

Catskill Veterinary Services to host Open House at Newburgh location

Catskill Veterinary Services, PLLC, invites the community to attend an Open House at its Newburgh Urgent Care and Emergency Veterinary Hospital on Tuesday, Nov. 18 from 4 - 6 p.m. The event will take place at 5020 Route 9W, Suite 105 in Newburgh (across from the Alexis Diner) and is open to the public. Guests are encouraged to tour the facility, meet members of the veterinary team, and enjoy local wines, cheeses, and hors d'oeuvres.

This event celebrates the expansion of Catskill Veterinary Services' mission to bring life-changing to life-saving veterinary care to pets and their families throughout the Hudson Valley. The Newburgh hospital provides urgent care and emergency services for dogs, cats, and exotic pets—bridging the gap between primary care and 24-hour emergency hospitals.

"Catskill Veterinary Services is committed to meeting the growing need for accessible, compassionate, and advanced veterinary care in our region," said Dr. Joseph D'Abbraccio, Managing Partner of Catskill Veterinary Services. "Our Newburgh hospital allows us to extend our reach and support pet owners throughout Orange, Ulster, and Dutchess Counties."

Co-owner Dr. Daniela Carbone added, "This new facility represents our dedication not only to providing exceptional medical care but also to being there when families need us most. Whether it's a late-night emergency, a worried owner, or an injured pet, our team's focus is always on compassion, communication, and quality care. We're proud to be part of this community and look forward to welcoming everyone to see what we've built together."

The state-of-the-art Newburgh facility features advanced diagnostic technology, dedicated treatment and surgical areas, and a skilled team of veterinarians and licensed veterinary technicians. The hospital provides:

- Urgent Care and Emergency



Dr. Joseph D'Abbraccio

Services for dogs, cats, and exotic pets

- Digital Radiography, Ultrasound, and Laboratory Diagnostics
- Comprehensive Surgical Capabilities
- Compassionate and Experienced Veterinary Team Members
- Convenient evening and weekend hours for urgent pet needs

Catskill Veterinary Services has quickly become a trusted name in the region, with clients praising the hospital's professionalism, compassion, and high standard of care. Read the following testimonials.

- "My cat had a bump on her chin which broke open overnight. Her regular vet was unable to see her until the next afternoon, so I called CVS—they got me into the Newburgh UC office within two hours. Staff are polite and professional."
- "We brought our guinea pig here for a bad ear infection, and Dr. Gina was amazing! She explained every option, responded to emails the same day, and calmed our nerves at every visit. The hours are great, and the staff are so patient and supportive."
- "The staff was kind, professional, and acted quickly to make sure Leo was safe and cared for. They explained everything clearly and helped ease my nerves throughout the whole visit. I felt Leo was in very good hands."

**OPEN HOUSE**



**CATSKILL VETERINARY SERVICES
NEWBURGH**

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 18TH
4PM TO 6PM
5020 ROUTE 9W SUITE 105 NEWBURGH, NY 12550
LOCAL WINE, CHEESE AND HORS D'OEUVRES

• "Kind, caring, patient, kept us up to date on his condition, cleaned him up after he vomited in his carrier. All staff were exceptional—kind, caring, and loving. Their compassion for Luke and his moms was felt."

• "My dog Emma was in great pain from her nail getting torn off after a fall. The entire staff was fantastic, friendly, and knowledgeable. They talked through everything, even the estimate of costs, which was such a stress reliever. Emmy is feeling better today thanks to their amazing care!"

• "Today we had a cat-emergency. Our regular vet couldn't see him, but we were told about this new urgent care. It couldn't have been a smoother visit. The staff was professional, skilled, and caring, and Dr. Green quickly put our cat at ease. Choices and pricing were clear and transparent. We're so glad they're here."

These testimonials reflect the

hospital's growing role as a cornerstone of veterinary care in the Hudson Valley, offering a trusted place for families and their pets in moments of need.

With established locations in Rock Hill and Middletown, and the Newburgh hospital now serving as a regional hub, Catskill Veterinary Services continues to expand access to advanced veterinary medicine, emergency care, and community education throughout the area.

All are welcome to attend the Open House, tour the new hospital, and meet the team dedicated to providing life-changing, to life-saving veterinary care.

Catskill Veterinary Services also has locations at 230 Rock Hill Drive in Rock Hill and 390 Crystal Run Road in Middletown. Visit catskillvetservices.com or call (845) 796-5919.

Volunteering as a senior: Staying active, giving back & finding purpose

By Jamie Stickle
Retirement often marks a major life transition — a time when many seniors look for new ways to stay engaged, active, and connected. For many, volunteering becomes a powerful avenue to do just that. Across the country, seniors are stepping up to contribute their time, skills, and compassion to causes that matter, enriching both their communities and their own lives.

Volunteering offers a unique blend of physical, mental, and social benefits, making it an especially valuable pursuit for older adults. Research consistently shows that seniors who volunteer regularly experience lower rates of depression, enhanced cognitive



Jamie Stickle

BROOKMEADE SENIOR CONCEPTS



Seniors provide important services as volunteers at Brookmeade Community in Rhinebeck. *Courtesy photos*

function, and greater overall life satisfaction. Staying socially active through volunteering can also reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation, which are common challenges in later life.

One inspiring example is Phil Seymour, who has volunteered at The Meadows nursing home for the past three years. “I was a patient here four years ago,” Phil recalls. “When I got better, I wanted to give back.” Phil noticed there were areas that could be improved to brighten the residents’ days—like having new puzzles available for mental stimulation. He took the initiative to collect puzzle donations and bring fresh challenges for the residents to enjoy.

Beyond that, Phil helps maintain the facility’s gardens, a favorite pastime that keeps him physically active and connected to nature. “Gardening is therapeutic,” he says, “and I love that it benefits the residents.” He’s also active in the wider community, tending a garden plot at the town library’s community garden, where he grows food to donate to the local food pantry. Phil even bakes muffins weekly for the staff at Brookmeade, offering a sweet way to show his appreciation and love for baking.

His commitment illustrates a common theme among senior volunteers: the desire to stay engaged in meaningful ways while giving back. “I’d tell anyone considering volunteering to just do some good and give back,” Phil advises. “There are so many volunteer opportunities out there—it’s just about finding one that fits.”

