Alone. Is That a Good Thing?](#)" Be it through divorce, death, or choice, about 24 million people, or 21% of US adults who are 50 years and older, live alone. Read more about Solo Aging in this month's Deeper Dive.

### Listening to Music After Age 70\*

Music has played a big part in mental health and dementia research and therapy for some time. Long-term care facilities have integrated programs such as Music and Memory® that focus on the therapeutic value of music for individuals with cognitive challenges. (Perhaps you've seen [the video with Henry](#), who has dementia.) There is a connection with music for many of us. [Research conducted by Monash University](#) in Australia looked at the benefits of listening to or playing music in people over age 70, and the results showed a significant decrease in the risk of dementia. The Fisher Center for Alzheimer's Research Foundation offers "[Listening to Music May Cut Dementia Risk](#)".

### Hiring In-Home Help

Sometimes visiting family for the holidays can be a jolt of reality. They may not be doing as well as they have led us to believe, and their independence may depend on getting (allowing) some help to come into the home. In-home services generally include assistance with personal care and environmental needs, such as dusting, vacuuming, and laundry. Most states have programs that are generally less expensive than market rates of in-home service agencies for those who are eligible. In-home caregivers most often cannot dispense medications. Transportation may be offered if the service is incorporated into the service plan. Fees vary and may be an out-of-pocket expense, or there may be coverage through long-term care insurance or Veterans benefits. Look into in-home assistance if your loved one needs assistance. (We'll be happy to help.)



## Timely Resources

### Wheeling Parkinson's Disease Support Group

The Wheeling Parkinson's Disease Support Group will meet on **December 19 at 10:30 am**. The Wheeling Parkinson's Support Group is normally scheduled for the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday at 10:30am, and weather permitting, will resume this schedule in January 2026. The group meets at the Ohio County Senior Center, 2200 Main Street, Wheeling, WV. Contact Ann at 304 280-8701 or Paula at 304 233-2350 ext 105 for more information.

### Vaccination / Support Group / Adult Services Coalitions

#### Vaccinations

- The CDC offers information on [vaccination schedules](#) which are appropriate to age and health conditions.
- What ARE those diseases? What are symptoms? What are consequences of the disease? Is it contagious? Can it be prevented? ? What about vaccinations? What does the vaccination involve? Are there side-effects? Who should consider the vaccination? Read on!
  - COVID: [COVID](#) and [Information on vaccinations](#)
  - ANNUAL FLU SEASON: [Annual flu season](#) and [Information on vaccinations](#)
  - RSV: [RSV](#) or Respiratory Syncytial Virus and [Information on vaccinations](#)
  - SHINGLES: [Shingles](#) and [Information on vaccinations](#)
  - TDAP: [TDAP \(tetanus\)](#), [Diphtheria](#), Pertussis or Whooping Cough and [Information on vaccinations](#)
  - MEASLES: [Measles](#) and [Information on measles vaccinations](#)

#### Other considerations:

- Check with your primary health care provider for information on vaccinations. Your medical record may have information on when a vaccination is due. Ask about any contraindications.
- Most vaccinations are available at pharmacies. Consult your pharmacist about availability.
- Most vaccinations are covered by Medicare *for those with prescription coverage*. Recent governmental changes may impact payment. Confirm your coverage!
- There will be changes in insurance coverage for vaccinations including the COVID vaccination depending on age, health, and insurance carrier. Confirm your coverage!
- You can get information on [immunization resources](#) or go to <https://www.immunize.org/>. Click on "Vaccines and VIS".
- Annual Flu Season is here. COVID cases are on the upswing. Measles have seen a resurgence. What is your vaccination status? Are you an older adult or are you immune-compromised? Talk to your primary health care provider about vaccinations.
- Current administration policies may impact the information that is available.

### Support Group Information

There are support groups that cover many areas of need that include in-person and virtual options. Here are just a few that are available. Contact us for details. Contact us if we can help you locate a group.

