

Early Spring 2021

Outlook

for the Bay Boomer and beyond...

by the Bay

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**DNA:
UNCOVERING THE PAST**

LEAVE A LEGACY,
RECORD YOUR MEMORIES

**DOWNSIZING:
LET IT GO**

**DATING AGAIN
OVER 50**

TAKE A WALKING CLUB IN STRIDE

fitness • entertainment • gardening • nutrition

Letters to the editor

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

Was disappointed not to be able to find the Winter edition of *OutLook*.

Always look forward to that magazine. Where was it or where is it?
Susan H., Severna Park

As with many publications we had distribution issues as libraries are closed to the general public. Senior centers are closed, and doctors' offices and restaurants are keeping their patrons to a minimum. We will, however, continue publishing with continued restrictions on delivery.

SUBSCRIPTION BOXES

Enjoyed the Holiday issue article on gifts that keep on giving. Great idea to give something that will be delivered throughout the year, especially at times like these.

Also got lots of ideas for gifts for other occasions.
Cran44 by text

BIKE RIDING

Good article on bike riding. It was on my list and with limited sources of entertainment and availability of gyms,

it was very timely. An excellent source of exercise and outdoor fun.

Jim S., Edgewater

FALL EDITION

Was so glad to receive the Fall issue of *OutLook*. Not only a timely cover, but as usual, I enjoyed all the articles. And as always, took lots of time to read it, to enjoy each article – learned something from each one. I try to spread it out over many days before sharing it with my husband.

Carla W., Trenton, N.J.

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FROM THE DESK



It appears that most of us have made it to the beginning days of Spring. Thankfully! It's certainly been a year for all of us. More challenges perhaps than we'd ever dreamed of.

Really, at the beginning of 2020, would you ever have believed we'd be masked, isolated and restricted in our daily lives, relationships and all of our travel? And now, ever so slowly, a year later, we're emerging, but to what? Will it ever again be "normal"? Or will we return to whatever our perception was of normal? And more importantly, what have we learned? That's a tough one as most answers to that question are negative, only addressing the actual nemesis of where we are – such as don't eat out, stop socializing, don't hug your friends, distance yourselves from anyone on the street or in shops. Or, don't even go into shops.

But in questioning others, and putting aside "the rules," here's what we might have learned: Overwhelmingly, to value each day, keeping in mind that some of us are no longer here to appreciate what we do have. And then be grateful for everything. That's from my friend Linda. She's always grateful, but now more than ever. Others bring up appreciating the little things, such as a greeting from the mail carrier, a smile that you can detect above a mask, a friend sharing her good news, finding someone to walk with, discovering a new author and sharing, or finding something of value, possibly even while streaming TV. How about now you have time to sit and call a faraway friend for a lengthy catch-up. And a biggie with young families – discovering that they really have great kids! Being locked down together brings the opportunity to discover, appreciate and be awed by their goodness, their intelligence, their willingness, their creativity and their crazy sense of humor. Who would've known if we hadn't been forced to live so closely for so long? Then there's my friend Karen, who discovered what great neighbors she had while walking her dog and engaging others in conversation, albeit behind masks. And Val joined a pickle ball group, with her husband, and is having more fun, not only chatting with others, but getting a decent workout that's fun to do.

It truly is unimaginable what we've been going through, but perhaps we've missed a takeaway: that we've learned to value friendships more or have learned to slow down, breathe and enjoy *what is* rather than *what isn't*. Like most things, we've no doubt learned that this, too, will pass. And now, although it's been a long time coming, here it is Spring. What a fabulous time of year. Time to get out there and start digging in the dirt. (See Matthew's "Reflections" column on page 37.) He certainly has the right idea.

Then there's Anne Bradstreet, a poet and fellow New Englander, who could sum things up so well when she wrote, "If we had no Winter, the Spring would not be so pleasant: If we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome." She wrote this while raising eight children and relocating seven times. One house had burned to the ground with most of the 800 books that she had in her library! Very impressive as they all had to be carted over from the Mother Country. Her family was also subject to Indian attacks and her husband traveled. All this and so much more that she recorded through poetry with the help of a quill pen and ink made from berries. It was, after all, the mid-1600s. Kinda gives new definition to our whining doesn't it?

So, from where I sit, on these opening days of Spring 2021, with the crocuses poking out of the newly thawed ground and the Spring peepers getting ready to emerge (see Henry's article page 47) perhaps it's best to just enjoy the here and now and all that is, rather than what isn't. Don't you agree?

TAKE A WALKING CLUB IN STRIDE

By Leah Lancione

It is not earth-shattering news that walking is a proven way to maintain your health. If you've been walking for some time or just started the new year with a resolve to get moving, try these tips for starting a walking club, so you don't have to exercise alone. The American Heart Association (AHA) suggests using the **Meetup.com** website which provides downloadable "coordinator resources" after you pay a startup fee. **Meetup.com** also offers a page that gives step-by-step instructions for starting a group.

AHA tips for initiating a walking club include:

- Decide on your target audience, i.e., fitness and age levels.
- Set meeting specifics such as time of day and day or days of the week.
- Pick the location by deciding which route, including the starting and stopping point, is best and safest for your members. Test-run it before your group launches.
- Have a backup plan in the case of inclement weather, designating indoor locations like a local mall or indoor walking tracks available at a school or recreation center.

Once you have the foundation basics for starting a walking group, it is important to hammer out the necessary logistics. The National Institute on Aging (NIA) offers an online tool kit that highlights specifics for folks wanting to start a walking club.

As part of the organizing process, the NIA recommends contacting local businesses or organizations that can help promote the club. For example, see if the area senior center, library or rec center will post a flyer or employ other methods to get the word out. Another good startup tip is to hold an informational



meeting (in person or virtual) before the first scheduled walk so all members are on the same page. This would be a good time to set up a means of future communication, whether it is a weekly newsletter sent out via email, or a phone call or text to keep everyone in the loop.

The NIA also points out important safety measures to consider. For example: Will reflective gear be necessary? Should waivers be filled out with important emergency contact information and should older participants verify doctor's approval to start a new exercise regime? The site also offers other safety measures participants should take when walking as a group. Vital information for using crosswalks, taking heed of sidewalks or uneven pavement, and being mindful of large bushes, parked cars or other impediments are some of the highlighted safety warnings.

Once you get through the groundwork, you will also need to ask members about instituting weekly and/or monthly goals, as well as transportation or carpooling options available. The NIA also provides a checklist of items for individual members:

- Shoes with flat, nonskid soles, good heel support, enough room for your toes, and a cushioned arch that's not too high or too thick.
- Socks to cushion and protect the feet and help keep them dry.
- Clothes that feel comfortable during a walk.
- An ID with emergency contact information, a mobile phone and a small amount of cash.
- A hat or visor for the sun, sunscreen and sunglasses.
- Scarf and/or hat to cover the head and ears in cold weather.
- Layers of clothing in cold weather that can be removed, as necessary.
- Waterproof clothing to avoid getting wet if there's a potential for rain.
- Step counters or other wearable devices to keep track of steps taken.
- Water to drink before, during and after the walk.
- Snack or bag lunch, if appropriate.

The internet offers plenty of videos on YouTube as well as advice from fitness experts if you need more encouragement to get your walking group going. For example, there is a YouTube video presented by a YMCA fitness expert that offers safety tips for seniors wanting to walk outside at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2eDfNBIgpQ as well one by Senior Living that highlights a walking club, and The Garden City Wanderers, if you want some fitness inspiration.

Just think, this new venture will not only get you feeling energized and improve your overall well-being, but you may just make a new friend or two in the process.

The rest of our tomorrows are a gift. Don't waste them.

RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM A SUPPORT GROUP

By Louise Whiteside

Connect with others caring for an elderly parent. Learn ways to deal with a substance abuser. Gain understanding of a disease that a loved one is suffering from. In a time of grief, allow yourself to be comforted by a compassionate group of peers. Let others give you the help you need to stop smoking or overeating.

Did you know that there is a peer group available to support you through literally any problem or issue you may be confronting? A group of people with similar life challenges is available to listen to your concerns, relate personally to your experiences, give you valuable feedback, recommend helpful resources and simply serve as a sounding board for you.

A peer support group can serve as a bridge between professional medical treatment and your need for emotional support. Although a doctor or nurse may give the finest of medical treatment, he or she may not have the time or resources to provide you with the needed emotional support. Similarly, friends and family may be extremely supportive and sympathetic to your situation but may not understand the full impact of a physical disease or mental problem. On the other hand, a group comprised of people with shared problems or life changes may provide a gap between your medical and emotional needs.

Support groups can be offered by nonprofit organizations, clinics, hospitals, social service agencies or religious institutions. They may also be independent of organized entities and run entirely by members. Support groups may be in the form of face-to-face meetings, teleconferences or online contacts. Some may offer educational opportunities. For example, a doctor, nurse or mental health professional may be invited to discuss a topic relevant to the group.

Members of a support group often have similar feelings, worries, anxieties and the need for practical advice. Participants are likely to feel a sense of rapport and kinship with one another. Benefits may include:

- Feeling less isolated
- Reducing stress, depression or anxiety
- Ability to talk openly about feelings
- Sharing concerns in a nonjudgmental environment
- Improving coping skills
- Gaining a sense of empowerment
- Improving understanding of a disease
- Gaining practical feedback
- Getting help with available resources

WHERE TO FIND A SUPPORT GROUP?

TRY THESE SOURCES:

Doctors, clinics or hospitals are a start. Also helpful could be a nonprofit organization which deals with a particular medical condition or life challenge. Consulting your minister or religious leader can help. Websites of the National Institutes of Health on specific diseases and conditions, such as the National Institute of Mental Health found at nih.com give advice. And information is available at the Mayo Clinic (www.mayoclinic.org) and Mental Health America mhanational.org

HERE ARE QUESTIONS TO ASK

BEFORE JOINING A SUPPORT GROUP:

- Is the group designed for people with specific medical conditions or life issues?
- Does the group meet for a set period of time or continue indefinitely?
- Where and when does the group meet?
- Is there a facilitator or moderator, or is the group peer-led?
- If there is a facilitator, has this person undergone training?
- What are the guidelines for confidentiality?
- Are there established ground rules for participation?
- Is the support group free and, if not, what are the fees?

Try the support group for a few weeks. If initially you don't feel comfortable sharing personal issues with strangers, simply feel free to listen. If ultimately the group does not feel like a good fit for you, consider trying another group.

Please remember that a support group is not a substitute for professional medical care or mental health treatment. If a support group does not feel appropriate for you, and you still need help coping with your situation, talk with your health care practitioner about counseling or other types of treatment.

Bay Bytes

Looking for information on how to handle some of the trickier financial decisions we're all faced with such as taxes, investments, Social Security and ins and out of a reverse mortgage? Log onto 360FinancialLiteracy.org/Calculators for lots of easy-to-understand assistance.

DNA:

Uncovering the Past

By Carolyn Campbell

Because people's previous experience with DNA is often limited to TV crime shows, they are pleasantly surprised that the **Ancestry.com** testing experience is easy, interesting, enjoyable and positive. People often ask if the test requires a cheek swab, but the reality is more straightforward. Saliva is one of the most accessible of our body's fluids, making saliva sample collection painless and noninvasive.

Once the kit has arrived, the best time to take the test is first thing in the morning, before you eat, drink or brush your teeth. All that is required is to spit a few millimeters of saliva into a test tube until it reaches a specified line. Then, screwing the test tube lid on tight, a blue stabilizing solution is released that protects your DNA while it is mailed to the company. The usual wait time to receive test results ranges from four to six weeks. Because the test packet arrives in the mail, it seems logical that the company will also mail the results. But after you receive an email that confirms results are available, you retrieve them online, using the test code that came with the packet, along with the username and password that you establish before taking the test.

Ancestry has 90 million family trees, 4 million members in its DNA network and 20 billion family history records. A genealogical DNA test is a DNA-based test that looks at specific locations of a person's genome to determine ancestral ethnicity and genealogical relationships. Results give information about ethnic groups the test subject may descend from and about other individuals to whom they may be related. For example, the **Ancestry.com** DNA test looks through a person's entire genome at more than 700,000 locations across their DNA. The results then come in two parts.

"The first is your ethnicity estimate, where we use your DNA to see what regions of the world your ancestors came from such as Ireland, Cameroon, Native American, etc.," explains Dallin Hatch, public relations manager at Ancestry. "This estimate is looking up to 1,000 years into your past,

which means it often looks back further than physical records exist. For most, it's a glimpse even further into their past than they've been able to go before through traditional methods."

Relative matching is an exciting part of the fun. Now that more than 4 million people have taken the Ancestry DNA test, the average person will have more than 400 fourth cousin matches or closer. Since you and your near and distant cousins share recent common ancestors, these cousins may be the key to fleshing out parts of your family tree that were previously unexplored. They may have documents, family heirlooms and stories you can't find any

other way. Through the Ancestry network, you can connect with these cousins to see what you can uncover together. Relative matching took place with me when I discovered a first cousin who had taken the test. Previously naive about Ancestry's scope, I didn't realize that my birth family from across the country could be part of the Ancestry network. "More people are taking the test daily," says Michelle Ercanbrack, family historian at Ancestry.

"Depending on the amount of DNA that you share, there are a lot of different 'buckets' in which a cousin match could fall. The closest is if you are an identical twin, then a parent-child match, then immediate family, then a distant cousin." Each time I have looked at my DNA results, there are new cousins listed.

DNA testing will appeal to your love of acquiring new knowledge. When you pair the Ancestry DNA test with the most extensive online genealogical database – **Ancestry.com** – everyone's sure to have a rich discovery experience. Now with more than 80 million trees and 20 billion historical records, it allows users to discover, preserve and share their family story in ways never before possible, says Hatch. "You never know what you are going to find until you start looking," Ercanbrack says. "Taking the Ancestry DNA test is an opportunity to discover something new, to take a piece of yourself and preserve it for future generations."

By learning something new, you can also connect with something old -- your family history.

**Everyone is
sure to have a
rich discovery
experience.**

Bay Bytes

Do you need a copy of your signature for various reasons on the internet? Or are you looking to create your own font using your style of script? Log onto www.calligraphr.com/en/ where they will help create your very own font.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

By Neil Moran

When I mention to friends that I'm a substitute teacher I get a mixed reaction, mostly on the not-so-positive side.

"Kids are awful these days, I would never sub!" is one familiar refrain. Another is, "I tried it one time and hated it!"

I'll have to admit it's easy to understand their hostility toward subbing. Most of us subs have dodged a few paper airplanes and have sent kids to the office for being disruptive. But most of the time, for many, the experience is positive, and increasingly rewarding.

Substitute teaching offers a lot of things retirees are looking for, like a flexible schedule and a chance to make a difference or give back to the community. Subbing can also open up other opportunities to get involved with young people. Retirees can often be found helping with the school's robotics program, health science, sports and countless other programs.

OK, the pay isn't so great, averaging \$15.49 an hour, according to the job site **Indeed**. But the schedule is very flexible. It's possible to work five days a week or say the heck with it and take a few weeks off and travel. A substitute teacher can also pick and choose where they want to work: high school, middle school or elementary. Some districts also have 401k investment options and possibly other perks, like being able to get your car repaired for the cost of the parts.

As far as credentials go, it helps if you have at least a bachelor's degree, which will most likely garner a higher wage. Without a degree, expect to work as a teacher's aide at a lower rate. They

may also require a background check and some type of a training session either online or in person.

Classroom Management: Substitute teaching can definitely be a challenge, at least initially. Kids will test a new substitute teacher, for sure. Experts say that when entering a classroom for the first time, at least act like you're in control.

"Enter the classroom as the teacher of the day -- because you are," says Melissa Kelly, a secondary teacher and author of *The Everything New Teacher Book: A Survival Guide for the First Year and Beyond*. She says kids are excellent judges of character and will sense any fear and anxiety you display.

The sooner you get to know the students the better. Kelly suggests standing at the door before the bell rings and greet the kids coming into class. Taking attendance is an important first step to managing a class because you can get to know students' names and begin to establish control over the classroom. Don't be afraid to hit the pause button when taking attendance to squelch any disruptions. This helps set the tone for the day.

"Avoid rushing this important procedure," says Kelly. "You might have to stop the attendance-taking process once or twice to quiet the students again, but they will quickly understand what you expect. Stop disruptions when they are small to keep them from escalating."

Getting to know their names will also help to establish rapport with students and allows you to address them by name

CURRENT CONDITIONS HAVE BECOME A FACTOR

It is easy to have trepidations about substitute teaching, but the biggest elephant in the classroom right now is COVID-19. While school districts across the country try to maintain in-school teaching or consider restarting it, you should do your own homework on whether substituting is safe for you. Sources would include the school administrations, teachers' unions, health experts, trade pubs like *Education Week* and scientific journals.

The status of schools varies widely across the country. There are definitely incentives during the pandemic because most school districts have been facing a shortage of substitutes. For example, a bachelor's degree has been a minimum requirement, but some schools have had to lower that standard to fill the gap.

Still, these are just a few health and safety questions you'll want to have answered before subbing:

- Are vaccinations required for staff and/or students?

Would booster shots be a part of that if required to control future variant strains of the coronavirus?

- How often is COVID-19 testing required of staff and students and for what reasons? Does the school have a contact tracing follow-up program that can help source spreaders of the disease?
- Is the school's ventilation system adequate to diminish the chances of spreading the disease?
- Are furniture arrangements, other distancing requirements and cleaning protocols in line with the latest scientific thinking on preventing spread of the virus?

If you aren't comfortable with what you hear about these precautions, and especially if you have underlying conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure, substituting probably won't be right for you right now. -- Mick Rood

should they be misbehaving. It also comes in handy when you're calling the office to let them know you're sending someone down!

Subbing gives you a chance to get out of the house and interact with students and staff, which for some may be the difference between sitting home staring at the walls or getting out and socializing with others. Young folks can help you keep up with what the younger generation is doing and is interested in, which may come in handy when dealing with your grandkids. Getting out and around people may also be the perfect antidote for the rainy day blahs.

School children need our wisdom and support. We've "been there and done it." Although they may appear uninterested, just start telling a fascinating story and watch how they respond. Stories could include your time in the service, life in the '60s, or even a favorite dog you once owned. Try not to lecture or moralize, but rather have students reach their own conclusions. Once you've established yourself as a substitute, students will be interested in hearing about your life experiences.

As a sub, you have a certain amount of flexibility (depending on the teacher you're subbing for and circumstances) to do some extra things in class, like show a YouTube video that relates to the class assignment or read stories from books related to the topic.

