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VITAL INFORMATION FOR A VITAL LIFE®

Living Life in Harmony

at Harmony of Hockessin



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of Year – Open
Enrollment is Here**

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We'd like to wish you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving and much health and happiness throughout the holiday season!

And just as important—to us at least—we'd like to say **Thank You!** Thank you to you, our readers, for enthusiastically embracing this publication. It's been your participation in the creation of the magazine, your ideas, your feedback and your comments that have helped Vital! get better with every issue. And a huge Thank You to all our advertisers for so generously sharing your time, knowledge and expertise. Your passion for your professions comes through in every article you've contributed. We truly do appreciate you and couldn't do this without you.

This month we're excited to shine the spotlight on Harmony at Hockessin, Delaware's newest senior living community. Nestled in the hills of Hockessin, this beautiful community has everything you could possibly look for in a new home!

We're in the midst of Medicare Open Enrollment, and things have certainly changed this year. Turn to pages 4 and 5 to learn about what's different and what to look out for from our friends at Uphill Benefit Group and Senior Medicare Patrol.

As the gift-giving season gets into full swing, we like to keep in mind that it's the relationships in our lives that we're really grateful for. There are so many ways to show those we love, family and friends, just how much we care. Spending time together creating memories is always top of the list. Delaware Hospice's Festival of Trees is coming up and so is the Holiday Open House at Rockwood Museum. Get all the details on pages 12 and 13. If you don't end up picking up a cool gift at these events, check out pages 10 and 11 for some great ideas. Want to contribute to a cause that's near and dear to your heart? Volunteer! Volunteer Delaware has hundreds of opportunities. Because, of course, the best way to give is to give back.

Wishing you the warmest of holiday seasons and we'll see you next year!

Karyn and Heidi

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Heidi Atwell

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70+ MEN'S SOFTBALL TEAM

What is Delaware Senior Games?

Delaware Senior Games (DSG) promotes healthy lifestyles and fitness for all Delaware adults (age 50 and above) through year-round fitness programs and competitive athletic activities. Activity is the key.

Founded in 1991 as Delaware Senior Olympics, in 2025 we changed our name to Delaware Senior Games. DSG is a not-for-profit, principally-volunteer sports and fitness organization. DSG has more than 1200 members/participants and a Board of Directors from across Delaware.

Annual state games, for athletes of all abilities, are held during the period from June through October. Year-round opportunities are available for some sports. Additional opportunities are always being pursued.

In addition to the annual games, DSG sponsors two free year-round fitness programs, **Walk Delaware** and **Senior Group Challenge**. The Walk Delaware challenge is to walk a distance equal to the combined length and width of Delaware, which is 131 miles, in one year. The purpose of the Senior Group Challenge (SGC) is to encourage as many seniors as possible to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle through physical activity and exercise. The program connects with seniors through groups to which they belong, such as senior centers, community organizations, retirement communities, church groups, and more. Any organized group of seniors is welcomed into the program.

To learn more, call us today at 302-736-5698 or visit desenior.games.

DELAWARE SENIOR GAMES

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PICKLEBALL, POWER WALK,
RACE WALK,
RUNNING ROAD RACE,
SHUFFLEBOARD, SOFTBALL,
SWIMMING, TABLE TENNIS,
TENNIS, TRACK & FIELD,
VOLLEYBALL, POWER LIFTING,
Wii BOWLING, and Wii GOLF.



Medicare Changes 2025: Don't Get Left Behind



seniors currently rely on. More than 15,000 Delaware residents are being affected—many of whom may not realize their coverage is ending until it's too late.

Open Enrollment is not just an opportunity—it is a lifeline. For many seniors, it may be the only time this year to protect their healthcare, their finances, and their peace of mind. That is why working with a trusted, local advisor is more important now than ever before.

My name is **Theo Hill**, and my entire life has been dedicated to serving people. Growing up in church, I was taught the value of compassion and community. From a young age, I loved helping the elderly - listening to their stories, learning from their wisdom, and stepping in whenever there was a need. That passion didn't fade with age; it became my purpose. Today, as the founder of Uphill Benefit Group, based right

here in Delaware, I help seniors navigate the often-confusing world of Medicare with care, respect, and personal attention.

The truth is, Medicare is changing. Plans that existed last year may not be available next year. Certain benefits, such as dental, vision, over-the-counter allowances, and transportation services, may be reduced or eliminated. And for thousands of Delaware seniors whose plans have been terminated, failing to make a timely choice could result in losing essential coverage or being automatically enrolled in a plan that may not meet their needs.

Unfortunately, many seniors won't know this until their coverage simply stops.

That's why I do what I do. My mission is not sales, it's service. I work one-on-one with individuals to review their plans, explain new ben-

efits, and ensure they are not missing out on resources they are entitled to. As a Delaware local, I understand our community, our healthcare systems, and the unique needs of our seniors.

Choosing the right Medicare plan is more than checking a box - it's about protecting your health, your future, and your independence. This is not the time to go it alone or rely on out-of-state call centers. This is a time to sit down with someone you can trust - someone who cares about you and your family because they are part of your community.

If your plan is changing, or if you simply want peace of mind, now is the time to act. Open Enrollment is here, and help is just a phone call away.

