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# OutLook *by the Bay*

For the Bay Boomer and Beyond...

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## BAY VIEW - Words From the Desk



**Tecla Emerson  
Murphy**  
Publisher and  
Editor-in-Chief

**T**hank you! Here we are celebrating the start of our third year at OutLook by the Bay. It's a grand occasion and marking such a milestone at the height of a recession makes it all the more special. This success has come about thanks to all the hard work and dedication of the amazing people who surround us. People like our graphic artist. It's hard to believe, but Marie had never done this kind of magazine before and wasn't quite sure this was the direction she wanted to go. Look what happened! Our managing editor, Mick Rood, a very modest Pulitzer Prize winner, has been invaluable with not only his suggestions, but his keen eye for accuracy. We're flattered by his mere presence. We have writers who continue to astonish us with their creativity and expertise in whatever direction they choose to head. Take one of our most prolific writers: Melissa. Name the topic and she's off and writing, be it convincing us of the benefits of green tea or why we need to be out there exercising. Then there's Phil who's so busy and involved in so many things. Somehow we get him to slow down every couple of months and take pen in hand and tell us about the wonderful book club he started or one of his favorite places to hike. He's even taken on how to prepare a holiday brunch. It's that flexibility that we love so much about our writers.

How about our favorite import from the mother country, who regales us with culinary delights we can only dream about. And then there's Kater who makes us all squirm as we look around and realize she's right -- there are far too many "tolerations" that we're putting up with. How about Al, our writer/judge. He's done his best to make us more aware of the importance of legal documents in our lives as we approach an age when these issues are nothing short of critical. And did you ever dream you'd be reading a column by an undertaker? Well, Ryan was born into it more or less. He is here to answer our difficult questions, which he does with both understanding and humor. Then there's Cindy, who has no idea of the significance of being picked up by an editor in Connecticut who saw her short piece on Bay crabbing and asked permission to reprint it in an anthology. Consider Ellen, a new Annapolitan who's bound and determined that we're gonna eat right and get fit or she's gonna head back to the farm.

Our cover girls have caused quite a sensation - all local personalities, most retired - they've cheerfully come out during snowstorms, or just before dawn in the freezing cold so's we can get the best light - and they always look so happy regardless of the hour or weather conditions or the condition of once carefully coiffed hair.

We have three excellent writers holed up in the Rocky Mountains: Louise and Pat and Peggy, all friends, who are regular contributors always managing to get the feel and flavor of the Bay area. Talk about holed up, what about Neil? The snow up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan doesn't melt until just before they set off the Fourth of July fireworks, yet he shoots out at least one article per issue on all the horticultural aspects of successfully conquering the growing peculiarities of a near-tropical zone. Kathryn, formerly a school teacher, didn't know she had a special talent for writing until she stepped out and gave it a try. We're so impressed by whatever she sends. Peggy, who leaves us in the winter for warmer climes, still manages to shoot off an article or book review to us regardless of which sunny spot she's enjoying. And Tricia, who I'm sure is visited by the muse in the dead of night, invariably comes up with something different and pertinent each issue. Then there's Dear Vicki, who has an amazing insight into the human foibles and follies, most of which we can identify with. Of course we've got Leslie on board, who manages to flesh out all sorts of interesting tidbits that continue to fascinate us. Leah recently joined us as our new "young" writer who somehow manages to tune into our age-related issues. And then the expertise of our tireless and experienced and knowledgeable sales staff is equally impressive as they put in long hours. Their energy is contagious.

Of course, our readers are pretty special people too. They manage to let us know what a keen eye they have for detail and how much they appreciate having a source of information that focuses on them -- be it about travel, health, nutrition, financial advice, gardening ideas and so many other issues that we active Bay boomers face almost every day.

Where would we be without these amazing people? And interestingly most of our staff and contributors are retired, coming from very impressive and widely varied backgrounds -- still willing to share what they've learned along the way. We're so delighted that they've chosen us as an outlet.

Thanks, friends. The beginning of our third year, May Day 2009, belongs to you and it's yours to enjoy, yours to celebrate and yours to be proud of.

*Tecla Murphy*

# Spring

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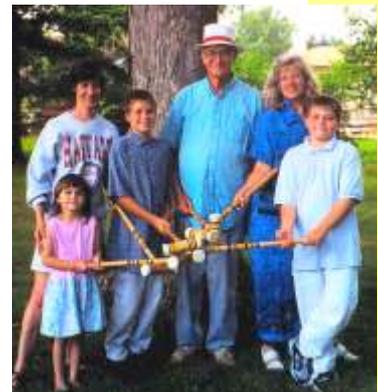
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**On the Cover:** Russ Smith, a retired Naval Academy professor, enjoys an almost daily game of tennis with wife Maureen, who formerly worked in the Maryland General Assembly. Both are now enjoying golf, community volunteer work and lots of travel.

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# Letters to the Editor:

## Kreeger Museum

Our director just came across your article on The Kreeger Museum in *OutLook by the Bay*. I especially enjoyed that you were able to touch on the many aspects of the museum, from its feeling of intimacy, to the acoustics and public programming.

My best,  
Molly M., Washington, DC

## Tea

Loved the article on tea, but one of the things that you forgot to mention was that if you are bleeding, for example, in your mouth, and you can't stop the bleeding, all you have to do is put a tea bag on top of where the bleeding is coming from and hold it down. It happened to me, it looked like I was hemorrhaging in my mouth and my oral surgeon told me to do this and within seconds the bleeding stopped. He told me it also holds true for other places if you are bleeding. It's the acidity in the tea. Any tea bag will do.

Thank you  
Pam W.

## My Favorites

What a great array of articles! Fun, informative and interesting. I love the subliminal Blue Stripe messages and "Bits and Bytes." "Ask the Undertaker" is a hoot. Important info I've never seen in another publication. I went online to read "Terra Cotta Warriors," a particular interest of mine, and added "OutLook" to My Favorites.

Thanks a million!  
Jan E., Hingham, MA

## Company Exposure

As an advertiser of *Outlook by the Bay* I have been extremely pleased. The magazine has given our company exposure to new readers we have not touched before and with people who really are looking for valuable information. As a reader, the magazine is well put together, comprehensive, contains great, up-to-date information and fun stories and always captures my attention. Looking forward to another year of working together and reading all the wonderful content!

Thanks,  
Suzan D. Tugberk, director of marketing  
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Please address your letters to: [editor@OutLookbytheBay.com](mailto:editor@OutLookbytheBay.com)

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# Who Said Camps Are Just For Kids?

By Leah Lancione

Some people may think summer camp is just for youngsters who want to get away from their parents or to make new friends after school is out. But it's not. There is a plethora of exhilarating day or week-long camps that beckon to enterprising and open-minded seniors and boomers. Even if you have to use the term "camp" loosely, there are opportunities to sign up for fitness boot camps, biking outings, sailing schools, ranch getaways and so many more. The prospects are endless for all those adults wanting to express their energy, creativity and spirit. Just take it from the famous playwright George Bernard Shaw who once proclaimed, "Youth is a wonderful thing. What a crime to waste it on children."

So, now that you've decided not to sit back and watch as your kids or grandkids return from camp with a renewed vigor and memories that will last a lifetime, check out a few of our picks. You will be happy to hear that most if not all of these departures from everyday life do not require lodging in matchbox-like cabins, smelling the continuous stench of bug spray, slumbering in sleeping bags or even the stinging of Bactine for the countless scrapes you incurred. However, if you do wish to relive a past outdoor adventure, there are camp-like outings and retreats at dude ranches across the country.

If you are able to spare no expense for your adventurous side, The Home Ranch in Colorado offers horseback riding lessons, cow working and cattle roping, along with less than rough-and-tough-it lodging accommodations. Each luxurious log cabin has such amenities as a hot tub and gourmet meals. If you feel traveling out of state will give you just the vigorous escapade you seek visit [www.info@homeranch.com](http://www.info@homeranch.com) for more details.

And, for those needing to get a head start or to tweak their riding skills before enrolling in a ranch vacation, the Woodland Horse Center in Silver Spring offers adult lessons. For more information, call (301) 421-9156.

Another outdoor camp-like experience that involves bonding, adventure and cultivating life skills is WomanTours, which affords women of all ages and abilities the opportunity to join bike tours to historically alluring and charming towns. One such outing is a bike tour through Maryland's Eastern Shore. The jaunt from inn to inn starts in Easton and travels through Unionville, the Upper and Middle Hooper Islands, Oxford and more. Another tour option not far from Maryland borders has bikers pedaling through the majestic landscape of Pennsylvania Dutch Country. For more information, visit [www.womantours.com](http://www.womantours.com)

If spending a few days or a week outdoors during warm summer months sounds appalling, there is a camp for adults with a "wild streak" called the Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp. The camp is held annually in different cities across the U.S. This year Hollywood, California, is the designated camp site. This "fantasy camp" offers amateurs or seasoned musicians the opportunity to cultivate their instrument skills, jam with famous musicians, write and record their own original ditty and to perform it live with real rock legends. Past camps have featured the likes of Roger Daltrey of The Who, Joe Walsh of The Eagles, Bill Wyman of the Rolling Stones and the Beach Boys' Brian Wilson. For more information on how you can "take a walk on the wild side," visit [www.rockcamp.com](http://www.rockcamp.com)

True Marylanders know life always seems sweeter when you're sailing. If you've always wanted to learn the challenging but rewarding sport of sailing, enroll in one of the weekend or week-long courses at Annapolis

Sailing School, which was the first adult sailing school in the country when it opened in 1959. From the novice sailor to a more advanced recreational skipper, the school can help anyone master necessary sailing skills on a variety of vessels. If you envision yourself and your first mate spending warm summer nights messing around the Bay, visit [www.annapolissailing.com](http://www.annapolissailing.com) or call (800) 638-9192 for more information.

The Chesapeake Sailing School, another school located in the sailing capital of the world, offers two-day weekend basic sailing courses or five-day "live aboard" cruising on a catamaran. Courses are designed to teach individuals or groups of all skill levels how to be competent sailors. So, if you want "ahoy" to be in your new vocabulary, visit [www.sailingclasses.com](http://www.sailingclasses.com) or call (800) 966-0032.

If you prefer to camp out somewhere more swanky and audacious, why not join the countless wannabe poker stars who enroll at one of the World Poker Tournament Boot Camps. The closest camp is held in Atlantic City, New Jersey, although Las Vegas is another obvious locale. For this fantasy weekend, poker aficionados get to develop their card strategies with world famous poker celebrities like T.J. Cloutier, Clonie Gowen and Mike Sexton. These and other professional players teach campers through lectures and interactive learning labs. To have a pro poker player offer vital critiques is a dream come true for many, especially since the camp culminates in actual tournaments where campers can test their luck and recently perfected skills. Try your luck and check out poker camp at [www.wptbootcamp.com](http://www.wptbootcamp.com)

If none of these examples suit your style, check out [www.GrownUpCamps.com](http://www.GrownUpCamps.com) or [www.ShawGuides.com](http://www.ShawGuides.com) where more 'camp' opportunities abound, including those for sports, the arts, academia and more.

# Spending a Small Amount of Savings to Safeguard the Rest

By Jane Sinclair

Everyone should think about this when planning their financial future: Spending a small amount of your savings to safeguard the rest. Creating a retirement roadmap is critical and there are vital components that need to be marked along your route. Long-term care (LTC) insurance is a very important step to a proper retirement plan and one that could potentially save you from losing your retirement savings. Let's discuss the basics of LTC insurance and how to obtain it for you or your spouse.

## WHAT IS LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE?

LTC insurance is a health insurance that was created to specifically cover the financial costs of people who have disabilities or chronic illnesses. Activities of daily living (ADL), which typically are not paid for through medical insurance or Medicare would be covered through your LTC insurance, which is often referred to as "custodial care." People with disabilities can take advantage of this insurance while receiving care at home or in a nursing facility. This type of insurance is designed to provide maximized functioning and independence when a person is unable to handle at least one basic daily living activity.

LTC insurance allows you to purchase a coverage plan that would place the financial burden onto the insurance company, should an adverse health condition affect you and/or your spouse. Not everyone will have long-term care needs in the future, but did you know that 43 percent of Americans aged 65 and above can expect to live in a nursing facility? And according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 70 percent or more of individuals aged 65 and above can expect to need long-term care coverage.

So here comes the important question again, "Would you spend a small portion of your savings to ensure the safety of the rest of your portfolio?" If so, then LTC insurance is a great way to help retain your nest egg.

## WHAT ARE MY OTHER OPTIONS?

There are other primary options to cover the cost of your health care needs. The first is to self-insure and the other is Medicaid/Medigap.

Self-insurance is a very limited option as it is extremely expensive to cover the out-of-pocket custodial care expenses. Many people with the ability to self-insure still choose to purchase LTC coverage to help

protect their financial assets and savings. Others who self-insure do so because they have not created an appropriate retirement plan and are out of options when a life-changing event occurs in the family. If this happens, you will need to recognize the possibility of depleting your lifetime savings in only a few years.

Medicaid/Medigap is an alternative, keeping in mind that you will need to spend down your assets in order to qualify for this program. Medicaid is a federal and state-supported program in which your assets need to be below the poverty line for you to receive its benefits.

Standard Medicare is divided into two parts: Part A, which provides limited hospitalization insurance and Part B, which provides medical insurance for doctor's fees, tests and other ancillary services. It is important to note that Medicare will not cover items such as prescription drugs, at-home recovery after a procedure or a hospital stay past a certain length of time.

Medigap, however, is a program designed to "fill in the gaps" of your insurance needs that a traditional Medicare policy may not provide. This includes hospital stays from days 61 to 150 days, a potential reduction of your deductible and more. In order to receive Medigap and Medicare, there are qualifications that need to be met and costs vary depending on your benefits.

## HOW MUCH CAN I EXPECT TO PAY FOR MY LONG-TERM CARE NEEDS IF I AM UNINSURED?

The average cost of LTC varies from state to state and is continuously increasing due to the rise in health care and associated fees. In 2007, the cost of long-term care ranged from \$46,100 in Texas to more than \$100,000 in New York. Currently in Maryland, the average costs of LTC is over \$73,000 and is estimated to top \$120,000 in 10 years, assuming 5 percent inflation.



These figures can be overwhelming and stressful when you are retired, which is why it is very important to plan ahead. Determining the right retirement course for you is an area that should not be overlooked and should include your health care potential needs. A one-year stay in a nursing facility will average close to \$74,800, which is \$6,233 a month or \$205 a day, according to National Underwriter Field Guide estimates.

### ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE?

Yes, there are eight different types of long-term care insurance programs that you may choose from. Here is a quick glance at the types and their coverage:

	Help with ADLs	Help with Additional Services	Help with Care Needs
Community-Based Services	Yes	Yes	No
Home Health Care	Yes	Yes	Yes
In-Law Apartments	Yes	Yes	Yes
Housing for Aging & Disabled Individuals	Yes	Yes	No
Board and Care Homes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Assisted Living	Yes	Yes	Yes
Continuing Care/Retirement Communities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nursing Homes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### IS LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE RIGHT FOR ME?

There are certain factors that may make you more prone to requiring services rendered through LTC insurance. Things to take into account include age, gender and lifestyle:

- Though age can play a part in long-term care needs, there is no definitive age of when coverage will be needed. In fact, 40 percent of Americans receiving long-term care today are between the ages of 18 and 64.
- Marital status is also another potential factor, because single people are more likely to need assistance from a health care provider. Women in general are at a higher risk than men and the length of LTC coverage needed is longer for a woman than a man because of life expectancy rates.
- There are factors that you have control over to help reduce your chances of health risks and related needs, such as lifestyle. A poor diet and exercise habits can put you at risk and increase the likelihood of needing LTC insurance.

Looking at these factors is not the only way to make a decision on whether or not long-term care is right for you and/or your spouse. It is an important step in designing your retirement and income planning goals and needs. If a health crisis arises in your retirement years, and you do not have LTC insurance, then you may potentially run out of money. It is important to assess your comfort level and make sure that your planning is providing you with peace of mind.

In terms of LTC insurance and retirement planning, I like to use the Boy Scout motto of "Be prepared."

### HOW DO I PURCHASE LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE?

It is important to seek the advice of a professional who can guide you through your choices and help determine which plans may best suit your needs. Remember, there are professionals in this area to assist you as there may be specific questions you need to have answered.

If you are not currently working with someone, but would like to get a free quote, you can look up local retirement planning companies in your area. Most are willing to set up a complimentary consultation to discuss your situation. 

*Jane Sinclair is the long-term care representative for Retirement Planning Services, Inc., located in Millersville. Contact Jane at (410) 451-9500 or JSinclair@RetirementPlanningToday.com*

## Partners in Care: A Way to Give and Receive

Despite all the budget cutbacks throughout the state and the nation, older adults are discovering new ways to transform the community. In February Partners In Care Maryland was honored by the National Council on Aging as one of only 14 programs in the nation with the potential to be a national program model for older adult volunteers.

What happens when we become too old or frail to drive to the grocery store or the doctor's office? What do we do when arthritis makes it impossible to make the smallest repairs around the house or even to change a light bulb? What if our friends have moved or died and we don't have family nearby to help us? PIC uses the tool of time-banking or service-exchange to build a community network of care around older adults, helping older adults to remain independent as long as possible in their own homes.

Many PIC volunteer members have almost made a career of helping others. The volunteers, using their own cars, provide rides, for example, to the doctor and to the grocery store, along with other assistance such as small handyman repairs. When projects are too big to do alone, groups are organized to get the work done. Some volunteers appear in the PIC office several times a week to pick up safety equipment that they then install for the elderly and disabled—from raised toilet seats to bathroom railings. Participants earn one credit for every hour spent assisting others. Those participants then use those credits to "pay" for services they themselves need. Everyone is called a "member" whether they are giving services or receiving services.

What began as a kitchen-table nonprofit has developed into a vital resource with 2,600 participants currently exchanging more than 20,000 hours of services each year in both Anne Arundel County and in Frederick. There are plans to expand throughout the state. Approximately 800 members are primarily volunteers while others are more likely to need assistance than to provide it.

