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Summer 2011

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OutLook

by the Bay

For the Bay Boomer and Beyond...

Publisher and Editor-in-Chief **Tecla Emerson Murphy**
 editor@OutLookbytheBay.com
 410 849-3000

Managing Editor **Mick Rood**
 MickRood@aol.com

Operations Manager **Cynthia Rott**
 Cindy@OutLookbytheBay.com

Art Director **Grace Toulotte**
 weareunitedbylove.com

Columnists **Victoria Duncan**
 Victoria2Write@aol.com

Ryan Helfenbein
 Ryan@LastingTributesFuneralCare.com

Henry S. Parker
 hspspb@gmail.com

Tricia Herban
 TriciaH@erols.com

Legal Advice
 Valarie A. Rocco
 www.SeniorsAdviser.com

Contributing Writers **Melissa Conroy**
 o4amuseoffice@yahoo.com

Penelope Folsom
 Penelope@OutLookbytheBay.com

Pat Jurgens
 4Louises@comcast.net

Peggy Kiefer
 Zinkiefer@aol.com

Leah Lancione
 LeahLancione@gmail.com

Kater Leatherman
 Katerleatherman@gmail.com

Kathryn Marchi
 Marchi-wre@mris.com

Peggy Markham
 Peggy@OutLookbytheBay.com

Neil Moran
 admin@neilmoran.com

Maureen Smith
 RSmith0636@verizon.net

Louise Whiteside
 Louise@OutLookbytheBay.com

Account Representatives **Chris Rott**
 AdSales@OutLookbytheBay.com

Mary Kramer, Eastern Shore
 essd09@gmail.com
 410 725-6350

Anna Marie J. Musterman
 annamusterman@comcast.net
 410 268-9089

Circulation **Jack Hovey**
 circulation@OutLookbytheBay.com

Photographer **R.C. Murphy**
 photos@OutLookbytheBay.com

Subscriptions **S. Hill**
 subscriptions@OutLookbytheBay.com
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Contact **OutLook by the Bay**
 626C Admiral Drive #608
 Annapolis, MD 21401
 410 849-3000

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“STAYCATION: Holiday in which leisure activities are pursued while staying at one's own home”



This summer we'll be getting together with our friends Jan and Joe; we have been trying to come up with something different and fun for our annual get together. We're leaning toward a staycation, a heretofore unheard of word but now found in most dictionaries. Not sure if staycation sounds more like a new disease or a new candy bar, but according to the *World English Dictionary*, the definition is a “holiday in which leisure activities are pursued while staying at one's own home.” Imagine staying home for the much anticipated summer vacation! Sounds intriguing, although in my house, stay-at-home anything usually involves trimming hedges, cleaning a closet or getting the oil changed in the car. Well, we're going to give it a try. Like every busy household, we've found that the only way to really relax is to leave town and then that isn't always the walk in the park we were anticipating. Like many travelers, our vacations involve trying to do it all and then invariably find that there's always one more mountain to climb. Last summer it was Cadillac Mountain on Mt. Desert Island. But there's so much to see and do on a trip, where do you cut back? One recent vacation with Jan and Joe included breakfast in North Conway, New Hampshire, and lunch on Martha's Vineyard, with a kayak experience in between. Our vacations end when we return home for a rest. This year, with the price of gas and the complications of air travel, we've decided that we'll just stay put.

And, if staying put sounds like a whine, it isn't. There's so much right here to do and see that tourists flock to our area for their holidays. I'd be hard-pressed to come up with a more stimulating and exciting region than right where we are. Imagine that within a short drive we have the most politically important city in the world, which also happens to be the premier area for world-class museums, most of which are free and most within a short walk of each other. If we should tire of visiting one extraordinary museum after another, we can take a short drive west and tube down the Shenandoah or do an under-the-stars opera at Ashlawn or an outdoor play at Lime Kiln, all just a short drive into Virginia. There's also kayaking and fishing in a lake, a stream or the Bay, or sail for days on end, gunk holing along the over 10,000 miles of tributaries and shoreline of the Bay. We could have a crab fest in the backyard or at any of a hundred different top-notch restaurants within an easy drive. There are endless walks through hundreds of parks with more than enough places to picnic. We have historical sites like Gettysburg, Brandywine and Williamsburg to name just a few, all within just an hour or two. (See Leah's article on page 10 for even more.) There are more than 40 miles of maintained bike trails just in Anne Arundel County. If we have young ones visiting, it will be a good excuse to visit one of the zoos. And how about the Bowie Bay Sox for reasonably priced sports tickets and almost guaranteed fun. And for something more mundane, there's actually a park where you can watch the planes landing at Baltimore Washington International Airport. (Check it out at bwairport.com) There are plays, musicals and outdoor performances just about everywhere. Most are listed in your local paper. Summer classes are offered throughout the Bay area in art (Maryland Hall), drama (Chesapeake College), computers (Anne Arundel Community College), sailing (Annapolis Sailing School) or philosophy (University of Maryland). Take a course online or on campus or head to one of the county senior centers.

With all this to do, it's not sounding much like a vacation! But our friends will provide the impetus to get out there and make the effort to visit sights that we haven't been to before or that we need to revisit. With our staycation, the only requirement will be that it's an easy drive from home. This year, we're going to try to enjoy the here and now.

You can't make a brand new beginning but you can make a new ending

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ON THE COVER

Jim and Jean O'Farrell met in Boston where Jean taught at a nearby nursing school and Jim, after graduating from the USNA, was on a submarine in New London. They married and settled in Annapolis in 1966. While raising their four children they both went to graduate school. This led to rewarding careers, Jim as an international contracts manager for Westinghouse and Jean as a psychotherapist in private practice. Today Jean continues to work part-time, and Jim enjoys fly fishing, golf and painting in water color and oils. They both delight in grandchildren and enjoy travel, family and friends.



North Arundel Aquatic Center, Glen Burnie
Courtesy of Anne Arundel County

LETTERS to the editor



KEEPING TOGETHER

Really enjoyed this issue, particularly Words from the Desk. When we were having the work done in our kitchen, the workmen discovered that we had been married 50 years. They wondered what our secret was. So I mumbled the usual stuff, good communication, yada, yada. Then I said, "I'll be leaving in a few minutes, but my husband should be home any minute. Come to think of it, that may be our secret!" In all sincerity, I have no idea how couples make it when they don't have their own interests. My husband is obsessed with golf. I joke that he is either golfing or having an affair. Whatever. As long as he's happy! Keep up the good work with your mag -- it's amazing.
Maureen S., Annapolis

ABSENCE, FONDNESS

Recently had a chance to sit down and look at the latest issue of *OutLook by the Bay* after having a knee replacement. Always read the Words from the Desk first, and had to laugh. Iris is right, absence does make the heart grow fonder. My husband was in the military and I think all of our military friends are still together. We are coming up on 47 years. It does get better and better. Who knew? Glad we hung in there.
Suzan C. Beaufort, S.C.

THREE MYTHS

I was amused to read the article "Three Myths About People Over 50." My father-in-law, Rev. Lewis

Payne, is a myth buster in every way.

On dad's 90th birthday, his son walked into his house carrying a computer and proclaimed, "Welcome to the 21st century." Dad taught himself how to use the computer, and uses it regularly for research and email. When he was 94, his computer was operating too slowly, so we gave him a new one. And on his 99th birthday, he signed up for high-speed Internet. I am grateful and proud to be his daughter-in-law.

L. Payne, Annapolis

NEW SUBSCRIPTION

My wife and I have read with much interest some of the most recent issues, and found them to be of high quality editorial content and thematic interest for both of us. Hoping you continued success in your endeavor. Our subscription form is enclosed.

J & M Houde, Silver Spring

CORRECTION

This is probably the umpteenth time you've heard this. On Page 37 on the Spring 2011 issue, the Bits & Bytes says there are 64 ounces in a quart. Really?!!
Try 8 ounces in a cup, 2 cups in a pint (16 ounces), 2 pints in a quart (32 ounces), 2 quarts in a half-gallon (64 ounces), 4 quarts in a gallon (128 ounces).

Joyce B., Annapolis

Ed Note: Oops! Good eye! Thank you and we're reducing our fact-checker's daily coffee ration from 64 ounces to 32 ounces.

RETIREMENT, A BEGINNING

Loved the article about John Dennis. I do enjoy this magazine so much! Even though we are not faced with the boomerang challenge, I enjoyed that article also. Would love to see that cherry wood furniture!

Jackie B., Ouray, Colorado

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DON'T FORGET THE SUNSCREEN!

By Robert G. Gram, Jr., M.D.

It's the time of year when we are either shedding our sweaters and enjoying time outdoors, or rushing inside to our air-conditioned homes to avoid the humidity. At this time of year, the potential hazards of heat and sun are important to recognize. With a few small adjustments to your routine, you can enjoy a safe and healthy summer.

Whether you are in the sun or shade, it's important to start every day by applying sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. As we age, our skin becomes far more sensitive and loses its ability to regenerate. For this reason, it's important to get into the habit of protecting your skin from the sun. If you swim, reapply sunscreen when you get out of the water. If you are outdoors all day, reapply sunscreen periodically. You may want to look into easy-to-apply sunscreen sprays, or purchase small tubes that you can keep in your pocket or

purse if you are on the go.

Be sure you don't forget to protect your lips with appropriate sunscreen, and wear sunglasses to protect your eyes. It's also important to be aware that some medications might not agree with high sun exposure. Check the label on the medications you take, and if you have any questions call your doctor or pharmacist. For added protection, wear a wide-brimmed hat and lightweight, protective clothing to shelter your skin from the sun and stay cool.

Drinking plenty of water is important when the temperature is high. You don't need to feel extremely thirsty for your body to need water, so drink periodically throughout the day. Carry a plastic water bottle with you if you spend time outdoors, or drink several glasses during the day if you are indoors. Avoid sugary drinks and alcohol, which interfere with your body's natural hydration process.

Nothing is more enjoyable than being outdoors in the summer. Remember, though, that the intense sunlight and high temperatures between the hours of 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. can be dangerous, causing sunburn and heat-related illness. Heat exhaustion can be more common in our later years, especially for those with high blood pressure. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include nausea, paleness, sweating, muscle cramps and dizziness. Avoiding heat exhaustion is the key to staying healthy when temperatures are high.

When planning your activities, schedule outdoor fun when the sun is low. Early morning and late afternoon are best, when it tends to be cooler and there is less direct sunlight. Make sure you have the proper gear with you when you go outdoors, including a water bottle, hat, sunscreen and lightweight clothing. Always keep your cell phone charged and with you in the case of an emergency. Take frequent breaks in the shade or air conditioning to avoid becoming fatigued. Performing activities outdoors on an empty stomach in high temperatures is risky. Light, healthy snacks, such as fruit, will help you maintain your energy level. Keep them on hand for you and your companions as you enjoy the day outdoors.

If you are driving somewhere this summer, don't forget that our vehicles trap heat. The temperature of a parked car on a warm day can escalate to 120 degrees. It's a good idea to keep a towel in your car to sit on, and leave your windows ajar to allow air to circulate. Before entering an extremely hot car, start the air conditioner and let the car cool off before you start driving.

By protecting your skin and planning ahead before you go outdoors, you will stay healthy and cool all summer long.

Dr. Gram, a grandfather of four, is a practicing physician and the founder and CEO of Right-time Medical Care. He can be reached at rgram@myrighttime.com

Bits & Bytes

If you're searching for a vacation rental anywhere in the world and want to eliminate the cost of a rental agency, try going through the owner at VRBO.com or Zonder.com or HomeAway.com or Rentalo.com



Fly-Fishing: A Sport with Physical and Mental Benefits

By Leah Lancione

When you think about fishing, what images come to mind? Images of a young man struggling to reel in a massive catch? A grandfather teaching his grandson how to attach a fake insect? Or do you envision two grown sons spending a warm summer afternoon fly-fishing with their father? Well, the last visualization may be a scene from the breathtaking novel *A River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean that was turned into a film directed by Robert Redford. In both, fly-fishing is as important as any basic necessity. One line from the book states, “In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly-fishing.”

Fly-fishing does carry with it an enigmatic quality since it requires one to skillfully study and apply the meticulous techniques necessary to cast the “fly” and successfully lure fish. This angling process can take some time and involves the fly fisherman, or “fly fishers” rather, to be patient, quiet and perceptive. It is clearly a sport of tremendous skill, but to many, it is a beloved pastime.

The social media network Facebook even has numerous sites devoted to fly-fishing with hundreds of thousands of followers. On one site, a post noted author Izaak Walton’s comment attributing fly-fishing to “The Contemplative Man’s Recreation.”

Whether fly-fishing is classi-

fied as a sport or an art form probably doesn’t matter to true enthusiasts. When the fly fisher is alone with a fly rod and reel casting the lure onto the lake, river or ocean, nothing else matters but getting that fish to strike the bait. This painstaking, careful process has been deemed by many to be very therapeutic in nature. And like other forms of angling, fly-fishing offers a diversion from the fast pace and stresses of everyday life.

In fact in 2005, the Federation of Fly Fishers and Trout Unlimited started Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc., to “aid in the physical and emotional recovery of wounded or injured military personnel through the art of fly-fishing. The group has performed demonstrations on the therapeutic benefits of fly-fishing to hospitalized veterans and outpatients.

In addition, men are not the only “contemplative” folk attracted to fly-fishing for its therapeutic, destressing benefits. According to the website (www.shelovesflyfishing.com/women-fly-fishing.html), statistics from a survey conducted by the Outdoor Industry Foundation, 35 percent of the 18.2 million fly fishers are women. The site attributes the efforts of Casting for Recovery (CFR), as a considerable reason for women getting more involved. The national nonprofit organization CFR, founded in 1996, promotes “physical, emotional and spiritual healing” through fly-fishing retreats for breast cancer survivors. CFR is based on the belief that “the natural world is a healing force.” Women who

have experienced the devastating effects of cancer meet together, fish together and continue the healing process in a peaceful setting.

So, if your body no longer responds to tennis like it did 20 years ago and golf doesn’t seem to leave you feeling physically or mentally charged, why not try your hand at fly-fishing? There are countless books and websites devoted to inspiring and instructing the beginner fly fisher. Sites like Fly Fishing 101- For Beginners (<http://flyanglersonline.com/begin/101/>) and Hooked on Flies (www.hooked-on-flies.com) offer beginners tips on basic fly-fishing techniques as well as information regarding locations, materials, and other resources. Who knows? You just may uncover the fishing enthusiast inside you and reap some of the alleged physical, emotional and spiritual benefits.

For more information

Project Healing Waters

www.maryland.va.gov/publications/newsreleases/2008/02-13-08_HealingWaters.asp

www.projecthealingwaters.org/html/events09.html

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Here's a recipe that you and your family might enjoy on one of our sweltering summer days. It's quick, it's easy, it's versatile, it's delicious and you won't have consumed a day's worth of fat and calories in one sitting.

Whip eggs until thickened and lemon-colored. Add sugar and continue beating until well blended. Add milk and vanilla and blend. Pour into ice cream maker. As it blends add any smooshed fruits - as much as it will handle.

When cycle completes, ice cream should be removed from canister and put in Tupperware-type container to store in freezer.

Possible fruits: peaches, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, cherries, blueberries or nuts or any combination.

MINT CHOCOLATE CHUNK - Add four tablespoons Crème de Menthe and crushed frozen Oreos at the end of the cycle - churn just enough to blend.

COFFEE - Add three heaping tablespoons powdered instant coffee with the vanilla.

CHOCOLATE CHIP - Add one cup mini choc chips towards end of cycle.

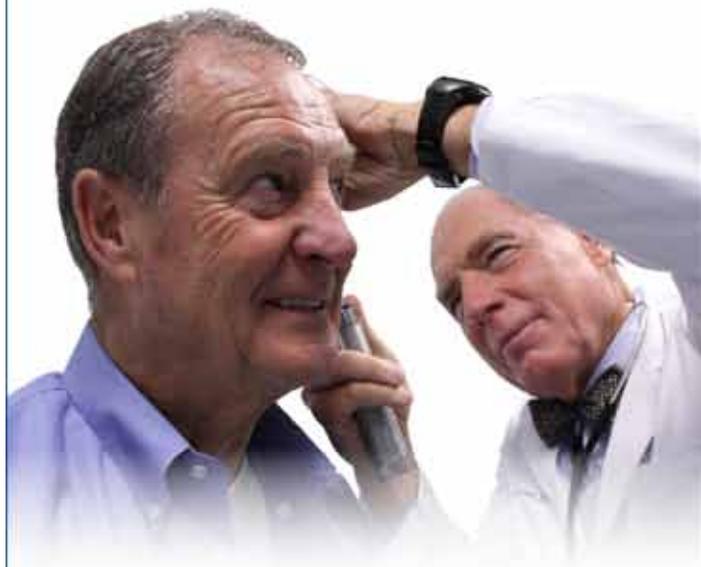
MINT CHOCOLATE CHIP - Add crushed up dark chocolate bar and four tablespoons Crème de Menthe at end of cycle.