Volunteering opportunities for seniors are diverse and plentiful. Many organizations value the wisdom, patience, and reliability that older adults bring. From

continued on page 9





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Five simple steps to healthy aging

By Premier Medical Group

When you think about it, we are always in a state of aging – whether we’re 30 years old or 70. But most of us don’t seriously think about the health ramifications of aging until we’ve reached that middle age mark. And then, as the years go by, we feel the aging process more profoundly. It’s not just the gray hair, or the lines on our face. Most of us start to get some aches and pains. Maybe we don’t excel at the sports we loved when we were younger. Perhaps our cholesterol levels and blood pressure rises, or we tire more easily.

While we may not feel as limber and vibrant as we used to, it’s important to remember that aging is a badge of honor. We’ve weathered the storms of life, raised families, carved out communities for ourselves, pursued jobs and careers. That’s why now, perhaps more than ever, it’s important to do what we can to stay healthy, both emotionally and physically. And it’s never too early – or too late – to begin this incredibly important journey.

Healthy Aging is Not Hard

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), healthy aging means adopting healthy habits and making positive lifestyle choices that support our health and well-being as we age. There’s a saying that nurturing your body is also nurturing your mind. And when you think about it, it’s true. Because when the body hurts, the mind often follows. Pain and physical discomfort can cause mood shifts, low energy, sadness, and anxiety. But don’t get discouraged. There are some simple and enjoyable ways to nurture our bodies and souls as we get older.

Five Simple Ways to Nurture Our Health

• **Nutrition** - Maintain a healthy and balanced diet. We’ve heard a lot about this, but what does it



really mean? It means we should eat a variety of foods so that the body gets the full range of nutrients it needs. This involves choosing sensible portions of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats.

• **Physical Activity** - We don’t need to compete at high levels in sports or run marathons. But we should introduce regular exercise into our daily routines. Consider gardening, easy hiking, apple picking, walking around a museum, swimming, or learning yoga or tai chi. Not only are these activities good for your mind, they help to improve strength, balance, flexibility and posture – and reduce stress.

• **Mental Health** - When we’re younger, most of us are busy raising families or working jobs. But when we retire, or slow down, sometimes we don’t feel as stimulated as we used to. That’s why it’s important to keep our minds active. Consider taking classes at a community college, try painting or writing or gardening. Now that you have more time to yourself, try learning something new, volunteering or joining travel clubs. There are so many interesting things to keep your mind active and fresh.

• **Emotional well-being** - Now is the time to focus on you. Because your emotional health influences your physical, mental and social health. When you manage stress and stay emotionally balanced, your body responds in kind. Your mind can stay sharper, you can develop stronger relationships, and you can feel more productive, confident, and content. Consider

making more time for friends and family. Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation and mindfulness. And get help if you need it. Feelings of sadness, stress or loneliness can become overwhelming, so it’s critically important to talk to your doctor or a counselor who can help.

• **Get regular check ups** - Even if you’re feeling fine, it’s important that you see your doctor once a year. Many health issues like high blood pressure, diabetes, or cancer can develop very slowly and without obvious symptoms at first. Getting a regular check-up can help catch these issues early, when they’re easier to treat and manage. Your doctor can also recommend vaccines, screenings, and lifestyle changes that can help prevent all kinds of illnesses.

Another reason to see your doctor regularly is to help manage any conditions you know you have. Our needs change as we age, and you may need to have medications and treatments adjusted over time. Plus, it’s important to talk to your doctor about mood, memory, and sleep – things you may not think about as medical conditions.

What are some common conditions that occur when we age? - Many of us attribute small aches and pains to “just getting older.” So, we don’t take them as seriously as perhaps we should. The thing is, sometimes these aches and pains may be caused by something more serious. And we can get help to manage them. Some of the conditions that can develop, and we can treat as we

age, include:

- **Osteoarthritis.** This is the “wear-and-tear” type of arthritis where cartilage (the cushioning between bones) breaks down and can cause inflammation of the joints and weaker bones.

- **Cataracts, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration.** You may think you don’t see as well as you used to because you’re aging, but sometimes that blurry vision and difficulty driving at night can be a symptom of an underlying eye condition.

- **High blood pressure and high cholesterol.** In rare cases, these two conditions may cause shortness of breath and dizziness, but most often there are no symptoms at all. These are two heart conditions that can cause stroke and heart attack, so they’re very important to address.

- **Diabetes.** You might notice that you’re a bit more thirsty than usual. Maybe you’re more tired than you used to be, or you’re getting up more often to urinate at night. Well, many people don’t have any symptoms at all, but these are some symptoms of developing diabetes which is a serious condition.

The Bottom Line

The bottom line is that we should all feel proud when we age. We’ve developed wisdom and life-long experiences that have made us what we are today. But it’s important that we take time to nurture ourselves and embrace the steps we need to take to enjoy this wonderful part of our lives.

For more information on aging and how you can make the most of this time in your life, contact us at Premier Medical Group. We have expert physicians and programs that are designed specifically to help. Contact us today at 888-632-6099 or visit us online www.PremierMedicalHV.com

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Keep pre-teens and teens healthy with immunizations

(StatePoint) Immunizations prepare young people’s immune systems to recognize and resist viruses that spread quickly. These are viruses that can lead to health issues like infertility, muscle paralysis, brain damage, blindness, deafness and cancer.

The recommended immunization schedule approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is based on ongoing review of the most recent scientific data and relies on two main factors: when the vaccine works best with your child’s immune system, and when they need protection most.

“Seeing your pediatrician to catch up on vaccinations helps keep classmates, teachers and others in the school community healthy, too.” says Rebekah Fenton, MD, FAAP, an adolescent medicine physician at a community health center in Chicago.

The AAP is sharing this information about recommended vaccines and the diseases they prevent:

Meningococcal Disease - At 11 or 12, your pre-teen should get their first dose of meningococcal vaccine to protect against meningococcal disease, a fast-acting disease that is life-threatening if not caught and treated within a few hours. Caused by bacteria that can infect

the bloodstream, brain and spinal cord, anyone can get meningococcal disease. Among young people, it’s most common in babies and 16-20-year-olds. Infections are spread through close contact like coughing or kissing, and lengthy contact in spaces like college dorms.

Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY) vaccine protects against four bacterial strains, labeled A, C, W and Y.

Meningococcal B (MenB) vaccine protects against another bacterial strain and is recommended for kids with certain chronic health conditions that make them more vulnerable or anyone 16-18 whose pediatrician recommends it.

