



Free AARP Tax preparation will take place from February 3, 2026 to April 2, 2026 (last day for intake).

Appointments this year will be made via a program called Google Voice. Beginning January 5, 2026. **Please check the January FOCUS Newsletter for the phone number to call for an appointment.** You may make an appointment with a counselor if they are available to answer the call or leave a message with your name and number to receive a call back for scheduling an appointment.

The Senior Center is not making appointments this year for tax preparation.

After you have made the appointment for tax preparation, you will pick up your tax packet at the Senior Center front desk.

The drop off procedure will be in place again this season, requiring you to bring your tax information into the tax prep room at your scheduled morning time, and you will pick it up the following week in the same location at the scheduled afternoon time, unless more information is needed to complete the return.

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PICK UP YOUR INTAKE PACKET AT THE SENIOR CENTER FRONT DESK PRIOR TO YOUR

FOCUS

DECEMBER 2025

APPOINTMENT AND COMPLETE THE FORM IN IT'S ENTIRETY.
PLEASE BE ADVISED: We can not prepare returns that involve crypto currency, the sale of inherited property, or rental income other than land (example signs/crop).

The following are **MANDATORY ITEMS** you need to bring:

- LAST YEAR'S TAX RETURN,
- DRIVERS LICENSE OR OTHER FORM OF ID FOR EACH ADULT ON THE RETURN,
- SOCIAL SECURITY CARD FOR EACH PERSON ON THE RETURN,
- BANKING INFORMATION FOR DIRECT DEPOSIT OF ANY REFUND

IF YOUR RETURN WAS COMPLETED HERE AT THE CENTER LAST YEAR, CHECK THAT TAX PACKET FOR COPIES OF THESE ITEMS.

IF YOU CANNOT KEEP YOUR APPOINTMENT, PLEASE BE COURTEOUS AND CALL THE GOOGLE VOICE NUMBER TO CANCEL.



Energy Saver North Carolina

The Energy Saver North Carolina program can help North Carolina homeowners and renters save energy and money. The program helps income-eligible homeowners and renters across the state cover the cost of energy efficiency and electrification upgrades through HOMES (Homeowners Managing Efficiency Savings) and HEAR (Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates). This program can help eligible individuals:

- **Save Money:** Reduce utility bills with energy-efficient upgrades through insulation, air sealing, and upgrading heating and cooling systems.
- **Improve Their Home:** Enhance comfort and efficiency with modern appliances and systems through the purchase of energy-efficient appliances and the electrification of home systems, like cooking, laundry, hot water, and heating and cooling.

The program has an easy application. Individuals can apply online, by email, by phone, or by mail. For more information, please visit www.energysavernc.org or give Energy Saver North Carolina a call at **866-998-8555**. Staff are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.



Pet Portrait Class

Join us for our beginner-friendly pet portrait class! Participants MUST register and provide photo of pet by November 28th to participate. Military-involved, Veteran and Civilian's welcome.

DATE & TIME	LOCATION	DETAILS
FRIDAY DEC 12TH 2025 FROM 10 AM - 1 2PM	MARION SENIOR CENTER 100 SPAULDING ROAD, MARION, NC	CALL (828) 659-0821 OR VISIT THE SENIOR CENTER FRONT DESK TO REGISTER. NO COST!



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS
arts.gov/creativeforces
CREATIVE FORCES



Riddles

1. What do you call it after all the gifts for Christmas have been opened?
2. We traveled from the East, following a bright star, bringing gifts to the newborn King.
3. What bites but doesn't have any teeth?
4. I stayed snug in a manger with animals while my mother sang me a lullaby. Who am I?
5. Which one of Santa's reindeer can you see from outer space?
6. What does Alvin want for Christmas in "The Chipmunk Song"?

Answers are on the back page.



The McDowell Senior Center Dementia Support Group at the McDowell Senior Center will meet on Thursday, December 18 from 1:00-2:30 in the front conference room at the McDowell Senior Center. Future meetings will be held at the same time on the third Thursday of each month.

In December, the group will celebrate the upcoming holidays with refreshments.

These meetings are for the caregivers, families, and friends of individuals with dementia.

