

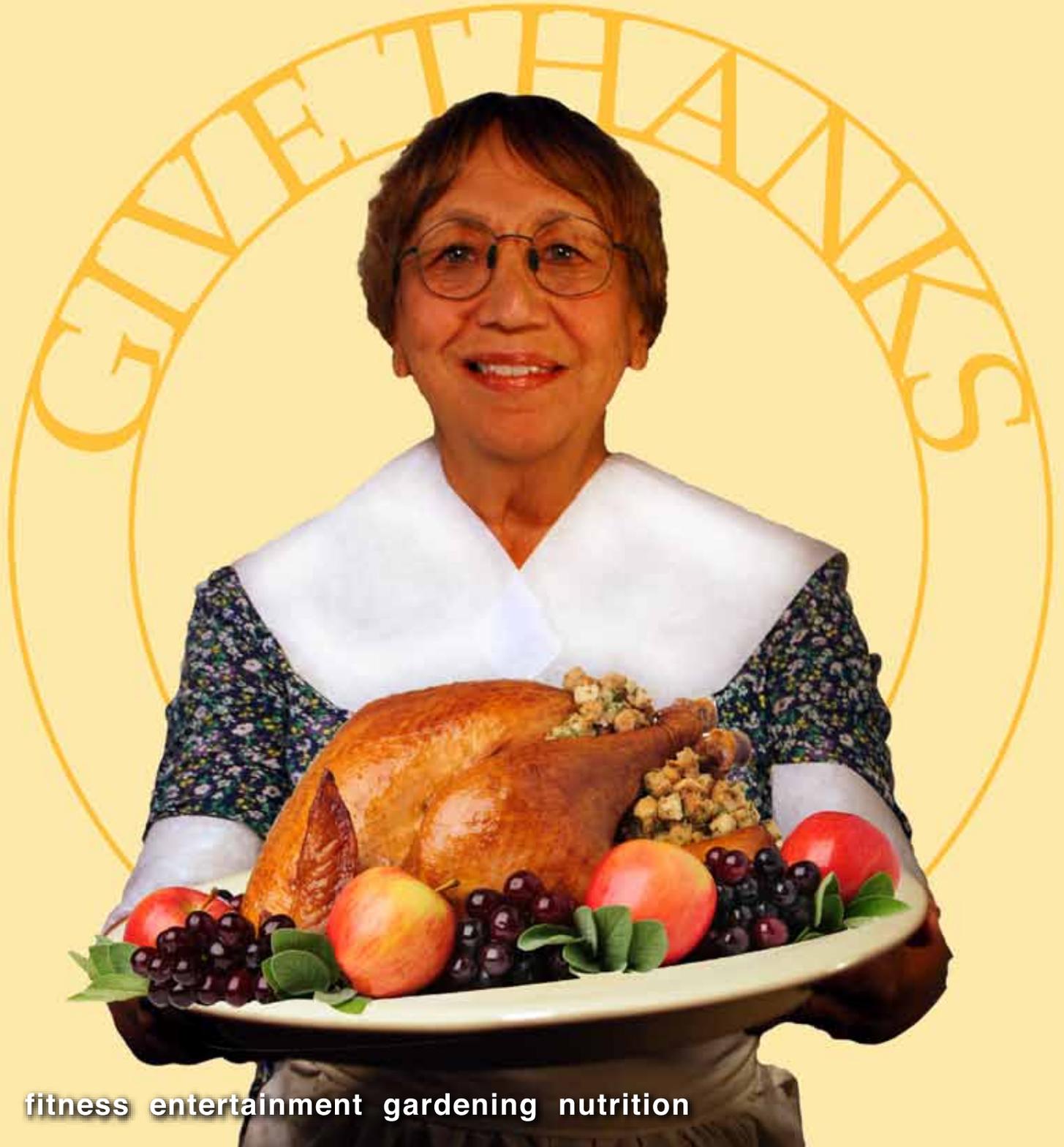
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www.qachorale.org**



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Bay Bytes

To locate a Christmas tree farm near you where you can cut your own or pick up one freshly cut, log onto www.pickyourownchristmastree.org/MDxmastrees.php

Publisher and Editor-in-Chief Tecla Emerson Murphy
 Editor@OutLookbytheBay.com

Managing Editor Mick Rood
 MickRood@aol.com

Operations Manager Cynthia Rott
 Cindy@OutLookbytheBay.com

Art Director Emma Stultz
 emma.stultz@outlook.com

Columnists Dr. Jim David
 James519@comcast.net

Victoria Duncan
 Victoria2Write@aol.com

Jessica L. Estes
 JEstes@ByrdandByrd.com

Ryan Helfenbein
 Ryan@LastingTributesFuneralCare.com

Mac Millhone
 MacMillhone@me.com

Henry S. Parker
 HspSbp@gmail.com

Dr. Passaro and Wooddell
 www.WPDentalGroup.com

Contributing Writers Joanne R. Alloway
 JRWrite@aol.com

Joan Amundsen
 JAmun@comcast.net

Melissa Conroy
 o4aMuseofFire@yahoo.com

Peggy Kiefer
 KinseyKiefer@aol.com

Leah Lancione
 LeahLancione@gmail.com

Kater Leatherman
 KaterLeatherman@gmail.com

Nancy Lincoln-Reynolds
 NReynolds@woodschurch.org

Neil Moran
 NRMoran188@gmail.com

Ellen Moyer
 EllenMoyer@yahoo.com

Louise Whiteside
 LouiseMW@wispertel.net

Account Representatives Mary Kramer, Eastern Shore
 ESSD09@gmail.com

Chris Rott
 OutLookbytheBay@aol.com
 410.849.3000

Circulation Jack Hovey
 OutLookbytheBay@aol.com

Photographer R.C. Murphy
 OutLookbytheBay@aol.com

Emma Stultz
 emma.stultz@outlook.com

Subscriptions S. Hill
 OutLookbytheBay@aol.com
 \$24.95 per year (bimonthly - 6 issues)

Contact OutLook by the Bay
 210 Legion Ave. #6805
 Annapolis, MD 21401
 410.849.3000

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FROM THE DESK

Five kernels of corn. A myth, according to historians in Plymouth, Mass. The tale of the five bits of corn that were allotted to each of the surviving Pilgrims was attributed to Governor William Bradford, who supposedly recorded it in his diary back in the 1600s. Close inspection by scholars discounts the veracity of the legend. But it's hard to throw ice water on a wonderful tale with a strong and lasting ring to it, one that might be worth keeping alive and circulating.

The story is set in the "starving time" during 1621 when the Pilgrims, newly located to Plymouth, had so little to eat that each was allowed just five kernels of corn per day. Historians have noted that different foodstuffs were readily available such as clams, fish, all the lobsters one could catch and a wealth of wild berries. The Pilgrim fathers also had a limited amount of ammunition that could be used on a wide variety of abundant wildlife.

If the legend was in fact true, chances are good that they would not have survived for very long with so little to eat. But survive and multiply they did, and soon included additional settlers who began to arrive in droves.

Interestingly, much like the Jamestown settlement, many of the new arrivals lacked the skills that were necessary to survive in an untamed wilderness. The settlers were not equipped to farm the land; most had limited knowledge of farming techniques, especially as they related to the New World. Thanks to the Native Americans' expertise, they did get through the "trying times" and went on to help create the greatest nation in the world.

In the month of November we have the opportunity to celebrate a holiday that is an American icon. There is such bounty in this land of ours, maybe putting five kernels of corn on each Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner plate to remind us of that bounty would be the beginnings of a nice tradition. Wouldn't it be interesting, with each kernel of corn, to spend a moment acknowledging five blessings for which we are most thankful? We have such abundance, comparatively speaking, in large part thanks to early settlers who took a huge chance knowing it could all end in disaster. Then imagine what powers were in force that provided the Indians who appeared to keep them alive. And two of those spoke English!

It's difficult to understand the motivation of those 102 souls who crossed the Atlantic in the early days of Winter on a 110-foot boat. They departed Leiden in Holland in September and it wasn't until mid-December when they dropped anchor in Plymouth Harbor where they were greeted by the early days of a New England Winter! Through those frozen days, only 52 survived. Those hardy and daring souls created what is popularly called the first Thanksgiving. (Others make a similar claim, including Popham, Maine, and various sites in Virginia, but the most widely accepted location remains in Plymouth.)

In the Spring of that first year, they planted crops, primarily corn supplied by the local Wampanoag and were able to harvest and store that first bounty. This was the basis for the day they set aside to give thanks. The guest list included 90 natives – a Pilgrim father no doubt extended that invitation. There were only four surviving Pilgrim mothers and they knew better! The feast, for those of us who like to complain of overstaying company, lasted for three days!

It's hard to imagine how those hardy souls made it through that first Winter and how they were then able to give thanks after that "first harvest had been gotten in." True or not, the tale of the allotted five kernels of corn just might be worth keeping alive. It's a legend that should give one pause to remember and say thanks for the bounty that we enjoy today in this land of plenty.



What is Arthritis?

By *Thomas Harries, MD*

Arthritis is a disorder that causes joints in your body—such as the hips, knees, feet, fingers and lower back—to become inflamed.

There are more than 100 different diseases and conditions that are considered arthritis. The most common form is osteoarthritis, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Known as the wear and tear arthritis, it occurs when cartilage in the joints breaks down.

Another form, called rheumatoid arthritis, occurs when the body's immune system attacks the joints.

Symptoms of arthritis vary depending on the type of disorder you have, but common symptoms include pain, aching, stiffness and swelling in and around your joints. If you have these symptoms on an ongoing basis, see a doctor for diagnosis.

While arthritis can be painful and potentially debilitating, you can live a normal life with this disorder if it is properly diagnosed and treated.

DIAGNOSING ARTHRITIS

Early diagnosis and treatment of arthritis can help increase your chances of living a full and active life.

Aches and pains in your joints can affect you in many ways. Maybe your wrist gets sore when you try to open a jar. Perhaps your back stiffens up in the morning when you get out of bed. Or maybe that knee you injured playing softball years ago hurts again for no apparent reason.

These aches and pains can have a variety of causes, including arthritis. Whatever the cause, the first step toward relief is to see your doctor for a proper diagnosis. If you do have arthritis, treatment can help ease your symptoms and get you back to your regular activities.

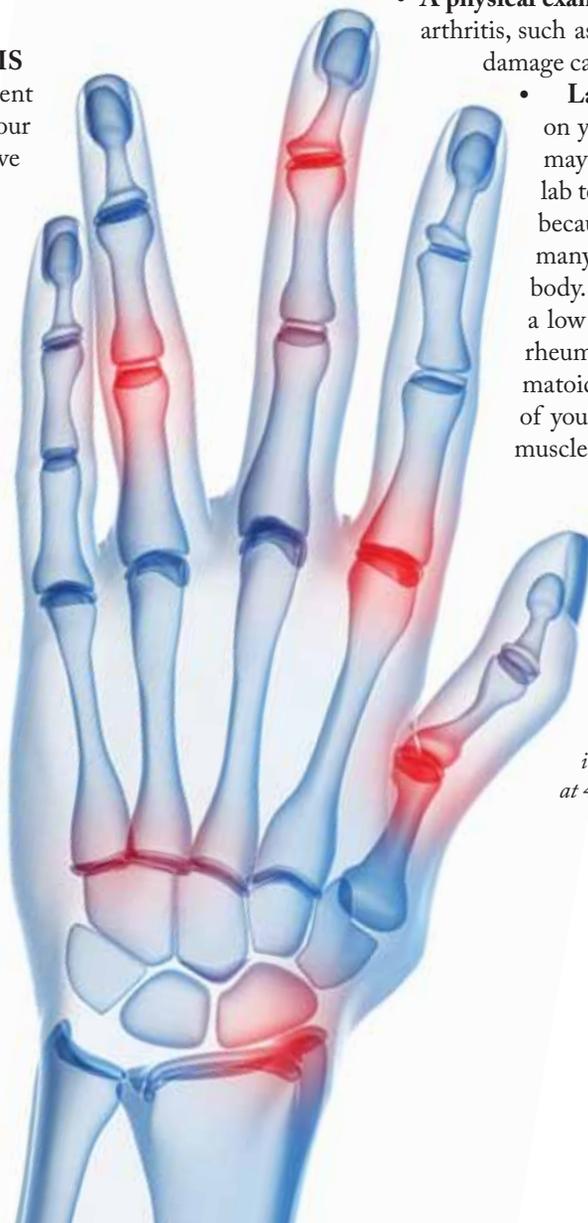
STEPS TO A DIAGNOSIS

There's no one test to diagnose arthritis.

Rheumatoid arthritis, in particular, can be difficult to diagnose because it may begin with small signs, like aching joints or a little stiffness in the morning, that are also commonly associated with many other diseases. It may be necessary to see a doctor who is specially trained to diagnose rheumatoid arthritis, such as a rheumatologist.

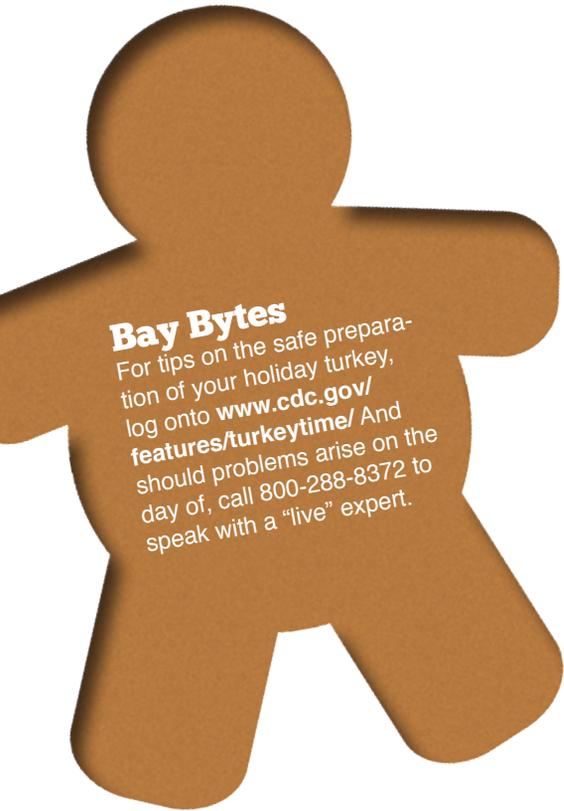
According to the Arthritis Foundation, if your doctor suspects you have arthritis, he or she may recommend one or more of the following tools to help make a diagnosis:

- **Your medical history.** Along with discussing your symptoms, your doctor will probably ask about your health background, that is, any diseases, allergies or conditions you currently have, and medical procedures you have undergone in the past.
- **A physical exam.** Your doctor will look for common signs of arthritis, such as swelling and tenderness, loss of motion and damage caused by bony growths in and around the joint.
- **Lab tests.** If your doctor suspects arthritis based on your symptoms and a physical exam, he or she may order lab tests to confirm the diagnosis. Most lab tests for arthritis involve samples of your blood, because it is easily and safely obtained and holds many clues to what's going on throughout your body. For example, blood tests can show if you have a low red blood cell count or if an antibody called rheumatoid factor is present—both signs of rheumatoid arthritis. Other tests may require samples of your urine, joint fluid or small pieces of skin or muscle.
- **X-rays.** These tests can highlight damage or other changes to cartilage and bone that indicate you may have arthritis. X-rays can also be helpful in determining the severity of arthritis and if the disease is progressing.



Thomas Harries, MD, is an orthopedic surgeon with Anne Arundel Medical Center. He has special interest in arthritis and disorders of the knee. He can be reached at 410.268.8862. Visit OSMC.net for more information.

Letters to the editor



Bay Bytes

For tips on the safe preparation of your holiday turkey, log onto www.cdc.gov/features/turkeytime/ And should problems arise on the day of, call 800-288-8372 to speak with a "live" expert.

THE TRUE FACE OF TOOTHPASTE

I learn so much from each issue of *OutLook*, I look forward to it. In fact, I changed toothpaste brands after reading the article written by the dentist on brands that damage tooth enamel! You should be thanked for providing such informative material!

Leah L., Virginia Beach, Va.

What an interesting article on toothpaste. Who would've known!

Thank you for clarifying what we all should know or need to know.

Penelope F., Delaware Water Gap, Pa.

SECOND CAREERS

What a fabulous next career—growing grapes and turning them into wine. Wish I'd thought of that!

L. Lupine, Edgewater

WORDS FROM THE DESK

This morning I finally opened the most recent *Outlook by the Bay* and began reading the editor's column.

Inspired (as always) to get busy in this new season, the cynic in me began whispering her evil voice ... "Are all these go-getters real people? Or does she make up these examples?"

Before I could slay the evil cynic inside my head, in the very next breath I read about a girl who I know, who is going to finish her book.

Thank you. Those were words of encouragement for my situation and so perfectly timed you cannot even imagine!

Leslie P., Annapolis

Our holiday cover girl, Carol Van Epps, began life in "I Love Lucy's" hometown, Jamestown, New York. She is married to a "Kiwi" (New Zealander), has two very artistic daughters and five energetic grandchildren. After being a dental assistant for over 35 years in two states, she has worked as a macrobiotic cook, a personal chef, a graphic artist, a feng shui practitioner, a declutter specialist and now lives her passion of creative cooking.

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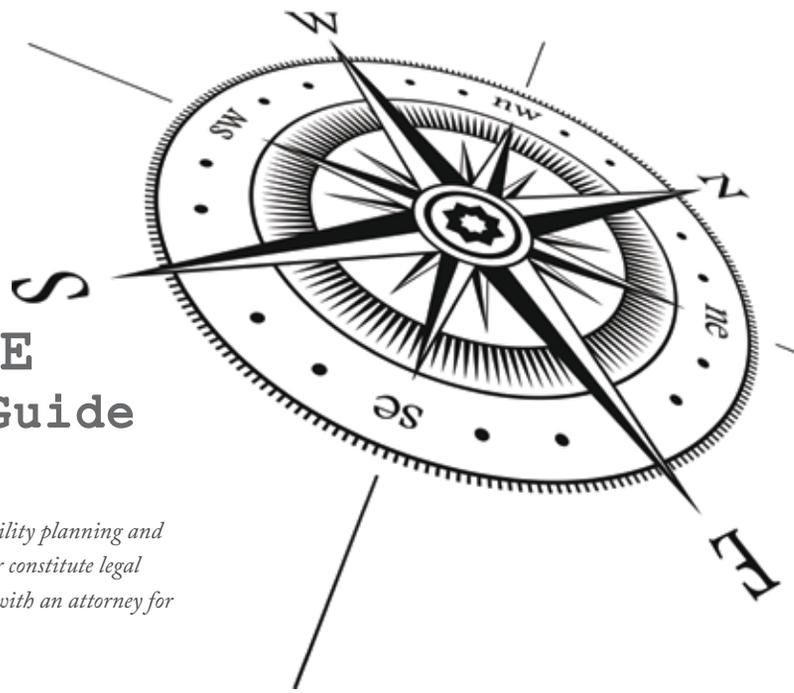


CHART YOUR COURSE

A Legal Navigation Guide

Charitable Remainder Trust

This column presents general information regarding estate and disability planning and probate. It is not intended to create an attorney-client relationship or constitute legal advice to its readers. Individuals with legal concerns should consult with an attorney for advice regarding their specific circumstances.

By Jessica L. Estes

With the holidays fast-approaching, things can get quite hectic: family gatherings, holiday decorating and shopping for that unique, but perfect gift for each of your loved ones. This year, as you make your list and check it twice, you may want to consider a charitable remainder trust.

What is a charitable remainder trust? A charitable remainder trust is an irrevocable trust that allows the donor, or another individual you name, to receive each year either a fixed dollar amount from the trust or a percentage (at least 5 percent) of the value of the trust. The right to receive this distribution is either for the individual's lifetime or for a period of years not to exceed 20 years. At the end of the term, the amount remaining in the trust is distributed to a qualified charity. Generally, a qualified charity is one that has been deemed tax-exempt by the Internal Revenue Service.

Moreover, the charity will serve as trustee of the trust and will be responsible for investing and managing the asset(s) in order to produce income for you. Because the charity is also the remainder beneficiary, it has an incentive to increase the value of the trust, which in turn benefits not only the charity, but you or the income beneficiary of your trust.

What are the tax benefits of a charitable remainder trust? There are three primary tax benefits. First, after you have transferred the asset(s) to the trust, you may take an income tax deduction, spread over five years. You are not, however, allowed to

deduct dollar for dollar the amount that you gave. Rather, you are only allowed to deduct the amount of the "gift," which is the amount donated less the amount of income you are expected to receive. For example, if you donate \$100,000 to the trust, but are expected to receive income of \$30,000, then you are only able to deduct \$70,000.