Your health. Your coverage. Your future. Let's navigate it together. I can be reached at 201-250-3591 or by visiting uphillbenefitgroup.com.



A Matter of Balance

Falls can happen to anyone; however, as we age, the risk of serious and long-term injury resulting from a fall increases dramatically. One in three adults aged 65 and over will fall this year. Alarming, accidental falls are the leading cause of both fatal and non-fatal injuries among the elderly, and lead to a large percentage of elderly cases of traumatic brain injuries and fractures to the hip, spine, pelvis, forearm, leg, and ankle.

This is a scary reality! Here we have outlined four proactive measures you can take to reduce the risk of falling for you or your loved one.

Fall-Proof Your Home

If you happen to use the services of a home health agency, a home safety assessment is typically conducted before the start of services. But you can always conduct your own assessment as well. We often don't realize how our home environment can increase the risk of falls and serious injury. Something as simple as placing a non-skid mat in the shower or bathtub can decrease your fall risk dramatically. Is there clutter around that can be easily tripped over? Is your bed mattress lower than "back of the knee" height? How about lighting? Is there adequate coverage in all areas of the home? Don't forget to ensure that all railings are secure and stable.

Stay Active

Limited activities lead to a reduction in mobility and physical fitness, which greatly increases the risk of falls. Check your communities and local gyms for exercise programs tailored specifically for older adults. Water aerobics, dancing, or simply playing a game of catch can help with balance and coordination. Consider gathering a group of neighbors or friends and starting your very

own walking club. It would be a great way to combine socialization and healthy living!

Wear Proper Fitting Garments

Ill-fitting shoes and clothing can largely increase the risk of falls. Clothing that is too loose can easily get snagged on something. Shoes should be the correct size and have sturdy non-skid soles. Non-slip socks are also good for individuals who prefer the comfort of walking around their home barefoot. If you have trouble when putting on your shoes, try using an assistive device such as a long-handled shoehorn.

Communicate With Your Healthcare Professional

Falls are often indicative of a more serious underlying issue. However, less than half of the individuals who experience a fall will talk to their healthcare provider about it. Do you seem to be off balance a little more than usual? Ask your doctor to review your list of prescriptions to see if it may be a side effect of your medications. Be sure to keep up with all annual physicals and checkups, including eye exams and update your glasses or contacts as needed.



OPEN ENROLLMENT

Protect – Detect – Report

By Tara C. Wimbley

Medicare Open Enrollment, which takes place from October 15 to December 7, is the annual period during which you can make changes to your coverage. The changes you make during Open Enrollment will become effective on January 1 of the following year, provided your enrollment request is received by December 7. The SMP's primary objective is to provide you with tools to help prevent abuse and fraud. Our goal is to assist Medicare beneficiaries in obtaining the best possible services by protecting, detecting, and reporting any potential fraud. It is essential to treat your Medicare and Social Security Numbers with the same caution as your credit card and never disclose your information to a stranger.

As Open Enrollment is currently underway through December 7, you may receive calls requesting your information, claiming to be from Medicare; remember to refrain from providing your personal information over the phone. Medicare never

initiates calls, texts, or home visits. If you believe you have been targeted by fraud, please contact your Delaware SMP immediately at 302-255-9642. For further details on SMP, please follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/deseniormedicarepatrol for SMP Medicare Fraud Awareness and locations and times where we will be doing outreach.

Tips You Will Need to Know About Medicare & Medigap:

If you opt for Original Medicare, you may need to join a separate drug plan and may want to add Medicare Supplement Insurance (Medigap). This is an extra insurance you can

buy from a private health insurance company to help pay your share of out-of-pocket costs in Original Medicare. There are limits on when you can add it.

- Generally, you will need Part A and Part B to buy a Medigap policy.
- Some Medigap policies offer coverage when you travel outside the U.S.
- Generally, Medigap policies don't cover long-term care (like care in a nursing home), vision, dental, hearing aids, private-duty nursing, or prescription drugs.

- If you're under 65, you might not be able to buy a Medigap policy, or you may have to pay more.

Medigap policies are standardized, and in most states are named by letters, like Plan G or Plan K. The benefits in each lettered plan are exactly the same no matter which insurance company sells it.

If you suspect any fraudulent issues, please contact your Delaware SMP at 1-800-223-9074, extension 2.

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Call Toll Free:
1-800-223-9074
To report suspected fraud/abuse



☐ Be aware that Medicare doesn't call or visit to sell you anything.
☐ Be cautious of offers for "free" medical services.
☐ Don't give out your Medicare number except to your doctor or other Medicare provider.



Empowering seniors to prevent health care fraud

This project was supported, in part by grant number 90MPPG0097-01-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.





Rest & Reset: Smarter Sleep and Mindful Living

As the days get shorter and nights grow longer, many people struggle to maintain their sleeping habits. As we age, it can be harder to sleep well. Small changes in your day can help you rest better at night. Try a few of these easy ideas:

- **Keep a schedule.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends.
- **Create a peaceful environment.** Keep the room dark, quiet, and cool. Use a fan or sound machine if helpful.
- **Move during the day.** Gentle exercise helps your body rest at night, but avoid working out within 3 hours of bedtime.
- **Limit naps.** Resting too late in the day can make it harder to fall asleep at night.
- **Watch what you eat and drink.** Avoid caffeine, alcohol, large

meals, and too much liquid late in the evening.