Meningococcal ABCWY (MenABCWY) combines protection from MenACWY and MenB. If both vaccines are recommended at the same visit, it can be used instead of separate injections.

Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis - At 11 or 12, pediatricians give the Tdap booster to protect against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough). It’s a slightly different version of a vaccine your child received as a baby (DTaP), with lower doses of the diphtheria and pertussis vaccines. After this, they’ll need additional boosters

every 10 years.

Tetanus is caused by exposure to naturally occurring bacteria in soil or dust through a break in the skin. Tetanus produces a toxin that causes painful muscle contractions. Also known as lockjaw, it can cause neck and jaw muscles to lock, making it hard to open the mouth or swallow.

Diphtheria causes serious throat infection, breathing problems and heart failure. The vaccine is a lifesaver. Before it existed, diphtheria killed 1 of every 5 kids infected.

Pertussis can cause a cough that won’t go away and sometimes vomiting or trouble breathing. The protection your teen got from their childhood vaccine starts to wear off around age 11, making the booster essential. Teens can easily spread the disease, including to infants, who are at even more risk.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) - The HPV vaccine prevents genital warts and works well to protect against strains of the virus that cause more than 90% of six types of cancer, including cervical cancer, penile and anal cancers, and cancers of the mouth and throat. Vaccinating kids ages 9-12 allows them to build strong immunity against the virus before exposure. If they don’t get the first dose until age 15, they’ll need

three doses.

Influenza - The flu is unpredictable and there is no way to know if your child will have mild illness and miss just a few days of school or if they will get seriously ill and need hospital care. But be wary. U.S. flu deaths in children broke records during the 2024-25 season, with at least 216 deaths. The AAP recommends flu shots annually for everyone 6 months and older to prevent severe illness.

COVID-19 - Millions globally, including teenagers and children, have received the COVID-19 vaccine. If your child has never had this vaccine, their immune system won’t be ready to recognize and resist the virus that can lead to long-term problems associated with COVID.

Behind on Other Vaccines? - Delaying vaccines leaves your child vulnerable to preventable diseases. The AAP vaccine schedule is designed to prepare their body to resist contagious diseases as early and fully as possible.

Learn more about vaccines at www.HealthyChildren.org and catch up on those your child missed. Most vaccines can be given at the same time as others.

Keep your home clean with these online finds

(StatePoint) You probably already know that keeping your home clean doesn’t have to amount to backbreaking labor, thanks to smart advances in cleaning solutions that offer unmatched convenience and thoughtful designs.

Here’s what to add to your cart from Tineco — global leader in intelligent home appliances:

Floor Washers: Today’s best floor washers bring versatile vacuum-and-wash technology to

hard floors, eliminating the need to do each chore individually and ultimately cutting cleaning time in half.

The FLOOR ONE S7 Stretch Ultra is engineered for multifunctional use, offering a runtime of up to 50 minutes. It features a 180-dgree lay-flat reach, an anti-tangle brush design, dual-sided edge access, and a heated FlashDry self-cleaning system to ensure optimal performance with every session.

The new FLOOR ONE S7 Stretch Steam combines 180-degree ultra-flexible lay-flat reach with 320 degree F HyperSteam Technology to achieve spotless results with ease. Optimized for today’s homes, it has up to 80 minutes of runtime and an advanced self-cleaning system for simplified post-use maintenance. Finally, the FLOOR ONE S9 Artist PRO, built for high-efficiency, everyday performance, delivers smooth steering, effortless maneuverability, and edge-to-edge

reach. A dynamic display, shifting three dimensional lights and LED headlight enhance the cleaning experience.

Stick Vacuum: The PURE ONE Station 5 is an intelligent stick vacuum featuring 175 watts of suction power, a wide 120-degree green LED headlight, a ZeroTangle brush head, and 70 minutes of runtime. A 3-in-1 Smart Station that charges, stores and empties the vacuum’s dustbin offers self-managing convenience to anyone who vacuums frequently.

Carpet Cleaner: Frequent carpet cleaning helps maintain a carpet’s lifespan, however professional services can be expensive and difficult to schedule. With 130 watts of powerful suction, SmoothPower technology that makes movement intuitive, 167 degree F PowerDry technology to speed up surface drying times, and a convenient self-cleaning cycle to keep the machine fresh and ready for the next clean, the CARPET ONE Cruiser lifts dirt and debris deep from fibers while restoring the look and feel of carpets. A great choice for pet owners or anyone with heavy foot traffic, this model is ideal for frequent use.

To learn more about Tineco and its full portfolio of intelligent stick vacuums, floor washers, carpet cleaners, and more, visit us.tineco.com.

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SCAN FOR WEBSITE



What Happens Now? V.I.P. Companion Care provides important help and education

My name is Donna J. Slavin and I have been a caregiver for over 30 years. The following are some suggestions that you, or someone you know, may need today or in the near future. I pray NOT!

- You take your loved one to the doctor and you get a diagnosis that you did not want to hear!

Now What?

Hmm – maybe a second opinion or a specialist is necessary. OK you now get confirmation of the diagnosis. Educate yourself, learn everything you can about the diagnosis, ask questions!

- Next you will need a Care

Support Network!

A Care Support Network is so needed for you, the primary caregiver! This can encompass your family, friends and neighbors and those within your religious affiliations to help you. This is of the upmost importance! Statistics show that “Caregiver Stress” or “Caregiver Burnout” is a reality and can often lead to you, the primary caregiver, ending up in the hospital or out of commission entirely!

- Caregiver Support Groups are so helpful! The Office for the Aging in Dutchess County at 845-486-2555 may be able to help you with

finding one relative to the diagnosis you have been given.

What medical insurance does your loved one have? What does it cover? Does it cover help in the home? Do you have all legal documents in order as well as financial information?

If your loved one is diagnosed with Alzheimer’s or one of the many Dementias, call the Alzheimer’s Association at 800-279-3900.

- Maybe you will need to hire a Geriatric Care Manager to help you ease your caregiving journey. To hire a Geriatric Care Manager go on AgingLifeCare.org, put in

your zip code and a list of Geriatric Care Managers will come up.

There is so much to process when you become a caregiver or a partner in care and there is so much more to address. I hope I have helped you a little bit and I look forward to educating you more.

You can reach me at my company, V.I.P. Companion Care at 845-249-8186 or email me at Dolphindonna622@yahoo.com. I also facilitate support groups for Alzheimer’s and Dementia.