Another benefit is that whatever the charity receives at the end of the trust term is not subject to estate tax. Similarly, the donation will not be subject to gift tax for the amount of the "gift." However, if the income beneficiary of the trust is someone other than the donor, or their spouse, then there may be a gift tax imposed on the amount of the income that is paid to the income beneficiary.

Finally, because the charity is tax-exempt, there is no capital gains tax on the sale of the asset(s) in the trust. So, you can turn nonincome-producing property, which has increased significantly in value from the time at which you acquired it, into cash without having to pay capital gains tax on the profit. This enables you to invest the full proceeds of the sale into an income-producing asset. For example, you own stock that currently is worth \$200,000, but you only paid \$10,000 for it 20 years ago. If you were to sell the stock, you would have to pay capital gains tax on the \$190,000 profit. On the other hand, if you transferred the stock to a charitable remainder trust and the trust sold the stock, there would be no capital gains tax. Fur-

thermore, the full \$190,000 profit could be invested in a mutual fund that would pay you a portion of the income it produced.

Fixed annuity or percentage of trust? You can elect to have either fixed annuity payments or a percentage of the current value of the trust. If you choose the fixed annuity, you will receive a fixed dollar amount each year. This is beneficial if the trust has a lower-than-expected income return because you will still receive your fixed payment. Sounds great, but be careful. The higher your annuity is, the lower your income tax deduction. Also, if the trust does not generate enough income to cover your annuity payment, then the trust's principal will be used. The more principal that is used, the less likely it is that the charity would receive anything at the end of the trust term and consequently, the less likely it is that the charity would accept your donation in the first place.

Conversely, if you elect a percentage of the value of the trust, your payments will reflect any gains or losses in value of the investments each year. And, it is important to note, that once you make a decision, you cannot change it later. If you are considering a charitable remainder trust, consult a qualified attorney and financial planner before making a final decision.

Jessica L. Estes is an elder law and estate-planning attorney at Byrd & Byrd, LLC with offices in Bowie and Prince Frederick. She can be reached at 301.464.7448 or on the website at byrdandbyrd.com

HIDDEN TREASURES: WHAT'S IN YOUR ATTIC?

By Kathryn Marchi

Giving money to charitable organizations or seldom-used items to thrift shops seems to have become a part of the American culture. It is our way of giving to those less fortunate. These donations of clothing and household goods seem to be accentuated for many of us who are downsizing our homes. We cling, however, to family heirlooms and historical documents we believe are "priceless." We hope to pass them down to our heirs. After all, it is important to keep things "in the family."

Did you ever wonder if any of these items might be better shared with others outside of the family, perhaps in a museum somewhere? You've seen citations on museum exhibits that items were donated by an individual or a family. By their very nature, it is also thought that these are highly placed, wealthy individuals and that the items are priceless and documented as historical in nature.

My husband and I discussed some of our treasures and wondered if they might be appreciated by local art galleries or museums. It seems that many children today don't really want our collections of memorabilia. One wonders if their plan is to have a huge yard sale to dispose of the stuff after we are gone.

Here is an account of one of our items and how it found its way to the George W. Bush Presidential Library in Dallas:

After the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, my husband purchased a book featuring photos and accounts of heroism during that tragedy. It was a rather ordinary book with not a lot of pages. It sat in our library for a few months

In the meantime, my niece told us about her college friend who was a first responder on 9/11 – his first day on the job. Most of his family members were firefighters in New York. Immediately our book came to mind and my husband had the idea to meet this young man and ask him to take our book to his firehouse. The idea was to ask these brave men to write in the book, much as one would in a school yearbook, and share their experiences and thoughts on that terrible tragedy. We assumed that some of them would not want to do this and that was OK.

We met this young firefighter in 2003 and he was happy to take the book to his comrades.

Four years later, imagine our surprise when the book arrived in the mail. Unbelievably, there were 25 personal accounts written across the pages of that book. They were well-written, heartfelt, heartbreaking, historical and very personal. Our friend said the men took the book home, sometimes for weeks before they could bring themselves to write. It was hard to believe that we had such a treasure in our house.

The book lay on our coffee table for six years. Friends and family all read the accounts. It was always assumed that we would keep the book in our family. After many discussions, it was decided that we might want to donate it to a museum. It was an historical document and should be shared with others and be secure.

Last Winter we contacted the newly opened George W. Bush Presidential Library in Dallas. After photos of each page were sent to an archivist, she asked if she could meet with us. Since we were taking a cross-country trip to California in February, we made a detour to Dallas and met with both the archivist and the curator of the museum. We presented the book to them and they were very enthusiastic about it, drawing up the papers for the donation. We were overjoyed that our treasure would be shared with the public and kept in a safe environment.



Very possibly you too have something among your treasures, in your attic or stored in a trunk, that would be better donated to a museum, library or gallery. Our treasure was a once-in-a-lifetime placement, to be sure, but there are other locations besides a presidential library where your treasure might be better located and appreciated:

- Libraries: old historical newspapers, photos or magazines to be archived and displayed there or at another appropriate location.
- Local historical societies and museums: pottery, dishware, linens, clothing that may be indigenous to your area.
- Universities and colleges: In a different take, Virginia Tech has a program called the "Hokie Gold Legacy Program" whereby graduates donate their degree rings which are melted down for inclusion in rings for upcoming classes. (www.alumni.vt.edu/classring/hokiegolddetails.html) Of course, there are ways to leave monetary donations such as real estate, trusts or stock portfolios to these institutions as well.
- Charitable organizations: big ticket items such as automobiles, boats, real estate for which monies brought in revert back to the organizations themselves. (Google "car, boat, real estate donations" for sites and more information.)

As you ponder where you might donate an item, I'm sure you'll come up with a suitable place such as a fellow in England, Mr. Leslie Morgan, who had a hobby of hand crafting historical aircraft from copper and brass. His models were representative of the "seven pillars of aeronautical wisdom" such as the Wright Brothers's flyer, Louis Bleriot's monoplane, the Vickers' Vimy, the Ryan NYC (Lindbergh's aeroplane) and the Supermarine S6b racing aircraft. Mr. Morgan thought to contact the Royal Aeronautical Society in Farnborough, outside of London, about donating them there. The beautiful and intricate airplanes were displayed in the library for future generations to admire. What a wonderful legacy for that family.

During the holiday season, donations always come to mind, especially for our friends who don't need another knick-knack to place on their shelves. Instead of a gift, many folks donate money to documented organizations in friends' names. Now that you're aware of the possibilities, do you have an heirloom or historical document in your home that could be donated to a museum or gallery in your name?

My husband and I certainly did not think our treasured book would ever be in a presidential library, but it is quite a nice distinction.

Kathryn, currently living on the Eastern Shore, can be reached at marchi-wre@mris.com

Move more.
Play more.
Live more. ▶ That's what friends are for.



Hip and knee pain? Get relief.

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Learn how to reduce your pain from one of our experts. Visit us online for a list of upcoming classes at askAAMC.org/joint or call 443-481-5555.

LIVING HEALTHIER TOGETHER.



Treating Your Pets Safely

By Joan Amundsen

In a lifestyle survey conducted by Gallup, a 44 percent sample of Americans own a dog and 29 percent own a cat. And 70 percent of Americans in the survey describe themselves as “a dog person.” Gallup found that dog owners are more likely to give gifts to their dogs at the holidays than those who own cats. But why not, since most folks think of their dogs as family members and companions, not just a pet.

When we accept a dog into our family many of us become apprehensive about giving them the right food and the right amount. Most dogs can eat the same kinds of food. There are, however, certain breeds that sometimes have digestive problems and need a special diet.

A boxer currently in our family has stomach problems; his food is now cooked especially for him and frozen in meal portions that we found on www.yummly.com/recipe/external/Homemade-Chicken-Meal-for-Dogs-Food_com-152830

Most dogs love ice cubes, but again not all dogs tolerate the ice. If your dog can handle the cubes, try flavoring them with chicken or beef broth or frozen juices (without sugar) or even yogurt. If you find that the cubes do not agree with your dog, then just serve him cold water. Better to be safe than sorry. We mix up homemade ice cream as a very special treat. For our recipe, we use three or four cups of low or nonfat plain yogurt and a small tub of fresh strawberries, then mash the strawberries, mix with the yogurt and freeze in a container overnight.

Some foods are hazardous to your dog's health and you need to be aware of them. The ASPCA has made a list of these foods. They include avocados, raw bread dough, chocolate, grain alcohol (drinking alcohol), grapes or raisins, hops, macadamia nuts, xylitol (a non-caloric sweetener) and any moldy food.

Rhonda Mossner of The Quilter Cook shares her recipe above for Hazel's Doggy Biscuits. The recipe was given to her many years ago by the wife of a well-known vet in the Indianapolis area.

It would be easier to have dog-bone shaped cookie cutters

Hazel's Doggie Biscuit Mix

2 cups whole-wheat flour
1 tsp. salt
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup cornmeal
1/4 cup sunflower kernels, finely chopped



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a large-rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Mix dry ingredients in a large bowl, and add one-fourth cup molasses, two beaten eggs, one-fourth cup milk and two tablespoons oil. You may need to drizzle in a little more milk to make the dough stiff. On a lightly floured surface roll dough to a one-half inch thickness. Use a bone-shaped cookie cutter and cut as many biscuits as possible.

Place on baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes until lightly toasted. To make biscuits harder, bake the whole recipe and when the last batch is cooked, place all biscuits on the baking sheet, turn off oven and return them to oven for an hour or more until they become very dry and hard. Store biscuits in an airtight container.



to make the biscuits. Cutters can be purchased at many places, but I especially like the variety sold on Amazon. Just do a search for dog bone cookie cutters. You're sure to find similar ones at any pet supply store. What a delight it can be to have the grandchildren who visit over the holidays spend time making some of these delicious treats for their pets.

Dogs also love the taste of pumpkin and bananas. We use a dollop of canned pumpkin on our pet's evening meal. Whenever he sees anyone eating a banana, he simply drools.

If you're heading out for the holidays,

there are many resorts and motels that welcome you and your pet. Check them out at <http://www.officialpethotels.com/?refclid=1385~B~hotels%20that%20welcome%20pets#axzz3EzVEkabT>

If you're searching for more pet services, try your local Pet Smart store. They offer dog walking, training, grooming and a Doggy Day Camp.

For the ultimate in pet pampering, there's a site where a wide variety of products are offered. I just love the toys, and all those little fancy must-have items. Packaged dog food with your pet's name on the bag can even be purchased. You enter his name, age and a photo and you are on your way to a customized nutrition plan. Log onto <https://pawtree.com/>

I have a feeling that we are going to see a lot of pampered pets this holiday season. Go for it. Dogs are still man's best friend.

THE LINK BETWEEN PERIODONTAL HEALTH AND OVERALL HEALTH

By Dr. Joe Passaro

If you've been told that you suffer from periodontal disease, commonly referred to as gum disease, you aren't alone.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that more than 70 percent of Americans age 65 and older suffer from gum disease, an infection of the tissue that surrounds your teeth.

Age isn't the only reason you or a loved one may be at risk of gum disease, either. Risk factors also include smoking and tobacco use and taking certain medications including antidepressants and some heart medications. Stress, genetics, poor nutrition, obesity and clenching and grinding your teeth also are risk factors.

The consequences of gum disease are varied as well.

Several studies have shown that periodontal disease is associated with heart disease, according to the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP). While a cause-and-effect relationship has not yet been proven, research has indicated that periodontal disease increases the risk of heart disease.

Research has also suggested a relationship between diabetes and periodontal disease, with that relationship going both ways. Periodontal disease may make it more difficult for people who have diabetes to control their blood sugar and people with diabetes are also more likely to have periodontal disease than people without diabetes, the AAP says.

Links between gum disease and osteoporosis, respiratory diseases and can-

cer also exist. Researchers found that men with gum disease were 49 percent more likely to develop kidney cancer, 54 percent more likely to develop pancreatic cancer and 30 percent more likely to develop blood cancers.

So how do you fight back against gum disease?

It is important to see your dentist for regular cleanings. If your dentist feels it is necessary, he or she may refer you to a periodontist, who is a dentist that specializes in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of periodontal disease.

Caused when plaque builds up under the gum line between teeth, the disease can present itself in different forms.

The mildest form, known as gingivitis, is often caused by inadequate oral hygiene. It causes gum tissues to bleed easily and become swollen and red. At this stage, gum disease is often undetected by patients because discomfort can be minimal. With the help of your hygienist and

proper home care, gingivitis is reversible.

Another form, periodontitis, is the result of untreated gingivitis. At this stage, plaque spreads beneath the gum line and harmful bacteria in the plaque cause the gum tissues to become irritated.

This inflammatory response, which is the body's natural response to fighting infection, can lead to problems not only in the mouth, but also other parts of the body.

To learn more about gum disease, the American Academy of Periodontology also offers a website with great resources for learning more, as well as an online gum disease risk assessment test: <http://service.previser.com/aap/default.aspx>

Dr. Joe Passaro and his partner, Dr. Woody Wooddell, opened the doors to their dental practice in Davidsonville in 1981. In addition to caring for their patients' dental health by offering general dentistry services, Drs. Wooddell and Passaro provide expert restorative and esthetic dental solutions. Visit their website at www.wp dentalgroup.com or call 410.956.5555.



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- Administrative volunteers to help at the main office in Pasadena or at one of our two patient care centers located in Linthicum and Harwood

DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT PERSON

By Louise Whiteside

Who among us has not had someone in our life with whom we simply could not get along? Perhaps an overbearing boss, a complaining neighbor or an overly critical relative? So often we have tried to reason, communicate or compromise with such a person, only to run into frustration, feelings of helplessness or even eventual withdrawal from the individual. Many times we have blamed ourselves for our inability to interact successfully with this person; we may have reasoned that by being courteous or accommodating, we could resolve our differences.

Unfortunately, there are times when the usual techniques practiced in polite society just don't work. The individual we are dealing with may present a unique problem. There are times when being "nice" or reasonable -- or even a bit challenging -- toward the person is futile, and may even exacerbate the situation. Indeed there are individuals who, for whatever reason, do not wish to live peaceably with others, but who actually thrive on a constant state of discord.

WHAT MAKES THESE INDIVIDUALS BEHAVE IN THE WAY THEY DO?

There are some possible reasons:

1. **Low self-esteem:** Some individuals feel the need to compensate for deep-seated feelings of inferiority by making others feel inferior.
2. **Self-centeredness and no sense of moral obligation:** Some people may be so self-absorbed that they are unaware of the pain they are causing others.
3. **History of a dysfunctional upbringing:** Having experienced rejection or abuse in one's family may lead an individual to feel justified in "getting even" with the rest of the world.

If you do have a difficult family member and your attempts to compromise, placate or have civil discourse only make things worse, what can you do? All you want is to keep peace in the family.

First, what not to do. As a rule, the following attitudes or behaviors, when dealing with an extremely troublesome individual, do not work:

- **Being "nice" to the person.** This may be perceived as weakness, and often invites further mistreatment.
- **Remaining silent.** This can encourage escalation of abusive language.
- **"Active listening."** Giving empathic attention to a difficult person can lead to further domination by the individual.

Here are some survival techniques:

1. **Using assertive body language.** A standing position, with ruler-straight posture, exudes authority, while a slump suggests submissiveness.
2. **Responding to behavior.** Rather than reacting to words, react to behavior. Example: "Please come back when we can have a civil discussion," is more effective than, "I

never did that."

3. **Responding with humor.** Some of us are better at delivering verbal quips than others, but often a clever one-liner can thwart a counterproductive interaction. Example: A response like, "Oh, that's highly classified information," might produce the desired result.
4. **Using "you" rather than the I.** This places the responsibility on the troublesome individual. Example: "Please don't contradict me," might be more effective than, "I feel hurt when you contradict me," because it puts the onus on the offensive individual.

A word of caution: It's a good idea to assess the situation before reacting to a verbally abusive person. When our gut tells us we may be treading on dangerous ground, it's best to avoid an antagonistic encounter. Safety is always the first priority.

The references below can help in dealing with -- or freeing ourselves from -- mistreatment by an abusive individual.

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Take The Bully By The Horns: Stop Unethical, Uncooperative Or Unpleasant People From Running And Ruining Your Life. By Sam Horn St. Martin's Press, New York (2002).

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Louise Whiteside, M.Ed, M.S.W., has conducted workshops on communication, anger management and interpersonal skills.



FLOATERS IN THE EYES

By Michael J. Dodd, MD

A common complaint I hear from patients over age 50 is about "floaters." In this article I will discuss the cause of these annoying symptoms and what, if anything can be done.

To understand the cause of floaters a little eye anatomy background is helpful. Behind the colored iris is the clear lens and behind the lens is a viscous, clear material called the vitreous humor, or vitreous for short. The purpose of the vitreous seems to be to help maintain the shape eye and keep it from collapsing. The vitreous is clear and allows natural light to pass unimpeded to the retina where the light information is transmitted to the brain for perception of images.

As we age the vitreous loses some of its gel-like consistency and may become more water-like and tend to painlessly collapse toward the center of the eye. When this happens, the peripheral part of the vitreous, which is attached at multiple micro-

scopic points along the retina, may tug on the retina. This tugging or "traction" on the retina can stimulate the retina to send light impulses to the brain. Patients perceive this as "light flickers" or "flashes" in their side vision. Patients may sometimes see this flashing -- known as photopsia -- without a vitreous detachment. This can be caused by "ocular migraines" or rarely without any apparent cause. Sometimes the flashing from vitreous traction may occur in clusters and be quite disturbing. It can last for minutes or hours and rarely for days.

This vitreous traction will eventually stop when the vitreous attachment to the retina finally separates. Once the separation occurs, floaters may appear. They may have many shapes and sizes. Most patients describe them as "comma shaped," "C-shaped" or "rings," which move back and forth, or up and down, with eye movement. Large floaters can drift in the central visual field and partially block vision, especially reading vision. So floaters are part of the normal anatomy of the eye, which have detached from their normal position. Therefore they are often referred to as "vitreous detachments."

What can be done about these annoying floaters? Unfortunately, not much. They remain forever, but with time they usually break up into smaller, less noticeable fragments and become less noticeable. So a vitreous detachment is considered one of those normal aging events that affect many older people.

But our story does not end here. Rarely, when the vitreous tugs on the retina, a break can occur in the retina and this may lead to a retinal detachment (RD). This must be diagnosed and treated quickly to avoid permanent vision loss. Also, some floaters can be caused by a hemorrhage into the vitreous from a leaky blood vessel in diabetic patients. This also needs to be evaluated and treated.

So any patient with a new symptom of floaters and light flashes needs to be evaluated soon to be certain there is no hemorrhage or RD. Consult with your eye specialist if these symptoms occur.

Dr. Dodd is a practicing ophthalmologist at Maryland Eye Associates located in Annapolis, Prince Frederick and Upper Marlboro, as well as an instructor at the University of Maryland Department of Ophthalmology. He can be reached at 410.224.4550 or mjddm1@gmail.com



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GRAMS VERSUS TEASPOONS

By Melissa Conroy

America's nonsensical measuring system is a favorite topic of ridicule in other countries. France, Spain, Canada and other nations have their liters, milliliters, meters, grams and other standardized forms of measurement. In contrast, Americans have to grapple with ounces, gallons, miles, yards and cups, making each measurement attempt an interesting juggling act. Cooking is particularly challenging: The poor chef has to say, "OK, so I need three and half cups of flour, five tablespoons of cocoa powder, and a pint of water, but since I'm cutting the recipe in half, I need..."

Although teaspoons, pints and cups rule in the American kitchen, most pre-packaged food uses the metric system on their labels. Take, for example, a serving of Lean Cuisine Glazed Chicken.

Food product weight: 8.5 ounces
Calories: 240
Total fat: 5 grams
Protein: 22 grams
Fiber: 2 grams
Sugar: 5 grams
Carbohydrates: 26 grams
Cholesterol: 45 milligrams
Sodium: 450 milligrams
Potassium: 390 milligrams

For most people, food packaging numbers are fairly arbitrary. You probably don't have the faintest clue what 2,000 milligrams of salt or 50 grams of fiber actually looks like. Most Americans measure food by volume (a tablespoon of oil, four ounces of milk, one cup of flour), and it's hard to visualize how much sugar 20 grams really is. As a result, it can be very difficult to make wise food choices and intelligently select foods that are good for you, and not merely labeled as "healthy," "low-fat" or "light."