The program, founded in Anne Arundel County in 1993, has dramatically improved the quality of life of isolated seniors -- both from the social interaction and the sense of community. How can you help PIC? Visit <http://www.partnersincare.org/> or phone (410) 544-4800. 

# Cut Flowers: Create the Mood With Innovative Containers

By Louise Whiteside

**"...when selecting vessels, be sure that your flowers - not their containers - are the stars of the show."**

It's a special occasion, maybe your birthday or an anniversary. Upon answering the door, you're handed a long, rectangular box by a delivery man. The perfumed scent emanating from the box nearly stops your breath. You open the box to discover a dozen deep scarlet, long-stemmed roses. My guess is that you feel warm, maybe a bit tearful. Those beautiful roses remind you that you are especially dear to someone.

Here's another scenario: You've just returned from a shopping trip to the farmer's market. You're carrying an armload of fresh, white daisies poking their heads out of a large, brown paper bag. The sight of the daisies makes you smile.

Flowers! How they speak without words and how they beautify our world. No doubt cut flowers are a part of your life: They add grace to your living space. They signal to guests that you've taken a little extra trouble to honor their presence.

Flowers are exquisite just as they are, but the way you choose to display them can say much about you. Picture, for example, the long-stemmed, scarlet roses you've just received, standing regally in a shimmering silver pitcher on your coffee table. Do they make a statement of formality and elegance? Now visualize those dainty white daisies peering over the sides of a large, rustic wicker basket, or extending their long necks out of a tarnished copper teakettle on the floor of your deck. Do they send a message of cheer and hospitality to your luncheon guests?

In setting a mood, containers are almost as important as your flowers. In the same way that you'd adorn a simple black dress with lovely jewelry, so might you choose the perfect vase to show off your beautiful blooms.

And, just as you wouldn't want your jewelry to overpower your dress, neither would you want your container to drown out your flowers. While your flowers should take center stage, a striking vase can do much to enhance their charm.

Think about it: What kind of mood does a cut crystal vase stir in you? How about a crockery cookie jar? A wicker basket? A white enamel teakettle? And think about the occasion: Formal or casual? Joyous or solemn? Stately or whimsical? What container makes the right statement? Consider its size, shape and material. Vessels for your cut flowers can be found everywhere: In your basement, in your attic, at yard sales, in antique shops or in your kitchen cabinet. Pairing the ideal container with the perfect flower arrangement can be a fine art or a playful adventure.

Try to imagine the types of flowers that might fit with the following standard types of vases:

- Clear glass or crystal
- Ornate patterned china
- Baskets
- Terra-cotta flowerpots
- Silver or brass pitchers

Or experiment with the following "fun" types of containers:

- Jugs, crocks and kettles
- Coffee cups
- Soup tureens
- Unusual colored bottles
- Cut glass or silver punch bowls
- Ordinary drinking glasses

After you've stretched your imagination and unearthed the most unlikely containers, experiment with the many ways you can decorate and adorn them.

For example, decorate the insides of your containers: Place a few drops of food coloring in the water to match or complement the colors of your flowers, e.g., a pale purple coloring with white lilies; a pale pink with dark pink roses, etc.

Drop some fresh cranberries into the bottom of a clear glass vase before inserting your flowers. (Hint: tulips are a good choice for this type of arrangement, preferring an acidic environment.) Not only are the berries a novel conversation piece; they can also serve to anchor your stems.

Drop any of the following into the bottom of a transparent glass vase:

- Decorative buttons
- Marbles
- Glass beads
- River rocks
- Seashells
- A piece of pretty glass jewelry

Or decorate the outsides of your containers:

- Wrap with pretty fabric remnants (seal with two-sided tape)
- Attach leaves or stems to the outside of a plain glass jar
- Wrap a container with bright green moss (tie with raffia)
- Wrap a drinking glass with shiny gift-wrap (tie with ribbon)
- Find an endless array of pressure-sensitive stickers at your craft store (butterflies, snowflakes, stars, hearts, or your choice)

In summary, when selecting vessels, be sure that your flowers – not their containers – are the stars of the show. A vase should enhance and complement a flower arrangement, not overwhelm it.

These suggestions are only meant to pique your imagination. Your individual style and preference will lead you into infinite possibilities. 

Reference: *Flower Style: The FTD Guide To Flowers In Your Home*  
New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2002

# The Five Givens of Life

By Kater Leatherman

Every now and again, a book crosses my path that teaches me exactly what I need to learn. One that comes to mind is *The Five Things We Cannot Change ... and the Happiness We Find by Embracing Them*. Written by David Richo, it addresses the realities of human existence called the five "givens." He assures us that once they are accepted, we will be able to minimize emotional exhaustion, disappointment and stress. While these five givens of life will be a valuable reminder to us all, for some they will feel like a death sentence. Leading the pack will be the folks who suffer from entitlement issues. They may also be people who have endured a difficult childhood or experienced an unimaginable tragedy. Some, if they feel chronically down on their luck, will fall under this spell. Their belief - or should I say magical thinking - is that they've already dealt with their fair share of problems, and don't mind receiving a dose of pity while they're telling you about them either. They think that since they have done their "time," life should be easier, with less strife and difficulty. "Sorry," David Richo would say to those seeking immunity. "You're still going to have to deal with the five givens of life."

Here they are:

## 1. Things change and end.

The only constant is change, so strive to expect and accept it with grace. Now for the end part. Think circle. With every ending comes a new beginning, and God never closes one door without opening another.

## 2. Pain is a part of life.

Breakdowns are breakthroughs so think of pain as the gateway to healing and growth opportunities. Let go of why it's happening to you. What's more important is how you're going to handle yourself with it. The soul speaks to us through our feelings and we heal our wounds by going through, not around them.

## 3. Things don't always go according to plan.

We've all had the experience of looking forward to an event that didn't materialize only to realize how much time we wasted thinking about it. Maybe the better plan is to surrender to outcomes and expectations.

## 4. No one is loving and loyal all the time.

Love is a wonderful thing but it hurts sometimes. Since we have no control over others, we might as well put our energy into

being loving and loyal to ourselves. Just as important is to avoid retaliation when someone wrongs us.

## 5. Life is not always fair.

This might be the biggest kicker in the pants. What remains fair is that everything happens for our highest good and, when we accept this, then we'll have an attitude that allows us to look in the face of adversity and show the world just who we really are and what we are made of. Yes, we are spiritual beings having a human experience and, most days, staying grounded is a very tall order. But whether you're a twenty-something, elder-something, or somewhere in between, the five givens are one area where accepting them will leave you feeling happier and more in the flow of life.

*Kater Leatherman teaches yoga at Ridgely Retreat in West Annapolis and has a monthly column in the Home section of The Capital. Her book MOVING ON: Feel Lighter, Liberated, More Alive! One Woman's Quest to Create SPACE for Change, can be purchased at [www.katerleatherman.com](http://www.katerleatherman.com)*

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# Croquet: Fun for the Backyard and Beyond

By Leslie J. Payne

Say the word “croquet” and my thoughts go to summer evenings as a child. Sounds of wooden mallets hitting wooden balls punctuated the enthusiastic cheers of several generations competing for the *Backyard Championship*. As a child I thought croquet was limited to backyards and barbeques, but the fun world of croquet is so much more.

Backyard croquet is still played in yards across America, but there are other versions of the game: American, International, Golf and Gateway croquet. Nine-wicket croquet is the family game for backyards and parks. Six-wicket croquet is the modern sport played with precision equipment on specially built courts and requires skill and strategy. If you want to play, there are plenty of ways to learn: clubs, videos, online instruction, magazines and even croquet schools.

## Croquet Clubs

According to one who knows, the best thing about croquet is the fun and the people. Peter Oleson, a member of *The West River Wickets*, laughs warmly as he explains how the club got its start. A group of friends in Galesville, began playing backyard croquet, an excuse for some summer fun. A team from Shady Side found them and together they enjoyed some competition. Eventually, the two groups merged, formed the *West River Wickets*, and in 2007 became official members of The United States Croquet Association.

When asked if the *Wickets* is a small, elite club, Oleson laughed responding, “Anything but!” The group, always open to newcomers, currently boasts about 30 members ranging in age from the late 20s to the oldest player at 86. They play six-wicket croquet, which is demanding because the clearance between ball and wicket is only 1/16 of an inch. While they do follow the rules and standards of the USCA, the purpose of it all is enjoy the game.

## Have Mallet, Will Travel

Croquet can also be a great excuse for travel. The USCA Croquet School is located in West Palm Beach, Florida. Three days of intensive courses cover all aspects of the game and “is a great way to get the rust out” as Peter Oleson puts it, to be ready for the new season. The playing season is dictated by weather. In Florida one can play year round, but in Maryland the season is April to November, or whenever the cold takes the pleasure out of the game.

Tournaments are hosted by croquet clubs in various states including California, Florida, the Carolinas and Maryland. Some competitions are more laid back than others, but all are focused on fun. Whether the tournament is in your backyard or part of an invitational championship on a manicured green, croquet is all about having fun, being with friends and enjoying good weather.



## Nearby Clubs:

Patuxent Croquet Club, Inc.  
Woodbine, MD  
Contact at (410) 381-6234  
or reach Lee Hanna at [lehanna@aol.com](mailto:lehanna@aol.com)

West River Wickets  
Galesville, MD  
Contact Peter Oleson at (301) 602-2433

## Nearby Tournament

Jun 5-7, 2009 · The Peachwood Classic  
Region: Mid-Atlantic  
Location: Patuxent Croquet Club,  
Woodbine, MD  
Contact: Lee Hanna  
Phone : 410-381-6234  
Email: [lehanna@aol.com](mailto:lehanna@aol.com)

## For More Information

The United States Croquet Association  
[www.croquetamerica.com](http://www.croquetamerica.com)



*If not now — when?*

# Notes from the JUDGE



*Al Northrop was admitted to the practice of law in 1975 and is now serving on the Prince George's County Circuit Court. He can be reached at Judge@OutLookbytheBay.com*

# Guardianships

*By Albert Northrop*

**H**elp me out here. I know I've been writing articles for this publication for a few months now, but I can't seem to recall what they were about. It seems to me that I was writing about things that have to do with estate and money concerns as we get older. It's right on the tip of my tongue, but at the moment I just can't remember. I had it just a minute ago.

Sound familiar? Have you heard this sort of thing recently? Have you found yourself saying it? It's no secret that we lose a little bit of our memory every day as we get older, especially short-term memory. It's nothing to be embarrassed about, it's just a fact of life.

But let's say that you or someone close to you neglected to prepare that power of attorney I suggested a couple of months ago. And let's say that that person close to you, perhaps an elderly parent, is getting forgetful to the point that some rather important matters are left unattended. The mortgage doesn't get paid or the electric bill check doesn't get mailed. If it happens once or twice, no great harm is done. If it becomes chronic and the electricity gets turned off in the middle of January, then there could be some severe consequences. The question becomes, how do we handle the affairs of an elderly or disabled person who can no longer care for themselves in their daily affairs and who hasn't, can't or won't execute a power of attorney to allow someone else to take care of things?

The answer is to obtain a guardianship of the property of another. A person with let's say an "interest" in another person, usually a close family member, files a petition for guardianship

in the Circuit Court for the county in which the "ward" or elderly person resides. It will require the certificate of two physicians who must attest to the fact that the elderly or disabled person is unable or incapable of taking care of their own affairs. The court will appoint an attorney to represent the interest of the elderly person for the purposes of the pending petition. The case, if contested, may be heard by a jury if one is requested. The standard of proof is clear and convincing evidence, a higher standard of proof than proof by a preponderance of the evidence.

In most cases the attorney appointed by the court will speak to the alleged incompetent and will review the physician certifications and any other evidence. If it appears that everything is in order and in fact the alleged incompetent does not object, the case will proceed in an uncontested manner. The petitioner, or where appropriate, someone chosen by the court, will be appointed as guardian of the property of the elderly incompetent. That guardian will receive income, Social Security, pension money, etc., for the ward and then pay the bills when they become due. They will make an annual accounting to the court. If it is a family member, their services are usually gratuitous. If it is a court-appointed guardian, usually an attorney, they will be paid a reasonable fee for their services.

How do we avoid all of this? Go back and print out that power of attorney form that I offered. (Go to [OutLookbytheBay.com](http://OutLookbytheBay.com) under Judge's Notes.) Have it executed before it's too late.

So what was it I was trying to remember? What does come to mind is the couple in their mid-90s who were celebrating their 75th wedding anniversary with a party. A reporter from the local paper was there to report on the event. He noticed that the elderly gentleman always referred to his bride of three quarters of a century with terms of endearment such as "sweetheart, lovey, dear, honey buttons, sweet love" and the like. In time he pulled the gentleman aside and inquired: "I notice that you always refer to your wife in endearing terms. Do you think that is the secret to your long marriage?" The gentleman replied "To tell you the truth, I forgot her name about 10 years ago and I'm too afraid to ask the old witch what it is."



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# Seniors Making Music Happen on the Eastern Shore



By Lin Clineburg

We sat transfixed, listening without breathing it seemed, to the beautiful strains of Brahms played by world-class musicians at the Wye River's Aspen Institute that early summer day. The afternoon concert, and champagne buffet supper that followed under a crisp white tent, nourished us culturally and physically. We left, feeling at peace with the world as the sun slowly slipped behind the Wye. It was a beautiful introduction to retired life on the Eastern Shore. That concert was only one of many performed at various locations during the annual two-week Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival, and we knew that we wanted to be part of them all.

That was eight years ago. The magic actually began 24 years ago when J. Lawrie Bloom, a Chicago Symphony clarinetist, invited several musician friends who loved sailing to vacation with him at his parents' home on the Eastern Shore. They gave a successful, impromptu concert in the gazebo at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, and the rest is history. Lawrie became artistic co-director of the festival, sharing responsibilities with cellist Marcy Rosen of the renowned Lion's Gate Trio. The ensuing 23 years have seen continual growth. Today's Chesapeake Chamber Music (CCM) is much more than just an annual musical event.

Chesapeake Chamber Music is the nonprofit umbrella organization for the annual CCM Festival, the biennial CCM International Competition, Interlude Concerts held during the year and the YouthReach program, which introduces 350 local elementary school children to playing the violin. An 18-member board of directors and two part-time paid professionals plan and execute all these programs assisted by numerous talented and devoted volunteers, mostly retirees in the community. These individuals bring a wealth of experience to CCM from prior careers in business, law, public relations, marketing, the arts, computer programming and simply a love for music.

Patricia Barbis and her husband retired to St. Michaels in 1997 after a successful career in public relations in Washington, DC, and service in the U.S. Foreign Service throughout Asia and Europe. As a newcomer at a Sunday lunch in Trappe, hosted by *Time Magazine's* retired Tokyo bureau chief, Pat was recruited as a volunteer to help market and promote chamber music on the Eastern Shore. She's served on the board nine years, the last four as vice president. Her special interests have been to assist in creating and launching CCM's International Competition for young professional ensembles and in introducing string instruments to elementary school children in Talbot and Dorchester counties.

Before moving permanently to the Eastern Shore in 1993, Arnold and Zena Lerman spent weekends away from their work in Washington, DC, bicycling the country roads of Talbot County. Music lovers, they were active followers of the chamber music scene in Washington. After their move to Oxford, Arnie, a lifelong violinist, enjoyed playing with local orchestras and became a volunteer with the Chesapeake Chamber Music Festival. Arnie joined its board, working on the first Capital Campaign in 1993. When the nine-year term limit for board members freed up some of his time, Arnie pursued what had become a dream project for him - the creation of an international chamber music competition providing young professional ensembles with recognition, cash awards and exposure to new performance venues. Today the biennial competition is recognized in music schools and conservatories throughout North America and the world as a premier musical event. Arnie's goal is to continue to enhance and further "the rich mosaic of musical offerings under the CCM umbrella."

In all, there are approximately 100 active volunteer members who give generously of their time and talent to Chesapeake Chamber Music, bringing pleasure to young and old alike throughout the year.

Festival 24, to be held June 4-14 on Maryland's Eastern Shore, brings 21 internationally renowned musicians to perform eleven exquisite programs in venues from Chestertown to Queenstown and Easton to Oxford. Beginning with a free family concert on Thursday, June 4, at the Avalon Theatre in Easton, the festival will continue for a week and a half with concerts, which are free or attractively priced. Tickets to the Aspen Institute concert on Saturday, June 6, will include a champagne buffet supper after the concert, and the Angels Concert on Sunday, June 14, a CCM fundraiser at a wonderful waterfront estate, will feature a luscious cocktail party.

For more information and a festival brochure, and to obtain tickets to the 2009 Festival events, please visit [www.ChesapeakeChamberMusic.org](http://www.ChesapeakeChamberMusic.org) or call the CCM office at (410) 819-0380.

**"In all, there are approximately 100 active volunteer members who give generously of their time and talent to Chesapeake Chamber Music, bring pleasure to young and old alike throughout the year."**

*Get out there and get involved.*



# Mediation

By Carolyn J. Rodis

Henry Blue is worried. His best friend died recently after being kept alive on a respirator. Henry wants to talk with his children about the medical treatment he wants if he is unable to speak for himself. His daughter, Jane, keeps putting him off, saying, "Dad, you're only 70, and you're in great health. Why talk about such a morbid subject now? There's plenty of time later."

Mildred Jones is tired of listening to her children argue about who will get what after she dies. She is ready to have her lawyer write a new will leaving everything to her dog, Puffball. Just let the children try to contest her wishes!

Jonas Brown is thinking about retirement. His wife, Gloria, isn't ready to stop working. They are worried about how they will negotiate their lives, when James wants to travel and Gloria has an assignment she needs to complete.

These situations are typical of those we face as we age. Families are not having necessary conversations because they are hampered by worry, misunderstandings, denial and past history.

There is a way out of the impasse for these families, a practice you might have thought is limited to things like labor disputes – mediation.

Mediation is a process that offers families the opportunity to discuss difficult subjects in a safe, confidential environment. A third-party, neutral mediator guides the conversation, assuring that each participant is heard. The mediator is not a judge, and does not decide who is right or wrong. Nor does the mediator suggest solutions. Rather, the role of the mediator is to facilitate discussion.

Mediation offers opportunities for each family member to express his or her emotions, and for the mediators to acknowledge and reframe those feelings in a way that lets the other participants hear them. Mediation identifies the real interests and values of the participants.

