

LIFESTYLES

Dear Graduates ...

Let's start with a profound contemplation.

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand...” (Ps. 139:13-18)

The Psalmist concludes, “Lead me in the everlasting way.” (v. 24)

God inscribed our days personally, and bound them together sequentially, before we drew our first breath. Our character develops through them, as does the rest of His story. In eternity past, He endowed our prenatal beings with unique gifts and traits suited to our appointed time. When both we and the world were ready — in the fullness of time — God no longer held back. He exhaled.

I love how the Psalmist contemplates our lives from eternity past to life everlasting, and the days of this age in between. Like bookends, eternity past and eternity future frame life in the here and now.

It is fitting that we look forward to our work, not what we shall enjoy, nor what we shall endure, but what we shall do. “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance as our way of life.” (Eph 2:10)

Be assured that in all that comes your way, God will be with you. You have an active role in His creation narrative. As it is still being written, God will guide you to interpret that which fills your days, for He desires to transform it for good. No one can fathom how far and wide the blessings can reach. Your time will be filled with numerous possibilities of good, and conversely, of evil. Remember your Creator. Build a life of significance and eternal reward.

Give honor to whom honor is due, but idolize no one. The best of men are still men. And use your words wisely and sparingly, for the common good. This constitutes real power. Others may bluster, so don’t be misled. It is necessary that you choose your mentors and role models with care: “Walk with the wise and become wise, ...a companion of fools suffers harm.” Yet, at times, good people will fail you. Be kind. “Mercy exults over judgement.” It’s how lifelong relationships form. (See Rom. 13:7, Prov. 10:31-32,19, 13:20, James 2:13)

Eternity past, life here on earth, and eternity future is a blessed continuum. Develop the gifts He placed in you before the world began. “God doesn’t want us to be shy with his gifts, but bold and loving and sensible.” (1 Tim. 1:6 MSG) Fulfill your good purpose in this new chapter of life. You’ll make a difference for all of eternity.

That being said, congratulations! God-speed and God bless!

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Take your dream vacation this summer with these budgeting tips

STATEPOINT

Whether it’s a once-in-a-lifetime tour of Europe or your annual trip to a beach house, intentionally budgeting for summer vacation can ensure you don’t throw your finances off course.

According to Certified Financial Planner® professionals, here’s how to plan your vacation without breaking the bank:

- Be realistic about expenses: It’s important to budget for the true cost of the vacation you have in mind. Beyond big-ticket items, such as airfare, hotel and car rental, be sure to factor in additional expenses you might incur, such as entry to attractions, currency exchange fees, shopping, entertainment and dining out. You should also create a cushion for emergency expenses. If time off from work will mean temporarily earning less income, be sure to account for the income drop as well.



GETTY IMAGES

With some planning, a dream vacation might not be out of reach.

- Set up a travel fund: Now that you have a figure in mind, it’s time to save for your goal. Create a specific savings account earmarked for your vacation and automate your contributions. If you need help prioritizing your vacation without letting it derail your other financial goals, work with your financial advisor. You may think of them as someone who only helps you with tasks such as investing for retirement or buying a home, but

a CFP® professional is trained to look holistically at your entire financial picture and can help you plan for the fun things in life.

Stretch Your Dollar: A dream vacation and thoughtful spending can go hand in hand. Here are a few strategies for stretching your vacation dollars:

- Consider timing: While summer travel often centers around kids’ schedules and work responsibilities, if you have flexibility, consider

visiting your destination during its “shoulder season.” This is the period between peak season and off-season when you can expect reduced prices and thinner crowds. Timing also matters when it comes to air travel. For example, traveling on a Friday is typically more expensive than a mid-week flight. Play around with dates to find the best rates.

- Eat in: Restaurant bills can really add up. If your vacation home has a kitchen, consider preparing some of your meals. Or visit a local grocery store and pack a picnic lunch to enjoy midday during your explorations.

