



The Senior Connection

BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

January/February 2026



PARK COUNTY
— SENIOR COALITION —

HAPPY
New Year

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Well, we made it—another trip around the sun without losing our keys too many times or accidentally calling the grandkids by the dog’s name.

That’s a win in our book!

As we kick off 2026, let’s raise a toast (or a cup of decaf) to all the wisdom, wit, and wonderful quirks that make this community so special.

This year, we are embracing joy, laughter, and maybe even a few new adventures—like figuring out how to silence that mysterious beeping sound in the kitchen.

Expect plenty of fun, a few surprises, and lots of opportunities to connect, learn, and laugh. After all, age is just a number—and in our case, it’s a number that comes with great stories, better jokes, and excellent discounts.

Here is to a year of laughter, warm hugs, and not taking life too seriously.



Some of My Favorite Movies for Winter Watching



Groundhog Day: A philosophical comedy about a weatherman who is forced to relive the same day. This is both hilarious and thoughtful.

Fargo: If you are in the mood for a dark comedy crime film set in the snowy landscape of Minnesota and North Dakota. This is the film for you...dont-cha-know.

March of the Penguins – A beautiful documentary about how at the end of each Antarctic summer, the emperor penguins of the South Pole journey to their traditional breeding grounds.

Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe – Classic story many of you probably already know from the books, during the World War II bombings of London, four English siblings are sent to a country house where they will be safe. One day Lucy finds a wardrobe that transports her to a magical world called Narnia.

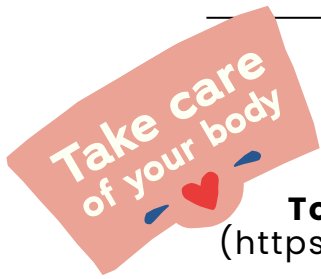
Jeremiah Johnson – In my opinion one of the best movies ever and on my list of all-time favorites. Loosely based on a true story of a Mexican American War veteran, who heads to the mountains to live in isolation. I have watched this many, many, many times

Cold Mountain – Another amazing movie with a terrific soundtrack. In this classic story of love and devotion set against the backdrop of the American Civil War, a wounded Confederate soldier travels across the South, aiming to return to his love, Ada, who he left behind as Inman makes his perilous journey home, Ada struggles to keep their home intact with the assistance of Ruby, a mysterious drifter sent to help her by a kindly neighbor.

James Bond Movies – Any and all of them! Who is your favorite Bond actor, and which is your favorite movie?

NOTE - If you do not have these movies or cannot stream them, you can most likely get them from the library.

Health and Wellness Tips



Top 10 Healthy New Year's Resolutions for Older Adults (<https://www.americangeriatrics.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/HIA-TipSheet%20NYE19.pdf>)

Making New Year's resolutions to eat better, exercise, watch your weight, see your healthcare provider regularly, or quit smoking once and for all, can help you get healthier and feel better for many more years to come. The American Geriatrics Society's Health in Aging Foundation recommends these top 10 healthy New Year's resolutions for older adults to help achieve your goal of becoming and staying healthy.

Eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fish, low-fat dairy and healthy fats -
In later life, you still need healthy foods, but fewer calories. The USDA's Choose My Plate program (choosemyplate.gov), and your healthcare provider, can help you make good choices. Eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

Consider a multivitamin - Consult your healthcare provider about any nutrition issues that may need over-the-counter vitamins or nutrition supplements.

Be active- Physical activity can be safe and healthy for older adults—even if you have heart disease, diabetes, or arthritis! In fact, many of these conditions get better with mild to moderate physical activity.

See your provider regularly- You should schedule an annual Medicare wellness visit with your healthcare provider around your birthday month to discuss health screenings and any changes in your advance directives.

Toast with a smaller glass - Excessive drinking can make you feel depressed, increase your chances of falling, cause trouble sleeping, interact with your medications, and can contribute to other health problems.