The mediator helps the participants identify the issues they want to resolve. The participants then brainstorm to come up with possible solutions to those issues -- ideas they had never considered before that are developed through the collaborative process. They discuss and test those options, deciding which ones suit their needs.

Mediation empowers the participants to control the outcome by collaborating to reach decisions that meet their needs as individuals and as a family. In the process, relationships usually are strengthened.

If these families came to mediation:

— Henry might learn that his daughter never resolved her childhood feeling of abandonment when Henry left the family to fight in the Korean War. Jane might reach an understanding of the fear Henry has of being kept alive if he develops Alzheimer's disease and no longer recognizes her.

— Mildred's children might relive some of their childhood conflicts, one daughter crying, "Mommy always loved you best!"

— Jonas might express his fear of dying before he sees the Great Wall of China, and Gloria might talk about her desire to leave a legacy through her work.

The mediator has provided a neutral and safe place for them to explore their feelings and discover their real interests. With the help of the mediator, they can then suggest solutions and find a resolution of their conflict that works for them.

Conflict is inevitable in our lives. Mediation offers a way to manage conflict so it becomes an opportunity for growth and understanding.



Carolyn J. Rodis is a mediator with Rodis & Henick, L.L.C., located in Anne Arundel County. For more information call (410) 279-0942 or [cjrodis@yahoo.com](mailto:cjrodis@yahoo.com)

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# A Sportin' Summer

By Matt Wilson



Looking for a place to take your grandchildren on a spring afternoon? The Bay area has plenty of sporting events for the entire family to enjoy. From college lacrosse to professional golf, there is something for everyone to enjoy. Whether you are looking for competitive sports, a sporting event in a relaxed atmosphere, or a game that is entertaining for all ages, the Bay area offers them all. The warm weather in May and June makes this the perfect opportunity to get out and explore some of the more interesting and lesser known sporting events in the area.

If you are interested in lacrosse, which is becoming one of the most popular and fastest growing sports in the country, both the NCAA men's and women's national lacrosse end-of-the season tournaments will be held nearby. The United States Naval Academy is hosting the men's quarterfinal round at the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis May 16-17. The women's lacrosse NCAA Championship will be held at Towson University May 22-24.

If you have never watched a college lacrosse game, it is something the whole family should experience and may enjoy. It's a fast-paced game with a lot of action that keeps everyone entertained—regardless of age. It's played in May, when the weather is just right for sitting in the bleachers. Also, the games normally don't take more than two hours. Sitting in the bleachers doesn't get uncomfortably long and if you have children with you, it should hold their attention to the end.

June brings a professional Nationwide Tour Golf Tournament, the Melwood Prince George's County Open, held at The Country Club at Woodmore in Mitchellville. The Nationwide Tour is just one step below the PGA, so the competition is extremely impressive, but the crowds and commotion

are not nearly what you would find at a PGA event. The tournament is held June 4-7 and is a great experience and a must-see if you've never been to a professional golf tournament. It not only offers a relaxed atmosphere, but the opportunity to walk around and experience the scenery instead of sitting still in the bleachers at a ball game. The event is not overcrowded, so you have the opportunity to follow whichever golfers you choose and get much closer to the action than you could imagine. And if you are tired of walking around, there are plenty of places for you and your family to sit, spread out and watch several different holes and golfers. Woodmore, a beautifully landscaped golf course, is also easy on the eyes.

There are also great volunteer opportunities available the week of the tournament if you are interested in helping organize and oversee the festivities for the week and still enjoy watching golf in the process. With a \$35 volunteer fee, you get a uniform shirt and hat with the tournament logo, a meal for each day worked, two weekly grounds passes that give you access to the tournament and a volunteer appreciation party. There are also a variety of ways to get involved that include, being a walking scorer, providing transportation and housing for golf professionals, and more stationary jobs such as checking the credentials of fans entering the clubhouse. To fill out a volunteer application, visit the tournament Web site [www.melwoodgolf.org](http://www.melwoodgolf.org)

There are also numerous minor league baseball teams in the Bay area, some that you've probably heard of, and others that you may not have realized were here. The great thing about minor league baseball is the convenience of going, the inexpensive tickets and the great activities they have to entertain kids. Many minor league stadiums have playgrounds and activities geared to

the little ones, located conveniently in the stadiums so you can keep an eye on the game as well as an eye on the playground. A minor league baseball game is the kind of activity that you can simply decide one afternoon that you would like to go, there is no planning required.

Bay area minor league baseball teams include the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs in Waldorf, the Delmarva Shorebirds in Salisbury, the Aberdeen IronBirds in Aberdeen and the Bowie Baysox in Bowie.



*Matt Wilson, currently attends the University of Maryland, College Park, and can be reached at [mwilso16@umd.edu](mailto:mwilso16@umd.edu)*

For schedules, tickets or more information:  
NCAA Men's Lacrosse Championships  
<http://www.navysports.com/tickets/navy-tickets.html>

NCAA Women's Lacrosse Championships  
<http://www.towsontigers.com/>

Melwood Prince George's County Open  
<http://www.melwoodgolf.org/>  
(301) 599-2732

Southern Maryland Blue Crabs  
<http://www.somdbluecrabs.com/>  
(301) 638-9788

Delamva Shorebirds  
[www.theshorebirds.com](http://www.theshorebirds.com)  
(410) 219-3112

Aberdeen IronBirds  
<http://www.ironbirdsbaseball.com/>  
(410) 297-9292

Bowie Baysox  
<http://www.baysox.com/>  
(301) 805-6000

# Pursuing Your Passion

By Kathryn Marchi

Much has been written about finding your passion, whether during your primary career or in retirement. Many of us have had a hobby that was put on the back burner until retirement and when we had the time, it still lay dormant. What can you do to make your passion come to fruition?

Let's explore two stories about those who have made the time for pursuing their passions and have actually expanded upon them. For many, it was a completely different path from their former careers. Some even formed a new career and some simply enjoyed themselves.

As a classroom teacher for 23 years, I had a full-time career, as well as a family and we were frequently uprooted with my husband's career - I was a busy woman. One of my first loves was horses and it was difficult finding the time to ride. When life slowed down for us, my husband and I bought a five-acre farm and began a small horse boarding business. It was a lot of extra work but allowed lots of time to ride and get paid for it as I wound down my teaching career. That's my personal example of "pursuing your passion."

Another example comes from a man named Bill Turner. He worked long hours in the bread business for nearly 40 years. Six days a week, he would rise at 3 a.m. and work until 5 p.m. On the seventh day of the week, he played golf! This game was his passion and he was good at it -- a "scratch golfer." Many people urged him to become a golf pro, but having a young family, he was reluctant to take on something new. It was after WWII and into the 1950s and unlike in today's world, people did not change jobs easily. Bill continued working at the bakery and quickly moved up to management.

When he retired in 1984, Bill was able to play golf as often as he wanted. He repaired some old clubs he had collected and soon he had a small building put up in his backyard. Bill moved all of his tools to this little house and had it wired for electricity. He also installed a telephone, intercom system to the main house (his wife did not favor this!) and a small heater and air conditioner. Everything was set for his comfort and when he was not on the golf course, he was in his "shop" working with golf clubs.

Soon others began bringing their old or broken golf clubs for repair and refinishing. Bill developed his own technique for these jobs and the word got out! Bill Turner's golf repair business was launched. Customers including the postman and the UPS man were constant visitors to this little shop. Bill installed a stone pathway from the gate to the shop for easier access. He chose not to advertise, but posted a simple sign over the doorway which read, "Damn I'm Good!"

Bill's golf repair business took off and soon he was even making new custom clubs for people. Other golf repair shops sent him their overload items to work on. Bill was one contented man and could play golf whenever he wanted and talk golf with his customers while working on their clubs. Every member of his family had their own clubs!

In pursuing and expanding his passion for golf, Bill Turner created a new career in retirement. It was a totally new direction in his life and he continued this path well into his 80s. Neighbors often commented on seeing Bill walking to "work" in his backyard with his little Corgi, Boulder, nipping at his heels.

Bill was a happy man and a fine example of someone who was successful in "pursuing his passion."

I am dedicating this column to him. Bill Turner was my dad.

*Kathryn and her husband Dennis live in Centreville where she recently rediscovered her passion for writing. She is grateful for a typing course she took in high school many years ago. It keeps her fingers flying over the keyboard as she pursues her new passion. She can be reached at [marchi-wre@mr.is.com](mailto:marchi-wre@mr.is.com)*

## OutLook's Bits & Bytes

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# This Is Your Life!

## Writing Your Memoir...

By Peggy Markham

**M**emories. We all have them -- pasted photographs in an album, musings in a diary, stories repeated around the dinner table, a grandmother's wedding ring, family reunions, anniversaries, birthdays. Are you ready to take a pen in hand, fill a blank page with your story and put your memories in writing? A memoir is simply a record of events based on personal observations and you are limited only by the scope of your imagination. If you are hesitant about tackling the task of writing a memoir, then seeking the advice and guidance from a teacher will help. Look around your community for sources such as classes taught at a local college, art centers, libraries and your hometown newspaper for writing groups that meet regularly.

This journey of self-exploration can be cathartic, healing, laughable, sentimental and will open your awareness of the life you have lived. You have a story to tell, so how to start? The first hurdle to overcome is staring at a blank piece of paper on your new tablet with your pen poised in your hand and you feel stuck. You don't know where to begin. Forget the rules your ninth grade English teacher drilled into you and let your mind remember an event, put yourself in that scene and let the words flow onto the paper. Write fast and don't worry about mistakes; there will be time later to polish your piece. Your goal is to try to make writing a 10-minute exercise every day. Begin with, "I remember....." and immerse yourself in the details of the memory. Purchase a small journal and carry it and a pen with you as you never know when a wonderful thought, a rich word, a phrase or a buried memory will surface. Many of us have been known to wake up at 3 a.m., turn on our book light and then scribble away in a journal. We know from experience that upon waking in the morning, those unique thoughts that we had in the middle of the night are hard to remember. The respected author, Anne Lamott, says that she always carries a pen with her and has been known to write spontaneous thoughts on her hand if her note pad is not available.

Here are some memoir suggestions:

### **Computer or pencil on paper?**

Sounds like a simple question. Each teacher will have their opinion about how you approach your work. Some prefer the "organic" touch of a pencil or a smooth pen on paper while other writers like the swift pecks on the computer keyboard. It's your choice. Whatever method you choose, always save your material in a notebook.

### **Chronological order or flexibility?**

Narrowing your memoir to a list of carefully recorded dates, times and places makes your writing dry and uninteresting. You have the flexibility to shift your time sequences, blending events to suit your story. The emphasis can be on your impressions of the recall and if you mix things up a bit, then your approach falls more into the genre of "creative nonfiction" and this is your option as a writer.

### **Just the facts or use your imagination?**

Memories are often fuzzy as to the factual details, leaving you with the freedom to enhance and embellish the facts from your point of view. Facts alone may be necessary to form the frame of the story and often doing research to substantiate your recall brings in a wider viewpoint. Your recollection of a conversation may be vastly different from the person you were talking with and this other perspective can bring about a shift in your story. Was your mother really scolding you because you failed to tell her you were going to see your friend or was your mother terrified and worried that you had gone missing? Her recall of the event differs from your memory and these two points of view offer a contrast that can bring an element of interest to the tale. From the facts of the memory you can pull in some imaginary details adding tone and color. This "poetic license" doesn't destroy the validity of the story, rather it fleshes out the piece.

### The Nitty-Gritty of Specific Details

Here is where you start to "paint with words" on the canvas of your memoir. Think about your five senses: taste, touch, sight, smell and sound. Think of an event such as attending a high school prom. This event is more than the statement, "I went to the dance in May of 1958". Dig down into this memory and have fun with your five senses. Use juicy words to describe the scene. Something like: "I remember my senior prom in May of 1958. I wore an evening dress of aqua netting over lace with high heel shoes dyed to match. My date looked so handsome in a tux with a pink sweetheart rose pinned on the lapel of his white jacket. He gave me a wrist corsage of fresh, creamy white gardenias. We danced

the night away to doo-wop music in the beach pavilion that the junior class had decorated with glittery stars and giant cardboard cutouts of sea shells." Adding embellishment to the details makes the story vivid and memorable. Use strong, active verbs and pare out the adjectives and adverbs. Keep verb tenses consistent and generally avoid the passive voice.

As you proceed in this adventure of creating your memoir, you will become more comfortable with the tools applied to the craft of writing. Teachers will introduce you to usage of the reflective voice, point of view, dialogue, setting the scene, summary, tone and theme. As you add chapter after chapter, your story will fill you with the

satisfaction of a tale worth telling. Take 10 minutes and fill up that blank piece of paper with "I remember...." This is your life, your memoir. 

Suggested reading for memoir "how-to"  
*Writing Down the Bones*  
*Old Friend From Far Away*  
by Natalie Goldberg

Popular Memoirs to read:  
*Operating Instructions* by Anne Lamott  
*Edge of Taos Desert* by Mabel Dodge Luhan  
*The Tender Bar* by J.R. Moehringer  
*The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls  
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# Your Home Office Haven

By Gina Garunkstis Courbron

**"Whether you manage household bills or million-dollar accounts, here are some tips you can follow for creating your home office haven..."**



**I**t is really sad when the room we spend the most time in happens to be the ugliest room in the house. Typically, it is the home office.

Today, almost one in three households in the US have some kind of home office, according to IDC, a research analysis firm based in Farmingham, MA. These can range from professionally decorated rooms to a corner of the kitchen table. More and more households are creating a space for each adult in the home.

People can really indulge their personal style, whether that means old-world or movie-themed, in these spaces. Whatever makes you smile, feels good and looks pleasing is the goal. A well thought-out home office though, must marry the efficiency of a business workplace with the comforts of home.

Whether you manage household bills or million-dollar accounts, here are some tips you can follow for creating your home office haven:

## Office Location

Analyze what you do. Do you entertain clients at home? Do you prefer a quiet setting? Do you need to share the space with someone else or is it part of a guest room? Will the space be used many days and nights, or is this simply a space for bill paying? All of these will determine just where your office should be located in the home. For example, if you meet clients in your office, then you really need to have it at the front of the home so that people do not go through your personal home space.

## Function

If you move around a lot, then you have to make sure that you have adequate traffic flow. Also, make sure that your desk is positioned to allow you to easily see the door, but not necessarily right opposite the door. If you sit more, then make sure your chair is comfortable and provides good support. Be ergonomically correct. Select furniture pieces that can be raised, lowered, or tilted until they feel comfortable and fit you.

## Clutter Control

Everything has to be organized. Is your office filled with faxes or printouts? Establish a good filing system and keep most of it behind doors or in drawers. Keep the items you use most often close at hand. Use shelves, built-ins, file cabinets, bookcases and baskets to store and organize not only papers, but supplies, books and office equipment. It is hard to be productive with clutter on your desk and all around you.

## Lighting

This is crucial to a productive environment. Mix up the right light. This space, as others in your home, needs both general lighting and task lighting in combination with natural light, if possible. General lighting should be soft and diffuse. Your task or desk lamps should be adjustable so they can be moved easily to prevent glare on your desk or monitor. Natural light and a view relieve eye strain and make you happier, but make sure that you have blinds or shades on the window to minimize glare during those sunny days.

## Silence

Make sure you have a quiet space to work in and use the phone. Invest in rugs or carpeting, and window treatments, because they absorb sound and will reduce noise and echoes. If you make products on site, make sure that those spaces are in the back, in the garage or elsewhere.

## Personalize

Add some of your personality. It is your space and does not have to look like the rest of the house. It can be decorated in any way that makes you happy and gives you pleasure. Make sure that there is room to "breathe" in the office so you can focus and be productive.

A home business is an ideal situation for some people. So, if you dream of going to work in your pajamas, or wish to save time in your day and cut that commute time to work, these guidelines will help make the process go much smoother. Make a list of everything you hate about the office and start creating a homey workspace.

Remember, keep comfort and relaxation in mind to create a space that works and reflects who you are.



*For information about GG Design Inspirations and Gina's design services please visit: [www.ggdesigninspirations.com](http://www.ggdesigninspirations.com) or call (410) 672-7224.*



# What A Load of Manure!

By Melissa Conroy

Some enterprising soul discovered long ago that the manure animals so generously produce make soil rich, fertile and perfect for growing crops. People have been using manure to fertilize their fields and gardens for thousands of years, and even today many gardeners eagerly visit their local stable or barn to fill their trucks with nature's bounty. Since most farms and animal operations have manure in abundance and are glad to rid themselves of some of it, any gardener near a stable or barn has access to nature's most perfect fertilizer.



But just how does manure work? It actually offers two benefits. First, manure helps condition the soil by adding organic matter. Herbivores excrete high amounts of plant material in their manure, and this organic matter helps clay-heavy soil drain water better, sandy soil retain water, and all types of soil attract beneficial bacteria and worms. If you have poor-quality soil, manure can help you turn your garden into a welcome spot for seeds and plants.

Second, manure provides a generous dose of important nutrients to soil. As most gardeners know, crops leech nutrients out of soil: farm a plot of land for a couple years without fertilizing it, and crop production will plummet. This is where manure comes in handy: manure contains nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, three of the fourteen nutrients that plants need to complete their full life cycle. In particular, most grain crops need high levels of nutrients, so it is not surprising that farmers have long depended on manure to grow corn, wheat and other important grains.

However, not all manure is the same. Manure can come from a variety of animals. Horse, cow and poultry manures are quite popular with gardeners, but other types of manure are also used for soil. In fact, you can even purchase "zoo doo" from zoos such as Seattle's Woodland Park that sell the waste of their many exotic animals to the public. Manure from horses that are bedded down on sawdust will be quite different in consistency and nutrition content than manure from a chicken farm. Manure quality can be affected by what type of animal produced the manure, the animal's bedding and feed, its age and how it was stored.

