

Celebrating Hanukkah & the Light We Bring

As we wrap up 2024, we'd like to thank everyone who has made this year so special at AgeWell at the JCC South Hills.

Nearing Hanukkah, we think about the themes of light, resilience, & community. American author Anita Diamant writes "This is the season when people of all faiths & cultures are pushing back against the planetary darkness. We string bulbs, ignite bonfires, & light candles. And we sing."

This is the time to focus on the unique light each of us brings to the world, and we encourage you to

consider ways that you can share your light with AgeWell members in the new year.

Are you a retired professional with knowledge to share? Do you have a special hobby or skill that you could demonstrate? Do you have time to spare that could be spent volunteering? We're looking forward to an even brighter 2025 & all the new opportunities to grow, learn, & connect together in the new year.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season,
Mickey Benson & Hayley Maher

A Novel Idea!

Turn the page on 2024 with a new read! Throughout December, you can drop off used books in the AgeWell office.

On December 31, join us for a Noon Year's Eve celebration. At 11:30 on 12/31, anyone who would like to try a "Blind Date with a Book" will be able to choose a book to take home for the new year. Books will be labeled with genre & a brief description, and participants will be able to choose one that interests them. You do not need to donate a book to participate, & you do not need to register to receive a book.

We look forward to seeing what everyone is reading in the new year!

Staying Connected

The holidays & winter season can sometimes bring a sense of loneliness. Stay connected throughout the winter months with AgeWell at the JCC.

First, stop by the AgeWell office in December to write a holiday card. You can choose a card to send to a loved one, or you can write a note for another AgeWell member & staff will deliver the card.

Second, consider volunteering or signing up to receive calls through the CheckMates telephone reassurance program. In this program, volunteers are paired with older adults who may be isolated or lonely, & the pair enjoys weekly social phone calls.

If you are interested in making or receiving calls, please contact Amy Gold at (412) 697-3528. Social connections brighten the cold months- stay in touch this winter!

Meet & Greet Social

December 3 • 10:30 am • AgeWell Office

Whether you are new to AgeWell or you have been a regular for a while, this is your chance to connect with other members! Stop by on the first Tuesday of each month at 10:30 am to chat with other members & enjoy light refreshments. You do not need to register for this program.

Canva Workshop: Create Holiday Cards

December 6 • 10 am • Conference Room

Canva is a free, online program that allows you to create digital designs, including flyers, invitations, & more. The possibilities are endless! Come to this workshop to learn how to use Canva to create cards for the holiday season. If you have a laptop, bring it to this session to follow along. You do not need to register for this program.

Scrabble

December 9 • 1:30 pm • Lobby

Sharpen your brain by playing word games! Connect letters to form words in this exciting tile game. You do not need to register for this program.

Needlepoint Basics

December 10 • 11am • Conference Room

If you are new to needlepoint, or want to learn how to get started, this is the workshop for you. In this workshop, you will learn everything you need to know about decorative stitches & beautiful small projects. You do not need to register for this program.

Yarn Bombing with Cantor Rena

December 11 • 12 pm • Lobby.

You've heard of "work from home", how about "volunteer from home"? Scarf bombing is the act of placing scarves outside for people in need to take to stay warm. Cantor Rena Shapiro will demonstrate how to make scarves to leave for those in need. Participants should bring their own loop yarn for this workshop, which can be found at any major craft store. No previous experience is needed. Please register by contacting Mickey at mbenson@jccpgh.org or (412) 278-1795.

National Parks

December 11 • 12 pm • Conference Room

Join us for a viewing of Wonders of the National Parks: A Geology of North America. This month, the group will explore Redwood National Park. This series is presented by Great Courses & will be facilitated by volunteer Randy Detweiler. The video lecturer is a geologist & former professor Ford Cochran, who is the Director of Programming for National Geographic Expeditions. This series will take place monthly, & a different national park will be the focus of each discussion. You do not need to register for this program.

Knitting & Crochet Club

December 12 • 11am • Conference Room

This group is for anyone who wants to get together with other AgeWell members to work on their knitting or crochet projects. Members should bring their own supplies for this session, & you do not need to register to attend.

Vaccination Clinic

**December 13 • 9:30 am-12:30 pm
Conference Room**

Giant Eagle Pharmacy will be providing pneumonia, shingles, RSV, COVID-19, & flu vaccinations. Make an appointment by stopping in the AgeWell office or contacting Hayley at hmaher@jccpgh.org or (412) 697-3552.

Quilling: Jewelry & Gift Boxes

December 13 • 11am • Lobby

Quilling is the art of making decorative paper designs. This month's activity will be designing floral decorative boxes. Whether you're a beginner or a crafting enthusiast, this workshop is perfect for anyone looking to explore the art of quilling. You do not need to register for this program.

