

Volunteering Benefits Seniors' Mental Health

Seniors are vulnerable to mental health issues. The World Health Organization says around one in five older adults experience psychiatric disorders like depression, anxiety, and dementia-related mood changes. While various therapies can help, seniors may discover volunteering can be a surprising antidote to mental health concerns.

Volunteering offers seniors many benefits, including a renewed sense of purpose. Volunteering also helps combat social isolation, which can lower rates of depression and anxiety. According to Voices for National Service, older adults who volunteer have reduced risk of mortality, more optimism and feel less depressed and lonely. People who were once working full time and are now in retirement may find they have hours to spare. Those hours can be directed toward volunteer efforts, which can boost seniors' mental health in myriad ways.

- **Lowers depression and anxiety:** The National Institutes of Health says research indicates consistent volunteering can help to reduce risk of depressive symptoms. Staying engaged and active combats feelings of hopelessness.

- **Decreased social isolation:** Points of Light says regular time spent with peers and the people being helped can mitigate loneliness. Having a strong support network can make stress more tolerable and increase feelings of belonging.

- **Restores sense of purpose:** When work ends, many seniors lose the structure that governed their working life. Volunteering gives the opportunity to wake up, follow a schedule and achieve goals. It can be rewarding to play a valuable role in the community again, according to Voices for National Service.

- **Mental stimulation:** Volunteering may lead to learning new skills and interacting with others, and that can keep the mind sharp.

- **Physical activity:** Older adults may lead sedentary lifestyles if they have nothing to keep them busy. Volunteering helps a person engage in some sort of physical activity. A 2025 study published in the journal Social Science & Medicine found volunteering is associated with lower levels of hypertension and chronic inflammation. Staying active can lower blood pressure, risk of heart disease and eight types of cancer.

Volunteering is a tool older adults can use to stay healthy both physically and mentally.

Deaths And Funerals

Vicki Odom

Vicki Gwen Odom, 68, of Morganfield died on Sunday, August 2.

She was born June



25, 1958 in Union County, the daughter of William Kenneth Rust and Eula Lee Rust.

She dedicated her lift to family and friends.

Vicki is survived by her sons, Daniel Odom (Melissa) of Summersville, South Carolina and Matthew Odom (Mandy) of Sturgis; five grandchildren; her siblings, Frankie Rust, Kim Rhodes (Johnny), Rosie Langley (Allen), and Richard Rust (Linda); and many nieces, nephews, family, and friends.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her siblings, Lois Fulkerson, Patricia Fulkerson, and Benny Kay Rust.

Funeral will be Thursday, August 6, 1:00 P.M. at Whitsell Funeral Home in Morganfield. Visitation is 10:00 A.M. to service time on Thursday at the funeral home.

Burial will be in Uniontown City Cemetery.

Philip Sheridan

Philip Andrew “Flip” Sheridan, 69, of Sturgis died on Wednesday, July 29 at Indiana University Hospital in Indianapolis, Indiana under the care of hospice.

He is survived by his wife of 10 years, Amanda Luke Sheridan.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Robert “Shorty” and Joann Morrow Sheridan; two brothers, Henry “Hi” Sheridan and Howard “Ho” Sheridan; and a sister, Robyn Sheridan Timmilson.

Survivors also include a daughter, Chasity Sheridan Goldsbey; sisters, Vicki Sheridan Baird and husband, Charles Lee Baird, Kelly Sheridan Turner and husband, Gary Turner, and Julie Sheridan, nephews; a great-aunt; and several “best” friends.

Services will be held at a later date.

Edward Presley

Edward Eugene “Ed” Presley, 72, of Robards, Kentucky died on Thursday, July 30.

He was born Novem-



ber 25, 1953 to the late Anna June Butts and William “Bud” Presley.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his grandparents, Hubbie and Ida Stone; five siblings, Ronnie Presley, Dane Presley, Sue Parker, Marvin Butts, and Jack Butts; and three great-grandchildren.

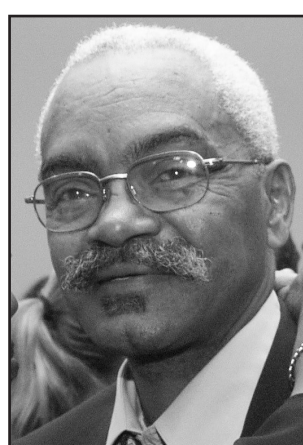
He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Brenda Presley; his children, Marc (Aimee), Bianca (Jo0se), and Jalayna (Johnny; grandchildren and great-grandchildren; his siblings, Katie Butts, Rick Butts, Becky Butts, Jim Butts, Patty Presley, Paule Presley, William Presley, and Rodney Presley; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

A celebration of life will be held at Thomasson’s Banquet Hall, 701 Atkinson Street, Henderson, Kentucky on Saturday, August 8 at 4:00 P.M. His son, Marc Presley will officiate.

Douglas Gray

Douglas Eugene Gray died on Monday, July 27.

He was born on De-



cember 8, 1942 in Sturgis to the late Alvin and Etta Gray. He was a graduate of Dunbar High School in Morganfield.

He was a U.S. Navy veteran and served during the Vietnam War. Following his military service, he began a long career with Ralston Purina in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Douglas enjoyed the outdoors, especially hunting and fishing.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Alvin and Etta Gray; and two brothers, Charles “Boop” Gray and Robert “Bubba” Gray.