The Dementia Support Group provides a safe, empathetic space for individuals affected by dementia to find guidance, comfort, and connection. If you would like to attend, you can just show up at the meeting or you can RSVP by calling Weyland Prebor at 828-659-0823.

McDowell Parkinson's Support Group (MPSG)

Monday December 8, 2025 1-3pm

We will have a Holiday Gathering to reflect on MPSG in 2025 and look forward to MPSG in 2026.

Please join us. All adults with Parkinson's or Parkinsonism and their caregivers are welcome. Refreshments are provided.

These meetings are social gatherings of conversations with the presenters and persons that have Parkinson's Disease and their caregivers.



Marion Nutrition Site
For Reservations
Call: 659-0831

MENU
DECEMBER 2025
For Home Delivered

Old Fort Nutrition Site
For Reservations &
Cancellations Call: 668-4867

Meals Cancellations call 659-0821

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 Oven Fried Fish Cole Slaw Scalloped Potatoes Cornbread Fruit Juice Cookie	2 Baked Parmesan Chicken Breast Green Beans Copper Penny Carrots Rice Biscuit Pudding	3 Meatballs w/Mushroom Gravy Tossed Salad Green Peas Egg Noodles Garlic Knot Cherry Cheesecake	4 Bar-B-Que Pork Sandwich Cole Slaw Baked Beans Iced Cake Fruit Juice	5 Taco Pie w/Taco Meat & Cheddar Cheese Diced Tomatoes & Lettuce Spanish Rice Naco Chips Fruit Cocktail
8 Baked Pork Loin Steamed Cabbage Orange Juice Black-Eyed Peas Corn Bread Cookie	9 Baked Breaded Chicken Breast Fillet Sandwich Lettuce & Tomato Tater Tots Cold Sliced Peaches	10 Pinto Beans w/Onions Turnip Greens Potato Wedges Cornbread Baked Sliced Apples-Cong. Applesauce-HDM	11 Baked Chicken Breast w/Mushroom Gravy Vegetable Medley Cornbread Dressing Roll Cranberry Congealed Salad	12 Chili w/Beans Tossed Salad Whole Kernal Corn Cornbread Fruit Cup
15 Sante Fe Chicken Fillet w/Salsa & Monterey Jack Cheese Glazed Carrots Fruit Cocktail Dilled Potatoes Biscuit Cookies	16 Baked Spaghetti Tossed Salad Buttered Peas Garlic Knot Pears	17 Hot Dog w/Chili & Onions Cole Slaw Baked Potato Wedges Apple or Peach Crisp	18 Baked Macaroni & Cheese w/Hamburger Meat Cold Country Tomatoes Steamed Cabbage Cornbread Peanut Butter Cookie	19 Pot Roast w/Carrots Green Bean Casserole Creamed Potatoes Roll Strawberry Cheesecake
22 Kielbasa w/Sauerkraut Five way Vegetables Mac & Cheese Roll Pudding	23 Chicken Stew w/Vegetables Rice Biscuit Cherry Cobbler	24 CLOSED	25 CLOSED	26 CLOSED
29 Country Style Steak w/Gravy Green Beans Cole Slaw Creamed Potatoes Biscuit Pudding	30 Italian Chicken Fried Squash Buttered Noodles Roll Jell-O	31 Baked Ham Lima Beans Assorted Juice Cut Yams Biscuit or Roll Cookie	<p><u>Nutrition Site</u> <u>Beverages</u></p>    	<p><u>Dining Room Notice</u></p> <p>In order to be sure you will be served lunch, please register by 12:00 pm the day before you want to eat.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>



**Medicare Open Enrollment Period
Ends December 7
Medicare Advantage Open
Enrollment Begins January 1**

Medicare Open Enrollment for 2026 plans ends on Sunday, December 7. Do you need help changing or enrolling in a Medicare Part D Prescription Plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan for 2026?

If you have Medicare and are planning to join a plan or change your current plan:

You can compare plans on your own by visiting Medicare.gov and selecting the tab: Find Health and Drug Plans. You can also personalize your experience by setting up your own Medicare account on Medicare.gov and following the links to view plans based on your prescription drug costs.