A gram is a unit for measuring mass. One dime weighs about as much as one gram. At your last checkup, your doctor may have given you a list of gram guidelines for your daily food consumption such as 46-50 grams of protein, less than 2,000 milligrams of sodium and 30 grams of fiber. These guidelines can be helpful, but it is important to understand what all these grams and milligrams really mean.

Instead of just blindly trying to consume less than X milligrams or more than Y grams, it is helpful to convert these numbers into teaspoons, tablespoons and pounds. This gives you a more concrete grasp of what you are actually eating. The results may surprise you.

Sugar is one specific example of why a gram measurement can be so misleading

or confusing. One cup of Newman's Own Marinara has 8 grams of sugar. On paper, this does not look like a huge amount. However, pour one-half cup of Newman's Own Marinara on your plate and you just added two teaspoons of sugar to your pasta!

Here's how the math works: **one teaspoon of sugar has 4 grams of sugar** in it. There are 4 ounces in one-half a cup. Therefore, each ounce of Newman's Own Marinara has 1 gram of sugar in it. You wouldn't think of tipping the sugar bowl over your plate of spaghetti, but that is exactly what you are doing with this sugary pasta sauce.

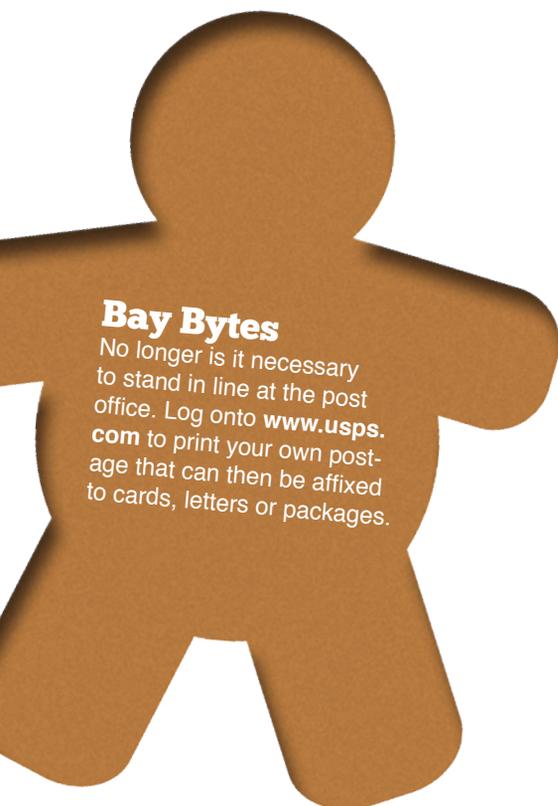
Pick up a pack of Hostess Ho Ho's and you know you are reaching for an indulgent treat at **43 grams of sugar**. That **converts to 10.75 teaspoons of sugar**. The American Heart Association recommends no more than nine teaspoons of sugar a day for men and six teaspoons of sugar a day for women. One pack of Ho Ho's and you just gobbled up your maximum sugar intake for the day, and then some!

Salt is another area where grams can mislead. **One teaspoon of salt contains 2,300 milligrams**. One cup of Campbell's Beef and Dumplings with Hearty Vegetables contains 800 milligrams of salt, almost one-third of a teaspoon. The American Heart Associate recommends no more than 2,500 milligrams of salt per day, and one serving of that soup eats up about one-third of your daily salt allowance.

If you are trying to make better food choices, it is a good idea to pay close attention to food labels and convert grams to teaspoons and tablespoons. Converting makes it easier to clearly understand just what you are eating. If 43 grams of sugar sounds rather vague, three tablespoons of sugar is a much easier number to visualize and grasp.

Here is a good illustration. One person is told that the average American eats 58,967 grams of sugar a year. The other person is sent to a grocery store to load up a shopping cart with 130 1-pound bags of sugar. Who do you think will have a better understanding of just how much sugar the typical American consumes every year?

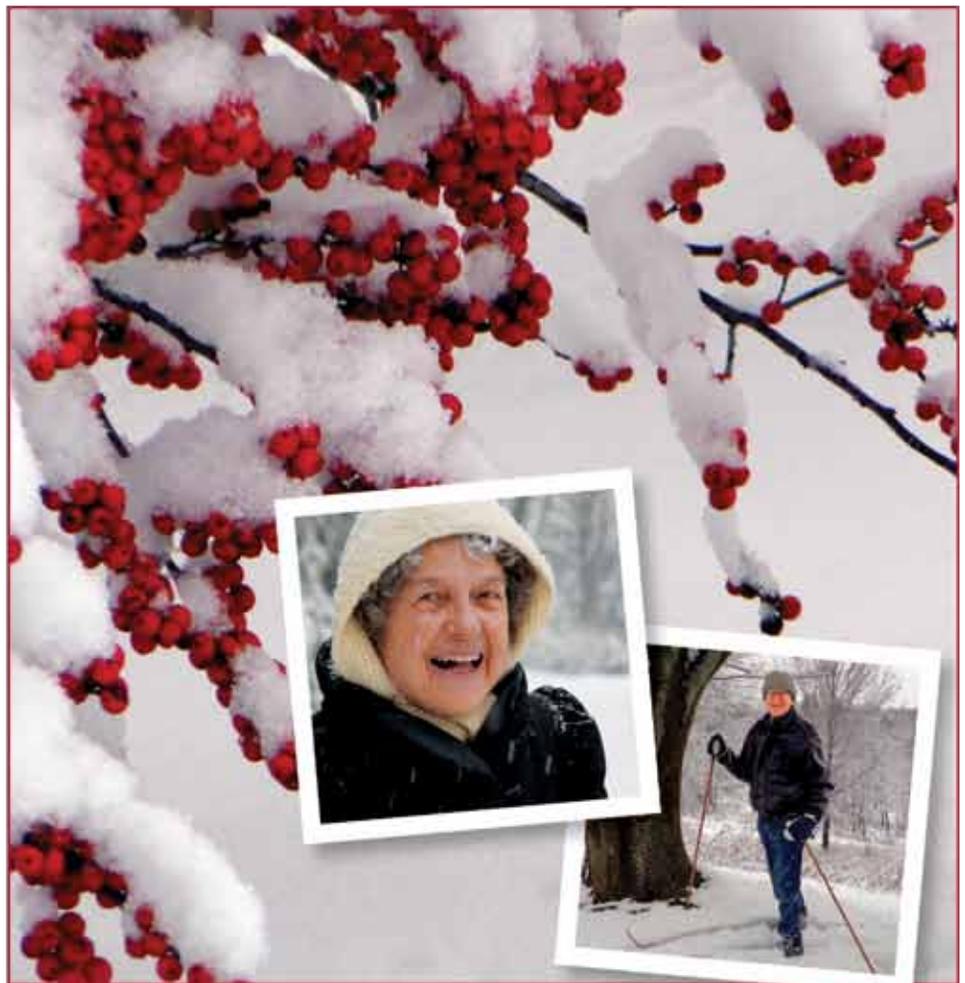
Converting from grams to teaspoons, tablespoons and pounds can also help en-



courage you to eat better. Say you are trying to consume no more than **2,500 milligrams** (just **over a teaspoon of salt**) per day. You know that this is a good choice to protect your heart. But, to be honest, you really don't want to cut back on the salty snacks you love. To encourage yourself, measure out a teaspoon full of salt and look at it closely. Imagine eating that entire teaspoon in one gulp. Doesn't that sound awful? Think about that **130 pounds of sugar** the average American consumes in one year. Can you imagine chowing down 130 pounds of pure sugar in one go?

Even if you push away the sugar bowl and saltshaker, most packaged food is loaded with extra salt and sugar. The average American consumes **1.5 teaspoons of salt** and **22 teaspoons of sugar a day**, mostly derived from packaged food. Even if you think you are eating healthy, you are probably consuming much more sugar and salt than you think. Dangers lurk even in food items you would not suspect.

Take the time to read the label and become familiar with what you are really putting in your body. And then, to make better food choices, break out your tablespoons and calculators. Visualizing what you eat, not as vague grams, but as pounds, tablespoons and teaspoons, can help you clean up your diet and eat your way to a healthier you.



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Thank You

By Penelope Folsom

There isn't a better time than the holidays to review the rules of etiquette that we learned so long ago. Interesting how much of it has fallen by the wayside. Many of the rules however, should still be respected and followed regardless of how long they've been around or what the contemporary dictates of our electronic age seem to be. For example, handwritten thank-yous are a must:

- in response to an event at someone else's expense, whether you brought a hostess gift or were effusive in your verbal thanks. This could include a day on someone's boat, dinner at their home, drinks or dinner out that was someone else's treat. Two days is de rigueur and yes, it should be handwritten. This takes only moments.
- after receiving wedding gifts. It seems to be a bit lenient, but the prevailing opinion is to acknowledge gifts within a year. A conscientious couple, however, would make a concerted effort to issue their handwritten notes long before a year is up. Procrastination, as we well know, somehow just makes the job more laborious.
- upon getting holiday or birthday gifts. You should send thanks for them within one week and again, handwritten really is the acceptable way to do this.

And then for those of you who somehow let the thank-yous slip by, the Christmas greeting card is always a great vehicle for catching up, such as, "We so appreciated that you had taken the time this Summer to include us in your picnic," or, "I've now finished the book that you had sent for my birthday, which was so appreciated."

And while we're on Christmas cards, do you really think anyone enjoys receiving a card with a preprinted John and Mary Smith? Are you really so busy that you don't have just a few moments so that each of the recipients can receive just a sentence as to what you've been up to, and signed with a real signature? If you have the time to address, stamp and lick each envelope, you should certainly have the few moments to personalize it.

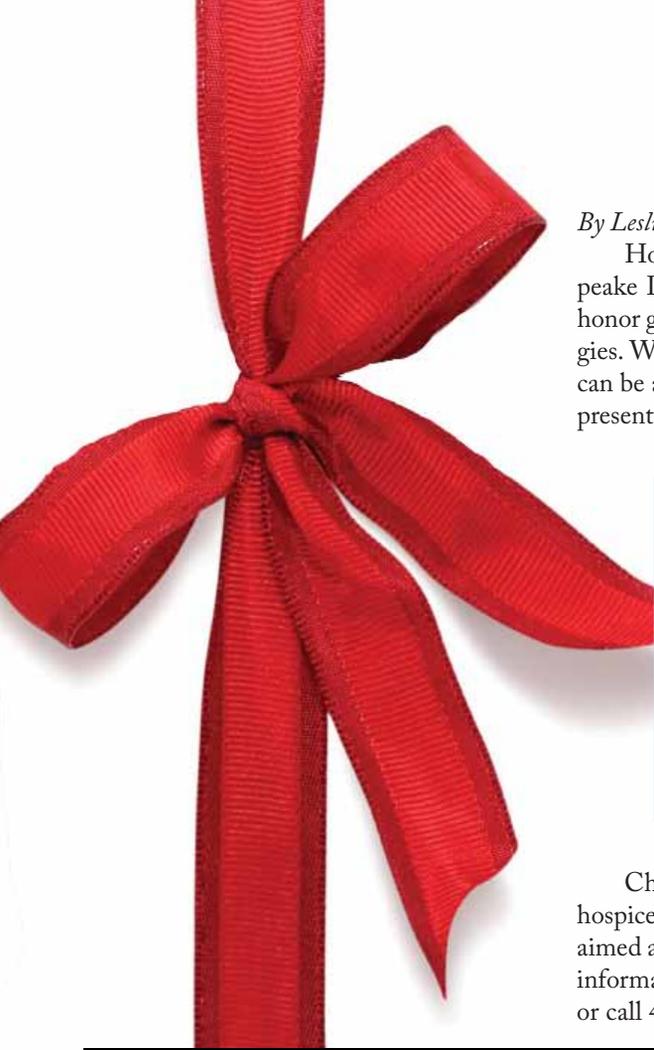
Then there are second-level thank-yous one should do after:

- receiving emails. Confirm or answer promptly. When an email is received, common courtesy dictates that one should respond. Realistically that should happen within 48 hours, if only to say, "I've received your email and will get back to you shortly." How else would the sender know if it actually made it through, or like much of our email, did it end up in the spam folder?
- getting phone calls. These are similar. A maximum of 48 hours to respond, even if it's the same trite phrase, "I'll get back to you on that."

There are certain cases when one is entitled to a free pass as in acknowledging acts of condolence, but again, the holidays are a great time to catch up with a note such as, "Wanted to thank you so much for taking the time ... or, "We so appreciated the flowers." Tardiness is, of course, excused or overlooked in this case.

Think back to the times when you've entertained or sent off a gift, never to get a response on the outcome. In this day of electronic wizardry, we're never quite sure if some of our efforts haven't dropped into the great beyond, never to be seen again.

To keep the task easier, keep a box of stationery, some all-purpose cards and a supply of stamps on your desk. It takes just a few brief minutes to pen a thank-you or a short note to someone who needs to be remembered or who has taken the time to do something meaningful for you.



Hope Full Holidays

By Leslie Hunt

Holidays can be a sensitive time when many of us ask how we will manage...Chesapeake Life Center offers specialty workshops throughout the year to help participants honor grief while at the same time exploring personal growth and effective coping strategies. We also offer two seminars near the holidays titled Hope Full Holidays since this can be a sensitive time when many of us ask how we will manage without our loved one present. The cost is \$10.

2014 SEMINARS WILL TAKE PLACE ON:

Saturday, Nov. 22 at 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at our Prince George's office, 9500 Arena Drive, Suite 250, Largo.

Saturday, Dec. 6 at 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at our Anne Arundel County office, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena.

If you would like to attend one of these workshops, please call 888.501.7077.

Chesapeake Life Center, a program service of Hospice of the Chesapeake, serves hospice family members and the community with bereavement services and activities aimed at enhancing the quality of life for those grieving the loss of a loved one. For more information on Chesapeake Life Center programs, visit www.chesapeakelifecenter.org or call 410.987.2129.

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Read Dr. Passaro's article "The Link Between Periodontal Health and Overall Health" in this edition of Outlook!

FOR THE GARDENER IN YOUR LIFE

By Neil Moran

If you live with a gardener you may not know what kind of garden gift to get him or her anymore than I would know what to get a golfer. (I'd rather see a beautiful golf course than play golf.)

Here are some garden gift suggestions for that special person in your life. Or, if you're a gardener, you may want to add these items to your own wish list. With the exception of the garden ornaments mentioned below, these are all "can't do without" items in my garden.

The Proplugger 5 in 1 » You might call this the Swiss Army Knife for gardeners. It performs a variety of functions, all from a standing position. You can use it for its original purpose, which is to remove healthy plugs of soil from one area of a yard and plug bare spots in another area. It also is a huge labor saver for planting bulbs: tulips, daffodils, crocus—even garlic and onion sets. When you visit the website (Proplugger.com) you'll be able to view how-to videos on plugging sod and planting various common bulbs with the 5 in 1.

Cobra Weeder and Cultivator » For many gardeners, including me, the Cobra Weeder and Cultivator (cobrahead.com) is a garden must-have. It's a quality built tool built by a family-owned company that is used to weed and cultivate around flowers and vegetables. It has an ergonomic handle and a metal "claw" that can handle the toughest soils and stubborn root systems. The short-handled tool sells for \$24.95, the long-handled tool sells for \$59.95.

A compost bin » I know, this probably doesn't make many Christmas wish lists. However, a compost bin is something a gardener will really appreciate. Turn kitchen scraps into "black gold" with a tumbler or pyramid compost bin. However, not all compost bins are created equal, and some, quite frankly, are a waste of money. I like what Gardener's Supply Company (gardeners.com) has to offer. The company sells a tumbler type of compost bin, which is like a round barrel on a rotating frame. You have to turn the bin two to three times of week to get the compost "cooking." The second type is a pyramid compost bin. Simply add the

organic matter to the top of the bin and the debris will gradually break down until it comes out the bottom as dark, rich humus. Both are priced at about \$150.

Garden ornaments » OK, now we're getting closer to what one might have on their Christmas wish list. To be honest, I'm not big on garden ornaments. In fact, I'd rather spend money on something I can grow to eat, like strawberry plants or blueberry bushes. However, I know that women in particular love garden ornaments almost as much as jewelry. Like jewelry, the beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Having said that, Gardener's Supply Company has some of the coolest ornaments for the garden, including their glass raindrop mobile and gazing globes that come in various colors. And if you're looking for more garden ornaments, type in "garden ornaments" in Pinterest for hundreds of ideas.

Garden magazines » Talk about a gift that keeps giving! There is nothing like curling up with a garden magazine on a cold Winter night. For organic gardeners, particularly vegetable gardeners, I recommend *Organic Gardening* magazine. Even if you or your loved ones aren't organic gardeners, I'd recommend this magazine. The advice is top-notch and they keep you up to speed on what other gardeners are doing around the country. They also offer yummy recipes each month. Other good picks for gardeners include *Fine Gardening*, *Horticulture* and *Birds & Bloom*.

Garden gloves » In my younger days I never would have thought to wear garden gloves for hoeing, pulling weeds and the like. Now I can't do without them. This could be a good stocking stuffer. Garden gloves run the gamut, from a \$5 pair at Home Depot to the nearly \$20 pair made especially for women at womanswork.com

I hope this gives you some ideas for that gardener who has everything. Happy holidays!

Neil Moran is a freelance writer and avid gardener who can be reached at nrmoran188@gmail.com

Holidays Without Stress: Voluntary Simplicity

By Dr. James David

Last December my wife and I had an opportunity to visit the Czech Republic, my ancestral home. Our first impulse was, "We can't do that! We have too many holiday traditions and obligations we must complete." Our second thought was, "This could be a trip of a lifetime. What can we forego so we can travel in December without feeling burdened by holiday demands?"

The upcoming holidays of Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanza can easily become exhausting rather than renewing. Women in particular are frequently more taxed due to food preparation, gift-buying, wrapping, entertaining, decorating, etc. What would happen if we carefully examine our faith and values and align ourselves with our authentic selves and be less compliant with society's expectations?

We began by making a list of our traditional holiday tasks and deciding what we could simplify or do without. It's wise to make these decisions with input from all family members. We decided to drastically reduce our holiday decorations, both inside and outside our home. Next we eliminated baking and all those sugary calories. Lastly, we simplified gift-giving for children and grandchildren in distant cities by sending money or gift cards in lieu of gifts requiring wrapping and mailing. We also realized that by completing some holiday purchases or baking well in advance, say September or October, we were freed up to truly enjoy the holidays.

Without realizing it, we had entered the realm of a concept and a movement called "voluntary simplicity" (visit www.choosingvoluntarysimplicity.com). It entails choosing a lifestyle that fits the uniqueness of you and your values. The goal is a life that is joyous, exciting and truly fulfilling, rather than just existing day to day.

HERE ARE SOME COMPONENTS OF VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY:

- Live within your means. Live the cliché, do I "want" it or "need" it? Avoid the stress of being financially overextended.
- You are what you eat. Be selective. Real food free of preservatives and additives will make us healthier and happier.
- Really evaluate how you spend your time. Is your life filled with events that are meaningless to you?
- Connect with the healing power of nature. A walk in the woods, gardening or boating will refresh us, providing relaxation and peace of mind.
- Spend time with those people whose eyes light up when they see us. Relationships need nurturing. Spend time with friends and family members whom you love and who love you.
- Find a balance between work and relaxation. We need to take care of ourselves. It's wise to do things every day that renew us physically and emotionally.

When we personalize our simplicity by knowing who we are and what we truly value, we will make decisions that create a life of meaning and genuine fulfillment. At his trial, Aristotle said famously, "An unexamined life is not worth living." He said this after choosing death rather than exile from Athens or a commitment to silence. If only all of us had the courage and the time to define ourselves, and as they say in Hawaii, "Live da Life!"

We might also read Duane Elgin's 1981 seminal book, *Voluntary Simplicity: Toward a Way of Life that is Outwardly Simple, Inwardly Rich*. The book was revised in 1993 and many related books have

since been published. See Linda Breen Pierce's *Choosing Simplicity: Real People Finding Peace and Fulfillment in a Complex World* for an annotated bibliography of books, websites, study circles, seminars, newsletters, magazines and organizations. It takes a major effort to acquire the countercultural skills of voluntary simplicity.

By the way, our holiday trip to the Czech Republic exceeded our highest expectations and Christmas that year with our family was wonderful. No Stress!

