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Letter From Judge Brad Jarrell Regarding Last Week's Commission Meeting

JULY 29TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Letter From Judge Brad Jarrell Regarding Last Week's Commission Meeting

To Whom It May Concern,

In light of the article published by the Dexter Statesman on July 23, 2024, I find it necessary to clarify some of the misunderstandings that may have been taken away from the Commissioner's meeting on Monday July 22, 2024. Most importantly, I want to ensure that everyone understands that the courtrooms at the Stoddard County Justice Center are in great shape and we use them on a daily basis.

In meeting with the Commissioners, my sole purpose was to report that the courtrooms could use new carpet. In our main courtrooms, A and B, the carpet is worn and has been unraveling at the edges. In courtroom C, which we use on a daily basis for smaller cases and hearings, there has never been carpet. This results in courtroom C having a significant echo, which is why we do not use it for cases that require a court reporter. The court reporter, also known as a stenographer, must be able to listen carefully and transcribe everything said in a court case, however the court reporter is only required in a limited number of case types.

I must also clarify that there is no mold in the courthouse. The only statement regarding that issue would have been to state that the old chairs, which were replaced over a decade ago, had to be thrown away due to them being cloth and unable to be properly cleaned. Since that time, all new chairs purchased for the courthouse have been selected in part based on their ability to be properly sanitized. We have also been improving the chairs in the courthouse by adding arms and removing rolling casters to increase ease and comfort for our visitors and jurors. The addition of new carpeting will also serve to help us in this endeavor.

I am not sure how this got so blown out of proportion, but I am grateful to the County Commission and local news organizations for their support and interest in the Stoddard County Justice Center.

Sincerely,

Bradley D. Jarrell

Associate Circuit Judge

LAST UPDATED ON JULY 29TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Age Spots by Jackie Dover - Freedom of the Open Road

JULY 22ND 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Age Spots by Jackie Dover - Freedom of the Open Road

Age Spots

Freedom of the Open Road

There is nothing like hopping into your car and cruising down the road with your music blasting and the wind in your face. Driving is important to maintaining independence for all ages but especially seniors. Being safe on the road is crucial and everyone needs to take the needed precautions to be the best driver we can be.

The first thing for safety is to ensure you are in the best shape physically, staying active and getting regular check-ups to make sure there are no issues that can arise while we are in control of a vehicle should be mandatory for all drivers. Make sure you understand what medication you are taking and if there are any side effects like drowsiness that could impact alertness on the road. Getting regular vision and hearing checks is important to ensure you are able to make the needed adjustments while driving as quickly as possible.

Plan your route so you are comfortable knowing how to get to where you are going. GPS and navigation aids are great with telling you how to get to unfamiliar places, use the hands free options so you are able to keep both hands on the wheel. Planning a trip so most or all of the driving is done during daylight hours is also a great idea; visibility is better and you have more notice to make required adjustments. In addition, plan enough time that if there is bad weather, you can make other arrangements if needed. Weather conditions such as rain, fog, or snow can significantly affect driving conditions. You may need to slow down and maintain a larger distance from other vehicles. If conditions worsen, consider postponing your trip until weather conditions improve or look into other options such as public transit, ridesharing or arranging rides with friends and family. Being safe is the key.

Keeping your vehicle in good condition is important for all drivers. Maintain regular service and inspections; check tires, lights, brakes and fluid levels on a regular basis. Many newer cars will alert you to any issues and when servicing is required. Having my car tell me when it needs an oil change is super convenient and maybe a little creepy.

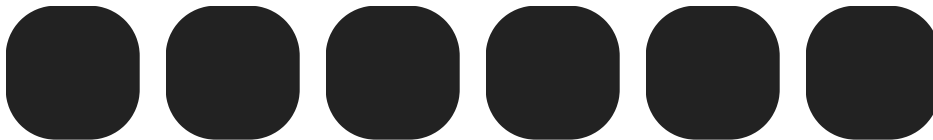
A very important rule for driving safety is minimizing distractions. I cannot tell you how many times I see drivers of all ages talking on their phone, head down texting or eating as I try to avoid getting in their way. Limit distractions, use the hands free and voice activated options. Try to avoid adjusting the radio or other controls while moving. Be the example for others.