Another important distinction is the difference between fresh and aged manure. Manure straight from the animal contains high levels of ammonia, and fresh poultry manure also has high levels of salts: these elements can easily burn plants. In addition, fresh manure often contains seeds, and these seeds may fill your garden with unwanted weeds. Finally, fresh manure may contain harmful bacteria such as E coli. Aged manure that has had time to compost is generally bacteria and seed-free, but it has lower levels of nitrogen and doesn't usually contain the levels of nutrition that fresh manure does. However, aged manure is gentler and safer on plants, and if the manure is properly aged, you can plant soon after you mix it into the soil.

In general, it is best to manure your garden in the fall after the year's growing cycle is done. This way, you can use either fresh or aged manure; the long winter months will compost the manure and condition the soil for spring. However, for this season's planting, you can use well-aged

## OutLook's *Bits & Bytes*

The printer was cheap - but now try to keep the ink flowing. If the price of an ink cartridge is driving you to distraction, try purchasing cartridges on line. Two excellent sites for doing some comparative shopping can be found at [www.comparecartridges.com](http://www.comparecartridges.com) or [www.dealink.com](http://www.dealink.com)

manure to prepare your garden for spring. Exactly how much manure to use in your garden is a complicated question, one that experts will answer with contradictory information, charts, graphs and advice. A simpler answer is that you should use quite a bit of aged manure and not much of fresh manure. Several inches of properly aged manure or an inch or two of fresh manure is a good rule of thumb.

However, don't simply dump the manure on the soil; it needs to be worked several inches down into the topsoil. A rototiller can be your best friend for this job, particularly if your soil is hard, but a shovel and some elbow grease works just as well. Invite your grandchildren over for a day and have them get to work; most children love any excuse to get dirty!

While you can buy commercial fertilizer and other expensive chemicals to enhance your soil, nothing quite beats old-fashioned free manure. A visit to your local stable or barn can give you all you need to condition your soil and improve your chances of a bountiful garden this year. 

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# Spring into the Season's First Veggies

By Emily E. Horton

**W**ho doesn't love springtime? It's a chance to revive the gardens from the frozen winter grounds with new herbs and produce, to reap the benefits of the local farmers' markets and to pay attention to the seasonal produce so your wallet does not feel the pain. In the springtime we are all conscious of what we eat because summer is just around the corner. We turn in the chili and the heavy soups for salads, steamed vegetables and grilled protein.

When it comes to pulling together pieces for a meal there's one thing a cook, whether professional or not, can do: frequent the farmers' markets and purchase the local produce. Farmers' markets are typically open for business in April or May. Or, if there is need for further guidance, turn to *Culinary Artistry* by Andrew Dornenburg and Karen Page, which has a list by seasons of produce and proteins that can be very helpful in the kitchen.

To shed the layers of the winter, loading up on fruits, vegetables and lean protein is the way to go. For a casual weekend meal, start with something simple such as an appetizer that can be prepared in advance, Greek salsa. Casually move into a mixed green salad with arugula greens, strawberries, toasted almonds and a homemade vinaigrette. An optional topping to the salad is any type of protein, my favorite being a pan-seared chicken breast. If the salad is a first course, a great pairing for a second course is grilled halibut filet seasoned with salt and pepper, a side of sautéed snow peas with feta and pecans, and some perfectly seasoned couscous.

This is a fairly quick meal some components of which can be prepared in advance. Notably, almost everything on the menu is a seasonal item and can most likely be found at a local farmer's market.



## Greek Salsa

Chop one 16-ounce can of large olives. Chop one 3.5-ounce bag of sun dried tomatoes, or start with a packaged julienne sun dried tomatoes that will be easy to work with. Chop green onions, approximately three to four stalks. Mince a handful of dill, remembering that fresh works best and has the best flavor. Crumble feta cheese; pre-crumbled is available. Drizzle olive oil and add salt and pepper. Mix completely until all flavors are combined and set aside.

## Mixed Green Salad (serves 4)

Clean four handfuls of arugula greens. Clean and quarter strawberries, approximately four whole strawberries per person. Toast a handful of almonds. Crumble eight ounces of feta cheese. Whisk together a spoonful of Dijon mustard, approximately four tablespoons of balsamic vinegar, slowly add approximately six tablespoons of canola oil while whisking.

To serve, dress the greens. Add strawberries, almonds and feta cheese to the bowl.



## Couscous

Bring one cup of water to a boil and add one cup of couscous, drizzle about one tablespoon of olive oil and sprinkle in black pepper and salt. Stir couscous in, cover and set aside.

## Sautéed Snow Peas with Feta Cheese and Pecans

Cut ends off snow peas. Mince three garlic cloves and gently sauté in four tablespoons of olive oil in a sauté pan on medium heat. Add snow peas and cook until bright green. Add pecans and cook covered for about 10 or 15 minutes. Mix in crumbled feta in the sauté pan and transfer to serving bowl. Can serve this warm or at room temperature.

## Grilled Halibut Filet

Season both sides of skinless halibut filet with salt and pepper. Grease the grill as well as the filets. Place the filets on the grill surface. Cook the filet through, marking each side with grill diamonds.

The Greek salsa can be served with homemade pita chips or any kind of desirable cracker. The salad can be served with any dressing, but in my kitchen no salad is complete without my homemade vinaigrette. Any spice can be incorporated into the couscous, however, keep it consistent with the flavors of the rest of the meal. If inspiration or guidance is needed, turn to the trusty chef's assistant, the book *Culinary Artistry*.

So enjoy the meal, stay seasonal and eat local!



*Emily Horton is studying to become a chef at L'Academie de Cuisine in Gaithersburg. She can be reached at [emilyehorton@yahoo.com](mailto:emilyehorton@yahoo.com)*

# Romeos Seen in Bay Area

By Maureen Smith

Have you always thought of yourself as a Romeo? Now that you are retired or a part-timer and looking for any and every chance to get out of the house, why not form a Romeo Club? There are hundreds of these fun groups across the country. And how did they come up with the name Romeo? Try *Rich Old Men Eating Out*, *Retired Older Men Enjoying Outings*, *Respectable Older Men Eating Out*, and in Houston, you will find *Rice (University) Old Men Eating Out*.

The best part is there are no rules, bylaws, minutes - just a group of men at the same stage of life getting together to solve the problems of the world over lunch. Once a week or once a month - or whatever fits your group. They can meet at the same place or try new restaurants each time.

Tom Brokaw gave the name "Romeo" notoriety in his book *The Greatest Generation*. As the story goes, John "Lefty" Caulfield (a school principal and U.S. Navy veteran) started the first ROMEO club at various dinners in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and he dubbed it "retired old men eating



out." However, there have been other references to the founder of the Romeo name and other references as to the meaning of the term Romeo. Many seem to claim the distinction of founding the name Romeo.

Clubs can be just a bunch of good friends getting together, former work colleagues, those sharing the same interests or those with varying interests --the less structured the better.

There is currently a Romeo group of retired Naval Academy professors. Not to be outdone, their wives formed a group called the Juliets. Usually, they meet at different restaurants, but on the same day. Occasionally

## OutLook's Bits & Bytes

Would you like a quick and easy lesson on how to repair or replace or build anything around your home? Try [www.handymanusa.com](http://www.handymanusa.com) for easy to follow instructions on just about anything.

they end up at the same restaurant but at different tables. Once the Juliet's sent their check to the Romeo table, but that didn't fly. The waitress returned with an unprintable comment from our Romeos.

We always enjoy sharing our retirement activities with one another. So get your friends together now to form your own Romeo club.

*Retired from the Maryland legislature, Maureen spends her time playing tennis, traveling, participating in book clubs and volunteering at the Assistance League of the Chesapeake. She looks forward to meeting with the Juliets every month and can be reached at [rsmith0636@comcast.net](mailto:rsmith0636@comcast.net)*



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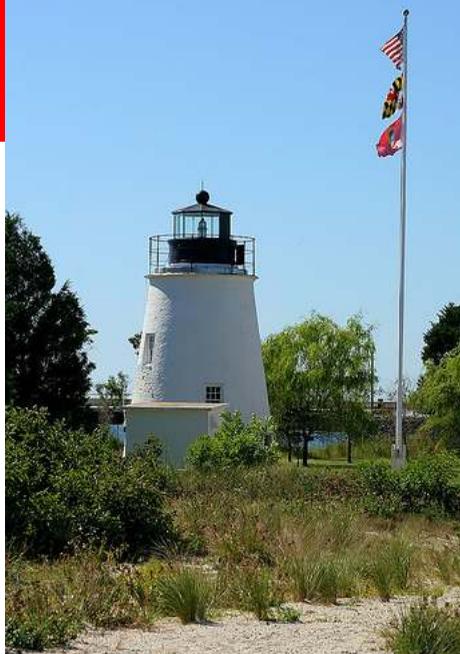
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# St. Mary's County: Celebrating Maryland's 375th Birthday at Maryland's Birthplace



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At [www.Maryland375.com](http://www.Maryland375.com) you can access a wealth of information for planning a trip or getaway to the place where the Free State took shape. It includes weekend getaway packages, family activities and prize drawings. The Web site links to the digital commemorative destination guide which may also be ordered or obtained at any Maryland Welcome Center. In the guide you'll find the Discover St. Mary's County Card, a value card linked to deals and discounts offered by participating attractions, restaurants and shops throughout the county.

### Fun!

More than 40 of the county's annual events starting in early spring have added special "Celebrate 375" components. Not to be missed are the Piney Point Lighthouse Festival on May 9 and 10, and the Air Expo on May 23 and 24, featuring the Blue Angels. A special Maryland Birthday Celebration Weekend is set for June 19 and 20. On Friday night, the world premiere of a symphony commissioned for Maryland's 375th will be performed at the popular St. Mary's College River Concert Series. On Saturday at adjacent Historic St. Mary's City, the 17th century will come alive with tall ships, re-enactments, pageantry, more music and fireworks.



• Easy and Affordable • Fun! • Historic • Charming



### Historic

In fact, 2009 is the year when Historic St. Mary's City takes center stage. The 800-acre outdoor living history museum and archaeological park along the St. Mary's River tells the story of the state's first years when it served as the capital of Maryland. It was at Historic St. Mary's City that America took its first steps toward the First Amendment right of religious freedom as well as toward participatory democracy. This once cosmopolitan town thrived with taverns but was later abandoned to sink back into the soil when the Legislature moved to Annapolis. Today, the "city" rises again with new stories to tell about life in early America. New attractions that join the Maryland Dove are the Godiah Spray Plantation, which includes the Brick Chapel of 1667 and the St. John's Freehold—a state-of-the-art archaeological museum.

To truly appreciate the challenges faced by early Marylanders, be sure to include St. Clement's Island in your visit. The St. Clement's Island Museum on the mainland tells the story of the voyage of the first hopeful colonists. On Saturdays and Sundays from Memorial Day Weekend through the end of September, a water taxi makes the scenic run to the nearby island where the colonists landed. A large cross erected to mark Maryland's founding now shares the island's skyline with a new attraction, the reconstructed Blackistone Lighthouse. The lighthouse is open to the public the first weekend (Saturday and Sunday) of each month from June through October.

### Charming

Add a leisurely stop in one of Maryland's oldest towns to your travel agenda: Leonardtown. Restaurants, shops and galleries surround the old town square while the new waterfront park along scenic Breton Bay is great for a paddling adventure or an evening stroll. Stay at the new hotel located just off the square and enjoy a great getaway weekend.



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# Your LEGAL TEAM

Ronald H. Jarashow, Esq., Robert R. Smith, Esq. and Gilda O. Karpouzian, Esq., are practicing lawyers in Maryland with over 30 years of experience. Their answers below are based on assumptions that Maryland law applies. Mr. Jarashow and Mr. Smith can be contacted at (410) 268-5600 or [info@fjbslaw.com](mailto:info@fjbslaw.com) and Ms. Karpouzian can be contacted at (410) 280-8864.

## Dear Legal Team:

*During the ice storm in March I delivered soup to my neighbor. On the way out of her house I slipped and turned my ankle very badly. There were medical bills and I had to miss some of my part-time work. This unexpected expense has set me back and I'm having trouble keeping up with all the bills. I don't want to sue this neighbor, but she refuses to help or even report it to her insurance company. What do you suggest I do to try to recoup some of my losses? - Still Limping.*

## Dear Still Limping:

Falling on your neighbor's property can present a complicated legal situation. Every state has legal rules about a property owner's duties to keep real property safe for visitors. Even if the property owner violates a duty, in some states, if you were partly to blame, you can be totally or partially barred from recovery. If your neighbor has liability insurance as is required by many mortgage lenders, then that homeowner's insurance may pay for medical bills and/or lost wages for someone injured on the property no matter who is at fault for causing the injury. Although you do not want to sue your neighbor, there is no other way that you can force your neighbor to reveal the name of her insurance company. Once you find out the name of the insurance company, you can report the injury and circumstances to the company directly. An attorney can assist you in evaluating the claim and at least getting the name of the insurance company in order to find out if it has a medical pay coverage and lost wage payment provision.

Recovering for your pain and suffering or any permanent injury or permanent wage loss, takes you into the legal world often referred to as "premises liability" or negligence. In some states, there is "strict liability" where the property owner must keep the premises safe for a visitor. In other states, like Maryland, you must prove that the landowner breached some duty to you. Slipping and falling on ice often raises the question of whether the injured person was aware that the conditions were dangerous, but walked on the icy area anyway or was not as careful in walking in an icy area while knowing of the conditions, which may be similar to that ice storm. In Maryland, the first question is whether your neighbor was "negligent" in not cleaning the ice from the walk or steps. Even if your neighbor was negligent, if you could see the ice or knew or should have known that the ice was likely to be there, then you may have "assumed the risk" or have been "contributorily negligent" for not being as careful as you should in walking on the icy area. In Maryland, if you either

assumed the risk or were contributorily negligent, then you would be completely prevented or barred from getting any recovery. In your situation, you indicated that you entered the house presumably going over the icy area and knew of the existence of the icy conditions when you left. So these defenses would be of concern. There are exceptions. We have been successful in obtaining recovery in an employment situation where an employee had no choice but to walk over an icy area in order to work.

## Dear Legal Team:

*My neighbor says that my fence is on his property. I can't afford and don't want to hire someone to prove our boundary and he won't show me his plot plan to prove what he's saying. I'm not removing the fence and in fact plan to ignore him. Is there anything that he can do to my fence? He said he'll take it down if I won't. - No Longer Neighborly.*

## Dear No Longer Neighborly:

The old saying "good fences make good neighbors" does not seem to apply to your situation. Evidently you and your neighbor have a boundary dispute. It is well established that, in the absence of a valid statute or contract, a property owner can fence his land. Of course, an owner cannot place a fence on his neighbor's property. To do so is trespassing. A lawsuit for trespass could be filed seeking damages, to tear down the fence, and for other damages. Correspondingly, your neighbor should not use "self-help" by tearing down your fence, especially if it is rightfully on your property. If he does, you can sue him for wrongful destruction or removal of your fence, and seek damages, an order saying you have a right to the fence or for other relief. Unfortunately, sometimes in neighbor disputes, one party takes action against the other without paying attention to what the law says. You may find that your fence gets damaged or removed. Your neighbor may deny or admit responsibility. Ultimately, you might be forced into court action. Before that happens, it would make sense for you and your neighbor to cooperate in getting a proper survey done and splitting the cost. Even if your neighbor does not cooperate, you probably should get a survey performed to show the location of the fence as correctly placed on the property line. This would be useful to you if there was any litigation in the future. Maybe your survey will convince your neighbor that your fence is in the correct place. The key is determining the boundary line between the properties and determining whether the fence really rightfully sits on your property. This may produce a dialogue with your neighbor toward seeking a mutual resolution of the matter.

## Dear Legal Team:

*My mother keeps changing her will, or so she says. One day I'm the sole inheritant and the next it's my no-account brother; then to the Prevention of Cruelty to Nonexistent Pets. Should the unexpected happen and she departs this world, do I have any legal rights to her estate if she does end up giving it to someone other than me? I've become pretty much the sole caretaker and have, in her manipulative stages, been the sole inheritant. - No Inheritance*

## Dear No Inheritance:

The rules about whether a will is valid and enforceable vary from state to state. In most states, however, as long as your mother is legally competent at the time of making her last will and testament, she can change her will and leave her money to the people or the charity of her choice. The last will and testament usually will have language acknowledging that it is the intent of the maker of the will to disinherit one or more of her children or relatives or leave all or part of the estate to a charity and/or individuals that are unrelated to the decedent. In some states, there are requirements for specific language that must be included in the will if a natural child is going to be disinherited.

There are various ways that a will can be attacked or set aside. For example, if you believe that your mother was unduly influenced or that fraud has been committed to make her change the will, then you may be able to file a legal action to "contest" her will. The process for will contests is different in each state. Many states recognize the principle, however, that if someone is in a "confidential relationship" with your mother and the will is changed to benefit that person, it might raise legal questions about undue influence that could set aside the will. Or, there may be proof that some person improperly exercised influence over your mother to change her will. There are other grounds to attempt to have a last will and testament be declared invalid, such as if the will is not witnessed by two individuals competent at the time of witnessing the execution of the will. Contesting a will occurs by filing legal proceedings with the court, which can be costly.

You also raise another issue with respect to being your mother's caretaker. If you are to be reimbursed for your services to her, you may have a "claim" against your mother's estate. The legal rules about whether you can get paid for having been your mother's caretaker may be different in every state. Some courts will recognize the right to get paid for the value of your services. Sometimes, there is an agreement that sets out what was supposed to be paid. Filing a claim against an estate or bringing a lawsuit against your mother's estate will be governed by the laws and procedures that apply in that state.

We are providing information about the law. Legal information, however, is not the same as legal advice about your specific circumstances. We try to be accurate and useful. We strongly recommend that you consult a lawyer to find out what is appropriate in your particular situation. We are not giving specific legal advice to you. These answers do not create an attorney-client relationship.

*There's a reason for that "off" button on the TV - why not use it?*

# Don't Fill the Garden Without Checking into New Varieties



*By Mick Rood*

If you are getting ready to fill some holes in your fruit and vegetable garden or you haven't yet planted some of your warm weather crops, why not try something new? Every year the seed companies try to come up with new varieties that might satisfy the desires of their customers. Many are the result of years of research and should produce what they promise.