Dr. Jim David is a practicing psychotherapist in Silver Spring who adheres to balance in all areas of life. Visit his website at www.askdrdavidnow.com or email at james519@comcast.net

Enjoy Birds in Your Garden All Winter Long

By Leah Lancione

Like every other state, Maryland has birds that migrate to warmer locales for Winter, as well as many that remain and tough out the cold, snow and ice storms. According to *The Backyard Bird Lovers Ultimate How-To Guide*, ice storms are the most dangerous for our fine-feathered friends because the ice cover and frozen ground makes it challenging for them to find insects and seeds for food. Starvation is a real threat so it's important to do our part. We can help birds to survive by making our backyards habitable throughout the Winter. In addition to helping the migrating birds that stop along the Atlantic Flyway, bird watchers in Maryland can look forward to year-round residents including northern cardinals, mourning doves, chickadees, wrens, finches, black-birds, robins, sparrows and even blue jays.

Tips for caring for birds during Winter weather include dusting off snow-laden feeders as often as possible and even scattering seed along the ground and anywhere else accessible. Try putting stashes in evergreen or other trees if bird feeders get iced over or snowpacked. In addition, keep your feeders stocked with the food suited to the birds that frequent your backyard. Though the *Starting with Nature Bird Book* acknowledges that birds are experts at keeping warm despite plunging temperatures, early and unexpected snow or ice storms can be dangerous to those that are midway through their migratory journey. Not to mention, some birds may not have fully "fattened" up by the time an early storm hits.

Bird Watcher's Digest (www.birdwatchersdigest.com/bwdsite/learn/top10/help-birds-bad-weather.php) also suggests using tube feeders to keep seed

from getting wet and keeping an extra large dry feeder on hand in the shed or garage to bring out during inclement weather.

Bird food can be found at any grocery store or farm supply stores. The Humane Society (www.humanesociety.org) recommends black-oil sunflower seeds that are high in fat and provide significant energy, millet due to its protein content, peanuts for metal mesh tube feeders, suet cakes (vegetarian or nonvegetarian), Nyjer seeds and medium-sized cracked corn. Wild Bird Centers claim to only sell field-tested and filler-free birdseed. Not to mention that they offer a "Clunkers for Cash – Feeder Swap" in which customers can bring in their "clunker" feeder and receive a 20 percent discount for a new one. The store also has a free feeder promotion for valued customers as well as "Birdie Bucks" earned with each purchase.

For those of you who want to nurture your bird-watching proclivities beyond your homestead, consider checking out some of the spots CBS Baltimore (<http://baltimore.cbslocal.com/top-lists/top-winter-bird-watching-spots/>) has selected as "top spots" for doing so in Maryland:

- Eastern Neck Wildlife Refuge (1730 Eastern Neck Road in Rock Hall, www.fws.gov/refuge/eastern_neck/) boasts more than 243 bird species and a new "Tubby Cove" boardwalk through the refuge and three trails for visiting bird habitats. Here bird watchers can see tundra swans that migrate from the Arctic to the marshes of the Chesapeake.
- Conowingo Dam (Route 1 crossing of the Susquehanna River, 8 miles north of Havre de Grace in Harford County, www.harfordbirdclub.org/conowingo.html), also an electricity generation plant, features gulls and bald eagles from mid-October through mid-March. This is also home to great blue herons as there is an active heronry on site.
- Blackwater Wildlife Refuge (2145 Key Wallace Drive in Cambridge, www.fws.gov/refuge/Blackwater/) is 27,000 plus acres of forest, tidal marsh and freshwater ponds. The refuge is acclaimed as "the largest breeding population of bald eagles on the East Coast north of Florida." Visitors will have the opportunity to view nesting and migrant birds including geese, ducks, northern loons, snowy egrets, osprey, great blue herons and the migrant peregrine falcon. A bonus is the option for visitors to check on the osprey and bald eagle nests online from the comfort of their home.
- Assateague Island National Seashore (Route 611, eight miles south of Ocean City, www.nps.gov/asis/index.htm) is a perfect habitat for migrating and nesting birds including pelicans, gannets, gulls, ducks, wading birds, shore birds and geese. The park offers a variety of ranger-guided programs along the marshes, dunes, forests and bays.

And as a final note, the Department of Natural Resources in Maryland has an excellent site on everything you need to know about birds and other wildlife in Maryland. Log onto www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Plants_Wildlife/birdingmd.asp



Old Farmer's Almanac Predicts Another Cruel Winter

By Leah Lancione

By definition, an almanac records and predicts astronomical events (the rising and setting of the sun, for instance), tides, weather and other phenomena in relation to time. First published in 1792, the most widely respected and consulted almanac is the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, thanks to its founding editor, Robert B. Thomas. The almanac is the oldest continuously published periodical.

Though there have been countless other almanacs produced, Thomas's predictions about the weather have proven to be the most accurate. "Thomas used a complex series of natural cycles to devise a secret weather forecasting formula, which brought uncannily accurate results, traditionally said to be 80 percent accurate." (www.almanac.com) The formula is so treasured that it is still preserved under lock and key in the almanac headquarters in Dublin, New Hampshire.

Historical accounts of the almanac's value include a report in 1942 that a German spy was apprehended in New York with a copy of the *Old Farmer's Almanac* in his coat pocket. Speculation traveled fast that the Germans were using the periodical for its beneficial weather forecasts. The almanac survived accusations it was aiding and abetting the enemy.

So, what does this secret and precise formula predict for the nation's Winter weather this year from November 2014 to March 2015)? Maryland is grouped in the "Atlantic Corridor" designation along with Connecticut, District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, Northern Virginia, Delaware,

Rhode Island and parts of New Jersey, New York and Massachusetts. According to the almanac, the first couple of weeks of November will be cool (3 degrees below the average) with periods of increased precipitation. Mildly cool days with cold nights will give way to chances for showers and snow flurries in the last week, so you better plan for some hearty comfort foods for Thanksgiving.

Beyond November, the outlook isn't so great if you long for mild Winters. However, if you're "dreaming of a white Christmas," you may just get your wish. According to the almanac, "winter will be colder and slightly wetter than normal, with above-normal snowfall." The almanac is also calling for the coldest weather in late December and early to mid-January, with the most snow coming into the region in mid- to late December as well as

mid-January and early to mid-February.

Another seasonal fact is the Winter solstice officially takes place at 6:03 p.m. on Dec. 21, signaling the start of the season. If the almanac is "on the money," it'll be another harsh Winter. Fortunately, the almanac's forecast for Spring looks bright with a "generally drier and warmer" April and May.

Although the almanac boasts an 80 percent accuracy rate, if you want to compare other predictions for Winter weather, check out the National Weather Service at www.weather.gov or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website at www.noaa.gov for their long-range forecasts.

For more information or to consult the *Old Farmer's Almanac* yourself, visit your local library or log onto www.almanac.com

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Shrimply Delicious

By Joan Amundsen

Did someone mention shrimp for dinner? I love shrimp. When I think about it, I can almost taste that succulent, hot and juicy sautéed shrimp that has been bathed in a garlicky lemon sauce, or icy cold shrimp, dipped in the spiced up cocktail sauce that my dad was so famous for.

When I was young my mother would bread and fry shrimp in lots of fat in an old iron fry pan, and serve it with dad's hot sauce. In those days there wasn't any talk about calories, cholesterol levels or clogged arteries.

But times have changed. Today people choose to eat healthy and the preparation of food is streamlined. You can buy your shrimp fresh, frozen, cooked, raw, cleaned, tail removed, almost any way you want. It is up to the cook. And we can now have our shrimp all year round.

Most often, I prefer to buy shrimp frozen raw, shelled and cleaned, and cook it myself. Shrimp cooks quickly and if you don't watch your timing you will end up with a tough chewy crustacean. I have found that many times when buying shrimp frozen and already cooked, as used for a shrimp cocktail, the thawed shrimp tends to become soggy and not very tasty.

Always defrost your frozen shrimp before cooking. Remove from plastic bag and place in a colander. Give it a few quick swishes with cool water until it thaws. Thawing it in the fridge will leave the shrimp a bit soggy.

For a Shrimp Cocktail

For a **pound of shrimp**, bring about **three quarts of water** to a boil. Add a **dash of lemon juice** and add all the shrimp. Simmer gently about three minutes. Watch the shrimp. They will turn a light pink as they cook. As soon as they are done remove them from the cooking water, and run under cold water to drain. That's it. Chill and serve with **hot sauce**.

One of my favorite comfort foods is my version of sautéed shrimp using the following recipe. Run cool water over a serving of shrimp to thaw. When thawed, place on paper towel to dry.

Dad's Hot Sauce

Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup catsup and 2 Tbs. horseradish. Add a $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. of lemon juice and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. Worcestershire sauce. Taste and adjust to your liking. If it is not spicy enough, you can add a drop or two of hot sauce.

A tip: If you are serving the shrimp as an appetizer, line a martini glass with lettuce, add a dollop of hot sauce, and hang the shrimp around the edge of the glass. Top with half of a lemon slice and you're ready to serve.

Marinade

1 Tbs. lemon juice
1/3 tsp. minced garlic

2 Tbs. olive oil
A pinch of salt and pepper

Combine lemon juice, oil, garlic, salt and pepper in a bowl and stir until mixed. Add the one portion of shrimp and stir until all is coated. Let shrimp sit in the marinade about half an hour. The shrimp will begin to take on a pink hue around the edges. That is caused by the lemon juice which is already beginning to 'cook' the shrimp. Heat a nonstick fry pan and add a teaspoon of olive oil. Place the shrimp in a single layer in the pan and sauté a few minutes on each side. Add a spoonful of marinade over the shrimp if needed until they are done. Remove shrimp, turn heat down and add the rest of the marinade to the fry pan, including all those little bits of garlic that remain. You can also add a dash of white wine to the pan. Stir gently but do not allow the sauce to turn brown. Serve the shrimp and sauce over cooked rice, or transfer the shrimp to a bowl. Add a green salad and crusty bread and you're done.

If you are planning a company dinner, why not prepare shrimp jambalaya. It's a little more work, but so worth the effort. You will need a three-quart fry pan with a tight-fitting lid.

Shrimp Jambalaya

1 lb. of cooked, coarsely chopped shrimp, set aside. Heat pan over low heat and add 2 Tbs. butter or margarine, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup finely chopped onion, 1 tsp. of minced garlic, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of diced cooked ham or kielbasa. Cook over medium heat until onion is transparent. Add to pan and blend in 3 cups of chicken or vegetable broth, 2 cups of chopped cooked tomatoes, 1 Tbs. parsley flakes, 1 tsp. salt, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. thyme, $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. pepper, $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. cayenne pepper, $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. chili powder (optional), 1 bay leaf. Cover and bring to boiling. Gradually add 1 cup rice (not instant). Simmer covered about 20 minutes or until a rice kernel is soft when pressed between fingers. Add cooked shrimp and simmer another five minutes. Remove bay leaf. Serve hot. The longer you keep this pan on the fire, even to just keep it warm, the more liquid you will need. Serves 6 to 8.

A pino grigio wine pairs well with any shrimp dish.

There are so many things you can do with shrimp. From shrimp bisque, to grilled shrimp, to stir fry, I love them all. It may take a little more of your time to prepare some of the dishes, but in the long run isn't it worth it?

Something New for Your Holiday?

FIVE IDEAS FOR CHANGING TIMES

By Joanne R. Alloway

As the holidays approach, we begin thinking about how we spend those special days with family and friends. As we get older, our situations change. Our children have moved far away. Our aging parents need us, or they, like other relatives, may have passed away. Traditional holiday plans made great memories, but we can still make new ones. Here are some ideas:

Charity: A few years ago, in my large (six siblings) family, we were experiencing changes and stress at holiday time. The prospect of exchanging gifts was out of the question. We decided instead to use the money that would be spent on gifts to help an agreed-upon charity. That year, our charity was St. Jude's Children's Hospital. We felt good about helping sick children, and have done this in other years for different charities. On the holiday itself, we still gather to spend a peaceful, happy day, enjoying each other and a good meal. There are many worthy causes you can donate to instead of exchanging gift cards or buying soon-forgotten items. You can check your charity's standing at www.charitynavigator.org/ or www.charitywatchdog.org/toprated.html

Plan a Family Event: What better time to have an extended family gathering potluck style, making it a low-key event. When everyone brings something, even when the menu is unscripted, a great party ensues. Having it before or after the actual holiday will net a better turnout than if it is held on the actual holiday. This is a fun way for grandchildren to get to know their cousins and distant relatives. Ask someone to find a place for the gathering, if your family is large. A teen can plan games for kids; someone else takes care of music. Make new holiday and family memories, and maybe a new tradition.

On the Water: Ever thought of spending part of your holiday on a cruise ship? If you're an empty nester or you'd like to do something different with your family, cruise ships depart the Port of Baltimore for the Caribbean during November and December. For information log onto www.cruiseweb.com If you can get to other departure cities, your choices will be greater and perhaps warmer. Last year, my friends visited parents in Miami for the holiday,

then boarded a cruise ship for five days, celebrating Christmas in St. Thomas. There are many ways to celebrate onboard ship and at ports of call. If you decide to cruise, watch for last-minute discounted rates such as second guest pays 50 percent less or onboard credits. www.cruise.com/lastminutedeals

Invite Someone Who is Alone: Everyone knows someone who is going to be alone during the holidays – not by choice. This is an opportunity to do something rewarding for both of you. Start by asking for help decorating your tree, wrapping gifts or making food for the feast. Everyone likes to be needed; ask if they could bring their special dish the day of the holiday. Plan on spending the whole day together, including them in all your planned family activities, making sure they are in your photos so you can frame one as a memento.

Drive to a Nearby City: We are fortunate to have great cities within driving distance of our area.

- *Philadelphia* – A holiday weekend in the City of Brotherly Love can be very festive. Combine history, ice skating, shopping, film festivals, light shows, the Waterfront Winterfest and the Christmas Village, for entertainment ideas. www.visitphilly.com/articles/philadelphia/top-holiday-events/
- *New York City* – There's nothing like the Big Apple in December. It's alive with energy and color. If you haven't done this yet, put it on your bucket list; it's worth the trip. Try Broadway, Radio City Music Hall, Madison Square Garden, shopping at the fabulously decorated department stores, visiting the historical monuments or tasting international cuisine. Make this a memorable, though pricey weekend. Oh, don't forget the nightlife! www.timeout.com/newyork/events-calendar/december-events-calendar
- *Alexandria, VA* – Charming and close, Old Town Alexandria is a small, but warm holiday destination. The town is decorated with trees and white lights on lovely, historic streets. The Scottish Christmas Walk and Parade is notable. A visit to George Washington's Mount Vernon home, especially on Dec. 20, will feature a rare evening of special programs, old-time crafts, fireworks and music. Alexandria's Holiday Market is open for gifts, European foods, beer, wine and entertainment. www.visitalexandriava.com/calendar-of-events/winter-holiday/

We're in a wonderful area for endless holiday fun. Watch the local newspapers for local events. No matter what you do for the holidays, make memories and enjoy the experience, and maybe this year it will be something different.

Joanne can be contacted at jrwrite@aol.com



AN ANNAPOLIS LANDMARK

The USNA Chapel

By Ellen Moyer

It dominates the skyline.

From the Severn River, City Harbor, Ritchie Highway and King George Street, the green patina of the U.S. Naval Academy Chapel's giant dome in Annapolis compels our attention. It hovers above us, a beacon beckoning us to find shelter, and once there, to discover our moral compass and spiritual strength.

The current USNA Chapel is the third in academy history since its founding in 1845. The first chapel, built in 1854, burned. The second was built in 1868 after the Civil War. It was a simple brick Victorian gothic church with a steeple up front located where the superintendent's house is now located. Remnants of each of these chapels exist today in stained glass windows. One located in Bancroft Hall is dedicated to those American Navy personnel killed in the Samoan Hurricane of 1889. Another, now lost, memorialized Commodore Foxhall Parker who is the only superintendent to die while serving in that position. Both set a pattern for memorializing character and courage and fortitude that would dominate the current chapel dedicated in 1908.

Architect Ernest Flagg was commissioned in the 1890s to design the buildings for the new campus that had a growing student body. Flagg studied at the Ecole de Beaux Arts in Paris and later in his life became president of the New York Society of Beaux Arts Architects, a style that dominated public buildings in America between 1880 and 1920. He designed Bancroft, Mahan, Maury and Sampson halls, the superintendent's house and the chapel in the neoclassical beaux art tradition notable for grand entrances, sweeping staircases, eye-catching monuments, sculptural decorations and theatrical nobility that embraced allegorical ideals throughout history.

Adm. George Dewey, an 1858 Naval Academy graduate and in 1900 a Democratic candidate for president, laid the corner stone for the chapel in 1904. The chapel has been renovated twice since then. The 1940 renovation increased the central nave to allow for seating 2,500 people. During the second renovation in 2009, workers discovered a 20-foot diameter skylight in the dome that had been covered over. The dome, with a diameter of 65 feet, soars 180 feet above the chapel base. Designated a national historic landmark in 1961, the chapel has remained the center of the campus on its highest ground, a symbol of the vital role for moral and spiritual guidance important to midshipman and future military leaders.

The symbol of spirituality wrapped up in the iconic dome permeates the entirety of the chapel. Standing on Cooper Road and looking up the broad granite staircase, visitors face 22- by 10-foot bronze doors symbolizing "War and Peace, Patriotism, Wisdom and Science for God and Country." In 1906, a competition for designing the doors for the chapel was announced. Thirty artists entered. The winner was Evelyn Longman. The *Independent News*, stated that "... on a close analysis, her design, does not compare favorably with the best doors of the world in interest, but in a certain charm of line a part of ideas."

As Longman was the only woman in a field of male competitors, it is interesting that her doors opened the chapel for what was then an entirely male student body. Installed in 1909, the bronze doors involve allegorical sculptures symbolizing various phases of war and peace. Patriotism is illustrated with a female figure suggestive of the Delphic Sibyl of Michelangelo calling a youth to service.

The grand bronze doors open into a space surrounded by stained-glass windows, memorials to others intended to inspire strength of moral character. Over the altar, the carved legs of which represent Biblical figures of Matthew, Luke, Mark and John, is a stained-glass remnant of Jesus walking on water that came from the original chapel built after 1845.

The first new window in the chapel was commissioned by the widow of Cmdr. Theodorous B.M. Mason, the founder and first head of the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence and a Naval Academy graduate, class of 1868. It represents an allegorical portrait of Sir Galahad. Arthur Alfred Lord Tennyson wrote of this knight of the roundtable and pursuer of the Holy Grail, "My strength is as strength of 10 because my heart is pure." The work, therefore, symbolizes that the pure of heart will conquer enemies. The work is designed by Frederick Wilson and was made in the Tiffany Studios.

Tiffany Studio artist Frederick Wilson also designed memorial windows for Adm. David Dixon Porter, the USNA superintendent after the Civil War, William T. Sampson and David Farragut. Farragut became a midshipman at the age of nine, was



given command of a US Naval vessel at the age of 23 and became the nation's first four-star admiral. He is remembered for his charge during the Battle of Mobile Bay, a decisive battle in the Civil War, "Damn the torpedoes; full speed ahead."

Another major stained-glass work of art made in Tiffany Studios for the chapel was donated by the class of 1927. It is called "Commission Invisible" and is based on the likeness of Tom Hamilton, president of the class of 1927. Tom Hamilton was also a major football hero for Navy, which in 1926 was ranked number one in the nation. But in the Navy-Army Game of that year Navy was losing. Late in the game, Hamilton scored for Navy, tying the game and saving Navy's first-place ranking.

And so the USNA chapel depicts works to inspire courage, trust, moral character and spirit for winning. Underneath the chapel's main floor, the crypt of John Paul Jones, father of the Navy, holds this spirit. Battling the British and faced with disaster in his sinking flagship, the "Bonhomme Richard," he refused to strike his colors, saying, "I have not yet begun to fight." He went on to win the battle and capture the British ship, the HMS Serapis.

Jones defined a naval officer as one who was a capable mariner but a great deal more. "He should be as well a gentleman of liberal education, refined manners, punctilious courtesy, and the nicest sense of personal honor ... He should be the soul of tact, patience, justice, firmness and charity."

The neoclassic beaux art dome of the USNA Chapel that dominates the skyline of Annapolis symbolizes Jones' admonition for the highest of human standards.

Ellen (EllenMoyer@yahoo.com), a former mayor of Annapolis, was assisted by Jim Cheevers, senior curator, US Naval Academy Museum, who provided information for this article.

Services are open to the public with proper ID, such as a driver's license, to gain admittance to the USNA.

