

Prime of LIFE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2022

HARLAN NEWSPAPERS SPECIAL SECTION

Gilbert Ahrenholtz likes the Obscure and Different

Collectibles on Display

His treasures are as vast and varied as his life experiences

By Molly Blanco, News Reporter

DEFIANCE -- Vinyl records, barber chairs, fainting goats, tractors and cash registers: you can find all of these items and more in one of Gilbert Ahrenholtz's collections.

Ahrenholtz has collected wacky items for most of his life and his collections have grown to include anything and everything that catches his eye.

Ahrenholtz, who owns Total Contracting in Harlan, has lived a life as interesting as his collections.

He once hosted a radio show, performed original songs as a side gig and even formed a DJ duo with his wife, Connie, who he has been married to for almost 47 years. Ahrenholtz and his wife DJ'd every Saturday night for about 20 years. They named their group after his favorite song, the Beatles' "Twist and Shout."

Ahrenholtz lives in Defiance with

his wife on the same farm where he grew up. He started farming with his father when he was young and his plan was to continue the family farm. However, he realized after a few years that farming wasn't his passion.

"Four or five years of the hog business was enough for me," Ahr-

enholtz said. "Some people love to farm... I think my talent that God gave me is handling people."

Although he does not farm anymore, he owns lots of animals that he "collects" as pets, including fainting goats, alpacas and miniature donkeys.

He says his family loves the

animals, especially his nine grandchildren. Ahrenholtz has two sons and two daughters, all of which are married. Ahrenholtz said family is his number one priority, and he is proud of his children and grandchildren

Gilbert *please see next page*



Gilbert and Connie Ahrenholtz. (Photo by Molly Blanco)



Gilbert Ahrenholtz with one of his collectible items. He loves to look for collectibles that are different and obscure. (Photo by Molly Blanco)

Ahrenholtz displays collectibles at office, home

Gilbert *from front page*

every day.

“We’re a pretty close family,” Ahrenholtz said.

Ahrenholtz said some of his family jokes that his collections are “junk,” but his son loves it and even has collections of his own.

Venturing Out

After he left the family farm, Ahrenholtz went to manage a store in Des Moines that was the first store to sell only waterbeds. The business was obviously short-lived, but he said it made a killing during its peak.

Around the age of 30, he started working at a camera store in Fort Dodge. He also started hosting a six-hour radio show on the station KKEZ called “Solid Gold Sunday Night,” using his real name, Gerry Allen, as his stage name.

Everyone knew him as Gilbert, so he used his actual name on his radio show for anonymity.

He hosted the radio show for about a year when he got offered a better-paying job as a DJ at a nightclub.

“One night I was with the owner [of the club] and he said ‘I would like to find that Gerry Allen. That’s who I would like to DJ at my club.’ And of course, he knew me as Gilbert, so I said ‘I am Gerry Allen!’” Ahrenholtz said.

Even after he moved back to Defiance with his family, Ahrenholtz continued to be a performer.

He started performing “Song-agrams” about 40 years ago. He would write a personalized song or poem for a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion and perform it at events.

“I would dress up in outfits and I would go to their house on their birthday... and I wrote an eight verse poem,” Ahrenholtz said.

“I probably did up to a thousand of them.”

Ahrenholtz went to great lengths for a laugh and wore all sorts of costumes for the performance.

“I’ve dressed up as a cowboy, I’ve dressed up as Elvis... I’ve dressed up as a woman!” Ahrenholtz laughed. “That one was very popular.”

Ahrenholtz does not perform anymore, but he still likes to be in front of a crowd.

“I still like to get up in front of people, so I open the service [at

church],” Ahrenholtz said.

Ahrenholtz and his wife also love to host events with family and friends at their home.

Ahrenholtz said one of the reasons he likes to collect is because he likes to see other people enjoy his collections or discover something they had never seen before. His wife carefully curates and displays many of his collections around his office and at their home.

“I just love it when people come in and say ‘this is so cool,’” Ahrenholtz said.

He said some of the items he is most proud of are the most obscure.

“Some things are so neat to me, and pretty soon somebody who had been in here 20 times will say ‘what is that?’ and I have a story behind it,” Ahrenholtz said.