And lucky for us, someone has already done our homework. Consumer horticulturist B. Rosie Lerner at the Purdue University Extension Service has culled through the new offerings for this year. We borrow the most interesting prospects from her list along with the attributes the seed companies predict. Some general gardening tips follow – these from the Home and Garden Information Center at the University of Maryland Cooperative Extensive Service. Finally, you'll be able to access the Web sites of the seed companies mentioned here.

Creatures of habit, we all plant our old favorites. To shake things up, sample this menu of garden favorite wannabes:

**Seedless tomatoes.**

You read it right. Burpee Seeds knows you've heard of seedless watermelons and grapes, but this product – dubbed "Sweet Seedless" – is a first. Burpee says this hybrid is sweet because the plant uses its carbohydrates to produce flavor, not seed production. The medium-sized fruit should continue forming until frost sets in.

**Snack pack watermelon.**

And speaking of watermelon, Burpee has a seedless, "personal-sized" variety yielding three-to-four-pound fruit about the heft of a large musk melon. Check out the hard, dark green rind ready in about 75 days.

**Lunch box-sized cucumbers.**

It appears handy sizes are in. The Cook's Garden and Johnny's Selected Seeds offer "Iznik" cucumbers that grow to be just three to four inches long. With compact vines and small leaves, these cukes fit well in small gardens and containers.

**Bull's-eye beets.**

Here's something different. Park Seed Co. has come up with Chioggia Guardsmark, a beet with a spiral of magenta and white stripes that form a bull's-eye if you cut them in a cross section. The mild-flavored beet can grow to three inches or a bit more in circumference.

**Honey bear squash.**

Stokes Seeds, along with Johnny's, Park Seed and Jung Quality Seeds, sells an acorn-type, winter squash that promises plenty of yield and a good tolerance of powdery mildew. Plants reach only three feet tall, with a four- or a five-foot spread.

**Colorful sweet peppers.**

Burpee has "Pinot Noir" bell peppers that start out light green and morph into shades of yellow, red and purple. A plus is its ability to set fruit in cool or hot, muggy weather. They are 70 days away.

**Deep purple onion.**

Johnny's offers a dark-reddish, bunching scallion that holds its color into the warmer weather. 60 days away.

It may be too late to start your seedlings inside, but we know some vegetables and herbs don't get happy until it gets a bit warmer – tomatoes, basil, hot peppers and egg plants to mention a few. One way to jump-start tomato plants is to enclose them in clear plastic around the plants but open at the top to retain day-time heat. Here's another tip from the Maryland Cooperative Extension: Fill plastic water bottles and place them near the plants inside the enclosure. The bottles heat up during the day and release heat at night.

Some other words to the wise:

- Mix in a handful of finely ground lime around tomato and pepper plants to prevent blossom-end rot.

- If you are still growing seedlings, begin to harden them off by putting them outdoors during the day and bringing them in at night for up to a week before transplanting.

- To prevent cutworm damage to vegetable plants, try putting cardboard or plastic collars around the plants to prevent night-time feeding. Some gardeners swear by spreading ground-up oyster shells as a means of preventing cutworms. 

Here's how to reach the seed companies:

- Burpee Seeds <http://www.burpee.com>
- The Cook's Garden <http://www.cooksgarden.com>
- Johnny's Selected Seeds <http://www.johnnyseeds.com>
- Jung Quality Seeds <http://www.jungseed.com>
- Park Seed Co. <http://www.parkseed.com>
- Stokes Seeds <http://stokeseeds.com/cgi/StokesSeeds.storefront>



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# The Bitter Truth About Chocolate

By Ellen Kittredge

As Lucy from the *Peanuts* comic says, "All I really need is love, but a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt!" What is it about chocolate that makes it so appealing? Why do so many people have such a strong association with this food? There are few foods that enter our daily discourse quite as frequently as chocolate. The two others are red wine and coffee, and interestingly enough, these foods share some common characteristics with chocolate.

## The Bitter Truth About Chocolate

As a chocolate lover and avid researcher of any and all foods that come across my path, I have always been aware that I should not let my personal preferences sway the scientific facts.

Luckily for me, and those of you for whom the thought of a smooth, delicate bite of this delectable food starts your mouth watering, the facts are on our side!

Chocolate is a healthy food. Let me give you a few more details though before you go out and buy a big Hershey's bar.

It turns out that the cocoa bean, from which chocolate is derived, is perhaps the most potent source of antioxidants of any food we know. A measure of antioxidant capacity is called ORAC (oxygen radical absorption capacity). You may see certain juices containing fruits like blueberries, raspberries, acai berries, etc. with high ORAC scores. The higher the ORAC score, the more antioxidants the food has, and the better job it will do in healing some of the damage that free radicals do in our body. So, a high ORAC score is a very good thing.

Blueberries, one of my favorite foods, score in the 2,000 range for ORAC. Cocoa beans have an ORAC score of 13,120, more than six times higher than blueberries. The problem, however, is that cocoa beans, by themselves, are a very bitter food. So the vast majority of chocolate that you will find on the market has been paired with sugar, which is not a health food. The more sugar and milk in a chocolate bar, the lower the antioxidant capacity and the less beneficial it is to the body.

The important thing to remember here is: "The more bitter the better." The darker the chocolate, the less sugar it has, and the higher the ORAC score will be. Most people in the nutrition field agree that any chocolate with a cocoa content of 70 percent or higher can be considered a healthy food. Anything less than that and you are falling into questionable territory. Another factor to consider when purchasing chocolate is that raw chocolate, which is relatively unprocessed is actually healthier than chocolate that has gone through more processing, so make sure to give that a try next time you see it on the shelf.

If you don't consider yourself a dark chocolate fan, I have two suggestions. One, try buying higher quality organic and fair-traded dark chocolate. Yes it will be more expensive, but see it as a treat, something to be indulged in slowly. Know that the taste will be far superior to the dark chocolate you may be more familiar with. Two, try to slowly work your way up to 70 percent. Start with 55 percent, then move to 60 percent, etc. This is what I did in making the switch and it really works.

You'll notice that once you switch to dark chocolate you will not eat as much, as it is immensely more satisfying, and that if you do try milk chocolate again it will seem too sweet. I say this based not just on personal experience, but on feedback from many clients.

*Ellen is a nutrition and health counselor practicing in Annapolis and can be reached at [www.ellenkittredge.com](http://www.ellenkittredge.com) or (202) 577-1940.*

## A few more interesting facts about chocolate:

Chocolate contains a substance called theobromine, which actually may be more responsible for the stimulant effect you feel when you eat it than caffeine. Chocolate actually contains little caffeine. Theobromine comes from Greek, and can be translated as "food of the gods." It is used in medicine as a vasodilator (blood vessel widener), as a heart stimulant and may be the active component in chocolate that has given chocolate such notoriety as an aphrodesiac.

Because it contains stimulants, chocolate is not a healthy food for people who have a more sensitive nervous system. If you fall into this category, stick with blueberries. They have no apparent side effects, and are quite a delicious treat in and of themselves.

Cocoa contains a special kind of fat that is anti-inflammatory and helpful with weight loss. The scientific name for this fat is oleoylethanolamide, or OEA. This fat acts similarly to fish oil, which contains omega 3 fatty acids and antioxidants in its ability to counter inflammation in the body.

Throughout the ages, chocolate and the cocoa bean, have always been given great honor and treated with respect. The cocoa bean was used as money by the Aztecs and Mayans, and has been a part of celebrations for as long as humans have been harvesting and eating it.



*Use up and enjoy all those things you've been saving for a special occasion - start now!*



By Neil Moran

# Gardening the Natural Way

For some of you savvy seniors, gardening organically may be old hat. Like me, you may have learned how to do it in the '60s or '70s. For others it may seem like a mysterious, daunting thing like learning basket weaving or chess. Actually, it's not that hard to learn how to garden organically. The potential benefits are fresh, tasty, vitamin-packed vegetables without all the chemicals.

When I noticed the chemical behemoth Ortho selling plant-based insecticides in the big box stores, I knew organic gardening had hit the mainstream. However, I'm sure some folks are still a little unsure about how to garden organically. For one thing, it is more than just substituting inorganic for organic fertilizers and pesticides. It is also about understanding soil and the microscopic creatures that inhabit it.

There are many benefits to organic gardening, both for the consumer and the environment. I think it goes without saying that all those pesticides and preservatives in foods aren't really good for us. And while I respect the awesome job the conventional farmer has done at feeding the populace, even some of these farmers are starting to question the massive use of chemicals and the effect it has on the land and the water we drink.

So if you're interested in gardening without harmful chemicals, read on as I explain how to plant your first organic garden.

## Breaking Ground

The first thing that needs to be done is to work up a spot in your yard. If it's your first time gardening, start off with a small garden, say 8' x 10'. In other words, don't bite off more than you can chew or hoe. The site should receive at least eight hours of direct sun. The next step is to remove the sod with a sod cutter or sod shovel. Now

work up the soil two or three times with a rototiller or double dig with a spade. Last, bring in quality topsoil to raise the area back up to the level of the surrounding turf, or slightly higher.

In some locations around the Bay Area the soil may be unsuitable for growing a good garden because it contains too much sand, clay or heaven forbid, rocks. If this is the case in your yard you may want to build a 12-inch high raised bed and fill it with loamy topsoil. Topsoil can be purchased from most general contractors. Be sure the soil is nice and dark. A good test is to squeeze it in your hand. If it forms a firm ball, and then crumbles it is good soil. If it doesn't form a ball, it is probably too sandy. If it forms a tight ball without crumbling apart, it is probably clay-based. For information on how and what to use to make a raised bed, check out *Cubed Foot Gardening: Growing Vegetables in Raised, Intensive Beds*, by Christopher O. Bird.

Gardening organically requires a deep (pun intended) understanding of soil. Soil is to the organic gardener what money is to those Wall Street types. While the conventional gardener relies almost exclusively on inorganic substances to provide all the nutrients for plants, organic gardeners dream of soil teaming with tiny microbes and juicy earth worms.

It's these underground critters that determine, to a large extent, how well an organic garden will do. And to encourage these soil do-gooders you will need to add organic amendments to your garden. Compost and well-rotted manure is the ticket to a productive organic garden. You can make your own compost with everything from grass clippings to potato peels. The finished product will encourage microbial and

worm action while providing improved soil aeration and the retention of moisture and nutrients. For more on composting check out [www.HowToCompost.org](http://www.HowToCompost.org)

One of the biggest benefits of gardening organically is knowing your food was produced without harmful pesticides. Fortunately, we can control the pests in our gardens without taking aim with the big chemical guns.

As mentioned earlier, stores are starting to carry organic-based insecticides, such as those made by Ortho and Safer. These insecticides are sold as "indoor" or "outdoor" insecticides and usually contain pyrethrum and/or soluble oils. These are examples of plant-based insecticides that are pretty safe for you and the environment. Copper-based fungicides are a good alternative to some of the more toxic compounds used to control fungus on roses and other plants. To avoid the use of inorganic pesticides we can also rotate our crops every three to four years, plant lots of flowers nearby to attract the beneficial insects and keep the garden well cultivated and free of weeds.

Likewise, there are several organic fertilizers we can use. These won't harm soil microbes, unlike inorganic fertilizers that can fry soil microbes with their heavy concentration of salts. Look for things like fish emulsion, bone meal, Milorganite and even sugar beet juice to feed your hungry plants organically. For more information or to purchase organic fertilizers and pesticides check out [www.GardensAlive.com](http://www.GardensAlive.com) and [www.ArbicoOrganics.com](http://www.ArbicoOrganics.com)

Some organic gardeners even rely on growing certain plants together as an organic pest control strategy. For instance, carrots and leaks planted together will repel the insects that plague each other. If you're interested in finding out more on this concept and more helpful organic gardening tips, pick up the classic book by Louise Riotte, *Carrots Love Tomatoes: Secrets of Companion Planting for Successful Gardening*

Check out Neil's Web site and articles at [www.neilmoran.com](http://www.neilmoran.com)



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“Retired? What are you doing for an encore?” That’s the question posed by Encore Creativity for Older Adults founder and director, Jeanne Kelly. While she was director of the Arlington, Virginia, campus of the Levine School of Music, Kelly led three older adult choral groups – average age 72 – in a George Washington University study on creativity and aging. The study results, which captured national and international attention, showed that the chorale members enjoyed an overall improvement in their physical and mental health. It also inspired Kelly, a resident

## Anne Arundel-Based Nonprofit Offers Fun for Older Adults

of Tracy’s Landing, Maryland, to launch Encore two years ago.

Encore has grown to eight chorales and one dance program for adults over the age of 55 in Maryland, Virginia, Washington and most recently, Ohio. In September, Encore will be partnering with Anne Arundel Community College’s Center on Aging to establish the first Encore Chorale in Anne Arundel County.

“We have always wanted to start a local chorale,” Jeanne Kelly said. Anne Arundel Community College has been very supportive of our program and I’m delighted to be working with them. All of our chorales are open to anyone over the age of 55, without audition. We have 15 weeks of rehearsals, followed by a series of concerts in high visibility locations. This past year, all of our chorales, over 200 singers, combined for a performance at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage.”

This summer will be a busy one for Encore.

“We’ll be conducting two ‘sleepaway’ choral camps for older adults,” Kelly said. “The first will be at St. Mary’s College of Maryland June 16–20 and later in the summer we’ll be at the famed Chautauqua Institution in New York, Aug. 31–Sept. 4. We held these camps last year and the participants had a ball. We’re planning bigger and better this year.”

Sandwiched between the camps will be the highlight of Encore’s summer program – a “Singing at Sea” cruise from New York City to Southampton, England, July 6–12 aboard the luxurious Queen Mary 2. Kelly said, “We were honored to be invited by Cunard to bring our program onboard this famous ship at amazingly affordable rates. In six days, we’ll turn a group of older singers into a polished ensemble and perform a concert for the passengers.”

For more information, call Encore at (301) 261-5747, or visit Encore’s Web site at [www.encorecreativity.org](http://www.encorecreativity.org)

## Ask the Undertaker

By Ryan Helfenbein



Over the past several months I have been getting many inquiries about prepayment of funerals. One can’t help but wonder if it is due to the economic situation our country is facing, the winter blues or people today just wanting to be more prepared and relieve their family from the financial burden on their death.

Whatever the reason may be, it is a wise decision as long as it is done correctly.

First, let’s gain a clear understanding of what a funeral home is required to do according to state law when a consumer prepays for a funeral/cremation service. Very simply stated, in the state of Maryland a funeral home cannot take a family’s money in advance and put it in its funeral home account. Unfortunately today some funeral homes use what is called “money trusts” or “escrow accounts.” In the past they were the only options available to a firm. But today we are finding out that when the funeral home’s name is attached to the account, the funeral home may have easy access to those funds. We see in the media every once in a while how funeral homes across the nation take prepaid funeral monies and spend them prematurely for selfish reasons. This has happened in Maryland a few times within the last three years. Even though state law has what is called “secure measures in place,”

they are not secure enough, especially given the economic situation our country is currently facing. Perhaps, funeral homes today still use the “money trusting” option because they are either unaware of better options or they wish to gain a personal investment benefit by putting that money with one bank.

So what is a better solution? Or, should I keep the money to myself and let my family take care of it when death occurs? Yes, there is a better way, and no, you should not leave it up to your family. Since the late 1980s the funeral industry, in conjunction with particular life insurance companies, began offering “funeral policies.” These are whole life insurance products exclusively offered through particular licensed funeral establishments and have been developed to pay for the final arrangements you have selected upon your death. In addition to offering protection from rising funeral costs, these “funeral policies” are protected by both state and federal governments. These policies are easily transferable to any funeral home and exclusively held by a designated policy owner and/or the insured – not by a funeral home. No matter what happens to the funeral home where you purchased your policy, the money will be available to your family immediately upon your death. Claims on these policies are usually paid within 24 hours, as opposed to traditional

insurance claims, which can sometimes take around 30 to 90 days to pay out.

This is a nationally recognized means of payment, these policies can be payable upon death to any funeral home selected at the time of need. Why would a funeral home honor these plans when they didn’t provide it in the first place? Simply because they are paid within 24 hours and the home doesn’t have to turn to the family for payment. With most funeral homes today requiring payment by the day of the service, “funeral policies” provide your family the peace of mind knowing that the financial discussion will be completely eliminated and that the money will be safely secured. It is truly a win-win for both the family and the funeral firm.

If you are considering prepaying for your final arrangements, be sure your funeral home is not putting your money in an account with its name attached to it. This money is for your funeral/cremation plan, to relieve your family of this burden no matter when or where death occurs. With the current economic situation we need to be sure that we protect our future savings with the best means necessary and “funeral policies” do just that.

Ryan, a licensed funeral director and certified planning counselor, can be reached at [Ryan@fhnFuneralHome.com](mailto:Ryan@fhnFuneralHome.com) or (410) 758-3987.

# The Reverse Mortgage Past and Present



*By Charles Pastore*

“Pay off your mortgage as fast as possible.” And “I don't want a reverse mortgage because I will no longer own my home.” These are two very common statements heard in today's world, but do they hold true? Let's take a quick look at history.

When our parents and grandparents got a mortgage to buy a home in the early 1900s, there was usually a clause that said the note could be called at any time. When the Great Depression hit in 1929, banks were calling notes in an attempt to raise cash. Subsequently, many innocent people lost their homes. This, of course, is no longer the case.

Remember the really high interest rates in the late '70s and early '80s? This was about the time that adjustable rate loans were coming into the mainstream. When a borrower's loan rate jumped up, they could no longer afford the payment. Then some nice folks decided to help. They would front you the money for your loan and you didn't have to make any payments, but you signed over your deed and they would get their money out of any equity (after you have been kicked out). The reverse mortgage was born out of a distress situation. Seeing that this was a predatory arrangement, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) stepped in. In 1989 they began regulating how reverse mortgages were written and even began to insure them.

Let's look at some other accurate statements. Many financial planners and advisers today consider real estate that is free and clear, or with a lot of equity, a nonperforming asset and a reverse mortgage as a financial planning tool.

Although some areas of the country have held up under current conditions, many people have experienced losses in their home values as much as, or in some cases, more than we have seen in the stock market.

When you get a reverse mortgage, you still own your home, you still get all of the benefits of value appreciation and you will be able to use the equity in your home to satisfy your own personal needs and desires.