Catholic Services

Sun 9:00 a.m. Main Chapel

Sun 11:30 a.m. St Andrew's Chapel (lower level)

Daily 12:50 p.m. St. Andrew's Chapel (lower level)

Christian Science Services

Tues. 6:30 p.m. call for location

Eastern Orthodox Christian Services

Sun 9:00 a.m. call for location

Tues 7:00 p.m. call for location

Jewish Services

Fri 7:15 p.m. Uriah P. Levy Center

Protestant Services

Sun 8:15 a.m. St. Andrew Chapel (lower level)

Sun 11:00 a.m. Main Chapel

For more information and to locate other services log onto: www.usna.edu/Chaplains/services.php

For upcoming performances in the Chapel, log onto: <http://www.usna.edu/Music/schedule/index.php>

Historic Country Inns to Visit Over the Holidays

By Ellen Moyer

The seasons are changing. Our life outdoors, gardening, walking and sailing is on hold while the world sleeps. The frost of Winter, however, offers new opportunities for discovering new places and sharing time with friends in quieter moments. Throughout history the dining table has been a gathering place for conversation, relaxation and the best of hospitality. If you like fine food, wine and the ambience of historical country inns, the two come together in northern Baltimore County horse country with three fine restaurants. Between the snow swirls, load up your car and follow the Baltimore Beltway North.

The Valley Inn has been a landmark on Falls Road since 1832. Popular with the horse country crowd, the two and one-

half story stone structure was built as an inn and restaurant and never stopped until 2010 when it was closed for renovation. Now refurbished, the Valley Inn is back in business. Memories of the horse patrons who found this their special place for casual dining fill the walls with original photos.

When built, the inn faced the new railroad, the Baltimore and Susquehanna, chartered by the Maryland legislature in 1828. The line that would eventually become the North Central Railroad extended 380 miles to York. It passed through Mt. Washington, Lutherville, Timonium, Monkton, Cockeysville and Sparks with stops along the way. Presumably, the Valley Inn was built to accommodate passengers on the rail line as well as coach passengers on the historic Falls Road. In August 1972, Hurricane Hazel wiped out much of the railroad track and one of the oldest railroad lines, 134 years in operation, came to an end.

The rural community of Sparks along the old York Road got its name from the railroad. A switching place on the property owned by the Sparks family was finally shortened to a town named Sparks, a community once named Philapolis and earlier Priceville. The abandoned railroad is now a hiker biker trail along the Gunpowder River that runs through Sparks and extends to York, Pa.

Sparks is also the site of **The Milton Inn**, holder of the prestigious DiRoNA Award and the 5 Star Diamond Award. Originally built in 1740 as a coach

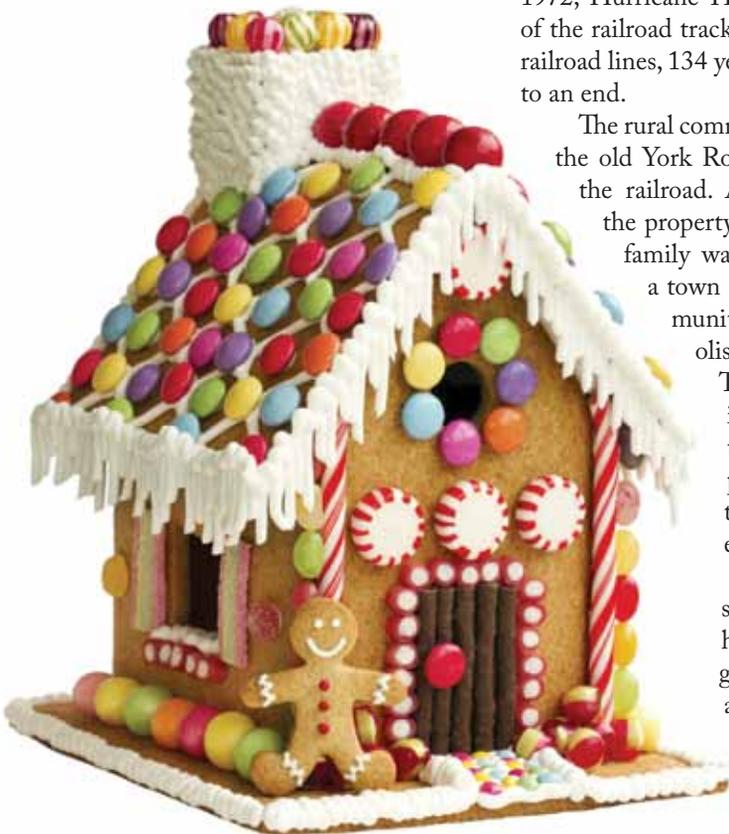
stop for Quakers who settled the area, the charming stone country inn served visitors for 100 years. It then served the area as a classic cooking academy for boys. (Infamously, John Wilkes Booth attended the school). It was named the Milton Academy after John Milton, author of *Paradise Lost*. In 1947 it was purchased, restored and has served the public ever since with fine dining, excellent wines and comfortable ambience.

Milton Inn's Chef Brian Boston, a Baltimore native, has been named chef of the year and brought numerous awards to the Milton Inn. He shares his culinary expertise with fundraising for Poverty Solutions. The chef also happens to be a Maryland state equestrian champion four years running caring for his two horses in his spare time.

Back in the heart of horse country on Shawan Road near Hunt Valley, **The Oregon Grill** announces its horse connections with a pathway lined by statues of jockeys of award-winning horses. Inside the stone country home built by the Price family more than 200 years ago on land patented in 1737, the art of the horse covers the walls. Over the years the home has served employees of the iron ore furnace and limestone quarries of Oregon Ridge, a retail store and a post office. Its life as a restaurant is relatively new. Oregon Grill has a cozy atmosphere, a bar with a wood-burning stove and is a romantic getaway in Baltimore County's horse country.

For information or reservations for a Winter getaway contact:
Valley Inn, 10501 Falls Rd, Lutherville, 410.828.0002
Oregon Grill, 1201 Shawan Rd, Hunt Valley, 410.7711.0505
Milton Inn, 14833 York Rd, Sparks, 410.771.4366

Ellen, a former mayor of Annapolis, can be reached at ellenmoyer@yahoo.com





ESTATE PLANNING: WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

By Margo Cook

Many of us spend nearly all of our lives working, saving and accumulating, yet we may spend hardly any time planning what should happen to those hard-earned assets after we die. In fact, we probably spend more time deciding what color to paint the house than who our benefactors should be once we're gone. Estate planning is important, and it's not just for the rich. It's for everybody. Estate planning is about you and your goals, concerns and passions. It's about you and your loved ones too. All deserve your time and attention.

What is estate planning?

The purpose of estate planning is to determine what will happen to your important and valuable assets—bank accounts, retirement funds, proceeds from insurance policies, homes, belongings—after your death and, in some cases, even during your life.

Good estate planning can help you:

- Make your wishes known.
- Appoint trusted people to oversee your affairs after your death.
 - Name people to speak for you—if you are incapacitated and can't do so yourself while you're alive.
- Minimize taxes.
- Support favorite charities, projects or people.
- Leave your estate organized and your wishes clear.
- Provide comfort and support for family and friends.

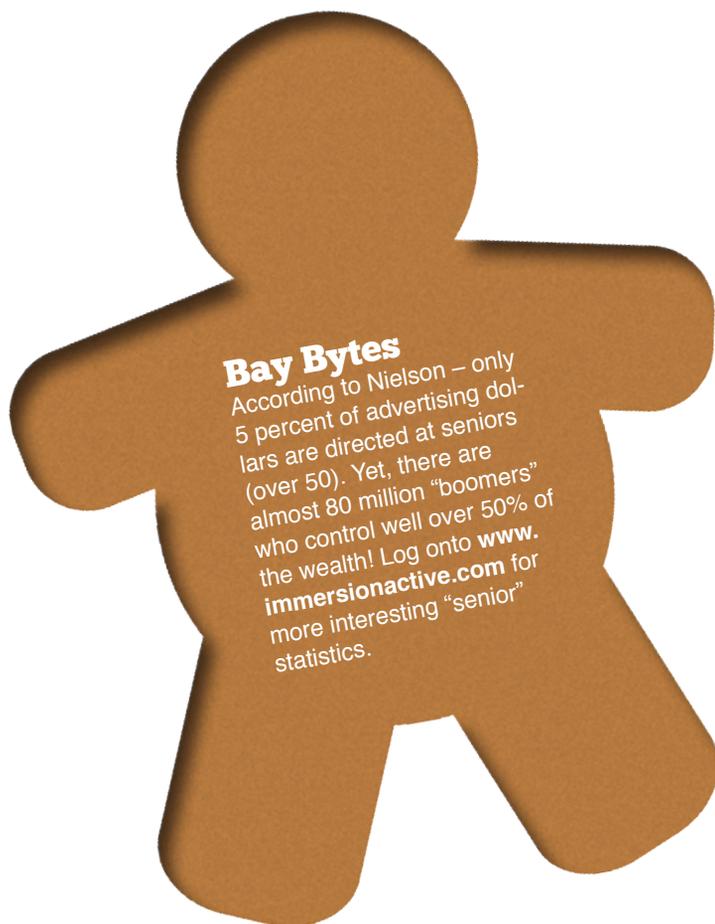
According to the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), every adult—regardless of income—needs an estate plan that includes at least these four documents:

- A will to let you name who will care for any minor children, manage your estate and get your belongings after you die.
- A durable power of attorney to name trusted people to make financial or legal decisions for you while you're alive if you can't make them yourself.
 - Advance directives to indicate the types of care you do and don't want if you become sick or terminally ill. You can also appoint someone you trust to make medical decisions for you if you are unable to do so.
- A letter of instructions, which can include any important information loved ones will need after your death, such as burial wishes or the location of bank accounts. This letter can also detail the emotional inheritances you wish to leave your loved ones, such as memories, lessons, and family traditions.

Depending on your family and financial circumstances, you may need other documents too, such as those creating a trust. Although you can prepare estate documents yourself, the help and advice of an attorney experienced in estate planning is invaluable. In many cases, it's a relatively small fee to have the documents prepared by an attorney. And, as AARP notes, once estate planning is done, it's done, except for periodic updates if circumstances or laws change.

Estate planning is about you and your goals, concerns and passions. It's about your loved ones too. All deserve your time and attention.

Margo, the director of giving at Anne Arundel Medical Center Foundation (www.aahs.org/giftplanning or www.aamcfoundation.org) can be reached at 443-481-4745 or mcook1@aahs.org for more information.



WITH THE GRAIN: STRAIGHT-EDGED SHAVING

By Melissa Conroy

For centuries, men had to hold a straight-edged razor to their throats to rid themselves of unwanted hair. The shaving game changed in 1847 when William S. Henson submitted the first patent for a safety razor. Safety razors took off when King Camp Gillette was granted a patent for his safety razor in 1904 and earned a large contract to supply razors to the military during World War I. Safety razors grew in popularity, especially as women began shaving their legs and under their arms. The first electric razor was patented in 1928, and disposable razors hit the market in 1974. With more convenient and quicker ways to shave, straight-edged razors eventually fell out of popularity.

Today, however, straight-edged shaving is making a comeback. There are plenty of websites such as **StraightRazorPlace.com** and **BadgerandBlade.com** devoted to the art of shaving. A growing number of barbershops around the U.S. offer straight-edged shaves, an experience complete with hot towels, assorted lotions, soaps and boar bristle brushes. A man wanting to swap out his five-blade disposable razor for a straight edge has a variety of razor styles, brushes, shaving bowls, strops and other gear to peruse.

Straight-edged razor aficionados claim that an old-fashioned blade gives better results than an electric or safety razor. Less razor burn and irritation, smoother skin and no five o'clock shadow are all touted as benefits of shaving with a straight edge. The website **HeritageShaving.com** calculated that the average man could save \$465 dollars in five years by switching from disposable safety razors to a straight-edged razor. For many men, the appeal of straight-edged shaving is its high manliness quota. The website **ArtofManliness.com** states, "Putting razor-sharp steel next to your throat every morning reminds you that you're alive."

The first step toward a straight shave is picking the right razor. **ArtofManliness.com** suggests that a beginner shaver select a 5/8 size razor with a rounded point made of well-tempered steel that does not have a full concave (a hollow on each side of the razor). A good-quality razor costs around \$250, but properly cared for, it will last a lifetime. In fact, some men shave with razors that were passed down from their grandfathers.

To maintain your razor, you need a hone and a strop. A hone is a whetstone that you use to sharpen your razor, and a strop is a piece of leather and canvas that puts the finished edge on your razor. A razor must be stropped every time you shave, so pick a good quality one and maintain your edge.

Other tools are important to a proper straight-edged shave. A classic boar or badger hairbrush whips up a nice, creamy lather and spreads it evenly on your face. You will need a shaving bowl or mug to make lather. You can omit the Barbasol: straight-edged razor enthusiasts prefer high quality creams and soaps such as Body Shop for Men Shave Cream or Taylor of Old Bond Street Sandalwood Shaving Cream.



Straight-edged shaving is a process: there is no rushing things when you have a razor perched on your chin. Begin with softening up your beard and skin by wrapping a hot towel around your face. Soak your shaving brush in hot water, whip up your lather and apply the lather to your face with the brush. Shave with the grain, not against it, holding your razor at a 20 to 30 degree angle. Apply very little pressure and let the weight of the razor do the work.

Techniques for shaving vary. Some tutorials recommend making only one pass while others suggest shaving first with the grain and then across the grain. Most recommend pulling your skin taut for maximum closeness. YouTube has a variety of shaving tutorials, and a little research on the Internet will unleash a host of advice.

Interestingly enough, straight-edged shaving is not just for men. There are some adventurous women who tackle their leg and under arm hair with a straight-edged razor. Obviously, leg shaving involves more surface area as well as some interesting contortions, but it is possible. As proof, watch this wonderful YouTube video entitled "Sharp Ladies' Shaving DE and Straight Razor Shaves" where two lovely ladies demonstrate how women can use a straight edge on their legs.

Not quite ready to plunk down a few hundred dollars on a straight-edged razor and equipment? For starters, you can try an old-fashioned safety razor to get a feel for straight-edged shaving. One of these razors will cost about \$20. If you like the shave you get with a safety razor, you can then take the plunge and invest in a nice Le Grelot Red Stamina or Dovo Red Wood Straight Razor.

For a better shave, less razor burn and several upticks in your cool dude persona, an old-fashioned straight razor is a great substitute for your Gillette Six Blade Aloe Infused Pro Stick. It takes some time, patience and precision, but a straight-edged shave can be a meditative, classy and just plain awesome way to start your morning.

Ask *the* Undertaker

By Ryan Helfenbein

Perhaps Frank Sinatra was not only a great singer, but something of a visionary when he sang the lyrics of his classic, "My Way," in 1968. This song, written by French composers with lyrics reworked especially for Sinatra by Paul Anka, is about a man reflecting on life as his end nears. As the song goes, he walks you through his story of trials and tribulations, but keeps coming back to that famous line: "I did it my way." Not only has this become an extremely popular song to close out funeral services, but it defines the modern day funeral and cremation experience.

We saw this first hand just recently with the passing of Joan Rivers – an iconic comedic star who was of the Jewish faith, which has traditional rituals and customs when a death occurs. According to news reports, Joan wrote to her daughter Melissa late in her life that, "I want it to be Hollywood all the way. I don't want some rabbi rambling on; I want Meryl Streep crying, in five different accents. I don't want a eulogy; I want Bobby Vinton to pick up my head and sing 'Mr. Lonely.' ... And I want a wind machine so that even in the casket my hair is blowing just like Beyonce's."

Ms. Rivers was stretching it, but now we are seeing unique funeral requests right here in our home towns. Farmers having tractors carrying the casket, rather than being escorted by the hearse. Friends and family gathering in a comedy club rather than a church or synagogue for a service to honor the recently departed's love of laughter. Perhaps this unique way to experience a tribute to a life is brought about by the increasing popularity of cremation, or is it just simply the fact that today's consumer wants a unique experience. A recent survey found that nearly three-fourths of respondents do not want a typical funeral. The survey also suggested that the funeral and memorial experience will become a time to share in that person's life adventures, and in a sense, to walk into that person's life one last time. In other words, it doesn't always have to be the traditional way of things. As the industry survey indicates, and Joan Rivers' last requests bear out, the majority of us will want it done "My Way."

Services can be uniquely designed, but the bigger question remains: What do we do with the casketed remains or urn after

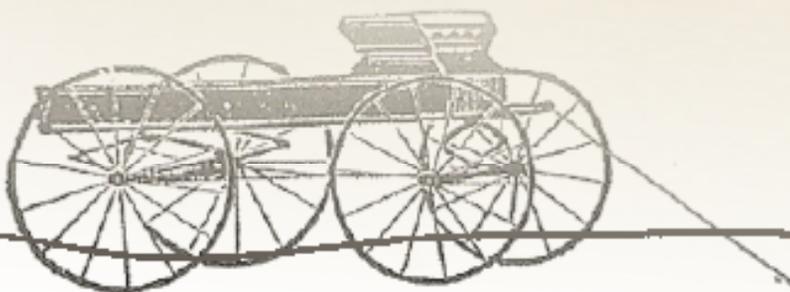
the service? Can a final resting place incorporate the "My Way" theme as well?

For most of us, we have the choice of either ground burial at a cemetery or a niche in one of those columbarium walls. These typically only provide the personalization option of engraving one unique design on the monument, marker or niche plate in attempt to tell the story of that person's life. However, there is more to a life than just a name with dates. Cemeteries are starting to acknowledge these desires. Today we are finding some cemeteries that offer scattering ponds that are inhabited by black swans or a memorial garden surrounding a putting green, all on the grounds of the cemetery. In a South Carolina cemetery there's an early design for a lazy river to be winding its way through the grounds. Closer here to home, we have a themed Chesapeake Bay Cremation Garden, consisting of a nearly nine-foot-tall memorial in the shape of a Chesapeake Bay lighthouse, surrounded by native grasses. Lazy rivers and lighthouse memorials, putting greens and black swan-inhabited ponds are only a few of the examples of cemeteries offering "My Way" options.

If this is not your cup of tea or just a tad over the top, monuments can be crafted for traditional gravesites that can be unique but less flamboyant. We have seen monuments created in the shape of a fireman's helmet with a life-like fireman standing next to it for a local firefighter who was laid to rest after dying in the line of duty. Another example is a six-foot monument that was created as a replica of a tree with the individual's initials carved into it as high school sweethearts might do in a schoolyard.

Today, almost anything can be done in order to keep a person's life "living" in both areas of end-of-life commemoration – the funeral service and the cemetery. The goal today should be to tell that person's story in a way that may be remembered for generations to come.

Ryan, owner, supervising mortician and preplanning counselor at Lasting Tributes on Bestgate Road in Annapolis, offers solutions to high-cost funerals. He can be reached at 410.897.4852 or Ryan@LastingTributesFuneralCare.com



Yogurt: **HEALTHY OR NOT**



By *Melissa Conroy*

When searching for a tasty, nutritious snack, many people reach for a carton of yogurt. Yogurt has long enjoyed a reputation as a healthy, delicious food. Full of protein, calcium and probiotics, yogurt is a great way to start your morning or tide you over until dinner.

Or is it? While yogurt has a "health halo," the truth is that many brands and varieties of yogurt are not very healthy. While yogurt does contain beneficial ingredients such as protein, most commercially prepared sweetened yogurt is packed full of sugar, artificial sweeteners and food dyes. (It may be worth your time to do a bit of research on the source of some of the food dyes). Other yogurt brands contain low levels of beneficial probiotics, and others are high in fat.

To help separate the facts from the myths, let's take a quick look at the history of yogurt. Yogurt has been a part of most dairy-consuming cultures for centuries. It doesn't have a single origin: Many people throughout history discovered that fresh milk turns into thick, tangy yogurt in the right conditions. To create yogurt, milk needs to be exposed to the right bacteria in the correct temperature and moisture. Thermophilic (heat-loving) bacteria cultures develop best in heat and produce thicker yogurt. Mesophilic cultures (medium-loving) grow best at room temperature and produce thinner yogurt.

In the right conditions, the bacteria in milk convert the lactose (milk sugar) into lactic acid, which thickens the milk. The milk proteins coagulate and set, which form yogurt. The fermentation process also produces acetaldehyde, which gives yogurt its tangy taste.

In the 1900s, scientists isolated the bacteria that makes yogurt and created a combination of different bacteria strands so that yogurt could be commercially produced. In 1981, the FDA declared that all commercially prepared yogurt in the U.S. must contain *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*. Today, a yogurt lover can go to a grocery store and select from dozens of different types of yogurt flavors, brands and concoctions, everything from Go-Gurt (frozen yogurt in a squeeze tube) to yogurt parfait packs, complete with granola and chocolate topping.