YOGURT - Pour large container of yogurt into ice cream maker. If it's plain yogurt add a bit of sugar and vanilla. If flavored, such as vanilla or blueberry, it's usually OK without any additions unless you choose to. Any fruits can be added during the process.



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COOL PLACES TO SPEND THE DAY THIS SUMMER

By Leah Lacione

OK, so the coolest place to spend a day is probably up north in coastal Maine. However, if you're like many people these days, a trip to some faraway destination is out of the question in the current economy. So instead of traveling beyond Maryland's borders and spending more than you should, consider a staycation, capitalizing on some "cool places" right in your own backyard. Maryland is the home to many charming spots that won't cause a strain on your wallet this summer. Here are a few examples.

FORT MCHENRY: Located in Baltimore, which is the "birthplace" of our national anthem, this well-kept park offers visitors the opportunity to discover a treasured "slice" of Americana by exploring the fort, observing daily flag changes and watching a celebrated orientation video and interactive exhibits in the Visitor Center. Folks can take self-guided tours through the grounds and museums (open 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.), which are comprised of the star-shaped fort, military barracks, weapons

and military memorabilia displays and the guardhouse. During the summer months the historic site also presents ranger talks, with musket and artillery demonstrations performed by the fort guard.

Fort McHenry has extended summer hours (until 8 p.m.) and admission is \$7 for adults, which enables seven days of entry to the national monument and historic shrine. Other passes are available, including the lifetime Interagency Senior Pass (\$10) for those 62 years old and older.

Now is your chance if you've never visited the place that inspired Francis Scott Key to write *The Star-Spangled Banner* during the Battle of Baltimore on Sept. 13-14, 1814. "O, say, can you" set aside a few hours to tour this national landmark? For more information, visit www.nps.gov/fomc/index.htm

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART: The BMA, founded in 1914, holds an esteemed collection of 19th-century, modern and contemporary art, including the largest com-

pilation of works by Henri Matisse. Situated across from the main campus of Johns Hopkins University, the BMA offers exhibitions, art programs and cultural events. Exquisite sculpture gardens enable visitors to saunter through acres of lush gardens embellished with contemporary and modern art. On select Saturdays in July and August, music lovers can also purchase tickets to jazz performances held outdoors in these gardens.

The BMA is a place where you can stroll around on your own or bring the whole family. The museum offers art fun to inspire the creativity in both young and old with hands-on art workshops, special gallery tours and more. Guided tours are also available.

In addition to a superb gift shop, the BMA boasts a restaurant, Gertrude's, that offers visitors delicious regional cuisine and an inviting atmosphere to rest your legs from all the walking. Since admission to the museum is free, you can splurge on a scrumptious lunch by the restaurant's renowned chef, John Shields.

What's a better way to "beat the heat" this summer than by perus-

ing the 90,000 works of art the world's greatest artists including the likes of Vincent Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso and Paul Cézanne? For more information, visit www.artbma.org/index.html or call 443 573-1700.

NATIONAL CRYPTOLOGIC MUSEUM:

The National Cryptologic Museum located in Ft. Meade, adjacent to the National Security Agency's headquarters, offers a host of fascinating and obscure artifacts and military apparatus to captivate the attention of even the most learned history buff. It presents NSA's and our nation's cryptologic legacy with such awe-inspiring exhibits as the Enigma encryption and decryption machine from World War II and the U.S. Navy's "Bombe," which was used during the war to break Enigma-encrypted messages sent by the Germans. Also on hand is a battle flag used for signaling during the Civil War. So, if you have a history enthusiast in the family, or you want to learn about the people and machines that, through cryptology, protected our national security with mystifying strategy and equipment, visit the National Cryptologic Museum.

The museum also contains a gift shop and reference library with codebooks, unclassified documents and books for visitors to engage in research to further rouse their interest in our nation's history and methods of defense. Admission is free and open to the public Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the first and third Saturdays of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Guided tours are available. For more information, visit www.nsa.gov/about/cryptologic_heritage/museum/index.shtml or call 301 688-5849.

SANDY POINT STATE PARK: If you just want to spend the day relaxing or engaging in some blithe leisure activities along the magnificent Chesapeake Bay, consider dropping by this 786-acre park nestled along the northwestern shore and beside the grand Bay Bridge. From April to October (6 a.m. to sunset) and October to April (8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.), visitors can swim, boat, hike, fish, crab, bird-watch, walk, sunbath and more! The site is the perfect setting for a picnic with friends and family or a stroll along the shore.

Visitors can also rent a rowboat or motorboat. Food and beverages

are available. For those inclined to take a dip or engage in water activities, there are lifeguards on hand from Memorial Day through Labor Day. A Marina Store offers boating, fishing, crabbing and picnicking supplies and gear.

The park hosts a range of special events throughout the year including the upcoming Maryland Seafood Festival in September that draws visitors from near and far!

For more information and specific entry fee details, visit www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/southern/sandypoint.html or call 410 974-2149.

Bits & Bytes

If you're searching for outdoor entertainment through the summer, log onto www.ArtsAmerica.us where you will find more than enough free or reasonably priced outdoor fun.



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Swimming IS for Everyone!

By Joanne R. Alloway

The health benefits of swimming are numerous. It is an aerobic activity that promotes cardiovascular health and improves overall fitness. Swimming increases flexibility, muscle strength and can aid with weight loss. It takes stress off our weight-bearing joints and spine, often injured in other aerobic sports such as running or racquetball. If you have a sport-related injury or arthritis, swimming can help. You can learn how to swim at any age or improve on it with great results. And all you need is a suit, towel and maybe swim goggles to get started.

Many of us learned to swim as youngsters, but even if we didn't, most of us love being in or near the water. Water can be soothing, relaxing and many times therapeutic. It's no wonder many of us flock to Ocean City every summer. Just walking along the ocean's shoreline and letting the surf wash over our feet is refreshing! Whether we swim out past the ocean's breaking waves and body surf back or just hang out where it's comfortable, it's a summer treasure on a hot day.

Ocean swimming is not for everyone. But swimming in our area rivers and the Chesapeake Bay is a rite of summer and as we learned in our young years should never be done alone. Try joining a group. Groups compete in triathlons and open water races in the Bay annually. Every June, the Great Chesapeake Bay Swim is held. It contains races that are well-regulated for weather and safety. Open-water swim groups can train together at Sandy Point Park. Structured training for swimmers is available there and includes land and water clinics. This is a perfect opportunity to get a group of like-minded friends together to begin a new challenge. It becomes a great exercise and learning time together. The

training is not just for those who want to race. It's a natural way to become comfortable swimming in open water for exercise or pleasure anywhere you are. So, if you and your friends go to some exotic resort, you can enjoy those waters, too.

Moving away from nature's setting of swimming in open water, there's the more predictable venue of the pool. Most adults feel secure swimming in a pool, more than likely because they know the dimensions. In our area, we have many outdoor pools in residential communities for swimming, many open to nonresidents of the neighborhood. And for military families, there are two pools, North and South Severn. You must have a military sponsor with you when you go, but the pools are clean, and as in all Maryland outdoor pools, a 10- to 15-minute "adult break" is called. This allows you and your group to cool off and get in some lap swimming while the youngsters rest. Passes for military pools can be purchased for a full or half summer.

Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks offer two indoor pool centers where swimmers can meet to exercise or train all year. The number of seniors (age 60 and older) not only swimming but attending various classes at the pools is high, largely because these nongravitational exercises really help joint pain.

The Arundel Olympic Swim Center's pool on Riva Road in Annapolis, is 50 meters long divided into 25 yard lanes. The Glen Burnie pool on Crain Highway at the North Arundel Aquatic Center, is 25 yards with eight lanes, and the leisure pool has three 20-yard lanes. Fee structure and hours are the same at both pools and the water temperature is comfortably controlled. Both facilities are accessible to the handicapped and reduced fees are available for seniors and frequent users.

Another excellent indoor pool is located in the Severna Park YMCA on the Baltimore and Annapolis Boulevard. It is also home to a US Masters Swim Team. Masters Swimming is for anyone over the age of 18. It's a fun, healthful way to fur-

ther your swimming techniques and endurance. There are few requirements to join; practice is on a regular schedule. There are competitions, local, regional and national, but not all masters choose to compete. Many are in for the joy of the sport; it's something you can do well into old age. (I once competed with an 82-year-old in a mile event.) The camaraderie can be phenomenal, making it a great way to make friends from other clubs. There are groups of masters practicing at most indoor pools.

No matter where you live or how old you are, you can take advantage of this sport for health and fitness and doing it with friends makes it more fun.

Joanne R. Alloway is an author, freelance writer and consultant living in Annapolis. She can be reached at jrwrite@aol.com or www.allowayswords.com

Links

Great Chesapeake Bay Swim:

www.bayswim.com/index
www.active.com/swimming-clinic/annapolis-md/be-more-open-water-swim-clinic-and-practice-swim-2011

Training for open-water swimmers:

-MWR North Severn Pool
Eucalyptus Rd.
410 293-2082
-MWR South Severn Pool
Route 450
410 293-3033

Department of Recreation and Parks

www.aacounty.org/RecParks/swimcenters

Arundel Olympic Swim Center

Riva Road, Annapolis
410 222-7933

North Arundel Aquatic Center

Crain Highway, Glen Burnie
410 222-0090

Severna Park Y/Masters Swimming

www.spyswimming.org

Nine Best Things About Passing the Half Century Mark

By Penelope Folsom

1. You've developed your own style of doing things such as how to dress, what you choose to eat, how you decorate or undecorate your home and even what car you drive or vacation spots you choose. You're comfortable with your decisions and don't care what the world thinks.
2. You know stuff. Lots of stuff. You're the ideal partner in a game of Trivial Pursuit. You've witnessed so much of history you're somewhat of an expert now, even though everyone may not be interested in your vast store of knowledge.
3. There's time now to pursue a dream that you have not had time for before, such as taking a language or learning an instrument. There's even time now to explore opening your own business, the one that you've been thinking of all these years.
4. Children, for the most part, are grown and gone. Good, bad or indifferent, you did the best you could. You can now sit back and enjoy them and their lives and families.
5. You actually have a few hours that you can call your own to pursue whatever leisure activities you choose, be it reading the newspaper through half the morning or taking the time to finish either reading or writing that book you've promised yourself.
6. Decisions come easier. You've been there, done it, you now have the experience to make quick decisions which are usually the right ones for you. That doesn't mean that we still don't agonize over the occasional decision, but now it's easier.
7. There's a good chance you'll be happier and more content as most of the big stuff is behind you. What's done is done and now is the time to enjoy your accomplishments or move on from life's aggravations.
8. It's an age of finally being comfortable and accepting of who you are. Maybe you're still not perfect, but you've gotten comfortable in your own skin and accept the person you've become.
9. You're protective of your time to make it count. It's easier than ever to say "no" when you just plain don't want to do something, be it volunteering for the bake sale or taking care of the kid's dog.

HandyPro helps local resident stay in her home.



Vicky, from Preston, Md., was in and out of the hospital two months ago, only to find that she was diagnosed with ALS and had become wheelchair bound. She was now facing a question that so many are faced with today. Should she live in an assisted living community or nursing home, or can she modify her house so that she can continue living safely at home?

Her question was soon answered by Keith Osterman, president of HandyPro. Within two days of returning from the hospital, Osterman's company installed a wheelchair ramp for Vicky, allowing her to enter and exit her home safely.

According to the US Census Bureau, there are 75 million Americans who are aging in place and who may be asking the same questions. With the current trend, it is estimated that over 106 million Americans will have this concern by 2015.

Keith Osterman started HandyPro Handyman Service that specializes in home modifications because he saw the need of modifying or transforming homes, allowing the elderly to stay home instead of choosing assisted living or nursing home care. "Not only does it make financial sense," Osterman says, "but I understand that most people would prefer to age (with the convenience of independence and dignity) while in their home."

His company is focused on providing individuals and families the convenience of complete accessibility and mobility within their homes.

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Tips for GRANDSITTERS

the grandparents making it clear how frequently they are available to babysit. "Setting limits early on will help you steer clear of misconceptions and unrealistic expectations," says award-winning children's author Karyn Henley at **Grandparents.com**. If you want to be the first call or only on standby in emergency situations, that needs to be clear. Grandparents should also let their children know their schedules so there is no delusion that schedules are 100 percent flexible.

The website suggests that by discussing whether grandparents want to be considered the standby in emergency situations or the first call/part-time caretaker, "sticky situations" can be avoided, preventing scenarios in which the grandparents feel used and abused.

Other guidelines that should be established upfront include: expected rules including preferred bedtimes, allowed and prohibited snacks or foods (especially in the case of allergies), agreed-upon amounts of TV viewing and permitted shows and any behavior that is considered inappropriate and suitable for disciplinary action. Parents and grandparents should have an understanding of what's expected and what response is required in particular scenarios.

Grandparents also need to be honest about what situations may make them uncomfortable and what they can or cannot handle. For example, some parents may be fine with taking their grandkids on fun excursions while others may only feel secure doing activities in the home.

Grandparents should ask for a set of instructions for emergency situations as well as emergency phone numbers. There should also be a signed document from the parents giving medical personnel permission to treat the

child should it become necessary. Parents should take the initiative for making sure the environment in which their child will be watched is properly baby- or child-proofed. Parents have to become experts at getting on their child's level to examine every inch of a place for potential hazards, so this is a must for any child care setting, whether it's grandma's house, the backyard or their own home. Parents should also make it as easy and comfortable for grandparents as possible. For example, a stepstool beside the crib, premade snacks placed prominently in the refrigerator or an extra pillow on the glider in the nursery are the personal touches that could make the difference between a pleasant experience for a grandparent and a disaster. In fact, if meal preparation is part of the deal, that should also be discussed in advance.

Finally, grandparents should not even consider babysitting for a full day or week, let alone an hour, if they are not in good health. Caretakers are often called upon to scurry after a swift toddler, pick up and cradle a crying baby for extended periods of time, and, quite frankly, expend more energy than usual. Mental alertness and a good physical condition are crucial when caring for a little tyke. If a physical ailment significantly inhibits your quickness or response reflexes, think twice about watching a toddler or young child.

Since becoming a grandparent is, by most accounts, the most glorious title one can assume, it's important that families preserve that special claim. With proper boundaries and predetermined expectations, all involved can benefit from the grandparent/babysitter setup. Grandchildren will cherish the time with their grandparents, parents can rest assured that their children are in the best of hands and grandparents can add meaning to their retired, sometimes monotonous lives.

By Leah Lancia

Grandparents now are often more than just the grandparents that we remember. No longer are they just the folks who keep a fully stocked cookie jar 24/7 and visit on birthdays or holidays, spoiling the little ones rotten. Today, grandparents are often part-time caretakers. And more grandparents than ever have the opportunity to have summer visits from the young ones. Not only is it desirable for many sons and daughters to have their parents serve as the babysitter or caretaker while they need help during summer vacation or at other times during the year, it is often an economic necessity as day care can be expensive.

Though having the grandparents babysit can be a win-win situation for everyone involved, i.e., the child is afforded the best care from a family member in a safe and familiar environment, but the grandparent gets the chance to truly bond with the grandchild while staying active. Of course, proper boundaries must be in place for this arrangement to work. Not only will boundaries ensure the child remains safe and secure, disciplined and nurtured properly, but grandparents also need to enforce limits so they do not become overworked.

Whether it's for a day, a week during the summertime or even an hour, guidelines must be determined in advance and followed. These guidelines include

Getting the Most Money for Your Collectibles

By Wayne B. Zussman

Collections of any kind – comic books, records, coins, china, dolls, jewelry – can take on a life of their own. Over time, collectibles provide joy to the collector, who often doesn't anticipate selling them one day. Typically, collectors sell when they downsize their homes, need money or when they want to prevent the collection from falling into the hands of heirs. Even items in the home that aren't part of an organized collection can bring in extra money to the owner. These might include great grandma's vintage Singer sewing machine, pink Depression glassware or an autographed pro sports jersey.

Whatever the situation may be, determining the right price and finding an avenue for selling the collectibles are the two big factors in a successful transaction. Seniors should be especially cautious when selling their collectibles. People who are in the business of buying and selling collectibles are, of course, trying to make the most money they can. Associations that revolve around a specific type of collectible can help seniors find a reliable source. An Internet search will provide a good starting point for this approach.