Guard against falls- One in every three older adults falls each year — and falls are a leading cause of injuries and death among older adults. Exercises such as walking or working out with an elastic band can increase your strength, balance, and flexibility and help you avoid falls.

Give your brain a workout- The more you use your mind, the better it will work. Read. Do crossword puzzles. Try Sudoku. Socializing also gives your brain a boost, so join a bridge club or a discussion group at your local library or senior center.

Quit smoking- Did you know that cigarette smokers are twice as likely to develop heart disease as non-smokers? It is never too late to quit.

Speak up when you feel down or anxious - About 1 in 5 older adults suffers from depression or anxiety. Some possible signs of depression can be lingering sadness, tiredness, loss of appetite or pleasure in doing things you once enjoyed. You may also have difficulty sleeping, worry, irritability, and wanting to be alone. If you have any of these signs for more than two weeks, talk to your healthcare provider and reach out to friends and family.

Get enough sleep - Older adults need less sleep than younger people, right? Wrong! Older people need just as much — at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night.



Next PCSC Board Meetings
9:30am at 825 Clark Street Suite C

Board meetings are the fourth Tuesday of the month.

Interested in joining our Board of Directors or Committees?
Call 719-836-4150 for more information or to setup a coffee chat with a current Board Member!

Hot Chocolate

Word Search

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

- BEVERAGE
- CHOCOLATE
- CINNAMON
- COCOA
- COMFORT
- COZY
- CREAMY
- FIRE
- FLAVORS
- FROTH
- HAZELNUT
- HOT
- INDULGE
- MARSHMALLOW
- MILK
- MUG
- PEPPERMINT
- SIP
- SWEET
- VANILLA
- WARM
- WHIPPED CREAM
- WINTER
- YUMMY



Traditional New Years Foods

To celebrate the new year, you can eat foods believed to bring good luck, such as black-eyed peas for prosperity, lentils for wealth, and pork for progress. Other symbolic options include fish and long noodles for abundance and longevity, respectively, and green vegetables (like collard greens) to represent money.

Traditions also include eating 12 grapes at midnight for good luck throughout the year or eating cornbread as a representation of gold.



Foods for good luck and prosperity

- Black-eyed peas: Symbolize prosperity and are a Southern tradition for good luck.
- Lentils: Believed to bring financial prosperity and wealth, especially in Italian tradition.
- Greens: Leafy greens like collard greens, cabbage, and kale represent money and wealth.
- Pork: Symbolizes progress and prosperity in the coming year.
- Fish: Represents abundance.
- Rice and grains: Symbolize abundance as they swell when cooked.
- Cornbread: Its yellow color is thought to represent gold.
- Dumplings: Round-shaped foods like dumplings are considered lucky.
- Citrus: Thought to bring good luck and abundance

Featured Recipe:

Kickin' Collard Greens Recipe

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/51803/kickin-collard-greens/>

Ingredients:

Original recipe (1X) yields 6 servings

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 slices bacon
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 pound fresh collard greens, washed and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes or more to taste



Gather all ingredients.

Heat oil in a large pot over medium-high heat.

Add bacon, and cook until crisp, 5 to 7 minutes.

Remove bacon from pan with a slotted spoon, crumble, and return to the pan.

Add onion to the pan and cook until tender, about 5 minutes.

Add garlic, and cook until just fragrant.

Add collard greens, and fry until they start to wilt.

Pour in chicken broth and season with salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes.

Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer until greens are tender, about 45 minutes.

Taste and add extra pepper flakes for more heat, if desired.

Serve hot and enjoy!

Fairplay Senior Brunch
Third Monday of the month
10am-12pm 880 Bogue Street, Fairplay

More Health Tips

12 Mistakes You Make at the Doctor's Office

<https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/doctors-office-mistakes/>

Good doctor-patient communication is not just about a feel-good moment, it can prevent mistakes. That's just one compelling reason to make the most of your office visits. And knowing what not to do when you are the patient is as important as knowing what to do.