- **Create a routine.** Try calming activities before bed, like reading, listening to soft music, or enjoying a warm bath.

Activities like journaling, prayer, or deep breathing can ease stress and prepare you for sleep. Studies show that adding meditation to your routine can enhance sleep quality, as it helps develop mindfulness.

When your mind won't slow down, mindfulness offers a simple way to find calm and clarity.

It's not always easy to find time for mindfulness. But even a few minutes can make a difference. Mindfulness not only helps you sleep better, but you may also feel less stressed, find your mood improves, and find it easier to concentrate. Still, some things can get in the way, such as:

1 Desire – Wanting to feel good can lead to daydreaming or making plans instead of staying present.

2 Aversion – Feeling angry or upset with yourself or others can block calm thoughts.

3 Fatigue – Feeling tired makes it hard to focus and can make everything feel harder.

4 Restlessness – Feeling like you need to move or do something else can keep you from sitting still.

5 Doubt – Wondering if mindfulness really works can stop you from trying.

Work through these barriers with a few simple steps:

- **Get comfortable.** Sit, stand, or lie down in a way that feels good. Listen to your body.
- **Focus on your breath.** Notice how you breathe in and out.

Don't try to change it, just pay attention.

- **Be kind to yourself.** Let thoughts come and go. Don't worry if your mind wanders. Just notice it and gently bring your focus back.

- **Practice often.** Even five minutes a day is better than one long session once a week. The more you do it, the easier it gets.

Mindfulness isn't just occasional—it can be a daily habit that supports both mind and body. Better sleep and mindfulness work together to bring more peace and rest: self-care for your soul.

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Living Life in Harmony

In the heart of Hockessin, Delaware, there's a place where warmth, laughter, and connection fill the air. **Harmony at Hockessin**, one of the area's newest senior living communities, has already earned a reputation for being a home where residents thrive.

Though new to Hockessin, Harmony is no newcomer to exceptional senior living. The family-owned company behind the community has been serving older adults for more than 40 years and now operates 48 communities across 12 states. Built on a foundation of compassion, respect, and a true sense of family, Harmony's mission has always been to treat every resident, family member, and associate with the same care and dignity they would their own loved ones.

From the moment you step through the doors of Harmony at Hockessin, it's clear this is not your typical senior living community. There's a hum of energy in the air with friends gathered in the bistro over coffee, laughter echoing from a game of cards in the lounge, and the comforting aroma of something delicious wafting from the kitchen.

Executive Director **Frank DeMarinis** sums it up perfectly:

"When families come to visit, I always encourage them to experience the energy here. We show off

our beautiful spaces, of course, but it's the people and the atmosphere that really tell our story."

A Lifestyle Built Around Connection and Joy

At Harmony at Hockessin, life is filled with comfortable living and meaningful engagement. The community's lifestyle program, *Living Life in Harmony*, is designed to help residents stay active, social, and fulfilled in ways that feel authentic to them.

"There's truly something for everyone," Frank explains. "We have book clubs, gardening groups, art classes, and movie nights. Game nights are always popular; trivia and bingo get pretty competitive! But what makes it special is the level of enthusiasm and support residents show for one another. It's a real family."

The events calendar reflects the residents' wide range of interests. Whether it's a painting class, a live concert in the community room, or a volunteer project that gives back to the greater Hockessin area, Harmony residents are encouraged to live with purpose and curiosity.

For those who enjoy adventure beyond the community, the possibilities are endless. "Our residents love to get out and explore," Frank says. "We organize outings to local restaurants, museums, and farmers markets. Longwood Gardens is

always a favorite, especially in springtime. We also take scenic drives to the beach or day trips into Wilmington for shopping and dining."

No two days are the same and that's exactly how the residents like it.

Dining That Feels Like Home, Only Better

Ask anyone at Harmony at Hockessin about their favorite part of community life, and the dining experience is sure to come up. The culinary program, led by **Chef Don Hornberger**, has become one of the most talked-about features among residents and families alike.

"Our dining program is one of our biggest points of pride," says Frank. "Chef Don brings years of fine dining experience to the table. Meals are made from scratch, using fresh, seasonal ingredients. We incorporate resident favorites, host themed dinners, and even do cooking demos where residents can learn from the chef himself. It's all about making dining something residents look forward to every single day."

Chef Don's philosophy is simple: food should be as nourishing to the spirit as it is to the body. From comfort classics like roasted chicken and homemade soups to gourmet touches such as seafood specials and signature desserts, every dish reflects a commitment to quality and care.



Harmony
at Hockessin
Family Serving Families



And, as Frank laughs, “Our hand-cut fries and chips have become famous around here. Residents tell us they taste just like home.”

The community’s *Simply Your Choice* dining program ensures flexibility and variety, accommodating dietary needs without sacrificing flavor or creativity. Whether residents prefer to enjoy a quiet breakfast in their apartment or share dinner with friends in the bistro, each meal is an opportunity to connect and celebrate the day.