- Do a home exchange: Rather than run up a large hotel bill, stay in your dream destination free by doing a home exchange. Online home exchange platforms can help ensure there are no surprises at your destination or at home when you return.

SENIOR CENTER CALENDARS

<b>Ashland Senior Center</b> 324 15th St. (606) 324-7323 Monday Closed for Memorial Day. <b>Boyd County Senior Center</b> 3015 Louisa St., Catlettsburg (606) 739-6349 Monday — Closed for Memorial Day. Tuesday — Board games. Wednesday — Cornhole, Obie. Thursday — Bingo. Friday — Walk and Wave. <b>Flatwoods Senior Center</b> 2513 Reed St., Flatwoods (606) 494-2362 Tuesday — Movie Day. Wednesday — Bible study. Thursday — Imel’s. <b>Greenup County Senior Center</b> 614 E. Main St., Greenup (606) 473-6244	<b>Lawrence County Senior Center</b> 101 W. Pike St., Louisa (606) 638-9335 Tuesday — 10 a.m.: Smoking cessation. Wednesday — Crafts. Thursday — Scavenger hunt. Friday — Senior Free Day. <b>Olive Hill Senior Center</b> Ky. 2528, Olive Hill (606) 694-1579 Tuesday — Socializing. Wednesday — Bible study.
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Tuesday — Movie. <b>Carter County Senior Center</b> 200 N. Hord St., Grayson (606) 474-4179 Tuesday — Chair exercise. Wednesday — Ping pong, soccer. Thursday — Relaxation techniques. Friday — Bingocize. <b>Senior Menu</b> Tuesday — Cheeseburger deluxe, garden seasoned broccoli, baked potato chips, lettuce, tomato, onion and pickle, diced peaches, bun and milk. Wednesday — Grilled chicken salad, Chunkie veggie soup, ranch dressing, Clementine, sugar cookie, milk. Thursday — Sausage links, egg patty, English muffin, hashbrown potatoes, cottage cheese and pears, V8 juice, milk. Friday — Honey-glazed pork chop, baked potato, Brussels sprouts, apple slices, roll, milk.
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Thursday — Annie Wilson, Transylvania Life Insurance. <b>Elliott County Senior Center</b> 101 Ky. 7, Sandy Hook (606) 738-6945 Tuesday — 10 a.m.: Nutrition with Mandy. Thursday — Morning Movie. <b>Senior Menu</b> Tuesday — Cheeseburger deluxe, garden seasoned broccoli, baked potato chips, lettuce, tomato, onion and pickle, diced peaches, bun and milk. Wednesday — Grilled chicken salad, Chunkie veggie soup, ranch dressing, Clementine, sugar cookie, milk. Thursday — Sausage links, egg patty, English muffin, hashbrown potatoes, cottage cheese and pears, V8 juice, milk. Friday — Honey-glazed pork chop, baked potato, Brussels sprouts, apple slices, roll, milk.
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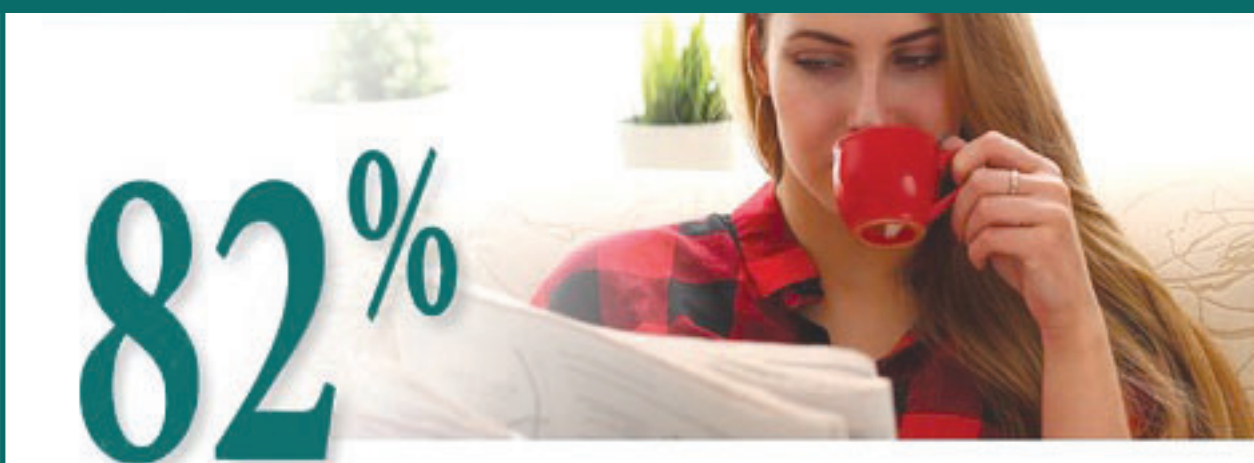
THIS WEEK IN THE TRI-STATE