With that in mind, here are some mistakes to avoid when you're visiting your doctor:

1. **Overestimating your technical abilities** - Patient portals are increasingly common. It has been found that 3 in 4 adults ages 50 to 80 have used one. But that does not mean they are easy to use. If you are not sure, get someone to help you when providing information at your doctor's office.
 2. **Timing routine visits wrong** - If you're sick, you need to get medical attention right away. But if you're scheduling a routine appointment, like a physical, consider the timing. Depending on the insurance, what you are there for, time of year, etc...all these things can affect what you pay and what is covered.
 3. **Coming in unprepared to discuss your symptoms** - It's essential to do your prep before the office visit. Tell your doctor your symptoms first, instead of trying to tell them what you think you might have. Making a list of your symptoms is a great start.
 4. **Keeping your doctor in the dark about seeing other providers** - If you've seen other providers - a specialist or an urgent care physician - don't assume your doctor will have that information, share that at your current appointment.
 5. **Hiding the truth** - The doctor's office should be a judgment-free zone, and providers have heard it all. Overcoming embarrassment to have honest discussions with your doctor has many benefits. Doctors can more correctly interpret your symptoms and, when you need medication, prescribe you something that is less likely to be harmful.
 6. **Not knowing your family medical history** - We know a lot more than we used to about how diseases are inherited. It's never been more important to know details about your family's medical history so you can share them with your provider.
 7. **Not bringing a list of your medications (including doses)** - Drugs can interact with each other, and mix-ups do occur, especially as you get older and take more medications. Remember that vitamins and supplements can interact with medications, include any you take on your list to discuss with your doctor.
 8. **Seeing the doctor-patient relationship as a one-way street** - Traditionally, conversations between doctors and patients have had a "because I said so" ring to them. That's no longer true. These days, you have a say with your doctor, so communicate your wishes, concerns and problems.
 9. **Ignoring the cost of your care** - Health care costs are high, so it's important you get the most care for your money. Ask how much specific services will cost up front and what's covered by insurance and what's not. If you can't afford something, let your provider know. There may be an alternative available.
 10. **Leaving without written instructions** - Post-op instructions have been the norm for years. But today your doctor is likely to take notes on a computer during your appointment, which means your medical records are immediately updated. So, it should be easy to get a printed copy that includes a list of your medications, recommended treatments and other instructions. Make sure you have yours when you check out.
 11. **Leaving without getting your questions answered** - Nothing is more frustrating than leaving the office and realizing you forgot to discuss with your provider the one thing you really wanted to. Just like you should come prepared with a list of symptoms, you should also come with a list of questions or concerns you have - and bring them up early in the appointment.
 12. **Not using the office staff's expertise** - Develop a good relationship with your provider's team, and don't hesitate to use them when needed. If your doctor must move on to the next patient - or if something comes up while you are at home and the provider's not available - talk to their nurse, medical assistant or even the office manager. They may have handled something very similar with other patients and can help you as well.
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It is not too late to avoid serious illness and/or hospitalization by getting your COVID-19 or Flu vaccine!

Although COVID-19 or the Flu can affect anyone, older individuals at greater risk of severe illness from COVID-19.



Call Park County Public Health 719-836-4174 to book an appointment today!



A friendly reminder, If you are able to help, your donations will make a meaningful difference in allowing us to sustain and grow our services.

To make a donation, simply scan the QR code then go to the website's donor section, or go directly to <https://parkcoseniors.org/donate/>.



Thank you for your kindness and support.



PARK COUNTY SENIOR COALITION



Get In Touch with Us!



Web: www.parkcoseniors.org

Phone: 719-836-4295

Email: Senior.Coalition@ParkCountyCo.Gov

Visit: Fairplay and Bailey Locations

- Bailey Office Hours: Mondays: 8AM-3PM and Thursdays: 12PM-3PM
- Fairplay Office Hours: Monday-Wednesday: 8AM-3PM and Thursdays: 8AM-11AM

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