Once you've established yourself with students it gets much easier. To get to a place where subbing becomes old hat, follow a few of these additional suggestions from Kelly:

1. **Don't get too friendly.** Students may take advantage of someone who tries to befriend students as a management tool. This can lead to resentment from others as well.
2. **Stay on top of discipline.** Be aware of what is going on in the classroom. Just because you've got a group of students working on the assignment for the day doesn't mean you can go put your head in your phone or the computer. Occasionally walk around the class and encourage those not working to get the assignment completed and praise those who are working.
3. **Avoid confrontation.** There will be times when a student will push you to the limit or you may be just having a bad day yourself. Confrontation often draws in other students to defend the accused and it simply ends up with an ugly incident. Handle conflict quietly and with authority. Sometimes going out in the hallway and having a talk with a student will bring down the temperature and often results in an overall better rapport with that student.
4. **Give Praise.** Last but not least, praise kids individually or as a class. "Give effective praise when it is due and ensure students feel like you are on their side and that you truly believe in them," Kelly says. "Students will pick up on your attitude toward them, so be positive."

Neil, when not gardening or writing, is a substitute teacher in Michigan. He can be contacted at nrmoran188@gmail.com



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Fresh, Green, Luxuriant and Abundant: THE HISTORY OF MINT & Mint Juleps

By Joyce White

Mint, with its many uses, refreshing taste and ability to grow in abundance across the globe, has played a major role in human cuisine reaching back to ancient times. American settlers used mint for culinary and medical purposes and encouraged an American love affair with the stuff. It's found in toothpaste, mouthwash, medicine, candy, drinks, syrups and cocktails. One potent drink infused with this bold herb, the mint julep, is not only the official drink of the Kentucky Derby, but is renowned as a symbol of the American South. While Kentucky may lay some claim to this iconic drink, evidence suggests that the origins of this bracing drink lie elsewhere.

Mint is the common name of plants belonging to the genus, *Mentha* and there are about two dozen species and hundreds of varieties such as peppermint, spearmint, chocolate mint, pineapple mint and apple mint, among many others. Though mint was commonly used as a medicine to freshen the breath, relieve nausea, gas and other bowel discomforts, it also regularly appears in historic culinary recipes, even in recipes for broths found carved into stone tablets, dating to about 1600 BC. Mint is also found in an ancient Roman recipe for *Hypotrimma*, a sweet paste made with dates, raisins, honey, cheese and pine nuts, among other ingredients. In 1570, early modern Italian chef, Bartolomeo Scappi, included mint in an eggplant and cheese recipe similar to eggplant parmigiana.

A recipe that boasts both the medicinal and culinary benefits of this useful herb is the mint julep. Juleps hail from late medieval and early modern Europe, and according to a c.1400 medical text, *Lanfranc's Cirurgical*, it is defined as "a sirup maad oonly of water & of sugre." According to a 16th century text, juleps were sometimes flavored with violets, musk and other "dyuerse [diverse] waters," of which mint may have been included. In the inimitable lyrics sung by Julie Andrews, these early juleps were most typically used as that spoonful of sugar that helps the medicine go down, a mere aid in the administration of healing bitter medicinal infusions.

The earliest reference I can find where an intoxicating spirit is added to julep dates to a 1787 article published in *The American Museum, or Universal Magazine* that reveals rum was a popular additive to julep in Virginia. The article sketches the day of a Virginian who "rises about six o'clock ... then drinks a jupal [sic] made of rum, water, and sugar." Another important fact tying juleps to the

Chesapeake Bay region has it that in the late 18th century, master distiller, Basil Hayden Sr., migrated from St. Mary's County to Kentucky. He brought his highly esteemed bourbon recipe with him. It contained corn for sweetness and rye for added spicy notes. According to historian Henry Bonner, "Fundamentally, St. Mary's County produced a corn-based whiskey, the recipe of which Basil Hayden took with him to Kentucky, and there by 1800 his distillate and other corn-based whiskeys became known as Bourbon (after Bourbon County, Kentucky)." It's clear that mint julep's all-important ingredient, bourbon, owes its origins to regions along the shores of the Chesapeake, not Kentucky.

Similarly, an early reference regarding the addition of mint to juleps is on record by 1805 and suggests the innovation was made in the Chesapeake region in a newspaper article entitled, *When Two Virginians Meet*. This narrative playfully mocks the two Virginians' penchant for mint juleps. It claimed that "the first thing two Virginians do when they meet is take a mint julep together," then, after some chatting will "take another mint julep," followed by "another julep," which makes the conversation go "on for hours" until "another mint julep stops" the conversation for good.

Curiously, a January 1838 edition of the *Baltimore Sun* reveals that during that Winter (which presumably was relatively warm), "lovers of mint juleps (were) highly alarmed for fear there (would) be no ice laid away for next Summer." Salvation came on Feb. 2 when the *Sun* announced "to lovers of mint julep (that) the Brandywine was frozen over on Monday night" which allowed men like N. Poset, proprietor of the bar room at the 12th Ward Headquarters, to advertise on March 17th that mint juleps, made with "fresh, green, luxuriant, and abundant" mint, would be available the following day at any hour. Oddly, a rebuke was published in July of 1838, berating lovers of mint juleps for removing such an abundance of ice from the Jones' Falls

River that catfish were forced to swarm near the surface of the water with opened mouths to get "a drop of cold water."

Now that Spring has arrived, grab some fresh mint, Maryland-made bourbon or rye, sugar syrup and plenty of ice and sit back and enjoy the refreshing and cooling virtues of a mint julep. You can always claim it's a medical necessity!

Joyce White, a food historian, can be contacted through www.atasteofhistory.net



IS THIS THE TIME TO BUY? OR SELL?

By Reid Buckley

As a third-generation real estate agent, I have been hearing about or directly experiencing the ups and downs of the real estate sector for a long time. Right now, we are seeing a surge of buyers as people look to “nest” in an area with more physical space than they currently have in a DC townhome or a New York apartment. Sales volume of detached homes is up 14.5% to 2,698 for the zip codes including Annapolis, Arnold, Crownsville, Davidsonville, Edgewater, Riva and Severna Park. The average home sale price for those areas is up 10% to \$664,250. Where we really see the surge, though, is in the \$1 million and over market. Whether it is waterfront or not, the \$1-plus million segment of the market grew by 60% from year-end 2019 to year-end 2020!

Several factors are driving the desire to live in our area. First, a large portion of office workers are not only working from home as a result of COVID-19, but it is estimated that at least 30% will continue to work from home once we resume some semblance of normal. It would not be a surprise if that figure were actually higher, at least for part of each week. Second, if there are two people working from home, the one-bedroom condo in the city isn't conducive to simultaneous video calls. This challenge is compounded if there also are children on video calls for school. The need for more space and privacy is a huge factor in the flight from urban areas.

Desire for more space wouldn't translate into moving for a lot of people, except that interest rates remain at an historic low. When the interest rate for jumbo loans is 2.75%, moving becomes a viable alternative. Many investors have realized strong gains in the stock market and are opting to sell now to invest in lifestyle. With the low rates, they can get a lot more for their money than they could even a couple of years ago. Finally, for those coming from DC, we are still a manageable commute if work requires you being there.

Now that buyers want to move, inventory is at an all-time low. This is driving prices up and many homes go under contract after a multiple-offer situation. Multiple offers were a rarity until last year; now it is often the norm. For those in the market to buy, make sure you have a pre-approval ready to go so you can make a strong offer when you find your dream home. Potential sellers should interview several agents who specialize in their type of home to compare marketing approach, sales history and cancellation policy. In this market, a home sale represents the transfer of a sizable asset so it's important to have a proven professional on your team.

Reid Buckley is a licensed real estate agent and waterfront specialist with The Mr. Waterfront Team of Long & Foster Real Estate. She can be contacted at 410.266.6880 or via email at Reid@WaterfrontHomes.org



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LEAVE A LEGACY

Record Your Memories

By Leah Lancione

Have you thought about recording favorite memories to serve as a legacy to your kids and grandchildren? If so, there are many ways to carry out such a sentimental and meaningful undertaking. They range from writing an e-book, blogging, journaling or making photo books, the choice is up to you.

Before selecting the way in which you want to record the stories of your life, take a moment to organize your thoughts and pinpoint which advice, memories or words you want to pass on. Maybe even start with an outline so you don't leave out any prominent life events. Look through old photo albums to get photographs to jog your memory about details. Set aside pictures or mementos that you may want to detail in your accounts. Also try rehashing some nostalgic moments with family members so they can help refresh your memory or provide a different perspective.

Here are a few options for leaving an audio or visual legacy for your family:

Lastly.com helps users recount and commemorate family histories. The site claims the process of documenting life events is "simple" because the LifeReview feature "takes the work out of writing" by providing a series of questions and writing prompts and then places these stories in a "fun, meaningful" visual format on display for family and friends to enjoy. Users can also upload photos and keepsakes to accompany the recorded memories so viewers can actually click on an album for each recorded life event on a timeline. The site offers a free seven-day trial if you want to check it out before officially starting your writing journey. A

subscription is \$45/year to continue editing and preserving your "Lifestory."

StoryWorth at <https://welcome.storyworth.com> is an online retailer that enables people to record their family stories or cherished memories that can be printed out. StoryWorth will email you, or your loved one who will be recording the family stories, once a week with a set of questions that will facilitate the story writing process and then at the end of the year, compile the stories in a printed, bound keepsake book. This is an opportunity for families to share its history and favorite memories with generations to come. The subscription costs \$99.

Journaling will help you to keep things simple and stick with the tried-and-true method of jotting down your commentaries on important happenings or even daily comings and goings. If you want to take a modern approach, there are a few apps for video journaling. These apps can be used on your laptop or mobile device.

MindLogr is a "journaling software that includes video-capturing capability." The video logging system allows users to make, store and organize videos by date and even share content on social media. Videos are made directly through the webcam, so creators don't have to upload entries. There is a free web-based version as well as a mobile application that is \$1 a month, \$10 a year for the standard plan or \$5 a month or \$50 a year for the premium plan. The app claims to help people "easily record thoughts and experiences to save and share with people you love."

Similarly, **LiveJournal** is a video journal app that can be "used to share

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Arbor Day is April 30. Join the Arbor Day Foundation at www.arborday.org/ where for a contribution of \$10 or more you will receive 10 free trees of your choice suitable for your area.

content with like-minded people.” Users can both blog their life events and share them on social media by creating and uploading videos or images. There is a free limited version or three price plans for the extended features, depending on how long you want to access the application: \$5 a month, \$15 per six months, or \$25 annually. Visit www.livejournal.com to decide if you want to join this online community of people who want to “share their life story and exchange ideas.”

Mini recorders or voice recorders are still used by many people to capture exciting or significant life events for posterity. Mini recorders are no bigger than a cell phone so you can carry them with you in case of spontaneous inspiration. Mini recorders are not just for journalists, but anyone who finds it is easier to express themselves verbally rather than in writing. And just think, how special will it be for a loved one to come across these taped memories in the future. Not only will they cherish reliving this oral history you have passed on to them, but just hearing your voice will be special. Amazon sells a wide range of mini recorders ranging from \$15-\$50 depending on “bells and whistles” such as a USB charger, a secure digital card, noise-canceling features, file-safe technology and more.

www.shutterfly.com is a great online retailer of photo books if your idea of recording your favorite memories involves lots of photographs and captions like a glorified scrapbook. Shutterfly lets you upload photos from your phone or laptop and even save

them in online albums or “share sites.” Shutterfly offers unlimited secure photo storage for your account and saves all projects. The options for photo book styles, sizes, layouts, features and embellishments are endless. Photo books range from \$15-\$70. You will have tons of fun applying the customization tools for stickers, frames, captions and other flourishes available.

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DATING AGAIN OVER 50

By Sheila O'Connor

Mary, 65, has been widowed for some time and is wondering if she should look for a companion. But with two grown children and four grandchildren, she feels that she is too old and too mature to start dating again. "Dating is fine when you're young, but at my age, I'd feel a fraud and more than embarrassed going to singles clubs to meet people. None of my friends are interested in the singles' scene and doing things on my own just seems too nerve-racking."

Finding yourself alone again in your 50s or older can seem very daunting indeed. The singles scene can be loaded with problems: You could get stuck in a conversation with someone you don't like or you might not be up for giving or taking rejection. There's also the problem of addressing intimacy.

What's more, the odds can appear to be stacked against you. It takes more initiative and effort to find available partners, but when you do find them it seems you're both already set in your personalities. Because of this you often find it hard to "click" with others who just don't share your ideas.

What's needed here is a change of attitude, says Naomi Leefer Schultheis, who runs workshops for singles. The way around this problem of having a different view from someone else is not to say, "They're wrong, I'm right," but rather try, "That's interesting."

Accepting another person's differences, of course, doesn't mean you have to stay with them if you're not really interested. Instead, think about your own goals for dating. Are you looking for companionship, fun, intimacy, love, marriage or all of the above? Some people have an aversion to admitting to these, especially to marriage.

"If you want to get married and you know this, then admit it, even if only to yourself. In our society there's a taboo against just wanting to get married, but knowing what your aim is can save you a lot of pain because you won't be staying with someone whose goals are incompatible with yours," Schultheis says.

"Whatever happens, don't feel pressured into anything until you feel ready. In any good relationship your views should be respected and valued. If they're not, it's a warning the relationship is not right for you," she says.

But what if you have fears about the very idea of dating? Women often feel embarrassed or ashamed just to be seen looking for someone special, since they think they'll be labeled as "desperate."

Counteract this by telling yourself that you're on a noble search, Schultheis advises. You can use this same strategy next time you're at a party. Instead of spending time worrying about the impression you're making, ask yourself, "Who do I feel drawn to in this room?"

"Tell yourself that just being there shows you have courage," Schultheis says.

Attitude is important. "To overcome an aversion to going as a single, tell yourself that if someone has a need (for companionship, belonging, etc.), then they should do everything they can to overcome that need. It's the person who doesn't do anything about it who should be embarrassed."

So just how do you make contact? It's often difficult for women to take the lead

in conversations. Studies show that although men get a positive response from women in 1 in 10 cases when they're the initiators, women almost always get a positive response when they start the conversation first (and it almost doesn't seem to matter what they actually say!).

Often the best way is simply to approach someone and say, "Hi, my name is Tell me yours?" Just making the initial contact is appreciated. During the conversation be aware of nonverbal clues like eye contact and open body language, both of which are positive signs. If he is looking uncomfortable or looking around the room, he is not interested, so make your excuses and move on.

What's the best way to do that? You can graciously break away with something like, "I've enjoyed talking to you, but I'd like to mingle some more so have a good evening." This saves the other person wasting time with you, too.

If you'd like to see them again, but don't want to get stuck with them all evening, you could say something like, "I've enjoyed talking to you, but I'd like to mingle some more so do you want to exchange numbers?"

With a little bit of know-how, you will find dating again over 50 to be not so scary after all.

It doesn't have to be so scary!



Don't risk getting to the end with your song unsung.

ORTHO ISN'T JUST FOR THE YOUNG

By Wooddell & Passaro Dental Group

You *are* never too old for orthodontic treatment. Whether you are uncomfortable with your smile or have trouble with oral hygiene because of the placement of your teeth, adult braces have many benefits. As you age, your mouth and jaw change shape. Your jawbone naturally loses density, which causes your teeth to shift. Over time, your teeth become crowded, and you experience pain or discomfort when chewing and swallowing. Teeth that overlap also become difficult to keep clean, making your teeth more susceptible to dental decay. Braces not only straighten your teeth to give you a more natural smile, but they also improve your overall oral health.

Many variables are considered when developing a patient's customized treatment plan, but age is rarely a deciding factor. Orthodontic treatment can be as successful for adults as it is for adolescents. In fact, one in three orthodontic patients is an adult.

Whether you're 8 or 80, it's the same physiological process that moves teeth through bone. Teeth move in response to forces being placed on them over time. Many orthodontic problems can be corrected as easily for adults as for children or teens. Adults have denser bone tissue than children, so treatment may take a little longer, but age does not keep teeth from moving.

It's common for orthodontists to work with a patient's general dentist to coordinate care. Adults may have fillings, missing teeth, misshapen or worn teeth or dental diseases that need to be considered in planning treatment. Some medications, habits like smoking, clenching or grinding teeth or tongue thrust,

can affect the outcome of treatment. For some adults to reach optimal dental health, the dentist and orthodontist may need to call in other dental specialists such as oral surgeons, periodontists and endodontists.

To move your teeth in their ideal positions, your orthodontist will use an "appliance," braces or aligners, to deliver controlled forces that gently and predictably reposition teeth. Advances in orthodontics have made treatment more comfortable and less noticeable than ever. Many of today's treatment options are designed to minimize the appearance of the appliance to better fit any lifestyle. Today's options include clear aligners, tooth-colored braces, tiny but more traditional metal braces and braces that go behind the teeth. Treatment may take one to three years, but it's a comparatively small investment of time that pays big dividends in improved dental health, better function (biting, chewing), the ability to more easily keep your teeth clean and higher self-confidence.

The opportunity for a healthy, beautiful smile has not passed you by. Just because you didn't have orthodontic treatment when you were a youngster, or your teeth have shifted over time, it doesn't prevent you from doing something about it now. Your age doesn't matter. You can have the smile and dental health you've always wanted.

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NEVER BE LATE AGAIN!

By Sheila O'Connor

Your six-year-old grandson can't find his homework and the school bus is due. He cries, and you drop your mascara brush right down the front of your blouse.

Your alarm goes off and you switch it off, telling yourself you'll get up in five minutes, only to wake up half an hour later and find you're going to be late for your volunteer job. You run around trying to get ready and only just make it to work on time.

Sound familiar? If any of these apply to you then don't despair, lateness is a problem that can be solved.

Cathy wasn't late for everything. If she was going on an exciting date from that over 50s website, she'd have no problem getting ready and arriving on time, even being early sometimes.

Her problem, however, was that she kept being 15 minutes late for work. Her boss wasn't happy, and she felt foolish blaming it on bad weather or traffic conditions.

Olaive B. Jones, former director of the Applied Behavior Change Center in Washington, D.C., says being late for only some things is common.

"This is known as selective lateness ... you're not late for everything all the time, but have the capacity to be punctual when you're motivated to be, as in the case of an important date when you want to make a good impression."

Cathy had to realize that her job was actually important to her. Her lateness then became less of a problem.

"If you're committed to your job and you have to leave the house earlier because it's raining or snowing, you'll just have to admit that that's part of your work time, even though you don't get paid for it. You need to reframe this time spent by looking at it in a different way," Jones explains.

A person might reframe the drive to their volunteer job, for instance, by putting the time to good use, be it by enjoying soothing music or listening to a novel on a cassette.

"Being late," Jones says, "has to do with time and you need to ask yourself who the time belongs to. Every second you breathe is time that's yours and therefore the time you give to an employer or a friend is, in a sense, a gift. You don't have to begrudge the time spent, however, because you usually get something back in return, whether in the form of a pay packet or a good friend's company."