Because collections and family heirlooms hold emotional value for the collector and/or family members involved in the sale, Consumer Reports' Shop Smart magazine recommends a thorough information-gathering approach to selling:

Get some free advice. Many antiques and collectibles dealers are willing to authenticate pieces free of charge. Call a shop in your area to see if it offers this service. Resist the temptation to sell your valuables to the dealer without verifying the price they quote, or you may not get the best deal.

Consult price lists. To ascertain the real value of your item, Consumer Reports recommends visiting your local library and consulting collectible price guides, such as the "Kovels' Antiques & Collectibles Price Guide" and "Collectibles Price Guide." Note that www.

kovels.com is highly recommended by many sources.

Determine the going rate. Don't assume that the price listed in the guides is the maximum you can expect for your collectible. The antiques and collectibles market is subject to fads and items frequently go up and down in value based on demand. To determine the going rate for your collectible, find out what it's selling for on eBay, Kovels.com and other online dealers.

Pay for an appraisal. If you find that you have an item worth hundreds of dollars, Consumer Reports says it may be worth paying an expert to appraise it. To determine a reasonable asking price, try to find an appraiser who is an expert in your area of collectibles.

Choose your method of sale. Selling your collectibles through a dealer will likely cause you the least amount of hassle, but dealers generally offer 20 to 50 percent less than so-called "book

value." Auctions typically pay better, particularly if you have a large collection that contains some high-value items, but you'll have to pay a 10 to 15 percent commission on the selling price. Other options include advertising online or in collector's publications and selling your item at a collector's show.

The best way to make a good transaction is to know the true value of what you have and find a reputable dealer who will not pressure you. Be patient when making decisions about cashing in on your collections and valuables. Getting accurate information about your collection from professional sources can help alleviate the stress of knowing if you are getting the best price.

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Don't Wait to Hydrate

*** Dehydration can occur in just 30 minutes of regular exercise if the temperature or humidity is elevated.**

By Leah Lancione

Everyone knows the famous line, “water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink” from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Well, in the tale and in life, water is necessary for survival. And regrettably, many people do not drink enough water. As a result, they remain continually dehydrated. Being dehydrated doesn't just mean you are experiencing thirst; significant health problems can occur when the body is deprived of an adequate daily supply of water. The body needs water for proper organ function, lubrication of joints and muscles, flushing of toxins, regulation of body temperature, the passage of oxygen and nutrients to cells and more. Skin, hair, the brain and virtually all systems of the body, depend on sufficient water intake.

According to WebMD (www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/feel-your-best-with-water), it is vital that people replace the fluids they lose. The article explains that many people are walking around moderately dehydrated and, at a minimum, need to drink eight to 12 cups of water daily. Depending on someone's height, weight and activity level, more water may be necessary. In addition, when it's warmer and more humid outside, causing the body to sweat, or during exercise, it's important to increase water consumption. If that increase doesn't occur, the body is susceptible to cramps, fatigue, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. The article reports

that children and older adults are at a greater risk for dehydration.

Moreover, it is important to keep the body hydrated before the feeling of being thirsty arises, because by then, the body may already be dehydrated. Dehydration can occur in just 30 minutes of regular exercise if the temperature or humidity is elevated. One to two quarts of fluid can be sweated out of the body during normal exercise in a mild climate.

The Institute of Vibrant Living's website (www.theivl.org) says that “next to air, water is the single most essential element for life.” And, “drinking plenty of pure water is one of the absolute best things you can do for yourself on the road to self-care.”

The amount of water needed tends to vary depending on the expert, but the common recommendation from nutritionists and doctors alike is to drink at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water a day, and according to the American College of Sports Medicine, eight to 10 ounces of fluid every 15 minutes during exercise.

Height, weight and exercise are not the only determinants of how much water should be consumed daily. Diet is also a factor since the human body gets water from food as well. According to an article on the Mayo Clinic's website (www.mayoclinic.com) “food usually accounts for 20 percent of your total fluid intake, so if you consume two liters of water or other beverages a day, you will typically replace your lost fluids.”



The IVL also reveals that, the older we get, the less sensitive we are to our “thirst mechanism.” Therefore, it's important to drink on a predetermined schedule. So, if you're supposed to drink eight 8-ounce glasses a day, and you are awake more or less 16 hours a day, that means it is necessary to drink a glass of water every two hours. A good way to ensure the daily “quota” of water ingestion is fulfilled is to try keeping a pitcher or jug of water in the refrigerator that must be drained before bedtime.

To calculate your individual prescription for water intake, visit www.medgadgets.info/h2o/waterf.htm and then go fill up your glass. The days of walking around dehydrated should be over.

Step out of your comfort zone and see what you can achieve

It's Never Too Late for This

By Terry Portis

I am never quite sure how to respond when someone tells me, "The time for that has passed me by." If I agree, is that insulting, questioning the person's abilities? If I disagree, am I questioning whether or not a person knows their own life? Usually, I just sort of nod, but not too enthusiastically.

The truth is that sometimes people give up too soon and too easily. Dreams and ideals that flourished in our 20s are crushed by the next 30 or 40 years of working too hard and too long on things we are not that thrilled by.

There are two things in particular I want to focus on that are very often pushed aside in the noise and tumult in our lives. Those are broken relationships and daring to do new things.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO REPAIR A RELATIONSHIP

We don't remember when we stopped talking to our friend or family member. At one point we couldn't imagine going a week or a day without checking in with them. The relationship meant something, and life was better because that person was in it. Something happened -- a disagreement, unkind words, hurt feelings -- and the relationship seems lost forever.

David McCullough's excellent book on the life of John Adams gives some fascinating details on the relationship between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Their ability to work closely together and their mutual respect was known throughout the United States and Europe.

Differing ideas about the French Revolution would greatly dam-

age their relationship. Their published writings on the topic were polar opposites, and they publicly criticized each other. This dispute and open criticism led to two decades when they did not speak to each other. It appeared the relationship was over.

At the urging of Benjamin Rush, a physician and fellow co-signer of the Declaration of Independence, they began to correspond on a regular basis. They continued to write for 14 years before they both died on the same day in 1826. Rush simply reminded them that they had shared some remarkable hardships and successes together, and that these were more important than the conflict that had driven them apart.

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO DO SOMETHING DARING

Three years ago a 76-year-old man decided to fulfill his dream, and climbed Mount Everest. Given the grueling training and the danger involved, this is remarkable. I am sure people told him that the time for climbing Mount Everest had passed him by, and most people would have nodded in agreement.

We have many wonderful examples of people who have done something

daring later in life. At 77 an artist by the name of Grandma Moses decided to start painting. At 65 Winston Churchill became prime minister of England and dared to lead his country in a five-year fight for its freedom.

Albert Schweitzer ran a hospital in Africa when he was 89, at 82 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe finished writing his famous Faust, and John Glenn became the oldest person to go into space at 77.

So, today, the time is ripe to pick up the phone, or a paint brush, because it's never too late!

Dr. Terry Portis is director of the Center on Aging at Anne Arundel Community College. He holds a doctorate in counseling psychology and can be reached at tdportis@aacc.edu



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SHELF *Esteem*

With a little time and some artful arranging, your shelves can become an eye-catching focus of interest in a room

By Gina G Courbron

Your books tell stories and so should your bookshelves. Along with your collectibles, memorabilia and framed photos, they give visitors and guests a glimpse of who you are -- your interests, talents and hobbies. So with a little time and some artful arranging, your shelves can become an eye-catching focus of interest in a room, instead of an 'edge to edge' arrangement of books lined up on every shelf. All vertical lines on bookshelves can be boring and not warrant a second glance. Similarly, a jumbled assortment of odds and ends competing for space on every shelf will project an uninspiring and cluttered appearance.

The key lies in combining creative collections of decorative items, greenery and artwork with a well-planned selection of books. The goal is to compose a balanced arrangement that warrants a second look. Arranging a bookshelf takes a little finesse and is quite similar to decorating a room. Balance, color, texture and height all need to be considered, as well as adding some 'unexpected' items that make visitors want to look closer.

Are you ready to enhance the shelf life of your bookcases? Here are some easy, shelf decorating tips to get you started:

- First, take everything off the shelves. Start with a clean slate. Look at each book and decide which you want to keep---those you love and use---and donate or give away the rest (have boxes handy for the latter). B.I.G., located at 2000 B Capital Drive, Annapolis is a good choice for donated books.
- Gather other shelf 'potentials' from

around the house---collections, memorabilia, art objects, candles, framed photos, plants---and group according to color, finish, size or theme.

- Books used regularly should be shelved vertically for easy access and can be grouped according to author or subject. An additional storage option for 16" shelves is to arrange two rows of books on each shelf. Place shorter books against the back wall and another row of taller books along the front edge of the shelf to hide the ones behind.

- Color, size and texture need to be considered when arranging books and accessories on shelves. To add emphasis and interest, paint the back wall of bookshelves a deeper color. Coordinate the color of books with the color of accessories you are using on the same shelf.

- Keep things in balance so no one section of the bookcase appears weighted down or repetitive. Instead of placing groups of books directly under similarly arranged books, alternate stacks of books horizontally and vertically. Put larger books and accessories on lower shelves and lighter items on upper shelves.

- Vary height and depth. Arrangements are more interesting if everything isn't at the same level. Stacks of books, boxes and baskets make perfect risers for displaying accessories. Place items in front or back of other items for added dimension. For instance, place a framed photo or small accessory in front of a row of books.

- As in other accessorizing around the house, allow for some empty pockets of space. It not only gives the eye a chance to rest, the visual 'pause' it provides creates a greater emphasis on the accessorized spaces.

- Add a personal touch by displaying a few golf-related objects next to or on golf books. Place antique toys alongside children's books, etc.
- Remove jackets from hard cover books, but leave covers on visual or 'coffee table' books (and those that are collectible, rare or have sentimental value).
- When selecting book ends, consider the size of the books. For large or heavy volumes, choose larger book ends for a more balanced and consistent look. Use a horizontal stack of books as book ends on one or both sides of a group of vertical books
- Consider hanging artwork or accessories on the back wall above bookshelf.

Adding it all together, instead of looking at your newly arranged bookshelves and seeing individual elements, you should be looking at a composition of well-chosen and meaningful pieces that will give guests a snapshot of what's important to you and your family. Congratulations, you have raised your level of shelf consciousness!

Gina G Courbron can be reached at GG Design Inspirations, ginag@ggdesigninspirations.com

Outlook's Bits & Bytes

To prevent weeds from taking over your garden this summer, surround your plants with layers of overlapping newspaper. Top with mulch and enjoy the lazy days of summer doing something other than weeding. Check out **NorthCoastGardening.com** for more info.

10 BEST

Cool-Off Treats for a **HOT** Summer Day



Just short of dangling your legs in the neighbor's pool, one of these suggestions might help you get a quick cool-down this summer.

1. Keep a supply of homemade popsicles tucked in the freezer; they're not just for kids. And you can use whatever ingredients you like, including a fruity yogurt or any fruit juice that you have on hand.
2. Try chilled watermelon cut into bite-sized pieces or whirl pieces in the blender with a few ice cubes for a slushy cold treat.
3. Lemonade that you've made with fresh-squeezed lemons makes a cool treat. (Easy recipe: three cups water, three lemons juiced, 1/4 to 1 cup sugar, your choice as to how sweet. Combine and chill.)
4. Homemade iced tea that you keep chilled and ready in the refrigerator is a welcome no-calorie treat. Serve over ice cubes made from the lemonade above.
5. Have frozen blueberries or grapes on hand for a quick pick-me-up. Kids love these too.
6. Make a fruit slush out of oranges or peaches or bananas, or any combination of your favorite fruits. Add one part milk or yogurt to four parts fruit and a handful of ice cubes. Whirl it altogether in the blender for a refreshing and healthful drink.
7. You know how we're never getting enough water. Well in the heat, now's the time. Help yourself to a mega-mug of water with lots of ice and a slice of orange or lemon or lime to perk it up.
8. Eat smaller meals like a cool fruit salad for lunch or chilled shrimp and a pasta salad for dinner.
9. Iced coffee with whipped skim milk

on the top and a dusting of cinnamon. If calories aren't an issue, add a couple of tablespoons of vanilla ice cream.

10. And for the pièce de résistance there is nothing like homemade ice cream. An electric ice cream maker is easy to use, not expensive and you can create your own recipe. To save calories, try using whole milk or nonfat vanilla yogurt instead of cream. Make a basic vanilla and add fruit such as blueberries, chopped peaches or strawberries.

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BE HEELED!

Going barefoot or wearing sandals can aggravate many foot problems.

By Melissa Conroy

Summer means it's a great time to pull out the sandals, break out the flip-flops and walk around barefoot. Unfortunately, lighter footwear can reveal things we'd rather not expose, such as scaly feet, cracked toenails and other unsightly podiatric ailments. Our feet take a tremendous beating, and this along with age, can give us feet that we'd rather cover up with socks than unveil in sandals. Unsightly foot problems are both more noticeable and more prevalent in the warm summer months. Thankfully, callus-free, smooth feet can be relatively easy to achieve with some simple at-home steps. If you have a lot of problems with dry, cracked skin on your feet and are embarrassed to let your toes run free without shoes or socks, here are some tips for healthy-looking feet.

First of all, know that if you have chronic dry feet, going barefoot or wearing sandals a lot can aggravate the problem because going without footwear draws moisture out of your skin. I tend to go barefoot almost constantly in the summer and when I do, my feet usually end up drying out and peeling terribly. Keeping something on your feet during the day whether it is socks, light slippers or shoes can help your feet retain some of the skin's natural moisture.

Speaking of shoes, badly fitting ones can cause foot problems which lead to calluses and other rough spots. Well-fitting, comfortable shoes will go a long way toward keeping your feet smooth. When shoe shopping, it is better to go later in the day because your feet naturally swell a little bit during a normal day so a shoe that fits comfortably first thing in the morning may be a little tight by dinner time. While we may talk about "breaking in" a pair of shoes, the reality is that shoes should feel

good on your feet when you are trying them on at the store. While some shoes like Ugg boots do stretch, most shoes are made of material that will not stretch or expand much, so a tight, uncomfortable shoe is likely to remain so.

Once shoe problems are solved, it's time to give your feet a little pampering. You have a number of options to slough away dry skin, soothe cracked heels and smooth off calluses. If your feet are really troublesome, a good pedicure at your local salon might be just the ticket. (And yes, men, you can get a pedicure too.). During a pedicure, the technician will work buffing away roughness and tidying up wayward cuticles. In fact, for the adventurous sort, you could try a fish pedicure. You sit with your feet in a bowl of warm water while a school of tiny toothless carp called Doctor Fish swarm around your feet munching on your dry skin. While some states ban this procedure, it is quite popular among pedicure lovers who claim that a fish pedicure is tickly fun that leaves their feet baby smooth. However, anyone with diabetes or poor circulation should check with their doctor before scheduling any pedicure, fishy or not.

If the idea of spending \$25 or so on a professional pedicure doesn't thrill you, you can do one at home. There are a number of foot-soak and foot-scrub products at your local drugstore, so investigate a few, particularly ones with peppermint for a tingly, refreshing experience. Either take a long bath or shower or let your feet soak in a bowl of warm water to soften them up, then reach for a foot scrub to slough off dead skin. You can purchase a ready-made scrub or use a handful of plain cornmeal. Take the time to really work the scrub in your skin, around your toes and in problem areas.

Once scrubbed, your feet may need more heavy-duty treatment to take off really stubborn calluses. Pumice stones are perennial favorites for smoothing away calluses, but sometimes they are not enough for particularly tough, hard feet. There are now cheese-grater style callus removers on the market that you may or may not want to search out.

After being soaked, scrubbed, and grated, your feet deserve a thick anointing of a rich moisturizing cream. Here are some of my favorites for dry feet:

-Mary Kay Extra Emollient Night Cream: This is part of Mary Kay's Satin Hands Collection. The emollient is super-rich and long-lasting.

-Bag Balm: As the name suggests, this was developed by dairy farmers to rub on cracked cow udders. It is good on feet, so smooth it on and try not to moo.

-No-Crack Super Hand Cream: Developed by a pharmacist, this cream will have your feet baby-soft in no time.

Once you have your feet liberally slathered in a thick moisturizer, you need to lock it in place. If you just start walking around after putting on moisturizer, the carpet will absorb most of it, not your feet. At the very least, put on a pair of socks. In fact, you can buy socks that are impregnated with moisturizers like the Airplus for Her Aloe Infused Socks that Walgreens carries. These socks will smooth more lubricants on your feet, helping soften them. In fact, a great bedtime ritual is rubbing moisturizer onto your feet, then putting on socks.