The discussion on when someone should stop driving will vary for everyone. If there are physical limitations involved such as vision loss or dementia the conversation may come sooner than anyone wishes and some people will be good drivers their entire lives. There are several resources that offer refresher courses or evaluations for older drivers such as AARP, the National Institute on Aging and even your local insurance company. For or more information on this topic or any age related issues, please call Aging Matters 1-800-392-8771, because Aging Matters.

LAST UPDATED ON JULY 22ND 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Age Spots by Jackie Dover - We All Need Heroes

MAY 14TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Age Spots by Jackie Dover - We All Need Heroes

We All Need Heroes

Have you ever been pulled over for speeding or "rolling through" a stop sign? These are such frustrating experiences that can feel like a waste of time and can be overly stressful as you try to find your insurance and registration without being suspicious. At least that's what I think when I am pulled over. It is stressful, but have you ever thought about the stress on the other side of that stop. The officer is walking up to a vehicle with an unknown amount of people and unknown intentions. Are you a family out on an ice cream run or did you just rob a house down the street? The fact the officer still does their job without knowing what may happen is heroic.

President John Kennedy established national Police Week in 1962 to recognize and honor law enforcement officers with a special acknowledgement of those who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Events are held throughout the country in celebration of Law Enforcement during this week. If you get the chance, please show kindness and respect to all of the men and women who put on the badge and put their lives on the line to keep us all safe. You can show gratitude and support by thanking any officers you see out and about. If an officer has gone above and beyond for you, write a letter and show your appreciation.

Locally, Seniors and Lawmen Together (SALT) an organization established to bring together seniors and law enforcement to address unmet safety needs and allow seniors to meet and interact with law enforcement in a friendly and positive environment will host the Law Enforcement Memorial Ceremony. This event will be at 10:00 am on Thursday, May 9 at the Cape Bible Chapel, 2911 Kage Rd, Cape Girardeau, Mo. This event will recognize all the fallen heroes who died in the line of duty in our area. This event offers family, friends and coworkers of those who have lost their lives to remember them with respect, gratitude and honor the men who made a difference in their communities and paid the ultimate price. SALT honors those from the counties of Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, Iron, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Ripley, Scott, Stoddard and Wayne.

What makes a hero? Someone who is willing to give of themselves and sacrifice for the betterment of others. Someone willing to put themselves in danger to step in front and protect those who are weaker and more vulnerable. A hero runs into danger and helps guide others out of the line of fire. Law Enforcement have a tough job and get little respect and sometimes little pay and recognition. Please take the time to acknowledge all that our first responders do to allow us safety and security as we go about our days and nights.

If you are a senior or have questions about senior issues, please call Aging Matters 800-392-8771. Because....Aging Matters.

LAST UPDATED ON MAY 14TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Age Spots - Time Matters

APRIL 03RD 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

Age Spots - Time Matters

Time Matters

My twins, my babies are graduating from high school in a few months. I cannot believe how fast time flies. It feels like yesterday I was carrying them around in their little car seats and now they tower over me. The funny thing about time is, it's the one thing we can never get back. Once the time has passed, it is just gone, we cannot slow it down to savor a precious moment or speed it up to get through an awkward or painful time. Time is finite for each of us and we each get to decide how we spend our time.

We do not have to wait to start living the life we want to have; we can start now. Prioritize what is important to you.

- Spending time with family and friends that you enjoy is a great way to spend your time. Building social connections has many benefits; it can lead to better health both physically and mentally. Friends and family can be a support system and help when needed and can hold you accountable to stay active and make better choices. Spending time with the younger family members can build memories they will cherish forever.
- Devote time to hobbies or find new hobbies to pursue. I love to read and do that almost daily. It is a way for me to relax and refocus on myself; it is something that is just for me. I can turn off the outside chatter and just focus on what I find enjoyable. Finding something you enjoy doing can add value to your life, it can reduce stress, make you happier and introduce you to new people who have similar interests.
- Be true to yourself and live the life you want. Get to know yourself and what makes you happy and pursue that. We all need to make choices that bring us peace and happiness. Find out what that is for you.
- At the end, when you reflect back on your life, you do not want to have regrets about the life not lived. Take that vacation of your dreams. Reach out to the friend you lost touch with. Make amends to those you have wronged and choose the life that makes you happy.
- Make healthy life changes. Eating healthy and incorporating more physical activity may help you live a longer healthier life. It could give you more time with those you care about and allow you to do more of the things you enjoy.