Embracing the change of seasons with candles



LIFE IS BETTER WITH CANDLES

With Sonya, the Candle Lady

Dreading the time change in the fall and upcoming cold weather is common because of the lack of sunlight, which can cause sleep problems, anxiety, and depression.

The simple act of lighting a candle can create a calming atmosphere and a meaningful ritual to help manage anxiety and address feelings of dread in the following ways:

- Creates a mindful moment – Lighting a candle can be a form meditation. Focusing on the flame

and the intention of releasing worry helps you stay grounded in the present moment, rather than focusing on the stress of the impending change.

- Signals a shift – Lighting a candle can serve as a personal ceremony to mark the transition. It provides a visual signal that you are acknowledging the change and setting a new tone for the next season.
- Induces calm – The soft, flickering light is less harsh than artificial lighting and will signal your brain that it’s time to slow down – Make this a ritual before sleep.

How to create a ritual before sleep:

- Select a candle with the scents of Sandalwood, Vanilla or Cinnamon which are associated

with coziness and grounding.

- Find a quiet space where you can dim the lights and have privacy away from distractions (turn off cell phone).
- Have an intention as you light the candle by taking a deep breath and focusing on your thoughts without judgment and meditating until you feel less worried.
- Get into the habit of snuffing the flame instead of blowing it out as a symbol that you were successful in your intention and have embraced the new season.

Candles can be used to mark seasonal transitions so remember to light a candle and embrace the Fall & Winter Seasons.

Candle Care & Safety

Scented candles are safe if they are made with high-quality, non-toxic ingredients and are used according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

Always make sure that there are no curtains above or table cloths that can easily catch fire. While we encourage the use of creative candle holders, always use one that is specifically designed for candle use. The holder should be heat resistant, sturdy, and large enough to contain any drips or melted wax. Always place your candles on a stable, heat-resistant surface to avoid heat damage and prevent glass containers from breaking. Never leave unattended and keep away from children and pets. Never burn a candle for more than 4 hours and trim the wick to ¼ inch before lighting to promote proper flame height.

Additionally, keep candles away from drafty areas to avoid flame flickering; pool debris and black marks from forming on sides of the candle holder.

About

Sonya, the Candle Lady established herself as a trusted source for soy and beeswax candles when she opened Ye Olde Candle & Gift Shoppe in 2015 at Pleasant Valley with late husband, Dominick and relocated to Eastdale Village in 2020.

Ye Olde Candle & Gift Shoppe transitioned in May of 2024 from storefront to focus on

candle-making workshops; art galleries, local libraries, restaurants and schools. However, you can now visit her new showroom suite; order on her online store and place orders through Door Dash.

The Carriage House at 42 Catharine Street, Suite C108 in Poughkeepsie.

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It is best to call in advance just in case there has been a change in my hours

To set up appointments to visit or to inquire about candle-making workshops, call (845) 818-6280

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V.I.P. Companion Care

Where your loved one is mine too!



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845-249-8186 • DolphinDonna622@yahoo.com

Dementia Care Instructor



International Council of
Certified Dementia Care
Practitioners

What men need to know about PSA screenings & prostate cancer symptoms

By Philip Gilbo, MD
Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, affecting about 1 in 8 during their lifetime. Many men survive prostate cancer, especially when it's caught early. Understanding screening and symptoms is key to early detection and better outcomes.



Philip Gilbo, MD

What is prostate cancer? - Prostate cancer starts in the prostate, a small gland below the bladder. Most cases are adenocarcinomas, which begin in gland cells. Prostate cancer usually grows slowly, but some types can be aggressive and spread quickly.

Symptoms of prostate cancer - Early-stage prostate cancer often causes no symptoms. When symptoms do appear, they may include:

- Blood in urine or semen
- Changes in urination (frequency, difficulty, weak stream, pain or burning)
- Erectile dysfunction
- Persistent pain in the back, hips, or pelvis

Non-cancerous conditions like benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), infections or aging can also cause these symptoms. However, blood in urine or semen is rarely normal, and persistent pain should prompt a visit to your doctor.

Your provider may recommend

PATIENT FIRST

follow-up testing, including a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test.

What is a PSA screening? - Screening means testing when you don't have symptoms. Early detection improves survival rates. A PSA test checks abnormal levels in your blood. Elevated PSA can signal prostate cancer, but also BPH, prostatitis (inflammation or infection) or urinary tract infections.

PSA screening helps detect cancer early, but results should be considered with other tests.

Benefits of PSA screening – these include early detection before cancer spreads and improved outcomes — prostate cancer is highly treatable when found early

Risks, limitations of PSA screening – include false positives: High PSA may not mean cancer, leading to unnecessary tests and overdiagnosis/overtreatment: Some cancers grow so slowly they never cause harm but may still be treated. “Active surveillance” is now common for low-risk tumors to reduce overtreatment.

Who should have a PSA screening? - Recommendations vary among physician groups. Talk to your doctor about what's right for you. Men at higher risk may benefit more from PSA screening:

- Strong family history (father,

brother, or child with prostate cancer)

- African American men (higher risk compared to other ethnicities)

Lifestyle factors also increase cancer risk – these include unhealthy diet, lack of exercise, obesity and smoking

How is prostate cancer diagnosed? - Prostate cancer diagnosis involves:

- PSA blood test (often repeated to confirm abnormal results)
- Digital rectal exam (DRE) to feel for lumps or hardness
- Imaging (MRI or ultrasound) to visualize suspicious areas
- Prostate biopsy (small tissue sample checked for cancer cells)

A biopsy confirms diagnosis, and imaging helps determine the stage.

What happens after a prostate cancer diagnosis? - After diagnosis, your doctor will grade the cancer using the Gleason score, which measures aggressiveness and guides treatment:

- **Gleason score 6:** Low risk of spreading
- **Gleason score 7:** Intermediate risk
- **Gleason score 8–10:** High risk

PSA levels, physical exam and imaging also help determine risk group. If cancer has spread

outside the prostate (lymph nodes or other organs), the Gleason score is less important for treatment decisions.

Risk group helps guide treatment options. Sometimes, genetic tests on the tumor are also helpful. Your doctor will consider your age, overall health and preferences, especially regarding potential side effects.

Treatment options may include the following.