Comfort, Security, and Style All in One Place

Harmony at Hockessin is designed to meet residents wherever they are in life’s journey. Offering **Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Memory Care** all on one campus, the community provides peace of mind that support and care are always close at hand.

The campus itself is both elegant and welcoming, featuring open, light-filled spaces and modern amenities. Residents can choose from studio, one-bedroom, or two-bedroom apartments, all beautifully designed with comfort and accessibility in mind.

Pet lovers are happy to know that Harmony is a **pet-friendly** community, and the landscaped grounds and outdoor patios provide plenty of space for leisurely walks or simply soaking up the sunshine.

Amenities abound: there’s a movie theater for film nights, a game room for cards and billiards, a cozy library for quiet reading, and even a pub for social gatherings. Residents also enjoy access to a full-service salon, fitness spaces, and a variety of group activities designed to keep both body and mind active.

To make life as easy and worry-free as possible, Harmony provides housekeeping, laundry services, chef-prepared meals, and complimentary transportation for appointments and outings. On-site **physical and occupational therapy** services are also available, ensuring residents can maintain strength, mobility, and independence without leaving the community.

Care That Feels Like Family

What truly sets Harmony at Hockessin apart is its personalized approach to care. Whether a resident needs a helping hand with daily activities or full-time memory care support, every plan is tailored to their unique preferences and abilities.

“Personalized care plans allow us to meet each person’s needs while still encouraging autonomy,” Frank explains. “Our team is dedicated, compassionate, and deeply experienced. They know that true care isn’t just about assistance - it’s about listening, connecting, and celebrating each person’s individuality.”

That philosophy resonates with residents and families alike. One resident’s daughter shared,

“I can’t imagine a better place than Harmony! The staff is so kind and compassionate. They treat my father like family. This is an ideal community for anyone needing just a little help maintaining their lifestyle or anyone needing 24-hour full-time assistance.”

For many, those words capture what makes Harmony so special: the perfect blend of professional care and heartfelt compassion.

Celebrating Community, Every Day

Harmony at Hockessin is a place where special moments are built into everyday life. Theme nights bring the community together for festive dining, music, and laughter. Seasonal celebrations fill the calendar, from summer barbecues and holiday dinners to charity drives and art shows.

“Residents love to get involved,” says Frank. “When we host a themed dinner say, a luau or an Italian night, everyone joins in. The decorations, the outfits, the music - it’s incredible to see how much fun people have. It’s not just about food and entertainment; it’s about togetherness.”

Even more inspiring is the way residents support one another. New neighbors are welcomed with open arms, birthdays are celebrated with genuine joy, and laughter is never in short supply. “Honestly,” Frank reflects, “the biggest surprise since opening has been how quickly Harmony at Hockessin became a family. We built a beautiful space, but what’s happened here is even more meaningful. It’s a true community.”

For those seeking a senior living experience that balances independence, security, and connection, Harmony at Hockessin offers a genuine sense of belonging. It’s a place where residents live life fully, supported by a caring team and surrounded by friends who feel like family.

As Frank puts it:

“Harmony at Hockessin is more than a place to live, it’s a place to thrive. We’ve created a community where residents feel connected, valued, and at home every single day.”

Experience Harmony for Yourself

Discover why so many seniors and families are choosing Harmony at Hockessin as their new home. Tour the campus, meet the residents, and join the community for a chef-prepared meal to experience the warmth firsthand.

Harmony at Hockessin is located at **621 McGovern Road, Hockessin, DE 19707**. To schedule your visit, call **302-504-8007** or learn more at **HarmonyatHockessin.com**.

Come see what it means to *live life in Harmony* — where every day is filled with comfort, care, and connection.



Best Tech Gifts for Seniors: 10 They'll Actually Use

By Michelle Wright

Let's be real—shopping for seniors isn't easy. They've lived through more tech revolutions than anyone else, and yet somehow the phrase "Bluetooth-enabled" still makes them suspicious.

But when you find the right tech gift? Suddenly, you're their favorite person, and everything's worth it.

Picture this: your mom casually calling you from her TV (yes, her *TV*), or your grandpa's vacuum working overtime while he sits back and watches his stories. It's not sci-fi; it's the kind of tech that makes life easier, cozier, and, dare we say, cooler for the most experienced generation.

Here are 10 tech gifts and gadgets that'll have them saying, "Now *this* I can use!"

1 JubileeTV

Why Your Parents Will Thank You: Video calls, photo sharing, and reminders show up right on their TV. No confusing screens, no menus that look like spaceship controls. Just the same TV they love, but smarter.

What Makes Caregivers Happy: You can help Mom find her favorite show without the "It's not working!" call. Plus, quiet activity tracking means you know Dad's up and moving (or at least watching the news).

If you're looking for unique tech gifts for seniors, JubileeTV makes a great addition. Picture Mom seeing her grandkids on a surprise video call or Dad catching a friendly reminder to water the plants. JubileeTV turns the TV into the MVP of the house—finally giving it the credit it deserves. It's a way to stay close, solve problems, and skip the 45-minute troubleshooting sessions. If that's not a win for everyone, we don't know what is.

