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Farming, Community Keeps Raley Going



Raley at his farm in Avenue

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

He's been a sheriff's deputy, assistant sheriff and member of numerous community organizations but what Jamie Raley has always been throughout it all is a farmer.

At 69 years old, he continues to show that getting on in years doesn't mean you have to retire.

It helps if you love what you do.

He lives in Avenue on an 88-acre tract of land that has been owned by his family for generations.

"It's been in our family since 1886," Raley, who was born and raised in St. Mary's said.

He grew up with farming right outside his front door.

"That was in the heyday of tobacco," Raley said. "Every year when I went back to school and I wrote my essay about what I did over the summer it was always 'I. Cut. Tobacco.'"

"It was a good year-round crop." These days he grows commodities such as corn and soybeans on his Avenue property and focuses on raising cattle at a property in Oakville.

He's a businessman as well as being a farmer and his job never stops; on top of farming, he is often busy representing the interests of agriculture in the halls of power.

He's a past president of the St. Mary's County Farm Bureau and now is the 1st Vice President of the Maryland Farm Bureau.

He credits his continuation in farming and giving back to his community to his family and his upbringing.

"I have a very wonderful wife," Raley said. "I was raised by people who grew up during the Great Depression and survived World War II."

"There's a work ethic and a

spirit of giving back to the community."

He joined the sheriff's office in 1978 and eventually rose to be the assistant sheriff under Sheriff Richard Voorhaar.

He won his class's top honor for firearms marksmanship, he said, and took second place overall in his class.

His swearing in ceremony was less auspicious, though.

"I was deathly ill with a flu virus," Raley said. "We went to the courthouse and my dad was holding me up at the counter by my belt so I could get sworn in."

Even while he was serving in the sheriff's office he continued to help

out on the family farm.

He's always enjoyed it despite its arduous nature.

"Agriculture touches everyone and everyone's life," Raley said. "The farm bureau... is heavily involved in agricultural education as well."

"We want kids to know where food comes from."

But he also wants to ensure agriculture continues to be a major part of life in St. Mary's, which has seen rapid modernization and growth since he was born.

"We want to preserve family farms and to make the business sustainable," Raley said.

He's done some travelling, he said, but working and serving in St. Mary's County is his first love.

"There's nothing that beats my front porch," Raley said.

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Are you looking for a Volunteer Opportunity?

It's a new year full of new opportunities to make positive and noticeable differences within our community and county. Would you like to participate in rewarding community changing volunteer opportunities? Consider joining the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services' Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)! RSVP volunteers have been making a difference year after year by donating their time and skills serving our community. RSVP has partnered with charitable agencies, organizations, and businesses that provide human services to community residents in need.



Current volunteer opportunities include:

Historic St. Mary's City St. Clement's Island Museum Historic Sotterley

- ✧ Special event set-up
- ✧ Front desk Attendant
 - ✧ Tour Guide
- ✧ Gift Shop Attendant
- ✧ Flower Garden Attendant

Teen Court

- ✧ Teen Court Judge
- ✧ Hearing Support Assistants
- ✧ Administrative Assistant

Northern Senior Activity Center

- ✧ Chess Volunteer
- ✧ Outdoor Landscaping
- ✧ Book Club Leader
- ✧ Billiard Volunteer
- ✧ Lending Library Assistant

Community Mediation of St. Mary's County

- ✧ Mediating
- ✧ Promoting fundraisers
- ✧ Disseminating brochures
- ✧ Office assistance

A Community That Shares (ACTS)

- ✧ Receiving and dispersing medical equipment
- ✧ Repairing Equipment

Charlotte Hall Veterans Home

- ✧ Activity Assistant
- ✧ Gift Shop Attendant
- ✧ Technical Support

Loffler Senior Activity Center

- ✧ Zoom Activity Monitor

Home-Delivered Meals

- ✧ Volunteer Drivers needed to deliver meals to homebound older adults living in the Mechanicsville, Leonardtown, and Lexington Park areas