Penny often slept in. Her answer was to buy an alarm that woke her up to an audio cassette. On this she recorded herself saying, "Get up, you have to get ready. The rush is not worth the extra 15 minutes in bed."

This did the trick, especially when she placed the alarm so far from her bed that she had to get up to turn it off.

Sometimes lateness can be due to procrastination. In this case, Jones says, "You have to decide who's going to be in control, you or the situation. You have to decide that you're willing to be on time and that you want to be in control. This puts the time in a different perspective because you're then using it to your advantage, not giving it to someone or something else."

Take back control and visualize yourself already being on time. Notice how good it feels to be relaxed and on top of things. "Life is measured by the time you spend in it. Are you in control or is it the external world around you? Remember it's your time," Jones says.

But what if you have a problem with lateness that isn't yours but that of other people's?

Gemma's grandkids were always holding her up in the morning, even though she put out their things the night before.

Mandy, on the other hand, had a problem with her brother's lateness. He would drive her mad always being an hour late for dinner parties.

The answer in these cases is to work with the other people's lateness. In Mandy's case, if she planned something for 7 p.m. she told her brother to arrive at 6 p.m. or if she told him 7 p.m. she'd expect him not to appear until 8 p.m. That way she wouldn't end up frustrated and annoyed.

In Gemma's case, she used the reward system for her grandkids. She knew they liked a few pages of a story read to them, so if they arrived at the school a few minutes early, Gemma would take out the book and read in the car.

With much of the lateness problem, motivation plays an important part. As Jones says, "Everything you ever accomplish in your life starts with your mind and your heart. The clearer you are about what you want to achieve, the quicker you will accomplish it."

And that includes being on time!

DEFINING AEROBICS FOR A HEALTHIER YOU

By Mick Rood

You may think aerobics is a bunch of young people in a gym bouncing around in synchronous fashion to music you may never want to hear again. But moderate exercise is at the top of lists on how to prevent or at least limit heart attacks and strokes in seniors. So let's better define what it is and put it to use.

Aerobics is generally described as sustained exercise that increases the heart rate and sends oxygenated blood to the brain and the rest of your body. Or, giving us a break from medical lingo, Dr. Sawalla Guseh, a cardiologist with Massachusetts General Hospital, put it this way for *Harvard Men's Health Watch*: To discover the moderate intensity of aerobics, try the "talk test." If you can converse while exercising, but you can't sing, that's the sweet spot of moderate intensity, Dr. Guseh says. Also, a mild sweat is a good sign you are doing the right thing.

How does this translate into real life, for say, 30 minutes a day, five days a week?

Walking probably doesn't fit the bill if you saunter around the block. Power walking or trotting a mile or so probably does.

Golf doesn't mean regular rounds at a championship-length course, but it requires walking, not carting, a par-3 or short executive course.

Racquet sports of the gentler variety will work, but while ping pong is a fun game, it likely won't work your body enough.

Gardening seems odd, but the strength, flexibility and endurance required is key. Stretch beforehand, alternate heavier (digging) and lighter (pruning) tasks. Finish it tomorrow if you've had enough today.

The treadmill, swimming, cycling and, yes, dancing can serve as part of an aerobic bill of health. And, of course, it all has an acronym – (FITT). That's frequency, intensity, type and time, according to the American Academy of Sports Medicine and many other sources. It couldn't hurt to consult your doctor or even a personal trainer on what mix of these elements to put in your regimen. In each case, you will have to tailor exercise to your abilities.

As for **frequency**, you don't have to be wedded to that five days a week mentioned earlier, but it is a minimum, experts seem to agree. You can work in some aerobics on the weekends, too. Workout **intensity** is highly personal, a function of your fitness level. Don't overdo it; it is supposed to feel good. Your **time** spent doesn't have to be a half an hour a day. You're not a clock slave; it can be longer or it could be split up during the day. The **type** of workout should really be one you enjoy, not one you feel forced into doing. Keeping it that way helps you follow up on your intentions.

Mick Rood, managing editor of this publication, is trying to get his aerobics in order.



Bay Bytes

Are you looking to take a course or courses virtually? Maybe finish up that degree? And from a distinguished school of advanced learning? Log onto any of these sites [Extension.Harvard.edu/open-learning-initiative](https://www.extension.harvard.edu/open-learning-initiative) or [OCW.MIT.edu](https://ocw.mit.edu) or [OYC.Yale.edu](https://oyc.yale.edu) and be pleasantly surprised by what is offered.

SAYING YES OR NO WHEN ADULT CHILDREN ASK FOR MONEY

By Carolyn Campbell

Elizabeth Knight's son was in "difficult straits" as a single, custodial father who also battled colon cancer. When his car quit running, he asked her for money for a new car. "At the time, I was trying to qualify to buy a home," she recalls. "If I co-signed the loan for him, I wouldn't be able to buy my home." She agonized about the decision. "It was hard to say no to this 30-year-old child who had a cancer diagnosis and a heavy responsibility," she recalls. "Yet he'd also had a lot of really good times with his credit card and now had bad credit."

With heavy heart, she said no. "I agreed to drive him to some dealerships that offer slightly higher interest loans," she says. "I didn't co-sign anything, but I reviewed the documents and supported him in getting connected to a reputable dealership that offered loans to people with problems. He got the payments set up for a loan he could finance. The outcome was that he even established a new credit history," she says.

Knight is far from alone in receiving a money request from an adult child.

Certified senior adviser Fred Johnson recalls the day when his 79-year-old single male client told him, "My daughter and son-in-law want to borrow \$20,000 to pay off a medical bill. They don't have insurance." When Johnson responded that hospitals have payment plans, the client said his children didn't feel they could afford that option. They also said they'd rather not borrow against their mortgage. "They didn't want to use their own resources," Johnson says. "Instead, they preferred to borrow \$20,000 from a senior citizen who has limited retirement and savings."

As a certified senior adviser, Johnson frequently consults with seniors whose adult children ask to borrow money. "Some adult children look at their parents as an endless supply of cash. And

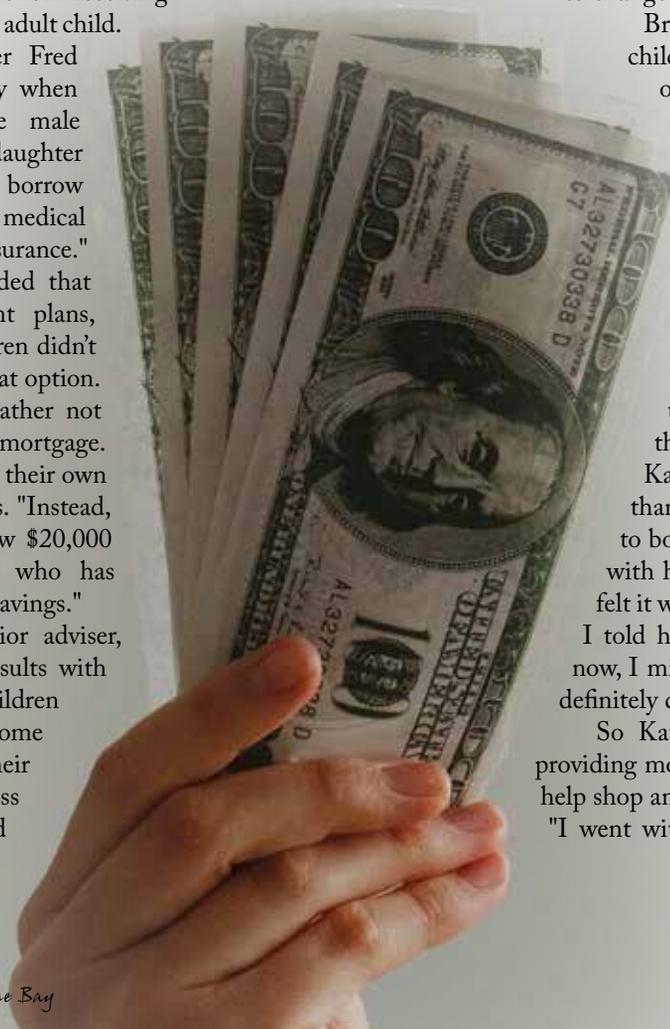
many seniors feel a real conflict when their adult children ask for money. There is a natural tendency for most parents to want to help their kids out when they hit a rough spot at any stage of life, says Amy Brunson, program manager for a caregiver support program. "It is really important for parents to think about the implication of the request and also consider their own needs."

She adds that there is such a thing as enabling adult children -- or anyone else, such as a neighbor or family member -- and establishing them as someone who always needs help. "If we keep bailing them out instead of saying, 'It's time you figured this out,' how is that helping?" Always granting their requests could "be teaching them that, over the long term, we approve their irresponsible spending." Brunson says. Sometimes, saying no to a money request forces an adult child to "dig down and figure out solutions to their problems. If we always bail them out--particularly with chronic money requests--there is no motivation to change their behavior."

Brunson feels that once parents have supported children through high school and provided the opportunity for an advanced education, "They have reached their majority and it's time for them to grow up. It's time for the National Bank of Mom to close."

Kate Roberts was surprised to hear from her daughter. The two had been estranged since Roberts and her husband divorced seven months earlier. But now, her daughter Brittany was calling to say that she planned to marry. "She called to ask how much money I could contribute to the wedding," Kate recalls. Recently divorced, Kate felt that she could afford to spare \$700, less than half of the \$1,500 her ex-husband planned to borrow to help pay for the event. "I was honest with her about what I could afford," she recalls. "I felt it was important for her to realize my limitations. I told her that if I didn't budget my money wisely now, I might have to live with her after I retired. She definitely didn't want *that* to happen," Kate laughs.

So Kate reassured her daughter that along with providing money, she would be happy to offer her time to help shop and assist in making all wedding arrangements. "I went with her almost every weekend," Kate recalls.



"Along with getting ready for the wedding, we were able to spend time together and talk, which helped rebuild our trust after the divorce."

Fred Johnson feels that Kate made the right choice in setting boundaries. He suggests that retired couples reach an agreement by asking themselves, "What do we want to do to show a united front if our kids ask for money?" In this way, parents can circumvent a tactic children use – to get one parent alone and get that parent to commit to a request – separating that parent from the judgment of the other. "It's a continuation of the triangulation tactic that both young and adult children use. It can be a pattern that continues into adulthood," says Johnson, adding, "If a parent sets boundaries in little things, it gives you the courage to say no when a child's request is a major imposition. While everyone is willing to step in in a crisis, if the request for money is for convenience sake, the negotiated deal has to have some input from both parties," Johnson says. "Too, giving a serious chunk of money is often not a decision made by just the giver and the receiver. The child's siblings may also need to be considered."

Roberts gave her daughter a clear message and was honest about her own financial situation. "After being estranged from her daughter, she was probably tempted to do whatever it took to re-establish the relationship. Yet she came up with ways of supporting the wedding other than just money. Such supports

make us feel like we are helping, but not always just throwing money."

Adult children who have yet to completely assert their independence may come to parents for financial relief. "This perpetuates the child-parent relationship instead of the adult-adult relationship," Brunson says. "From the child's point of view, it's not unusual for the parent to hold that over the child for years."

Brunson adds that in the eyes of siblings, the child who asks for money is "often the kid who always creates resentment, who seems to be the real favorite or the real dependent, leaving the parents to have to justify his behavior." She adds that the other siblings may consider the money gift part of their inheritance and feel resentment when it isn't paid back. "Five years later, when he goes on a big trip, they'll think, 'How come he hasn't paid mom back yet?'"

If a parent wants to be sure that money is paid back, there needs to be a written agreement, a promissory note, indicating that the money will be repaid with interest if it is required. It is also advised that parents who plan to give a monetary gift to first consult with a tax attorney to determine the consequences and how it will affect their estate plan. "If they plan to give money to one child, they may want to ask how that affects what they want to give to their other children."



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SPRING

INTO LONGEVITY

By E. Downing

It's Spring and for most of us, it's been a long time arriving. But here we are and ready to get out there and embrace the season. And to keep up with that healthy lifestyle that you no doubt embrace, here are a few reminders to help you stay on track.

1. **Simplify.** Whether that means cleaning out the clutter that you've been carefully collecting and preserving over the years, or moving to a more manageable home, now is the time. Do you really need all that stuff?
2. **Eat right.** You haven't heard that before? Interesting. But perhaps this is the year to make an honest effort to eat less sugar-loaded or prepared foods such as convenience meals found in the frozen food section. Read labels. Try making meals from scratch as in homemade salad dressing with fresh herbs. Avoid drinks other than pure natural water or tea – the flavor selection of teas is endless. There's bound to be one out there that you like, and it can be served either iced or hot.
3. **Relationships.** Friends and family. Stay connected. Do whatever it takes to stay in touch, be it Zoom meetings or face time and just enjoy them, even though you may not always agree. Why not start a new group of potential friends? It's not that difficult to get a group of like-minded people together for a book discussion group, walking group or lunch in the park.
4. **Sleep.** Don't overdo it, though. Studies show that most of us need around eight hours per night. Go to bed at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning. You'll find that you sleep better if you're on a schedule. And if you must take a nap during the day, make it a power nap, not to exceed 20 minutes. You'll feel refreshed and it won't interfere with a night's sleep.
5. **Eliminate stress.** What is it that creates anxiety at this point in your life? Too many obligations perhaps? Then weed some of them out. This is the age when we should be having fun. We shouldn't be loading ourselves up with countless "to do" lists.
6. **Guard health.** Don't take good health for granted. Get the checkups you know you should have. That includes your dentist, eye doctor and family practitioner. If you're on any meds, work with your doctor on how to reduce them.
7. **Hobbies.** Isn't there something you've always wanted to try? Such as ceramics, knitting, woodworking, learning Portuguese or some new culinary skills? Now is the time to do it and classes are offered at most of the local colleges, senior centers and online.
8. **TV.** Turn it off. How will that increase longevity? You will have to find something else to fill that time like going for a walk, meeting with a friend, reading a book or preparing your next meal from scratch. In all of recorded history, it's unlikely that anyone on their death bed was quoted as saying, "I didn't get to watch enough TV."
9. **Exercise.** You've heard this one many times, but are you doing anything about it? Exercise can be as simple as going for a 20- to 30-minute walk or can be as challenging as taking up tennis or pickle ball. There's also swimming, golf, hiking or biking with one of the local groups, or joining a gym. Look around you. The most fit and vital people you know are the ones who are involved in some sort of exercise. The good news is that you get to choose what fits your lifestyle.
10. **Something new.** Get out of your comfort zone by signing up for a trip to Antarctica, a walking tour of the deserts of the Southwest or take a class on writing a memoir while visiting Ireland. Sign up for Summer camp to learn a new skill. Studies show that people taking on new challenges remain more vital.

Isn't this the perfect time to try some of these suggestions? Whatever you choose there are sure to be lasting benefits, not only in extending your life, but maybe improving your health and even meeting a few new friends along the way.

Life is fleeting. Whatever is calling you, do it now.



LONG-TERM CARE PLANNING

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 readers. Individuals with legal concerns should consult with an attorney for advice regarding their specific circumstances.

By Jessica L. Estes

With the advent of modern medicine, people are living longer. Yet very few of us have planned properly, if at all, for our future long-term care needs. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 70% of people turning age 65 can expect to use some form of long-term care during their lives.

What is long-term care? Long-term care is required when an individual is unable to perform the basic activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing, eating, going to the toilet, walking and moving about, for a period exceeding 30 days. Long-term care can include homecare, adult daycare, respite care and assisted living or nursing home services.

In the DC/Baltimore metro area, long-term care costs for an individual often exceed \$100,000 per year. That is a lot of money and most people simply cannot afford to pay that amount. Still, the majority of individuals do not have long-term care insurance. Instead, people mistakenly believe that their health insurance will pay for their long-term care needs, or that they will not need long-term care. Unfortunately, these people find out too late that they were wrong.

If someone does not have long-term care insurance, but requires long-term care, how do they pay for it? Either they will use their own resources to fund their care, or they are going to have government programs such as Medicare, Medicaid or certain veterans' benefits help pay for it. Medicare is health insurance, which under certain circumstances, may cover a portion of the cost, but only for a limited time. After that, Medicare does not pay anything toward long-term care.

Medicaid, on the other hand, is a needs-based program that helps qualified individuals pay for medical and long-term care costs. There are several different Medicaid programs, but some of these programs have lengthy wait lists, which is why it is important to plan now. Similarly, the Aid and Attendance benefit available to qualified veterans is also a needs-based program that can provide a monthly income to cover a portion of the veteran's

long-term care. However, because these are needs-based programs, most people will not qualify until they have spent down most of their own funds.

How do I plan properly for my future long-term care needs? It really depends on your individual situation. For most, long-term care insurance is always a good idea if you can afford it and if you can qualify medically. If not, there may be certain asset protection trusts that could be used to preserve most, if not all, of your assets so when the time comes, you can qualify for government benefits. Government benefits such as Medicaid or Aid and Attendance help cover such costs or some people choose to enter a continuing care retirement community. There are a variety of options, but one thing is certain -- everyone is different and what is right for you will depend on a number of factors including your monthly income, assets, age, family dynamics and desire for a particular quality of life.

Are there any pitfalls to avoid in long-term care planning? Transferring your home to a revocable living trust or owning a life estate in your home "with powers," could disqualify you from certain government benefits.

Moreover, whereas the IRS allows gifts of \$15,000 per year to any number of individuals without having to report those gifts, Medicaid does not. For Medicaid purposes, those gifts will be subject to penalty and could jeopardize your eligibility. Likewise, if you have a 529 Plan for your grandchild, it is likely this account will have to be spent down before you will qualify for Medicaid, which could result in hefty tax consequences and withdrawal penalties.

Finally, with regard to durable general powers of attorney, you want to make sure that your named agent is authorized to give assets, engage in Medicaid planning and is able to create and fund an irrevocable trust. That way, if you are unable to do so yourself, your agent can implement a plan for your long-term care needs.

Ultimately, it is your future. Planning now not only ensures that you are making your own decisions, but that you will be able to have the quality of life you want. And your loved ones will not have any stress or guilt over these decisions because they are yours.

Jessica L. Estes is an elder law and estate planning attorney at ERA Law Group, LLC in Annapolis. She can be contacted at 410.919.1790 or via email at jestes@eralawgroup.com

GARDENING PRODUCTS TO REDUCE STRAIN

By Kimberly Blaker

Gardening offers many excellent mental and physical health benefits. It's a healthy form of exercise because you're moving around. It also boosts your emotional health because you are spending time outdoors while tending to your plants' needs as they grow.