2 Voice-Activated Home Assistants

Grandpa likes to call Alexa his 'little helper'—she plays Sinatra, checks baseball scores, and even reminds him to water his plants. Sure, he sometimes calls her 'Alice,' but she doesn't seem to mind. Voice-activated home assistants like Amazon Alexa and Google Nest are the ultimate household sidekick. These little geniuses answer questions, play music, and even remind your dad to take his pills—all without him needing to push a single button.

Who It's Great For: They can say things like, "Alexa, what's the weather?" or "Play Miles Davis," and voilà—instant answers or a mini concert. It's like having a helpful neighbor who doesn't judge their love of reruns.

What Caregivers Love: Set reminders for medication, check the oven, or send gentle nudges to call their favorite child (hint: that's you).

3 Digital Photo Frames

Digital picture frames sit on a shelf or table, quietly cycling through family photos, keeping seniors surrounded by the people they love most.

Why Seniors Love Them: No fiddling required. New pictures show up automatically, thanks to a sneaky little app their kids use. One minute it's a wedding photo, the next it's a new baby or that family vacation they loved.

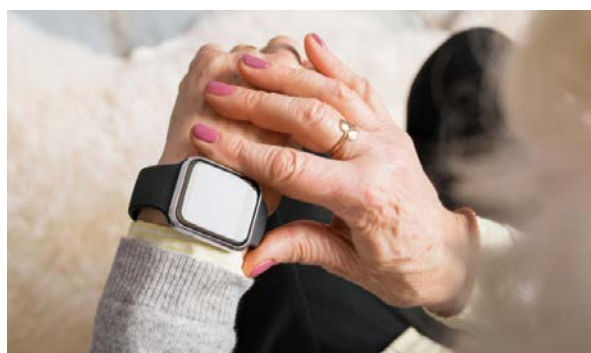
What Caregivers Can Do: Upload photos from anywhere—no need to send prints or wait for holiday visits. Add captions like, "Look, Dad, we finally painted the fence!" to keep the updates personal.

4 Health Monitoring Wearables

Health monitoring wearables are like having a personal trainer, nurse, and nosy neighbor rolled into one—and they fit right on your loved one's wrist. These little innovative devices help seniors stay on top of their health without a ton of effort.

For seniors: They can track steps, monitor heart rate, or get a polite nudge to stand up after sitting too long. Some even come with fall detection and emergency alerts, which is basically like having a safety net that you don't have to explain to your insurance.

For caregivers: Imagine checking on Mom's activity levels without awkwardly asking, "Did you leave the house today?" Some wearables let you peek at their health stats from your phone, so you can be helpful without being overbearing.



5 Smart Thermostats

Smart thermostats are the Goldilocks of smart home gadgets—always finding the temperature that's *just right*. They adjust automatically, keep energy bills in check, and make life a little cozier for everyone.

What makes them great for seniors: No need to fiddle with the thermostat or remember to turn it down at night. These devices learn their preferences and do the work for them. It's like having an invisible assistant who's really into room temperature.

Why caregivers love them: You can manage the thermostat remotely, which means you can make sure Dad's not roasting himself at 80 degrees in July or freezing because he forgot the heat.

6 Noise-Cancelling Headphones

Ah, the unsung heroes of peace and quiet: noise-cancelling headphones. They block out the chaos, bring in the clarity, and let seniors focus on what they actually *want* to hear—like their favorite music or your voice on a call.

Why seniors need them: Perfect for drowning out the background noise of barking dogs, humming appliances, or that one neighbor who loves to mow the lawn at 9 p.m. For seniors with hearing loss, they amplify and clarify sound, making it easier to catch every word of a favorite podcast or hear dialogue on a TV show.

What caregivers appreciate: Clearer sound during phone calls means fewer "Wait, what did you say?" moments. Bonus: they might even start calling you more often.

7 Robot Vacuums

Why seniors love them: No bending, no pushing, no lugging around a heavy vacuum. Just press a button (or schedule it), and let the little robot zoom around like a cleaning ninja. They're lightweight, easy to empty, and designed to avoid hazards like cords, socks, or your dad's collection of dropped TV remotes.

For caregivers: You can handle the setup and scheduling, so the vacuum sticks to a routine, but it can also be started and stopped manually without getting confused. You know the house is staying tidy without anyone overexerting themselves.

For homes that aren't exactly "robotfriendly," models like the Eufy RoboVac 11S skip the fancy



map features and focus on solid cleaning skills. Others, like the Roomba 675, navigate more intelligently but still don't overcomplicate things.



8 Entertainment Gadgets

Tablets like the iPad, e-readers like the Kindle, and senior-specific devices like the GrandPad offer entertainment options for seniors who are comfortable managing standalone devices. They can be a solid choice for seniors who can remember to charge them, navigate the screens, and keep track of where they set them down.

Why seniors like them: The Kindle makes reading accessible with adjustable fonts and a backlit screen, while the iPad adds variety with streaming, games, and video calling. The GrandPad, designed for seniors, simplifies things with big icons and basic functionality, but it still requires some tech comfort-like charging and managing the device.

A note of caution: While these gadgets are nice for self-sufficient seniors, they do require a bit of maintenance and familiarity with tech. If your loved one struggles with remembering to charge devices or finds touchscreens challenging, they might end up relying on you for frequent help.