You can also contact North Carolina SHIIP (Seniors' Health and Insurance Information Program). The SHIIP staff offer unbiased assistance in selecting either a Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan or a Medicare Part C Medicare Advantage Plan. The number to call for help is 1-855-408-1212. Before calling, make sure you have your current list of prescription medications and your Medicare Card information. You can also visit their website for helpful Medicare information at: <https://www.ncdoi.gov/consumers/medicare-and-seniors-health-insurance-information-program-shiip>

You can also call Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to request assistance with Medicare plans. Before calling, make sure you have your current list of prescription medications and your Medicare Card information.

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Begins January 1

From January 1, 2026 – March 31, 2026, if you are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can switch to a different Medicare Advantage Plan or switch to Original Medicare (and join a separate Medicare drug plan) once during this time. Your coverage will start the first day of the month after you ask to join the plan.

What can I do?

- If you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan (with or without drug coverage), you can switch to another Medicare Advantage Plan (with or without drug coverage).
- You can drop your Medicare Advantage Plan and return to Original Medicare. You will also be able to join a separate Medicare drug plan.

What can't I do?

- Switch from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Join a Medicare drug plan if you are in Original Medicare.
- Switch from one Medicare drug plan to another if you are in Original Medicare

Note: You can only switch plans once during this period.

If you need assistance changing your Medicare Advantage Plan during the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment, you can find help locally at the McDowell Senior Center in Marion or the A.C. Bud Hogan Community Center in Old Fort. We request that you fill out and return a SHIIP Medicare Program Assistance & Information Contact Form available at the reception desk at both sites and our SHIIP counselors will contact you for an appointment.

You can also get help from North Carolina SHIIP or through Medicare using the contact information provided previously in this article.

A Medicare beneficiary may also be able to save money on their prescription drug plan and prescription drug costs if they meet certain financial criteria. If your gross monthly income before any deductions is less than \$1,956.00 (single individual) or \$2,644.00 (married couple) and you have assets of less than \$17,600.00 (single individual) or \$35,130.00 (married couple) in savings, stocks, IRA accounts, or additional property other than your home, you may be eligible to apply for the Medicare Part D Extra Help Program through Social Security. You can apply online at ssa.gov under the Medicare tab or by calling Social Security at 1-800-772-1213, by calling the NC SHIIP hotline at 1-855-408-1212, or by completing the Medicare Pre-Enrollment Form at either of our Senior Centers and one of our trained SHIIP volunteers will assist you with applying.

**THE BUZZZ
OF MARION**

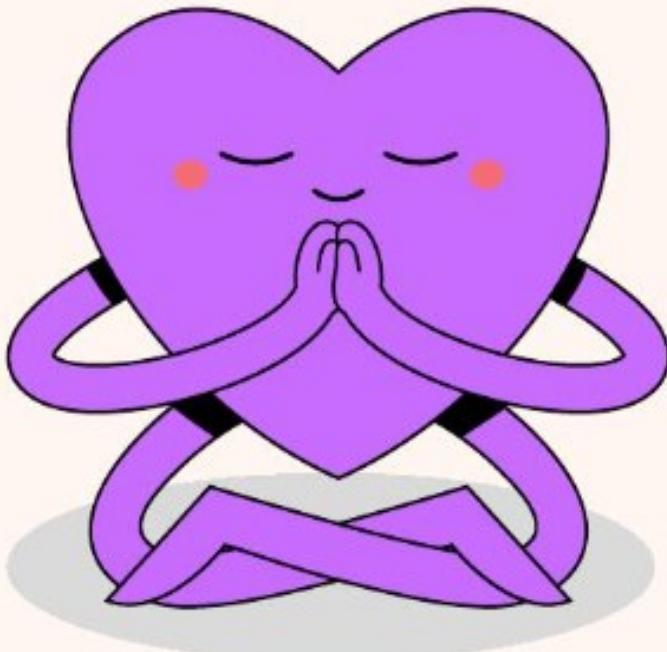
Please keep Charles and Mary Davis in your thoughts and prayers. They lost their daughter, Rebecca Davis on November 6th after her life-long battle with Muscular Dystrophy. Say an extra prayer for Charles because he is still down with his back.

The Just for Fun Players performed at Autumn Care Nursing Home last month. They received a warm welcome by all. The residents were a great audience and asked the group to please come back again.