Collectibles

He said he has a glass fire extinguisher that is shaped like a light bulb and is meant to hang above a doorway. People would walk past it every time they went through the doorway, but they never knew what it was. He explained that it is an old-fashioned fire extinguisher made to be thrown above the doorway and clear the exit so people can escape.

His wife suggested he put it in storage so it does not break, but he prefers to keep his prized possessions on display.

“If I have to put it away so it doesn’t get broken, nobody will see it and it isn’t worth anything to me,” Ahrenholtz said. “I want people to see fun stuff.”

Ahrenholtz has so many strange or obscure items that even he does not always know what they do.

“I got something back there that I don’t even know what it is!” he laughed.

Over the years of hunting for collector’s items, Ahrenholtz has found numerous unexpected gems. He once purchased an abandoned storage unit for \$40 and found \$6,000 worth of silver dimes inside.

Ahrenholtz keeps many of his collections in a huge barn on his property that is packed full of items.

“I take my kids up in that barn with the cobwebs and stuff piled in rotten boxes, and I say ‘Someday, kids, this will all be yours,’” he laughed.

Records are his favorite items



Gilbert and Connie feed some of the animals they have on the farm. (Photo by Molly Blanco)

to collect, and he estimates he owns thousands of vinyl records and 8 track albums in total. Some other items Ahrenholtz loves to collect include jukeboxes, tractors and cars.

However, he also loves to collect strange and obscure items. He recently acquired a vinyl record that circulated in Russia in the 1950s and 60s that was made to look like an x-ray image.

During that time, certain music was banned in Russia, so people started sneaking albums into the country by disguising them as x-ray images.

Ahrenholtz searches for new items to add to his collections every Saturday at the Denison livestock auction. Sometimes he picks up a box of items

for a dollar without knowing what is inside, which is how he finds some of his unique and rare items.

“Sometimes it takes me three or four hours to go through that box, and sometimes you really find some neat stuff,” Ahrenholtz said.

Ahrenholtz is still on the hunt for a player piano and a cylinder record player, items that he would love to add to his collection.

Ahrenholtz said his collections are not for sale; he collects because it brings him joy, not because the items have monetary value.

He likes to keep everything that is meaningful to him, and he has collected a lot of meaningful items over the years.

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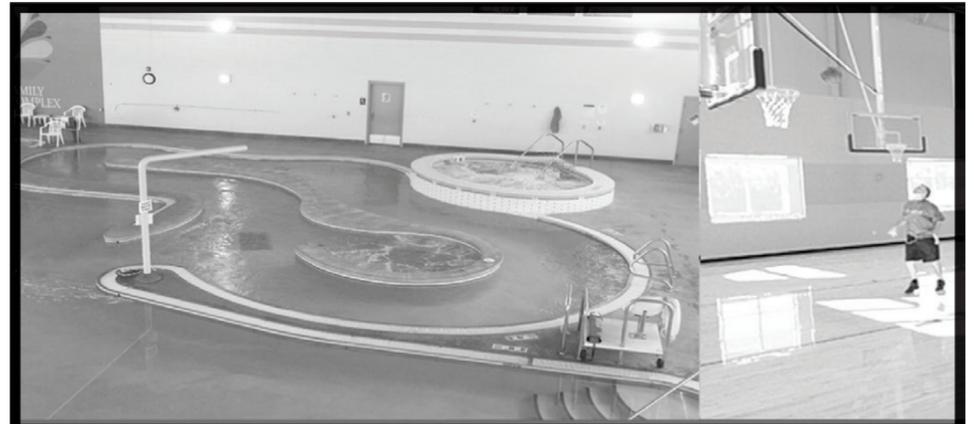
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Telehealth Therapy Services Offers Seniors At-Home Care

REGIONAL -- Myrtue Medical Center's Senior Life Solutions is an intensive outpatient group therapy program for seniors. Individuals may benefit from the program if they are experiencing symptoms of age-related depression or anxiety, dealing with difficult life transitions, a recent health diagnosis, or the loss of a loved one.

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, Myrtue Medical Center immediately started to identify ways to continue to meet with seniors in the community. Myrtue's Senior Life Solutions began providing services remotely, often called teletherapy, to its patients in April of 2020. This allowed their senior patients to receive the care they needed while remaining safe and secure at home.