While these devices can be engaging, they aren't the best fit for seniors who prefer a more hands-off experience.



9 Video Doorbells

Video doorbells are basically tiny bouncers for your parents' house. They keep an eye on the front door, let you screen visitors, and ensure your loved ones don't answer the door for someone selling magazine subscriptions-or, worse, solar panels.

For seniors: With a quick look at the screen, they can see who's at the door and decide if it's worth getting up. No more peeking through the blinds like they're in a spy movie. Bonus: many models include two-way audio, so they can talk to visitors without ever opening the door.



For caregivers: You'll sleep better knowing they're not opening the door to strangers or fumbling with the lock. Many doorbells let you check the feed from your phone too, so you can be their eyes and ears if needed.



10 VR and AR Tools

Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) tools aren't just for teenagers yelling at video games in their basements. For seniors, they open up a whole new world of exploration, entertainment, and maybe a little bragging rights at bridge club.

For seniors: VR lets them visit Paris without booking a flight or take a walk on the moon without, you know, *actually walking*. There are guided meditations, virtual concerts, and even low-impact exercise programs to keep them moving in the most fun way possible.

For caregivers: It's a chance to see your loved ones engaged in something new and exciting. Plus, some VR programs even have multiplayer modes, so you can join in and make memories together-while keeping an eye out to ensure they don't try to use the headset as a new kind of hat.

For seniors who are adventurous or curious, VR and AR tools can be an incredible gift. Whether they're revisiting a favorite vacation spot or finally mastering virtual golf, it's a reminder that you're never too old to try something new-or to win a VR game against your grandkids and remind them who's boss.



How to Choose Tech Gifts for Older Adults

1 Prioritize Simplicity. The more buttons, the more confusion—and not the fun kind. Look for tech that practically says, “Press here, I’ll handle the rest,” and comes with instructions that don’t require a magnifying glass or a Ph.D.

2 Consider Their Specific Needs. Is Mom always calling because she can’t find the remote? Or is Dad wishing he could hear your voice more often (but maybe not too often)? Focus on what makes their day-to-day life easier, whether that’s staying connected, managing their home, or being entertained.

3 Look for Gifts That Align with Their Hobbies and Interests. For parents who enjoy TV but need a helping hand, consider tech that simplifies their experience and makes it easy for the whole family to keep in touch. Bookworms? Go for a Kindle. Neat freaks (sorry, “clean enthusiasts”)? Get them a robot vacuum they can name Dustin Bieber.

4 Make it About Connection. Nothing says “I love you” like a gift that brings you closer together—even if it’s through a screen. Digital photo frames, video calling tools, and gadgets that encourage interaction remind them they’re always part of the family action, even if it’s just catching up on who ate the last Thanksgiving pie.

The right gift isn’t just something they’ll use—it’s something that makes life easier and keeps them connected to the people who matter most (that’s you, by the way).

Why These Tech Gifts Matter

When you’re shopping for the perfect tech for grandparents, it’s easy to get caught up in features and specs. But these tech gifts are actually about turning everyday life into something a little more manageable, a little more fun, and a little more connected.

For seniors, they bring independence, joy, and fewer reasons to yell, “Why won’t this thing work?!” For caregivers, they mean fewer emergency tech support calls and more peace of mind knowing your parents are happy, safe, and possibly talking to a robot vacuum named Dustin Bieber.

Sure, you’re buying tech. But what you’re really giving is the gift of independence, connection, and fewer ‘Can you help me with this?’ calls. Unless you want more of those—then by all means, skip this list.

REJOICE AND REMEMBER WITH THE 38TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF TREES

The holidays can be a magical time of joy, love, generosity and celebration. For those missing a loved one who has passed on, the holidays can also bring feelings of profound loss and grief.

Delaware Hospice acknowledges and embraces all of these sentiments with its signature holiday event—Festival of Trees. It's a celebration both unique and meaningful in a very personal way to everyone who attends.

Welcome to a Winter Wonderland

Festival of Trees is more than an event; it's an enchanting wonderland where holiday magic comes to life through charming décor and festive music. Guests are dazzled by a breathtaking display of decorated trees and wreaths, each a testament to the creativity and holiday spirit of sponsors and supporters. These magnificent displays overflow with holiday cheer, marking a cherished tradition now 38 years strong that ushers in the holiday season for families, friends and communities across the region. The festival also features a holiday marketplace and a bake shop offering delectable treats.

A Choice of Locations and Times

Festival of Trees is hosted at two different locations during two different weekends. Choose the most convenient venue and timeframe to visit:

Wilmington, DE; Brantwyn Estate; 600 Rockland Road

- Friday, November 14, Noon to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, November 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Sunday, November 16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Milford, DE; Delaware Hospice Center; 100 Patriots Way

- Friday, November 21, Noon to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, November 22, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Sunday, November 23, Noon to 4 p.m.

A Time to Celebrate and Honor

Among the most touching features of Festival of Trees are a special Remembrance Tree, Memorial Tree and New Hope Tree. The deeply moving Remembrance Tree takes center stage at each location. Every ornament adorning the Remembrance Tree is a poignant tribute to loved ones who are no longer with us. These ornaments, generously purchased by donors, each carry a heartfelt message, creating a touching display of remembrance and love.