- Active surveillance for very low-risk, slow-growing cancer
- Surgery (radical prostatectomy) for all risk groups
- Radiation therapy for all risk groups
- Hormone therapy (androgen deprivation therapy, ADT) for more aggressive cancer, often with radiation
- Chemotherapy or immunotherapy for metastatic cancer

Prostate cancer is common but usually treatable, especially when caught early. Talk with your doctor about PSA screening, especially if you're over 50 or at higher risk. See your doctor if you notice blood in urine or semen, changes in urination, erectile dysfunction or persistent pain in your back, hips or pelvis.

Visit [nuvancehealth.org/findcare](https://www.nuvancehealth.org/findcare) to find a doctor near you.

By Philip Gilbo, MD is the System Chief of Radiation Oncology for Nuvance Health, now part of Northwell Health

Radon continued from page 5

greater than 4.0, the EPA and the NYSDOH recommend installing a radon mitigation system to reduce the levels. These systems are highly effective in reducing your radon levels by removing the gas from under your home or building prior to entering your building.

Radon generally enters a home through soil, seeping upward into the foundation, in the basement and other living levels. Health risks increase with long-term exposure of elevated levels of radon. In fact, the U.S. Surgeon General has warned that radon, a radioactive gas, is the #1 cause of lung cancer for non-smokers. According to CDC, radon is a Class A - carcinogen and is hazardous to inhale. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Surgeon General recommend testing all levels below the third floor, slab construction and crawlspaces for radon gas.

New York State Department of

Health Warning - The New York State Department of health issues a warning that “Radon poses a serious health risk in 40 New York counties and are considered High Risk for elevated levels, The Hudson Valley, i.e., Dutchess Orange, Putnam, Columbia, Greene and Ulster counties were listed among those 40 counties as per New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH).

If you have not tested within the last two years or even longer, it's time to test again!

If you have never tested for radon gas it's time to test now!

If you have a radon mitigation system present, it's time to have your system inspected and testing performed again to ensure your system is operating properly and is effective in reducing and keeping levels below 4.0 pCi/L and that your radon levels have not changed!

“What's Your Level”? - As a

homeowner or business owner, you can't afford not to test for radon. Testing is the only way to know if you and your family, friends, or tenants are exposed to harmful levels and are at risk from

this cancer-causing radioactive radon gas.

For more information visit www.hudsonvalleyradon.com or call 855-HV-RADON (855-487-2366).



The Surgeon General has warned that radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States today. Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths.

Exercise for arthritis: What you should know

By Christian Campilii PT, DPT



Do you have stiff, achy, painful joints? You're not alone.

An estimated 54 million adults are living with this chronic condition. It is called arthritis.

Arthritis steals movement. It sometimes keeps you from doing the things you love. But with a bit of effort, you can restore some movement and regain your ability to enjoy activities.

Regular exercise (physical activity) is one of the best ways to improve pain, stiffness, and range of motion, the common arthritis symptoms.

It also can benefit your physical, mental, and social health. It even

BODY KNOWLEDGE

can prevent or improve many chronic conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, depression, and some cancers.

Many people with arthritis think exercise will be painful — probably because they've tried, and it was. But we know through research that people with arthritis can exercise without worsening their pain. Plus, regular physical activity can decrease arthritis pain and improve walking activities.

The trick is doing the right exercises, in the right way, at the right time.

It isn't easy. Arthritis is a complicated condition. Once arthritis moves into a joint, the

muscles surrounding the joint become weakened. This leads to a ripple effect of joint pain and muscle weakness.

If you've tried to exercise and stopped because of pain, consider seeing a physical therapist. They can work with you to develop a safe and effective strengthening and conditioning program to help reduce your pain, not add to it. In the process, you also can improve your mobility and function. The bottom line: exercise shouldn't hurt if you have arthritis.

People with arthritis should increase their exercise routines more gradually than those without it. Walking, cycling, and swimming

are great forms of cardiovascular exercise. Strength training and stretching are equally important. A physical therapist can teach you how to exercise with the correct form and posture. They also will help you exercise for the right amount of time and intensity.

If you have questions about how physical activity can help address your arthritis symptoms, a physical therapist can help.

Physical therapists are movement experts. They improve quality of life through hands-on care, patient education, and prescribed movement. You can contact a physical therapist directly for an evaluation

Adapted from APTA

For more information visit the centerforphysicaltherapy.com or call 845-297-4789.

Empress Ambulance Service expands its commitment to HV with acquisition of Northern Dutchess Paramedics

Empress Ambulance Service, LLC ("Empress") has announced the acquisition of Northern Dutchess Paramedics Emergency Medical Services (NDP), further strengthening its role as the leading EMS provider in the Hudson Valley and reaffirming its commitment to investing in local EMS systems, supporting providers and enhancing patient care.

Empress, with headquarters in Yonkers and Poughkeepsie, will work with the NDP team to ensure seamless continuity of care for the patients and communities they serve.

"We are excited to have the

opportunity to invest in the people, resources, and systems that keep our communities safe," said Michael Minerva, Sr., president of Empress EMS. "This step underscores our belief that strong EMS systems are built by supporting the professionals who deliver care every day and reflects our long-standing commitment to the region. By working together, we will expand capabilities, improve systems, and continue delivering the high-quality care residents and healthcare partners deserve."

NDP EMS has more than 30 years of experience delivering emergency and non-emergency

medical transportation in the region and has built a respected legacy of service operating from its Rhinebeck headquarters.

"After many years of operating independently, we felt it was the right moment to partner with an organization that shares our values," said Edward Murray, founder and CEO of NDP. "Empress's commitment to its employees, patients, and communities made them the clear choice. We are excited about what this partnership means for strengthening EMS in our region."

As part of the PatientCare EMS Solutions family, Empress brings nearly four decades of experience

in providing state-of-the-art emergency services, non-emergency transportation, and compassionate patient care across Westchester and Dutchess counties, as well as the greater Hudson Valley. "With this acquisition, Empress demonstrates its growing investment in and commitment to the communities served in the region and aligns with the company's overall strategic goal of expansion and providing exceptional service for these communities" said Herman Schwarz, CEO of PatientCare EMS.

New study finds U.S. needs more after-school programs

(StatePoint) Ninety-five percent of parents with a child enrolled in an after-school program are satisfied with that program, and there is overwhelming support for more government funding for after-school, according to a new study. But unmet demand for these programs is high in all 50 states, and majorities of middle- and low-income families who want after-school programs are being shut out.

The parents of 29.6 million children, more than half the school-age students in the United States, want after-school programs for their children – but just 7 million children are currently enrolled. Another 22.6 million children would attend after-school programs if they were available. That means three in four of the

children (77%) whose parents want to enroll them in an after-school program are being left behind. Cost, availability, and accessibility are the barriers families cannot overcome.