However, as you age, or if you have any physical impairments or conditions, all the bending, extending, kneeling, lifting and other gardening movements can become painful or difficult. If you find gardening is taking a toll, there are many easy-to-acquire products out there. Particular gardening gadgets and equipment can reduce strain and support you through various challenges to make the experience not only possible but enjoyable!

Arthritic hands can make it difficult to grip and maneuver traditional gardening tools that put your hands and wrists in uncomfortable positions. But there are a few great alternative tools. In particular, is the *Radius Garden 5-piece tool set* or the *Bear Paws Cultivator Claw*, explicitly made to be lighter weight with a more ergonomic design.

If knees or back are prone to pain, the constant bending and kneeling required for gardening may seem impossible to keep up with. Still, there are ways to reduce discomfort and limit the need to kneel and bend as often.

If you struggle to put pressure on your knees for extended periods, many products can reduce the stress of kneeling on the hard ground. You might want to try the *Abcosport deep-seat garden kneeler*. It can be used as a garden seat or kneeling pad. There's also the *AMES Buddy Lawn and Garden Cart*, which doubles as an easy-to-pull wagon and a sturdy seat from which to garden.

A bad back can make it hard to bend over to pull weeds to keep them from taking over your garden. With *Grampa's Weeder*, a stand-up weed puller means you can remove these invasive plants from the root without ever having to bend down.

Do you struggle with limited reach because of limited mobility or wheelchair use? If so, there are tools to make it easier to tend to your plants from farther away such as the *Ymachray*

Long-Handled Planter. With this you can easily plant your bulbs and seedlings in the ground without having to kneel down and reach into the garden.

It is also possible to bring the garden up to your level with the *Keter Easy Grow Raised Garden Bed*, which can be used while standing. There are many other types of raised beds of various heights and sizes to fit your specific needs.

Gardening involves a lot of moving, standing, squatting, pulling plants out of the ground, and carting around heavy plant debris, soil and all manner of tools. But suppose you struggle with balance problems or poor strength? Gardening can put you in a dangerous position, increasing your risk of falling or sustaining an injury. To prevent this, try a cart that tools around safely with a rolling mobile tool storage system like the *Vertex Super-Duty Yard & Garden Cart*. This will reduce heavy lifting and provide a welcome assist when carrying gardening tools around.

Doing heavy watering with a hose can throw off your balance and be difficult to lift. To avoid this, install a drip system like the *Raindrip Automatic Watering Kit*. It automatically delivers an efficient amount of water to your hanging plants and containers.

Plants can be particularly rough on thinning skin, especially when dealing with rose thorns or spiky weeds, which can quickly tear up your skin. This can make gardening painful and even lead to infections. Think about investing in *thorn-proof rose pruning gloves* that extend farther up your arms to protect yourself as you reach into thick growth. It's also vital to keep your skin protected from too much sun exposure, which can lead to sunburn and increased skin cancer risk. A *Lenikis sun hat* with a wide brim and neck cover keeps you protected from UV rays.

Also worth considering is an indoor gardening system, like the *Smart Garden hydroponics growing system*, if you need to stay entirely out of the sun.

Bay Bytes

Interested in teaching a class online, preparing and dropping off a meal, using your artistic talents or any of hundreds of other ways to assist those who would benefit from your talents? Countless opportunities to share your time and skills can be found on [VolunteerMatch.org](https://www.VolunteerMatch.org)



Are Thank-You Notes Still Apropos?

By Leah Lancione

Once upon a time, getting a written thank-you note or card in the mail was a welcome gesture of good manners. A thank-you was not only appreciated but even anticipated after certain occasions or following requested services rendered. It was customary for someone to write a thank-you after such events as graduations, baby showers, bridal showers, bar mitzvahs, weddings, job interviews and more.

Thank-you notes, these hand-written expressions of gratitude, were sent to recipients through the mail, or hand-delivered, and represented sincere gratitude. Both the communicated message, as well as the actual act of writing it by hand, represented a gift itself—one of time spent and gratitude offered. Despite the longstanding tradition of penning a thank-you notes, many believe they are now passe in a world where texts, emails and posts on various social media platforms have replaced “old-fashioned” verbal or written forms of communication.

So, is writing a thank-you note an outdated custom as well as a waste of time and paper? I think not! It’s easy to overlook emails or text messages when “the average number of emails in an inbox is 200” (<https://techjury.net/blog/how-many-emails-are-sent-per-day/>), and, according to the Pew Research Center, “text messaging users send or receive an average of 41.5 messages per day.” But it is not as easy to miss a card addressed to you and wedged between four or five other pieces of mail at most! A thank-you note is surely a heaven-sent diversion from the bills and junk mail received!

In addition, many employers also still view a thank-you note following an interview as an acknowledgment of respect. The employment website CareerBuilder claims that sending a thank-you note after a job interview is appropriate and appreciated. The site also asserts that a post-interview thank-you note could even play a part in the decision making between you and

another qualified candidate. “Considering the fact that 57% of job candidates don’t send thank-you notes, taking that extra step can set you apart considerably in the eyes of hiring managers. All things being equal, if it were to come down to you and one other candidate, sending a thank-you note could give you the edge you need to win the job.

Even though businesses may accept email thank-you notes, the more personal, time-honored tradition of putting a pen to paper (whether on a card or elegant stationery) offers a more intimate touch. In fact, *Psychology Today* cites a study on the “underestimated benefits” of handwritten thank-you notes. “Researchers found that the prosocial gesture of expressing gratitude in a handwritten note boosts positive emotions and well-being for both the letter-writing “expresser” and the recipient.

Traditional etiquette expert Emily Dulles believes people should be sending thank-you notes “more than ever before.” In an article in *Readers Digest*, she says sending a thank-you is appropriate after receiving gifts, being a houseguest, a dinner party, a favor, and receiving gifts or notes of condolences. She offers these style points:

- Address the recipient based on your relationship, meaning a first name for a friend, and “Mr. or Mrs.” for a potential employer.
- Acknowledge what you are thanking them for.
- Mention how you plan to use or display the gift.
- Close with warm words about the person.

The next time you find yourself grateful for an act of kindness, respond with an equally considerate gesture and write a heartfelt thank-you note. Not only will it provide you with another moment to slow things down and ponder how the act of thoughtfulness touched you or brightened your spirits, but it will likely do the same for the recipient of your note.

Life just gives you time; it's up to you to fill it.

TREES FOR THE BAY AREA

By Neil Moran

In the immortal words of Joni Mitchell, “They paved paradise and put in a parking lot.” Trees have been replaced in the Bay Area by parking lots and other developments. In fact, since 2013 Anne Arundel County alone has lost 2,500 acres of forests, pointing to a need to plant more trees. Trees contribute many things to the environment, such as acting as a filter system for waterways.

“The Chesapeake Bay is such a wonderful waterway and we’re not taking care of it,” says Nancy Allred, (nallred@umd.edu), who is interim master gardener coordinator for the University of Maryland Extension, Anne Arundel County. Allred says trees provide a host of benefits for the watershed as well as for property owners. Besides beautifying the landscape, tree canopies reduce storm water runoff, she says, by intercepting and holding rainfall. Tree roots also anchor the soil, reduce erosion and prevent valuable topsoil from washing away. As a part of our ecology, they provide food and shelter for songbirds, animals and insects that can be beneficial to our gardens and agriculture. Finally, they’re a good investment; trees can reduce annual heating and cooling costs by up to 12% and increase property values by 10 to 15%.

There is a lot you can do to restore paradise to the Chesapeake Bay area. In fact, there are a number of initiatives to educate and encourage property owners to plant trees. One of those initiatives is Replant Anne Arundel, a program that offers trees to homeowners in rural and urban areas.

In Anne Arundel County there is a push to plant trees native to the area. Native trees adapt well to their native environment, require less maintenance (water and fertilizer), and are less prone to disease and insect infestation. While plant selection and proper planting methods are important, so is care afterward, something that sadly is neglected by some property owners, including, or perhaps especially those who have landscape companies install their trees.

Plant Selection and Planting: Unless you’re doing a large-scale reforestation project, choose container-grown trees from a reputable nursery in your area. Avoid bargain-priced trees. Trees in containers dry out quickly, so keep them well-watered until you can get them in the ground. Choose a mostly sunny location for your tree. Consider the eventual height and spread of the tree you’re planting. Avoid planting directly in front of your house where it will neither overshadow the features of your home nor be too close to your home, where it could someday topple over onto your house during a storm.

Container-grown trees can be planted anytime the soil isn’t

frozen, however, Spring and Fall are ideal because the weather is relatively cool and wet. Choose a location where the soil drains well. The planting hole need not consist of top-notch soil, but if it is predominantly sand or clay, add amendments. A mix of store-bought compost and topsoil will help your plants get off to a good start. Dig the hole twice as deep and wide as the root ball and backfill with the amendments, as necessary.

Remove the tree from the container. If the root system is extremely root-bound and is circling the container, it may be necessary to score the roots with a sharp knife. Otherwise, leave the roots alone. Before closing up the hole, fill it with water from your hose and then backfill it with soil. Water one more time to remove any air bubbles. Apply a 3- to 4-inch layer of mulch about 3 feet out from the base of the tree, except at the base of the trunk itself, which should be left free of mulch so that rodents can’t hide under the mulch.

The other tree planting option is to plant bare-root stock. This method is used for large-scale plantings like along the edges of farm fields and for reforestation projects. Bare-root trees are available from local conservation districts and some nurseries. Plant bare-root trees in the Spring or Fall only. A special spade type shovel is used to open up the soil wide enough to insert the tree roots. Close up the opening by firmly pressing the soil with your foot. Water immediately, if possible, or plant when the weather is cool, and rain is in the forecast.

Newly planted container and bare-root trees need not be fertilized right away. However, you could apply a slow-release tree fertilizer like Espoma’s Tree-Tone organic tree fertilizer at planting time and then once or twice annually. Apply the product along the dripline of the plant.

Critical Aftercare: Often, contractors working on urban developments are required to plant trees before they wrap up a project. Unfortunately, these trees aren’t

always cared for as they should be after planting and suffer as a result.

“A big issue is the aftercare of trees,” says Allred. “When developers develop, they are often required to replace trees.” Often, though, she says these trees are left to their own devices after being planted, resulting in plant tags and supports that grow into the tree bark because it has been left on too long. If homeowners are going to have a landscaping service plant trees, they have to remember to provide the aftercare needed to keep them healthy and flourishing.

Another problem, Allred says, is over-applying mulch around the base of the tree, which results in what she calls a “mulch volcano” or, a cone of heavy mulch that makes it difficult for plants to get oxygen and becomes a habitat for critters like bark-eating voles. Instead, apply 2 to 4 inches of mulch evenly around the base of the plant, leaving 4 to 6 inches clear of mulch away from the trunk. Well-rotted manure can also be applied around the base of trees with a thin covering of decorative mulch. This will provide a good growing medium and water retention for years to come. Be prepared to weed as necessary. Weeds are inevitable and shouldn't be dealt with by applying an excessive amount of mulch or chemical herbicides.

Allred says homeowners should also be aware of compaction. Anytime heavy machinery drives over the root system of a plant, the soil can become severely compacted, creating problems for years to come. Try to work with contractors that may need to excavate your lawn or neighbor's lawn so that they stay clear of established trees. The only way to loosen up soil that has been compacted is to rent an aerator and aerate the lawn several times.

Here is a list of native trees hardy to the area. When mature, these trees will intercept up to 4,793 gallons of storm water, sequester 1,249 pounds of CO₂, and provide an environmental and economic value up to \$275.

Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*): Grows from 20-35 feet. Beautiful pink and lavender flowers appear in the Spring.

Excellent selection for a landscape with limited space.

Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*): Grows 75-100 feet; Evergreen; provides Winter cover for wildlife. Estimated life span: 200 years.

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*): Grows 40-100 feet; is the earliest Spring bloomer; and is adaptable to a variety of habitats, including swamps, uplands, hillsides and dunes. Estimated life span: 90 years.

Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*): Grows 70-80 feet; provides acorns for wildlife; prefers uplands habitat. Estimated life span: 200 years.

Persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*): Grows 50-75 feet; produces orange and purple berries; is valuable to wildlife. Estimated life span: 60 years.

Black Walnut (*Juglans nigra*): Grows 70-90 feet; best planted in woods, on slopes, or along streams; produces nuts in August and September. Estimated life span: 250 years.

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*): Grows 15-25 feet; used by 58 wildlife species and 35 bird species, and berries are edible for people. Estimated life span: 50 years.

Source: 17 Native Trees for Your Yard, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

“The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second-best time is now.”
-Chinese proverb

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CHECK OUT COUNTY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AND GET INVOLVED

By Leah Lancione

Volunteering is a way to help people in the community where you live. Donating your time and skills to one of the many service organizations in Anne Arundel County will not only benefit others, but you as well. Engaging in community service work will help to keep you active, connected to other like-minded people and improve your health. According to a Harvard Medical School Health Blog, “A growing body of evidence suggests that people who give their time to others might also be rewarded with better physical health—including lower blood pressure and a longer lifespan.”

There are many community service organizations and nonprofits that rely solely on volunteers to carry out their mission. You simply need to find the organization that suits your skills or champions a cause near and dear to your heart. Local senior centers may be a good place to start. Next is a list of a few notable community service organizations or nonprofits in Anne Arundel County.

If you were a teacher or have expertise in a particular subject area and find the idea of tutoring students meaningful, check out the 501(c)3 nonprofit Anne Arundel Literacy Council (<https://icanread.org>), which is “transforming lives through free, convenient, individualized literacy and ESL instruction for adults and out-of-school youth.” The AALC offers the volunteer tutors and their students with convenient meeting times at public locations. They provide tutors with training sessions as well as other helpful workshops. For more information on AALC, call 410.269.4419, or fill out the contact form at <https://icanread.org/contact-us/>

If you feel motivated to take an active role in conservation, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) has “fought vigilantly for healthy rivers, clean streams and a saved Chesapeake Bay,” for more than 50 years. Not only does the CBF accept financial donations through one-time or monthly giving, as well as memberships, it offers volunteer opportunities to those who “enjoy working with others to help restore the Chesapeake Bay.” If you have a few hours to spare, potential positions include planting trees or gardening oysters, helping restore underwater grass restoration, helping in the office or public speaking. Visit www.cbf.org/join-us/volunteer/ for more information.

With locations in Annapolis, Severna Park and the

Bowie-Crofton area, The Pregnancy Clinic found at <https://pregnancyclinic.org> provides free services to women who believe they are pregnant. The Pregnancy Clinic offers “confidential health services related to unexpected pregnancies and other sexual health concerns, including free pregnancy tests, ultrasound, abortion information and STD/HIV testing and treatment.”

To discover ways you can get involved as a volunteer, visit Help, Hope, & Healing.org (<https://helphopeandhealing.org/get-involved/volunteer/>). Both female and male volunteers of all ages and backgrounds are welcome to join this group and take part in a training course to equip them to offer “physical, emotional and spiritual support” to women and to “empower them to make healthy and life-affirming decisions.” Volunteer opportunities range from counselor, Sonogram Chaperone, LifeSense class teachers, office support, event staff and more.

If you have been an animal lover your whole life, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) of Anne Arundel County is a great place to donate your time. Located in Annapolis, the SPCA is the largest and oldest animal welfare organization in the county. The SPCA provides shelter and humane care for homeless animals and works as an advocate for animal welfare in the community.” Though there are updated shelter policies due to COVID-19, donations of new and unopened pet supplies can be dropped off at the shelter’s

donation table. If you want to join the team of dedicated volunteers, you will receive volunteer training, a volunteer T-shirt, a handbook and necessary training materials. Volunteers are asked to commit to at least six continuous months, six hours per month, and to pay a nonrefundable \$30 processing fee. Volunteer positions include dog walkers, cat socializers, “petit suite” (hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, mice, etc.) socializers, event staffing and more. Volunteer application available at aacspca.org/volunteers/

These groups are just a handful of the wonderful community service organizations that afford volunteers the chance to get involved in Anne Arundel County. For a more extensive list of nonprofits in the county and beyond, visit greatnonprofits.org to find one that suits your interests, passion and abilities. Your act of service can make a difference in someone else’s life and better the community you love.



Volunteers at the Lighthouse Shelter, AnnapolisLightHouse.org

ESCORTING REMAINS

By Ryan Helfenbein

Here we are, at the beginning of 2021, bidding farewell to a year that a majority of us wish simply never occurred. With our new year upon us, and after being trapped indoors for nearly three-fourths of 2020, many of us will begin planning trips. For some, this may be a time to take a late relative back home, that is, escorting cremated remains back to a hometown for permanent placement. With the crazy world we live in now, a maze of regulations challenge those traveling with cremated remains. In the chance that you are one who is taking the lead on this sort of pilgrimage, let's explore how it is done legally.

Most often undertakers oversee the organization and preparation of transporting cremated remains from one place to another. The most common and legal means of transporting cremated remains is the good old U.S. Postal Service. Within the United States, this is a rather streamlined process. The undertaker must use Priority Mail Express, with the cremated remains placed in a leakproof container and the exterior of the package labeled as such. That's right, there are special labels that clearly proclaim that the package contains human remains. This is a very clear-cut approach to transporting cremains domestically, although undertakers are often stumped with the question of how much insurance should be placed on the package.

International travel is where things start to get a bit more difficult. Most countries will simply ask to have a certified copy of the death certificate and certification of cremation be made available with the urn. However, others do make it a tad more challenging. For example, if cremated remains are to be sent to Italy, it is required that the following be sent well in advance to the Italian Consulate for approval: an original certified copy of the death certificate authenticated and translated in Italian, the most recent passport of the deceased, an original certificate of cremation, a statement of description of the required receptacle housing the cremated remains on letterhead from the funeral home, a small metal plate affixed to a required wooden shipping container and an authorized letter from the family stating (what feels like) everything but what the weather was on the day the person was born! When that is in order, a prepaid envelope must be included as well so that a request for authorization from the

proper authorities can be returned. An unusual amount of red tape to simply see that a loved one gets to a final place of rest, let alone, their cremated remains.