The Spirit of Giving

By attending Festival of Trees, guests not only kick off the holiday season, they support Delaware Hospice's mission of providing care and comfort to those who need it most. Proceeds directly benefit Delaware Hospice programs and services.

Coping with Loss during the Holidays

The holidays often spark fond memories of family, friends and traditions. These memories also may turn painful when a loved one is gone—especially the first year after their passing. The feeling of loss can even exist when a loved one is seriously ill during the holidays and their absence seems imminent in the years to come.

Delaware Hospice understands that each person's journey of grief is different and personal. Whether a loved one received care from Delaware Hospice or not, resources from our expert counselors are available to help cope with loss emotionally, spiritually and practically.

To learn more about Festival of Trees and services available from Delaware Hospice, visit www.DelawareHospice.org or call 800-838-9800.

Rejoice and Remember at Our 38th Annual Festival of Trees!



WILMINGTON, DE - Brantwyn Estate, 600 Rockland Road

- Friday, November 14, Noon to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, November 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Sunday, November 16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.



MILFORD, DE - Delaware Hospice Center, 100 Patriots Way

- Friday, November 21, Noon to 4 p.m.
- Saturday, November 22, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Sunday, November 23, Noon to 4 p.m.

Kick off the holidays with an enchanting journey through a winter wonderland featuring uniquely decorated trees and wreaths. This free, family-friendly event also includes our holiday marketplace and bakeshop. All proceeds benefit Delaware Hospice.

DELAWARE[™]
HOSPICE



Call or scan to learn more
800.838.9800
DelawareHospice.org



Step Into The Season: Holiday Open House At Rockwood Park & Museum

There's something timeless about the holidays at Rockwood Park & Museum. The twinkling lights, the soft sound of carols in the air, and the stately 19th-century mansion glowing with festive décor - it all feels like stepping back into a gentler, more elegant era.

This December, New Castle County invites you to relive that magic at the Holiday Open House at Rockwood Park & Museum, a cherished local tradition that returns on Friday, December 5, and Saturday, December 6, from 5 to 9 p.m. Both evenings are free and open to the public, offering a warm and welcoming start to the holiday season.

After Santa's arrival at 5 p.m. on Friday, the festivities begin with the official tree lighting ceremony at 6. The beautifully decorated mansion

will be open for self-guided tours, allowing guests to enjoy each room's period décor and holiday finery. Every corner tells the story of Delaware's rich history and the Rockwood family's legacy.

Outside, the park glows with spectacular holiday displays of thousands of lights, setting the scene for a beautiful evening stroll. Enjoy live performances from local choirs and dance groups, and don't miss free photos with Santa — always a delight for young children and the young at heart.

Visitors can also browse the Santa Shop, featuring handmade crafts, ornaments, and gifts from local artisans and student groups. It's a wonderful way to support the community while finding a few unique treasures for the season.



Friday night's entertainment spans the Hemlock Tree, the outside tent, the Carriage House and the Mansion.

Saturday night's entertainment includes a DJ outside, performances in the Carriage House and more free photos with Santa in the Mansion.

All event parking will be at Rockwood Office Park, 501 Carr Rd., Wilmington.

Guests are encouraged to dress warmly, bring a camera, and take time to enjoy the simple pleasures — laughter, lights, music, and the company of others celebrating the season together.

In lieu of bringing canned goods for donations, we are asking people to make a donation to the Hope Center's Amazon wish list or make a monetary donation. Visit www.newcastlede.gov/2156/Hope-Center.

Whether Rockwood is part of your family's annual tradition or this will be your first visit, the Holiday Open House is an experience that reminds us of what matters most — community, kindness, and a little old-fashioned holiday cheer.

For more information and a schedule of events, visit www.newcastlede.gov/events.

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

- Theater & Dance Performances
- Festive Lights & Menorah
- Live Music | Crafts
- Holiday Shoppe
- Museum Tours
- Food Trucks
- Photos with Santa
- Holiday Train
- NEW! Kids Winter Wonderland



Volunteers needed!
Sign up at
newcastlede.gov/volunteers

AT ROCKWOOD
PARK & MUSEUM
**DECEMBER
5 & 6**
Nightly 5-9PM
Tree Lighting:
December 5, 6PM

NEWCASTLEDE.GOV/EVENTS

~ALL EVENT PARKING AT 501 CARR RD., WILMINGTON~
4651 Washington St. Ext., Wilmington
302-761-4340 | rockwood.org



Crossword

By Dave Fisher

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
17					18					19				
20						21			22					
			23		24									
25	26	27						28				29	30	31
32							33				34			
35					36	37					38			
39					40				41	42				
43				44				45						
			46				47							
	48	49								50		51	52	53
54								55						
57								58				59		
60								61				62		

