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North Adams Council on Aging
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spitzercentr@yahoo.com

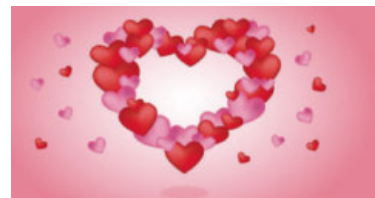
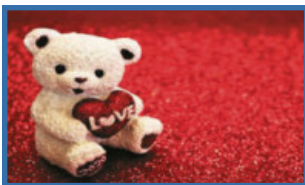
FEBRUARY 2024

Well here we are already in the second month of the new year. How quickly time flies. All the hustle and bustle of the holidays is behind us. We experienced incredible, happy and fun-filled times at the center in 2023 and we thank everyone for helping us make 2023 such a **wonderful SUCCESS**. It is our hope that you will continue your participation in all the upcoming programs and events.

You're the reason we're here.

On **Wednesday February 14th**, we will be holding our **Valentine's Day** luncheon beginning at 11:30am. This year we will be crowning a **queen** and **king** so don't forget to look your finest. **And** we will be entertained by the Northern Berkshire Ukulele Club. Good food, great friends, outstanding entertainment and kisses. Reservations are required. Call Jan at 413-664-9826 by Friday, February 9th.

No walk-ins



Closed Monday February 19th President's Day





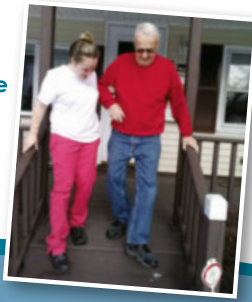
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Look For These Changes in 2024

New Year, new federal government rules. Here are some of the changes taking effect in 2024 that will matter to many older Americans.

- ⇒ Social Security beneficiaries will see a 3.2 percent increase in January, reflecting the 2024 cost-of-living adjustment. The average retirement benefit will go up from **\$1848** a month to **\$1907**.
- ⇒ There will be a higher threshold for how much of your work income is subject to Social Security payroll taxes. The cap is rising from **\$160,200** to **\$168,600**.
- ⇒ The rules on required distributions from retirement savings accounts will change. If your 72nd birthday was in 2023, you aren't required to take **distributions** from 401(k)s and traditional IRA's. Starting in 2024, you will be subject to RMD's.
- ⇒ The government will **expand the eligibility** for the Extra Help program, which assists people with limited incomes in affording their prescription drug costs, such as premiums and copays. Medicare enrollees will qualify if they have income less than about \$22,000.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Cold Remedy-I read that the decongestants I've been taking for years don't actually work. What should I do now?

It's True: A panel that advises the Food & Drug Administration announced that a decongestant in many cold and flu medicines-called phenylephrine, or PE on packaging won't harm you, but it won't unstuff your nose either. It's almost like a placebo when it's taken orally, say Stefanie Ferreri, a professor of pharmacy at the University of North Carolina Eshelman School of Pharmacy. (It is effective as a nasal spray.) But there are options that do work.

Pseudoephedrine is an effective oral alternative, says Sarah Westberg, a professor at the University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy. Just know that pseudoephedrine (which is sold OTC from behind the pharmacy counter) can cause an increase in blood pressure, so talk to your doctor, so talk to your doctor if you have high blood pressure or heart disease. Nonmedicated saline nasal sprays can also help relieve congestion. So can steamy showers and humidifiers.

Acid Reflux: I read in the news that long-term use of the proton pump inhibitors I take for acid reflux may be linked to dementia. What else can I do for digestive relief? While there is no definite science showing that proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) cause dementia, some studies have shown that the longer you take them, the greater your dementia risk. Though PPIs are a powerful tool in fighting reflux and its negative health consequences, it might make sense to explore other long-term options. Fiber-rich foods such as oatmeal, whole-grain bread, root vegetables and brown rice can help. Bananas, which are alkaline, can help neutralize stomach acid. As long as you aren't lactose intolerant, milk and yogurt are good choices. "Acid reflux causes damage to the lining of the esophagus," says Nipaporn Pichetshote, M.D., a gastroenterology specialist at the University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine in Los Angeles. "Milk and yogurt coat the esophagus." Things to avoid include fried beverages, coffee and alcohol.

Norman would like to thank everyone that came to his retirement celebration and for their donation towards his gift.

He enjoyed greeting and serving everyone on a daily basis and will truly miss seeing everyone. He promises that he will continue to visit the center offering his smiles and goodies.