Those are among the findings of "America After 3PM 2025," a report released in October by the After-school Alliance. The survey of 30,515 U.S. parents of school-age children finds a wide, and widening, opportunity gap, with children in low- and middle-income families more likely to be without the after-school programs their parents want for them than children in high-income families. Families in the highest income bracket now spend approximately nine times as much on out-of-school time activities as families in the lowest income bracket, up

sharply from five years ago.

"After-school programs give students a safe place to go after the school day ends, boost their academic achievement, help address the youth mental health and chronic absenteeism crises, provide alternatives to screen time, give working parents peace of mind that their children are safe and supervised, and more," said After-school Alliance executive director Jodi Grant. "But there aren't nearly enough after-school programs to meet the need."

More than 8 in 10 parents agree that after-school programs provide opportunities for children to learn life skills like interacting with peers and responsible decision making, and help them develop teamwork, critical thinking, and leadership

skills. Eighty-four percent say after-school programs allow working parents to keep their jobs or work more hours, and 92% of parents with a child in a program say they are less stressed knowing their child is safe. To learn more about the study, visit after-schoolalliance.org.

"Our country will be stronger and more successful when all children can take advantage of what after-school programs offer – but, sadly, this study shows we're nowhere near reaching that goal," Grant added. "We need greater support from federal, state and local governments, businesses, and philanthropy. Every child deserves access to a quality after-school program."

Teaching our teachers to build storerooms of skills

Many years ago when I began my career in education, I was given a priceless gift. I met Sister Mary Consilia, a brilliant educator who created and directed a reading center on the college campus. She recruited me at the age of 19 to work with the children who came to the center. Sister took me under her wing and for the next few years, I watched and learned from this extraordinary educator. Her insight and ability to help children overcome their disabilities to become confident and achieve the skills they needed to be successful learners cannot be taught in books.

Teaching is not merely a profession - it is a vocation, a calling. As educators, we are mandated to lead our children into productive and enriching lives. We have the daunting responsibility to enrich their minds with knowledge and nurture their spirits with wisdom and joy. We must imbue them with confidence and our example must provide the path to achieve their goals. You might say that we have the future in our hands!

How do we create an environment where our children feel safe and secure and trust that their teacher will teach them the way they learn? What do we need to do to make it work for all our children? Here are a few suggestions.

• **Patience** - They say that patience is a virtue. Perhaps there should be a huge storeroom

MAKING EDUCATION WORK with Diane Fulves

packed with pounds of patience where we could withdraw all that we need each day. It would probably be the busiest place on earth! Patience is the ability to wait and wait some more. Sometimes our children need more time to process. They are not finished yet. (Neither are we.) Children learn in different ways. Those who need more time are not lazy or slow or unmotivated. They simply need our willingness to slow down and wait for them to catch up. Teaching our children is not a race to a finish line to complete a lesson plan. It is often a slow walk over a bumpy road so that we can be sure our children grasp the insight and knowledge to achieve. With our patience and kindness, they will.

• **Flexibility** - Lesson plans are essential, however, there are days when our students' needs take precedence. Modifications and accommodations must be made to help them learn. We may have to shorten or change an assignment, offer more individual attention to some students, take more time to explain math problems. When we are willing to make these changes, we are actually saving time because we will not have to review the same problems over and over again.

• **Compassion** - Many children come to school each day eager and ready to participate in all their daily activities. They are well nourished, well rested, and loved. Other children may not be so fortunate. They may return home to an empty apartment. There is no one to greet them or help with homework. A bowl of cereal may be their supper and another bowl for breakfast. They come to school hungry and exhausted in body and spirit yet they continue to struggle to be attentive in class and complete their assignments. Pay attention to these children. They need our understanding, our time, and our compassion. Contact the principle and guidance counselor to get help for this family. Contact the parents to offer assistance. When the single mother of one of my students was very ill, I sent home-cooked food, meatloaf, pasta, muffins. This was our little secret! Children need to be nourished.

• **Humor** - Last, but certainly not least, is a sense of humor. Perhaps there should be another storage room where we could extract the humor that will soften the stresses

in our lives. I have many memories of times in my classes when the children and I laughed and laughed so loudly that I had to close the door. And when the laughter died down, the children returned to their work with big smiles on their faces. These are precious memories for me. Humor mixed with kindness is a great antidote for frustration and stress.. There were many moments in my career with children who had serious emotional needs, when a frustrated child was jolted into a calm, positive attitude when the problem was met with a humorous, but kind response. Yes, laughter really is the best medicine!

Our children must know that they are worthy of our kindness, our understanding and our respect. Remember, we are creating a future for them and for ourselves. Handle with care! Handle with care!

Diane Fulves is an educator and advocate for children and parents. She is director of Empowering Our Parents, which offers information and support to parents. She is the director of Nurture the Spirit and Shakespeare Odyssey, programs that enrich children with the magic of the arts. For more information, please contact her at dee076@verizon.net

Volunteering as a senior

continued from page 2

assisting with administrative tasks, mentoring youth, helping at food banks, to participating in community gardening and arts programs—there is something for every interest and ability level.

Additionally, volunteering can help seniors build new social connections and strengthen existing ones. Joining a volunteer group or club offers a chance to meet like-minded people and form friendships based on shared passions.

For those who worry about the time commitment, many organizations offer flexible schedules and short-term projects. Even a few hours a month can make a significant difference and provide a welcome sense of accomplishment.

Volunteering at nursing homes in particular holds special significance. Seniors can empathize with the residents' experiences and provide meaningful companionship. Activities like reading aloud, facilitating games, or simply spending time talking can brighten residents' days and foster a stronger community.

As more seniors seek purposeful ways to spend their time, volunteering stands out as a

fulfilling option that benefits all involved. Whether it's a way to stay active, meet new people, or give back to the community, volunteering offers rich rewards for both seniors and those they serve.

So if you're a senior wondering how to make a difference, take a page from Phil Seymour's book: find something you enjoy, and use your time to brighten the lives of others. The impact may surprise you—and the benefits will extend far beyond what you give.

Want to get involved? Brookmeade Community welcomes volunteers of all ages, including active seniors looking to share their time and talents. From companion visits and activities support to garden maintenance and special events, there's a role for every interest. To learn more about volunteering opportunities at Brookmeade, contact us at 845-876-2071 ext. 105 or email info@brookmeadecommunity.org.