There is the option of the family flying with the cremated remains. Years ago, the undertaker would simply provide the family with a copy of the death certificate and instructions to inform the TSA representative at check-in that they are in fact traveling with cremated remains. TSA would 99% of the time let the individual move through. Today, it is a little more difficult – and ultimately depends on the airline. Most airlines are going to have a policy when it comes to transporting cremated remains. Generally, airlines require that a copy of the death certificate and

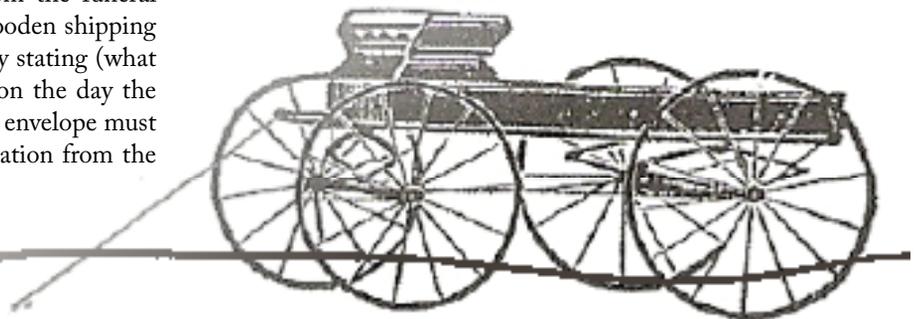
the cremation certificate accompany the remains, which must be placed in an urn that can be successfully X-rayed, such as plastic or cardboard. Note: TSA will not, and legally cannot, open the urn to view the actual cremated human remains, nor do they desire to do so. Ultimately, it all comes down to the actual airline you are traveling on, so be sure to check ahead.

Much like international mailing of cremated remains, escorting international air transport of cremated remains can become complex as well. The starting point for this is to simply contact the embassy of the country that will be accepting the cremated remains. Once you have an understanding of the requirements from the country to which the remains are being transported, you'll then have to contact the airline to be sure their requirements will be met as well. Or simply let your undertaker see that they arrive at your international destination.

Our complex world today has led to more requirements for this very simple task, so be sure to consult your undertaker for guidance.

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

...challenges for
those traveling
with remains!



MARYLAND BEATEN BISCUITS: RESURRECTING A CULINARY FOSSIL

By Joyce M. White

“One could tell the hour before breakfast by the sound of cooks beating biscuits all the way down the block” and “the sheer physical effort in [their] preparation would make the modern housewife shudder,” reminisced Baltimore chronicler Francis Beirne in 1951.

While Maryland’s earliest settlers grew Indian corn as their main cereal crop, a smaller amount of soft, yellow wheat was also grown to make pastry, such as pies, cakes and beaten biscuits for holidays and special events. Beaten biscuits get their name because the dough does, in fact, need to be beaten. These biscuits emerged before chemical leavening agents were widely available (pre-1840s), and the only way to lighten them without using yeast was to beat the dough with a mallet or rolling pin for about 30 minutes to incorporate air into them. Beating the dough also disintegrates the gluten to prevent them from getting chewy. According to the 1935 New Deal Federal Writer’s Project, *“No traditional Maryland menu would be complete without the ‘Maryland Beaten Biscuit.’* “Humble homemade beaten biscuits were once commonly made on a daily basis, but they also were a prestigious part of an 1818 dinner for President Monroe, a 1950 dinner for the Gourmet Society of Maryland and a 1961 meal for the Maryland Food and Wine Society.

The beaten biscuit is now considered to be a culinary fossil. If these biscuits were once so popular, why did they fall out of favor with Marylanders? The answer is simple: People started using the wrong type of flour. To make tender and light biscuits, flavorful stoneground soft pastry flour needs to be used, as was used hundreds of years ago by Maryland’s early settlers. When historically correct flour is used, the biscuits are tender and soft, as they should be. This started to change in the middle of the 19th century when commercial grain mills sprang up along Baltimore County’s numerous waterways where imported hard, red wheat was milled using rollers that removed all the germ and bran before being ground to produce cheap, less-flavorful all-purpose flour. Unfortunately, when roller-milled flour from hard wheat is used, beaten biscuits quickly harden into tasteless hockey pucks. It’s not really surprising they fell out of fashion.

To resurrect this Maryland culinary icon, gather up a clean mallet or rolling pin and good quality stoneground pastry flour and try your hand at the following 1824 recipe. You will be pleasantly surprised at the results.

Though named for Maryland, the earliest published recipe for beaten biscuits is found in *The Virginia Housewife* published in 1824 by Mary Randolph. This makes sense because northern Virginia and southern Maryland share many historical cultural traditions.

APOQUINIMING CAKES [BEATEN BISCUITS]

Put a little salt, one egg beaten and four ounces of butter in a quart of flour. Make it into a paste with new milk, beat it for half an hour with a pestle and roll the paste thin. Cut it into round cakes and bake them on a griddle. Be careful not to burn them.

MODERN RECIPE ADAPTATION

Yields: About 21 1.5 oz. biscuits

4 cups soft pastry flour, plus more for the board

1 1/2 tsp. salt

4 ounces/1 stick salted butter, cut into pieces the size of peas

1 large egg

About 1 cup milk

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large bowl, whisk together the flour and salt.
2. Add the chopped butter to the flour and use your fingers to work it into the flour until it is distributed evenly.
3. In a small bowl, beat the egg until foamy. Add it to the flour/butter mixture.
4. Add just enough of the milk to make a dough that is smooth and not sticky.
5. Lightly flour a board and place the dough on the board.
6. Knead to make sure it is not sticky at all.
7. Take a rolling pin and beat the dough for 30 minutes.
8. Turn and fold the dough often to make sure it gets beaten evenly. You will know it has been beaten enough when air bubbles come to the surface of the dough and pop or blister, and the dough will feel soft and squishy.
9. Roll the dough out and cut into circles or pull off 1.5-ounce pieces and roll into a circle. Dock the top of each biscuit with a fork.

BAKING OPTIONS:

- Grease a griddle with lard, shortening or butter. Cook the biscuits in the fat until the bottoms turn golden. Turn and repeat.
- Or you can bake the biscuits at 375° F. until lightly golden brown and cooked throughout, about 25 minutes.

Serve with butter, jam, apple butter, maple syrup or honey. These can also be eaten with soups and stews or use them to make sandwiches filled with traditional country ham.

Joyce, a food historian, can be found on her website at www.atasteofhistory.net

Downsizing: Let It Go!

By Marilyn Leek

Relocating to a smaller home means letting go of possessions — you simply will not have the space. Items like an old lawn mower or 20-year-old tax returns are easy to throw out. It's the items that we all get attached to — books, clothing, photos, cards and letters, collections — these are the most difficult to part with. Giving away items to the right place or person makes it easier for you to let them go and actually feel good. Here are some examples:

Books. The Anne Arundel County branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) holds an annual book sale. Proceeds are used for educational grants and scholarships. Best of all, they will pick up your books! The Parole Rotary Club's Books for International Goodwill (BIG) program ships used books overseas to meet the global thirst for reading. These are just two examples of the good your books can do once you donate them.

Clothing. Why pack up those work suits, skiing outfits or extra winter coats that you might not have the chance to wear again? Why not let them go to help someone else who will not only be grateful, but will put them to good use?

Photos. In the case of photo albums, consider having the photos scanned and saved to the "cloud" by a company who provides this service. Photos saved electronically are actually safer stored this way and wouldn't it be great to so easily share them with multiple family members?

Cards and Letters. These are often the hardest to let go. Keep a few that mean the most, photograph others and then let the rest go. Remember, jettisoning physical items does not mean forgetting the memories.

Collections. Keep one or two items as space allows and then remember the joy these items could bring to someone else. One widow donated her husband's unique 1920s jazz record collection to a radio station so now many can enjoy them. Other collections of figurines, toys, etc., can delight fellow collectors and potentially mean cash for you.

Sometimes to let go of possessions, you must first shed a role you've played. If you've had the honor of hosting large family gatherings and are now moving to a retirement living

situation, it's time to let go of that role. You can certainly host smaller get-togethers, but you do not need to keep the 12-place settings of china, crystal glasses, linens and all the other items you once needed. A family member may be delighted to have them.

Why not share with the new hostesses your secret recipes and huge roasting pans? It's your time to be free of the burden of planning, cleaning, cooking and then cleaning again. Family traditions will continue, and your role is now a fun but still vital one — sharing good stories and perspectives and just sitting back to enjoy the day. As you prepare to downsize and relocate, embrace this latest phase of your life and celebrate the new freedom you will enjoy. If you're unsure of how to even begin downsizing, consult a professional. They will know what has monetary value and have suggestions for where best to make donations to match your wishes. They may also suggest an estate sale to help clear out your home. Remember, estate sales are not just for the deceased.

Most importantly, bid a cheery goodbye to former roles and items with gratitude as you enter this next exciting phase of your life.

Marilyn is a certified senior move manager who has been providing support and guidance for Maryland seniors and their families for over a decade. She can be contacted at Marilyn@ChesapeakeTransitions.com or 410.897.0050.

Bay Bytes

Found a stash of pills or not sure if you have the right prescription? Log on to reference.medscape.com/pill-identifier to discover what you are dealing with.

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Amy never imagined that she would experience a wake-up call during a routine visit to her doctor. She had just celebrated her 60th birthday. She perceived that her health was good and looked forward to a happy retirement. There was one nagging problem that she unconsciously pushed to the back of her mind. Her feet were numb. She visited dermatologists and podiatrists and tried many kinds of lotions and salves. They were soothing, but the problem never went away.

Finally, at the doctor's visit, a blood test revealed that her A1C (a measure of blood sugar level) was 6.1. She was stunned to receive the diagnosis that she was pre-diabetic. Along with prescribing medicines, her doctor gave her advice that stayed in her mind. "He said that losing weight could help me more than anything," she recalls. She became determined to cut back on the number of calories she consumed and become healthier through weight loss.

Amy is far from alone. Along with downsizing their homes and time commitments, another way for baby boomers to improve their health is through downsizing their dining. To begin, adjust bulk buying to fit your needs. Warehouse markets and increasing numbers of supermarkets now offer large "family size" packages of food. If you purchase meats and poultry products in bulk, separate them into smaller portions before placing them in the freezer. With nonmeat products buy them wrapped individually.

Make less than a full recipe. Search online for recipe scaling programs that can help you cut a recipe in half or in fourths. Websites such as **allrecipes.com** offer adjustment features depending on the number of servings needed.

Set aside a cooking day — possibly on a weekend—to prepare and package food into small containers in the freezer or refrigerator.

Form a group to share meals. Especially if you are used to cooking in larger portions for a family, consider organizing a meal-sharing club. Get together with a few other friends who are empty nesters and share cooking duties. For example, make your usual large

portion casserole with a full pan of mashed potatoes and a large salad. Then divide it with one or two other families. Then enjoy a night off from cooking when another family brings dinner to you.

Make your healthy eating goals public. Choose a support person and email or call him or her to review goals or strategies. Writing down goals and talking to someone gives you

reinforcement. Implementing these downsizing strategies can make all the difference. They can help you enjoy your favorite meals at home or occasional restaurant meals without sabotaging your plan to stay health-conscious and maintain a healthy weight.

Going out to a restaurant open for service during the pandemic? Visit the restaurant's website beforehand. Many of the chains will list the calorie count for each dish.

If salads are your entrée of choice, bring your own dressing and skip the fatty extras. Many salads come with calorie-dense dressings or toppings, such as fried tortilla strips or onion strings. Order your salad without the dressing and extras.

When going out to an impromptu event, order a low-calorie favorite. Opt for grilled menu items, such as grilled chicken or fish. Full in flavor, these dishes are typically lower in calories. Since many entrees are served with starchy side dishes such as a baked potato or French fries, order a double of vegetables.

Say no to rolls, bread and chips that precede the meal since you can easily eat far more than you intended.

Keep a few restaurants in mind where you know you can find good choices.

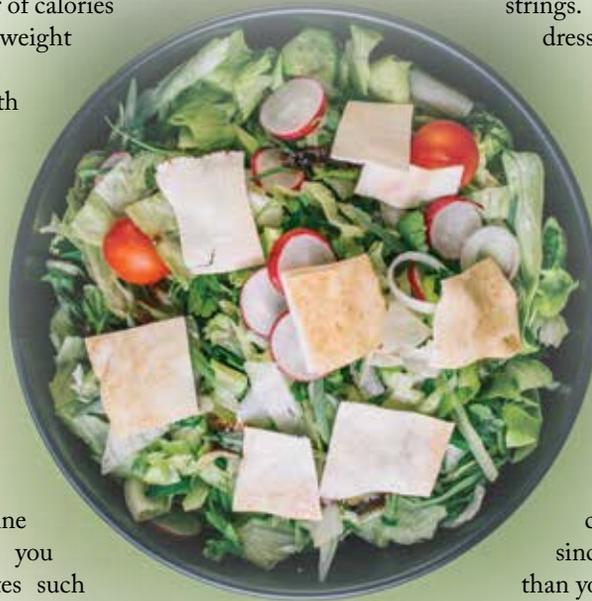
Keep a list of your favorites close by and don't be afraid to make suggestions when deciding where to eat.

Restaurant portions can be two or three times bigger than a standard portion. There's that urge to finish everything on your plate because it's just sitting there, and it seems a shame to waste it. Avoid overeating by asking for a take-home box as soon as your meal arrives.

It's possible to downsize your dining, enjoy the experience and live a healthy lifestyle. If you plan ahead and set goals to avoid overeating, you will succeed in your downsizing efforts.

MAXIMIZE YOUR HEALTH BY DOWNSIZING YOUR DINING

By Carolyn Campbell



Bay Bytes

Do you have a brilliant idea for a business, but not sure how to get it off the ground? For lots of easy-to-understand help, there's **Entrepreneur.com**. The site provides a wealth of information on how to get started.



OLDER ADULTS AND COVID HOSPITALIZATION: FOUR THINGS TO KNOW

By Eric Bush, MD

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought intense scrutiny of our hospital systems, especially what happens when adults over age 80 or living with complex acute illness are facing hospitalization. The decisions a relatively healthy person might make without blinking require careful consideration when it is an older adult living with life-limiting illnesses like congestive heart failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Here are four things to consider when facing a loved one's COVID-19 hospital stay.

1. Be upfront with medical providers right from the start of the admission process. They will look at what we call their ADLs, or activities of daily living: Does the patient need to use a walker or wheelchair? Is the patient able to get around independently, prepare meals, bathe and dress? Someone in their 80s or 90s who functions as if they are in their 60s or 70s will have a different conversation about treatment options. If the patient has end-stage dementia or other progressive illnesses, is bed-bound, and does not have that degree of functionality, then intubation, or mechanical ventilation, must be considered from a quality-of-life perspective. One of the questions should be is, if you intubate them will they ever be able to get off the vent? Is that something that grandma or dad would have wanted in the first place?
2. The straight talk you have from the beginning is part of what helps providers determine what they call "goals of care." This is defining the focus of the patient's care. The first step is understanding the patient's medical issues and talking to the patient, family and other medical providers. The second step is what procedures and treatments you would or would not want done, especially factoring in the patient's condition prior to hospitalization. The goals of care for let's say a urinary tract infection is different depending on each patient. For a 40-year-old man in average health, you have a choice of a half dozen antibiotics. With an octogenarian with several complex medical conditions who has had prior infections and hospitalizations, you are limited to

perhaps one IV antibiotic, and even that has a lot of side effects including things like seizures and renal failure. You have the same diagnosis resulting in two very different goals of care.

3. It's OK to ask the hospital care team to use language you can understand or relate to. That applies to any age, but folks who are 80 and older tend to be rather stoic just to get to that age. They tend to minimize the everyday aches and pains and shortness of breath, just to keep going. That is a healthy thing for them to do on a "normal" day, but in a crisis situation, the medical team needs to know how to help. If you ask octogenarians if they are in pain, almost always, they will tell you, "No." If you ask them if they are in any discomfort, they will admit to that. The same goes with the word "anxiety" – it is not a word they use. Instead, medical personnel should ask if these patients are feeling nervous or restless.
4. Visitor restrictions may be the hardest part of pandemic hospitalization. Nothing can replace being surrounded by friends and family to bring comfort, but a close second is taking advantage of today's technology for virtual real-time visits. Care teams have smart devices that allow patients to talk with family and friends via FaceTime, Zoom or Google Duo. If you are able to see them and how they are doing, it is an affirmation of whatever written or verbal reports you're getting from the care team. Also, reach out to get the perspective from the psycho-social members of the care team – the social worker and the chaplain. It will help you gain a more 360-degree view of not only the physical, but emotional and spiritual health of your loved one.

Perhaps the greatest takeaway from this time in our history is how important it is to make critical health care decisions now and to document and share them with your family. It is an act of love to let them know in advance what you would decide if facing their hospitalization.

Dr. Bush is the chief medical officer for Chesapeake Supportive Care and Hospice of the Chesapeake and can be contacted at info@hospicechesapeake.org or 410.987.2003.

The world is full of players. Why not be a game-changer?

PROCRASTINATION: DRAINING YOUR NEUROTRANSMITTERS

By Dr. Jim David

After many years of guiding many people to stop procrastinating, I noticed that I had stopped procrastinating! I attribute it to my repeating this sentence so many times with patients: "I used to procrastinate, but now, whenever I think of something I need to do, I want to do or I would like to do, I either do it right away or I write down when I will do it. I then do it and feel very good and positive about myself."

Then I thought about how my mood elevated when I did not put things off and how low energy I became when I procrastinated. Self-discipline, I believe, sparks production of the neurotransmitters that elevate mood and procrastinating drains some dopamine and serotonin, two of the "happy hormones," out of our brains. I noticed I really liked feeling strong and happy!

Another insight that became clear is that procrastinating not only affects us individually or intra-psychically but also interpersonally. If someone asks us to do something and we do not do it for two or three days, that person will probably feel ignored, unimportant or unloved. Even if we live separately, our procrastinating may adversely affect our relationships with friends and family.

Research reveals that problems in procrastinating affects 70% of people in some significant area of life. For many people, one-third of the workday is spent reminding themselves they should do something, but they do not do it. This drains energy!

Gender and intelligence are irrelevant in regard to who is most likely to procrastinate. Age is relevant. It tends to peak in the middle to late 20s and then decreases for the next 30 years as people are busily maximizing their potential. It increases again in our 60s and beyond. This is a very dangerous issue for many as we age. It is so easy to put things off and without any real conscious awareness, we have less motivation and energy.

Many people fail to stop and assess whether procrastinating is something they want to stop. Many people proudly proclaim, "I am a big procrastinator." To stop procrastinating a person needs to confront the issue and decide to get rid of it. The same thing could be said about many habits such as overeating or punctuality.

The three most common categories underlying procrastination are low self-esteem, perfectionism and fear of failure. Low self-esteem people do not believe in themselves so they tell themselves they cannot do it. This group also may suffer from clinical depression and/or anxiety. They feel overwhelmed

and cannot calm down enough to concentrate.

Perfectionists decide it makes no sense to begin because they will not be 100% perfect in eliminating procrastination. Those suffering from fear of failure do not like to begin the process because they know they will not be successful. The wisest answer to this question is for each person to search inside themselves to identify what is the real, underlying issue that keeps them in the box of procrastination.

The good news: Eliminating procrastination is readily achievable because it is intrinsically rewarding to accomplish tasks. We feel better! When my wife says please empty the dishwasher and I do it right away, I get rewarded with immediate, positive feelings of accomplishment and my wife is happy. The behavior sparks the production of neurotransmitters, biochemicals that lubricate neuronal connections much as oil does in a piston engine.