Along those same thoughts, we will truly miss Norman’s smiles, jokes, laughter, good nature and generosity. The staff wish him a happy, healthy, restful and peaceful time throughout his retirement years.

WE LOVE YOU NORMAN



Groundhog Day is a tradition observed in the United States and Canada on **February 2nd** of every year starting in the 16th century. It derives from the Pennsylvania Dutch superstition that if groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day and sees its shadow, it will retreat to its den and winter will go on for six more weeks; if it does not see its shadow, spring will arrive early. **We can only hope!!!!!!**

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A police officer call the station. “Sarge, I have a problem. A woman shot her husband for stepping on the floor she’d just mopped.” “Have you arrested her?” asks the sergeant. No, says the cop. “The floor’s still wet.”



February 2024

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 10:00 Northern Berkshire Retirees Club 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	2 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:00 –12:00 Western Mass Food Truck 11:30 Hot Lunch
5 10:00 Cribbage 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 12:30 Bridge	6 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch	7 9:30 Tai Chi 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 1:00 Chair Yoga	8 10:00 Fallon Health Navigator 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	9 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch
12 10:00 Cribbage 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:30 Bridge 1:00 Elder Services Caregiver Meeting	13 9:30 Massage Therapy By Appointment 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 NACOA Board Meeting	14 9:30 Tai Chi 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Valentine's Day Luncheon 1:00 Chair Yoga	15 10:00 N.A. & Wmst. Blood Pressure Clinic 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	16 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:00 –12:00 Western Mass Food Truck 11:00 Reflexology by Appointment 11:30 Hot Lunch
19 Spitzer Center Closed For President's Day Holiday	20 9:00 Foot Nurse by Appointment 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch	21 9:30 Tai Chi 10:15 Meals on Wheels 10:45 Reiki by Appointment 11:30 Hot Lunch 1:00 Chair Yoga	22 Popcorn Day 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	23 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:30 Brown Bag
26 10:00 Cribbage 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:30 Bridge 1:00 Elder Services Caregiver Meeting	27 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo	28 9:30 Tai Chi 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 1:00 Chair Yoga	29 10:15 Meals on Wheels 11:30 Hot Lunch 12:10 Bingo 1:00 Balance Class	

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PUT YOUR BRAIN IN NEUTRAL

Memory slipping? Use these simple hacks

You've got things to do, people to see, bills to pay. It's a lot to juggle, and your memory may not be what it used to be. These tips can lighten the burden on your brain.

Designate a "go" basket. Set a spot for the items you need when you leave the house—keys, wallet, work ID, sunglasses. Get in the habit of dropping your essentials in a basket or bowl placed there when you arrive home every day.

Solve the password problem. A password manager stores all your passwords in a highly secure online "vault" that's accessible via one master password. Don't like that approach? Then write your passwords down on a sheet of paper and place it in a book you'll remember on a nearby shelf.

Standardize your grocery list. With a printed list of your go-to-items, you'll save yourself a return trip to the store. Keep it on the fridge or the counter, and check off items as you run out.

WHAT EXACTLY IS DYSLEXIA

Dyslexia is caused by biological differences in the brain that make it difficult to map speech sounds to letters or sequences of letters, so it's hard to recognize written words. In the 1950s, dyslexia wasn't widely recognized as a condition and many people with it grew up being labeled either "stupid, unmotivated or oppositional," explains Rebecca Resnik, a psychologist in Bethesda, Maryland. Older adults may still carry that shame. Dyslexia runs in families; if one parent has it, there's a 40 TO 60 percent chance a child will be born with it too. If you suspect you may have undiagnosed dyslexia, a specialist can test you and set up a treatment plan if it's needed. (Find a specialist in your area through the International Dyslexia Association's provider directory at dyslexiaida.org.) New technologies can also help: Audiobooks are easy to get, and many publications offer audio versions as well. Pen-size reading devices can scan text and read it aloud. In addition, text-to-speech software lets you convert a digital device's text so that it's read aloud.

Friends of the North Adams Council on Aging

If you would like to become a member or keep your membership current, the dues are \$10.00 a year (or more if you're able). Thank you for your continued support.