Teletherapy services are provided via telephone or computer by a licensed therapist for Senior Life Solutions. After an initial assessment, Senior Life Solutions individualizes a care plan for each patient where they meet up to three times per week in an encouraging, supportive setting utilizing face to face and/or teletherapy services.

Senior Life Solutions Director, Dave Bauman, said, "Our teletherapy services allow our patients to continue to reap the benefits of group and individual therapy from the safety of their homes. During a group session, we all dial in on the phone or log in from a computer at the same time, and each patient has the opportunity to form a bond and sometimes even friendship with other members in the group who are experiencing similar life changes."

Bauman added, "Emotional health services are needed more than ever during these difficult times, and it is wonderful being part of a program that improves the quality of life in our community." An anonymous member of the Senior Life Solutions group shared, "It isn't the same as face to face, but I felt very, very supported. I was glad we were able to still be together. For those that aren't tech-savvy, the staff has been very helpful keeping us all connected."

While originally housed in the basement of the Harlan rural health clinic, Myrtue Medical Center has recently relocated Senior Life Solutions to 1303 Garfield Ave on the campus of Myrtue Medical Center. "The recent move to our new space has been a nice transition. Our clients love the remodeled space and all the upgrades," said Bauman.

The move to the new building has allowed for better patient accommodations including;

- Adjacent parking
- Handicap accessibility
- Updated furnishings
- Closer restroom accommodations
- Natural sunlight

"With the move to a larger facility, Myrtue Medical Center is making plans to expand services to include a second track to benefit from this program." Bauman adds "In the County Health Needs Assessment survey, Shelby County residents iden-

Telehealth *please see page 8*



MMC's Senior Life Solutions

Offering Tips to Cope with Anxiety and Isolation During the COVID-19 Pandemic

REGIONAL -- Americans of all ages are experiencing increased social isolation and loneliness in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the National Institute on Aging, nearly 14 million older adults in the U.S. live alone and are especially vulnerable during this time.

Their research has linked social isolation and loneliness

Solutions *please see page 8*



Bauman



Senior Life Solutions has moved into its new location. Above is the new building and the inside reception area. (Photos contributed)



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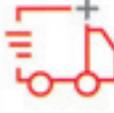


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April 28, 2022 - "Wicked"

\$167 - Broadway's biggest blockbuster, looks at what happened in the Land of Oz but from a different angle.

August 6, 2022 - Danube River Cruise & Passion Play

Spots still available but selling out fast! Airfare is still \$399 thru March 31st! Our Emerald River Cruise will begin in Budapest and travel up the Danube River and will end in Munich, Germany. It will also include the Oberammergau Passion Play. This has been performed every 10 years since 1634 by the inhabitants of the village. There are brochures at all SCSB locations.



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MMH's Senior Life Solutions offers Isolation Coping Strategies

Solutions *from page 4*

to higher risks for a variety of physical and mental conditions: high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, a weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease, and even death.

Myrtue Medical Center's Senior Life Solution program is encouraging people to engage in meaningful, productive activities to help boost mood and maintain their overall emotional health and well-being.

Dave Bauman, Director of Senior Life Solutions, said "It is important to find ways to connect and engage in activities to help mitigate symptoms of anxiety and depression during this time.

"We put together these quick tips to share with our communities and hope they will encourage self-care and support."

Quick Tips for Older Adults Experiencing Social Isolation

1. Find or keep a sense of purpose. Take up a hobby such as growing an herb garden, crossword puzzles, knitting, or other activities.

2. Age-appropriate workouts can help you not only stay in physical shape but in mental shape as well. Gentle exercises such as walking are suggested.

It is always recommended to consult a healthcare professional or primary care physician first.

3. Manage medication. Do you have enough to last you for the next 30-60 days? If you need help managing medications, contact your doctor or a loved one who can help you.

4. Keep a routine that includes consistent sleep/wake cycles. Incorporate talking to family or friends in that routine. Whether it be writing them a letter or calling them on the phone.

Bauman added, "Think of self-care like putting on an oxygen mask on an airplane.

"The flight attendant always instructs travelers to put on their own mask before securing others. You must take care of yourself right now to continue caring for and supporting those around you."

If you or a loved one is in need, contact the SAMHSA Disaster Distress

Tips for Caregivers

■ Take five to refuel. Make a list of things that help you relax and take 2 to 3 breaks throughout the day.