Hospice of St. Mary's

- ✧ Patient Care
- ✧ House Patient Cook
- ✧ Office Help

Senior Rides

- ✧ Drivers to transport seniors to doctor appointments and grocery shopping

Patuxent River Naval Air Museum

- ✧ Tour Guide
- ✧ Flight Simulator Team
- ✧ Exhibit Team
- ✧ Organizing & Data Entry

Garvey Senior Activity Center

- ✧ Evening activity leaders for:
 - Art Classes
 - Dance Classes
 - Card Groups
 - Book Discussions

St. Mary's County Crime Solvers Board

- ✧ Volunteers assist in educating the community about the role of Crime Solvers, solicit donations, and arrange fundraisers to obtain funding to be used for rewards



ST. MARY'S COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF AGING & HUMAN SERVICES
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Contact the RSVP office at 301-475-4200, ext. 1653, or monika.williams@stmaryscountymd.gov for more information!

Brought to you by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County and the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services

What Seniors Can Do to Safeguard Their Mental Health



undiagnosed among older men and women and untreated because it co-occurs with other issues affecting seniors.

In the past, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has acknowledged that late-life anxiety was not readily understood. However, much progress has been made in recent years thanks to a heightened awareness of the problem of seniors and

mental health. That means seniors now have ample resources they can look to as they seek to learn what they can do to safeguard their mental health.

Recognizing warning signs

The National Institute of Mental Health notes that recognizing the signs of mental health issues is the first step to getting treatment. Mental health issues vary, and individuals with anxiety will likely experience different symptoms than those with depression. But the NIMH notes that the following are some of the warning signs of mental health issues.

- Noticeable changes in mood, en-

ergy level, or appetite

- Feeling flat or having trouble feeling positive emotions
- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Difficulty concentrating, feeling restless, or on edge
- Increased worry or feeling stressed
- Anger, irritability, or aggressiveness
- Ongoing headaches, digestive issues, or pain
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs
- Sadness or hopelessness
- Suicidal thoughts
- Engaging in high-risk activities
- Obsessive thinking or compulsive behavior
- Thoughts or behaviors that interfere with work, family, or social life
- Engaging in thinking or behavior that is concerning to others
- Seeing, hearing, and feeling things that other people do not see, hear, or feel

Seeking help

As noted, a growing awareness of mental health issues and how they affect seniors has translated to more available resources for aging men and women who need help. Within the United States, seniors can visit the NIMH Help for Mental Illnesses webpage (<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help>) to access contact information for various groups

that help people in times of mental health crises. As of July 2022, Marylanders can call or text 988 to connect with the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, which encompasses all mental health crisis services, as well as help with drug and alcohol use.

Behaviors that can be beneficial

The National Institute on Aging notes that most cases of depression cannot be prevented. However, the NIA also notes that healthy lifestyle changes can have long-term benefits of seniors' mental health. Such changes include:

- Being physically active
- Eating a healthy diet that can reduce risk for diseases that can bring on disability and depression
- Getting adequate sleep, which for seniors is between seven to nine hours per night
- Remaining socially active, including regular contact with friends and family
- Participating in activities you enjoy
- Sharing mental issues or concerns with friends, family members and your physician

Research indicates that seniors are vulnerable to mental health issues. More information about how to combat and overcome such issues is available at nimh.nih.gov

Need help with your Medicare costs?



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- **Medicare Savings Program**
These programs pay the Medicare Part B premium and in some cases the Medicare Part A premium, Part A&B deductible and co-insurance.
- **Social Security Extra Help**
This program assists individuals enrolled in the Medicare Part D program with their Part D premium, co-insurance and deductible.
- **Maryland Senior Prescription Drug Assistance Program**
This program provides a \$60 monthly subsidy towards the Medicare Part D premium.

Eligibility for each program is based on gross income and in some cases savings and assets.