Obviously, different approaches to overcoming procrastination resonate differently with different people. There are innumerable approaches, but if you master the three that are explained here, you will no longer procrastinate.

The first approach comes under the heading "self-talk." I already mentioned my favorite self-talk statement that, "I used to procrastinate but now ..." Change self-talk statements from "shoulds" and "oughts" to "wants." Rather than saying, "I should clean my office," change it to, "I want to clean my office because it looks better, and I then feel better."

Write down your list of self-talk excuses that stop you from getting a job done. Change the excuses to self-motivating statements like, "The sooner I'm done, the happier I'll be." Make up a *to-do list* and feel fulfilled as you cross off the items on the list.

Changing our self-talk requires noticing any negative self-talk that cements us into not changing. Slowing down and tuning in our self-talk takes time and practice. It is very easy to be unaware of statements such as, "I can't do that" or "I'll never clean out my closet."

A second approach is to implement the work-reward system. When we accomplish our work, we give ourselves a reward of some predetermined type. No work, no reward! Too often we start working and get frustrated or sidetracked and then rationalize quitting work by saying, "It's OK, I need a break." We quit the task or work and give ourselves a *free* reward and promise to do



the work later, but most often we then do not do it. The work-reward system is backwards or out of sequence. First work, then earn the reward.

The third approach may be necessary if the first two approaches don't work. This approach has five steps. The first is gaining awareness that you are putting off doing something. The second is asking yourself, what is the real or underlying issue? The answer may come to you during a brain search, like a computer search using your conscious mind. Or, you may need to access your unconscious mind. You do this for yourself by taking the time to be still, silent and alone while relaxing deeply by focusing on your breath and eventually quieting your mind. This allows space for the answer to bubble up from your unconscious. Your unconscious is powerful and wants to be helpful.

The third step is deciding what you will do to resolve the underlying issue you have identified. This requires trusting yourself, which is trusting the answer that comes into your mind. There are 100,000 suitable answers, but the only valid answer is your answer. Never say, "I don't know what to do." Then evaluate your answer. If it makes sense, you implement it. Strictly avoid second-guessing yourself. People do this without realizing they are doing it. Second-guessing keeps you in a constant state of anxiety and powerlessness.

The fourth step is implementing your third step, decision.

procrastinating affects 70% of people in some significant area of life

This involves creating a concrete, specific plan to include When? What? Where? Who? This holds your "feet to the fire," requiring total commitment.

The fifth step is outcome, or periodically evaluating whether you have resolved the underlying issue. If you have, great. Celebrate! If you have not, repeat the process again. Only about 20% fully succeed the first time. It is best to record this five-step process electronically or manually. With a written record we can go back to reevaluate.

Make a conscious decision to achieve your goal of eliminating procrastination. Tell yourself, "I deserve the joy of managing myself and my life. I am eliminating my tendency to procrastinate."

Visualize yourself being decisive and successful, totally eliminating procrastination. Action steps are 1) physically relax, 2) visualize yourself working at your goal with positive self-affirmations, 3) visualize typical obstacles such as negative self-talk and overcome them visually, 4) delight in visualizing success. This is what successful people do. Successful athletes do it also. The critical element is stamping out negative self-talk and installing positive self-talk. "Never put off until tomorrow what you can do today." (*Earl of Chesterfield, Dec. 26, 1749*)

Dr. Jim David is a retired psychotherapist in Silver Spring, who adheres to positivity in all areas of life. Visit his website at www.askdrdavidnow.com or email at jimsue63@gmail.com

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STAY HEALTHY WHEN YOU FLY

REDUCE YOUR RISK OF DISCOMFORT

By Kimberly Blaker

Each year there are 6,500 in-flight medical emergencies in the United States. A small fraction of these result in death, according to a 2013 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Travelers can experience a host of health issues and just plain discomfort when flying. Not to mention the high risk of being infected with COVID-19. Many of these problems can be avoided if travelers take these precautions:

Coronavirus. The close proximity to others breathing the same air in such a confined area as an airliner cabin increases the risk of exposure. The best way to protect yourself and others is to avoid flying. If you must fly, research the measures various carriers are taking to reduce the risk for COVID-19 and choose the one with the most stringent measures. Use a *fitted* cloth mask that has multiple layers for added protection. Also, carry hand sanitizers and disinfecting wipes, using them often. Also, wash your hands immediately upon exiting the airplane.

Dehydration. The humidity level of airplanes is extremely low, usually under 10%. Combine this with the water loss caused by respiration, and passengers can become dehydrated enough to affect their health and mood. So drink plenty of water before, during, and immediately following your flight.

Tight clothing. When flying, several factors contribute to the risk of deep vein thrombosis -- a blood clot that can be life-threatening. Add tight clothes to the mix, and you could be in real trouble. When flying, wear loose-fitting clothes, particularly on your lower extremities. And avoid tight shoes, which can also restrict blood flow.

Sitting too long. Similar to the problem with tight clothing, this also increases the risk of a blood clot. It's particularly a problem when flying because of cramped seats that allow little room for movement. Passengers should get up and move around after three to four hours in flight, sooner if you begin to experience swelling or discomfort).

Ear pain. Air pressure in your middle ear during takeoffs and landings can make your ears feel clogged or even painful. Usually, chewing gum, yawning or swallowing relieves the pressure. But serious cases of airplane ear can lead to severe pain, hearing loss, vertigo, bleeding from the ear and more. In such cases, you'll need to see your doctor for treatment.

Bad breath. Several factors contribute to halitosis when flying. These include dehydration, skipping meals, illness, bad oral hygiene and eating certain foods.

Prevention is self-explanatory for most of these contributors. Foods to avoid before or during your flight include fish, garlic, onions, coffee and alcohol.

Constipation. Sitting still for long periods, dehydration and a change in schedule that conflicts with your regular movements can all contribute to constipation when flying. So, 12 hours or so before your flight, eat something high in fiber. You can also take a stool softener the day before your flight.

Dry skin and more. Arid cabins contribute not only to dry skin, but also dry eyes, nostrils and lips. The first thing to do is start hydrating the day before your flight by drinking lots of water. Then continue hydrating right on through your flight. Also, avoid salty foods. Carry lip balm and moisturizing lotion with you.

Lung conditions. People with any type of lung condition including, but not limited to, COPD, emphysema, severe asthma or a lower respiratory infection are at higher risk of serious complications when flying. That's because oxygen in the air decreases at high altitudes. If you have any type of lung condition or even heart or circulatory conditions, consult with your physician before scheduling a flight.

Pregnancy. According to Tatnai Burnett M.D. in "*Is It Safe To Fly During Pregnancy?*", flying is generally pretty safe before the 36th week of pregnancy. But flying can worsen any preexisting pregnancy complications. Talk to your physician before flying.

Blood pressure. Generally, flying is safe for those with high blood pressure. Still, if you have it, Penn Medicine, in "*5 Things to Know Before You Fly*," recommends taking precautions. Get up and move around while in flight, avoid salty snacks, alcohol and sedatives before and during your flight. Don't forget your blood pressure medication and if your hypertension is more serious, consult with your doctor.

Colds, flu and viruses. When you have a cold or sinus infection, it increases the risk for middle ear pain caused by cabin pressure. As previously mentioned, airplane ear can cause a host of more severe symptoms. So this may not be a good time to fly.

Anticipating these precautions will result in a more comfortable experience when we return to leisure travel.



MAKING SWEET MEMORIES: THE CANDY OF YOUR YOUTH

If you have discovered the website **oldtimecandy.com** you know it is dedicated to selling candy from the 1940s to 1980s -- the kind that we ate as kids. "We ship candy, but what we sell is memories," says Don Bridge, who with his wife, owns the site that markets candies that have all been sold for at least 20 years.

Bridge says that memories of candy transport seniors and aging baby boomers back to reminders of the good, old simple days of our youth. He gets the same reaction over and over again. "We donate boxes of candy from time to time. People who receive it tell us that it takes them right back to their childhood." One customer wrote she had bought an assortment and gave it to her mother. Her mother has dementia, and the candy brought back a flood of memories for both of them. "They talked for six hours," Bridge says, adding, "Anything that can get parents and children talking has got to be a good thing." Bridge was an electrical engineer and salesman in the Cleveland area who became interested in the internet in the mid-'90s. He wanted to start an internet business, but wasn't sure what kind. One day when he and his wife walked into a store that was "the Home Depot of candy distributors," Bridge saw candy he ate as a child and felt feelings of nostalgia. "I got to try this," he thought. He went home, ripped down his HO electric trains table, and bought \$2,000 worth of candy, along with boxes and a shrink-wrap machine. He threw together a simple website and **oldtimecandy.com** took off. Ten months later, his wife quit her job, and now she also works full time in the business. Initially home-based, the concern is in its 20th year and has expanded twice into larger quarters.

Jawbreakers, root beer barrels, wax lips, candy necklaces, Boston Baked Beans and Nik-I-Nips that we all remember are among their biggest

sellers. Sugar Daddies and Bit o' Honeys are in there, too. Bridge has found replacements for some old candies that are no longer made, such as Turkish Taffy. "A company in Cincinnati makes a similar product called French Chew Taffy," he says. "The newer Curly Whirly is exactly like the old Marathon Bar, which is braided caramel covered

in chocolate. Flicks, a chocolate lozenge, went away in the '80s after Ghirardelli moved the plant and broke the machine, it's now enjoying a revival after a company bought the brand name and repaired the equipment. Fizzies -- a flavored tablet that effervesced in water and was known as instant soda pop -- has enjoyed a similar revival and is selling in six flavors, including root beer, cherry and apple.

There are candies that people regularly request that Bridge hasn't been able to stock. "There is a candy that everybody's grandma had called Merry Mints. They came in a little white box. They're just not made anymore," Bridge says. The same is true of Milk Shake and Powerhouse candy bars, along with Regal Crown sours. Many women request a candy lipstick "that was two inches long and wrapped in cellophane paper and actually came off on your lips," he says.

Some candies are only sold regionally. The name of Necco wafers is actually an acronym for New England Candy Company, where they are manufactured. Abba Zabba and Rocky Road candy bars are from the West. Bridge sold Idaho Spud, another nostalgic Western candy bar for a while, but later discontinued it. He adds that there are 1,500 new candies made annually. "Many do not survive. On the other hand, Snickers has been the most popular candy bar for decades."

He adds that "brand loyalty" often begins in childhood, with people preferring Hershey over Nestle chocolate bars and Dubble Bubble over Bazooka bubble gum at an early age.

By Carolyn Campbell

Bay Bytes

Are you planning to sell some of those accumulated treasures such as a tractor, running shoes, tennis racquet, kitchen equipment, car, etc., without the shipping cost? Log onto either **5miles.com** or **VarageSale** to find local buyers and avoid shipping costs.

Welcome SPRING!



By Penelope Folsom

Spring has arrived. Most will agree it was a long time coming this year, but here we are. So why not let Spring invigorate you now before the heat and casualness of the Summer sets in? Take a few moments to examine a few of the bad habits we may have slipped into and give them a nudge to get back on track. Here are 10 suggestions that could put you on the road to getting organized, becoming more fit and energized, and maybe even help to ward off some of the signs of advancing years:

Keep Moving Perhaps we've heard that ad nauseum, but now more than ever physical activity should be part of your life. It has been proven to be a life-extender. Find a favorite activity such as golf, pickle ball, walking, tennis or your own special brand of exercise. Encourage a few friends to join you. It's more fun as a group.

Choose Your Foods Carefully You're a discerning adult, so choose your foods with a critical eye. Marketing is everything to food purveyors, but you know what's good for you and what isn't – it's time to institute that sound judgment

Socialize Get out there and meet others. There are people who may well enjoy sharing one of your interests or hobbies. Why not have fun doing it with friends or acquaintances, be it Zoom meetings, bike rides, walking or whatever you enjoy? Why not join others in their special interest? Many recent studies have pointed out the benefits of older people being more social.

Stay Tuned There is so much going on, so many opportunities, so much still to learn and be part of. Keep up. Try to stay abreast of new technology and new ways to communicate. Give up bad habits: This can mean too much TV, sleeping too many hours, food that you know you shouldn't be eating, smoking and even driving too fast. Give it up now and find a fun activity to replace it.

Volunteer There are more than 400 volunteer opportunities in Anne Arundel County alone. Why not become part of the growing group of seniors who are enjoying work with others?

Log onto www.aacvc.org for Anne Arundel County or <http://volunteer.maryland.gov> for opportunities in the surrounding area.

Take Care of Paperwork You know what that is. A will, a power of attorney and an advance health care directive. And while you're busy with that, it might be a great time to plan the arrangements for your final act. You've been meaning to do it, so do it. There's a great feeling of relief once it's taken care of and everything is in place. It's going to have to be done someday; why not do it now? (Your family will thank you!)

Keep Up With the Latest Technology Either ask a young person to get you up to speed or look for tutorials available on U Tube on just about any subject you can imagine.

Diet Supplements This means if you have vitamins for a specific purpose, take them! They're not doing you any good getting stale sitting on the kitchen shelf. You bought them for a reason. Why aren't you taking them?

Clean Up and Scale Down It's time. You've spent a lifetime acquiring all that stuff. Now spend a few days donating it or passing it on to family members. This can include clothing, furniture, appliances and all that techno equipment that you think you'll use again. The Salvation Army is a worthwhile drop site, and The Vietnam Veterans of America will come to your home to pick up. Log onto www.vvmaryland.org/householdgoods.htm These are just two of the organizations that would be happy to take your stuff.

Plan a Trip This can be lots of fun and we *will* get back to traveling. Where have you always wanted to visit? Maybe after completing the above "Clean up and Scale Down" list, reward yourself with an adventure locally or start putting plans in place to visit a far-off location that's been on your "bucket list."

Any or all of these suggestions could work toward getting you back into the swing of things as Spring emerges after what may well have been the longest Winter yet!

EARLY SPRING QUIZ-AGROSSIC
 In his poem "Mind Matter," Oakes John
 Chrestanih Venzar addresses the anguish of
 regret: "For all sad words of tongue or pen,
 The saddest are those that might have been."
 Identify the film adaptation of a Tolstoy classic
 that offers this perspective: "To suffer and up-
 lifting I hadn't than wishing I had."
QUOTATIONS: ANNA KARENINA

A. Gail and Doug
 M. Nathaniel
 N. Miles of the heart
 O. Kopee going
 P. Adversity
 Q. Miles to stretch
 R. Trepidat
 S. Never leaves the
 G. London
 H. Over the top
 I. New Hampshire
 T. In that
 U. NS
 V. At the same time
 W. Adjusting
 X. Night watchman
 L. Night watchman

For the last five years or so, right about late March or early April, I begin to plan my annual conquest. I've waged battle on the same battlefield so many times now that each slight dip in the terrain is familiar, each rocky spot, each root and where the automatic irrigation system sprinkler heads are all located.

My foes are formidable, having chalked up five wins in as many years. With many tools at my disposal, my enemy is armed with its own tricks and seemingly superior tactics. This is the year to finally conquer and vanquish the long-time enemy; I can feel it. There will be skirmishes against the moss, the sandy soil and battalions of clover, chickweed and nut sage, all for the glories of having a backyard filled with weed-free, beautiful green grass.

No doubt you are thinking, "Really? This is Maryland. Good luck with that!"

However, there is something wonderful about this time of year. Despite the failure in growing grass -- remember, this is the year I will triumph -- the next couple of months when the ground seems to awaken slowly, shaking off the cold and snow to come back to life, *is* wonderful. This is the time of mud, and bud, and I give thanks every year when the Earth transitions from what feels like perpetual shades of gray, into bright Spring green.

This year, we're all no doubt anticipating this change of the seasons more than we can remember from past years. Perhaps working almost solely at home and not being out of doors as much over the Winter months has many of us looking forward to warmer days and more sunshine. For many of us, there is a deep longing for that wonderful rich aroma that seems to come on sunny April days when you can literally smell the renewal of things growing, popping back to life.

The global pandemic has changed so much of our lives this past year, and for many, these changes have seemed inescapable and have felt like they will never end. Many people I've spoken with recently have expressed a deep sense of loss this past Winter. Loss spread out across a whole spectrum of topics, but on a basic

level mostly they have felt loss over losing normalcy of their lives. Simple events like going out and sharing a cup of coffee with friends, or attending a showing of the latest film, or even simply spending time with extended family members over the holidays seem to be warmly remembered and a distant memory.

Acknowledging our sense of loss is an important part of the healing process and of focusing on the future. This acknowledgement of how we feel and what we have experienced helps move us, in gradual stages, out of focusing on our grief and anger and ultimately into a new, albeit changed, life. Our job is to work through these transitions to acknowledge the changes and the potential for the positive impact they may hold for us.

This time of year also perennially feels like a harbinger of brighter, new life as we move out of the cold and gray of Winter and into the warmer, sunnier days of Spring. For many, myself included, this time of transition between the seasons

is a marker of hope and of optimism for what lies ahead. These months at the beginning of Spring remind us that nothing lasts forever, not even the Winter cold or the restrictions that have been forced upon us. As the hours of sunlight lengthen each day and the growing season returns once again, we are reminded that what lies ahead for us can be brighter and even more full of new life than the days behind us.

For me, the time ahead will in part include drawing up more plans of attack against the weeds that have somehow restored a strong foothold in my backyard. And, as the old adage says, "hope springs eternal" and my hope is that this year will be the year of triumph for my grass. The months ahead will also be a time to celebrate all that our grassy backyard will

provide ... manicured terrain for cornhole games, an opportunity for some solace while mowing, and even enjoying the coolness and familiarity of the grass under my feet on a warm day.

The Rev. Matthew Hanisian is the rector at St. Martins in the Field, Severna Park, and can be contacted at MHanisian@StMartinsintheField.org

PULLING OUT THE WEEDS

The Reverend Matthew Hanisian

**THE BEGINNING OF
SPRING REMINDS
US THAT NOTHING
LASTS FOREVER ...**

Why not make it happen. Why not today?

Spring Reigns: *The Johnstown Flood*

By Kater Leatherman

It is acknowledged truth that justice is often denied to those who deserve it the most. The tragedy of the Johnstown Flood would unfairly claim the lives of 2,209 people, an even greater number than those who went down with the Titanic 23 years later. On May 31, 1889, deep in the hills northeast of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, the South Fork dam broke and flooded the town with 20 million tons of water.

Johnstown, located 60 miles east of Pittsburgh, was founded in 1800 by Swiss German immigrant Joseph Johns. Prosperity in the town gradually increased with the building of the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal in 1836, making it a port and key transfer point. After the construction of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Cambria Iron Works in the 1850s, Johnstown became a mill town known for the quality of its steel. Spewing toxic smoke over the city from the busy mills was a sign of success.