When most people reach for a yogurt, they pick a sweetened one such as Yoplait Whips Chocolate Mousse. However, most sweetened yogurt is high in sugar, which makes it a less healthy

food. Here are some popular yogurt flavors and their sugar content:

- 6 ounce serving of Dannon Fruit on the Bottom Blueberry: 24 grams
- 8 ounce serving of Stonyfield Smooth & Creamy Lowfat French Vanilla: 29 grams
- 4.4 ounce serving of Activia Blueberry: 19 grams
- 4 ounce serving of Yoplait Whips Chocolate: 22 grams

It is important to note how much sugar your yogurt contains and also look at how much sugar is in each ounce (4 grams equals approximately 1 teaspoon). Yogurt servings are typically small. A four-ounce serving of Yoplait Whips Chocolate has 5.5 grams of sugar per ounce. In comparison, Coke has 3.3 grams of sugar per ounce. (that's close to 10 teaspoons of sugar in a 12 oz. bottle). Also, sweetened yogurt gets most of its calories from sugar. In Yoplait Strawberry yogurt, 63 percent of the calories are from sugar, and many other yogurt brands are just as sweet. (For a list of 251 other forms of sugar log onto www.MyFitnessPal.com).

There are lighter, less sugary yogurts available, but many of them use artificial sweeteners, which can be harmful to your health. Yoplait Light Boston Cream Pie has only 10 grams of sugar per serving, but it also contains sucralose and acesulfame potassium, two forms of artificial sweeteners. (Google dangers of artificial sweeteners for more information).

Your favorite yogurt may also be lacking the live bacteria cultures that are beneficial to your digestive system. Some yogurts are heated after they are made, and this kills their bacteria culture. Other yogurts are made with low levels of bacteria culture. When picking a yogurt, look for the National Yogurt Association Live & Active Cultures seal to ensure that your yogurt contains beneficial bacteria.

Yogurt can be a healthy snack if you are careful to pick the right brand. Greek yogurt is a good choice; it can have up to twice the amount of protein and half the carbs as regular yogurt. Greek yogurt is strained to make it thicker, and this reduces the milk

plain yogurt may seem a bit sour, but once you become accustomed to the taste, you will find it pleasant and satisfying. The key is selecting a good-quality brand such as Stonyfield. Stonyfield Smooth & Creamy Nonfat Plain Yogurt (8 ounces) has 100 calories, 10 grams of protein and 16 grams of sugar. For an even richer taste, try Stonyfield Smooth & Creamy Whole Milk Yogurt. At 8 ounces, it contains 170 calories, 9 grams of fat, 9 grams of protein and 12 grams of sugar. If plain yogurt is too sour at first, add a little fruit or a drizzle of honey. Once you are used to eating it, you will find its natural sweetness and piquant flavor very appealing.

High-quality yogurt can be a healthy, beneficial snack. The bacteria cultures in yogurt are often referred to as probiotics, which are living organisms, such as bacteria and yeasts, that are beneficial to your health. Your body needs these organisms to digest food, boost your immune system and help keep your intestinal track functioning properly. The average woman needs 46 grams of protein per day and the average man needs 56 grams, while 6 ounces of Greek yogurt can contain 10-15 ounces of protein. Yogurt is also an excellent source of vitamins such as potassium, magnesium, calcium and vitamin B.

Double chocolate cheesecake yogurt may taste delicious, but don't fool yourself into thinking you are eating a healthy snack. Choose your yogurt wisely. Pick one that has low sugar, no artificial sweeteners and high protein, and then you will have a snack both good and good for you.

sugar and lactose content.

One good yogurt choice is Chobani 100 Greek Yogurt. Key Lime Chobani (5.3 ounces) has 12 grams of protein, 100 calories, 5 grams of fiber and 7 grams of sugar. Instead of artificial sweeteners, Chobani 100 uses stevia, evaporated cane sugar, and monk fruit.

Plain yogurt is also quite delicious: a good brand of unsweetened yogurt is tangy and full-bodied. Unsweetened yogurt has some natural sugar content because milk contains sugar. At first,



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Making Room for Vegans at Your Holiday Table

By Leah Lancione

Vegan? What's a vegan? I still get that question frequently despite the fact that 7.3 million Americans consider themselves vegetarian and of those, one million are vegan (consume no animal-derived products), according to a *Vegetarian Times* study (www.vegetariantimes.com). The next question is then, more often than not, "So you mean you don't eat or wear anything that comes from an animal?" Usually, I try to explain briefly why I've chosen this lifestyle and how long I've been a vegan before changing the subject. It's just too easy to get into a debate about animal rights or healthier food choices when, quite frankly, I don't feel it's my place to judge someone else or convince them that my way is right.

That being said, it's a bit off-putting when arriving at a party, barbeque or just a simple meal and there isn't something — anything — a vegan can eat. If I'm dining with family

members who are well aware of my veganism, I'm usually asked in advance if there's something like a vegetable side dish, fruit or salad they can fix for me along with the regular course. My family has learned to support my veganism after 15 years, although there's an occasional comment about eating rabbits' food.

When eating at some place other than my home or with family members, it can be dicey. Not wanting to appear rude or hard to please, I usually look for a vegetable side dish and politely ask what the ingredients are and/or how it's been prepared. Usually, there is at least something I can eat without the fear of getting sick later.

Recently I did find myself at some-

one's home for dinner, and although it's well-known that I'm a vegan, there appeared to be nothing for me to eat. Fortunately, I had a packet of vegan protein shake in my purse. So, when everyone started pulling their piece of the pizza pie and somebody quipped, "What are you going to eat?" I nonchalantly whipped out my shake. My husband looked mortified that even he hadn't remembered to order a salad for me, but since I was somewhat prepared, the situation wasn't too uncomfortable. I simply have to remind myself to be understanding; if I feel being vegan is a compassionate choice then I have to also be compassionate with those who don't fully comprehend my lifestyle.

Hopefully you're starting to understand, too, how awkward and potentially embarrassing it can be to sit at a dinner table with an empty plate or one adorned with items you can't fathom consuming. So, take this as the start of your new role as the most gracious



host to all! It's not too hard to make vegans feel welcome at the holiday repast.

The following are a few suggestions for enabling a vegetarian or vegan to dine contentedly.

If you don't have the means or time to create both a vegan or vegetarian option to the meat main course, **Eatdrinkbetter.com** suggests providing a selection of sides. "Using vegetable stock in the stuffing instead of chicken stock; leaving the ham, cheese and bacon bits out of sides and salads (or even just a portion of them); making pie crust with vegetable shortening instead of lard; sautéing vegetables in olive oil instead of butter—all are gestures that are greatly appreciated." Since Thanksgiving typically involves a stuffing, mashed potatoes and a number of vegetable side dishes and comforting desserts along with the bird, it's all about the preparation of these items. A small portion of mashed potatoes can be whipped together with almond, soy or rice milk and vegan margarine. The corn and other vegetables steamed and left naked opposed to served with butter. You can always leave a butter tray on the table. Yams can even be topped with vegan marshmallows and nobody would taste the difference.

Now, if you want to supply a real vegan main course along with your regular turkey and fixings, Turtle Island Foods offers a Tofurky meal that is vegan, uses certified nongenetically engineered ingredients and no hexane-extracted soy isolates, concentrates or other ingredients

manufactured with hexane. This bird substitute can be cooked in the oven alongside the meat version. Just add about 10 minutes and follow basting directions. Tofurky can be found at Whole Foods, Trader Joes, Kroger, Wegmans and some other grocery chains. Good Life Organic Market in Severna Park is also a great place to shop for vegetarian and vegan meal options.

Field Roast's "Celebration Roast" (also available at the retailers listed above) is made with the seasoned protein-rich, wheat-flour substance referred to as "grain meat." This Seattle-based company is proud of the culinary fusion of Chinese and Japanese seasoning techniques as well as English flavors derived from barley malts, mustard, garlic, red wine, balsamic vinegar and more. The company also offers other roast variations as well as meatloaf, sausages, deli slices and other meat alternatives to tantalize any vegan foodie.

The brand Gardein offers a Turkey cutlet that uses non-gmo soy, wheat and pea proteins, vegetables and ancient grains like quinoa, millet, kamut and amaranth. These are meatless cutlets that can be grilled or cooked in the oven or microwave and come with a vegan home-style gravy.

There are countless real turkey substitutes available at grocery stores that try to present some vegetarian or vegan products, usually found around or near the frozen vegetables. Just remember to add the items to your holiday shopping list.

In addition to providing plenty of vegan dishes, consider providing a "hu-

mane" turkey for your feast. Brands like Organic Prairie raise animals according to the federal organic standards. For turkeys this means slightly more square footage and better conditions than nonorganic industrial factories. Organic Prairie claims its turkeys are raised with "100 percent organic feed and the freedom to range in the out-of-doors. This means you're assured a turkey free of antibiotics, synthetic hormones and pesticides." (Visit www.organicprairie.com/product/organic_whole_turkey1/organic_turkey) Go to the website or visit natural food markets like David's Natural Markets in Gambrills and Columbia, to find more civilized and healthier options for your turkey dinner. This humanitarian nod may please all guests during this time of giving thanks and remembering the compassion and harmony Native Americans and pilgrims shared at the very first Thanksgiving.

HOLIDAY AGROSTIC

The first American woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize is remembered primarily for her settlement work. Other causes included women's suffrage, the juvenile court system, world peace, the NAACP, and the ACLU. Name this woman.

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE: JANE ADDAMS

A.	Newcomer
B.	Occult
C.	Bliff
D.	Earlham
E.	Litheness
F.	Pitance
G.	Eminence
H.	Avulsion
I.	Coward
J.	Enema
K.	Phenom
L.	Rheum
M.	Inspected
N.	Zebra stripes
O.	Errors
P.	Junkyard
Q.	Affair
R.	Nines
S.	Eyeleth
T.	All clear
U.	Devworm
V.	Dwight
W.	Attemper
X.	Mouth-to-mouth
Y.	Seesaw

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A Journey Through Fall

By Nancy Lincoln Reynolds

Just about anything that concerns our relationship to creation, the inevitable end of life and the fear of uncertainty about each is a spiritual matter. Spirituality has to do with those things that cannot be comprehended by one of the five senses. Spirituality expresses itself as appreciation of intangibles like love, awe, beauty and the many forms of nature. Spirituality leads us to faith and the worship of a greater power who is assigned authorship and meaning to our origins. Most faith traditions focus upon naming God and include both individual and communal responses. Even if one dismisses belief in anything beyond life here and now, the spiritual quest, so defined, remains.

Recently I discovered an itinerary that invites participants to locate themselves on their spiritual journeys. It seems fair to assume that each of us, regardless of our specific faith orientation, is engaged in such travel. Life requires that we find meaning and purpose and includes an endless run at trying to synchronize what we have learned to be true about ourselves with what is real in our worlds -- to be consistent between belief and action. This is a sacred matter, matching spirit with reality.

The itinerary offers an intriguing correlation between one's age and the months of the calendar year. Suggesting seven years makes up a phase of life, an individual aged 29 to 35, for example, would be "living" a spiritual journey in the month of May 1978-84, and so on.

I am struck by my reaction to being in the "October" of my spiritual life. My association with this month, to some extent, carries with it urgency around last chances to get things together. Previously robust and vital scenery is transitioning to wisdom-colored legacy. Thanksgiving is almost upon us with the multitude of reli-

gious holidays quickly following, and so it is time to focus and get serious about what comes next. It is time to tweak and prepare for harvest and reaping, if they are to happen. It is time to begin thinking about the pending close of the year. As though heralding such, October closes out with an emphasis on hallowed saints who have walked this way before and whose spiritual journeys have ended here.

There is a certain wisdom that comes with journeying through the Fall months. Most of us have worked out the youthful confusions and fancies of "April," the sowing and establishment of ourselves in "May" and "June," the somewhat frightening and unwelcome midlife issues of "August" and "September." Experience has taught us something about responding with some measure of calm and patience, rather than reacting impulsively to things that could threaten us. We have learned to embrace the smallest of gifts instead of wishing for "bigger" and "more," and to welcome challenge as opportunity instead of obstacle. Even as we experience in our bodies and minds the winding down of our chronological years, we may find meaning in being part of a grander, albeit daunting, spiritual process that carries us beyond this time into eternity.

And so it is that we may encounter *fear* for what it is: a cause and occasion for acknowledging our lack of control and dependence upon more than ourselves. Our nation's most recent crisis, the introduction of the Ebola virus into the United States, has shot fear across the country. Many react with incredulity and anger while others respond with concerned but confident outreach and determination to overcome the intrusion. Fall people have been here before (different offenses but familiar scenarios). People of the Fall un-

derstand fear as a primal piece of humanity's makeup that has been with us from the beginning. We know that fear is less about that which threatens us and more about our own sense of vulnerability in the wake of it. If we have paid attention through the previous seasons, we may also know the importance of not only coping and resilience, but reliance upon our conclusions about spiritual matters.

In the Judaeo-Christian tradition, as well as others that recognize the Old Testament creation stories, fear is the post-Fall condition of Adam and Eve. The Hebrews name their condition as one of "nakedness" (vulnerability) wherein they are exposed to whatever might threaten them, and so they hide. After initial attempts at blame, they wisely fear the consequences of their own decisions and actions (had they been in their March or April months of spiritual journey?) and it is that for which they fear God's wrath and punishment. In these traditions God's response to our fear is consistently, "fear not," mostly because God's promise is one of presence and eternal salvation.

Finding ourselves on our spiritual journeys gives us good insight into what remains to be learned and done. It offers us possibility in the midst of facing and even fearing that unknown. For people of the Fall, it is noteworthy that God meets us in "January" when we are helpless at the beginning of our spiritual journeys, traveling through with us to "December" where, once again, we face vulnerability. "Fear not," for God, however defined, is with us always.

Nancy is the associate pastor of Woods Presbyterian Church in Severna Park and can be contacted at nreynolds@woodschurch.org

Let's Make Dinner

with *Mac Millhone*



As always, you need good olive oil, kosher or sea salt and fresh ground pepper.

4 nice veal shanks 3 1/2 to 4 lbs. total
1/2 cup flour
4 Tbs. butter or more divided
1 medium onion chopped
1 large carrot chopped
1 stalk celery with leaves, chopped
4 cloves garlic crushed
1 bay leaf
5 branches thyme tied into a bundle
1 cup dry red wine
1 cup beef stock or broth
1 14 oz. can diced tomatoes

Preheat oven to 300 F.

Salt and pepper the shanks well, then dredge in flour until lightly coated. Discard remaining flour. On the cook top heat 2 Tbs. butter and 2 Tbs. oil in a six-quart or larger Dutch oven or heavy braising pot with lid. When the oil is hot, sear the meat one piece at a time till nicely browned on both sides. Five minutes or so per side. When one is browned transfer it to a plate and continue with the remaining pieces. You may need to adjust oil -butter level or temperature. When all the meat is seared, cover it and check the oil. If there is any burned residue, remove it with a paper towel, leaving the fond or browned bits in the pot. Add butter and oil as necessary and put pot over medium heat. When fat is shimmering add onions, carrots and celery. Cook until translucent about eight minutes then add garlic and herbs. Cook for a few minutes and add wine. Let wine reduce by half then add stock and tomatoes. Let this all boil for about 10 minutes to reduce and concentrate the liquid. Adjust seasonings and add the veal with the large side of the bone facing up. Cover with a heavy lid and slide into the oven. This will take two hours, but three will not hurt. Baste every 40 minutes or so. The liquid should be slowly turning. If it is boiling, turn it down. Remove meat to a platter and cover to rest while you check the sauce. You may like it just the way it is. If you want it thicker, just put the pot back on the burner and reduce it. Remove thyme twigs and bay leaf and serve over your starch choice. I prefer egg noodles.

Gremolata

3 Tbs. chopped flat leaf parley
2 Tbs. finely chopped garlic
2 Tbs. fresh lemon zest

Mix ingredients together and scatter over plated osso bucco. Warm sauce will bring out the wonderful aroma and make this great meal even better. Oh, that weird stuff in the middle of the bone is marrow. Try it, it's quite good.

Mac, a retired airline captain, is currently living in Annapolis. He enjoys researching food, cooking and baking. He can be reached at macmillhone@me.net

OSSO BUCCO

Serves four

Osso bucco. A dramatic way to say veal shanks. It means 'hole in the bone.' I think it loses way too much in translation. Some of the most flavorful cuts of meat are disguised as tough and hard to work with. Trust the force here. Things like shins and tails and short ribs have big flavor and sublime textures if handled well. They contain lots of collagen, which translates to great tastes and rich sauces. The tricks are low heat, enough time and correct moisture.

The technique is called a braise. It is pretty easy to do without much hands-on activity. It works well for many tough cuts, but it can't be rushed. Veal shanks are easy to find at a well-stocked grocery or can be ordered from your butcher. For individual servings, look for cuts 2 to 2 1/2 inches thick and reasonably sized. Too thin and they cook to quickly, too big they are hard to work with. Plan to serve one per guest. Custom calls for this dish to be served over risotto and that is a great choice. Mashed potatoes, polenta or large egg noodles are also an excellent base. Tradition further calls for a strange and pungent little mix called gremolata to be scattered over the dish prior to serving. I recommend it and have included a recipe.

One other tip is to tie the individual pieces around their perimeter with kitchen twine. This will help hold their shape during lengthy cooking.



WHEN IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR PET

By Kater Leatherman

People are spending thousands of dollars to prolong the lives of their pets. Instead of making them comfortable, we are seeking cures for their old age, ultimately changing the natural course of things. At some point, we have to ask ourselves: What are we gaining in the process?

Many of us remember a time before leash laws when pets were allowed to roam free. Some pets would simply wander off when they were ready to die. Others were killed by automobiles or stolen. Different circumstances warrant different choices and, more and more, we find ourselves having to make the awful decision to terminate the life of a pet.

It is estimated that 27 percent of the population now lives alone. Social media and television never quite fill the void of loneliness and, for some people, pets are the only real bond. We are the center of their universe. When you consider their unmatched loyalty and unconditional love as well as their ability to forgive, this is not an easy reality to face.

Are we terrified of a grief so intense that we may never fully recover after we lose our beloved pets? Singer songwriter Judy Collins describes deep grief as having the “power of gale winds, the force of earthquakes, the fire of tempest.” This might be the other thing that motivates us to prolong the loss. We’re so attached that we can’t imagine our lives without them. Yet, keeping a pet alive when it is ready to die is worse.

A few years ago, my sister finally put her dog down. Her only regret was that he suffered longer than necessary because she and her husband couldn’t bear to end his life. When it finally happened, they were so devastated that it took them a month before they could do anything beyond shop for groceries, get the mail and answer phone messages.

So, how do we know when it’s time? I have a client who asked her dog to give her a sign. She finally got one when he refused to eat for three days. Beyond asking for a sign, there is no one single rule. However, most vets agree that the quality of a pet’s life is a major consideration.

Questions to ask:

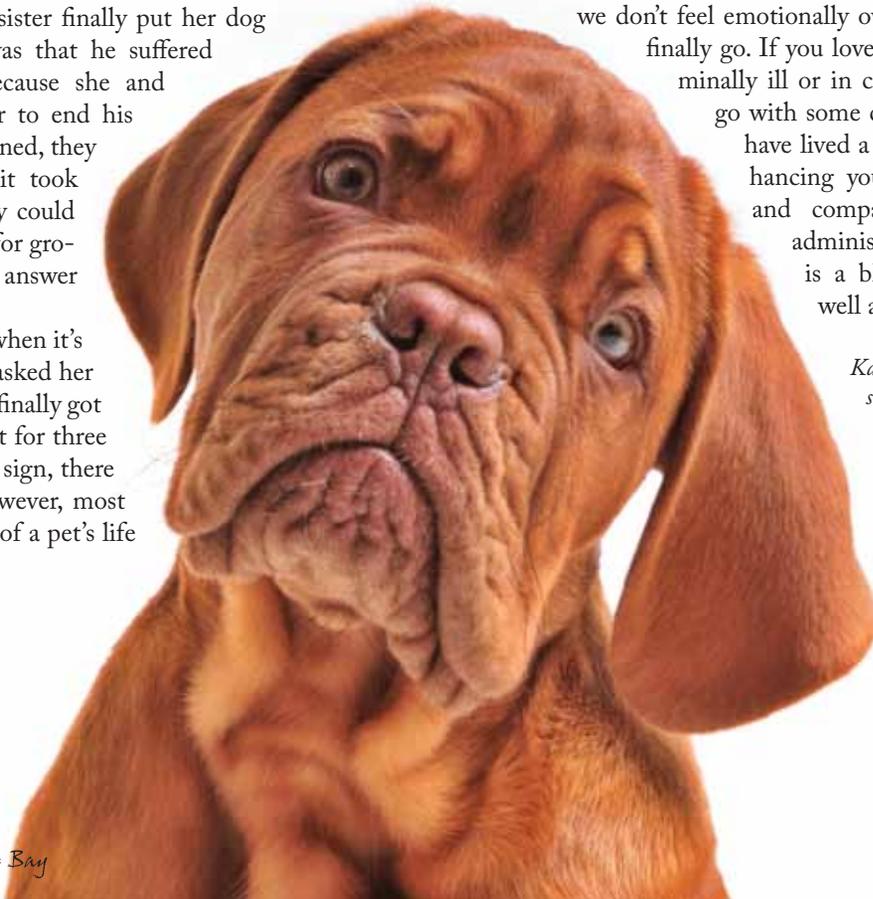
- Is the illness recurring or getting worse, thereby threatening your finances?
- Are you compromising the health of your back by having to carry your pet up and down the stairs?
- Is caring for your chronically ill pet causing stress for you and your family?