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Of course you'll need to get to another computer to gain access to this Web site.

There have been a few innovative additions to the reverse mortgage program set up by HUD. For one, the limit has been raised to \$625,500 nationwide so if your home was worth more than the old limit of \$417,000, you will realize a greater benefit. It is now also possible to use a reverse mortgage to purchase a home - this was not available prior to Jan. 1, 2009.

Many seniors today are taking advantage of the reverse mortgage to accomplish many dreams and desires previously not available. Reverse mortgages are providing better cash flow and the home owner has more flexibility to help with children and grandchildren, or help in fixing up their home, or just being able to maintain the standard of living they were used to. It is not a short-term solution, but a long-term financial strategy.

*Charlie Pastore is a member of the Society of Certified Senior Advisors and the reverse mortgage coordinator for the Mid Atlantic for 1st Mariner Mortgage. He can be reached at (410) 266-0533 or (800) 503-0002.*

For some more straight talk from an independent party about reverse mortgages, just Google the key words "reverse mortgages ftc" or "reverse mortgages aarp" on the Internet. Both sites provide telephone hotlines and literature you can get on reverse mortgages.

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# Brunch for Father's Day or Any Day!

By Lesley Younes

**B**y all accounts Father's Day may have been an afterthought as it was first celebrated on June 19, 1910.

Mother's Day has been around since ancient Greek times and was celebrated mostly in Britain and the Commonwealth with its resurgence in the USA around the year 1870.

The third Sunday in June is a time of burned toast and unusual breakfast combinations in bed, served by overly excited children. It's time when fathers are to be indulged and reminded that they are not forgotten for all they do to support, guide and influence the family.

Below are a few recipes that you can mix and match, add to your own favorites or make all at once for a memorable brunch.

## CUBAN SANDWICHES

Makes 1 stacked sandwich

- 2 slices of any firm bread
- Dijon mustard to taste
- Dill pickles to taste
- 2 slices Black Forest ham
- 2 slices smoked turkey
- 3 very thin slices of Swiss cheese
- 1/4 tsp. garlic paste
- 1/2 tbs. mayonnaise
- 1 egg
- 2 tbs. half and half or whole milk
- Unsalted butter

Spread the bread with mustard and top with pickles, meats and cheese. Make the garlic paste by mashing it with a pinch of salt and then mix it with the mayonnaise. Spread on remaining slice of bread and assemble the sandwich.

Beat together the egg, milk and a little salt and pepper, then soak the sandwich in the egg mixture - rather like French toast.

Melt butter and cook on both sides until golden brown. If you have a bacon press, this comes in really handy and works very well, but anything flat and heavy can be used.

## MANLY MAPLE BACON

- 1 lb. your favorite bacon (thicker is better)
- freshly ground black pepper
- pure maple syrup

Lay bacon slices on a large oven sheet with sides to catch dripping fat. Liberally cover bacon slices with freshly ground black pepper. Bake or broil until crisp. Remove from oven and immediately drizzle with pure maple syrup. Serve.



## LUMBERJACK BREAKFAST BOWLS

serves 12, or six lumberjacks

- 1 lb. finely chopped mushrooms
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 2 tbs. unsalted butter
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 2 tbs. crème fraiche or sour cream
- 2 tbs. fresh tarragon, finely chopped, or 1 tsp. dried
- 12 slices good Virginia ham
- 12 large eggs

Pre-heat oven to 400. Cook mushrooms and green onion in butter with salt and pepper, until mushroom water has evaporated, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the crème fraiche and tarragon.

Fit one slice of ham into each of 12 lightly oiled muffin cups, making sure that there are no 'holes' for the egg to slip through. Divide the mushroom mixture evenly between them, then crack an egg into each cup. Bake in the middle of the oven until whites are cooked but yolks still runny, usually about 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and remove with a spatula or two spoons. If you have oiled the muffin pan sufficiently, this will be very easy. Serve while still warm. Recipe can be doubled if you have many visiting lumberjacks!

## CORNBREAD WITH AN ATTITUDE

makes a 9 X 9 dish

- 1/2 lb. fresh Chorizo, removed from casing
- 1 cup white cornmeal
- 1 tbs. baking powder
- salt to taste
- 2 eggs lightly beaten
- 1 cup sour cream, crème fraiche or yogurt
- 1 8-oz. can creamed corn
- 2 fresh jalapeno chilies, seeded and finely chopped
- 2 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese

Pre-heat oven to 350. Crumble and fry the Chorizo over medium high heat in a dry pan, to render some of the fat. Pour off excess fat, reserving about two tablespoons. In a large bowl, combine the sausage and the rest of the ingredients. Generously butter a 9 X 9 baking dish or a 10-inch heavy skillet that can be put in the oven. Spoon in the cornbread batter and sprinkle the top with a little more cheese if desired. Bake for 45-55 minutes, until the cornbread turns golden and starts to smell divine. Serve hot from the oven.



## HONEY FRUIT WITH RUM

serves 4-6

For the marinade: 4 tbs. Honey, 4 tbs. dark rum and 2 tsp. Angostura bitters or fresh lime juice

- 1 large orange, peeled and segmented with membranes removed if possible.
- 1 large Fuji-style apple, unpeeled, cored and diced
- 1 pear, not too ripe, unpeeled, cored and diced
- 1 banana, peeled, sliced
- 1 cup seedless red and green grapes
- 1 cup strawberries, halved
- 1 cup raspberries and blueberries, and/or other fruits of your choice

Whisk marinade together, test for balance, adjust if necessary with a little more of this and that.

Mix in fruit and any juice which occurred from preparing the oranges/fruits.

Chill for 30 minutes to three hours before serving with a scoop of coconut or mango ice cream, or both.

## VEGETABLE FRITTATA

(Leek and asparagus)

Serves 6-8

- 1/4 stick butter or 2 tbs. truffle oil
- 1 cup chopped leeks (white and pale green part only)
- 1 12-oz. bunch thin asparagus, trimmed and cut into 1" pieces (about 2 1/2 c.)
- 1 cup sliced stemmed shitake mushrooms or chanterelles if you can find fresh ones.
- 8 large fresh eggs
- 1 cup diced Fontina cheese, divided
- dash of salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

*Note: If you have never worked with leeks before, please make sure that you wash them thoroughly as the sand and the soil that they're grown in tends to cling. Leeks have a gentle onion flavor and when cooked impart a sweetness to all dishes. They are worth substituting for onion in all dishes when they are in season.*

Pre-heat broiler. Melt butter in an oven-proof skillet, add leeks and sauté until soft, then add asparagus, mushrooms and sprinkle lightly with salt. Sauté until tender, about six minutes. Whisk eggs, three-fourths cup cheese, salt and pepper to taste and gently fold this into the vegetable mixture to combine. Cook until almost set, then sprinkle remaining cheeses on top and broil until the frittata is puffed and cheese begins to turn golden. Cut into wedges and serve immediately.

## TWICE-BAKED CROISSANTS WITH ALMONDS AND ORANGE SYRUP

serves 8-16

Pre-heat the oven to 350.

### Syrup

- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 vanilla bean or 1 tsp. vanilla essence
- 1/4 cup fresh orange juice or 1/4 cup concentrate and a little water to thin

### Almond Cream

- 1/2 cup almonds
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup almond paste (not marzipan), cut into pieces
- 1 large egg
- 5 Tbs. unsalted softened butter
- 1 Tbs. rum, preferably dark
- 1/2 tsp. pure almond extract
- 8 croissants - day-old are best
- 3/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted in a moderate oven
- confectioners' sugar for dusting

Make syrup by combining sugar and water in a saucepan. Split the vanilla bean, if using, with a sharp knife and scrape out the seeds. Add pod and stir until sugar is dissolved, then bring to a boil. Do not stir while boiling. Simmer for two minutes, then remove from heat, remove the pod and stir in orange juice. Cool.

To make the paste, pulse the almonds in a food processor or blender with two tablespoons sugar, until finely ground. Add almond paste and pulse until finely chopped. Beat together butter and remaining two tablespoons sugar, almond mixture and a pinch of salt, until fluffy, about three minutes. Whisk together egg, rum and extract and gradually add to the almond cream, beating until well combined.

### To assemble:

Cut croissants in half horizontally. Brush insides with orange syrup (top and bottom half). Spread two tablespoons almond cream on each bottom half, mounting in centers, then cover with the tops. Spread one tablespoon almond cream on top of each. Line an oven tray with parchment paper and transfer croissants. Sprinkle the tops with two tablespoons of toasted almonds, bake until golden brown and warmed through, 15-20 minutes. Cool slightly, then dust with confectioners' sugar and serve warm.

## STOLI MARY

Makes 6 servings, can be doubled.

As this is a frozen drink, it can be made up to two days ahead.

- 2 1/2 lbs. ripe in season tomatoes (about eight) cored, seeded and chopped
- 1/4 cup packed torn fresh basil leaves
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. hot pepper sauce, or to taste
- 1/2 tsp. fleur de sel or good kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
- 6 tbs. vodka (preferably Stolichnaya) finely chopped celery leaves, plus 6 small whole leaves for garnish

Combine first six ingredients in processor. Blend until smooth. Transfer to a glass baking dish. Freeze until starting to set around the edges, stirring occasionally, about one hour. Continue to freeze and stir until the granita consistency is visible.

Before serving. Remove from freezer, let stand until soft enough to scrape with a fork, about 20 minutes. Scrape granita, forming flakes. Divide them between six glasses. Pour one tablespoon vodka over each. Sprinkle each with chopped celery leaves and garnish with a whole celery leaf and a spike of celery.



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# The Dark Side of Grandmothering

By Victoria Duncan

**R**ound up a bunch of mothers of adult children and the conversation eventually turns to the subject of grandchildren. Now, crank it up a notch so that the same group of women also happens to be comprised of mental health therapists from varying disciplines. Bring them together at a professional conference for a workshop entitled "The Grandmother Journey." Mix it up and see what happens.

Facilitated by Barbara Graham, author of a soon-to-be-released book about this subject, the workshop touched upon both the delights and the dilemmas of being a grandmother. Dropping below the social chit-chat of the very real pleasures of grandchildren, these 35 or so women introduced themselves in turn. Professional masks slid away as they confided their stories and challenges.

The barely acknowledged dark side of grandparenting is an almost taboo subject. It is the not-so-pretty stuff that suggests concerns about insecurity, role confusion, boundaries, fear of abandonment, economics and competition. Nope, you won't find these themes on a Hallmark card or in a fluffy article about 12 patriotic crafts to do with your grandchildren on the Fourth of July.

As the conversation turns serious, Sherry's comments bring the first round of heads nodding in agreement. In her excitement on the birth of her first grandchild, Sherry experienced unexpected grief at what she calls the true ending of her daughter's childhood. Thinking that she resolved these feelings when her daughter married several years ago, Sherry now enjoys her freedom and reduced responsibility. Yet, something about the passing of the mantle of motherhood speaks to her of a poignant finality mixed with nostalgia for her own early mothering days.

Encouraged by Sherry's candor, several therapists participating lamented the absence of any appropriate role models to guide them. Yesterday's grandmother probably did not work outside the home and many lived nearby. Today our grown children may have more or less expectations for grandparents and perhaps view us more as peers rather than the authority figures we saw in our own parents. This muddies the waters and leads to role confusion when we step into grandparenting our children's children.

Paternal grandmothers most frequently blamed their concerns on the often delicate and tenuous relationship between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. They spoke about the experience of walking a thin line between offering support, but not being intrusive, and backing off at the risk of being labeled disinterested or uncaring. It's a dance that is difficult to learn, dicey at best and impossible to master, but very worth working at because it is the only way to keep your family close.

Janet confessed that she felt painfully left out as she sat in the waiting room during her grandson's delivery whereas her daughter-in-law's mother witnessed the birth and held the baby at length during his first hour of life. Only after mom and baby settled in their room and finished the first feeding was Janet able to secure a few precious moments to see her new grandchild, while the maternal grandmother remained as a watchful presence. Although Janet empathized with her daughter-in-law's need for privacy and accepted that this experience was not about her own feelings, it still stings, but remains unsaid, that one grandmother alone received such privilege. More importantly, from the get-go, Janet believes that this set a precedent for which grandmother would be most important in this baby's life.

With tears in her eyes, Susan relates virtually losing the right to even see her new granddaughter. During the pregnancy, the maternal grandmother-to-be unexpectedly passed away. Rather than drawing closer to her husband's family, her daughter-in-law found Susan to be a painful reminder of the loss of her mother. With the baby now six months old, Susan's overtures and offers resulted in a cold and stony refusal for visits, leaving a gaping hole in Susan's heart and helpless feelings of loss and grief.

Just when it appears that maternal grandmothers occupy the cat bird seat of complacency and contentment, Deborah speaks up. The problem with being a maternal grandmother is that the mother-daughter relationship is so loaded with expectations on both sides. In her case, Deborah prided herself on raising two independent daughters. Now, she reflected that perhaps she did her job too well as her expectations of being a hands-on grandmother are rebuffed. On the other hand, Sylvia struggles to balance the needs of her therapy clients, her own aging mother and her daughter's expectations for Sylvia to help raise her autistic grandson. She revealed that she often feels criticized unjustly despite her sincere efforts to be supportive.

The talk continued with issues facing all who are present, such as struggles dealing with our own aging and ambivalence about how much we should be involved as grandparents. We question how to handle differences of opinions about childrearing with our adult children. We ache to be consulted; but fear giving opinions. And, of course, we talk of our deep and abiding joy for these precious little people who capture our hearts.

Sometimes the voiced concerns surround the question of how many, if any, grandchildren will arrive. Sandy owned up to being a grandma-wannabe and fretted that her daughter, who is so involved in a demanding career, will choose not to have children thus depriving Sandy of a role she desires. Josephine was disappointed when she discovered that there would be no more grandchildren than the one living on the other side of the country. And Lorraine, an involved grandmother to six, worries that she may have nothing left for the newest grandchild on the way.

Then, there are the complicated family situations that comprise contemporary life. Diane's son and daughter-in-law divorced and then each remarried, bringing two more step-grandmothers into the equation, further dividing time and loyalty. Lydia explained that her gay son and his partner used an egg donor,

*Procrastination is no longer an option.*

sperm from each partner, and a surrogate mother to birth their child. All of these players claim a place in her granddaughter's life so she wonders how to relate to each of them, as well as to her granddaughter. And how is Theresa to make peace with her home being used as a drop-off zone between her son and his ex-girlfriend as they bitterly exchange custody of her two-year-old granddaughter each week?

Distance and proximity are two sides of the same coin and both may create trials. Some budding families live almost next door which, while convenient, can test the ties that bind. Adult children living at a great distance from the grandparents pose different challenges. When it is far and expensive to travel, visits can be too infrequent, too costly and sometimes even too lengthy when either party overstays. All along the spectrum of distance, families negotiate, modify and continue to try to get it right---or at least try to not get it wrong as far as visitations go.

Finally, consider what we might call the dirty little secret of grandmotherhood: competition with the other grandmother. In some cases, economics evoke insecurity when one grandmother enjoys greater financial security and can afford more treats. Laurie summed this up by admitting that she feels caught up in a sibling rivalry cascade of emotions, Mary agrees and discloses that she senses an "uncomfortable and unwelcome popularity contest unlike anything since high school." She wants no part of this competitive-

ness, but finds it nearly impossible to avoid. Despite an uneasy agreement between the paternal and maternal grandmothers that the competitive edge belongs to the mother's family, grandmothers from each side of the fence confess to feelings of rivalry on more occasions than they like to admit.

As the workshop concluded, our facilitator, Barbara Graham, read from her book, *Eye of My Heart: 27 Writers Reveal the Pleasures and Perils of Being a Grandmother*. The book, rising out of the author's own experience, wrestles with the issues that we discussed and, as well, honors the loving and funny moments that accompany the role of grandmother. The book was due out last month, and it promises to reveal the true stories that usually remain untold. If the successful writers who have contributed essays are as honest and gutsy as the women in my workshop, this is a book to track down and read.

No, you won't find many of these issues in greeting cards or in sappy sentiments. However, articulating these concerns allows us to stretch ourselves beyond clichés and stereotypes to more fully and authentically embrace this complicated, joyful, frustrating, awesome, and important role. Speaking candidly of this dark side of grandparenting brings these concerns into the light of day, away from the shady corners of shame and

denial, letting us know that we are not alone in our challenges, and giving us strength and joy for the journey.

#### Lessons from "The Grandmother Journey" workshop:

- Being a grandmother is a multifaceted, crazy, complex, and rich experience
- Therapists, trained in communication and relationship skills, also face challenges in this role
- Old baggage and challenges may be triggered in these new relationships
- We're not alone. Other grandmothers struggle with similar issues.
- It's not about us. This is our child's journey, we are not in control, and our role is to let go once again.
- Outdated role models no longer suffice. Our job is to forge and nurture new types of relationships with our children and grandchildren.
- Our fierce and deep love for our children and grandchildren trump the challenges.

#### To attend a similar study group:

The Osher Lifelong Institute at American University in Washington, DC, offers a non-credit course in contemporary grandparenting. For more information, the Web site is [www.OLLI-DC.org](http://www.OLLI-DC.org)





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# Art in Historic Stevensville

By John Church

Art is vibrant in Historic Stevensville. That's the first exit on the eastern side of the Bay Bridge. Close to the Rustico Restaurant, artists thrive in several studios. Marion LeMoal and Maureen Bannon work in oils and watercolors there next to photographers, potters, jewelry makers and other artists using various mixed media. Many of the artists retired from a first career and are now well-established in this art colony. Most are members of the Kent Island Federation of Art (KIFA), the Chesapeake Art League organized by Jeanne Noble or the Island Arts, a co-op organized by Joan McWilliams. These artists work hard to perfect their work and aim to receive county designation as an Arts and Entertainment (A&E) District. Look for Historic Stevensville on Queen Anne's County TV "Two Minutes of Tourism" in the near future.

## Some of the coming art attractions in Historic Stevensville:

"Art Stop Saturdays" on the first Saturday of every month. KIFA and all art shops in Historic Stevensville will be open, from 10 am to 3pm or later. Refreshments will be served and flags will be flying. This event is fully sanctioned by the Kent Island Arts and Entertainment District steering committee!