Fourteen miles up the Little Conemaugh River from Johnstown, was an idyllic world far away from the bustling, filthy town below. The South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, which had about 50 wealthy men and their families, included Andrew Carnegie, Henry Clay Frick and Andrew Mellon. On the property, purchased in 1880, they built several "cottages" - some with 14 rooms - and a three-story clubhouse with 47 rooms that lodged most of the members and their guests. But the main attraction was Lake Conemaugh. The 500-acre body of water, started in 1840 and completed in 1852, was built by the state of Pennsylvania as a reservoir for the canal basin in Johnstown. At the time, the stone-reinforced dam was the largest in the world.

In Johnstown, the 12,000 inhabitants were already dangerously predisposed to yearly flooding, due in part to a total lack of regard for the environment. Two rivers

-- the Stony Creek and Little Conemaugh River -- joined to form the Conemaugh River. Structures were built along the edge of the Conemaugh where slag from the steel mills was poured, narrowing its width by half. When the steep hills surrounding the town were stripped of their trees, excessive runoff made the problem even worse.

Up above, at the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, little consideration was given to the weakening state of the dam or the devastation that would occur if it collapsed. Made of earth and resembling a hillside, the top was lowered when it was leveled so that two horse-drawn wagons could pass each other on its rim. Already, the spillway had been partially obstructed and three overflow pipes at the base removed by the previous owner. Beyond hiring crews of inexperienced workers to patch the weakest areas with mud and straw, members of the club had little interest in investing their money to ensure its safety. They even ignored the alarming report of engineer John Fulton who inspected the site in 1880.

Meanwhile, situated in a valley 404 feet below the level of Lake Conemaugh, life in Johnstown was a stark contrast to what was happening at the South Fork Club. Work in the mills was dirty, hot, backbreaking and dangerous. Shifts were 12 hours, six days a week. Every two weeks, switching from the day to the night shift meant working the dreaded 24-hour "long turn." The constant roar of the blast furnaces and the smoke-filled air blanketed the valley. Living conditions were unsanitary and many faced prejudice on the job. Alcohol was often used as a means of escape.

But at the secretive, private retreat in the mountains where outsiders were forbidden, days at the club were spent in leisure. Members strolled through the

Bay Bytes

Working on your travel plans and not sure if border crossings are currently allowed? Log onto **Triptik**. **AAA.com** for all the most up-to-date information. And, **TravelState.gov** will give the most current information on travel restrictions, citizens returning to the U.S., student travel and more.



cooler, surrounding woods in the Summer heat. There was fishing (bass and pickerel), swimming and boating at the picturesque lake. Picnic lunches were enjoyed near the dam. Otherwise, everyone was required to take their meals at the clubhouse. Free from the intrusions of the outside world, the rich arrived by rail from Pittsburgh, leaving behind a world they had the luxury to escape.

The Spring of 1889 left behind a Winter of heavy snowfall. With the ground already saturated from the thaw, there were unprecedented periods of rain that poured off the hillsides and down from the streams into Lake Conemaugh. On May 31, three million gallons of water were coming into the lake every hour. As the water reached the dam's crest, it began to eat away at the earth. Frantic efforts to add height using dirt to hold back the lake were futile.

To relieve the pressure, workers tried to carve out a spillway and remove the screens that kept the fish in the lake, but both attempts failed. John Park, a club employee, rode his horse to the nearest telegraph station to warn the town below.

It reached the telegraph office in Johnstown where the town was already under several feet of water from two days of steady, hard rain. With an attitude that a burst dam couldn't possibly happen to them, the warning did little to dissuade anyone to head for higher ground beyond the second floor of their homes.

But it did happen. At 3:15 in the afternoon, the dam burst wide open. On its way down the valley, the wall of water swept through the small towns of South Fork, Mineral Point, East Conemaugh and Woodvale, sweeping away people, trees, animals, barns, homes, 50 miles of railroad track, 33 locomotives and 200,000 pounds of steel cable. It would take 52 minutes to reach Johnstown where residents later recalled that it looked like "a moving, boiling black mountain of junk."

With the force of Niagara Falls, the water surged into town at 40 miles an hour and 60 feet high, leveling everything in its path. When the wreckage reached the Pennsylvania Railroad Stone Bridge - which spanned the Conemaugh River - it served as a "strainer," creating a mountain of debris 40 feet high and 30 acres across. Eighty people who were trapped in the wreckage lost their lives when a fire started that raged for three days.

When the water receded, four square miles were destroyed including 1,600 homes and 280 businesses at a cost of \$17 million in property damages. Ninety-nine families perished with

400 children killed under the age of 10. Seven hundred bodies were never identified; some were found as far away as Cincinnati, Ohio. Twenty-two years after the tragedy, in 1911, the last victim was reportedly discovered.

Contributions totaling \$2 million came from around the country and abroad. Clothing, food and other provisions arrived by rail. Undertakers showed up to prepare the bodies for burial while doctors, nurses and Clara Barton's newly formed American Red Cross provided medical assistance. Days after the flood, on June 6, Cambria Iron Works reopened. By Fall, the city had recovered. Five years later, Johnstown showed no signs of the disaster.

Two years after the flood, the property where the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club stood was auctioned off. Two high-profile attorneys who were members of the club deflected any attempts to claim responsibility for its part in the nation's greatest disaster. Although Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick both gave large donations toward relief and rebuilding efforts, justice was never served for the survivors who attempted to recover damages from the club.

One of the lesser-known facts about this story is that every South Fork Club member agreed to remain silent about the disaster, so much so that some of their children and grandchildren never knew about the Johnstown Flood. They weren't aware of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, whose blatant carelessness caused so much suffering among those who survived the disaster. And, beyond newspaper accounts, they wouldn't hear the firsthand stories of how their families Summered at a resort on the beautiful, but perilous, Lake Conemaugh.

Today, a three-and-a-half-hour drive from Annapolis gets you to Johnstown where points of interest include the The Flood Museum, refurbished Alma Hall that sheltered 264 people after the tragedy, and a ride in the famous Inclined Plane. Billed as the steepest vehicular inline plane in the world, there is an observation deck at the top with a panoramic view of the city, the Pennsylvania Railroad Stone Bridge and the path of the floodwaters. While you're in the area, be sure to visit the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club property where three options are offered to view the clubhouse. Call 814.886.6170 for more information.

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... the 12,000 inhabitants were already dangerously predisposed to yearly flooding, due in part to a total lack of regard for the environment.

If it doesn't work out, maybe it was the best adventure ever.

INDOOR VEGGIE GARDENING FOR FUN, HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING

By Kimberly Blaker

The movement toward more sustainable living has gained traction in recent years with people looking to help the environment and their wallets. Gardening is a great hobby to support a more sustainable lifestyle – growing nutritious foods you need without polluting or destroying the environment. It's fun, saves money on groceries and helps you feel self-satisfied by eating something you grew. When you grow your food at home, you also know exactly what's in it and how it was produced.

Outdoor gardening can be difficult, because there are so many variables. This includes climate changes, unpredictable weather and plants eaten by wildlife or pests. Indoor gardening allows you to grow veggies year-round in the comfort of your home, with a greater likelihood of success because you control the environment. This is also beneficial for those with little or no outdoor space.

Growing plants indoors is good for your health in other ways, too. Did you know that plants remove carbon dioxide from the air and generate oxygen, making the air in your home cleaner? The sense of accomplishment you feel from successfully starting a garden is also good for your mental health.

Herbs, leafy plants and microgreens are the most common edible plants for indoor growing. They generally do well with shallow soil because they're smaller and don't need as much space inside. They also don't need as much sun and are easier to grow if you're just starting out. It's possible to grow fruits indoors. But fruit generally needs a more significant amount of sun, exposure to pollinating insects or animals and wind.

Before starting your indoor herb and veggie garden, consider realistic expectations for your lifestyle. Plants need tending and care to grow successfully. If you're new to gardening, you may want to start small and simple, like a grow kit that supports your growth process.

On a basic level, plants need at least water, nutrients, and light - and of course, you'll need the plant seeds or seedlings. Also, think about what your space is like, how much is actually available and what will grow best in that environment. Alternatively, if you have more flexibility, you can think about which plants you want to grow and how to adapt your environment to meet their needs.

To give your plants the best chance of thriving, you'll want a specific place you can control. Decide if you'll use one room, spread them around the house, dedicate just a windowsill, or perhaps build a smaller controllable environment within your home. Also, be aware of your home's humidity, especially during dry Winter months, since plants need moist environment. Plants do best in stable, consistent temperatures in the 60s to 70s with good air circulation to prevent mold or fungus growth.

If you're planning to use mostly natural light from your windows, consider the amount of light that is permitted and at what time of day. Generally, a south-facing window will give you the most sunlight. This will likely change through the seasons. So be aware of how light exposure varies and affects plants.

The supplies you'll need depend on your budget and how involved you want to be. Some products do nearly all the work for you. You can also find those that offer simple setups where you're more engaged with the process. If you have specific plants in mind, research what particular items you'll need to support the best growing environment.

Containers should be big enough for your plants' needs. Consider how big the plants will grow, the depth needed for roots and how far apart seeds must be planted. When growing plants indoors, take into account drainage, so that excess water doesn't build up and cause problems like root rot or bacterial growth. It's not necessary to have anything fancy. Depending on the individual plant, why not repurpose old plastic containers?

Examples of edible vegetables and herbs that can be grown indoors include:

Vegetables

- Leafy greens such as spinach, kale, lettuce or arugula
- Carrots
- Scallions
- Potatoes
- Mushrooms
- Microgreens including beets, radishes and peas planted as seedlings or sprouts

Herbs

- Mint varieties
- Cilantro
- Parsley
- Basil
- Rosemary
- Thyme
- Lavender
- Oregano

Be gentle, we're all going through something.

The soil you use for growing indoors is different from ordinary garden soil. Use potting mix or soil made explicitly for seedlings and the indoors. These soil varieties are made to drain better than garden soil and they are less likely to contain fungus or bacteria.

If you're growing plants throughout the Winter and early Spring, you'll need a light source to make up for the lack of natural sunlight. Grow lamps are specifically designed to provide the right type of light to help plants grow. Common types of grow lamps are LED or fluorescent. Consider which plants will need more or less light exposure and place them at appropriate distances.

Watering is key. Always check how dry the soil is before watering, ensure appropriate drainage and be aware of the plants' needs. Self-watering containers, drip systems and hydroponic kits that may use pumps or other methods to make the process easier can be helpful.

Before planting your indoor garden, prepare your environment. Have all the

supplies you'll need so you don't have to stop and run to the store at mid-planting. If you're using a growing system, read all the instructions before starting. If you're doing the whole process on your own, have a way to track everything yourself and make sure you've researched what you're doing.

Edible plants generally take more effort than just putting seeds in the soil and forgetting them, especially indoors where you have to create the environment. Each plant has different needs: Some may need pruning, adjustments to watering and soil, and various harvesting or replanting times. To keep track of your plants' needs, it might help to keep a journal or binder or some kind of tracking system. The system will remind you to care for them and how to do so, and also track your successes or failures for next time.

In terms of harvesting, some plants need to be completely picked and then replanted. Other plants, especially herbs and leafy greens, can be harvested when needed, as the plant grows and will regrow where it was cut.

Bay Bytes

Is Fido getting bored or the new puppy or kitten has nothing to do? Log onto YouTube and type in "Relax Your Dog TV" or "TV for Dogs," or "CatTV" for hours of dog or feline fun and entertainment!

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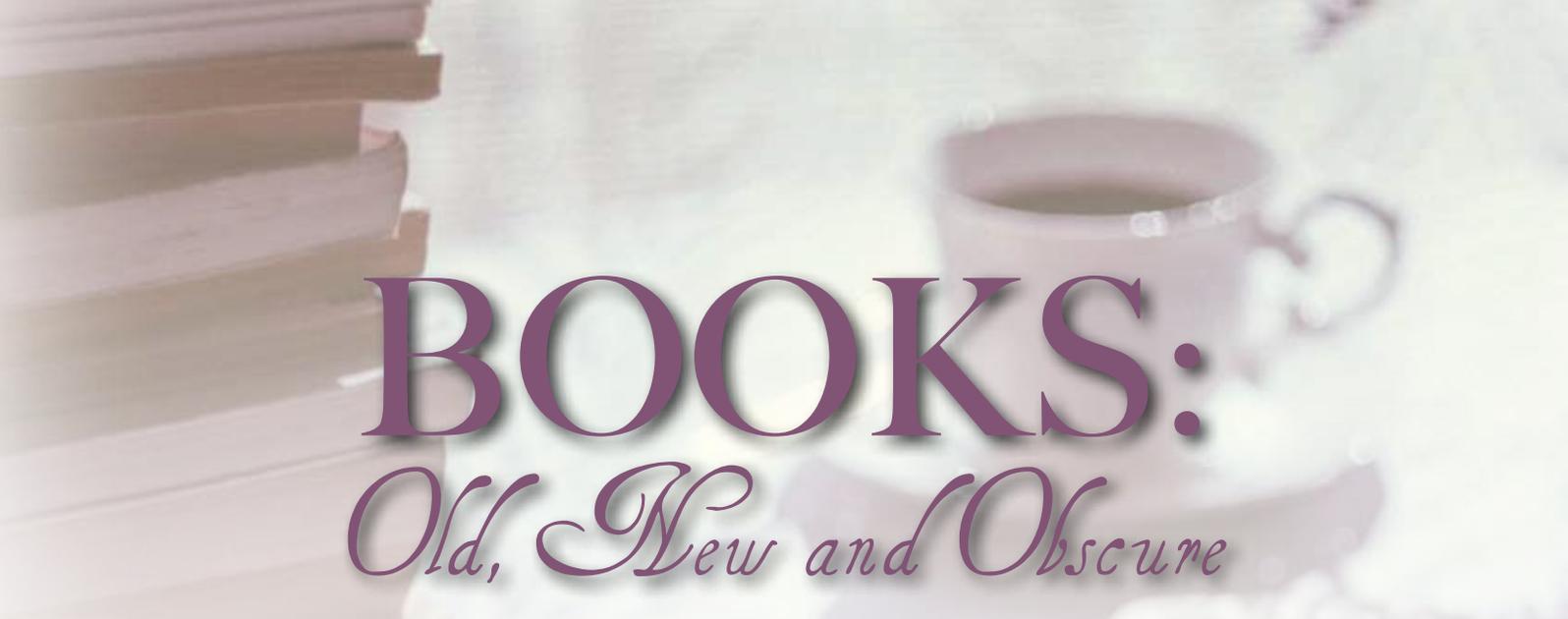
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BOOKS:

Old, New and Obscure

KEEP SHARP: BUILD A BETTER BRAIN AT ANY AGE

By Sanjay Gupta, M.D.
Simon & Schuster (2021)

Gupta's new book lays out in simple and easy-to-grasp terms how to maintain and even improve your mental faculties and reduce the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

What's good for the heart is good for the brain and Gupta inspires us to stay healthy in general with a sermon you've heard before: Eat your fruits and vegetables, exercise and get a good night's sleep. However, he takes a deeper dive to clarify some important points about nutrition, including that we get the best nutrition and vitamin support from food rather than supplements. He also lists some of the more important brain-healthy foods.

Gupta goes beyond diet and exercise with inspiring wisdom and stories to help us obtain the goal of a healthier brain. He cuts through the mental fog of myths that might be holding us back or taking us down the wrong road, such as "older people can't learn new things or we use only 10% of our brains." He also debunks many of the diet programs out there, concluding that "diets may seem confusing, but food isn't."

The brain surgeon's precepts about aging and the brain are based on hard science and studies of people who have kept sharp well into their 90s. For instance, he says the "secrets of superagers" may not be in genetics, as once thought. Scientific studies back up Gupta's assertion that "we have a huge impact in our brain's fate with simple lifestyle choices. Superagers often don't act like old folks. They, too, keep sharp with good habits."

We not only need to move our bodies, but we also need to "move" our brains, finding ways to challenge our brains and exercising this vital organ, which, after all, controls all of the other functions of the human body. Besides dietary inputs and exercise, Gupta puts a huge emphasis on the importance of living a purposeful life and staying socially engaged.

~ Neil Moran

EDUCATED: A MEMOIR

By Tara Westover
Random House (2018)

Educated was named one of the best books of the year (2019) by 19 different, notable publications. It was a No. 1 *New*

York Times Bestseller. Can any piece of writing live up to such credentials? Indeed, this book does that and perhaps even more.

Tara Westover is a gifted writer. The first page of the prologue offers an example of her talents: "the wheatfield is a corps de ballet, each stem following all the rest in bursts of movement, a million ballerinas bending, one after the other, as great gales dent their golden heads. The shape of that dent lasts only a moment and is as close as anyone gets to seeing wind." She takes a thought and interprets it through experience and feeling, creating a moment of empathy with her subject. It is perhaps this sense of empathy that makes *Educated* so horrifying, for we are led to empathize with hateful people and their cruel and self-centered behavior. Westover describes her life from the inside out. She shares both her experiences and what they do to her. It will perhaps help us to understanding why it is so hard for abused spouses to leave their abusers, although Westover was an abused child rather than a spouse.

This is a book to read and to discuss as many of the incidents are virtually unbelievable, so bizarre that they cry out for processing. Even though the reader knows in advance that the author "makes it out," you lie awake turning pages, transfixed by each new reality as the story unfolds. When you have read *Educated*, you will have been educated, possibly transformed, as I was, into a more compassionate person.

~ Tricia Herban

YEAR OF WONDERS: A NOVEL OF THE PLAGUE

By Geraldine Brooks
Penguin Books (2001)

Rereading this book, first published in 2001, gives hope that despite the many losses in the current pandemic, our spirits will survive. Pulitzer Prize winner Geraldine Brooks wrote *Year of Wonders* using the written record about an English village during an outbreak of the bubonic plague in 1665. The villagers of Eyam decided to quarantine themselves. This novel imagines what life might have been like during the long months of isolation and the death of two-thirds of the villagers.

The chronicle of the village's plague year is told by Anna Frith, a widow with two sons, who keeps house for the rector, tends a flock of sheep and later becomes a healer. When the

plague breaks out in the village, Rector Mompellian preaches a sermon on “Greater love hath no man than he lay down his life for a friend.” Most villagers agree that they will quarantine to avoid transmitting the plague elsewhere. A boundary stone is marked where provisions are left at the edge of the village. Only the wealthy family flees.

Despite the good intentions of the villagers to preserve the health of outsiders, fear, suspicion and violence erupt at times in the year of death and deprivation. Many struggle with the belief that God or the devil has inflicted evil on the people for some great sin or perhaps a greater purpose. Tragedy abounds in this novel, but also great beauty and tenderness, both in the events and the telling. “And as fire cannot quench the living spark in a humble patch of grass, neither can our souls be quenched by death, nor our spirits by suffering.”