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<https://www.stmarysmd.com/aging/>

Garvey 301-475-4200, 1064
Loffler 301-475-4200, 1654
Northern 301-475-4200, 3104

Seniors Find a Family at Church



Eddie Hintz and Chuck Fick celebrated their 80th and 90th birthdays respectively the week after New Year's. Photo by Joan Hoerning for Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church.

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Eddie Hintz has been a life-long church goer. "I was baptized as an infant, confirmed at the church, was married at the same church." That was in her home

state of Wisconsin. The involvement with her church, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), led her to health care missionary work in Africa for four years. When her husband was transferred to Southern Maryland there was no WELS church, so they stated going to a church in Upper Marlboro where she met several others from the area, mostly connected with Patuxent River Naval Air Station, who realized the need for a church closer to their home.

She was a founder of Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church in Lusby. "We had our children in the back of the car, and it was Martin Luther King's holiday. And we drove and hit all the firehouses and senior centers in the area. And then we went back and asked them how much it would cost to rent the facility. And we started out at the senior center in Leonardtown." Attendance was slow until they moved to Calvert, first meeting at Dowell Elementary School. Their new church at the HG Trueman Road and Routes 2/4 intersection opened in 2010.

Hintz turned 80 on Jan. 3. But she has far from slowed down. Church members consider her their Energizer bunny. And

one of her passions is to get more senior citizens, like herself, active in the church. She realizes the potential physical, social and emotional benefits to them as well as the spiritual.

Things have changed since she was growing up in Wisconsin. "The parents didn't look to see what senior establishment they were going to move into, where their next move was going to be. It was assumed that they would stay in the farmhouse and one of the sons or the daughters would live in the farmhouse with them and take care of mom and dad. Or if that wasn't the case, they would try to live in the same community so that they'd be available to take care of their parents."

She added, "We're talking generalities here, but that aspect has totally changed. People in their forties, fifties are thinking about which senior complex they might eventually move into. And the church is not as involved. The families are sort of doing this on their own. Sometimes they're looking for a church if they move. Sometimes not."

Lenore Blevins, 68, who is helping Hintz in her efforts to get seniors involved, said, "The church is a family. There are some churches that have a lot of younger members, and they'll seek out a person who they can take food to, or like an adopted older person that the church can do."

As some people get older they may seek out a church after being away for so long and others may need more of a nudge. "There's no age limit. You can become a member at anywhere from one to 80 or 90, to become that member. There's no set timeframe for that. And I think it's good for people to get involved in the church because it's like a family, especially if they don't have family. That becomes their family," Blevins said.

Hintz said, "I think if you ask people if they belong to a church, the first thing that goes through their mind is the building. I belong to that church. It's really not about the building, it's about the congregation or members in the building. That is the church, the people that attend and are affiliated with that church. And, as seniors, I think we have to have people who care and are concerned about them as individuals, not as seniors. We need to have people that have care and concern on their minds about especially the senior members, some of whom do not have families."

Blevins added, "The church needs the older members too, because of learning from the past. We learn from things in the past, different traditions that have been passed down through the years. The younger people need to hear those things from the past." That is a particularly important point for Blevins who has been active in collecting local history.

Home and Community-Based Services

Aging & Disability Resource Center/
Maryland Access Point (MAP)
Caregiver support and respite
Community Options Waiver
Community First Choice
Long-term care rights and advocacy

Human Services

Homelessness Prevention
After School Programs
Youth Services Bureau
Teen Court
Christmas Caring
WARM Transportation
Local Management Board
Non-Profit Agency Monitoring
Community Development

MAP/Senior Information and Assistance

Financial Assistance Programs
Senior Rides
State Health Insurance
Assistance Program (SHIP)
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Maryland Access Point (MAP)



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Keys to Senior Independence -

Tuesdays, March 7-28

Centenarian Luncheon - Monday, April 10

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day -

Tuesday, May 2

Men's Health Day - Saturday, June 3

Road Show Presentations

New Beginning newsletter

Schedule a Road Show Presentation to learn more about the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services! Call 301-475-4200, ext. 1073, to schedule a presentation or to sign up for delivery of the Department's bi-monthly newsletter, New Beginning.