■ Call or write a friend who can lend a sympathetic ear, make you laugh, and remind you that you are not alone.

■ Pursue other interests. Hobbies, sports, crafts, and other pursuits are not frivolous. They help you clear your mind of worry – if only briefly.

Care for Yourself

■ Nourish your body. Ensure you are eating a balanced diet and drinking plenty of water. If produce is hard to come by right now, check to see if local farmer's markets are delivering.

■ Take a break from the news. Although it is important to stay updated, it is recommended to take at least a 15-minute break.

■ Stay connected to your loved ones or a mentor using your phone, or applications like Facetime or Skype to speak to them virtually.

Helpline (800) 985-5990 that provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.

Additionally, older adults and adults living with disabilities can contact the Institute on Aging's 24-hour toll-free Friendship Line, an accredited crisis line at 800-971-0016.

If you are experiencing a mental health emergency, go to your nearest emergency room or dial 911.

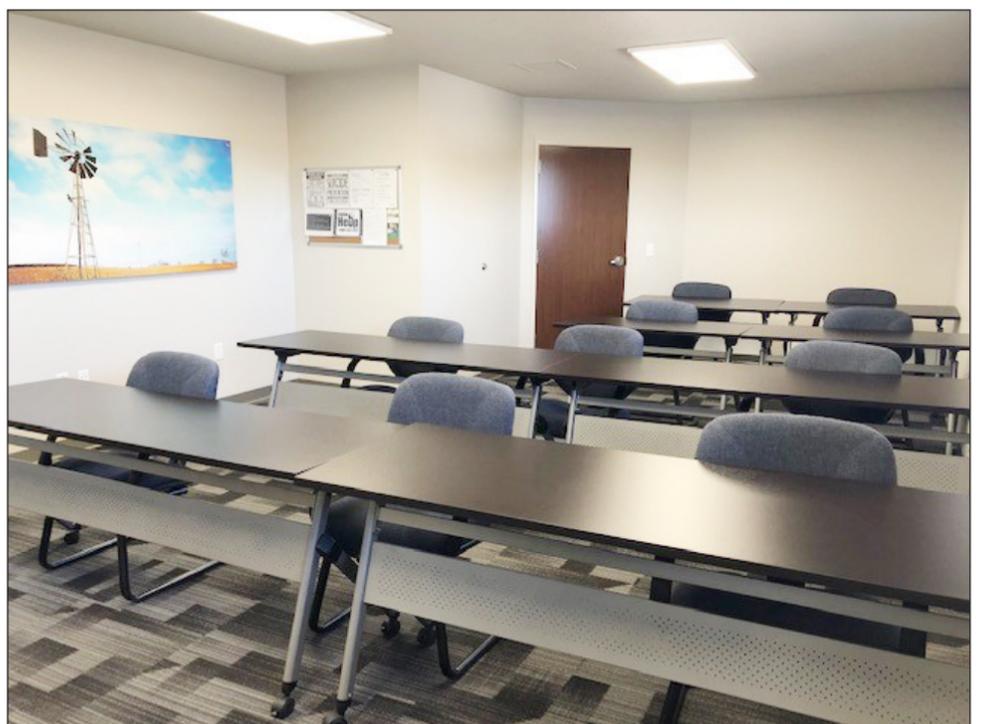


Telehealth services available

Telehealth *from page 4*

tified mental health issues as a priority health issue. A second track would allow us to accommodate up to 30 clients in two different groups simultaneously. The additional group offering is just one way Myrtue Medical Center is working hard to address the needs of those in the community."

Senior Life Solutions staff includes a board-certified psychiatrist, a licensed social worker, and a registered nurse, who are dedicated to the emotional well-being of the seniors in the community. All Senior Life Solutions services are confidential and HIPAA compliant. Referrals to the program can be made by anyone, including self-referrals, a patient's physician, family members, friends, or any other healthcare professional. For more information, call 712-755-4327.



Senior Life Solutions' new reception area and room, complete with technology upgrades. (Photos contributed)



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Don't gamble on retirement

When people save for retirement, the biggest concern is the return on investment.



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When they retire however, it's not only the returns they need to care about, but also the order of those returns.