By Teresa Gentry and Cathy Laws

YOGA CLASS

WITH CERTIFIED YOGA INSTRUCTOR JORDAN LANEY



No experience necessary.
Open to all ages, bodies
and abilities!

Chairs and props are used
to relax and connect
throughout the holiday
season.

9:30AM EVERY WEDNESDAY IN DECEMBER!
(WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CHRISTMAS EVE)

WHERE: THE McDOWELL SENIOR CENTER, ALL EQUIPMENT PROVIDED
TO SIGN UP: VISIT THE MARION SENIOR CENTER FRONT DESK OR
CALL 828-659-0821



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
for
ARTS
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CREATIVE FORCES

AMERICA
250



WITH SUPPORT FROM
HENRY M. JACKSON
FOUNDATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF
MILITARY MEDICINE

gather 'round **WORKSHOPS + EVENTS**

FOR MILITARY- AND VETERAN-CONNECTED POPULATIONS AND CIVILIANS
OPPORTUNITIES TO GATHER 'ROUND, LEARN & SERVE TOGETHER



ALL EVENTS ARE FREE OF CHARGE, AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
DUE TO LIMITED SPACE, SOME PROGRAMS REQUIRE REGISTRATION (AS LISTED).

COMMUNITY YOGA - EVERY WED. IN DECEMBER 9:30-10:30AM

LOCATION: THE McDOWELL SENIOR CENTER. CALL (828) 659-0821 OR VISIT THE SENIOR CENTER FRONT DESK TO REGISTER

JEWELRY MAKING: WIRE WRAPPING - DECEMBER 16TH 6:00PM

LOCATION: PHEONIX ON MAIN. CALL (828) 559-0315 TO REGISTER. (AGES 18 AND UP.)

PET PORTRAITS - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12TH 10-12AM

LOCATION: THE McDOWELL SENIOR CENTER. CALL (828) 659-0821 OR VISIT THE SENIOR CENTER FRONT DESK TO REGISTER. (MUST PROVIDE PHOTO OF PET BEFORE THE CLASS)

BLUEGRASS JAM - EVERY SATURDAY, 1-4PM

LOCATION: FOOTHILLS WATERSHED, OLD FORT. NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED.

OLD FORT ART WALK - DECEMBER 12TH 4-7 PM

LOCATION: START AT ARROWHEAD ARTISANS GALLERY, LIVE JAZZ 5-7PM.
FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

COMMUNITY SQUARE DANCE! - JANUARY [DATE TBD] 2026

LOCATION: MARION COMMUNITY BUILDING. NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
for the
ARTS
arts.gov/creativeforces
CREATIVE FORCES



INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?
CONTACT JORDAN LANEY
EMAIL: JORDANLLANEY@GMAIL.COM
CELL: 828-406-6514

WORKING TO SUPPORT THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FOR MILITARY- AND VETERAN-CONNECTED POPULATIONS IMPACTED BY DISASTER AND IMPROVE CAPACITY FOR PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY EFFORTS FOR ARTISTS AND ORGANIZATIONS WHO SEEK TO SUPPORT THESE COMMUNITIES.



December Christmas Fun



Friday, December 5th

Christmas Cards : 9:00am Dining Room

We will be making
Christmas Cards

Friday, December 12th

Christmas Sing Along : 10:45am Dining Room

Come enjoy singing
some of the great
Christmas Tunes.

Monday, December 15th

Christmas BINGO : 10:45am Dining Room

Come Play
Christmas BINGO

Tuesday, December 16th

The Polar Express : 10:30am-11:30am Dining Room

West Marion Elementary School Children Performance : 11:30

Wear Your Christmas
PJs and enjoy
Hot Chocolate &
Polar Express Trivia

Wednesday, December 17th

Christmas Jeopardy : 11:00am Dining Room

Staff & Seniors Playing
Christmas Jeopardy
with a Twist

Thursday, December 18th

Ugly Sweater Contest : 11:30am Dining Room

Wear your Ugliest
Christmas Sweater

Friday, December 19th

"Grinch Day" Christmas Lunch :



Christmas Lunch for
Senior Center's Participants only.
See Dining Room
Check-in Desk to Register