With regular care, your feet will be softer, feel more comfortable, and look a whole lot better. Heel cracks will disappear, calluses will be smoothed away and you'll have a pair of feet that you'll be proud to show off at the next pool party.

Leave more than you take



Ask the Undertaker

By Ryan Helfenbein

www.LastingTributesFuneralCare.com

Many of you remember the 1950-1960s sitcom *Leave it to Beaver*. It depicted the ideal suburban family. Everyone got along, everyone loved each other and there were no estrangements or broken families. Unfortunately, as hard as we all strive to mimic the Cleavers, we all have our imperfections. As a matter of fact, according to a UK news article published in 2010, one in three children today lives with a single parent or stepparent. And according to *USA Today* more and more Americans are moving from one state to another each year. And now, with the rise of cremation this creates challenges for an undertaker due to a legal document that is necessary before cremation can take place – a cremation authorization. More importantly, who can authorize an undertaker to move forward with cremation?

News articles often warn consumers of the “reluctant approach” a funeral service provider might take when a family chooses cremation. It leads consumers to believe that undertakers are just looking to profit. Reluctance could be more likely due to the finality of cremation. If a family chooses burial, the individual can be disinterred and moved. There is no recourse with cremation. The cremation authorization protects the funeral home and, in turn, protects the family by having them initial and sign off on numerous steps in the cremation process, including a hold harmless agreement in case a family member has a change of mind after the procedure is done. No problem, we sign a document, put a couple of initials down and “voila,” Pop can be cremated. So what is the big issue? The issue lies in who is the appropriate person to sign the authorization.

According to the Maryland State Board of Morticians, if an individual has a prepaid, preplanned contract with a funeral provider designating that the individual has elected the disposition of cremation, the

cremation authorization can be signed by any representative of the family. What if this was not done? Then we have to go down the line of who is legally deemed the authorizing agent. Starting with the actual decedent, via a prepaid preplanned contract, it then would fall on the spouse. After the spouse, the responsibility falls in order on adult children, parent, adult sibling, a person acting as a representative of the decedent under a signed authorization of the decedent, guardian of the decedent at the time of the decedent’s death or, in the absence of any person previously mentioned, any other person willing to assume the responsibility to act as the authorizing agent.

Here’s an example. Mom passes away, without a prepaid preplanned contract. Dad would then sign the cremation authorization. Now when dad passes way without having a prepaid, preplanned contract, each child is going to need to sign the authorization. If children lived in another state or country, the family will need to track them down to acquire their signature or at least a written statement giving authorization to cremate dad. What if a family cannot locate a child? This is where you will begin to see your undertaker begin to sweat a bit. The funeral home can choose to not move forward

with cremation or require that the family sign a document stating they did everything in their power in an attempt to locate this individual and that they will not hold the funeral home or crematory responsible.

If I have cremation listed as the method of disposition in my will, won’t that take care of it? While it is not a bad thought to record your preference in the will, not once have I met with someone who brings the will along to make plans when someone passes away. Regardless of what the will may state, a cremation authorization still must be signed and completed by the designated authorizing agents. If it is documenting plans that you want, my advice would be to acquire a prepaid, preplanned contract from a certified planning counselor. They will be sure that not only are your details planned and paid for, but documented in such a way that they are guaranteed to be carried out exactly as stated in the plan. This would then eliminate the potentially daunting cremation authorization process that is required if this is not carried out in advance.

It’s unfortunate that we all haven’t been blessed with a Cleaver-type family. Even in the closest families, however, we should do all we can to protect each other when final decisions are made, especially when it involves something as permanent as cremation.

Ryan, 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 reached at 410 897-4852 or Ryan@LastingTributesFuneralCare.com

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BOSTON'S WALK INTO THE REVOLUTION: A HISTORICAL SHORT GETAWAY

By Peggy Kiefer

Living in the historical city of Annapolis, or the surrounding metropolitan area, it is sometimes hard to remember that Boston, Mass., had a vital role in the forming of our nation.

Provincialism being what it is, on the other hand, if you listen to Boston historians, they often forget the Bay State was not the only one important in our nation's history.

But having spent a recent short five-day trip to Boston with a Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) program entitled "Boston's Walk into the Revolution," much of what we learned tied together the history of Boston, Philadelphia, Annapolis and Washington into a cohesive understanding of the American Revolution.

Walking the Freedom Trail was an important part of the program and gave us all an understanding of Boston's role in the Revolution, and also a good physical workout. If you like walking, Boston is for you.

Enthusiastic lecturers, including one who wrote the book *The Complete Guide to Boston's Freedom Trail*, which was given to all the participants, charged the air with enthusiasm for our daily adventures. Most days began with a lecture on such subjects as "Roots of the American Revolution," "The War Begins," "The Siege of Boston" and "The USS Constitution." These lectures were followed by a visit to most of the places mentioned by the instructor.

An introductory tour of historic Boston via charter bus got us acquainted with many of the areas of the city. We rode the subway together and walked part of the Freedom Trail from Boston Commons to the Old State House. Visiting the Paul Revere house brought back memories of the famous poem by Longfellow. (We also learned

that there is much fantasy in that poem.) Visiting historic Faneuil Hall was enhanced by a talk by a National Park Service ranger. We then had free time to explore the large area on our own and to shop for souvenirs.

Riding the ferry from the city to our hotel in Charlestown became an almost daily event for us. We had been given a transportation pass, which was good on the buses, ferries and subways. This was used to great advantage, as Boston is not a driving city, very much like Annapolis.

If you like to sample a city's restaurants, historic sites and other attractions that can't be included in a short program, free time is given for this option. A few of us decided to visit the John Adams National Historic Park, which included a tour of the birthplaces of both John Adams and his son, John Quincy Adams. A docent led the tour of the principal home of John and Abigail Adams. If you have ever toured the William Paca or Hammond Harwood historical homes in Annapolis, you would probably recognize many of the artifacts in the homes.

Other members of the group chose to visit the John F. Kennedy Library or just explore more of the city on their own.

Rounding out this very busy and educational five days was a visit to Bunker Hill, which you may remember from your high school history days as the place where the famous order, "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes," was given. Following this visit was a bus trip to the important historic towns of Lexington and Concord. This excursion was preceded by a lecture on the role of both these towns at the beginning of the American Revolution.

On the last morning of our

program, we took a narrated tour of the Charlestown Navy Yard, where the USS Constitution (known as "Old Ironsides") is docked. This ship is arguably called "the most celebrated ship in American history." One of the Navy's first vessels, it was launched in October 1797 as a protection for American merchant ships.

We had a very intensive tour of the USS Constitution given by an enthusiastic, knowledgeable young naval officer. We climbed up and down ladders and ducked our heads due to low clearances, just like the sailors of days gone by. A visit to the USS Constitution museum was a good ending to the trip, allowing us time to digest what we had learned and to buy last-minute souvenirs.

If you are an aficionado of the American Revolution, and enjoy immersing yourself in history, this program is a short, intense way to satisfy these interests.

Peggy grew up in the Philadelphia and Annapolis areas and has been a docent in historic homes in Annapolis. Returning often, she now lives in Escondido, Calif., and can be reached at zinkiefer@aol.com

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My daughter advised me that she and her husband have agreed to separate. I am saddened by the news and also concerned that my husband and I may not be able to continue our visits with our grandchildren. What can we do?"

Worried Grandparents

Dear Worried Grandparents:

Before taking any legal action, you need to determine whether you and your husband will be denied access to your grandchildren. You may be able to work out a visitation schedule with the parents. In fact, they may welcome your invitation so that they can pursue activities on their own while their child is with trusted caretakers like yourselves. If you are unable to agree on a visitation schedule, maybe the parents would agree to see a mediator in an attempt to obtain a visitation agreement which is acceptable to all parties.

If mediation fails as well, you do have a right to seek relief from the courts. Since 1991, Maryland grandparents have had a statutory right to file a petition seeking reasonable visitation with a grandchild. That does not mean that the court is bound to grant you visitation. Rather, you just have a forum to present your request for visitation.

Although Maryland's grandparent visitation statute allows a court to consider a petition for reasonable visitation by grandparents, and the power to grant such visitation if it finds visitation to be in the best interests of the grandchild, grandparents visitation rights are not mandated. Since the passage of the grandparents visitation statute, Maryland courts interpreting that statute have held that given parents' constitutional right to make decisions concerning the care, custody and control of their children, the grandparent must first prove that a parent is an unfit person, or that exceptional

circumstances exist which indicate that lack of grandparent visitation would have a deleterious effect upon the child, before a child's best interests are considered.

In light of that high hurdle, it may be advisable for you to attempt to reach a visitation agreement with your grandchild's parents.

My granddaughter recently advised me that she intends to become a doctor. I am thrilled for her, but wonder how her parents will be able to afford to send her to college and medical school. How can I help?

Concerned Grandmother

Dear Concerned Grandmother:

I can understand your desire to help. Unless a grandchild's parents are well off, financial help from grandparents will most likely be welcome. According to **Collegeboard.com** the average cost to attend a public college in 2009 and 2010, was \$7,020, and the cost to attend a private college was considerably more expensive, averaging \$26,273 a year, with medical school running appreciably more.

Before you agree to making gifts for your grandchild's education, however, you need to consider your own financial position, as well as the tax ramifications of the gifts and your overall estate plan.

First consider whether you have the financial resources you will need to meet your future expenses and still contribute toward your grandchild's college education. If you determine that you do, then you need to consider how giving money to pay for your grandchild's college education will affect your tax situation.

Once you have determined that you have the financial resources to meet your future expenses then consider how

gifting will impact your tax situation. Gift tax laws affect the person who is giving the gift, not the person receiving it. Although most people giving gifts do not have to pay taxes on the gifts that they give, it is important that you understand gift laws when making gifts. That is, a gift by you to your grandchild or anyone else, in 2011, which does not exceed the sum of \$13,000 or \$26,000 for joint gifts given by married couples, will not count as a taxable gift to the giver, nor does a gift tax return have to be filed. Furthermore, under current law, each individual may make up to \$1 million dollars in total taxable gifts during his or her lifetime, before paying gift taxes on the taxable gifts distributed.

You also need to consider whether giving to one grandchild and not others will affect your overall estate plan. That is, do you want to treat all of your grandchildren equally?

If you decide that helping to pay for your grandchild's college education is an acceptable choice for you, there are a number of ways to do so. One such option is to establish a 529 college savings plan for your grandchild. There are generally two types of 529 plans offered by states. For example, Maryland offers a Prepaid College Trust 529 Plan and a College Investment Plan. Before investing in either plan, however, you should visit the website **www.collegesavingsmd.org** and consult with a financial planner.

*Valerie A. Rocco, is an estate planning, probate and elder law attorney with more than 30 years experience. Her responses to these questions are based upon Maryland law. Ms. Rocco may be contacted at 410 266-1009 (Annapolis) or 410 997-4228 (Columbia), or visit her website at **www.SeniorsAdviser.com***



CONFESSIONS OF A FIRST MATE: THINGS I LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

By Leslie J. Payne

We were going to celebrate! My husband and I were on our sailboat, anchored in one of our favorite anchorages. We planned to commemorate my birthday and our arrival in Long Island Sound with marinated chicken cooked to juicy perfection on our grill. It would be a meal to remember! And it was. A sudden squall forced us to run the motor and drive into the wind so we wouldn't drag anchor. As we sat in the cockpit, pummeled by rain, we ate cold beans out of the can. Definitely a birthday dinner to remember.

When Richard and I joined in a mid-life marriage, I became a "Mrs." and a "first mate." It's been a wonderful adventure and, at times, an unexpected challenge. If you are considering adding a boat – or a captain – to your life, allow me to share a few things I've discovered along the way.

LEAVE SCHEDULES ON SHORE. On a boat, the best way to get into a bad situation is to have a schedule you must keep. Weather is to be respected. If a storm is coming or the heat is too much, don't head out. A weather radar system is worth the money. On a four-month cruise, we never got caught in bad weather. I was

grateful. Here in Annapolis where the Chesapeake haze prevents good weather watching, having weather radar is truly valuable.

HAVE A GOOD STASH OF BOOKS AND GAMES. One thing I love most about cruising is having time to read. It's the perfect form of entertainment while at anchor, under sail, or waiting for the weather to clear. Many yacht clubs and waterfront towns have book exchanges: leave a book, take a book. It's a great way to add reading variety at no cost. Take along games like Bananagrams, backgammon or cards to add some fun to rainy days. As a last resort, a DVD player and a good movie are a great treat.

ENJOY THE TEAMWORK. Time on a boat takes teamwork and can be great for strengthening your relationship. A good captain is knowledgeable and in charge, not a screaming maniac. If a docking endeavor didn't go well, discuss how you both could handle it better next time. Consult each other on decisions like destinations and expenses so both partners have ownership.

AS FIRST MATE, STAND BY AND LEARN. At least be familiar

with how the engine should sound and look. During one cruise, we were plagued with engine problems. My husband could not hear the high pitch sounds indicating something was wrong. I heard the squeaks, knew it sounded different and spoke up, preventing a bad situation from becoming life threatening.

WHEN TOGETHER, ALLOW SPACE. Living on a boat for months at a time or just the weekend brings couples together, sometimes closer than you'd like. Give each other space, even while you're still in view. Listen to the water and wind. Let nature talk to you. When you do talk to each other, cheer each other on and give grace when needed.

FOOD TASTES BETTER IN THE COCKPIT. It doesn't really matter what you eat, everything tastes better eaten in the cockpit. Keep food simple. Prepare what you can before leaving home or the dock for an easier mealtime. Salads on windy days do not work. Kids with chocolate chip cookies usually leave a mess underfoot. Food usually served hot can taste fine without the warmth, especially if it's hot outside. And nothing beats a cup of fresh coffee while watching the morning mist on the water.

ADAPT TO PHYSICAL CHALLENGES. If you live with aches and pains at home, they'll be along with you on the water. Boating stresses the body as you work to keep balance, lean down into the refrigerator or help pull up the sails. Living with chronic pain, I continually need to assess how my body is handling boat life.

TAKE MEDICATIONS ON SCHEDULE. Add extra foam padding or pillow top covers to your bunk for sleep comfort. Take time for stretches and massage. Allow time for rest, to sit and watch what's around you. Let your aches help you slow down to appreciate the journey, not just hurry through it.

USE YOUR SENSE OF ADVENTURE. Things that seem routine at home, may take on a sense of adventure. Many cruising boats don't have freezers, so a walk into town for ice cream becomes a grand event. Other things are far from routine, like going up the mast. I don't like heights, so the first time I went up for a repair, I pretended I was on *The Amazing Race*, a reality show where con-

testants complete daredevil challenges. It worked, and I've been up the mast several more times since!

KEEP YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR. The noon heat was intense, the flies abundant and the wind nonexistent. Our engine had failed and we were adrift on the brown water of the Delaware Bay. Our towboat was more than an hour from arriving. My positive attitude evaporated, unlike the sweat streaming down my body.

With another swing of the fly swatter, Richard calmly commented, "When did our beautiful New England cruise turn into the African Queen?" His gentle humor caused me to collapse into giggles at our miserable situation. It would have been so much easier to curse and complain, but his good humor helped lighten our load. A kind word, a quick joke and a lighthearted attitude can make all the difference in times of stress.

APPRECIATING THINGS AT HOME. During winter, our 1,100-square foot home can begin to

feel cramped. After time out on the boat, we return and our condo has grown to palatial dimensions.

The last time we lived aboard, grocery shopping took some effort. We climbed in the dingy, motored to shore, walked a mile to the store, shopped, loaded our groceries into backpacks and our little cart, hiked the mile back, loaded up the dingy, pattered back to the boat, and unloaded groceries on board – all while it was raining. It took effort, but was also an adventure we shared. Since then, I never take jumping in the car and running to the store for granted.

ENJOY THE MOMENT. Each day, treasures abound on the water: fascinating wildlife, artistic sunsets, misty morning sunrises, perfect sailing conditions, towns to explore and people to meet. Even things that don't go as planned make for a good story later. Yes, it might be more comfortable to stay on land, but where's the fun in that? Live your life!

Leslie lives, writes and sails from Annapolis. She invites you to visit her blog, "Living With Payne," at <http://livingwithpayne.blogspot.com/>

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IT'S POSSIBLE



GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

EUCHRE - Not Just for the Midwest

By Cindy Rott

What the heck is a euchre? Those who know are probably smiling fondly while those who don't know might not -- sigh-- ever find out. Commonly played in the Midwest, sometimes even out here in Maryland, this card game was most probably introduced to this country through German settlers in Pennsylvania. Rules vary around the world, but the American version usually uses only 24 cards of a regular card deck: the nines, tens, jacks, queens, kings and aces. Euchre is easy to learn and fun with friends since both witty conversation and a strategic game can be had simultaneously.