Hintz observed, "Otherwise we're going to lose the knowledge they have."

Hintz for Christmas every year prepares baskets to give to the church's senior citizens. This year she outdid herself, shopping in the Mennonite community for baked good and fruit and in the grocery stores for candy and other treats, and also baking herself. She enjoys doing the Christmas shopping as if their members were her family (recently her husband Duane passed away).

"I think I am concerned about people's hereafter. And I don't only want to spend time with people here right now, but I also want to spend time with them in heaven. That's what it's all about for me. It's not just the present. It's about their future. I'm concerned about their future. That's why I think I keep on keeping on because I want to make sure that people realize that Jesus died for all of us. That's really important to me, that they hear that message."

The church wants to do more outreach to the senior communities in the area. Hintz asks, "What kind of needs do people have that we could be helpful with? Rides, for instance, if they need a ride, certainly not only to church, but a ride to appointments. We should try to make ourselves available and we should periodically, if we have names of people that would like somebody to stop by and just visit, maybe drop off a food item. But just start visiting people. So hopefully we can acquire some names of people that have no church or are not attending a church, people that need physical and

emotional support kind of thing."

That's why she does the Christmas food baskets. "I think we recognize we have a lot of children in church, and we try to do things for kids. And we recognize we don't recognize our seniors, that's the bottom line," she said.

Hintz said, "I think we want to impress on people that they're not joining a social club by joining the church. That's not our mission. But it is certainly an offshoot. It's an arm, it's a leg of the church. And I like to call them gatherings. One of those gatherings was held last week at a local restaurant where church members celebrated with longtime member Chuck Fick his 90th birthday along with joining with Hintz for her 80th milestone.

Sharon Bonner, 77, a resident of Asbury-Solomons, said, "I might be different from other folks because I left my church, which was Methodist and came back to my roots, which is Lutheran. And I'm very happy to be here because this church has many young people and I think that they keep the church very active, and I enjoy being able to take part in some of the things that they do. Saturday, they had a painting class for the ladies. They had flower classes recently."

She likes being around young people. "I think it helps you to keep aware of what more's going on, more in their lives. In today's world, it's a little different than when I was young. I think they struggle a lot and I think it's helpful to always be friendly to them and to try and approach them, and to get to know what they know that I don't know any more as

an older person."

"There's so much here. That's my main thing," Bonner added.

Bonner drives her friend from Asbury Solomons to church. He said, "I have a hard time walking. So, she's nice. She brings me over. I like it here. I like Asbury too."

The church provides him with hearing assisted devices so he can follow along with the service.

Starr Eastwood, who lives in Solomons, recently started attending church again. She stopped coming when her husband got sick, but she said, "I'm back for good."

Eastwood, who will be 80 in June, refuses to vegetate. "I've never been so busy." Eastwood volunteers at the S.M.I.L.E. thrift store down the road from the church.

For a while Eastwood had a crisis of faith. "My sister and brother died in the same week, and I was very upset with God. I knew my sister was dying. She was in hospice and very bad off when I got there."

She said of her sister's refusal to accept God in the end, "I couldn't have done it without God and Jesus Christ. I couldn't," adding, "I found it hard to believe that she didn't believe, or she did believe it wasn't, but she's resting in peace."

As to her return to church,

Eastwood said, "I look back and I wish I came back sooner, but I'm glad to have."

During an interview with The County Times, Hintz concluded the conversation by reciting a poem she found on a Lutheran notecard that said:

*"There are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit,
And there are varieties of service, but the same Lord,
And there are varieties of working,
But it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone."*

dickmyers@countytimes.net



A 90th birthday celebration for Chuck Fick by Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church on Jan. 4, as Edie Hintz, who was celebrating her 80th birthday, watches. Photo by Joan Hoerning for Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church.

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