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2024 Income guidelines to qualify for Fuel Assistance

Family Size	Income
1	\$45,392
2	\$59,359
3	\$73,326

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can do for you, contact us:

Central / South County
413-445-4503
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If you are eligible for fuel assistance,
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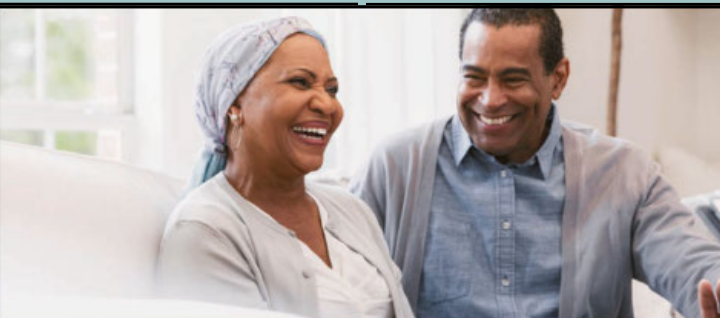
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2/1 Chicken Puttanesca, buttered noodles, zucchini, oat nut bread, mandarin oranges

2/2 Moroccan Beef Stew, Israeli couscous, asparagus cuts, 12-grain bread, fresh apple

2/5 Pork w/apple raisin, au gratin potatoes, corn, WG white bread, fresh orange

2/6 Beef burgundy, buttered noodles, carrots, parsnips, turnips, bread, yogurt

2/7 Chix Mexican Casserole, cilantro rice, peas & mushrooms, tortilla, sliced peaches

2/8 Butternut Mac & Cheese, beef barley soup, French green beans, roll, spiced apples

2/9 Oriental Chicken, steamed brown rice, broccoli, Chow Mein noodles, pineapple

2/12 Cheese, bacon & egg bites, tomato medley, O'Brien pot, bread, apricot halves

2/13 Chicken & Sausage Jambalaya, Spanish rice, Mardi Gras greens, cornbread, cupcake

2/14 Lasagna Roll, mushroom barley soup, snowflake roll, warm fruit compote

2/15 Breaded Chicken & gravy, mashed potatoes, Brussel sprouts, roll, strawberry cup

2/16 Vegetarian Wheat Chili, eggplant parm, lima beans, 12 grain bread, sliced pears

2/19 CLOSED—PRESIDENT'S DAY

2/20 Shepard's Pie, mashed potatoes, California blend, 12 grain bread, mixed fruit cup

2/21 Spanish Chicken Stew, rice w/orzo, green beans, tortilla, mangos

2/22 Chuckwagon Stew, buttered noodles, broccoli florets, wheat bread, applesauce

2/23 Breaded Pollock, mulligatawny soup, Monaco veggie blend, Italian bread, orange

2/26 Chicken w/orange cranberry glaze, pot, peas & pearl onions, bread, pineapple tidbits

2/27 Veal Scaloppini, potato leek soup, carrots, Italian bread, fruit crisp

2/28 Sliced Turkey & Gravy, SC & chive mashed pot, snow peas, roll, banana

2/29 Sloppy Joe on a Bun, steamed brown rice, winter blend, hamburger bun, peaches

ONE POT ITALIAN WEDDING SOUP

1lb ground turkey (90 to 94% lean)

1/2 cup grated Parmesan

1/2 cup parsley, chopped, optional

1/3 cup breadcrumbs

1 large egg, beaten

1 1/2 tsp garlic powder, divided

1/2 tsp black pepper

1/2 tsp kosher salt

1/4 tsp red pepper flakes, optional

3 carrots, diced

1 onion, diced

3 stalks celery, diced

9 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth

1 cup pastina (or small pasta) uncooked

2 to 3 handfuls baby spinach, chopped

1. For the meatballs: In a bowl, combine turkey, Parmesan, parsley, breadcrumbs, egg, 1/2 tsp garlic powder, salt, pepper and red pepper flakes. Mix until combined. Gently roll into about 30 meatballs 1/4 to 1 inch in size.
2. Coat a large pot with nonstick spray and warm over medium-high heat. Add half of the meatballs and cook for 2 min. Carefully flip over and cook another 2 min. Toss an additional minute to sear remaining sides, (meatballs won't be fully cooked). Transfer to a plate, repeat with remaining meatballs.
3. Reapply nonstick oil spray to pot. Add onions, carrots, and celery. Sauté 8 to 10 min, stirring occasionally, until softened. Add remaining garlic powder, sauté 1 min.
4. Add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, add meatballs and pasta, cover and simmer 10 min. Add spinach, stir until wilted. Season with salt and pepper.