It's a four-player game, so find some friends. The goal is to be the first partnership to score 10 points. The jack of the trump suit is the most valuable card, a jack of the same color is the second highest, the ace of the trump suit is the third highest followed by trump king, queen, ten and nine.

Partners sit across from each other and each person is dealt five cards. The remaining four cards are put in the center with only the top card face up. The three remaining cards are 'buried' for the hand.

BIDDING

Player to the left of the dealer has first choice whether to play the card in the

middle as trump or not, if he declines, the choice moves to the next player on the left and continues clockwise to determine who wants to use the face-up card's suit as trump. Regardless of who "orders" it up, the dealer picks it up and places it in his hand, and then discards a card. If all four players pass without "ordering" the card up, the card is turned over and a second round takes place, again beginning with the player on the left and going around. On the player's turn they may pick which suit they would like to be trump. If no player bids, the cards are shuffled and redealt. The question is can your partnership win at least three hands, also called a tricks. If you don't, you will be euchred!

PLAY

Once trump is established, the player to the left of the dealer leads by playing any card from his hand in the middle face up. A good strategy could be to play the highest card that is not of the trump suit. Play moves around the table with each player following the suit of the lead card, if possible. Highest card of the lead suit wins, unless a trump card was played. In that case the highest trump card wins the hand also called a trick. The player who wins the trick leads in the next trick.

SCORING

The partners that picked the trump suit score one point for taking three tricks. They score a bonus point (two total) if they take all five tricks. But if they fail to take three tricks, they are "euchred" and the defenders score two points. It is very bad to be euchred, and immediately calls for some good natured teasing.

Points can be kept track of using all of the five cards. A black five is placed face down on the other black five, same with the reds. Every time the red team scores, one suit designation is uncovered, until someone wins with all 10 showing.

Partners can also choose to play "alone" and score more if they are successful. These details can be found online at whiteknucklecards.com I don't want to overwhelm you on your first euchre experience. The best way to learn to play is to find someone who knows how. Ask around you'll be surprised who knows and loves this game.

Cindy can often be found through the summer months sitting by the pool playing cards with friends. She can be reached at Cindy@Out-LookbytheBay.com

The Bay THEATRE Company

APPROACHES TEN YEARS OF SUCCESS

By Tricia Herban

A year ago, Janet Luby assumed the artistic directorship of the Bay Theatre here in Annapolis, taking full responsibility for choosing and presenting the 2010-2011 season. Under Janet's leadership, performances such as *Beyond Therapy* and *The Foreigner* were quickly sold out and three out of the four plays for the season received the prestigious Helen Hayes recommendation, and actor Bill Largess received a Helen Hayes nomination for his role in *The Foreigner*. Critical acclaim from the region has been generous and BTC is now recognized as "a DC theater in Annapolis."

Going into its 10th year, the Bay Theatre remains committed to its self-described mission of "producing plays of superb quality and richness which appeal to audiences of diverse ages and cultures and to giving working opportunities to theater artists to practice this ancient and beautiful craft." The company has developed strong relationships with actors and directors in the mid-Atlantic region, regu-

larly drawing on talent from Washington and New York.

Luby is at the center of the action, both as artistic director and as a performing actress.

"I try to perform once each season to keep me intimately connected to the art, theatre and audience. Acting helps me keep a balance with the bigger picture job of being artistic director for the rest of the year." She notes "It is a privilege to serve in this capacity, to connect with the community and to meet people who want to be a part of Bay Theatre and who share this vital commitment to the dramatic arts."

Looking ahead to the coming season, Janet says, "I think the season will be somewhat different in that the plays have a bit more depth. I have chosen them very carefully because I feel it is essential that we offer our audiences the opportunity to join in the human journey and to experience life's great moments." October's drama, *Wit*, will be followed by two comedies, *Becky's New Car at Christmas* and *Love Letters* early in the new year. and the season will close with the biographical play about Emily Dickinson, *The Belle of Amherst*.

New developments at the theater include a children's show for the very first time which will run all summer, a choice of three- or four-play subscriptions, tiered pricing, 24-hour ticket or-

dering through Instantseats, donor benefits and a Newsletter, The BTC BUZZ. The Bay Theatre website (www.baytheatre.org) is a convenient source for season subscription and performance information and offers a direct link to Instantseats. And for the very latest on BTC, Facebook carries current reviews and fast-breaking news.

With consistent audience growth and fine reviews, The Bay Theatre Company is moving confidently into its 10th year. Janet Luby has established a fine record. As she says, "Theater is a living medium and our professional actors bring it to life. Our goal is to enhance the quality of life in Annapolis, thereby strengthening the entire arts community."

Tricia Herban an avid patron of the arts can be reached at triciab@erols.com

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Are You Boring?



“A finished person is a boring person.”

-Anna Quindlen

By Victoria Duncan

“So, who do you know, the bride or the groom?”

Sounds like a nice, open-ended question, right? Yup, Sara thought so too. She knew that asking questions that require more than a yes or no were a good tip for initiating small talk at a social function. Indeed, this question prompted the longest response -- seven words -- from the guest sitting at her right that she would receive from her futile attempts at engaging him in conversation at the wedding party.

“The groom’s father and I work together,” he answered.

“Oh, are you a teacher also?”

“Yes.”

“Hmmm. What do you teach?”

“Algebra.”

“Oh my! That was never my forte! I guess it must be challenging to get through to some students like me who always found numbers unfriendly,” she laughed.

“Not really,” he replied.

These truncated answers continued until Sara excused herself under the pretense of getting another drink. She sighed and concluded that it was going to be a long evening at her table.

At a fundraiser, Holly reported meeting a woman who babysat full-time for her three young granddaughters. After listening to 15 minutes of monologue while this guest recited each child’s potty-training and nap schedule, Holly’s eyes glazed over. She gently and then not-so-gently changed the subject only to find with dismay that her dining companion returned like a dog fetching

a ball to the same topic. Finally, Holly gave up and gritted her teeth through the rest of the dinner while the oblivious grandmother droned on.

Jim almost dreaded attending the community meeting that he previously enjoyed. Why? Every darn meeting, Wayne would bend his ear until he wanted to get out. Wayne, an intelligent, educated man with much business acumen, didn’t know when to back down on pushing his expertise and coming off as a know-it-all. Whatever the subject, he drowned out any passerby with his superior knowledge. Enough already!

By now, you have probably concluded that Sara, Holly and Jim have unhappily been stuck in social situations with people who are, at least for that moment, tedious and dull. What bad luck! Most of us can sympathize because we, too, have occasionally been caught in similar scenarios that have made the event seem endless and mind-numbing.

Yet, have we ever considered that we might be inflicting similar ennui on those around us? Is it possible that we could be boring! Our first response to this question may well be, “Say it isn’t so.” But stop squirming and take another look. Because boring people really don’t seem to know that they are boring, it behooves each of us to engage in a quick inventory from time to time:

DOES YOUR CONVERSATIONAL PARTNER APPEAR RESTLESS OR UNCOMFORTABLE?

Pay attention to body language. When someone is conversing, they usually turn toward you. If they are fidgeting

and twitchy, it’s a good sign that it’s time for a topic change.

IS THERE AN ABRUPT SHIFT IN THE CONVERSATIONAL TOPIC?

Imagine that during your lengthy discourse on the virtues of growing exotic orchids, the other person suddenly interjects with something like, “So, how ‘bout those Orioles?” Clearly, my dear, he is either not interested or simply not listening.

ARE YOU HOGGING THE FLOOR?

By definition, a conversation is an exchange of opinions, ideas, feelings or everyday matters with another person. In other words, it takes two and there should be a rough balance of talking time. You may find yourself enthralled, but hogging the floor is a sure way to bore someone else to death! Listen more, speak less.

DO YOU GIVE AN ANSWER THAT PROMOTES CONVERSATION?

Think of a social conversation like an extended tennis volley. When someone hits a ball to you, it’s your job to keep the ball in play. Lob it into their court in a manner that encourages them to bounce it back to you. Say that someone pitches you a line such as, “So, I heard you spent three months in Australia. That must have been great!” A monosyllable answer such as, “Yes,” stops this conversation deader than road kill. Come on!! Give ‘em something to work with. This is the opposite problem from hogging the floor, but it’s just as boring. Do your part unless you simply do not

Did you know that inspiration creates self motivation?



“Conversation... is the art of never appearing a bore, of knowing how to say everything interestingly, to entertain with no matter what, to be charming with nothing at all.”

- Guy de Maupassant



“I can excuse everything but boredom. Boring people don't have to stay that way.”

- Hedy Lamarr

wish to converse. In that case, gently excuse yourself and go home.

DO YOU HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR?

We know that negativity can be boring, especially in social situations. Learn to lighten up. It's not necessary to be a stand-up comedian, but do notice those things that amuse you. These are probably subjects and stories that others would find entertaining also. If you relate a short tale that casts yourself in a self-deprecating manner, it keeps the conversation moving and also shows that you do not take yourself too seriously. That's an added bonus.

HOW'S YOUR SUBJECT IQ?

Let's be straight on this: Any subject can be boring if it is ridden into the ground and any subject can be fascinating depending upon the approach and the audience. However, some subjects have more boredom potential than others. In general it's best to avoid or limit conversation about topics in which the lis-

tener will have nothing to add. If you're in a tete-a-tete with someone who has no grandchildren, never plays golf and is a nondrinker, it's pretty much a no-brainer that talking extensively about your latest golf score, the additions to your wine cellar or the new children's boutique that just opened downtown is going to cause their eyes to cross.

Likewise, waxing on about the fascinating dream you had last night, detailing your dog's skin rash or giving a meticulous description of the meal you enjoyed in an obscure restaurant in Tuscany will be a conversational dead end. Your listener has nothing to add. Give it up and find a new topic of interest to both of you.

Finally, remember that the art of social conversation is an acquired skill that takes practice. We all make mistakes at times and most of us are forgiving of the mistakes of others -- to a point. In our enthusiasm for our subject, we may miss cues that we have

crossed the line from being interesting to being long-winded. Sometimes, we're simply fatigued or preoccupied and don't have the energy to be engaging. However, do try to put your best conversational foot forward and brush up on these skills. Stimulating conversation brings positive energy into our lives, and that is something that is never boring.

Vicki can be reached at Victoria2write@aol.com

Bits & Bytes

There may still be time to pick up a short-term position at a park, hotel or resort. Log onto **CoolWorks.com** Be sure to check out the category Older and Bolder.

TECHKNOW CHALLENGE

PANDORA



By Scudder Sodergreen

Here's something from the mythical Pandora's box that you need not resist when temptation strikes. Pandora radio is a great example of an Internet radio. Internet radio? It's a radio based off the Internet that you can use anywhere that an Internet signal can be picked up.

Pandora allows you to listen only to the music that you enjoy, so with this innovative program, you are the DJ. By typing in the name of a song or your favorite musician, you get a list of songs that are similar to the song you chose or songs by the musician you picked. And best of all, the listening is free for 40 hours a month.

There are however, short ads of 15 to 20 seconds in length, every few songs. For a .99 cent subscription you can listen without the sometimes annoying pop-ups.

One of the many pluses of Pandora radio is the fast forward key. Its name tells it all; the button allows you to skip through the songs that you don't like or that you've heard already.

Unfortunately there's a skip limit. You can bypass a song six times an hour and only a dozen per day. Any more than that, and you are stuck with what's playing.

When you find yourself in these situations, the refresh button could be your only hope. When you click this button it causes the page to reload itself and stops the song. This benefits you because when Pandora reloads itself a new song is played which in turn solves your problem.

There are other annoyances. When you sign up for Pandora, you will be asked for your age and gender, among other things. Why? So they can help target those pop-up ads you will get unless you pay for your service.

Although I've talked about Pandora on the computer, there are also other options for you to tune in this radio.

As I wrote in the last issue (Late Spring) about the Ipad, you could obtain it on your Apple product via the app store. Again, as I described it then, an app is a small program able to

be downloaded onto a handheld device normally an Apple or Android (another big techy server) product.

Most Blue-ray (new high definition video player) DVD players now have Pandora radio already installed, so you turn on your television and, presto, you've got Elvis singing to you, provided that's what you asked for. Ladies this is a good way to get your husbands to get away from the Orioles game so you can listen to your music and they can make dinner for once. Gents, if you're talked into making dinner, it'll probably go much better while listening to your Pandora selections.

Today's tech world is all about you. And today's society is based on making your life more enjoyable, and they're doing a great job. It's not the way it used to be. (When my dad was born, he was still hunting dinosaurs with sharp sticks.)

Pandora has really outdone herself this time, so it's all right to be tempted.

Scudder can be reached at sasodergreen@aol.com

Bits & Bytes

To help identify that unusual tree check leafsnap.com on your computer or download free software by the same name on your iPod or iPad. Columbia University, University of Maryland and the Smithsonian Institution are helping to compile this electronic field guide that now contains many local trees.



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WASHINGTON, DC

Chris Martin: Painting Big

The Corcoran Gallery of Art

“Painting Big” is a three-part exhibition incorporating large-scale recent works, small paintings (on view through Aug. 28,) and a site-specific installation of 26-foot-high paintings suspended in the museum’s central atrium. Martin’s abstract works reflect his immediate environment and objects as varied as kitchen utensils, records, photographs and Persian carpets. Thus, his art is grounded in daily life and experiences of music, travel and language. Placed as they are throughout the Corcoran galleries, these colorful pieces create an overview of Chris Martin’s accomplishments.

On view: through Oct. 23, 2011

Contact information: www.corcoran.org/visit or 202 639-1700

Susan Swartz: Season of the Soul

National Museum of Women in the Arts

Environmental concerns are frequently reflected in the work of contemporary artists, and Susan Swartz’ colorful landscapes demonstrate her affection for the natural world and her interest in its preservation. A committed environmentalist and producer of award-winning documentaries, Swartz has created this series to portray her personal artistic journey, which is an outgrowth of the “battle with environmentally-bred illnesses.”

On view: through Oct. 2, 2011

Contact information: www.nmwa.org or 202 283-5000

Capital Portraits: Treasures from Private Collections

The National Portrait Gallery

This unique exhibit offers a selection of privately owned works, many of which have never been on public display. It covers a wide range of styles, images and stories. John Singleton Copley, Mary Cassatt, Andy Warhol and Kehinde Wiley are among those represented. From 1750 to the present, these commissioned pictures show us how intimately and personally art and its subjects are a part of both private and public life.

On view: through Sept. 5, 2011

Contact information: www.npg.si.edu or 202 633-8300

What’s Cooking Uncle Sam? The Government’s Effect on the American Diet

The National Archives

This unusual selection of materials from the collection demonstrates the many ways that our government has, over time, worked to control the safety, supply, production and research shaping the economy of food and our behavior as consumers. The Dust Bowl, wartime shortages, dangers of e. coli bacteria—all these issues and many more have become governmental concerns in response to citizen demands. Whether government is “watching us” or protecting us, such interventions are here to stay and these documents offer an opportunity to see how the government has influenced national opinion over decades.

On view: through Jan. 3, 2012

Contact information: www.archives.gov or 866 272-6272

Green: the Color and the Cause

The Textile Museum

This environmentally focused exhibit looks at the way different cultures “traditionally associate the color green with nature and its attributes, including life, fertility and re-birth.” The textiles include pieces from the year 1700 taken from the museum’s permanent collection as well as works on loan from international artists and designers of today. The concept of “green” textiles will be explored both technically and philosophically. Until the invention of synthetic dyes in the 19th century, green was one of the most difficult colors to create. The exhibit explores ingenious solutions of the past as well as contemporary responses to the textile medium.

On view: through Sept. 11, 2011

Contact information: www.textilemuseum.org or 202 667-0441

Kandinsky and the Harmony of Silence: Painting with White border

The Phillips Collection

This special Kandinsky exhibition explores in depth the 12 preparatory works that culminated in his 1913 masterwork, *Painting with White Border*. In addition to drawings and sketches that preceded the work, related pieces have been borrowed from throughout the world for the show. An in-depth conservation study of *Painting with White Border* rounds out the show.

On view: through Sept. 4, 2011

Stella Sounds: The Scarlatti Series

The Phillips Collection

These recent works by Frank Stella were inspired by the harpsichord sonatas of Do-

menico Scarlatti. The three-dimensional, wall-hung sculptures use the high-tech materials of coiled steel and lightweight resin to implement designs refined on the computer. Stella’s K Series, which these works represent, “moves at the crossroads of painting, drawing and sculpture,” beginning a new chapter in the artist’s five-decade career.