Aging or sick pets have good days and bad days. To monitor this, mark your calendar for one month. If they’ve had more bad days than good, then you’ll know.

While your pet can’t talk to you, there are clues such as personality changes and odd behaviors. Some will begin to lose interest in their owners. Others, when they are ready to say goodbye, will sleep in dark corners or on hard surfaces, have trouble breathing, experience muscle twitching, or pace a lot. One friend told me that every time she walked into a room, her dog would move to another room. Instinctively, he was trying to separate himself from “the pack” (you are the leader of the pack) so as not to slow the pack down in the wild.

It’s hard to know if a pet will die naturally or have to be assisted with his demise but, either way, it’s important to prepare for the separation both logistically and emotionally. As they age, we have the opportunity to grieve our pets in bits and pieces so we don’t feel emotionally overwhelmed when they finally go. If you love your pet, and it is terminally ill or in chronic pain, then let it go with some dignity. No doubt they have lived a long, full life while enhancing yours with love, pleasure and companionship. Euthanasia, administered at the right time, is a blessing to your pet, as well as to yourself.

Kater Leatherman is a professional organizer/home stager, yoga teacher and self-published author who inspires others to live better. Visit her website at www.katerleatherman.com or email katerleatherman@gmail.com





SCHERENSCHNITTE

THE ART OF PAPER CUTTING

By Joan Amundsen

Webster's dictionary defines Scherenschnitte as the art of cutting paper into decorative designs with scissors.

Paper cutting began hundreds of years ago in China, but really came into prominence in the 1800s with the German immigrants who came to this country and settled in Pennsylvania. They did all sorts of paper cutting that, for them, took the place of paintings and portraits, which they could not afford. Lately there has been a resurgence of this art form and the choices range from elegant to easy.

In answer to this resurgence, the Guild of American Papercutters was organized in 1988 in Hershey, Pa. The guild is now located in Somerset, Pa. The GAP, as it is referred to, is open to anyone who has an interest in this type of art. You can visit their website at www.papercutters.org/

Now is a perfect time to try your talents. With the holidays fast approaching, you could try cutting your own Christmas cards this year. You will be amazed and delighted at the results and the many compliments you will receive.

Children love paper cutting. They can make easy tree ornaments or they can cut out snowflakes to hang in their windows. When children see the results of their cutting, their expressions are priceless.

Alison Tanner is one of the biggest and best suppliers of patterns, scissors, paper and anything else you will need to complete a project. Go to her site at www.papercuttingsbyalison.com/index.cfm and check out all of her current patterns.

One of the easy ornament patterns offered by Alison is K-45. This is an assortment of 20, three-dimensional designs. Although the pattern states that it is for the intermediate scissorist, there are several easy patterns for the beginner.

The dove and the chickadee are great for the younger child to cut. The small white chickadee pattern starts out as just a flat piece of white paper. When the slash in the paper (done by an adult) is made and the part of the paper that is the wing is inserted through the slash, the chickadee becomes dimensional and can be hung with string. These produce guaranteed glees of delight from everyone.

There's not much you need to cut paper except a scissors and/or an X-Acto knife, a self-sealing cutting mat, paper and pattern. Of course it goes without saying that children should not use an X-Acto knife. Just remember though, as you cut, you move the paper, not the scissors.

Supplies can also be purchased at any craft shop such as Michaels, A. C. Moore or Ben Franklin Stores. Cutting mats are also available from stores like Joann Fabrics or Walmart. And, if you go to ebay.com or amazon.com you can run a search in paper cutting books, scherenschnitte,

Back Street books or patterns — any words that will bring up items for sale. Back Street books contain some very easy patterns. For more information, YouTube offers a quick tutorial at www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvos_jHy9FM

Alison Tanner, as mentioned before, offers a large variety of patterns that can be used for all-occasion cards and also offers patterns for snowflakes, ornaments and symbols. These patterns can also be used for scrapbooking. One of her newer additions is the Alpine Star tree topper, which is listed for a beginner. Many of these little ornaments and symbols lend themselves quite well to being painted with a watercolor wash. The tree topper or a snowflake could be painted with white glue and then sprinkled with diamond glitter. The options are endless.

You might want to try some of the beautiful paper cuttings that I refer to as "paper quilts." How about a cutting for the antique auto lover? Framed small cuttings make great gifts. You can finish a cutting and have it matted and framed before Christmas.

You might find that you've discovered a whole new hobby when you discover how easy paper cutting can be.

TRY ONE OF THESE SITES FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- www.papercutters.info/SA/Galleries/index.php?dir=./Back%20Street%20Designs%20Pattern%20Books
- <http://crafts.squidoo.com/paper-cutting-art-techniques-how-to-cut-intricate-patterns-projects-for-beginners#module167804092>
- <http://papercutting.blogspot.com/>



A Gobbler That's in Your Heritage

By Melissa Conroy

Every Thanksgiving, approximately 46 million turkeys appear on dinner tables around the US; almost that many are served at the Christmas feast. Almost all of these turkeys are one specific variety: broad-breasted white. This breed has long been favored by turkey growers for its rapid growth, generous breast meat and size -- a broad-breasted white can grow to 50 pounds.

Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey to be America's national bird, but the turkeys of his time were much different from the domesticated broad-breasted white. Turkeys in the wild are agile, intelligent and adventurous. The broad-breasteds are so large that they can't reproduce on their own and may have trouble walking. There's an old rumor that turkeys caught in a rainfall will look up and drown. It's not true, but domesticated turkeys are not very smart. Small wonder that in the popular vernacular, calling someone a turkey is a mild slight to the person's intelligence.

Broad-breasted whites are plagued with a number of health problems, such as heart disease and respiratory issues. Some of this is due to breeders trying to grow the biggest, meatiest turkeys in the quickest amount of time. Other health problems are caused by their environment: these commercially raised turkeys live their lives indoors, up to 10,000 in a single space. Their immune systems are fragile, and they require antibiotics and careful handling to keep from getting sick.

Many of the turkeys available at your local food store look

impressive roasted and served on a platter as the broad breasted is grown for size and breast meat - this however, may come at the expense of a rich, fully flavored taste. Commercially raised turkeys are often injected with vegetable oil and saline to improve their flavor.

The taste of any animal is affected by four qualities:

- diet, since a varied, free-range diet will produce a deeper, more distinctive flavor;
- environment, since animals need exercise to build up better-tasting flesh;
- age, because as they mature, they develop fat which intensifies flavor;
- heritage because the breed and genetic makeup of an animal affects its overall taste.

Broad-breasted turkeys are fed a commercially prepared diet, they are cooped up inside their entire lives, slaughtered young (around three to four months) and all come from the same genetic stock. These factors can result in a dry, disappointing holiday meal. Brining, frying, marinating and other cooking tricks can help improve the flavor, but if you want an exceptional feast to remember, it starts with picking a high-quality bird.

One option for your Thanksgiving or Christmas meal this year is selecting a heritage turkey. Heritage turkeys are birds that come from native breeds (turkeys indigenous to North and South

America) and share three specific qualities:

- ability to breed naturally without assistance;
- long life spans of 3-5 years for toms and 5-7 years for hens;
- slow growth rate.

Heritage turkey varieties include the standard bronze, bourbon red, Narragansett, Jersey buff, slate, black Spanish, white Holland, royal palm, white midget and Beltsville small white.

These turkeys are typically smaller, from the 20-pound Midget White to the 30-pound Standard Bronze. One unfortunate drawback is that they are also expensive; you may spend \$8 a pound for a heritage turkey. Raising turkeys naturally is not a cheap process, and heritage turkey growers incur a lot of cost getting heritage birds to maturity.

However, a heritage turkey tastes nothing like your standard, commercially raised product found at your local food store. Heritage turkey fans rave about its earthy, hearty flavor. If you are a dark meat fan, you will love heritage turkeys' moist dark meat. They boast an even amount of dark and white meat while the broad-breasted have 65 percent white meat and the rest dark. Some heritage turkey breeds have a strong, gamy flavor that may be startling to people who have only eaten broad-breasted before. However, slow food enthusiasts and foodies alike promote heritage turkey breeds as a novel taste experience that you simply cannot replicate with a frozen 30-pound bird from your local store.

Check your local area to see if there are any heritage turkey farmers with birds for sale. Your local health store may carry heritage turkeys, but be aware of the labeling and don't get fooled into purchasing a "heritage turkey" that is not from the approved list of heritage varieties. For example, a few sold in some health stores are crossbreed turkeys of heritage and nonheritage lines, thus not true heritage turkeys. If you can't find a heritage turkey breeder near you, you can buy them at www.heritagefoodsusa.com. They will ship you individual turkeys with both cooking instructions and information about your turkey's specific heritage variety.

Speaking of cooking, preparing your bird for the table requires a little extra care. A heritage turkey typically roasts more quickly with less moisture loss. White meat cooks more quickly than dark meat, but since a heritage turkey usually has an equal quantity of white and dark meat, it will cook more evenly. Before you slide your heritage turkey in the oven, spend some time browsing the Internet to pick up some cooking tips. Some chefs advise brining while others do not; others recommend roasting at high temperatures. You can put away the flavor injectors and rubs: a heritage turkey has plenty of its own flavor to bring to the table.

During this holiday season when some grocery stores all but give away turkeys, plunking down \$100 or more on a heritage turkey may seem extravagant. However, they are delicious and distinctive. They are raised humanely and allowed to develop normally, free to eat a natural diet instead of commercially prepared feed. For a holiday meal to remember, why not try a heritage turkey and discover what turkey is supposed to taste like?



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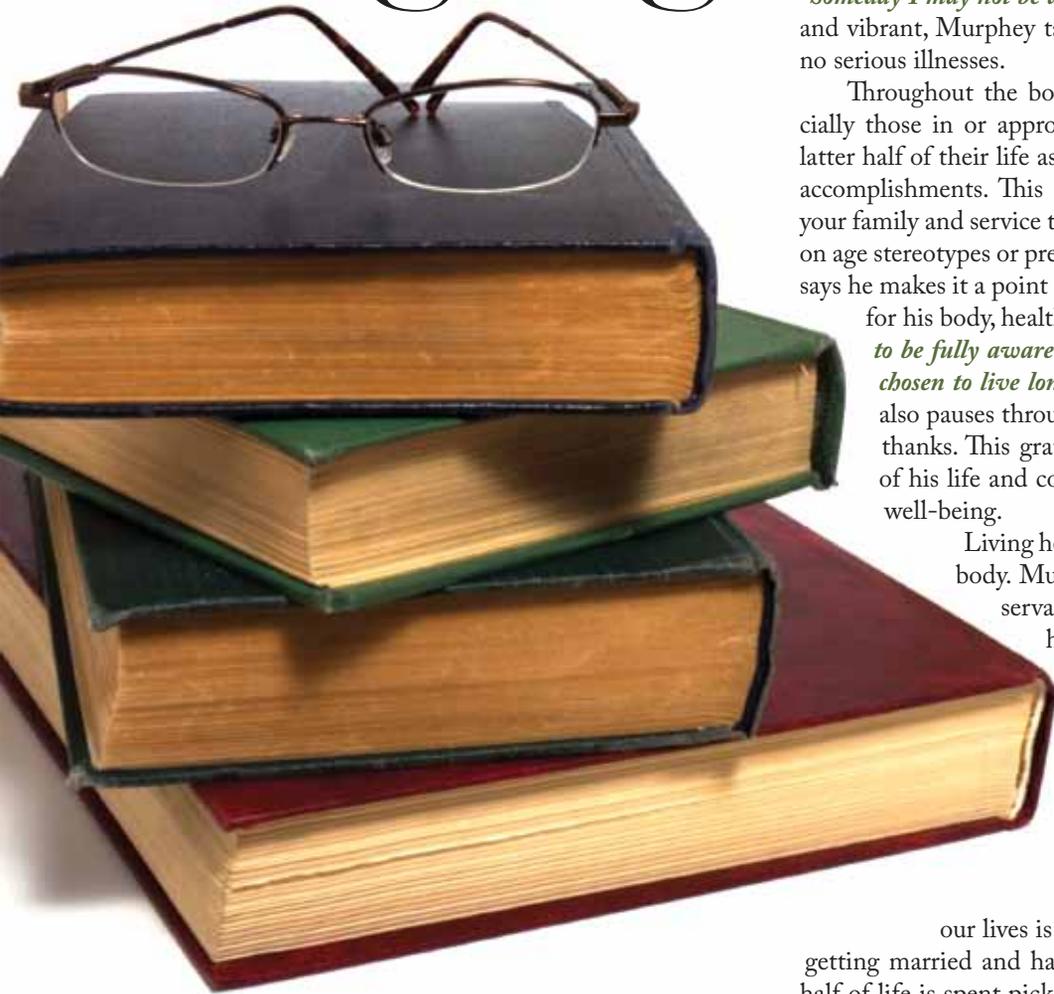
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Prolific Writer Cecil Murphey Offers Lessons on Aging



By Leah Lancione

Aging is a touchy subject to approach. Although we're all aging as soon as we're born, the reality of it is more difficult to face when it's physically or mentally evident. Many twenty-somethings throw caution to the wind as far as their health is concerned, but give them two or three decades and they'll start to see the results of poor choices. The point is, whether you're a boomer, a "whippersnapper" or one approaching those golden years, it's never too late to start aging gracefully. Best-selling author Cecil Murphey has tackled the topic of aging with gusto, and taking responsibility for your health and well-being is prominent in a number of his books.

In his book *Aging is An Attitude*, Murphey, now 81, described both his own and friends' perspectives on aging. When asked why he decided to delve into the topic of aging, his candor is refresh-

ing. He quipped, "*Well, I was getting older myself and didn't like it.*" However, instead of slinking into denial and trying to reclaim his youth as so many do, or, alternatively, accepting a defeatist attitude, he came to terms with aging and shifted his thinking.

Strengthened by his faith, Murphey, who was both a missionary and pastor, believes his spiritual walk and relationship with God is integral to his positive outlook on aging and even death. An avid runner and walker and 24-year vegetarian, Murphey fully accepts the charge to treat his body as a temple. "*I figure this body is on loan from God. If I take good care of it, it will last a lifetime.*"

Murphey admits he's often told he shouldn't do this or that because of his age, particularly running, but he proudly responds, "*Someday I may not be able to run, but today is not that day.*" Fit and vibrant, Murphey takes no medication and has experienced no serious illnesses.

Throughout the book Murphey encourages readers—especially those in or approaching their golden years—to view the latter half of their life as a time to appreciate and reflect on their accomplishments. This entails measuring the aging process by your family and service to God and others. Choosing not to dwell on age stereotypes or preconceived notions about aging, Murphey says he makes it a point to wake up every morning thanking God for his body, health and the talents he's been given. "*I want to be fully aware of my aging and be able to say that I've chosen to live longer and healthier,*" he asserts. Murphey also pauses throughout the day to look at his life and give thanks. This gratitude helps him have a sober judgment of his life and count all his blessings. This in turn fosters well-being.

Living healthier doesn't just pertain to the physical body. Murphey bases his advice on countless observations of friends and colleagues, as well as his own lessons learned by experience, and the light bulb conclusion is "*now is the time to keep growing.*" Murphey explains that after you've retired and your kids are grown, it's important to embrace self-examination. Referring to renowned psychologist and psychotherapist Carl Jung's discussion of mid-life crisis and how the first half of

our lives is spent fulfilling goals like finding a mate, getting married and having a family. Murphey says the second half of life is spent picking up the pieces of our lives in a search for wholeness and balance.

Speaking of living healthier and longer, Murphey co-authored a book with biostatistician Jan W. Kuzma titled *Live 10 Healthy Years Longer* that cites a decades-long health study that demonstrates how participants (all Seventh Day Adventists), and consequently anyone who ascribes to the principles of the aptly-named "Live Longer Lifestyle," can live 10 years longer (13 ½ years longer if vegetarian). The results also show that participants did not face the catastrophic illnesses their peers did and appeared to be happier all together.

The sentiment, and possible physiological reality, that a positive attitude can promote well-being, is also echoed in the book *Think Big* that Murphey co-wrote with renowned neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson. In the book, Carson and Murphey stress that attitude plays a "*tremendous role in our well-being as well as our*

ability to fight disease.” Conversely, Murphey confesses that if you believe you’re “ancient” you’ll act and feel ancient.

Murphey expressed one of the benefits of aging is the ability to let go of past mistakes you or others made that you didn’t feel free to do during your 20s through mid-life because of the many stresses that keep us wound too tight. Murphey admits that the more open and honest he is about his failures and shortcomings with his children and grandchildren, the more they respect him. Maintaining the strong bond he has with his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, the entire family gathers once a month for dinner. Clearly his brood admires his wisdom, wit and fortitude as Murphey proudly declares that one of his grandsons remarked that he’s going to leave everything in his will to his grandfather!

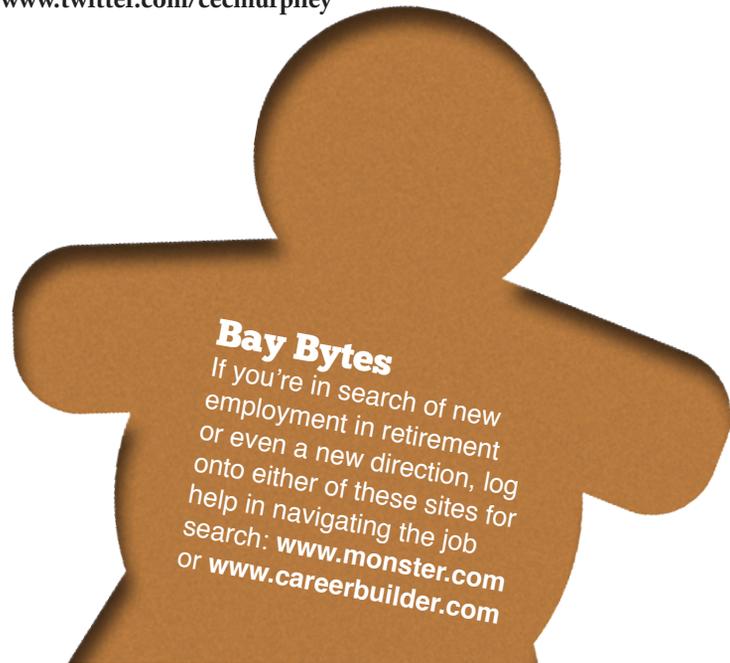
Murphey tackles many of the topics that correspond with aging in a number of his books. In *When Someone You Love No Longer Remembers*, he addresses worries and anxieties of relatives and caregivers when they cope with a family member’s mental decline. Murphey emphasizes the importance of human connection and touch. Though your relationship may have changed with a loved one as the result of a mental condition, you can still project your love, affection and warmth to them, be it through a simple hug, holding of hands or touch of the face. Your loved one may not, at that moment, remember your name but they will feel your love. That connection is both therapeutic for you and your loved one.

Forging human connection, whether through long-time friendships or relationships with family members as well as with new people, is also an essential part of aging along with continuing to grow and learn as a person. Appreciating the full circle of

life, Murphey advises older folks to fully enjoy the role of grandparent.

He also believes there is no such thing as a self-made man. *“You have to follow divine rules and learn from your experience. My kids and grandkids say I’m so wise, but I believe it’s just that I’ve learned from my experiences. That’s key,”* he says.