Negative returns during the first couple of years of retirement can increase the risk of running out of money, much more so than the same negative returns happening later in retirement. This is sequence of returns risk.

People who experience even one year of market loss early in retirement may need to make significant adjustments to their plans. Conversely, the same loss later in retirement will likely have much less of an impact on one's retirement income or lifestyle.

People may be used to looking for the average return on their portfolio, but it's not just the average return that is important. In fact, the order or sequence of your investment returns can make a huge difference in your retirement income.

Let's look at two hypotheti-

cal retirement portfolios with the same average return from 2000-2020. While both portfolios experienced the same average return (6.11%) from S&P 500 returns and had the same withdrawals (\$114,706), the ending account balance for portfolio 2 is significantly larger than portfolio 1. Portfolio 1 would have a much more difficult time providing retirement income in the future. This is all the result of sequence of returns.

We'll dive a little deeper to further illustrate this point. Let's say the initial investment was \$100,000 with \$4,000 in annual withdrawals increasing 3% each year for inflation*. Portfolio 1 experiences the S&P 500 returns from the year 2000-2020, and ended with a balance of -\$21,588. Portfolio 2 experiences the same annual returns, but in reverse order, with an ending balance of \$136,266. Even though the portfolios had the same average return and withdrawals, the order of that return can make a dramatic difference in a person's retirement. This is why it's so important to consider sequence of returns risk*.

What can people do to mitigate this risk?

Many people might think that they can mitigate se-

quence of returns risk by reducing or eliminating equity holdings in portfolios. But this compromises the upside potential that equities can provide and may lead to running out of money quicker. Portfolios with higher allocations to equities have typically outperformed, because downside volatility in the u.s. equity markets has historically been relatively short-lived. Past performance is not a guarantee of future returns.

Adding income annuities to a retirement portfolio is an efficient way to help reduce the sequence of returns risk. How?

- Income annuities are uncorrelated with capital markets and they reduce the net withdrawals from a portfolio.

- This helps lessen the likelihood of and allows retirees to keep some of their money invested in the market and take advantage of any potential future gains.

- Having additional sources of guaranteed lifetime income also reduces the role luck plays in retirement outcomes.

Income annuities are a low risk alternative that can take some of the uncertainty out of the market and ultimately your retirement.

Product guarantees are based on the/claims-paying ability of the issuer.



What seniors should know about social media safety

Seniors might not be the demographic individuals initially associate with social media. However, Pew Research notes that seniors' social media usage has been steadily rising for a number of years, proving that individuals 65 and over are not tech-averse.

Pew data from 2019 indicates that 46 percent of individuals 65 and older use Facebook. Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram can be a great way to stay connected with family and friends and stay up-to-date on community events. But social media usage is not without risks, especially in regard to users' safety. Seniors without much social media experience can heed these safety tips as they navigate popular platforms and discover all they have to offer.

- Examine your account settings. Social media users can control their privacy settings so they can decide who can (and can't) view their online activity. Each platform is different, but profiles set to public generally allow anyone to view individuals' activity, so seniors should set their profiles to private to limit access to their information.

- Be mindful of your social media social circle. It's easy to make virtual friends via social media, but seniors should be mindful of who they accept as online friends. Carefully consider each friend request and decide just how big or small you want your social media community to be. Many individuals prefer to limit their online social circles to individuals they know well and want to stay in touch with, and that can serve as a good measuring stick when deciding whether or not to accept a friend request.

- Avoid sharing personal information. Seniors are no doubt aware that they should never share especially personal information, such as their Social Security number. However, seniors also should hesitate to share personal information like vacation plans. Seniors who post about upcoming trips could return home to find they've been victimized by criminals who scoured their social media accounts and learned when they were going to be away. A good rule of thumb is to keep personal information private and limit posts to information that is not overly specific or sensitive.

- Recognize the threat posed by scammers. Social media platforms have had varying degrees of success in regard to keeping their sites scam-free. But scammers find a way, and users must take steps to avoid being victimized. Never click on a link within a post from someone you don't know and avoid anyone soliciting donations through social media platforms.

Seniors are engaging with social media more than ever. Such engagement requires seniors to be mindful of the many ways to protect their privacy when spending time online.

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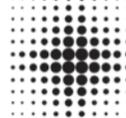
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