DECEMBER 2025
McDOWELL COUNTY SENIOR CENTER

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:30-10:30 Line Dance 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00 Drum Circle	1 9:30-10:30 J.A.M. Exercise 10:30-11:30 Bible Study 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 1:00-3:00 Art Class <u>Evening Classes</u> 5:30-7:45 Chess Club 6:00-7:00 Beginner Line Dance	2 9:00-12:00 Quilting 9:30 Yoga Class 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00-3:00 Anything Goes Gathering	3 9:00-10:00 Crochet Class 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise	4 9:00 Christmas Cards 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise
9:30-10:30 Line Dance 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00-3:00 Parkinson's Support Group	8 9:30-10:30 J.A.M. Exercise 10:30-11:30 Bible Study 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 1:00-3:00 Art Class <u>Evening Classes</u> 5:15-7:00 TAPS Care Group 5:30-7:45 Chess Club 6:00-7:00 Beginner Line Dance	9 9:00-12:00 Quilting 9:30 Yoga Class 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00-3:00 Anything Goes Gathering <u>1:30-2:30 Vaya Health</u>	10 9:00-10:00 Crochet Class 10:15 BINGO 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise	11 10:00-12:00 Pet Portrait Class 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 10:45 Christmas Sing Along
9:30-10:30 Line Dance 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 10:45 Christmas BINGO 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00 Drum Circle	15 9:30-10:30 J.A.M. Exercise 10:30-11:30 Bible Study 10:30-11:30 Polar Express Day 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 1:00-3:00 Art Class <u>Evening Classes</u> 5:30-7:45 Chess Club 6:00-7:00 Beginner Line Dance	16 9:00-12:00 Quilting 9:30 Yoga Class 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 11:00 Christmas Jeopardy 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00-3:00 Anything Goes Gathering	17 9:00-10:00 Crochet Class 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 11:30 Ugly Sweater Contest 1:00-2:30 Dementia Support Group	18 9:30-11:30 Craft Class 10:00-11:30 Variety Hour 10:00-11:30 Chair Exercise
9:30-10:30 Line Dance 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00 Drum Circle	22 9:30-10:30 J.A.M. Exercise 10:30-11:30 Bible Study 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 1:00-3:00 Art Class <u>Evening Classes</u> 5:30-7:45 Chess Club 6:00-7:00 Beginner Line Dance	23 CLOSED	24 CLOSED	25 CLOSED
9:30-10:30 Line Dance 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00 Drum Circle	29 9:30-10:30 J.A.M. Exercise 10:30-11:30 Bible Study 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 1:00-3:00 Art Class <u>Evening Classes</u> 5:30-7:45 Chess Club 6:00-7:00 Beginner Line Dance	30 9:00-12:00 Quilting 9:30 Yoga Class 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 1:00-3:00 Anything Goes Gathering 12:30-3:45 Card Playing	31 9:00-10:00 Crochet Class 10:15 BINGO 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 11:30 Ugly Sweater Contest 1:00-2:30 Dementia Support Group	26 
9:30-10:30 Line Dance 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 12:30-3:45 Card Playing 1:00 Drum Circle	29 9:30-10:30 J.A.M. Exercise 10:30-11:30 Bible Study 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 1:00-3:00 Art Class <u>Evening Classes</u> 5:30-7:45 Chess Club 6:00-7:00 Beginner Line Dance	30 9:00-12:00 Quilting 9:30 Yoga Class 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 1:00-3:00 Anything Goes Gathering 12:30-3:45 Card Playing	31 9:00-10:00 Crochet Class 10:15 BINGO 10:30-11:30 Chair Exercise 11:30 Ugly Sweater Contest 1:00-2:30 Dementia Support Group	26 

Webinar Schedule 2025 Eastern Region

To Register:
Go to Vayahealth.com/Calendar
Click on desired class to register.