<b>Sunday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 12:40 p.m. — Feed and Seed Ministries, 1500 Central Ave.; devotion at 1 p.m. followed by a meal.</li><li>• 5 p.m. — International Folklanders Dance Group, Folk Dance House, Ponderosa Estates. For more information, call (606) 928-9372.</li></ul> <b>Monday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8 to 9 a.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free breakfast; 25th Street and Carter Avenue.</li><li>• 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free lunch; 25th</li></ul>	<b>Tuesday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8 a.m. — Kiwanis Breakfast Club, Ashland YMCA.</li><li>• 8 to 9 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free breakfast; 25th Street and Carter Avenue.</li><li>• 11 a.m. — Story Hour, Flatwoods branch, Greenup County Public Library.</li><li>• 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free lunch; 25th Street and Carter Avenue.</li><li>• Noon — Downtown Ashland Lions Club, Elks Lodge, 900 Carter Ave.</li><li>• 4 to 5 p.m. — Women’s Grief Support Group, Community Hospice Care Center, 2330 Pollard Road, Ashland. (606) 329-1890.</li><li>• 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free dinner; 25th Street and Carter Avenue.</li><li>• 7 p.m. — Cricut Club, Flatwoods branch, Greenup County Public Library.</li></ul> <b>Wednesday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8 to 9 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen,</li></ul>
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Street and Carter Avenue. • Noon — Ashland Rotary Club, Ashland Elks Lodge, 900 Carter Ave. Lunch is \$9; public welcome. • 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free dinner; 25th Street and Carter Avenue.
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en, serving free breakfast; 25th Street and Carter Avenue. • 11 a.m. — Story Hour, main branch, Greenup County Public Library. • 11 a.m. — Book Club, McKell branch, Greenup County Public Library. • 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free lunch; 25th Street and Carter Avenue. • Noon — Ashland Kiwanis Club, Gattiland. • 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free dinner; 25th Street and Carter Avenue.
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<b>Thursday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8 to 9 a.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free breakfast; 25th Street and Carter Avenue.</li><li>• Noon — Optimist Club of Ashland, Ashland Elks Lodge, 900 Carter Ave.</li><li>• Noon — Russell Rotary Club, Bridges Christian Church. New members welcome.</li><li>• 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. — Ashland Community Kitchen, serving free lunch; 25th Street and Carter Avenue.</li><li>• 1 p.m. — Story Hour, McKell branch, Greenup County Public Library.</li><li>• 3:30 p.m. — Teen Program, Flatwoods branch, Greenup County Public Library.</li><li>• 4:30 to 5:15 p.m. — Ashland Community</li></ul>
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And for good reason...

Public notices in newspapers keep Kentuckians up-to-date on the local events, legal announcements and government initiatives that impact their daily lives. When it comes to keeping your community informed, your local newspaper delivers.

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\*Kentucky State Study 2023; conducted by Coda Ventures