On view: through Sept. 4, 2011

Contact information: www.phillipscollection.org or 202 387-2151

MARYLAND

Divided Voices: Maryland in the Civil War

Maryland Historical Society

This 5,000-square-foot exhibit celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Civil War by looking at three aspects of the conflict; the romantic war (year one), the real war (years two, three, and four) and the long reunion (possibly still taking place today). Hundreds of rare objects—personal possessions and letters—are used to illuminate the lives of the 80,000 Marylanders caught up in the conflict. Among the most noteworthy objects on display are: compelling and heartbreaking photographs of the period as well as Robert E. Lee’s camp chair, John Brown’s carbine and Abraham Lincoln’s memorabilia.

On view: through April 15, 2012

Contact information: www.mdhs.com or 410 685-3750

Setting Sail: Drawings of the Sea from the Walters Collection

The Walters Art Museum

From ship to shore, viewers of this exhibition of drawings, prints and watercolors will have the opportunity to learn about the life on shipboard and on land through the 19th century works by Jean-Baptiste Isabey, Paul Gavarni, Alfred Jacob Miller and others.

On view: through Sept. 11, 2011

The Art of the Writing Instrument from Paris to Persia

The Walters Art Museum

Pens and pencils reflect the prestige and pleasure of their educated owners—prominent statesmen, skilled calligraphers, wealthy merchants and women of fashion. These tools take the craft of metal work and jewelry to the heights of refinement while illuminating the importance of the written word across a spectrum of cultures.

On view: through Sept. 25, 2011

Contact information: www.thewalters.org or 410 547-9000

SUMMER TITLES

Maryland in The Civil War

By William S. Shepard

Download e-book from Amazon.com 2011

As we approach the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, this little e-book is a timely summary of what went on in the state of Maryland.

The story is told in four manageable essays, and it is riveting.

I didn't know about the thrilling story of Maryland Gov. Thomas Hicks, who in 1861 resisted great pressures to secede with a political mastery that few would have expected from this Dorchester County farmer. Had Maryland joined Virginia in seceding, Washington would have been surrounded by the Confederacy.

Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass are here, as well as an account of the end of slavery. Read the astonished letters of an English observer as the market for slaves bottoms out. Also examined is the Wye House, an Eastern Shore plantation where the plantation life was lived by generations of the Lloyd family. The 18th century Orangery is there, and is said to be the only one that still exists in North America. Now, however, the religious relics of the slaves who built it are noted.

Maryland remained a bitterly divided state, whose sons fought on both sides. At the Battle of Gettysburg, units from Maryland faced each other, and the color sergeants of the opposing armies were cousins from Trappe, Maryland. And, of course, John Wilkes Booth is here. You decide if Dr. Samuel Mudd's conviction was just.

A great read. Homework at school should have been this entertaining.

- George Spelvin

FOUNDING BROTHERS

By Joseph J. Ellis

Vintage Books, New York (2002)

George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and Aaron Burr. These are very familiar names to anyone who is a student of or has an interest in American history. *Founding Brothers* will probably give most readers a very different perspective on how our country evolved, far more than what is learned in a high school history class. Joseph Ellis, a winner of the Pulitzer Prize, divides the book into six chapters, each delving into a different aspect of the relationships of these famous men in American history.

In Chapter I, *The Duel*, the reader will get a very insightful look into the duel between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton, which resulted in Hamilton's death. It often is briefly mentioned in high school texts, but the repercussions and aftermath of this important part of American history is illuminating.

In Chapter 2, *The Dinner*, Jefferson invited Hamilton and Madison in June of 1790 to discuss the financial problems facing the new nation. Does this sound familiar? It gave an interesting insight into the thought processes of these three important men in the founding of our country. Jefferson and Hamilton were members of Washington's cabinet, and Madison led southern Congressmen who opposed the suggested financial plan.

Chapter 3, *The Silence*, delves into the subject of how slavery was covered up and not acknowledged as part of the government's formation. The divided thinking of members of the new Congress might make the reader compare it to current impasses in our governing body.

Since almost 700,000 of the population were slaves in 1790, this was a very touchy subject, made so by the expected differences of opinion of southern and northern lawmakers.

Chapter 4, *The Farewell*, gives the reader a deep insight into the thinking of George Washington, and in the high esteem in which he was held by almost all of the Americans, including the politicians. When he is writing his farewell speech after deciding not to run again for president, we get a good insight into his thinking about the future of the nation he helped form.

In Chapter 5, *The Collaborators*, we begin to see the formation of two political parties, the Federalists and the Republicans. In George Washington's two terms of office, this did not happen until well into the second term, and Washington managed to keep himself above partisan bickering. Now the job of finding a suitable replacement for Washington began. He had made it clear that he was not running for a third term. The four names topping everyone's list was not surprising: George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Of course, Washington was out of the running and Franklin was dead and gone. That left Adams and Jefferson. This chapter gives the reader an insight into the political maneuvering that took place in choosing the next candidate. James Madison takes an important part in these negotiations and the orchestrating of the process, many times behind the scenes, as does Abigail Adams, the very politically adept wife of John Adams. It is incredible for us to think of the president and vice president being from different parties, but that is what transpired, with John Adams being elected president and Thomas Jefferson, vice president. Almost all the disputes over both domestic and foreign policy in the 1790s found these two on different sides. This made for an "interesting" time in American history.

Chapter 6, *The Friendship*, covers the regaining of the lost friendship between Adams and Jefferson. They had been friends for many years prior to Adam's presidency and it was time to heal the wounds. Abigail Adams again has a part in this healing process. A few years after they retired, the letter writ-

ing began between these two distinguished and savvy men. They still disagreed on many issues, but it becomes quite evident that the emotional bonds and the old friendship recovered during the last years of their lives. The oft-cited irony lingers: Adams and Jefferson died on July 4, 1826, within five hours of each other, and 50 years to the day after the Declaration of Independence was signed.

Most people living in the Washington, DC/Annapolis area will be able to relate to many of the events and places where they occurred. Although one must realize that this was written by one historian, he backs up his statements with letters and newspaper accounts from that era. It may well change the reader's opinion of some of our famous founding leaders and give a different insight into American history.

- Peggy Kiefer

THE WARMTH OF OTHER SUNS: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration By Isabel Wilkerson

Random House, New York (2010)

Fifteen years and 1,200 interviews went into *The Warmth of Other Suns*. The book is an amazing accomplishment as a vitally engaging tale of three lives united only in the blackness of their skins and the heartfelt conviction of their worth as human beings. This led them to leave the Jim Crow South in order that their children might at last be free. These people, two men and one woman—a porter, a surgeon and a hospital aide—risked their lives to leave the South. They arrived in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago poor and unsophisticated, but brave and determined. They were typical of the 4 million black “immigrants” who went North between 1900 and the 1950s. At first, they crowded in with families from their home towns. They kept their language and accents, foods and folk customs, and sent money “home” when they could. They took jobs no one else would touch, worked hard and gradually moved “up.” Their incomes surpassed those of northern-born blacks and their marriages lasted longer. Their children advanced beyond their northern-born peers and they grew up taking for granted a freedom unimaginable in the land of lynch-

ing that their parents left behind. Readers will not forget this Pulitzer Prize-winning author's three heroes—George Swanson, Ida Mae Gladney and Robert Foster, M.D.
- Tricia Herban

THE PIANO TEACHER

By Janice Y.K. Lee

The Penguin Group, New York (2009)

The name of this novel, *The Piano Teacher*, does not indicate the true nature of the story. The fact that one of the main characters is a piano teacher does not make much difference in the plot, except to introduce the reader to her employers Victor and Melody Chen and their daughter, Locket, who is the piano student. A charming Englishman named Will Truesdale, is also employed by the Chens, and he proves very important to the plot.

The tale zigzags back and forth between the early 1950s and the early 1940s, so one is correct to assume World War II has a large role in the story and the characters. Claire Pendleton, the piano teacher, begins the novel in 1952 as a newlywed who has moved to Hong Kong with her husband. This is not a marriage made in heaven, as Claire was not particularly attracted to her husband, but thought she couldn't be “picky.” In this part of the story we are introduced to the English in Hong Kong, enjoying the good life of parties and socializing

We then are transported back to 1941 where we meet Trudy Liang, an exotic Eurasian, who is romantically involved with the same charming Eng-

lishman, Mr. Truesdale. One must keep remembering in which decade the story is taking place. Within six months after we first are introduced to Trudy and Will, the Japanese invade Hong Kong. This is where the story becomes more interesting and delves deeply into the cruelty with which the Japanese dealt with the Chinese, English and Americans who are in this country. Janice Lee, who was born and raised in Hong Kong, does a riveting job of conveying the fear and turmoil. Many of the residents are taken to a compound, which would now be called a concentration camp. Here they were separated by nationality and the true nature of the characters is revealed. Some are brave, some foolish, some treacherous and self-serving and others who do whatever they can to help others. Trudy is not put into this camp since she is Eurasian, but she does what she can to help Will, who is in the compound.

Back to the 1950s, we go for the end of the novel. Trudy has died in Hong Kong and Will is now involved with Claire. There is a twist at the end of the novel that will keep your attention.

One interesting note that some reviewers made about *The Piano Teacher*, and one that I agree with, is that none of the characters are particularly likeable. This was hard for me, as I enjoy “getting into the skin of” at least one character in a book. But learning about a part of World War II that most Americans know nothing about was the best part of this book. It gives the reader a great deal to think about and digest.

- Peggy Kiefer

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THE FUNNY THING ABOUT FIBER

Fibrous foods help with weight management and weight loss

By Elle Curtain

Fiber is a funny thing to talk about. Here's why. When you hear the word, fiber, what pops into your mind? Prune juice? Beans? Metamucil? What you probably don't know about fiber is that it does a whole lot of wonderful things for the body, in addition to promoting digestive health. Adequate fiber intake has been shown to contribute to weight loss and maintenance, lower cholesterol and blood sugar levels and may reduce risk of colorectal cancer.

The funny thing is, fiber is good for our bodies because of one simple property: we cannot digest it. It might seem counterintuitive that the body benefits from something it cannot "use." Fibrous foods help with weight management and weight loss because they take longer to chew, have fewer calories than comparable amounts of food and slow digestion. All of these things increase satiety and help control how much we consume. Slowed digestion also leads to slowed absorption of sugar which helps keep blood sugar levels in control, too. When mixed with water in the intestine, soluble fiber's gel-like consistency is thought to prevent absorption of cholesterol into the bloodstream, which makes it a natural form of protection against heart disease. The best part is, fiber does all of this while supporting a healthy gut.

With all of the benefits of fiber you would think we would be consuming tons of the stuff. Not true. Grocery store shelves are overwhelmingly stocked with processed foods which are stripped of nutrient-rich fiber during processing. This, combined with our love for meat and potatoes in this country, makes meeting the daily recommendations a challenge. The average American consumes less than half of the recommended amount of dietary fiber each day. According to the American Dietetic Association, we should be consuming 25 to 35 grams of fiber per day, but only consume about 8 to 15 grams daily.

Elle is a student at UNC's Gillings School of Global Public Health. Visit her on her blog at www.nutritionella.com where she publishes delicious recipes, kitchen tips and exercise inspiration, all with a touch of style.

helpful hints

Want to increase your fiber intake? Here are some simple tips to fit more fiber into your diet. Write a fiber-friendly grocery list. Writing down high-fiber foods will remind you to put them in your shopping cart.

Here are some to get you started:

FRUITS: berries, dates, prunes, dried apricots, apples, pears, peaches and oranges

VEGETABLES: spinach, broccoli, peas, green beans, Brussels sprouts, romaine lettuce
GRAINS: oats, bran cereals, whole grain breads, brown rice, whole wheat couscous

LEGUMES, NUTS AND SEEDS: beans, almonds, walnuts, pistachios, cashews, pecans. Refrain from refined grains. Making these simple substitutions will add lots of fiber to your diet.

AT BREAKFAST: choose bran flakes, shredded wheat, old-fashioned oatmeal, bran muffins, whole wheat breads including bagels and English muffins instead of corn flakes, rice cereals, instant cereals, muffins, bagels and English muffins made with white (refined) flour

FOR LUNCH AND DINNER: choose tortillas, breads, pizza dough and pastas made from whole wheat flours, brown rice, wild rice, quinoa and whole wheat couscous instead of products made with white (refined) flour, white rice and non-whole wheat couscous

Fill up a fruit bowl. Fruits are a great high-fiber snack and you'll be more likely to grab one for a snack if it's in sight.

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP? Try this simple and delicious high-fiber dish this summer and experience how good fiber can taste.



GREEK COUSCOUS SALAD

Ingredients

1 cup whole wheat couscous
(the fiber is in the couscous, so
stick to whole wheat)
1 cup water
2 cups fresh spinach
1/3 cup crumbled feta
1 medium tomato, seeded and
diced
1 Tbs. olive oil
1/8 tsp. salt
pepper to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a
saucepan. Remove from heat and
immediately add spinach, followed
by the couscous. Adding the
spinach first will help it to wilt
faster. Quickly stir, cover and set
aside for 3 to 4 minutes.
Meanwhile, combine tomato, olive
oil and a few dashes of salt and
pepper in a separate bowl.
Fluff couscous with a fork, add
tomato and crumbled feta and mix
until combined.

Finally, Relief for the Chemically Sensitive Traveler

By Priscilla Hart

I have tossed and turned in stale smoke-filled hotel rooms in pre-glasnost Soviet Europe, fought off nighttime mosquito squadrons in Italy's screen-less pensiones and slept on the Sahara's scorpion-infested sands.

But nothing prepared me as an older adult for the chemical onslaught of America's modern hotels.

After years of working and traveling overseas, attractions in my homeland beckoned. Two young children in tow, the rituals of family travel began: pilgrimages to Lincoln's cabin, to the cliff dwellings of the Anasazi Indians, to the coast of Kitty Hawk.

Thinking that I had mastered the art of sleeping in challenging circumstances, I had not. There are always new learning curves, in travel as in life.

Inadvertently, I had joined the ranks of the ever-expanding segment of Americans challenged by multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS). According to the National Academy of Sciences, up to 15 percent of us (up to 50 million) are reacting to unprecedented levels of toxic chemical substances we daily inhale, ingest or handle with extreme histamine responses and other disabling symptoms.

Like many travelers, I had once been a hardy wayfarer. Now, travel had become excruciatingly uncomfortable at times. In recent years I have coughed my way across the threshold of many hotel rooms, sneezed my way through the toxic cocktail of potent bathroom cleaners and risen with swollen red eyes from detergent residues on laundered sheets and towels.

In one hotel tucked away in the rustic woods of New Hampshire, air-

borne mold that seemed as dense as a blanket forced me to sleep on the bathroom floor with the window open. Near the Garden of the Gods in Colorado, I camped out under the stars on my hotel room's brick-red patio tiles to fend off the "violet-scented" air freshener that wafted about.

As travel companions, mosquitoes and scorpions hardly seemed daunting anymore.

But change was on the way -- helped by public policy decisions by the Centers for Disease Control, public awareness of MCS among Americans including Gulf War vets and new legislation.

Two years ago on a trip to Williamsburg, I popped the dreaded question to a hotel reservationist over the phone. "Could I possibly have a room that has not been chemically sprayed and cleaned?"

The voice responded: "Oh, you mean a green room?"

"A what?" I asked. "A room without the chemicals that make you choke?"

I was speechless.

But what really startled me was what came next. "Please hold while I put you in touch with our Americans With Disabilities Act Division." The what? Somewhere in the Midwest, another representative handling "disabilities" in accordance with the U.S. Department of Justice's American With Disabilities Act asked me for information. I later read that the ADA "prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications and governmental activities."

I was then given a reservation

in my first "green room." A green room is an individual hotel room not chemically cleaned or sprayed for 24 hours before the guest's arrival. Sheetting is re-washed in hot water before being used. Mild detergent and hot water are used in lieu of choke-inducing cleaning agents. Guests may also get feather-free bedding.

I breathed much better air through the night.

Green rooms are now popping up all over the country. But since the green room policy is done one hotel at a time, and depends upon the voluntary initiative of individual hotel managers, the process is hit-or-miss. Marriott International is the hotel chain leading the way. It runs 3,000 hotels nationwide, including Fairfield, Ritz Carlton, Courtyard and Renaissance chains.

Another more revolutionary trend is gaining ground: accommodations called pure rooms that have permanently installed multilevel purification systems. Pure rooms are the brainchild of Pure Solutions International. If green rooms are one small step for sleepers, pure rooms are on their way to becoming one giant step for public health. To find out where pure rooms are sprouting up, including overseas locations in China, Scandinavia, India and eight other countries, check out the company's website at www.pureroom.com

For the chemically distressed traveler, getting some shut-eye at the next inn should get easier as time goes on. Travelers can speed this trend by mentioning it in every reservation call they make.