For More Information:
Email: jeffrey.dula-brown@vayahealth.com
Or call: 828-225-2785 ext. 3346

Date	Time	Topic
December 12,2025	10:00am-11:00am	Communication 101
December 12, 2025	11:15am-12:15pm	OCD: Thought-Behavior Cycle
December 16, 2025	1:30pm-2:30pm	Communication 101
December 16, 2025	2:45pm-3:45pm	OCD: Thought-Behavior Cycle

Vaya Health Trainings 2025 Eastern Region

Open to the Public

Location:

McDowell Senior Center
100 Spaulding Road, Marion, NC 28752
Held the 2nd Wednesday of each month

To Register:

Go to Vayahealth.com/Calendar or
call the McDowell Senior Center at **828-659-0821**



Vaya Health's HEART serves: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Harnett, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Johnston, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mecklenburg, Mitchell, Polk, Rowan, Swain, Transylvania, Wake, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey counties.

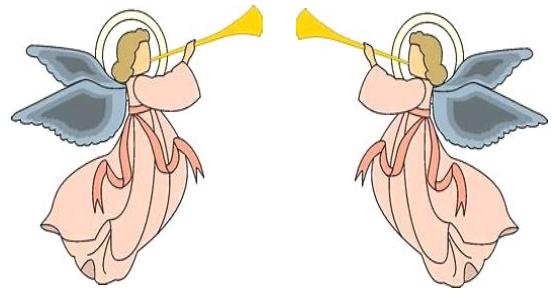
Dec 10 (1:30pm-2:30pm) Communication 101

Communication is the string that ties us all together. If that string isn't strong enough or is broken, relationships tend to unravel. Effective communication cultivates strong relationships and supports one's voice being heard. This curriculum is designed to look at ways to neutralize barriers and methods to enhance clear, concise, and deliberate exchanges.

Hosted by the McDowell Senior Center in partnership with the Vaya Health Education and Aging Resource Team. All HEART trainings are free and accredited through the NC Division of Health Service Regulation which awards one contact hour for each hour of training.

OLD FORT NUTRITION SITE
LOCATED AT 909 EAST MAIN ST., OLD FORT, NC 28762
Phone: 668-4867 DECEMBER 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1 8:30-3:00 Puzzles 8:30-3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 9:30-10:30 Crochet with Jo Shuman 12:15 Bible Study with James O'Neil	2 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:30 Crafts 12:15-3:45 Card Fun & Games with Carol	3 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:15 BINGO 12:15 Chair Exercise with Deb	4 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 12:15 Chair Exercise with Deb	5 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises
8 8:30-3:00 Puzzles 8:30-3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 9:30-10:30 Crochet with Jo Shuman 12:15 Bible Study with James O'Neil	9 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:30 Crafts 12:15-3:45 Card Fun & Games with Carol	10 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:15 BINGO 12:15 Chair Exercise with Deb	11 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 12:15 Chair Exercise with Deb	12 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises
15 8:30-3:00 Puzzles 8:30-3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 9:30-10:30 Crochet with Jo Shuman 12:15 Bible Study with James O'Neil	16 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:30 Crafts 12:15-3:45 Card Fun & Games with Carol	17 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:15 BINGO 12:15 Chair Exercise with Deb	18 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 12:15 Chair Exercise with Deb	19 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises
22 8:30-3:00 Puzzles 8:30-3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 9:30-10:30 Crochet with Jo Shuman 12:15 Bible Study with James O'Neil	23 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:30 Crafts 12:15-3:45 Card Fun & Games with Carol	CLOSED	24 CLOSED	25 CLOSED
29 8:30-3:00 Puzzles 8:30-3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 9:30-10:30 Crochet with Jo Shuman 12:15 Bible Study with James O'Neil	30 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:30 Crafts 12:15-3:45 Card Fun & Games with Carol	31 8:30—3:00 Puzzles 8:30—3:00 Fitness Equipment Exercises 10:15 BINGO 12:15 Chair Exercise with Deb		





VETERAN NEWS AND NOTES

Sleep Apnea VA Ratings: How to Get the Benefits You Deserve

Sleep apnea—especially Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA)—affects over half a million veterans and can seriously impact health and quality of life. The VA rates sleep apnea based on severity and whether a CPAP or other treatment is required.