If you want to learn more about Cecil Murphey or any of the 135 books he’s authored or co-authored, visit www.cecilmurphey.com or cecwrightowriter.com To follow him on Twitter, go to www.twitter.com/cecilmurphey





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BOOKS:

Old, New and Obscure

CHRISTMAS CHRONICLES

The Legend of Santa Claus

By Tim Slover

Bantam Books, New York (2010)

Christmas Chronicles is a delightful, although fanciful Christmas story that may become a classic that is read to families and by families for years. It is also available on a CD, which would be fun to listen to in the car while driving to grandma and grandpa's house for the holidays.

It starts out with a narrator who is cutting pine boughs for Christmas decorations high on a hill when a sleigh roars by on a road that wasn't there a moment before. A package, which turns out to be a biography of Santa Claus, falls out of the sleigh, which then disappears. The narrator picks up the book and begins to read it.

Thus begins the story in the 1300s. It is a biography of a wood craftsman named Klaus who creates wood toys for the children of his village in the Black Forest of Germany after the black plague kills many of the villagers. The word quickly spreads to other villages and soon Klaus has more toys than he can deliver. The story then continues to tell how Klaus became Santa Claus.

Author Tim Slover has a whimsical, magical way of writing, which draws in readers, makes them want to read more and even start to believe this magical story. He has a way of separating fact from legend and answers such questions as: Does Santa really come down the chimney? How is he able to deliver the toys all in one night? How does Mrs. Claus fit in the picture? How did they meet? How do the reindeer

enter the legend? Also touched on is how Santa Claus got to the North Pole, where the name elves comes from and how Mr. and Mrs. Claus are still living today. As I said, you need to believe in magic and have a good imagination.

Both Klaus and his wife, Anna, are made saints and from this comes the name Santa Claus.

Of course, every story has a villain, and a mean one he is. Rolf Eckhof does many evil deeds to counteract and stop the good that Klaus has created for the children of the world. This is a part that may be hard for children to understand.

Except for the villain, this is such an upbeat and entertaining Christmas tale that it doesn't seem absurd. It is easily read and except for a rather unusual ending, it should put the reader in a wonderful holiday spirit. Isn't that what Christmas is all about?

~ Peggy Kiefer

A DOG NAMED CHRISTMAS

By Greg Kincaid

Doubleday Books, New York (2008)

If you are looking for a "feel good" family book to read around the holiday season, you should enjoy *A Dog Named Christmas*. Sex scenes, violence and profanity are nowhere to be found, just a nice comfortable book to curl up with on a chilly December night. If you didn't see the television version of this book on the Hallmark Hall of Fame (first aired on CBS in November 2009), or even if you did, read on.

The McCray family lives on a farm

that the narrator's (George McCray) great-great grandfather bought from the Blackfoot Indians. The family has lived there for four generations.

Living in the farmhouse are George McCray, the father, MaryAnn McCray, the mother and their 20-year-old developmentally challenged son, Todd McCray.

Todd hears on the radio that the local animal shelter is looking for families who would foster dogs over the holidays so they don't have to spend their time in a small cage while most of the shelter volunteers and employees are enjoying the holidays. Todd, after using all of his powers of persuasion, manages to convince his father (with the help of his mother) to take him to the shelter to pick out a dog to bring home for the holiday season. His father agrees only if Todd agrees to take him back the day after Christmas. After Todd thoroughly checks out each dog at the shelter he decides on an older black lab mix that he names Christmas.

Then Todd takes it upon himself to find homes for all of the dogs at the shelter so none will be left behind. He convinces the other members of his family and many of his neighbors to foster a shelter dog for the holidays. As you might expect, all of the dogs are fostered for Christmas.

Of course, Christmas fits right in with the McCray family as if he has always lived there. George continues to remind Todd that he agreed to return Christmas to the shelter on Dec. 26.

A subplot enters the story when we discover that George is still struggling with the loss of two of his beloved dogs many years earlier and feels he cannot go through that again.

It would spoil the story to tell you about the wonderful opportunity that opens up for Todd or what happens to the dog Christmas.

A Dog Named Christmas is a quick and easy read, as well as being an uplifting break from the holiday stress and commercialism. If you are a dog lover, you will enjoy this feel-good book as much as I did.

~ Peggy Kiefer

Here are four of our favorite books for holiday giving for those who are thinking about retirement, soon to be retired or already retired:

1

THE JOY OF RETIREMENT, FINDING HAPPINESS, FREEDOM, AND THE LIFE YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED

By David C. Borchard
with Patricia A. Donohoe
AMACOM, New York (2008)

The title says it all as the book guides the reader through the process of new beginnings, while helping to define options and goals. A great source of what to do with the rest of your life.

2

THE NEW RETIREMENTALITY, PLANNING YOUR LIFE AND LIVING YOUR DREAMS...AT ANY AGE YOU WANT

By Mitch Anthony
John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken (2014)

This will inspire you to take time to assess where you are and to work out a plan for what's next, while realizing we're all different and there is no one-size-fits-all retirement.

3

UNRETIREMENT: HOW BABY BOOMERS ARE CHANGING THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT WORK, COMMUNITY, AND THE GOOD LIFE

By Chris Farrell
Bloomsbury Press, NYC (2014)

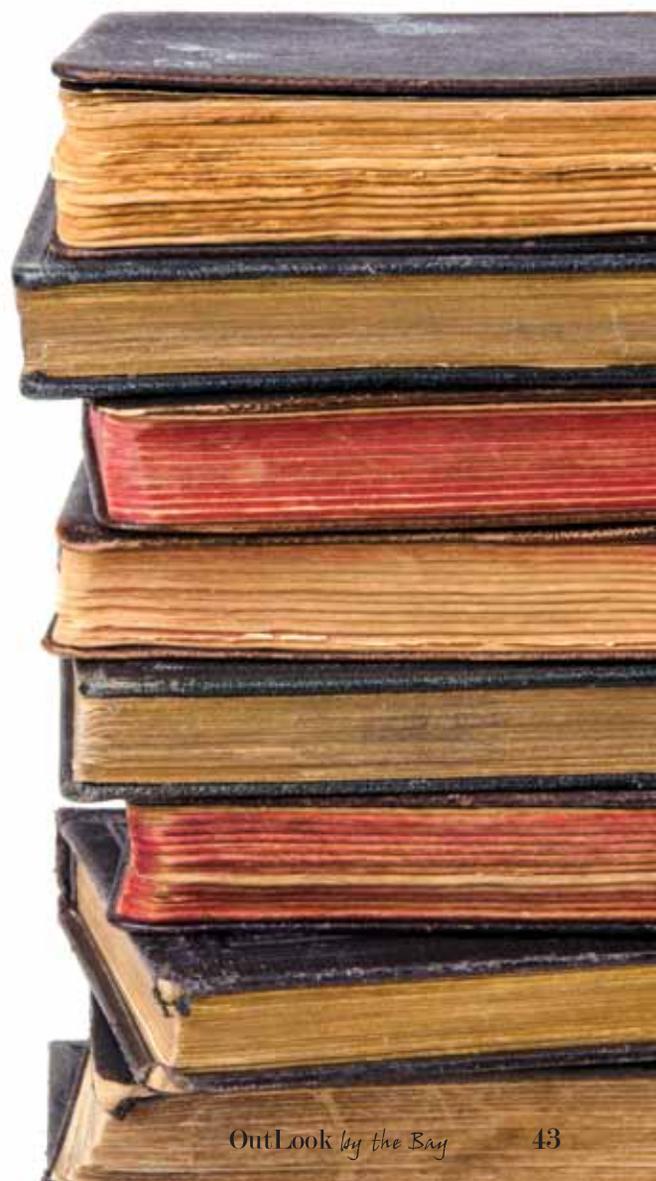
Not sure what to do next? This should be your guide. It will give you permission to pursue what's going to work for your retirement years and bring the most satisfaction to your life.

4

REBOOT! WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR CAREER IS OVER BUT YOUR LIFE ISN'T

By Phil Burgess
FriesenPress, Victoria, BC (2011)

Burgess says: "If we must retire to something, we should not retire to retirement." An excellent source to guide you through the coming adventure for what's next and what's going to work for you.



REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN HEROES

By E. Hovey

Each year at the beginning of December two holiday traditions commemorate the lives of America's fallen heroes. If you participate in one or both of these memorable events, you will find it worth the trip.

At dusk on Saturday, **Dec. 6**, the graves of the more than 23,000 soldiers who were killed, wounded or missing at the Battle of Antietam are illuminated. Candles are lit by volunteers in cooperation with the American Business Women's Association, in preparation for the hundreds of cars that will drive through the graveyard at the **Antietam National Battlefield**. At **6 p.m.**, cars with only parking lights lit will wind their way through five miles of road meandering between and around the tombstones. Each flame flickers for just a few hours, commemorating the life of a casualty from that horrific 1862 battle. Plan to arrive early to join the line of cars that can take as long as two hours to reach the entrance. The battlefield is accessible along Route 34 in Sharpsburg. Pedestrians are not permitted. The rain date is Saturday, Dec. 13. For a map and other details, log onto www.nps.gov/anti/planyourvisit/luminary.htm

Another memorable event takes place in **Arlington National Cemetery** where the public is invited to either join the volunteers to help distribute wreaths to be placed against each tombstone or to come as an observer. Morrill Worcester, the president of Worcester Wreath Co., of Harrington, Maine, started Wreaths Across America in 1992 with the delivery to the cemetery of 5,000 handmade Christmas wreaths. The company has created this tradition and continues to donate and arrange delivery each December. This year, the event will take place at **noon, Saturday, Dec. 13**, and in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Arlington National Cemetery, the goal is to cover all of the 230,000 gravesites with a fresh green wreath.

The tradition of wreath placement has spread throughout the nation and this December 725,000 wreaths will be distributed for gravesites at more than 900 locations throughout the United States and beyond. Your group or organization can get involved with a donation, by serving as a fund-raiser or by volunteering to place the wreaths. Wreaths can be purchased through the website for \$15 for one, \$75 for five and upward from there. Acknowledgement is then sent either *in memory of* or *in honor of*. More information can be found online: www.wreathscrossamerica.org/



GUIDELINES FOR GRACIOUS GUESTS

Our son was transferred to Japan two years ago and we will be traveling there for the holidays. We adore our two young grandchildren and can't get enough of them. We're scheduled to stay for three weeks and are looking forward to this time with our family. However, much as we think we all get along famously, is there some truth to "after three days fish and company ... ?"

Of course, given the expense and distance of an overseas trip, you wish to make the most of your visit. But yes, lengthy stays in someone else's home can become less than "fresh" and enjoyable to all parties. Even in close families, too much togetherness is, well, just too much togetherness.

Sometimes, we make the mistake of assuming a too-casual attitude with family. However, as a guest in anyone's home, you must do your part to making your visit go as smoothly as possible. Why shouldn't we treat our family just as well as we treat others?

Just as there are certain practices that you do in your own home to make guests feel welcome, there is a knack to being a good houseguest. After all, you want to be invited back, right? Here are some suggestions:

- Confirm arrival and departure in advance: Never assume you can stay as long as you want. Work around your host's schedule.
- Arrive with a host gift: It doesn't have to be expensive, but it cannot serve two purposes. In other words, don't pass off your holiday gift as a hostess gift too. Homemade brownies are a welcome treat or try giving a holiday candle.
- Pitch in. Pick up after yourself, play with the kids, fold laundry, chop vegetables, wash dishes, etc. You are not visiting royalty. Helping out will allow you to feel a part of things.
- Treat: You've arrived with a hostess gift and a holiday gift or two. But if you're staying awhile, offer to spell your hosts from kitchen duty by treating them to a restaurant meal.

Lunch or breakfast will be less expensive. Can't swing that? Then pick up an inexpensive bottle of wine for dinner or rent a PG DVD that everyone can enjoy. Even a well-heeled host appreciates being appreciated.

- Take a break: Split up your together time and provide some space that will feel welcome to everyone. For a long stay, take a couple of days or even a week in the middle of the visit to enjoy a trip to a nearby tourist attraction. When you return to your host's home, it will be a fresh visit all over again. Even for a shorter stay, take yourself off to stroll through town or visit a coffee shop with a good book. If you are visiting a family with children, perhaps you could offer the parents a break while you stay with the kids.
- Let some things slide: During any extended visit, irritations or tensions may arise. In those instances, ask yourself what your aim is before you act or speak. Do you want to insist that you are right or do you wish to have a happy visit? If it is the latter, and I hope it is, choose to let some things slide. Take a few deep breaths and consider taking that break mentioned above.
- Exit well: When it's time to depart, leave a room as clean as possible. Ask your host what to do with used linens. Remake the bed and empty the trash. Return glasses or cups to the kitchen.
- Pen a prompt thank-you: Follow up with a written thank-you note (not email) as soon as you return home. Keep it short, but remember to mention a few things that you particularly enjoyed about your visit.

Does this sound like too much effort for family? If so, then check into a hotel. There, you can pay to have others see to your needs. If you're a guest though, and wish to be invited back, follow through on these guidelines and have a wonderful visit.

Vicki is a licensed professional counselor and welcomes your questions. She can be reached at Victoria2write@aol.com

HOLIDAY QUIZ-ACROSTIC

		1 X	2 V	3 U		4 Q	5 N	6 U	7 R	8 B		9 D	10 G	11 M	12 I	13 H	14 T	15 W	16 J		17 A
18 U	19 K	20 H	21 M		22 X	23 O		24 U	25 R	26 E		27 S	28 X	29 N		30 G	31 I	32 N	33 E	34 B	
35 F	36 W	37 Q	38 A	39 T		40 W	41 O	42 Q	43 N	44 S		45 V	46 H		47 A	48 S	49 U	50 K	51 X	52 C	53 F
54 T	55 W	56 I		57 M	58 N	59 G	60 X	61 J	62 Q	63 F	64 T	65 P		66 C	67 H	68 P		69 D	70 O	71 W	
72 N	73 J	74 M	75 E	76 T	77 G	78 W	79 A	80 P	81 S		82 Y	83 X	84 D	85 P		86 X	87 F	88 L	89 S	90 O	
91 I	92 N	93 B	94 E	95 L	96 O		97 C	98 H	99 B	100 T	101 L	102 M	103 N	104 U		105 V	106 B	107 D	108 A	109 K	110 Y
	111 M	112 P	113 C	114 Q	115 O	116 F	117 V	118 D		119 N	120 S	121 Y		122 P	123 X	124 H	125 E	126 G	127 E	128 D	129 J
	130 F	131 X	132 H	133 L	134 W		135 E	136 S	137 Y	138 V	139 G	140 L		141 I	142 A	143 N	144 H	145 V		146 K	147 M
148 P	149 B	150 Y		151 X	152 K	153 G		154 R	155 Q	156 T	157 G	158 N		159 D	160 A	161 P		162 W	163 E	164 S	
165 I	166 M	167 E	168 X		169 R	170 Y	171 A	172 R		173 F	174 X	175 M	176 N		177 U	178 K	179 J	180 T	181 F		

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Directions

1. Read the definitions and supply the correct words over the numbered blanks.
2. Transfer the letters to the corresponding squares in the diagram.
3. Reading left to right, the completed diagram poses a trivia question. Words are separated by black squares.
4. Reading down, the first letters on the numbered blanks give the subject category followed by the answer to the trivia question.

- A. Rookie
- B. Supernatural
- C. Whack
- D. Indiana college
- E. Flexibility
- F. Meager amount
- G. High station
- H. Forcible tearing away
- I. English playwright, actor, and composer
- J. Treatment for constipation
- K. Genius
- L. Discharge from the eyes or nose
- M. Examined
- N. UPC (2 wds.)
- O. Blunders
- P. Hubcap burial ground
- Q. Event
- R. Perfection: to the _____
- S. Canines
- T. Signal that danger has passed (2 wds.)
- U. Nightcrawler
- V. President of Yale University, 1795–1817
- W. Mollify
- X. Resuscitation technique (hyph.)
- Y. Fluctuate

160	79	17	38	142	171	108	47
106	99	149	93	34	8		
52	97	113	66				
118	159	84	128	69	9	107	
167	127	75	163	125	26	33	135 94
35	63	87	173	116	181	130	53
153	10	59	126	139	30	157	77
20	124	132	144	46	13	67	98
91	31	141	165	12	56		
73	16	129	179	61			
146	152	50	109	178	19		
133	88	95	101	140			
175	21	111	57	147	166	74	11 102
43	103	32	143	92	72	119	58 5 158 29 176
70	115	90	23	41	96		
122	112	80	85	65	148	68	161
155	4	114	37	42	62		
169	25	154	172	7			
89	136	164	81	48	44	27	120
180	64	76	14	100	39	156	54
104	3	24	177	18	6	49	
145	105	45	117	2	138		
15	134	162	55	78	40	36	71
60	86	123	151	28	1	83	51 131 168 22 174
137	121	150	110	170	82		

Please visit amazon.com to order Sheila's book, **Quiz-Acrostics: Challenging Acrostic Puzzles with a Trivia Twist**, published by Puzzleworm. Sheila can be reached at acrostics@aol.com or visit her web site: www.quiz-acrostics.com.

THE CHANGING BAY

By Henry S. Parker

The soft swish of palm leaves on a Wye Island beach. Tropical reef fish flashing in Kent Island's near-shore shallows. Fork-tailed frigate birds gliding by the Naval Academy. Could these become familiar scenes on Chesapeake Bay?

Not likely, at least any time soon. But scientists paint a sobering picture of how global climate change will affect the Bay and some of these changes are already evident. For more information, see a comprehensive report at the following website: www.ocvts.org/classroomconnect/classrooms/jwnek/documents/Oceanography/Global_Change_Chesapeake.pdf

Consider the following:

- Over the last century, Chesapeake Bay sea levels have risen a foot. Half of this is due to the natural sinking of coastal lands in the region, but the remainder is attributable to a recently warming world. Scientists predict that sea level could rise another foot or two (and perhaps as much as five feet) over the next century—a rate much faster than the global average.
- Higher sea levels mean more coastal flooding. You can already see this at City Dock during most storms and moon tides, or when onshore wind patterns push water up into the Bay.
- Rising water levels also mean more erosion and inundation of vulnerable shorelines and critical tidal wetlands. These wetlands are vital to the Bay's shorebirds and wildlife and to the productivity of its multibillion dollar commercial and recreational fishery. The Eastern Shore's marshes are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels.
- Scientists associate global climate change with more extreme weather. Over the last century U.S. annual precipitation has increased about 0.5 percent each decade. In 2003 Tropical Storm Isabel pushed a 6- to 8-foot storm surge up the Bay. Increased precipitation, especially during storms, means more erosion and pollution runoff into the Bay.
- Reduced salinity, more light-blocking sediments and altered water chemistry resulting from climate change events can lead to lower dissolved oxygen concentrations, the loss of ecologically valuable submerged aquatic vegetation, outbreaks of harmful algae blooms and increased acidity of Bay waters that affects shellfish

health and productivity.

These predictions are by no means certain. The scientific models are still incomplete. Offsetting factors, like a decline in the sun's intensity or immediate major changes in human behavior, could alter the projected outcomes. We can adjust to the changes. After all, the Bay has been undergoing natural variations for millennia. And what's not to like about palm trees and balmy breezes in December? But one thing is clear: Without a significant change to the current patterns, the Bay will be a very different place by the end of this century.

What to do? You could always head north. Maine, maybe? But Maine has its own problems. Some scientists say that the Gulf of Maine is warming faster than 99 percent of the world's oceans, causing commercial fish species—including the iconic Maine lobster—to begin migrating north. Maybe you could head to Labrador where there's still time to get a good buy on waterfront property.

Fortunately, there are other things you can do, right here in the Bay area, to stem the tide of climate change and mitigate the consequences. No doubt you've heard them all before:

- Reduce your energy consumption.
- Cut back on driving or buy a more efficient car and keep it well-maintained.
- Support natural resources management actions that stabilize shorelines and wetlands and reduce runoff into the Bay.
- Encourage scientific research to better understand global climate change and its potential impacts.
- Be prepared to pay more for investments in resilient infrastructure and responses to catastrophic weather events.
- Educate yourself about this critical challenge.

If we are all willing to make these commitments up front, however painful they may seem, the long-term costs will likely be a lot less than if we avoid action now. It's a trite but true expression: Together we can make a difference.

Now about that waterfront property in Labrador ...

Henry is an adjunct associate professor at Georgetown University. He previously directed research programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and taught marine sciences at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. He can be reached at hspbp@gmail.com

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