He is survived by two children, Shamiel (Kaylan) Kennel and Edward (Andrea) Gray; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild; three brothers, Lacy Gray, George (Janice) Gray, and John Gray; a sister, Hazella Kelley; and nieces, nephews, extended family members, and friends.

Funeral service was held on Tuesday, August 5 at Whitsell Funeral Home in Sturgis with the Rev. Gerald Arnold officiating.

Burial will be at a later date at High Hills Cemetery in Sturgis.

Linda Thomas

Linda Nally Thomas died on Wednesday, July 29.

She was born February 17, 1959 to the late Jimmy and Joetta Nally.

Linda was a member of St. Ann’s Catholic



Church. She worked as secretary for Crop Production Services for several years.

She is survived by her son Alex (Joy) Thomas; her siblings, Karla (Mike) Baird, and Dickie (Jennifer) Nally; four grandchildren and nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by the father of her son, Tim Thomas.

Funeral services was held on Monday, August 3 at St. Ann Catholic Church in Morganfield with Fr. Freddie Byrd officiating.

Memorial contributions can be made to John Paul Catholic School or Eucharist Radio WEUC 88.7.

Class of '76 Planning 50th Reunion

The Webster County High School Class of 1976 is planning a 50 year reunion for Saturday, September 19. The event will be held at Hummingbird Hall, 1040 Market Street, Henderson.

Tickets are on sale now and may be purchased for \$35 per person by August 15. After that date ticket prices will. Increase to \$40 until September 5. Payment may be made through Venmo @ Pam Bivens-1. Tickets may also be purchased by mailing a check to Pam Bivins 4127 Liberty Pt., Owensboro, KY 42303.

Cocktails (mixers only provided) will start at 5:00 p.m. with dinner catered by Thomason’s BBQ starting at 6:00 p.m.

Class members who plan to attend may RSVP by text to 270-302-3868.

Between You and Me x 2

By Monty Carter

Living in Darkness

Living in darkness can be a frightful thing. Every day we encounter people trying to box shadows. They are uncertain about the future because the present is very dim. Standing in their shoes, you can feel angst, worry, doubt, pain, fear, shame, a sense of failure, and loneliness. The reasons are many: illness, financial issues, job security, marital strife, addiction, profound grief, family dysfunction, and mental health. These are just a few. I have stood in their shoes. It is a place of profound sadness and fear. It is lonely. And many of them are otherwise positive people, but every day another wave hits, and they see little relief. Life becomes overwhelming, and hope is diminished.

Imagine living from a place of fear, isolation, depression, shame, and sadness. These aren’t things you can easily “shake off” and confidently move ahead. Friends and family with good intentions counsel, “Just get over it,” as if it were that easy. We wouldn’t tell someone with diabetes to get over it. And yet, for people battling emotional and mental health issues, it seems ok to say it. For many, it is a lifelong battle; for others, it is a long season.

There is a profound sense of losing hope. Without hope, we can become ships adrift at sea. Navigating storms at sea is hard enough, but without instruments there is no direction. And we all need direction. We need a guiding force to help us navigate life storms. Dr. Wayne Oates (the father of the discipline, Pastoral Care) wrote and lectured extensively on human crisis and the spiritual care of its victims. He acknowledged the overwhelming sense of darkness in these moments, and then with a raised voice he would declare, “God is a God of darkness as well as the God of light!” His point was that no matter where we find ourselves (in light or darkness), God is ever-present.

The awareness of God’s presence in our trouble provides hope. I have “go-to” Bible verses that I press into when life is weighing me down. These are precious promises that remind

me of God’s presence despite the pain or trouble I face:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” (Ps. 46:1)

“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Deut. 31:8)

“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” (Ps. 34:18)

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened... for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (Josh 1:9)

“Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 8:39)

These are just a few of the many promises of God’s presence and care in Scripture. They bring me comfort and confidence in crisis. They remind me that I am not alone. The One who created and ordered the world is with me, and you too! And this is the launchpad of hope.

If you know someone battling hopelessness, stay with them. Encourage them, pray for and with them. Don’t give up on them. You don’t have to say anything; just be present. The ministry of “presence” is a powerful force. If you are in the battle, press into God. Cry out and share your pain or trouble. He is right there beside you, and He isn’t going to leave you!

I don’t know if it’s my Irish roots, but I love the Celtic hymn, “Be Thou My Vision.” The third verse brings me confidence, courage, and hope in dark times. May it be so for you as well:

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;

Be thou my dignity, thou my delight.

Thou my soul’s shelter, thou my high tow’r;

Raise thou me Heav’nward, O Pow’r of my pow’r

Agape,
Monty

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Union County Fiscal Court is accepting applications for a Full-Time Home-Delivered Meal/Transportation Driver position at our Senior Citizen Facility.

This full-time position includes benefits, health insurance, retirement, and vacation.

Applications and a copy of the job description can be picked up and turned in at the Union County Judge/Executive’s Office, located at 100 W. Main St., Morganfield, KY 42437. They may be obtained via email at jill.hunley@unioncountky.gov or on our website at www.unioncountky.org. Applications will be accepted until August 14, 2026.

The Union County Fiscal Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer: All applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability.

8/5c

“Our family serving your family since 1881”

HENRY & HENRY MONUMENTS

We accept appointments for one-on-one consultation.

207 Sturgis Rd.
Marion, Ky.
(270) 965-4514

602 US 62 East
Eddyville, Ky.
(270) 388-1818