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Answers on page 5

ACROSS

- 1. Hauls
- 5. Declines
- 9. Ledger entry
- 14. French for “State”
- 15. Breezy
- 16. Genus of heath
- 17. Showroom
- 19. Subsequently
- 20. Ending in a piercing point
- 21. Chitchats
- 23. Expose to radiation
- 25. Puts on
- 28. Half of two
- 29. Superior limb
- 32. Scheme
- 33. Greek letter
- 34. Double-reed woodwind
- 35. “Darn!”
- 36. Beginning
- 38. Show sullenness
- 39. Easter flower
- 40. Animal doctor
- 41. Ascribe
- 43. Type of tree
- 44. Label
- 45. Two-wheeler
- 46. Predestination believers
- 48. Newsletter
- 50. River horse
- 54. Radium discoverer
- 55. Consumption
- 57. Extraterrestrial
- 58. V V V
- 59. Otherwise
- 60. Explosion
- 61. Makes a mistake
- 62. Adjusts

DOWN

- 1. Not more
- 2. Mormon state
- 3. Big bash
- 4. Infertility
- 5. Hearing organ
- 6. Methane from plant matter
- 7. Vast
- 8. Symbiotic organism
- 9. Erase
- 10. Eliminate
- 11. Ship post
- 12. Frosts, as a cake
- 13. Driveway surface
- 18. Bit of parsley
- 22. Enthusiasts
- 24. Refurbish
- 25. Confuse
- 26. Danger
- 27. Sacred hymn
- 29. Give or take
- 30. Itinerary
- 31. Metric unit of length
- 33. Estimated (abbrev.)
- 34. Antonyms
- 37. Not positive
- 42. Wool eaters
- 44. Ability
- 45. Balladeer
- 46. Travels by plane
- 47. Protective covering
- 48. Male cow
- 49. Murres
- 51. Heap
- 52. Hitching place
- 53. 1 1 1 1
- 54. Taxi
- 56. S

BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

This cozy butternut squash soup recipe is creamy and rich, with a delicious hint of sage and maple syrup. The perfect blend of sweet and savory, it's ready in under 30 minutes, great for meal prep and freezes well too!



Prep Time 20 minutes
Cook Time 15 minutes
Total Time 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 tsp. dried sage leaves or ½ tsp. ground sage
- 2 carrots peeled and sliced
- 6 cups butternut squash cubes, peeled, seeds scooped out and cut into ¾ inch cubes – about 1 butternut squash. Use fresh over frozen for better flavor.
- 2½ cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup, optional
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk - dairy, almond milk, and coconut milk all work

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Sauté - in a medium-sized pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Sauté the onion in the olive oil for 5-7 min, until translucent. Add the sage and cook for another 1 minute or so, until fragrant.
- 2. Simmer - add the carrots, butternut squash, stock, maple syrup, and salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes, or until carrots and squash are tender.
- 3. Blend - add the cup of milk and blend with an immersion blender until smooth and creamy (1-2 minutes). Alternatively, you could very carefully transfer to a stand blender and blend until smooth.

COOK'S NOTE

Storage + Reheating

- Fridge – store in an air tight container for up to 4 days.
- Freezer – freeze in a glass or plastic freezer jar for up to 3 months; make sure it is completely cooled before freezing.
- Thaw – thaw for 48 hours in the fridge, or immerse the jar partially in cold water for a few hours to speed the process.
- Reheat – heat on medium heat in a pot on the stove; stir occasionally until warmed through.



Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 thru 9.

				7				
5		6				8		
1	2					9	6	
		8			2		5	7
			1		7			
7	4		9			1		
	5	4					1	9
		1				2		5
				3				

Answers on page 5

(courtesy of KrazyDad.com)



Turn Your Passion into Action!

Volunteer Delaware 50+ is a statewide program offered through the Delaware Health & Social Services, Division of State Service Centers, State Office of Volunteerism. The mission of Volunteer Delaware 50+ is to engage persons 50 and older in volunteer service, to meet critical community needs, and provide a high quality experience that will enrich the lives of volunteers.

Hundreds of opportunities are available across the state, with partner organizations ranging from those focused on animals, community engagement, computer skills, culture, economic support, the environment/nature, nutrition, health, at hospitals, hospice, knitting/sewing, legal and advocacy, at libraries, mental health care, mentoring/tutoring, performing arts, reading to children, senior centers and services, Habitat for Humanity and Stockings for Soldiers.

For more information or to get involved, email Ann.gorrin@delaware.gov, call 302-515-3020 or 302-255-9882, or visit volunteer.delaware.gov/volunteer-delaware50.

The Funny Bone

AIRPLANE HUMOR

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humor! After every flight, pilots fill out a form, called a gripe sheet, which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems, document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight. You'll love these maintenance complaints submitted by pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance personnel.

- P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.
- P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.
- P: Something loose in cockpit.

S: Something tightened in cockpit.
- P: Dead bugs on windshield.

S: Live bugs on back-order.
- P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.
- P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.
- P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume set to more believable level.
- P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.
- P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

S: IFF is always inoperative in OFF mode.
- P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right.
- P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.
- P: Aircraft handles funny.

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right and be serious.
- P: Target radar hums.

S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.
- P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.
- P: Noise coming from under the instrument panel. Sounds like a kid pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from the kid.



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At CORE, PPE is our specialty. We have masks, gloves, gowns, COVID tests and more, ready to ship. And with more than 50,000 other health and medical products available, we've got your every need covered. We're the authorized distributor for multiple manufacturers - that means you get direct-from-factory pricing, no matter how large or small your order!

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