"Art in the Square," a second annual event to be held during the Kent Island Days Celebration on Saturday, May 16. This is a Chesapeake Art League Event to raise awareness and donations for the A&E District project. Check the "Starving Artists Bake Sale."

"Art in the Park," in the green behind the Cray House on Saturday, June 20, rain or shine.

"Farmer's Market," June through September, also behind the Cray House, on the first Saturday of the month, which is also Art Stop Saturday. Spaces available for artists. Painting En Plein Aire.



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Would you like to plant a tree in someone's honor? Log on to [www.dnr.state.md.us/Forests/Treemendous](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/Forests/Treemendous) for information on ordering a tree to commemorate a birthday, to remember a loved one or to celebrate a holiday or just because.

**Artists at Work** at Jeanne Noble's studio, features her paintings, prints by area photographers, plus creative glass decorator pieces, and a bronze sculpture or two.

**Island Arts**, the co-op that opened in June 2008, has 24 members, many of whom are enjoying a second career in art. Joan McWilliams keeps Island Arts busy and interesting, with regularly scheduled workshops, and each month there's a co-op member "featured artist." On occasion a distinguished Bay area artist will visit and talk to the co-op members.

Stevensville traces its origins to a 1694 land grant. The historic district was put on the National Register in 1986. It's a great place to visit. And don't forget to stop at Peace of Cake, the baker.

*John Church, a US Air Force retiree, has been an avid photographer for over 30 years. He has photos on display at Island Arts and Artists at Work. Currently living in Davidsonville, he can be reached at [JockoChurch@aol.com](mailto:JockoChurch@aol.com)*



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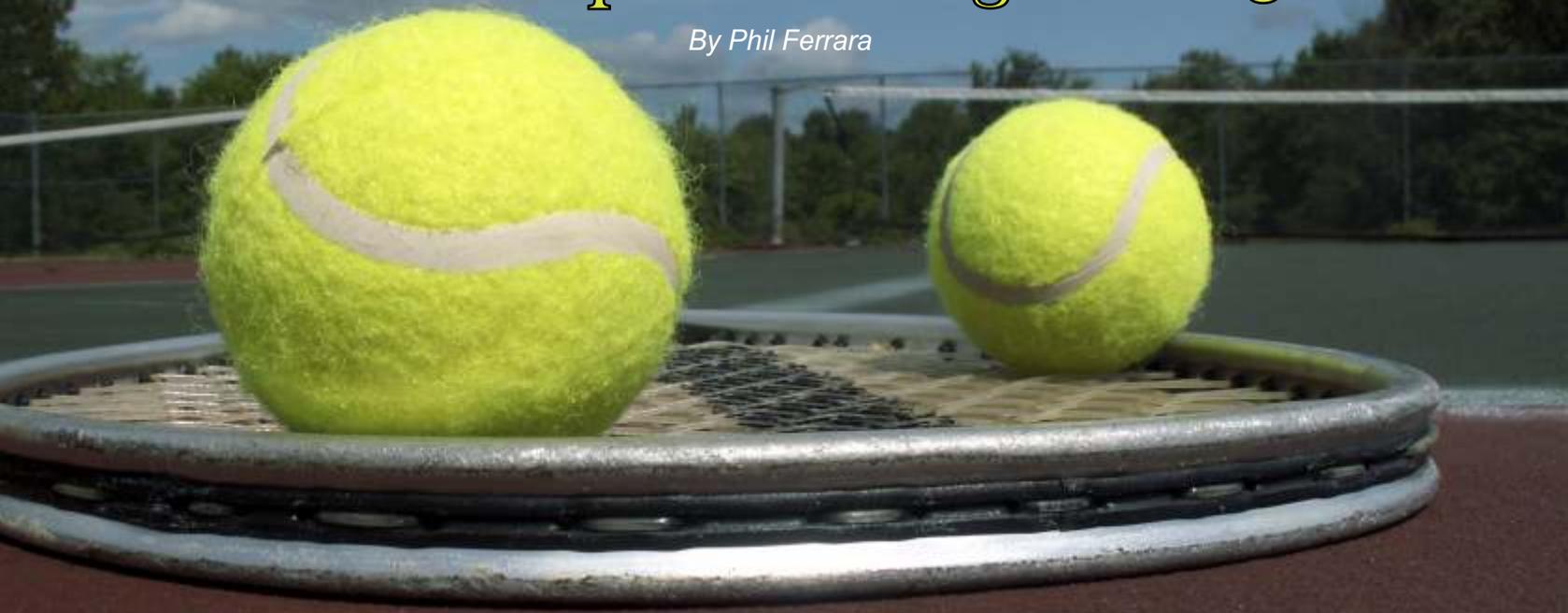
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# Tennis: The Sport of Kings and Queens

By Phil Ferrara



**A**re you anxious for the rain and the gray skies to dissolve into the glorious sunshine of the late spring flowers and the hint of summer to come? Are you feeling like the tethered dog ready to chase the squirrel or the racehorse caged in the starting gate?

If so, then the sport of kings and queens awaits you. In centuries long past, Louis IX of France and Henry VIII of England enjoyed the first slap of racquet against ball. Today's 21st century tennis, however, is a universal sport enjoyed as a lifelong pastime. It is immensely popular among boomers and seniors seeking a beneficial source of exercise, camaraderie and competition. The sport of tennis heightens the personal energy, vitality of life and social interaction for all of its participants.

Because it attracts every age and talent level, tennis has long been one of the most popular sports in the world. That popularity resulted in its selection as one of the original 'core' sports when the modern Olympics was inaugurated in 1896. Between 1877 and 1900 such well-known tennis events as the Davis Cup plus the Wimbledon, U.S., French and Australian Open Tournaments began competition. It was at these tournaments that future tennis champions arose -- fabled names like Sampras, Evert, Federer, Graf and Rod Laver. We have all seen or heard those names emblazoned across screens and sports headlines. We may not be able to compete with them, but we can observe and learn from their example and styles.

For those who might like to explore further the history and story of tennis, a visit to the International Tennis Hall of Fame in Newport, Rhode Island, would be an interesting trip. Open from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily, details can be found at [www.tennisfame.com](http://www.tennisfame.com) or by calling (401) 849-3990.

There are many ways for tennis enthusiasts to get started and enjoy the sport and its benefits, whether playing singles or doubles. Consider establishing a specific time each day or week, whether morning or evening, with a friend or with a neighborhood group. Or you might arrange a couple's weekly tennis date, perhaps on a weekend followed by a lunch or dinner together. Or establish a men's or women's game organized around a time convenient to the group.

It doesn't matter whether you play on a hard surface of concrete, asphalt or acrylic, or on grass or clay. Nor does it matter if you can serve an ace or if your backhand does not quite excel during a long volley! The important thing is to follow the recreation advice of one of our local Chesapeake Bay counties, Anne Arundel, where they have stated that **"Rule No. 1 is to have fun!"**

Where can we play tennis in the Bay region? Public courts abound in all of the counties surrounding the Bay with many examples listed to the right. Private clubs and courts can be found quickly by looking under "Health Clubs" and "Tennis Courts" in your local Yellow Pages. In short, they are everywhere!

Take another cue, this time from Talbot County's recreational advice to **"play for fun, for life!"** The exercise and fresh air allows us to sleep well and feel fully energized on waking each day. Our mental alertness can achieve new heights. So... game, set, match! Let the season begin!

Phil can be reached at [pferrara65@comcast.net](mailto:pferrara65@comcast.net)

## Public tennis courts:

Anne Arundel County (410) 222-7300/7317  
[www.aacounty.org/recparks/parks/tennis.cfm](http://www.aacounty.org/recparks/parks/tennis.cfm)  
The county has more than 60 tennis courts in 28 park locations with many lighted. In addition, there are 15 lighted courts at Anne Arundel Community College on College Parkway.

Calvert County (410) 535-1600  
[www.co.cal.md.us/residents/parks/](http://www.co.cal.md.us/residents/parks/)  
Calvert County has tennis courts at the Cove Point, Dunkirk District and Hallowing Point Parks.

Dorchester County (410) 228-5578  
[www.docogonet.com](http://www.docogonet.com)  
There are tennis courts at the Hurlock, Secretary and East New Market town parks, plus the 10 court Busick Tennis Courts facility on Glasgow Street in Cambridge. In addition, there is one court at McCarter Park in Cambridge.

Kent County (410) 778-1948  
[www.kentparksandrec.org](http://www.kentparksandrec.org)  
In Kent County, tennis courts are located at Millington Park and Worton Park, plus courts at Kent County High School, the three middle schools and the Town of Betterton.

Queen Anne's County (410) 758-0835  
[www.parksnrec.org](http://www.parksnrec.org)  
Queen Anne's County has tennis courts at the Mowbray, Church Hill, Grasonville, Old Love Point, Roundtop and Sudlersville parks.

Saint Mary's County (301) 475-4200, ext 1800 or 1801  
[www.co.saint-marys.md.us/recreate/facilities/index.asp](http://www.co.saint-marys.md.us/recreate/facilities/index.asp)  
The county has tennis courts at the Cardinal Gibbons, Cecil, Chancellor's Run Regional, Dorsey, Fifth District, Jarboesville, and John Baggett parks.

Talbot County (410) 770-8050  
[www.talbotcountymd.gov](http://www.talbotcountymd.gov)  
Talbot County has tennis courts at the Cordova Community Park and the Tilghman Island Elementary School Sports Complex.

# How Safe is Your Home?

By Carol Barbier Rolnick

Did you know the federal Centers for Disease Control and the Home Safety Council report that:

- The number of fatal accidents in the home is second only to those in vehicular accidents.
- More than one-half of all falls resulting in death or injury occur in the home.
- More than one-third of adults 65 or over fall in their homes annually.
- Four out of five deaths due to fire occur in the home and approximately one-half of home fire deaths occur in homes without smoke alarms.

And yet, if you're like most people, you want to remain living independently in your own home and community for as long as you possibly can. An AARP report, "Fixing to Stay," found that while more than 90 percent of people over 65 wanted to stay in their own homes as they grew older, people were concerned about their ability to remain in their homes. As many as 31 percent were concerned about being forced into a nursing home because of increased difficulty in getting around the house, and another 45 percent were concerned about having a home in which family and friends could move about safely.

As many of us reluctantly acknowledge as we age, these concerns are real. As we grow older, there are losses in our physical abilities and sensory perceptions, some of which are easily recognized while others can be more subtle. While we generally feel secure in our own homes, there may be a number of hidden dangers that we're not aware of, and we become more susceptible to falls and other home accidents. Stairs, hard-to-reach cabinets or shelves, high-threshold bathtubs, slippery floors and poor lighting are just a sample of the things that might create an unsafe situation or problems with accessibility.



## Solution for safety

Fortunately, there's plenty that can be done to ensure that your home continues to meet your safety and accessibility needs as you get older. The formula is simple:

- Evaluate your home for safety and accessibility, preferably with the help of an experienced professional.
- Implement modifications to improve safety and accessibility.

Home modifications can benefit not only people who desire to stay in their homes as they get older, but also people with progressive diseases (such as multiple sclerosis, COPD or Parkinson's disease) and those who have suffered an acute injury or illness such as a hip fracture or stroke.

## Many modifications are simple:

- securing or removing throw rugs
- replacing existing lights with higher wattage
- placing nightlights in bedroom and bath
- installing and checking on smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in key areas

More complex modifications can include installing a chair lift or home elevator, installing a fully accessible roll-in or walk-in shower or adding a master bedroom to the ground level.

Carol Barbier Rolnick is director of education for Safe Living Solutions, a certified aging in place (CAPS) company that specializes in home safety education and evaluation. Ms. Rolnick can be reached at [crolnick@safelivingtransitions.com](mailto:crolnick@safelivingtransitions.com) or (410) 729-4215.

## Who should evaluate your home?

Safety checklists are available through your local department on aging and disabilities, or by going online to safety-oriented Web sites such as the Home Safety Council [www.homesafetycouncil.org](http://www.homesafetycouncil.org) or the Centers for Disease Control [www.cdc.gov/ncipc/falls](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/falls)

To ensure a thorough, impartial assessment of your home, you should consider retaining a certified aging-in-place specialist.

## Carpe diem

Seize the day. Assess not just your home but yourself, and see what steps you can take to make you, as well as your environment, safer. The Centers for Disease Control has several recommendations to prevent falls that are equally applicable for improving personal health and safety. Check with your health professional to:

- start an exercise regimen
- review your medications
- check your vision
- assess your needs for improved safety and accessibility

Next month's issue:  
Implementing home modifications.



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# Charles Willson Peale - Who's He?

By Peggy Kiefer

Why drive the busy roads to Baltimore or Washington, DC, when you can visit a beautiful, historical house and museum in the heart of historic Annapolis?

The Hammond-Harwood House, a five-part, Anglo-Palladian mansion, features an extensive collection of portraits by the well-known colonial painter, Charles Willson Peale, often referred to as the "Artist of the American Revolution." Also in the collection are paintings by other members of the Peale family of artists, including Rembrandt Peale, James Peale and Charles Peale Polk, as well as portraits by lesser-known artists.

While giving a tour of the historic Hammond Harwood house recently, I mentioned the collection of Charles Willson Peale paintings. "Charles Willson Peale, who's he?" came a question from the back of the group.

Charles Willson Peale, in a nutshell, was one of the prolific, well-known portrait painters of colonial times, painting between 1774-1827. He was also prolific in producing other artists in his family. Among his 17 children, several are named after famous artists of earlier times, such as Rembrandt and Raphaelle, Rubens and Titian Ramsay. His brother James and nephew Charles Peale Polk are members of the "Peale dynasty." A good modern comparison would be to the Wyeth family.

Hammond-Harwood House curators are very proud of their extensive collection of nine of Charles Willson Peale portraits, eight of which are originals. Many art lovers visit the house just to view the collection.

Upon entering the front passage, his first portrait of Hester Baldwin Chase introduces the visitor to her husband, Jeremiah Townley Chase, whose portrait, painted by another artist, Thomas Edge Pine, hangs next to her. He is believed to have been the first occupant of the house, renting an office in the North Wing. He subsequently bought the house in 1811 for his daughter, Frances Chase Loockerman, from whose children the Harwoods originated.

A portrait of historical interest, and the only non-original Peale portrait, is that of William Buckland, architect of the Hammond-Harwood House. The copy is located in the dining room; the original is permanently housed at Yale University. The

original Peale portrait of William Buckland was found in the house unframed at the time of the death in 1924 of Miss Hester Harwood, great-great granddaughter of the architect and the last resident of the Hammond-House House.

Ironically, the portraits of his daughter, Sarah Callahan, her husband, John Callahan, and two of their children, are all original Charles Willson Peale portraits, and hang across the dining room from William Buckland.

Perhaps the most famous Charles Willson Peale portrait is that of a child, Ann Proctor. Mr. Peale is rumored to have avoided painting children. When he did, however, he had the children chose a favorite toy to hold, possibly to keep their interest for a short while. Ann is shown sitting in a chair holding a doll. What makes the painting so unique is that this same doll from the painting in 1789 was donated to the Hammond Harwood House in 1953. The doll also sits in a chair that is almost a duplicate of the one in the portrait. The doll is original, except for the arms and clothing. It is very unusual to have such a wonderful set of a portrait and an object from the painting, and it attracts many comments.

There are lots of compelling reasons to visit this beautiful 18th century (1774-1779) house, such as the fact it is 90 percent original, it has an extensive collection of John Shaw furniture, an Annapolitan noted for his beautifully crafted woodwork, and has a priceless collection of antique furniture and accessories, some of which belonged to the Hammond family.

Take a trip back in history, become acquainted with historic figures as depicted in the Peale portraits, as well as the other original paintings in the house, and marvel at the antique doll that has survived for over 200 years and sits for our enjoyment in a historic home right in the heart of Annapolis.

As one visitor commented at the end of a tour, "Wow, all of this history and beautiful art is right here for us to see in Annapolis. I thought we would have to drive to big cities to see what we have seen today."

*Peggy has been a docent at the Hammond-Harwood house for the last 10 years. Charles Willson Peale is one of her favorite painters and the art work in the house is always an inspiration to her. She can be reached at [Zinkiefer@aol.com](mailto:Zinkiefer@aol.com)*

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*This is not the time to be winding down - it's the time to explore more options and opportunities.*

## Facebook Friends

By Cindy Rott



**Y**ou hear your grandkids talk about it. Even some of your friends are doing it. So what's the big deal? Why bother? E-mail is good enough, heck in my day you put a pen to paper. Well it's the latest phenomenon sweeping the country, everyone is on it, even, gasp older people. Should you stop resisting and join? Definitely yes!

What are we talking about? Facebook is a social networking site on the Internet. It allows people to post messages to their friends, and then other friends can see the postings and also post messages, creating a "conversation" over time. Some people are always signed onto facebook, while others just occasionally check in to see what is happening with their friends.

Facebook is different from anything you've done before. Started in 2004 by a Harvard student -- originally just for students to use to network -- it is now all the rage, even for those over 50! Facebook makes it so easy to reach out to past and present acquaintances. You can check out former classmates, see your grandkids' lacrosse photos, post a quick message to Aunt Suzy in Idaho or just contact one of your neighbors down the street.

Facebook has become the biggest of the social networking sites, and thousands of new users join each week. It facilitates communication with people you already know; this is not picking up strangers on the Internet. Best of all, Facebook has great privacy options, allowing you to limit (or not) what other people see. Most people do limit access to their home page to just friends that they have "accepted."

If someone wants to get in touch with you, Facebook will send you a message that says, "John Smith wants to be your friend." Often your friend will include a personal message such as, "Can't believe it's been 30 years since graduation, how've you been?" On your screen two buttons will appear and you can "accept" or "ignore." If you can't remember John Smith, or you hate him, you can just click on ignore, but if you want to see his page you have to click on accept.

Facebook is really easy to use, it's fun and makes keeping in touch a snap. Best of all, an advanced degree in computer programming is not needed.