I am enjoying this time with my High School Seniors, we will never have these fun, stressful and crazy moments again. I know in the next few months we will have lots of changes, some I will enjoy, some I will struggle through, but I plan to make as many long term memories as I can, because this time matters. I hope you do the same.

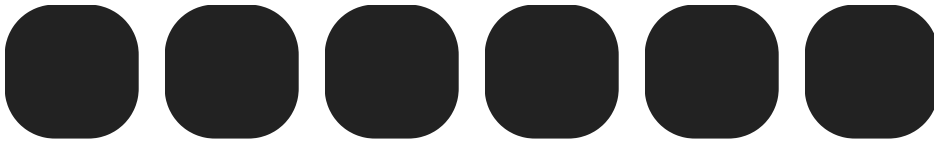
There are only 10,080 minutes in a week, how do you want to spend those precious minutes?

If you have questions about aging services, please call Aging Matters, 800-392-8771. Because, Aging Matters.

LAST UPDATED ON APRIL 03RD 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Age Spots - New and Expanded Programs from Aging Matters

JUNE 23RD 2023 BY DEE LOFLIN

Age Spots - New and Expanded Programs from Aging Matters

New and Expanded Programs from Aging Matters

Here at Aging Matters we are always trying to find new ways to help seniors in our 18 county service area which includes Bollinger, Butler, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Dunklin, Iron, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, Reynolds, Ripley, St. Francois, Ste Genevieve, Scott, Stoddard and Wayne counties. When we get calls asking for help, we try to find any program or service to help. Sometimes there are no existing programs.

We are expanding some existing programs and starting some brand new ones in July. AgingRx is a program we have been doing in Cape Girardeau County for 2 years, we were able to expand this into Bollinger, Perry and Scott counties last year and this year we will be expanding into all 18 of our counties. This program helps those who are 60 or older and who live in our service area get help with prescription medications. A senior in need must call our office and we will screen them for all available Extra Help programs. This allows us to help those in need get the most help available. After the applications are complete, we can then help with some prescriptions costs no matter if they are approved

for Extra Help or not.

Aging Matters currently partners with Miracle Ear to provide seniors who are 300% of the Federal Poverty Level help in getting hearing aids. With this program, you must live in our 18 county service area, have income under 300% of the Federal Poverty Level and be 60 or older. For this program, please contact the closest Miracle Ear office. If you need transportation to the appointment, Aging Matters can also assist with those costs.

Many seniors struggle accessing and using technology that is needed daily. Things as simple as using Facebook and texting to stay connected to family to using computers to check their Medicare and Social Security accounts. Aging Matters is planning to address these issues by offering classes to seniors to teach them how to safely use the devices and programs commonly available. Hopefully this will give our seniors the confidence and freedom to access technology as needed.

Another common issue we hear is seniors who have problems managing their finances. Living on a fixed income can be difficult with the cost of everyday items increasing. The unexpected loss of income from a spouse or lost job can also cause stress and issues for seniors. Aging Matters is beginning a program that will help seniors learn to set budgets and live within their means. It will also allow for one on one discussions of financial goals and money saving tips.

Aging Matters continues to serve meals at 32 senior nutrition centers. These centers provide a nutritious meal Monday through Friday; home delivered meals are also available for those 60 and older who are not physically able to go to a center. The senior centers also offer many support and recreational services such as bingo and other games, educational classes, dances, physical fitness programs and many opportunities to engage with others. For those who live outside the area the Senior Centers can deliver to, we offer a Distance Dining Program. This program sends frozen meals that can be heated in an oven or a microwave and gives the senior a warm, nutritious meal

For information about any of these programs or general information please call Aging Matters 1-800-392-8771, because Aging Matters.

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