VA Disability Ratings for Sleep Apnea

- **0%:** Diagnosed, but no significant symptoms or treatment
- **30%:** Daytime fatigue from disrupted sleep
- **50%:** Use of a CPAP or breathing device
- **100%:** Chronic respiratory failure, heart issues, or tracheostomy

Most veterans receive a 50% rating if a CPAP is prescribed. Still, higher ratings are possible with additional complications, like reduced lung function. For example, in one case, a veteran with service-connected sarcoidosis and OSA successfully increased his rating from 50% to 60% after pulmonary tests showed lung function decline. His consistent CPAP use, credible testimony, and medical evidence were key to winning the claim.

VA May Change Sleep Apnea Ratings

The VA is currently reviewing how it evaluates sleep apnea. Proposed changes suggest veterans whose symptoms are fully treated with CPAP may be rated at 0%. However, these updates are not yet final and don't affect current compensation.

How to Strengthen a Sleep Apnea VA Claim

- Include a sleep study diagnosis
- Submit lay statements about in-service symptoms
- Connect secondary conditions like PTSD, GERD, or hypertension
- Obtain a medical nexus letter linking sleep apnea to service

Not a Presumptive Condition— Yet

Sleep apnea isn't automatically service-connected, even for veterans exposed to burn pits or Gulf War toxins. However, you can win a claim by showing service caused or worsened your condition. One Gulf War veteran won benefits by submitting a medical opinion linking his OSA to chemical exposure, along with a sleep study and lay statements.

Secondary Conditions that May Strengthen Your Claim

- PTSD, anxiety, depression
- Hypertension and heart disease
- TBI, GERD, diabetes

THE BUZZ OF OLD FORT

We enjoyed some beautiful music by Mike Starnes in October and we look forward to hearing the "Just for Fun Players" perform in our dining room on December 5th at 10am. Hopefully, Mike Starnes will be back again too. Be on the lookout for more surprises during this month, including special guest appearances and exclusive announcements.

Last month we honored our volunteers with a special breakfast. We cannot put into words how grateful we are to all of you. Your dedication and kindness make a real difference every day. Whether you deliver meals (in the dining room or home delivered), sweep, clean, take-out trash, instruct a class, assist with classes/bingo, help during parties, water and tend to the plants, maintain greeting cards or daily attendance, from helping

wherever needed to offering a listening ear to our members, each act of service is noticed and appreciated.

Deb Vess is steadily recovering after her recent surgery, and we are so thankful to see her smiling with us. In other good news, Roann Bishop is also feeling better, Bruce Lankton is recovering, and Randy Farmer has returned home and is on the mend as well.

There are several people we should keep in our thoughts. Bob Volz lost his dad last month. The O'Neil's son has been in the hospital and had some health problems. Walter Hensley, Cathy Herron, Vernon Davis, Lee McIntosh, and Carol McEntire have also been facing health issues. Let's offer our support to these individuals and their families.

Also, if you haven't been here in awhile, come on back. We miss you!

The Old Fort Community Chorus will be having their concert at Old Fort First Baptist Church on December 13th at 7:00pm. Lee Silver, from our center, will be singing in the chorus. Everyone is welcome to attend and support Lee and the rest of the chorus for an evening of wonderful music!

We are hoping that everyone enjoyed Thanksgiving and we want to wish all of you a Merry Christmas.

By Cheryl Woody & Carey Woody

If you are interested in becoming a Home Delivered Meals Volunteer or would like to volunteer for other opportunities in the county please call Jennifer at 828-659-0826.



HAPPY

MARION

Terry Baldridge 1
Jean Parker 2
Faye Frady 3
Linda Sherman 3
Karen Laughter 5
Bonnie Autrey 7
Marilyn Foreman 9
Carol Jordan 9
Edna Burnette 15
Judy Crowe 17
Susan Jones 18

Gary Francis 19
Bob Dimmette 20
Janice Wheeler 22
Virgil McCurry 25
Teresa Schism 25



BIRTHDAY

OLD FORT

Donald Shuford 1
Vicki Powers 8
Charles Vess 8
Randall Brooks 9
Ruth Davis 10
Toni McCoart 19
Carolyn McEntire 19
Margie Swann 26
Lorine Parker 30
Lou Phillips 30

MCDOWELL COUNTY

SENIOR CENTER

100 Spaulding Road
Marion N.C. 28752

Phone: 828-659-0821

Weyland Prebor, Director

FOCUS

Marion Reporters:
Teresa Gentry
Cathy Laws

Old Fort Reporters:
Cheryl Woody
Carey Woody

Editor:

Karen Burrell

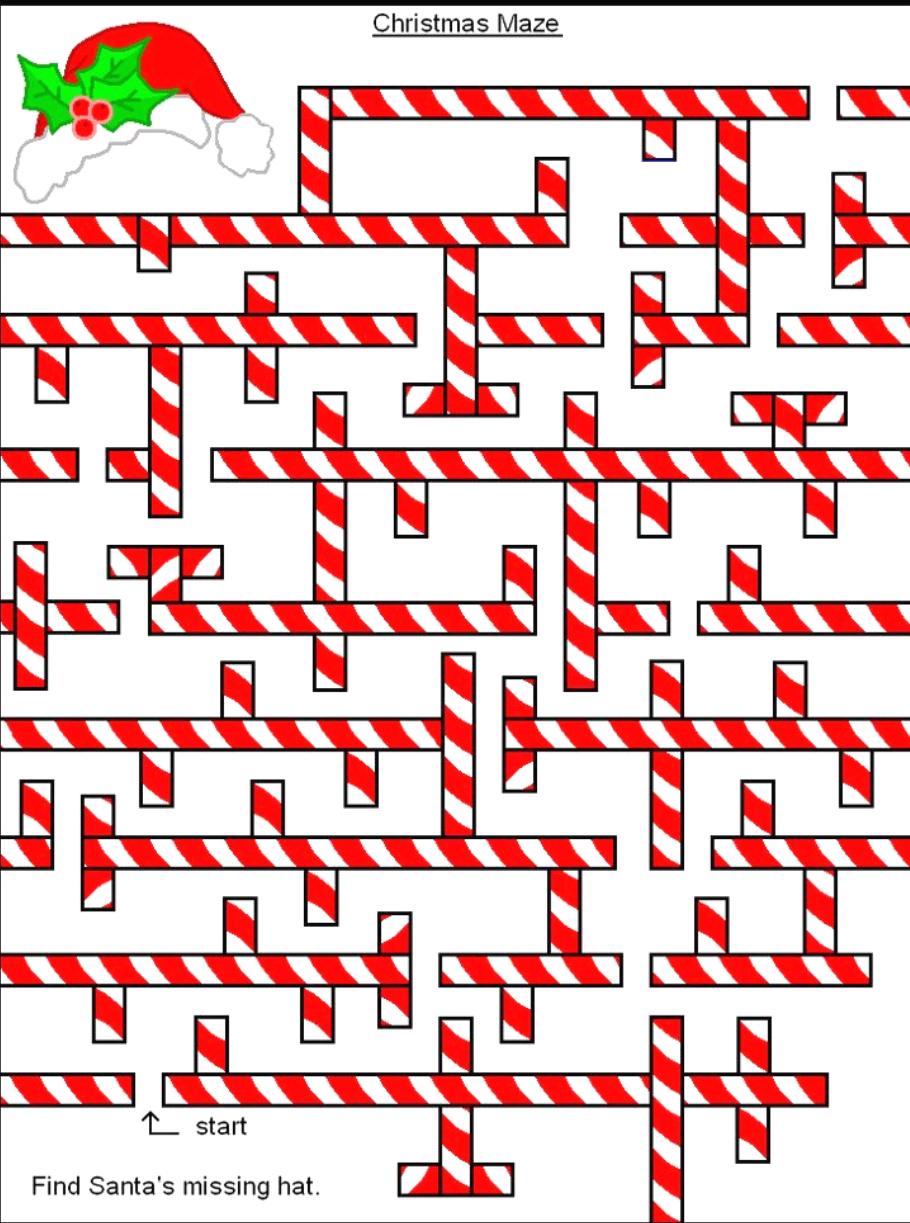
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Christmas Maze



Scan this QR code with a scan reader on a phone or tablet to instantly get to the McDowell County Senior Center website.

Let's Get Crafty

With Teresa

No supplies needed

December 19th

9:30am-11:30am



Space is limited to the first 12 people to sign up at the Front Desk.

For more information see Brenda Monosso.

Riddle Answers:

1. Christmess
2. The three wise men.
3. Frost
4. Baby Jesus
5. Comet
6. A hula hoop.