REMEMBER TO REST

By Pat Jurgens

Rest. It's a word that may not be in your vocabulary, much less a favorite pastime. We Americans are geared to hit the day running, balancing a bagel and a banana on the way to the car. We move from one activity to another, eating while walking or driving. We multi-task with cell phones and iPhones, with our work and loved ones who are only a breath away. Even if we're retired, our TVs and computers keep us up to the minute on breaking news across the globe, reactions of the stock market and the latest remedies for acid reflux and weight loss. We wonder why we can't slow down?

And here comes summer, the season of the year programmed into us since school days as a time to relax and enjoy pleasurable pursuits. We are keen to be outdoors in the warm weather, sailing and swimming, gardening, walking and biking. There are picnics and barbecues to prepare, friends to invite over, outdoor concerts and art festivals to attend. There's golf, baseball games, fishing and even camping (for those who still find it fun to sleep on the ground.)

But this is the time of life when we can choose to slow down, to smell the roses and enjoy simple pleasures. Resting may be an unlikely inclination, but a nap is not a cop-out. It's a joy. It's a well-earned timeout, not just when we're exhausted, but when we want to stop our endless rushing around. In yoga they say a restorative pose integrates all the benefits of the practice, i.e., your body mind, and emotions. You know how refreshed you feel even after a 15-minute power nap. Why not make a habit of it? Surely there are 15 to 30 minutes in your day when you could turn off the electronic gizmos, shut your eyes and stretch out.

You could also decide to create a quiet time for yourself first thing in the morning, if that suits your lifestyle. Sitting in silence – resting -- is not just for introverts or the religious. It is calming to take time to think or meditate or pray, but you don't need a purpose or a plan. Sitting outside in early morning alerts you to another world. You may have been unaware of birds calling in the trees, the sound of wind through the leaves, water lapping at the dock or the happy laughter of children. Or take a pause in the stillness of afternoon, feel the air as you breathe into your lungs or touch the soft fur of your pet. If you try resting after dinner, you may see a shimmering sunset over the bay, or enjoy the sight of long shadows across a green lawn.

Or try this: Find a quiet place to stretch out – in a recliner chair, bed or even on a mat on the floor. Close your eyes. Focus on your breathing. Then progressively relax the muscles in your body beginning with the toes and move slowly up to your head. Lie still and at ease for a few minutes and no-

tice if anything feels different.

Rest is beneficial to our physical, mental and emotional health. It's something to be included in our daily lives, not just when we're sick, but also when we're well. Learning to relax and allowing the mind and body to do nothing has substantial benefits.

Let's face it. We may still be able to do most of the things we used to do, but it takes us longer to do them. We get tired in our senior years. And there is no reason why we need to keep going 24/7 like young folks. At this time in our lives we can take some liberties – do what we want, when we want. Perhaps we just want to do something for ourselves, like relax, rest and revitalize our being. Balancing activity with rest is a prescription for staying happy and healthy in the golden years.

Pat Jurgens can be contacted at 4louises@comcast.net

Bits & Bytes

Here's a quick-and-easy guide to identify that unusual bird seen flying through your backyard. At **AllAboutBirds.org** they even have bird calls so you can identify that elusive songster that trills outside your bedroom window at 5:00 a.m.

helpful hints

Physically

- Slows the heart rate
- Increases blood flow to muscles
- Decreases muscle tension
- Reduces pain
- Enhances immunity

Mentally and Emotionally

- Reduces anxiety and stress
- Improves concentration and problem-solving
- Reduces headaches
- Improves memory
- Enables emotions to be more balanced

BEAT THE HEAT

By Neil Moran

As the old saying goes, “some like it hot, some like it not.” If the sweltering spring carries over into the Bay area summer, we’ll soon know which of your garden plants is in which camp.

If you haven’t bought all your plants yet, I’ve listed a few below that can stand a little heat. For the plants already established along your foundation or filling your flower bed, I’ve got a few tips to cool the fever.

Most plants, save cacti, don’t like the heat. However, there are some that can stand the heat a whole lot better than others. Here are five that you can add to your gardens or landscape that are most likely to succeed in the heat of the summer.

Tickseed (Coreopsis): Tickseed is a good sport in just about any situation. It comes in an array of colors, including yellow, orange, pink, red and combinations thereof. Tickseed grows to a height of 36 inches. Plant in moderately fertile, well-drained soil. It blooms most of the summer.

Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia hirta): This is an easy-to-grow, but short-lived perennial. However, it does tend to reseed itself so you’ll get a little added bang for your buck. As far as heat tolerance, you’ll get a bang out of how well it will do in the heat and humidity surrounding the Bay, maybe that’s why it’s our state flower. Black-eyed Susan grows from 18 inches to over 3 feet.

Geraniums (Pelargonium): Geraniums can take the heat as long as you get water to them. This beautiful plant is most commonly seen in window boxes and patio containers, however, there is also an ivy type that spills over the side of a pot. Grows to about a foot high or higher, depending how you trim it.

Mealycup sage (Salvia farinacea): Salvias are tough hombres that do well in less than ideal conditions while maintaining their beauty. It’s native to the southwest U.S., so no wonder it is accustomed to hot, dry conditions. Purple flowers adorn the upper portion of this plant which grows to two feet.

Moss rose (Portulaca): Living in hot, dry conditions doesn’t mean we can’t have color in our gardens. This plant has more color than a pina colada. It can also stand the heat better than a camel. This low-growing annual can be planted in hanging baskets or used as a border plant in a flower bed.

Help Your Plants Cope with the Heat

No one can say for sure, but the La Nina effect seems to be the culprit for the extremes in temperatures we’ve been experiencing, not to mention the violent storms. It could mean a hotter-than-usual summer around the Bay area. If this is the case, or even if it isn’t, there are some steps you should take to help your plants cope with the heat of the summer.

“Water, water, water,” says Loni Moyer, owner of Garden Girls, LCC, a landscaping company in the Annapolis area. “Water deeply, but infrequently,” she added. She also said that during really hot weather, it is a good idea to bring potted plants into the shade, if possible.

Give your plants about an inch of water each time you water. If using sprinklers, place a tin can in the middle of the area you’re watering and see how long it takes to fill it up. Then water accordingly.

Soaker hoses are also a good way to water, the benefit being they get water right to where the plants needs it. Irrigation systems are an excellent choice for gardens and lawns. These

systems are getting a little easier to install. Check out Lowes for an easy-to-install irrigation kit that recently went on the market called Auto Rain Lawn Gear.

Also, you should water very early in the morning, if possible. This will allow the water to soak in and let any excess moisture dry off the foliage when the sun goes overhead. Avoid watering late in the day, which can lead to fungus problems, especially in hot, humid conditions.

Follow the recommendations for spacing your plants. Plants that are crowded together will naturally suck up more water and restrict air movement, which will encourage fungus and insect problems. Also, keep those weeds out, which will compete for the precious water.

Apply a mulch of wood chips or grass clippings. Lightly colored mulches (like white cedar chips) will reflect the sun’s heat a little better than the darker ones. It must be applied at least three inches thick to do any good. Compost is also a good choice to spread around your sweltering plants. Not only will it help retain the moisture, it will fortify your soil with plant nutrients.

Avoid the use of black plastic or landscape fabric. These materials will increase the ground temperature around your plants. As a landscaper, I know the roots of plants get tangled up in these materials, making it difficult to replace the plants, which ironically can be damaged by these weed prevention products.

If you take some of these steps to help your plants beat the heat, you should be able to truly enjoy the dog days of summer this year.

Neil is a horticulturist and freelance garden writer/copywriter. Visit his website or leave comments at www.neilmoran.com

TechKnow Rules

1. Turn the phone off or to vibrate when in public places. It disturbs only you if it vibrates and even then, some phones have an annoying buzz that accompanies the vibration.
2. If you must take the call, answer with, "One moment please." Excuse yourself and step outside.
3. There should be no texting while enjoying the company of friends and family. None! Again, if it's absolutely necessary, step outside or into another room.
4. iPods are the bane of every adult's existence, especially when a young person bops through the room, ear plugs firmly in place, oblivious to what is being said or who is speaking to him. Use of this little electronic wonder should be used only when you are alone.
5. Last summer when my friend visited, she spent most of her time reading a book on her Kindle. It was difficult to get her attention and I was actually thankful when the visit came to an end, having spent so little time chatting with her.
6. Now there's also the iPad that we have to contend with. It's small enough to fit in anyone's purse or briefcase and therefore is always there. If you're at a social event why don't you turn it off and enjoy those around you.

TECHKNOW *Etiquette*



By Edree Downing

Imagine having to dish out advice on proper phone or texting etiquette. Remember back when courtesy was the norm? No longer. And it's not only your granddaughter who fails to exercise elementary civility. How about talking on the phone in movie theaters, restaurants and anywhere that you're standing in line? Imagine enjoying an evening out and your dinner companion is busy texting or the fellow at the next table decides to have a lengthy conversation on his cell, which you're part of whether you choose to be or not.

Recently we treated a young family member to a day at a football game with his friends and were more than surprised when he spent most of his time texting and little time interacting with his three friends and even less time enjoying the game. It's so out of control that it's now a misdemeanor if your local police officer catches you on the phone while driving. This is no doubt a good thing, as it's probably saved a few lives.

And surprise, studies are now showing that the current generation is lacking in social skills because of a lack of face-to-face interaction. What about all the good conversations you're missing and potential friends who are being turned off. So put away the gadgets and realize there just aren't that many emergencies that require you to be plugged in for hours on end. Get back to the enjoyment of face-to-face conversations. There's really nothing more satisfying.

Bits & Bytes

Can't quite get the spelling or definition of a difficult word like auspicious? Type it into **Google.com** and it will provide the spelling and a definition.

Do you find any satisfaction in living in the past?



HE COOKS

Take Advantage of Summer's Bounty
Make a Purple Plum Torte.

PURPLE PLUM TORTE

12 halved, pitted Italian plums
2 Tbs. red currant or apple jelly
3 Tbs. brandy

Cover and sauté plums cut side down until just softened and juices are released.

Remove from the stove. Cool and drain, saving the sauce to serve with the baked cake.

Pulse till fine in food processor: 1/3 cup sugar and 1/3 cup almonds.

Add to processor 1 cup flour, 2 1/2 tsp. baking powder and 6 Tbs. chilled butter cut in pieces. Mix until butter is fine.

Add 2 large eggs, 1 tsp. vanilla, 1/2 tsp. almond extract and mix until smooth.

Butter a 9" spring form pan and dust with flour, discarding excess. Pour batter into pan and smooth with spatula if necessary. Place the plums, cut side up on top of the batter. Lightly sprinkle the cake with cinnamon and sugar. Bake at 350 F. for 45-60 minutes, until a cake tester comes out clean. Cool at least 20 minutes for easy serving. When cool, this cake may be frozen but serve it at room temperature or slightly warmed with a drizzle of the reserved sauce. Serves 8.

Butter can be whatever you have on hand. As this recipe doesn't use any salt, salted butter is just fine. Use any unsalted almonds, with or without peel attached, slivered or not. It makes no difference, as they will be pulverized in the processor and the peels will not discolor the cake.

By Matt Herban

Toward the end of summer, Italian purple plums appear in all the food stores and even some farm stands. These are the little egg-shaped plums—not the round ones. Purple plums are typically used in Europe to crown tortes made of rich cake dough, and this is what you will enjoy when you follow the recipe below.

Before you stop reading, this is a torte, not a tart. We're talking about a simple cake dough. This does not mean a crust that has to be shaped, rolled and fitted into a pan. Rather, this cake uses a batter that is mixed up in the food processor and then poured into a greased spring form pan—much quicker and easier! It is a torte not a tart.

And why would you make plum torte? Because it is so good. There will be a wonderful scent throughout the house and you can serve it warm for breakfast (how decadent), cool with cheese and cold meats for lunch or as a substantial dinner dessert with vanilla ice cream. Why wouldn't you make this purple plum torte?

This same recipe could be used with other firm-fleshed fruit – peeled peaches, pears or apples. Just be sure to sauté the fruit until it is softened. Otherwise, the fruit will be likely to dry out in the baking process and still be somewhat raw in the middle.

Mat Herban is a lifetime amateur cook who loves trying new recipes, inventing recipes and sharing the results with friends. He can be reached at triciab@erols.com

Give up the guilt. Do you think hanging onto it will provide a cure?

A WELCOMING HOME: THE POWER OF COLOR

By *Tatiana Beckham*

The color of your walls can make or break a room. The question most often asked is, where do I begin and what color should I choose? The answer is easy enough: The project begins when you identify your favorite color. We all have favorite colors and others that we cannot tolerate. If you surround yourself with colors that attract you instinctively, you will be showing your true self and will feel more comfortable within your own environment.

If you cannot find a definite answer to that question, open your door to a wonderful color wheel, nature's most spectacular gift. Think about the millions of combinations of contrasting and complementary colors in your yard, especially at this time of year. Notice the many shades of green in a single tree and the many shades of blue in the sky. Pick a flower and see the glorious combination of colors.

There is nothing like a new color to give a drab and dated space personality and new life. It is important to choose wisely as we respond to color with our hearts, not just our heads. Color affects life so dramatically, even affecting your mood and emotions. Too often we surround ourselves with safe white walls or a sea of beige, ignoring the grand selection offered to us by nature.

People will often spend thousands of dollars on furniture, rugs, drapery and accessories and find that a room doesn't have that "pulled together" look. Despite all the work, the room ends up looking cold and uninviting. This is often is a color issue. White creates hard contrast. Dark wood furniture appears darker against white

and accessories seem to float in space against white. By contrast, the proper wall color can unite a room, showcase accessories and work wonders for your emotional well-being.

And now after having decided on your favorite color, how does that translate to your walls? At the paint store, select a handful of swatches in a color range you might like. If you are interested in blue, for example, take home all the color swatches in the blue range. In the room where the color will go, take some time to assemble color combinations that are pleasing to you. Leave those swatches in the room for a few days, and walk by now and then day and evening, to refresh your impressions of the effect. Eventually you will narrow down the possibilities and you will feel more secure in your choices.

When you are comfortable with the basic color choice, head back to the paint store. Remember that at this point you are choosing the background color for your room, nothing else. How do you do that? The goal with wall color is finding the most neutral shade of your favorite color that goes with everything you love and that works as a background for everything else that will be added to the room. From the palest to the deepest color, each has its most neutral shade. For example, if you've chosen blue to paint your room, you should select the most neutral shade of blue for your walls.

Paint manufacturers have already made the selection of that neutral shade for you. On each paint strip there are six to eight shades ranging from very light to very dark. The colors in the middle are usually the most neutral of all the shades on that strip.

At the paint store buy the least possible amount of paint of the middle colors of the paint strip. Also buy some large pieces of construction board. Paint those boards and secure them on the walls of the room to be painted with painter's tape. This way, you will be able to evaluate which of those colors you prefer at different times of the day. Remember that light will affect the color on your walls.

And yes, do paint the ceiling. Leaving the ceiling white will make the room look lower. If the ceiling in your room is low, paint the ceiling two shades lighter than your wall color. If the ceiling of the room is unusually high, you should paint it one or two shades darker than the wall color. The very lightest color on the color swatch is for the trim and moldings. Have fun coloring your life.

Tatiana Beckham and her partner Jean Phillips are interior designers, home stagers, and e-decorators. They can be reached at STAGING-TO-SELL (410 271-1261), or at tj@staging-to-sell.net or visit their website at www.staging-to-sell.net

QUIZ-ACROSTIC 33

Which outdoor concert venue began over a century ago as an amusement park that featured a baseball field, a theater, a dance hall, an electric fountain, and a steam calliope playing "Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home"?

SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT: RAVINIA
A. Sahara
B. Unloved
C. Manage
D. Mouth
E. Enrico Fermi
F. Ray of hope
G. Elated
H. Nebraska
I. Two-wheeler
J. Escalade
K. Recant
L. Tactic
M. Atlanta

O. Nicely-Nicely
N. Imbue
P. Maya
Q. Echoes
R. Notable
S. Taco
T. Ruble
U. Angola
V. Vagabond
W. Input
X. Nuthouse
Y. Ill-fated
Z. Apple

Mixed Results

Eating certain foods together at the same meal can affect your health

By Melissa Conroy

With the new “Food Plate” replacing the “Food Pyramid,” which itself was updated in 2005, Americans now have a different way to take charge of their eating and make sure that they are consuming a balanced, nutritious diet for optimal health. By now, everyone knows that what you eat plays a huge role in your overall health, longevity and weight. But did you know that you should be concerned with not only what you eat, but what foods you eat together? Simply put, eating certain foods together at the same meal can affect your rate of nutrition absorption, chances of avoiding cancer, weight loss efforts, and other health concerns.