Theater Club

December 16 • 12 pm • Conference Room

This month, hear from Mark Clayton Southers, an award-winning playwright, stage director, scenic designer, photographer & theatrical producer. He is the founder & producing artistic director of the Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company where he has produced over 160 full length & one-act plays, including August Wilson's complete ten-play American Century Cycle. You do not need to register for this program.

Book Club

December 17 • 1:30 pm • Conference Room

No assigned reading, just come tell the group about books you've read recently. This month, please purchase your favorite book & wrap it to participate in a white elephant book exchange. You do not need to register for this program.

Conversations with Amy

December 18 • 10 am • Conference Room

Join AgeWell's Information & Referral Specialist Amy Gold, MSW for a conversation related to resources for older adults. Each month will feature a new topic for discussion. In December, the group will talk about holiday stress & staying positive. You do not need to register for this program.

Holiday Sing Along with Cantor Kalix Jacobson

December 18 • 1:30 pm • Social Hall

Join us for an afternoon of joyful music led by Cantor Kalix Jacobson from Temple Emmanuel. Known for their soulful services and lively ukelele performances, Cantor Kalix will lead the group in a delightful mix of oldies, Jewish melodies, and winter holiday classics. You do not need to register for this program.

Appetizer & Potato Dishes Recipe Swap

December 19 • 11 am • Lobby

This month's theme for the AgeWell collaborative cookbook is appetizers & potato dishes. Cook your favorite recipe & bring it in to share. Bring the recipe to be added to the AgeWell collaborative cookbook. Contact Beth Rudel at brudel@jccpgh.org to register.

On This Day in History...

December 19 • 12 pm • Conference Room

This new monthly program will feature a new piece of history each month. Did you know that on December 19, 1732, Benjamin Franklin published the first Poor Richard's Almanac? Come to this discussion to learn more about this historical event. You do not need to register to attend this program.

National Crossword Puzzle Day

December 20 • AgeWell Office

The first crossword puzzle was published in the New York World newspaper on December 21, 1913. Crosswords are a great way to stimulate your brain! Stop by the AgeWell office on 12/20 between 9 am and 5 pm to pick up a printed crossword puzzle to take home for the weekend.

Musical Movie Marathon

**December 23-27 • 2 pm
Conference Room**

Celebrate the holidays with a musical movie marathon! During the third week of December, a classic musical will be shown at 2 pm each day. Come enjoy a screening of *Bye, Bye, Birdie*, *Anything Goes*, *Into the Woods*, *Mr. Saturday Night* and finally *Guys & Dolls*. You do not need to register for these activities, and popcorn will be provided!

Merriment with Mickey **December 25 in the AgeWell Office**

On December 25, we'll be talking about holiday traditions & starting a few of our own. At 11am, stop in for holiday trivia & cookie decorating. At 2 pm enjoy a festive movie & small craft. You do not need to register to attend these activities. Happy holidays!

Integrated Wellness Group with Dr. Elizabeth Cohen **December 27 • 12 pm • Conference Room**

Our culture is amid a paradigm shift in defining medicine as including the mind/body connection rather than simply mechanistically as in the past. This group, led by Reiki Master & retired professor Dr. D Elizabeth Cohen, will explore various wellness modalities through book discussion, guest lectures, & explorations of wellness techniques. You do not need to register for this program.

Games with Grandkids **December 30 • 1:30-3:30 pm • Social Hall**

Are you spending time with grandkids while they have time off from school? Bring them to the JCC to enjoy an afternoon of board games! You do not need to register for this program.

Noon Year's Eve Celebration **December 31 • AgeWell office**

Let's mark the end of 2024 with a celebration & ring in the new year! At 10am, stop by the AgeWell office for coffee, donuts, & games. At 11:30, we'll reveal the "Blind Date with a Book" options (see the front page for details). At 12pm, we'll have a l'chaim toast for the new year. You do not need to register for these activities. Join us afterwards for lunch in the JCafe, & place your reservation as usual by 12 pm on the day before.

Ongoing Programs

Blood pressure screenings with JAA **December 10 • 10-11 am**

Book Buddies Volunteer Program

Volunteer clearances must be completed. Stop by the AgeWell office for more information.

Canasta **Each Thursday from 1-3 pm**

Counseling Hours **December 9 and 23 • 10 am-1 pm**

JCafe Congregate Lunch Program **M-F from 12:30-1:30. Registration required.**

Mah Jongg **Each Tuesday from 1-3 pm**

If you are a mah jongg player, consider pre-ordering your 2025 card from the JCC South Hills mah jongg club. Five dollars from each card purchased will be donated to the JCC, & your card will be mailed to your house. To place an order, contact Kathy Jones by text at (412) 228-2722 or by email at kjones1364@hotmail.com.

Sound Bathing **December 16 and 30 at 12 pm**

Puzzle Swap

Available every day during AgeWell office hours.

Technology Tutoring By appointment only