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May 2019 Newsletter



Seniors Are on Pace to Out-Number Young People for the First Time Ever

May is National Older Americans Month. This is a time to both celebrate seniors and raise awareness about the many ways older adults impact the lives of others. It is also an opportunity to learn about one of the most important demographic groups in the country, which is far too often taken for granted in today's busy society.

Did you know that when Older Americans Month was first created more than a half-century ago in 1963, there were only 17 million Americans, out of an average population of 189 million, who would actually live long enough to see their 65th birthday. Today, however, there are an estimated 49.2 million American seniors. They comprise roughly 15 percent of the U.S. population.

Now, for the first time ever, research tells us that older adults are on track to out-number young people. By the end of the next decade, the entire living "Baby Boomer" generation will be older than age 65. This means one in every five U.S. citizens will be of retirement age. By 2035, that number will swell to an astounding 78 million people, comfortably eclipsing those under the age of 18.

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Let us share a few more surprising facts during this year's National Older Americans Month:

- In 2009, there were 39.6 million people aged 65 and older. In the past 10 years, there has been an increase of 10 million more, or 25 percent growth.
- Americans over age 60 already out-number those under 15 years old.
- "Elder Americans," or those age 85 and up, are the single fastest growing age group in the country.
- 42 percent of Americans aged 65 and older are from minority groups.
- Between 1900 and 1960, life expectancy increased by 2.4 years. Since 1960, it's increased by 3.5 years.
- The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the country's senior population will top 87 million by 2050.

There are many reasons to honor older adults, and National Older Americans Month is a great opportunity to show our beloved seniors just how much they mean to us.

It is also the right time to have important conversations surrounding how to age well as Older Americans or as their loved ones. Knowing how you will handle the need for long-term care, should it arise, or the legacy you want to leave your family, are critical choices to make while you are able to make decisions for yourself. Do not wait to schedule a meeting with attorney Alan Hougum to discuss the planning you want to make for yourself and your family.

5 Personal Care Tips for Helping an Aging Parent this National Older Americans Month

Did you know every May is National Older Americans Month? It is an occasion to honor and celebrate senior adults across the country, and raise awareness about the many challenges they face. It is also one of the many opportunities for adult children of aging parents to give back.

National Older Americans Month first occurred in 1963. This was a time when Medicare had yet to be created and few government programs provided assistance to seniors in need. At the time, more than one-third of all older Americans lived in poverty.

Thankfully, there has been tremendous progress over the past half-century to improve the lives of Older Americans. When it comes to age-related challenges in the home, much of the credit should go to family caregivers. Many of us do not realize that today they provide more than 80 percent of day-to-day support for aging adults.

Whether you are an Older American or an adult child caring for aging parents or grandparents, let us share five personal care tips that you may be able to use when it comes to family caregiving.

1. Eating. Consider assisting with both grocery shopping and meal planning. Your assistance can relieve stress for senior loved ones with mobility issues, and provide nutritious food choices.



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Preparing easy-access finger-foods and pre-cooked multi-serving dishes can be helpful. Further, providing plastic cups, plates, and straws can reduce clean-up.

2. Dressing. Adult children and family caregivers can help aging parents by keeping their laundry clean and by laying out loose-fitting, comfortable clothes the night before. Buying comfortable shoes and clothes with Velcro or large zippers can help them more easily adapt to changes of clothes needed, such as temperature changes and varying weather.

3. Bathing. Bathing may require caregiver supervision, as bathtubs and showers can be slippery and dangerous. At a minimum, consider removing any throw rugs and other such obstacles to reduce the risk of falling. Adaptive bathing equipment can also be helpful, such as shower chairs and hand-held showerheads.

4. Dental Care. A lapse in dental care could lead to complicated, and painful, health issues. Make sure elder loved ones are rinsing their teeth after every meal, and help them brush or keep their dentures clean if they need assistance. Do not hesitate to ask a dentist for more specific advice for you, as the caregiver, or for your loved one.

5. Toileting Care. Adaptive safety equipment can help seniors use the toilet safely, such as raised toilet seats and grab bars.

We know this article may raise more questions than it answers when you are caring for an Older American. Do not wait to learn more on our website or contact us to schedule a meeting with attorney Alan Hougum.



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Attorney Alan Hougum and his compassionate team will help you protect yourself and the people you love with strategic planning strategies, such as wills, asset protection and trusts, powers of attorney, estate trusts, elder law planning, Medicaid crisis planning, Medicaid eligibility and application, probate and estate administration, avoiding probate, charitable planning and giving, special needs, and estate tax planning. Hougum Law Firm, LLC, serves the entire Wausau, Wisconsin area.

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305 S. 18th Avenue, Suite 200, Wausau, Wisconsin 54401. Do you have questions you need answered before or after your appointment? Just let us know! Contact us by email at info@hougumlaw.com or call us at 715-843-5001.