~ Mary Barbera

FORTY AUTUMNS

By Nina Willner

William Morrow Paperbacks, reprint edition (2017)

Forty Autumns is a moving memoir about a family divided by the partition of Germany into eastern and western sectors in 1945 and life on either side up to construction of the infamous Berlin Wall in 1961 and beyond.

The story details the struggles of the Willner family whose fate was to live in East Germany. Taken from first-hand accounts of family members, the book details how they survived living under communist rule for 40 years. Ms. Willner’s mother, Hannah, actually escaped to West Germany in August 1948 at age 20. Her story of survival there is also an integral part of this amazing story.

Important to note is that very little was known about life in communist East Germany. Aided by maps, family photos and a well-researched chronology of events in Europe post-WWII, leading up to the dismantling of the Berlin Wall in 1989, *Forty Autumns* is a real learning experience about courage, adaptation and the human spirit. It is well worth the read.

~ Kathryn Marchi

THE LEAGUE OF WIVES

By Heath Hardage Lee

St. Martin's Press (2019)

This is the untold story of the women who took on the U.S. government to bring their husbands home from captivity during the Vietnam War.

Jim Stockdale, who most are familiar with, ejected from his plane and landed in a small town in Vietnam. He never imagined that he would remain in that country for almost eight years as a P.O.W. This is the story of how the families of these men coped during this time. Jim’s wife, Sybil, became the sole parent of their four boys, who somehow found the time and energy to form this league whose purpose was to wake up Washington to the plight of their husbands and address their inhumane treatment. It is a

fascinating read.

The wives realized that Washington’s policy of not “making waves” was not helping their husbands. They became involved in sending secret codes in their letters to their husbands as well as meeting with Washington leaders and even representatives of the Vietnamese government - never sure if their actions were helping or harming their husbands.

After reading this account, you just may choose to reread *In Love and War* by Jim and Sybil Stockdale, which was first published in 1984 and later revised and updated. This amazing book tells their story in side-by-side chapters. The exceptional courage of the POWs and their wives and families should not be forgotten.

~ Maureen Smith

THE GOLDEN THREAD: HOW FABRIC CHANGED HISTORY

By Kassia St. Clair

Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W.W. Norton & Co. (2019)

Before you decide to skip this review and this book, be advised that you would be missing the opportunity to learn about the fabrics that took us into space, provided the ability to insulate against the Antarctic and dazzled us with the magic of spider silk, a filament so complex that modern scientists have repeatedly failed to duplicate its protein structure.

The Golden Thread provides many perspectives. On page 6, the reader learns that, “The industry of fabric is older than pottery or metallurgy and perhaps even than agriculture and stock-breeding. Cloth is the original technology.” Moreover, St. Clair claims that cotton cloth and garments were the first global commodity.

The book’s chronological content takes in the origins of weaving, Egyptian mummies, the silk road and the historical espionage related to sericulture (silk growing). It moves on to explain how the Vikings’ woolen sails were woven of a type of wool unique to one breed of northern sheep and that after weaving and fulling, it was waterproofed with a mixture of water, horse fat or fish oil and ocher. The last finish involved coating the fabric with hot liquid beef tallow or fir tar which smoothed the surface while filling any holes, making the sail wind and waterproof. Viking sails could last 40 to 50 years!

From wool to synthetics was a leap that today enabled mankind to revel in polyester, one of the cheapest synthetics ... essentially a plastic derived from crude oil. This miracle fabric is an environmental horror that is not biodegradable and continually sheds plastic filaments. Yet without such fabrics, mankind would never have been lifted aloft in the pressurized suits that enabled the moonwalk, which was in so many ways humanity’s consummate accomplishment. *The Golden Thread* provides those details and then goes on to discuss the sport fabrics that have enabled world records to be set and broken, and finally, the holy grail of fibers, the still scientifically mysterious spider silk.

~ Tricia Herban

Is it time to start something new?



Dear Vicki,

My recent retirement was my choice, and I am satisfied with that decision. However, now I realize that all my friends were work-related acquaintances. The office group has now moved on and I need to do the same. My wife is good company, but I think I'm cramping her style with too much togetherness. How can I branch out?

Making friends later in life is as important as it always has been -- maybe even more so. That's because, as you point out, we lose some of those paths for social interaction that we've relied on in the past, like our jobs or the contacts we made through our growing children. Having a social support system is a key factor in maintaining both our physical and mental health as we age.

But for all our life experience, we hold onto the idea that making friends is something that just happens effortlessly. Wrong! No matter what stage of life we are in, making friends takes both *intention* and *effort*. Truly, it's always been that way. Even kids must make an effort to have friends.

Let's start with that intention. Accept that making new friends is both a challenge and an opportunity. It's going to take some work, but it will be an adventure, too. Decide to make at least one outreach every week and hold yourself accountable by keeping a record of your efforts. It's a great way to see what works for you.

Here are some suggestions on where to start:

- **Be a sport:** Find an athletic activity you enjoy or would like to learn. Avoid solo activities like jogging alone if your aim is to meet others. Instead, join a hiking group, a senior golf league or take tennis lessons. Make your local yoga center your hangout for a super source of community. If you're stuck for ideas, check out **meetup.org** for local activities and events.
- **Give of yourself:** Volunteer your way to new friendships. As a bonus, this will also help you to develop a sense

of purpose, another key factor that plays into post-retirement happiness. Many communities, such as Anne Arundel County, offer a dedicated volunteer center that helps match your skills and interests to a community need. Contact them at **www.volunteerannearundel.org** or 410.897.9207. Choose a group activity where you work alongside others. Answering phones by yourself may be worthwhile, but it isn't the ticket to making friends.

- **School rules:** Stimulate your mind and meet new people by going back to class. Community colleges offer a wide range of classes for retired folks at a nominal fee. Steer away from lecture classes if you're looking to amp up your social life. Instead, choose participation classes such as photography or watercolor painting. Read the class description carefully or call to inquire about teaching style before committing to a choice.
- **Keep the faith:** A large sign in our community says: "Rethink Church." Indeed, revisit your faith tradition or find a new one that reflects your beliefs. Attending a weekly service may enrich your spiritual life but, by itself, probably won't help you connect with others. Also look for a small group activity within the church or synagogue. It may involve a Bible study, a cleanup crew, a soup kitchen outreach or membership in a choir.

- **Go Clubbing:** You guessed it -- join a club! Look through the newspaper for listed book clubs, art clubs, political clubs and more. Also, investigate the listings in online newspapers such as www.Patch.com that provide excellent coverage of local organizations. And don't forget the Rotary and other civic clubs. Once more, the trick is to become involved by volunteering once you join.

Now what? So, you've taken the first steps. You have decided to make new friends and you've signed up for a class, joined a club, taken up a sport and gone back to church. That's great and you're busy, but that's not enough. This is the toughest part for many of us. To build friendships, take the next step and reach out to these casual acquaintances.

Throughout your life, you've exercised these skills, so now is the time to put them to use. Keep your sense of humor, a relaxed attitude and take the initiative. By now, you'll have met at least a few likely souls who seem worth getting to know on a deeper

level. Invite one of them to grab a cup of coffee after the meeting or for a drink after a round of golf. If they say no, that's OK. Maybe next time they'll be free.

"You must kiss a lot of frogs to find a prince!" This slogan holds true in making friends as well as in romantic love. Some of your efforts will just not prove fruitful. Some people are too busy, too lazy or simply not interested in becoming friends. Other times, you'll find that your interests and personalities don't click. Keep trying. Remember that even natural extroverts strike out sometimes. My personal rule is to reach out three times to someone that I'd like to get to know better. If at that point I've hit a brick wall, I move on and pat myself on the back for trying.

There's a whole world of new friends out there and now you have the time to invest in meaningful connections. Those friends won't come to you and time's a-wasting. Set your intention and make that effort. Your life will be richer for it.

Vicki Duncan is a licensed professional counselor and welcomes your questions. She can be contacted at Victoria2Write@aol.com

NEW ANNAPOLITANS TRANSITIONING INTO A NEW LIFE

By Natalie Canavor

Most of us have had to relocate at some point in our lives. And many of us remember that it wasn't always a smooth transition trying to create a new life. And certainly, the pandemic doesn't help that transition now. So how do you learn about a new community, find resources and most of all, connect with new friends?

Annapolis offers a special jumpstart called New Annapolitans. It was created in 1986, when a newcomer faced with this challenge ran a small ad in a local newspaper: "Are you new to Annapolis and interested in meeting other new residents?" As a result, twelve ladies met for coffee and were delighted to become part of this new group.

Today New Annapolitans (NA) is a social club, or more accurately, a social home for nearly 700 women. Its mission of integrating new area residents into Annapolis cultural, recreational and civic life remains strong. Regular events bring everyone together in "normal" nonpandemic times, and more than two dozen interest groups are open to all members. These range from tennis to bridge, photography to mah jongg, memoir writing to golf, Spanish conversation to couples events. There are three walking groups, five different book discussion groups and an active community outreach program that supports causes benefitting local women and children.

Many members opt to continue their club life indefinitely.

One is Pat Casey, who located to Annapolis in 2012 after retiring as a government executive. She heard about the club from neighbors and joined immediately. "I quickly learned about the whole area," she says, "and the opportunity to develop a network of delightful friends beyond my immediate environment—people, who without this group, I would never have met."

Kim Jankowski found NA on the internet when she moved to Annapolis from Frederick, Md., a few years ago. "I'd lived there 30 years, and our kids were grown, so I wouldn't meet people through them, and I worried about finding friends. Joining NA I immediately found the bridge group I wanted, and most importantly became part of the Big Sister-Little Sister program, which I love!" Every newcomer, generally defined as someone who moved to Annapolis within the last two years, is paired with a seasoned member to ease connection with the community and its people. Now Kim is a Big Sister herself, supporting Annapolis entrée for three recent members.

If you are new to the area and would like more information for yourself or for someone you know, check out www.NewAnnapolitans.org

Natalie, a New York transplant and a former president of the New Annapolitans, can be contacted at ncanavor@gmail.com

EARLY SPRING QUIZ-ACROSTIC

	1	T	2	S		3	V	4	D	5	J		6	Q	7	H	8	C	9	L		10	B	11	F	12	A	13	D		14	V	15	K	16	A	17	B	18	N											
19	S		20	A	21	C	22	S	23	O	24	N	25	I		26	K	27	S	28	H	29	L		30	K	31	A	32	Q	33	S	34	U	35	B	36	V	37	N	38	P									
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95	O	96	F	97	J		98	C	99	D		100	O	101	H	102	K		103	G	104	L	105	H		106	T	107	D	108	J	109	Q	110	R	111	I	112	V												
113	V	114	N	115	O		116	M	117	C	118	B	119	D	120	I		121	A	122	S		123	I	124	R	125	P	126	S	127	L		128	N	129	E	130	S	131	I										
	132	B	133	S	134	T	135	M		136	U	137	A	138	F	139	M	140	C	141	L	142	R	143	B		144	V	145	N	146	S		147	C	148	S	149	A	150	V										
	151	L	152	E	153	G	154	B	155	Q	156	C	157	J	158	M	159	P	160	I		161	C	162	N		163	I		164	V	165	F	166	A	167	J	168	T	169	Q										
170	C		171	B	172	A	173	P	174	N	175	G	176	O	177	L		178	H	179	D	180	N	181	C		182	A	183	R	184	T	185	O	186	D	187	Q		188	J										
189	I	190	R	191	V		192	H	193	Q	194	B	195	E	196	I	197	M	198	A	199	F	200	Q	201	H	202	D		203	T	204	G		205	P	206	K	207	H	208	S									
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227	T	228	N		229	L	230	M	231	B	232	P		233	C	234	G	235	A	236	D	237	I	238	O	239	R		240	P		241	M	242	L	243	K														

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Directions

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

Quiz-Acrostics and Quiz-Acrostics Book 2, published by Puzzleworm, are available at amazon.com

Sheila can be reached at acrostics@aol.com or visit her web site: www.quiz-acrostics.com

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| A. High school journalism honor society (3 wds.) | 20 | 12 | 121 | 172 | 149 | 79 | 212 | 137 | 235 | 198 | 31 | 182 | 166 | 16 |
| B. Comprehensive insurance coverage (2 wds.) | 214 | 10 | 132 | 194 | 118 | 35 | 81 | 231 | 154 | 86 | 17 | 44 | 171 | 143 |
| C. Remote (4 wds.) | 161 | 21 | 140 | 98 | 147 | 181 | 117 | 8 | 233 | 156 | 170 | | | |
| D. Toward that place (var.) | 42 | 236 | 4 | 73 | 179 | 202 | 99 | 216 | 107 | 186 | 13 | 119 | | |
| E. Vipers | 129 | 152 | 213 | 69 | 46 | 195 | | | | | | | | |
| F. Ruddy ducks (hyph.) | 199 | 165 | 96 | 70 | 40 | 219 | 138 | 11 | 226 | 64 | | | | |
| G. Conceptualizations of mental images | 63 | 204 | 45 | 153 | 103 | 234 | 90 | 94 | 175 | | | | | |
| H. Outrageously extreme (3 wds.) | 7 | 201 | 101 | 68 | 178 | 28 | 105 | 207 | 66 | 192 | | | | |
| I. Site of first primary (2 wds.) | 160 | 120 | 39 | 65 | 163 | 123 | 196 | 111 | 189 | 237 | 25 | 131 | | |
| J. Edgy (2 wds.) | 82 | 188 | 76 | 51 | 5 | 167 | 97 | 108 | 93 | 62 | 157 | | | |
| K. Altering | 206 | 243 | 26 | 15 | 89 | 56 | 220 | 102 | 30 | | | | | |
| L. Substitute batsman in cricket (hyph.) | 221 | 141 | 61 | 104 | 229 | 85 | 242 | 127 | 177 | 57 | 9 | 151 | 29 | |
| M. Son of Elishama | 139 | 197 | 116 | 241 | 59 | 135 | 158 | 83 | 230 | | | | | |
| N. Emotional relationships (4 wds.) | 47 | 91 | 162 | 37 | 41 | 210 | 174 | 77 | 74 | 228 | 145 | 18 | 128 | 24 |
| | 180 | 114 | 92 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| O. Perseveres (2 wds.) | 23 | 185 | 115 | 100 | 52 | 222 | 75 | 176 | 238 | 95 | | | | |
| P. Furnishing | 173 | 38 | 78 | 159 | 205 | 48 | 240 | 232 | 125 | | | | | |
| Q. Very harshly criticized (3 wds.) | 87 | 200 | 215 | 6 | 193 | 84 | 155 | 169 | 53 | 224 | 71 | 32 | 109 | 187 |
| R. Images of peoples | 110 | 142 | 183 | 190 | 239 | 124 | 58 | 55 | | | | | | |
| S. Is incessantly reminded of (6 wds.) | 60 | 72 | 130 | 211 | 19 | 126 | 33 | 22 | 50 | 218 | 43 | 208 | 133 | 146 |
| | 2 | 88 | 27 | 67 | 148 | 122 | | | | | | | | |
| T. By its very nature (2 wds.) | 1 | 227 | 203 | 168 | 106 | 134 | 80 | 184 | | | | | | |
| U. Insect nests | 34 | 223 | 49 | 136 | | | | | | | | | | |
| V. Nevertheless (4 wds.) | 225 | 164 | 112 | 3 | 209 | 191 | 113 | 14 | 36 | 144 | 217 | 150 | 54 | |

Toward the end of the long, dreary march to Spring, when we're not sure if the world will ever wake up, a joyful noise breaks out. From Stowe, Vermont, to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, from Eastport, Maine, to West Allis, Wisconsin, and all around the Chesapeake Bay, the northern Spring peepers start singing, reminding us that shirt-sleeve weather is near. All it takes for the chorus to erupt is a few warm days and a landscape with unfrozen ponds. This could be in mid-April in Stowe, where snow still lingers in the woods, or in March in Chestertown, Maryland, around the time that ospreys return.

Spring peepers are tiny, the size of a walnut. Their calls, audible for a mile or more, come from an inflatable pouch on the throat—the vocal sac. Listeners describe the sound as chirps, trills, high-pitched peeps, piping whistles, or even jingling sleigh bells.

The sudden appearance of these mini-amphibians often coincides with warm rainfall, so people once thought they fell from the sky. In fact, they don't even come from trees, though they are a type of tree frog. They're ground dwellers, emerging from under leaves or logs when the weather turns warm again. But a carpet of vegetation, even covered by snow, is skimpy Winter shelter for a tiny, furless animal, especially in the northern reaches of its range. Their hearts stop pumping blood and their bodies may freeze. Still, they survive the frigid months. How do they do it?

Antifreeze. Or its natural equivalent. The peepers make their own, in the form of concentrated glucose sugars, which keep cells from rupturing, protecting vital organs. The frogs thaw out in the Spring. After a short healing period, they're good to go again.

The renewal of life begins with the Spring chorus. Peepers sing for love. An amorous male frog's trill to females signals that he's ready to mate. His attractiveness is a function of his singing prowess—the faster and louder, the better. A receptive

female communicates her willingness by touching a suitor and allowing him to climb onto her back. She lays around 1,000 eggs, in water, preferably not inhabited by fish. Males fertilize the eggs as they are laid. Females take off a day or two after egg-laying, but the males hang around for a month or so. Eggs hatch

within days and soon develop into tadpoles. Most eggs and tadpoles are gobbled up by larger animals—dragonflies, leeches, fish, birds, water beetles and a host of others. Two months after hatching, survivors leave the pond as young frogs, still vulnerable to carnivores from across the animal kingdom. They mature in a year.

Spring peepers feed at night. They're particularly fond of insects, including ticks. They "drink" and "breathe," i.e., absorb oxygen, even while immersed in water, through their permeable skin and lungs. This makes them susceptible

to water pollution, especially from dissolved road salts, metals and other toxicants that run off from roadways. Nationally, and in the Chesapeake Bay region, the species currently enjoys a healthy status, but dangers lurk. Consider, for example, that the U.S. spreads 22 million tons of road salts every Winter.

While reading this, chances are that you've already heard the first early strains of the Spring peeper choir. Embrace the swelling chorus and the promise of longer and warmer days ahead. But do remember, even this most iconic symbol of the changing seasons is not guaranteed immortality in a human-dominated world.

Amphibians have been under assault for years. We all have a responsibility to help reverse that trend and to preserve the northern Spring peeper for countless future generations to enjoy.

Henry S. Parker is an adjunct associate professor at Georgetown University. He can be reached at hspshp@gmail.com

NATURE'S CHOIR: SPRINGTIME AT THE BAY

By Henry S. Parker



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