About the Author - Jamie Stickle is the Director of Human Resources at The Brookmeade Community and has been part of the team since 2019. She brings compassion, professionalism, and creativity to the workplace each day.



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Employer Recognition Summit honors businesses employing people with disabilities, advocates for more workplace opportunities and equality

Six Hudson Valley businesses that exemplify innovation in inclusive employment practices were honored during a recognition summit in which speakers advocated for more employment opportunities for this community and outlined the benefits of inclusive employment.

The National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Employer Recognition Summit was coordinated by Hudson Valley Service Providers, a consortium of 22 Hudson Valley agencies that provide quality, community-based support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month each October celebrates the contributions of workers with disabilities and promotes inclusive employment. The 35th anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act also was recognized. This law prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities and requires employers and service providers to make reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities.

“People with disabilities can accomplish tremendous things and they’re filling important roles in the workplace all across our great state, but we have so far to go,” said Dr. Jeffery Fox, Chair of Hudson Valley Service Providers and CEO of Abilities First. “There are many more people with disabilities who want to be productive in the workplace and have not had those opportunities. We need to do a better job preparing young people with special needs for employment before they graduate from school. We need to do a better job supporting adults with disabilities by keeping doors of opportunity open. We need to do better at educating our communities to be enlightened and accommodating. However, we can’t accomplish any of these goals without the partnership of businesses in our

communities.” Keynote speaker Lynne Thibdeau, State of the State Project Manager for the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, introduced Employment First, a state initiative advocating employment of people with disabilities. When New York’s program was introduced in 2020, the employment rate for a New Yorker ages 18 to 64 with a disability was 31.2% compared to 72% for a person without a disability.

“Employment First is a national systems-change framework centered on the premise that all individuals, including those with the most significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in competitive integrated employment and community life,” Thibdeau said. “We want to help people with disabilities become employed, but we want to meet the business need. We do think that we have people with unique skills and talents that can help... employment is the ultimate inclusion.”

A lively panel discussion examined “Reflections on Real Life Experiences with Employment for People with Disabilities.” Employers praised employees with developmental disabilities in several areas, including the performance, value, dedication and loyalty they offer. Price Chopper supermarket in Vails Gate has long employed people with disabilities, with one employee having 26 years of tenure. “People with disabilities come in and are lifetime employees,” said Sarah Randozzo, Store Manager. “We don’t see the challenges; we see the capabilities.”

Melissa Lane, a person with disabilities employed at QuickChek, was asked during the discussion what she would say to the manager who hired her. With a huge smile, she replied, “Thank you from the bottom of my heart.” Businesses honored during the summit:



From left: Steve Howell, Chairman of the Abilities First Board of Directors; Ron Colavito, CEO of Access: Supports for Living; and Dr. Jeffery Fox, CEO, Abilities First.
Courtesy photo

- Employer, Less than 25 Employees: Beck’s Hardware, with five Hudson Valley locations, nominated by Independent Living Inc. Beck’s Hardware has put forth exemplary efforts to accommodate people with disabilities and encourage their success in the workplace.
- Employer, 25 to 99 Employees: AFYA Foundation, which improves health outcomes by rescuing surplus medical supplies and matching them to compromised and under-resourced health systems locally and globally. The AFYA Foundation, nominated by Jawonio, consistently demonstrated extraordinary commitment to community, inclusion and global service.
- Employer, 100 to 499 Employees: Resorts World Catskill in Monticello, nominated by New Hope Community of Loch Sheldrake. Resorts World Catskill has demonstrated an exemplary commitment to equitable workplace culture, serving as a model for other employers seeking to build meaningful, representative talent pipelines.
- Employer, 500 or More Employees: Town of Cortlandt Department of Environmental

Services, nominated by Community Based Services. The Town of Cortlandt, in Westchester County, is an outstanding partner in creating meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

- Youth Employment Award: Perkins Restaurant and Bakery in Wappingers Falls, nominated by Abilities First. Perkins has opened its doors to hosting situational assessments and internships, and giving young people with disabilities the chance to explore real-world job settings and build critical workplace skills.

- Employment Innovation Award: Target at the Poughkeepsie Galleria, nominated by Access: Supports for Living. Target is being honored for numerous innovative programs and policies that create a diverse and inclusive workplace culture and inclusive talent pool.

The event was sponsored by Abilities First, Constructive Partnerships Unlimited, Gateway Hudson Valley, Jawonio, Independent Living Inc., Access: Supports for Living, In Flight Innovation for Developmental Achievement and New Home Community Services.

Holiday Budgeting 101: Financial advisors share their top tips

(StatePoint) Holiday season expenses are a given, but with a bit of planning and effort, you can easily include them in your budget. However, amid inflation, you may have concerns about balancing a merry holiday season with good money management.

Certified Financial Planner® professionals are sharing their top tips for keeping finances intact throughout the season.

Prioritize expenses: Examine your winter budget and see how

much extra you have left for holiday-specific spending (e.g., gifts, decorations, hosting and travel). A financial advisor can help you adjust for these additional expenses, as well as fit a holiday budget into your long-term plans.

Remember, it’s important to keep your expectations flexible so that if you overspend in one area, you can reduce spending elsewhere. For example, if seeing family is a priority but visiting involves pricey airfare, consider suggesting a Secret Santa so that everyone is

responsible for buying just one gift. Or, if you want to bring loved ones together to celebrate but need to trim expenses, consider hosting a potluck. Find deals: Leverage technology tools to find deals when online shopping. Consider using a browser extension to automatically test coupon codes and ensure you have the lowest price possible or to learn when the price of an item has dropped.

Practice self-care: Give yourself the gift of a stress-free season by setting spending boundaries. This

means being guided by your intentions, not peer pressure, when it comes to gift-giving, charitable giving and other areas where spending can become competitive.

Plan for next year: Get a head start on next year’s festivities by setting aside a little money from each paycheck into a high-yield savings account, starting now.

For help examining income and expenses during the holiday season, visit LetsMakeAPlan.org to find a CFP® professional near you.

Regional Food Bank and partners detail Hudson Valley’s largest Thanksgiving Food Pick-up and Delivery Event

Regional Food Bank leadership and volunteers, restaurant and food partners, site partners, donors and local and state elected officials joined together on Oct. 23 to kick off preparations for the Hudson Valley’s largest Thanksgiving Meal Distribution, unveiling more than a dozen pick-up and drop-off locations and key sponsors of this first-ever effort to provide nourishing meals to members of their community.