**\*Myasthenia Gravis Support Group** For information, contact Jay Adams at 304 780-9274.

**\*Opportunities to Shine for Individuals living with brain change**, their families, and professionals meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at 4pm at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 1343



## Timely Resources

National Road, Wheeling. For meeting information, contact Sara Alig at 304 336-8199. Ask about a Zoom option if you can't attend in person.

**\*Dementia Support Group:** Shadyside Healthcare & Rehabilitation, 60583 State Route 7, Shadyside OH, 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday from 6pm – 7pm. Call 740 676-8381 for more information.

**\*Caregiver Support for those caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's / Dementia:** Berkeley Senior Services, 11:30 a.m. on the 2nd Friday of each month, 217 North High Street, Martinsburg, WV 25404. For more information, contact Katherine Donovan at 304-263-8873 Ext. 4114 or by email at [katherine@berkeleyseniorservices.org](mailto:katherine@berkeleyseniorservices.org).

**\*Grief Support Group** meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month from 2pm – 3pm at First Christian Church, 1343 National Road, Wheeling WV. For information, contact Dannette Harris at 304 290-7050.

**\*Parkinson's Disease Support Group** meets the 3rd Wednesday at 11:30am at the Wilfred R. Cameron Wellness Center, 240 Wellness Way, Washington PA 15301. For more information, contact Casey Peluso at [cpeluso@pfpwa.org](mailto:cpeluso@pfpwa.org) or 412 837-1357.

**\*Parkinson's Disease Support Group** meets the 2nd Tuesday, 10:00 am Our Place/First Westminster Presbyterian Church 235 N 4th Street Steubenville, OH 43952 Judy Owings: 740-520-0120

**\*Wheeling Parkinson's Disease Support** group meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday at 10:30 am at Family Service Upper Ohio Valley (Ohio County Senior Center), 2200 Main Street, Wheeling, WV. For more information: Ann Koegler 304 280-8701 or Paula Calvert: 304 233-2350 ext 105.

### 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: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 11am, [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, [starr.decariarx@gmail.com](mailto:starr.decariarx@gmail.com)

Harrison County: 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at 3pm, [allisonheavilin@yahoo.com](mailto:allisonheavilin@yahoo.com)

#### WEST VIRGINIA:

Brooke County: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 2pm, [corris@valleyhospice.org](mailto:corris@valleyhospice.org)

Ohio County Adult Services Coalition: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 2:00pm, [tblanchard@theicgroup.com](mailto:tblanchard@theicgroup.com)

(No December meeting)

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

## Timely Resources for Readers

### Listening to Music After 70\*

🎧 ~ Can music [improve our overall quality of life?](#) Read more about the positive impact of music.

🎧 ~ The [American Music Therapy Association](#) offers more information on the use of music in different populations.

🎧 ~ ["Your Brain on Music: The Sound System Between Your Ears"](#) is an interesting article from The Kennedy Center.

If you find a broken link in any of the newsletter's referenced sources, please let us know! Thank you!!

All information presented is for educational purposes only. References are not endorsements.



Altenheim Resource Services



Timely Resources

## 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 independent adults 65 years and older

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

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

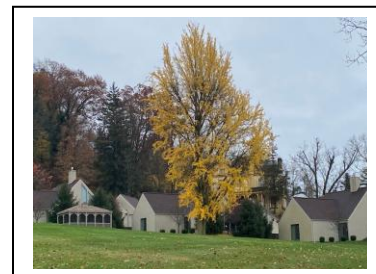
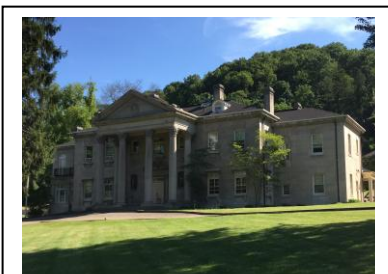
Lawn care, snow removal, general maintenance, general repairs included in monthly rent

Utilities are not included

Pets considered ~ call for our pet policy

***We are accepting applications!***

Contact George A. Dakovic, Executive Director at [gadakovic@gmail.com](mailto:gadakovic@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

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, Care Guides, and a photo gallery

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