“Food synergy” refers to the combined efforts of different compounds in foods like fiber, vitamins and fats. Some foods are best eaten together because they provide more nutrition than if they are eaten alone. For a quick rundown, let's look at some popular and beneficial food pairings that pack a major nutritional and disease-fighting punch.

ORANGE JUICE AND

OATMEAL: These two favorite breakfast items are twice as effective at clearing out your arteries when consumed together. However, don't cheat and use some presweetened instant oatmeal mixture loaded with sugar. Cook plain oatmeal and add some honey for sweetness, or even better, try steel-cut oats. They take longer to cook, but have a wonderful, nutty taste that can't be beat. Try cooking them in almond milk.

BROCCOLI AND TOMATOES:

Men, learn to love this combo, because it can help reduce your risk of prostate cancer.

GRAPES AND BLUEBERRIES:

Try this fruit duo in your next salad since they both contain flavonoids called anthocyanosides, great for warding off eye problems and preventing varicose veins.

PEANUT BUTTER AND

WHOLE WHEAT BREAD: If PBJs were a staple part of your childhood, you can bring them back by reaching for this combo. Your body needs a complete chain of amino acids daily, but it can be very hard to put foods together in one meal that will accomplish this. Peanuts contain certain amino acids that wheat does not have, making this a perfect pairing. However, it's best to use natural peanut butter as it doesn't usually have sugar or other stabilizers in it, and make sure to use wheat bread that lists wheat as the first ingredient.

FISH AND GARLIC: If you are struggling to keep your cholesterol down, cooking fish in garlic is a tasty way to accomplish this, along with giving you the important minerals and beneficial oils found in a piece of fish. In fact, cooking fish with garlic lowers your cholesterol more than eating garlic on its own.

BEEF AND CARROTS: A succulent piece of beef with a side of carrots is not only delicious but also boosts your immune system. This is because the Vitamin A in carrots is

best absorbed when it is accompanied by protein. Beef also gives you zinc, important for immune system functioning.

GREEN TEA AND LEMON:

Green tea gets a lot of attention as an important health drink. However, add some lemon and your body will absorb 13 times more antioxidants from the beverage.

RED MEAT AND ROSEMARY:

Although nothing says summer like meat sizzling on a barbecue, grilling meat over an open flame actually creates carcinogens. However, rosemary contains two antioxidants that soak up the free radicals in the meat, helping protect you from both cancer and wrinkles.

If you are interested in learning more about what foods to eat together, a quick Google search for “food synergy” will give you a variety of helpful articles about different healthy food combinations you can put together. Also, there are two good books you can pick up: Dr. Elaine Magee's *Food Synergy* and *The New American Diet* by Stephen Perrine and Heather Hurlock. These guides can help you supercharge your food so that you maximize the nutrients you get.

In any case, combining foods together often make them taste even better. With food synergy, your taste buds and your body will both be happy as you put together tasty, cancer-fighting meals that fuel you up and keep you strong and disease-free. Start mixing it up today!



TRIP ESSENTIALS

Recently while having the unfortunate, but not uncommon, experience of being stuck in an airport, I made a list of all the things I should have had with me. (Hindsight is always the best teacher.) While trying to remain calm and patient as our flight was delayed once again, I borrowed a pencil and made a list of the items I would be sure to have with me on any future trips. My list started with a backpack: essential both for ease in carrying and to fit under the seat so that it stays with me after boarding the airplane.



This is what should be packed inside:

- Snacks like energy bars or packaged trail mix.
- Magazines. Read them and throw them out.
- Travel games like crossword puzzles or a travel edition of Scrabble.
- Toothbrush, deodorant, extra lipstick, small hair brush. Who knows when you'll see your luggage again? If it hasn't happened to you yet, it will.
- Camera with extra battery.
- iPod with the ear buds. Have a couple of podcasts or audio books already recorded.
- Pencils, pens and a small blank notebook
- Travel clock
- Small pillow
- Inexpensive throw away raincoat. Can be found at any Dollar Store.
- Light-weight sweater.
- \$1 bills for tipping.
- Bottle of water purchased after going through security.
- If you're lucky enough to have a Kindle or an iPad, this is the time when they prove to be invaluable.
- And most important, all travel paperwork such as itinerary, trip tickets and maps for the trip tucked into an easily accessible place.



SUMMER TREATS

By Susan Singleton

Warm-weather eating often means hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and soda. Or there are the prepared foods from the local supermarket that are swimming in mayonnaise and loaded onto white bread – all of it swimming in preservatives. But summer is also a wonderful opportunity to get in tune with your body and improve your eating habits.

It really is easier to eat healthfully during the warmer months than it is at any other time of year. The abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables and the option to grill foods offer many tasty alternatives to the high-fat fare we might associate with summer.

Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

* **Be meat-savvy.** Choose lean cuts of beef, including round, sirloin and loin cuts. Tenderize the meat to increase flavor and texture without adding fat. Marinate in salsa, low-calorie salad dressing, wine or citrus juices.

* **Go meatless.** Vegetarian diets are often associated with a multitude of health benefits including lower cholesterol levels, lower blood pressure and lower risks for heart disease, diabetes and hypertension. Vegetarians also have lower cancer rates. Challenge yourself a few days a week.

* **Try variety.** Kick up the health factor by grilling with vegetables and fruits. Cooking vegetables on the grill adds flavor. Make kabobs with fruit and grill on low heat until the fruit is hot and slightly golden. These healthy snacks also make it easier to get the recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables.

* **Stay hydrated.** Summer heat can cause dehydration. Water is the best option when temperatures soar, but you can add slices of lemons, strawberries or herbs for a refreshing flavor. Coconut water is an excellent hydration tool and is full of potassium.

* **Think healthy.** Focus on simple snacks that

don't take much prep work. Keep fresh berries in the refrigerator to add to salads, yogurt and ice cream. Wash fresh green beans to dip in yogurt or low-fat cottage cheese. Keep healthy extras, like lettuce and tomatoes, in your produce bin. Try homemade popsicles by freezing 100 percent juice. Cut up raw vegetables to serve with low-fat dips.

* **Smoothie as lunch.** Replace a hurried meal with a fruit smoothy, which is a snap to make. Just toss some fresh fruit, yogurt, coconut water or milk in your blender. Your options for healthy summer eating are limited only by your imagination. Smoothies are also an excellent way to add vegetables to your diet.

In order to help you put these tips into action, a few amazing recipes follow that are quick, easy to assemble, travel well and are sure to impress.

Cucumber and Celery Salad with Tuna

Adapted from Everyday Food.

Makes four servings.

1 tsp. poppy seeds

5 Tbs. rice vinegar

1 Tbs. sugar

2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil (or sesame oil if you have it)

Pinch of ground red pepper flakes

2 cucumbers, quartered lengthwise and cut into 1/4 inch slices

3 celery stalks, cut into 1/4 inch pieces

2 cans (5 ounces each) solid white tuna packed in water, drained and flaked

Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper to taste.

In a medium bowl, stir together poppy seeds, vinegar, sugar, oil and red pepper flakes. (Feel free to adjust amounts to your taste to make sweeter, more sour or spicier.) Add cucumber, celery and tuna. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Toss well to coat.

Serve immediately.

This makes an amazing side to any dish..or double the dish and add grilled tuna steaks for a heartier meal.

Cool Cucumber Smoothie

Ingredients:

1/2 cup cucumber, chopped

1 banana

1 apple

1/2 cup kale

1 cup orange juice

Combine everything in a blender. Blend it all until it's smooth. To make it cooler, add ice.

Kale & Pear Smoothie

1 cup green grapes

1 large orange peeled

1 pear

1 large banana

1 cup kale

1 cup water

4 ice cubes

Chop pear and orange. Blend all ingredients on a low speed for a minute if you have a variable speed blender and then blend on high speed. Serve in a glass with a slice of lemon and a mint leaf.

Susan, a member of the American Association of Drugless Practitioners, can be reached at Susan@HealthyLifeConsulting.com

Equal doesn't have to be the same



Relocation Pros and Cons

We planned to relocate to where our daughter's family resides, but I'm worried. We'll see them more often but that has strings. While we're happy to help with child care, we want our own life. What are the pros and cons of living closer to grown children? -- Dave

Relocation Dilemma

I am divorced and wish to live closer to family but my children are spread throughout the country. I'm considering moving near one child who lives in a warmer climate in a city that I enjoy. However, her siblings feel rejected. How can I win? -- Susan

Relocation Blues

I moved to Maryland to be near my family. Now, they are being transferred to the West Coast. I'm devastated! Do I follow them again? -- Jane

The decision about where to live after retirement is challenging -- as these questions attest. Before committing to any life-changing relocation, ponder the pros and cons, the significance of your friends' and family's presence and your own hopes for your retirement years.

Relocating closer to loved ones provides increased opportunities to invest in family relationships. These bonds, sometimes taxed by geography, can strengthen to a rich source of joy and fulfillment and answer one challenge of post-retirement: the need to continue being useful and contributing individuals. Deepening family ties can provide both pleasure and purpose through functioning as a bastion of security, support, family values, history and tradition. And, as retirees age and need help themselves, living nearby family can ease the strain and offer greater peace of mind to everyone.

On the other hand, this choice presents some hurdles. Uprooting from

friends, church, social groups and a community where you've lived for years is challenging. The demands of navigating an unfamiliar town, securing health care providers and establishing new friendships can induce helplessness and even depression. Retirees find they must redefine their relationships with grown children and may experience uncomfortable role-reversal and dependence.

Expectations of all parties, often unspoken, can result in hurt feelings and misunderstandings. Grandparents anticipating more togetherness may feel disappointed when their offspring are otherwise occupied. In contrast, the adage about the joys of grandchildren, "Love them and then send them home" may not hold true. In fact, too much togetherness may result in obligation, guilt and resentment.

Finally, after moving and adjusting to new circumstances and roles, there is no guarantee this new normal will continue. As Jane realized, our children may themselves relocate, leaving us feeling stranded somewhere we never expected to be.

Overwhelmed and confused? Follow these tips in order to make a well-informed and carefully considered decision:

- Examine motives and expectations. Discuss these written points with a spouse, trusted friend or professional.
- Study your proposed community. Investigate the cost of living, medical care, climate, recreational and cultural activities and sources of support for seniors.
- Make a compromise. Is there a community closer but not too close? Living an hour or two away from family may pro-

vide closeness as well as some distance and independence.

- Plan for contingencies. If your children relocate, would you be happy staying behind? Would you follow?
- Stay in contact. Former friends, co-workers and other family members comprise your support system too. Connections enhance your well-being.
- Even the field. If you are moving closer to one child, kindly, but firmly, explain your reasons and visit the other more frequently or for longer periods of time.
- Define reasonable, but flexible boundaries. Reflect upon your availability and desire for providing child care, assisting with house care or repairs, and visiting which will enable you to maintain your autonomy while you promote satisfying interactions and mutual support with your extended family.
- Enlist advice. Listen to family concerns and expectations and respect their independence and limitations. The impact of your move will extend to all of your family -- it is not just about you.
- Heed gut feelings and red flags. If uneasiness persists, there is probably just cause. Delve deeper into these warning signs.
- Try it out. A short-term furnished rental or home swap may clarify your choices.
- Support your children's parenting. If you relocate, avoid being controlling or interfering. Respect, rather than undermine, their authority. You've raised your family. Now, it's their turn.
- Be reassured. If you decide against moving closer to your family, focus on fostering strong, lifelong attachments with your grandchildren. The quality of our interactions is more important than mere physical proximity. Deep bonds form with relatively short, but regular, visits and attention.
- Cultivate optimism. Many seniors relocate to find rewarding new lives. Shaking up the usual infuses us with fresh energy. At the same time, seniors wishing to remain in their own community will find more support than ever, if that is what they choose to do.

Vicki Duncan is a licensed professional counselor and welcomes your questions at Victoria2write@aol.com

THE BLOOMING BAY

By Henry S. Parker

As spring flows into summer, the Chesapeake Bay becomes a thick biotic soup so teeming with life that a single cupful may hold millions of minute organisms. We expect such warm-season productivity, knowing that our estuary is one of the most fertile ecosystems on earth. But we may not realize that the stirrings of this fecundity began months earlier, in the time of snow and ice.

Long before winterized pleasure boats shed their shrink-wrap skins, life in the Bay emerges from its chilly torpor. By early March the ingredients for the Bay's rich soup are already in place: copious nutrients, shallow, well-mixed waters, and ample sunlight. The result? A predictable, seasonal explosion of marine life that persists deep into summer.

The explosion begins with phytoplankton—tiny, one-celled photosynthetic organisms at the center of the marine food web. Capitalizing on abundant nutrients and the growing energy of the sun, they reproduce prolifically. Soon, dense concentrations of pigmented cells—"blooms"—stain the Bay's waters with a brownish-green hue. Normally this is a good thing, but more about that later. Sometimes a surplus of nutrients can result in excessive phytoplankton populations that screen sunlight from submerged aquatic grasses and deplete oxygen levels when the tiny plants die and decompose.

More than 1,000 species of phytoplankton inhabit Chesapeake Bay; two forms—diatoms and dinoflagellates—are the most abundant.

Diatoms live in glass houses—literally. The cells are encased in a shell made of silica, the compound used to make glass. They comprise two main body shapes—bilaterally and radially symmetric—and a bewildering and beautiful variety of forms. The cells may be solitary or colonial, some-

times arrayed in long chains. The importance of diatoms cannot be overestimated. They thrive in all the world's seas and account for nearly half of the oceans' primary production (the conversion of carbon dioxide and water into organic compounds and oxygen, a process usually driven by the energy of the sun). They are a vitally important food source for other marine life forms.

Dinoflagellates, like diatoms, are microscopic, single-celled primary producers that are abundant in almost all aquatic environments. Their most distinctive feature is a pair of whip-like flagella that can weakly propel the cell through the water. Dinoflagellates are also an important food source for higher organisms, but they have a dark side. Some species manufacture a neurotoxin. When these species bloom, sometimes reaching "red tide" concentrations of more than a million cells per milliliter, the toxin becomes concentrated in shellfish that consume the dinoflagellates. Unwary vertebrate animals, including fish and humans, that eat the contaminated shellfish can become sick or die.

Overall, however, phytoplankton are highly beneficial in marine environments. They produce perhaps half of the world's oxygen. They consume large quantities of the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, moderating impacts on the atmosphere. And they are the foundation of the oceanic food web, providing the major source of nutrition for zooplankton—the animal component of the usually tiny, free-floating or weakly-swimming marine organisms broadly known as plankton.

Zooplankton range in size from microscopic, single-celled protozoa to jellyfish the size of dinner plates. Even fish and shellfish, when in their immature, larval stages, are temporarily mem-

bers of the zooplankton community.

Copepods are the most important and numerous forms of zooplankton in the Bay and around the world. In fact, scientists think that they may be the most abundant animals on earth. These microscopic crustaceans resemble miniature shrimp. Voracious grazers of phytoplankton, they also feed on decomposing plant material and bacteria. Copepods are so dependent on phytoplankton as a food source that graphs of the seasonal abundance of these two life forms often look like sequential, overlapping bell curves with phytoplankton numbers declining in concert with building populations of copepods.

As zooplankton feast on phytoplankton, they too become prey for larger organisms, including young fish. And you know the rest of the story: Big fish eat smaller fish and so on down the line to the largest and most voracious predator of all. Any guesses?

As summer fades into fall, phytoplankton may undergo a second, mini-bloom fueled by a burst of nutrients from decomposing animal and plant remains. But by late autumn, with declining sunlight and temperature, the Bay grows sleepy again, storing its energy for the next cycle of rebirth and regeneration the following spring.

Bits & Bytes

How about picking your own vegetables and fruits this summer? Log onto www.PickYourOwn.org to find local farmers and what produce. Location, hours and costs are provided.

There's a price for not living your dream

QUIZ-ACROSTIC

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

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Directions

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

- A. Largest desert
- B. Disliked
- C. Conduct
- D. Speak
- E. First physicist to split atom (2 wds.)
- F. Possibility (3 wds.)
- G. Exultant
- H. Cornhusker state
- I. Bicycle (hyph.)
- J. Enter by means of ladders
- K. Abjure
- L. Maneuver
- M. Site of 1996 summer Olympics
- N. Permeate
- O. Damon Runyon character (hyph.)
- P. Ms. Angelou
- Q. Repeats
- R. Prominent
- S. Mexican treat
- T. Russian monetary unit
- U. Country in southwest Africa
- V. Wanderer
- W. Opinion
- X. Loony bin
- Y. Doomed (hyph.)
- Z. Fruit of Jobs' labors

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

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