“With the support of our sponsors, food industry partners, and volunteers we are taking the monumental step of feeding all of our neighbors in need throughout our 23-county service area this Thanksgiving,” said Tom Nardacci, CEO at Regional Food Bank during at press conference Tuesday at the Orange County Distribution Center in Montgomery.

“We know the need is greater than ever, especially with the federal spending cuts this year which eliminated more than seven million pounds of food to our region, or more than 5.8 million meals. This is the largest Thanksgiving distribution in the state and we could not do it without the tremendous support from the lower Hudson Valley to the Capital Region to the North Country,” said Nardacci.”

Working with its robust network of community partners, the Regional Food Bank will provide an unprecedented 115,000 Thanksgiving meals to 25,000 people in Orange, Dutchess, Ulster, Rockland and Sullivan counties. About 800 community

volunteers will join Regional Food Bank staff, sponsors and partners at six specially designated distribution sites in five Hudson Valley counties will help hand out Thanksgiving Day ingredients which will allow families to cook their own meal at home. This over 30-pound bag will be filled with food items (turkey, cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, gravy, vegetables, fruit, potatoes and dessert) sourced from local partners.

In addition, the Regional Food Bank will deliver Thanksgiving meals to a dozen Senior Citizen sites throughout the Hudson Valley.

“At Stop & Shop, we believe no one should go hungry, especially during the holidays,” said Daniel Wolk, External Communications Manager at Stop & Shop. “We’re proud to partner with the Regional Food Bank of the Hudson Valley to donate 500 turkeys, helping bring warmth, nourishment, and a brighter Thanksgiving to our local community members in need.”

In 2024, after more than 50 years of serving the Capital Region, Equinox asked the Regional Food Bank to step up and serve those in need for Thanksgiving. Last year, the Regional Food Bank served more than 150,000 Thanksgiving meals in six counties of the Capital Region.

This year the Regional Food Bank, with the help of 2,500 community volunteers, will provide the largest single-day Thanksgiving Meal Distribution in



Regional Food Bank CEO Tom Nardacci speaks at the kickoff event on Oct. 23.
Courtesy photo by Mike Bloom

New York State, handing out 350,000 meals, serving 75,000 people at 21 distribution sites across the 23 counties in the Food Bank’s service area.

Distribution Pickup Locations:

- Orange County: Regional Food Bank, 580 State Rt. 416, Montgomery
- Orange County: Mount Saint Mary College, 330 Powell Ave., Newburgh
- Dutchess County: Dutchess Community College, 53 Pendell Rd., Poughkeepsie
- Ulster County: Good Neighbor Food Pantry, 16 Rock City Rd., Woodstock

Walk-Up for Prepared Meal:

- Orange County: Salvation Army, 234 Van Ness St., Newburgh

Senior Meal Locations:

- Dutchess County: Kings Apt.,

Pawling

- Dutchess County: Maplewood, Poughkeepsie
- Dutchess County: Heritage Pointe, Staatsburg
- Dutchess County: Castle Court, Poughkeepsie
- Dutchess County: Cannon Street Housing, Poughkeepsie
- Dutchess County: Philip A. Swartz Housing, Poughkeepsie
- Dutchess County: Lexington Club, Poughkeepsie
- Orange County: Belvedere Housing, Newburgh
- Putnam County: Hillcrest Commons, Carmel
- Putnam County: Hughson Commons, Carmel
- Putnam County: Stonecrest Apartments, Brewster
- Putnam County: Gleneida Sr. Apts., Carmel

How to upgrade your home for multi-generational living

(StatePoint) Multi-generational living is becoming increasingly common. However, as families grow and change, so must their homes.

Danielle DeBoe Harper, senior creative style manager at Moen, a leader in water experiences in the home, shares three ways to develop aesthetically pleasing spaces that cater to everyone’s needs.

Create a Connected Kitchen - The kitchen is a place where everyone seems to gather. When planning your space, focus on a layout that fosters interaction. A large island can become a center for conversation, homework and meal prep, while a spacious dining area easily accommodates the whole family. Incorporate booster seats or highchairs for young children and consider seat cushions or chairs with armrests to ensure comfort and ease for older family members.

“Prioritize an environment where daily tasks become effortless for

everyone,” says DeBoe Harper. “Products like pot fillers above the stove eliminate the strain of carrying heavy pots of water for younger family members or those with mobility challenges, and touchless faucets help reduce the spread of germs – important in a large household, especially one with children. Plus, hands-free fixtures don’t require turning or twisting a knob to activate, simplifying the task for kids as well as household members with limited dexterity or arthritis.”

Transform Bathrooms - A well-designed bathroom should function for all family members. Grab bars in the shower and near the toilet add accessibility and an extra layer of safety for older relatives, pregnant women or those with mobility challenges. The good news is that you can choose decorative fixtures that blend effortlessly with different design styles, from traditional to transitional and even contemporary industrial.

“Even the smallest changes make a difference,” says DeBoe Harper. “Beyond grab bars, a small bench or seating area benefits those with mobility limitations and provides a spot for kids to sit while parents get ready. Dual vanities and mirrors mean less fighting over the bathroom in the mornings! And furniture with spacious drawers or recessed shelving help keep the space organized.”

When selecting shower fixtures, consider installing a multi-spray showerhead for a customizable showering experience. The Moen Verso Combination Shower with Infiniti Dial is ideal for multi-generational homes as it’s easy for all dexterity levels to operate. It combines a pivoting rainshower with a handshower, perfect for rinsing hair when bathing small children, or helping those with limited flexibility shower more easily or while seated. The Infiniti Dial provides personalized spray and coverage choices, too.

Design a Dynamic Living Room - Flexibility is key for everyday living, so invest in furniture that adapts to different needs. Think extendable dining tables for large family meals, or modular sofas and ottomans that easily maneuver to create more play space or to seat extra guests during a party. Many ottomans even offer built-in storage, perfect for tucking away toys and books. You also can utilize an extra table or credenza as a craft station or homework spot, with ample room to store supplies.

“The living room is like an art canvas, and each family member can contribute something meaningful to bring this space to life,” says DeBoe Harper. “Dedicate a wall area to hang children’s artwork or family photos. It’s also a great spot to weave in family heirlooms or items that hold sentimental value, so you can infuse the room with warmth and family history.”

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