Joining is easy. Go to [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com) and enter your name and answer a couple of profile questions. (Only answer the ones you want to share with your friends.) The more you answer about things like schools you attended, the more easily old friends can find you. Next, upload a photo or graphic. The cool thing about the photo is that it's your choice... Who says we're old, when your photo is from the '80s, or a pic of you on your sailboat taken from far away... Or you've photoshopped off the extra 20 pounds on your middle.

You will be astounded how quickly your friends will find you and ask for an update. Facebook will also suggest friends based on common groups and interests to see if you know them. And it will even suggest you become Facebook friends with your friends' friends. Facebook will help you reach out to old classmates, as well as the people in your current e-mail address book. You will be surprised how many people from your youth will ask to reconnect. And with a couple lines written on their "wall," you'll be in touch in no time. Once you're friends with someone you can check out their interests, their photo albums and what they're up to. Every time you sign in to Facebook, it asks what you're doing now. Those who answer this option give a glimpse of their daily life to their friends. People answer with all kinds of crazy things.

Facebook has space for picture albums and even video clips. This is the perfect solution to spread-out families, as pictures can be posted immediately for others to view. Posting short notes can save you from a phone call, but still keep you in touch. Let everyone know what you are up to instantly. How much you post is up to you. Some people have accounts solely so they can look at their kids' pages, and some people are on it all the time. I have really enjoyed checking in on my old college pals, looking at all the pictures of my cousins' kids and even Facebooking people I see every day to set up lunch. And if you ever tire of it, just stop checking in and it's done.

So if someone asks if you'll be their FBF (Facebook friend), try saying yes. FBF's forever. 

*Cindy, after a lifetime of relocations, has settled in Severna Park where she keeps in touch with her widely scattered friends through Facebook. She can be reached at [cmrott@aol.com](mailto:cmrott@aol.com)*



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## **GARDENING FROM THE HEART** **Why Gardeners Garden**

By Carol Olwell

*Antelope Island Press, Berkeley (1990)*

Since my gardening consists of buying plants and instructing my yardman where to plant them, the book *Gardening From the Heart* caught my attention. Flowers seem to shrivel and turn brown when I look at them and I was hoping to get a flash of wisdom from the dedicated, passionate gardeners featured by author Carol Olwell.

The book is cleverly divided into four diverse sections: The Garden as Paradise, The Garden as Provider, The Garden as Teacher and The Garden as Healer. There is also a very informative section on pesticides, their safety, their scientific names and which ones to avoid.

Olwell's fondest childhood memories are the times she spent on her grandparents' 11 acres in suburban Utah. She attributes her love of beautiful gardens and plants to her grandmother's knowledge and passion for her garden. She admits she didn't acquire any gardening skills from her grandmother, but did absorb the sense that the "earth was a truly beautiful and vibrant place, and that it deserved to be loved." She also admits to not having her own garden until almost 30 years later, and to not being very successful when she did begin. When she realized that everyone she met had different feelings about gardening, the idea for this book was born.

The wide variety of gardens and gardeners featured in *Gardening From the Heart* is truly amazing. She looked for people who were genuinely interested in plants and trees and who did all or almost all of their own gardening work.

Meeting all of these dedicated gardeners inspired Olwell, as they inspired me, and will hopefully inspire you. I was especially intrigued by Loie Benedict, from Auburn, Washington, who began to garden full time when she was 68, a time when many people are winding down their gardening efforts, or paying someone else to do them. She started out growing vegetables, but found they were more work and almost as expensive as buying them and didn't taste as good. So she planted more flowers until the vegetables disappeared from her garden. The head of the famous Buchardt Gardens in Victoria, British Columbia, asked her for some seeds after he went there on a visit.

Another interesting gardener is Lho Kazarian, who moved from Sweden to the United States and developed an organic garden in Sacramento, California. As a result of this organic gardening she developed a passion for fruit trees. She mainly taught herself to garden and learned from books. Her trees give her so much pleasure that sometimes she will just grab a branch and hug it. She feels that if a garden has been loved, it shows.

A different twist to the people interviewed by Ms. Olwell is Catherine Sneed Marcum, who started a gardening program for inmates at a county jail in San Francisco. Equipment and grounds were left from the old jail, which grew its own food. So she and some of the prisoners cleaned up and fixed the old greenhouses and planted a small garden. From this meager start, a large greenhouse and a substantial garden developed. There are about 700 men and 50 women at the

jail, but only a small percentage are able to help in the garden. They work hard, use some of the produce at the jail and sell some to a few local restaurants. She feels many of these young prisoners have never been nurtured and now they are learning to nurture the plants in their garden.

There are too many fascinating gardeners featured in this inspiring book to even begin to describe them. From a gardener in Billings, Montana, who only has 134 growing days to a gentleman specializing in nuts, cacti and desert plants in Northwest Arizona and a farmer in his 70s in Arizona who plants in circles, the varied people and types of gardening featured in this book are intriguing and attention-getting.

Who knows, it might even give me the impetus to get out there and do some gardening myself. How about you?

~ Peggy Kiefer

## **God Does Have a Sense of Humor**

By Rob Ballister, Jr.

*Universe, Inc., Lincoln, NE (2007)*

Naval Academy graduate and first-time author Rob Ballister delivers a touching and entertaining portrait of his journey through dating, growing up in New Jersey and surviving cancer. His knack for finding humor in everything from the most mundane (learning to do laundry) to the tragic (being diagnosed with cancer at age 22) will have you first smiling, then snickering and finally belly laughing as you follow him through life's ups and downs. The chapter titles alone are enough to brighten your day -- "Christmas in Gingerbread Hell," "Waterskiing Can Kill You" and "Sex Education as Taught by Nuns."

The author draws on his rich life experiences to generate the material. Whether he describes surviving cancer, serving in the Navy or coaching youth sports, each story is told with a warm, self-deprecating humor that draws the reader in to the experience. The stories are short, usually two to four pages each, so readers can grab one or two for a quick pick-me-up or settle in for a long laugh session by taking in several in one sitting.

The book goes beyond simple entertaining humor, however. Readers will pick up on messages embedded in some of the stories, such as appreciating one's family, the value of true friendship and the importance of faith.

This title received the 2007 Gold Medal for Humor from the Military Writers' Society of America ([www.militarywriters.com](http://www.militarywriters.com)). It is available at Hard Bean Coffee and Booksellers in Annapolis, or online through [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), [BarnesandNoble.com](http://BarnesandNoble.com) or [iUniverse.com](http://iUniverse.com). A great gift for those battling serious illness, facing an overseas deployment or anyone who just needs a bit of a lift, it is a bright, pleasant and unforgettable read.

## **The Invention of Hugo Cabret**

By Brian Selznick

*Scholastic Press, New York (2007)*

*The Invention of Hugo Cabret* is a fascinating tale for people of all ages. My wife, who recommended this book to me, is a librarian in an elementary school. She read it to a spellbound group of fifth graders. When I read this book, which I did in less than two hours, I was just as

spellbound as those fifth graders. It carries you along as if you were riding in a swift moving train without knowing the destination. You'll be surprised and delighted when you get there.

The setting is a train station in Paris, circa 1931. The book revolves around young Hugo, a 12-year-old orphaned boy, and an old man, Georges Melies. Hugo has a secret contained in a little book he carries around with him as he makes his rounds in the attic of the train station to ensure that the huge clocks in the big old station are well lubricated and keep accurate time. In order to not spoil the story for you, I'll only say that Hugo needs to keep the clocks up to speed or the station inspector will blow his cover and send him to an orphanage.

In the little book that Hugo conceals is a diagram and instructions to build an automaton. An automaton is a robot-looking mechanical man who is capable of drawing a picture. Hugo's goal is to pick up where his late father, who was killed in a fire, left off and fix the automaton. He is convinced the automaton has a message for him from his father. Hugo must keep the contents of his little book a secret though, at least until he can fix the automaton and see the message his father has left him.

However, the young boy is not the only one with secrets. Enter Georges Melies. Georges, who is a real person, but fictionalized in this story, owns a toy shop in the huge, crowded train station. He is an unhappy man who works at a job he is bored with: fixing and selling toys to the many travelers passing through the station. He is a man with resentments, literally locked away in a box in an armoire in his bedroom.

Georges confiscates Hugo's book after catching him in the toy store trying to steal parts that will fix the automaton. The old man is quite intrigued by the diagram of the automaton and decides to keep the book from the boy. The boy goes to great lengths to recover the book, mostly because it contains the information he needs to fix the automaton. In the pursuit of the little book, Hugo uncovers a secret. With the help of Georges' adopted daughter and another friend Hugo meets along the way, he is able to put the pieces of this mystery together. In fact, the whole story comes together eventually, like the intricate pieces of one of the great clocks.

I won't tell you the rest, but I will say it has a heart-warming ending. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* is a magnificent tale of love, friendship, conflict and regret. As you'll read in the epilogue of this book, there really was an automaton and a guy named Georges Melies. The author had read about a collection of automata Melies owned that had been donated to a museum. The automata were neglected and eventually thrown away. And then, like many authors of fiction, he asked himself what would happen if a young boy found the automaton. This book answers this question in a most eloquent way, a gift to all who read it.

Don't be alarmed at the size of this book. It just looks like a copy of *War and Peace*. Fascinating pictures fill many of the pages and help to tell the story. This is a great book to read or recommend to young people.

~ Neil Moran

# Traveling with Grandchildren

By Kathryn Marchi

Planning a trip with grandchildren? No matter what mode of travel is taken, there are many ways to help make this a pleasantly memorable experience.

Gone are the days when children either slept or scuffled with each other on a trip. In a car or train, counting cows until the next cemetery or listing license plates only kept them interested for so long. Today's kids have their techno stuff to keep them occupied: iPods, personal DVD players, portable electronic games and if they're not so lucky, one built-in DVD player for everyone! These gadgets do keep them quiet and occupied, but prevent the children from being a real part of the trip. They are unaware of their surroundings and, as a result, are not communicating with others. They might as well be at home on the sofa.

So, how can grandparents deal with these changes in "kid travel" and pry them away from their electronic gadgets? How can grandchildren enjoy and perhaps learn from the trip? Remember, we don't have the stamina to make too many trips with them so when we do, we want to make it count.

Here are some ideas that might be helpful in planning a pleasant summer interlude with grandkids. They can be applied or expanded depending upon whether you are traveling by automobile, train, airplane or boat.

Obviously the ages of the kids factors into the entertainment level or type of games or special planning. Younger children are a bit easier to plan for, but older children can be difficult since they are more attuned to their electronic games. In a long car or train ride, the old "goodie basket" containing coloring or sticker books, playing cards, puzzles, books and even some neat snacks is always a good thing to take along for passing the time. But if grandchildren are prone to motion sickness and can't enjoy reading or coloring, the game of "cow poker" or identifying vehicle license plates might have to be implemented for a more pleasant ride!

When planning the trip, research places of interest along the way or at the final destination. In a car or motor home, scheduling time for this breaks up the trip, provides much needed exercise and keeps the child's interest. For example, when traveling to Niagara Falls, plan the route to include Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where there are trains and related museums and the very interesting Amish country. Even little girls like to ride on a train! When traveling to

Boston, Sturbridge Village is a great place to stop and tour.

En route, be sure to stay at hotels or RV parks that have either indoor or outdoor swimming pools or other activities nearby such as miniature golf courses or bowling alleys. Plan on stopping early to allow adequate time for these diversions.

Researching areas to be visited is another important means of involving grandkids and creating interest in the trip. Do this together and make a list of important things they might want to see. This works especially well with museums and cathedrals. Go over this list again right before the tour so that they have a purpose for the visit. For older children this is a good way for them to organize their tour and also gives them some "ownership" in the trip. Keeping lists like this prevents confusion and frustration over having too many things to do and see. It also keeps boredom at bay.

Having the child bring along a favorite stuffed animal or doll (on the small side) is a great way to enhance the travel experience. The trip can be "seen" through the toy's eyes and at the end of the day, these experiences can be written in a journal. If the child is too young to write, the child can dictate thoughts and impressions. For those older children, "journaling" is a proven way to reinforce those all important writing skills and teachers will be very pleased with that when school starts up again.

Taking along stuffed animals and dolls also provides comfort to a frightened child during an airplane trip as well as staving off homesickness during the first few days away from home.

Another way to add interest to a trip is to "loan" the child a digital camera – under supervision, of course. This type of camera is much better than your "Brownie Hawkeye," since pictures are readily seen, deleted if necessary and printed out to put in a special album for recording the trip and creating memories. They can also be downloaded to a computer so that parents can receive their own version of the travels. If kids can label these pictures, so much the better for later recall. Older children, who have their own laptop computers, can enter their journals and pictures as they travel. Today's newer cell phones also have cameras that can record important events to be sent right away or downloaded to the laptop as well.

Buying souvenirs is always on a child's list when traveling. To prevent arguments and



overspending, make certain children have their own spending money. The amount can be decided beforehand. This is a great way to teach fiscal responsibility.

One extremely important issue when traveling with grandchildren either inside or outside of the USA is a letter of permission from their parents. This is a MUST! You should carry this letter, and proof of health insurance, at all times. Of course, when you travel outside of the United States, a current passport is required, so be certain you have all of these documents with you upon departure. If the kids do not have their own passports, be sure to apply for them way ahead of time. If inoculations are needed for the trip, schedule them well beforehand as well.

We grandparents cherish the time spent with our grandkids. But when traveling together, we do not want to appear to be "teaching" or "managing," so the idea is to include the child in every detail possible. We want them to "own" the experiences and have fun with us! Who knows, these grandchildren may continue the tradition with their own some day!



*Kathryn, grandmother of two, has traveled extensively with grandchildren. She can be reached at [marchi-wre@mrisc.com](mailto:marchi-wre@mrisc.com)*

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## Morphing into a Cartoon Character

*My name should be Sponge Barb, kind of like the cartoon character, Sponge Bob. That's because I just sponge up everyone's problems. My husband hates his job but won't quit because he is upset about finances. He comes home, dumps his unhappiness on me and then spends the evening on the computer. He feels better and I worry all night. In the morning, my married daughter calls me to complain about her life. My father's health is failing and I get bad news or complaints from him every day. My siblings can't get along and vent to me about each other. I feel so heavy and weighted down by all these problems. My suggestions are never taken! How do I get these people to leave me alone and take care of their own problems?*

Morphing into a sponge and soaking up the problems of those around you is an easy habit to fall into, but it's also possible to choose healthier responses. Rather than focus on changing your family members, let's talk about what you can change about yourself. You can't alter anyone's behavior but your own, so put your energy there.

First, take a look at what you're getting out of this situation. Your reward could be that functioning as a sounding board makes you feel needed or important. Or, perhaps sponging up these problems is something you believe that you should do based on the female role models you watched as you grew up. Thus, repeating this pattern now feels like doing your duty and getting an "A" for effort. Similarly, the carrot that you are chasing may be love and approval from those around you.

Once you have a handle on what is driving your sponge-like behavior -- and it may be a combination of factors -- ask yourself the question popularized by a television psychologist: How's that working for you? In other words, are you getting the payoff that you want? Even if the answer is yes, ask yourself if the payoff is worth the heavy and drained feeling that you describe. If not, get ready for a change, but be prepared that you may meet with some resistance and negativity from those who have come to depend on your limitless patience.

Choosing to be supportive and loving, without sacrificing your sanity and time, begins with having healthy boundaries. These are the limits we set in our interpersonal relationships that define where your sense of yourself and your concerns stop and another person and their concerns starts. At their healthiest, boundaries originate from a strong sense of self-worth to protect us from

# Dear Vicki

*Victoria Duncan is a licensed professional counselor who works with individuals and couples to address a full spectrum of client issues. She welcomes your questions at [Victoria@OutLookbytheBay.com](mailto:Victoria@OutLookbytheBay.com)*



the neediness of others. They are clear enough that we take care of ourselves by not taking on burdens that are not ours but, at the same time, these healthy limits remain flexible enough to accommodate unexpected and true emergencies when necessary.

Begin to notice when you feel put-upon and resentful as this may be a red flag that a boundary needs attention. Examine the circumstances and the motives of the person issuing the complaint. First, is this an issue that concerns you or that is your responsibility? And is the person complaining just for the sake of complaining or are they requesting assistance for a problem that you want to take on?

Let's consider the situations that you mentioned. Your husband's concern about finances sounds like a joint issue that could be addressed together. Are there areas where you both can economize? Do you need to take on part-time work to help out? Put your heads together and brainstorm some ideas to reduce your living expenses and his worry. If he refuses, then step back from soaking up his negativity. Be supportive and encouraging, but position yourself to draw a firm, but flexible line between his complaints and your peace of mind.

Ask yourself the same questions when confronted with your father's health issues, your daughter's unhappiness or your sibling's squabbles. What is my responsibility? Can I change anything about this for the better? Do I want or need to take this problem on as my own? Then, do what you can and are willing to do. Perhaps you want to investigate some home health care agencies for your father or intervene by helping him understand his Medicare coverage. Maybe you could offer to babysit your grandchildren so your daughter can have a day off to recharge. On the other hand, the squabbles between your siblings sound like a problem best left to them to address.

Practice a few phrases to express your empathy and concern but that put the problem squarely back on the person who is ultimately responsible for solving their own problems. Most likely, the person complaining does not really want or expect you to solve the problem. When you simply repeat to them what you've heard them say along with an

expression of understanding, they will feel heard and validated. For example, say "I'm sorry that you had such a bad day" or "It sounds as if you're really struggling with....." When you add that you trust their ability to handle this problem, because of their creativity (or cite another one of their strengths), you empower them to handle their own issues. And that's the best gift that you can give to anyone.

Then, change the subject or leave the conversation behind as you move on in your own life. Picture these concerns melting away as you see that imaginary line between their problems and your responsibilities to yourself. When you take care of YOU by having appropriate boundaries, you are more able to offer real help, on your terms, when it is needed. It takes practice to set and maintain healthy boundaries. Keep at it and you'll develop strength and improved mental health as a result.

## Bucket List Woes

*That movie, "The Bucket List," just bugs me! Seems I keep hearing friends remark about some activity being an item on their "Bucket List." When I heard that the name of the movie came from "Kicking the bucket," I didn't care for the title. But I liked the actors and so I went along with my wife to see it. Wish I had skipped the danged thing because now it's stuck in my mind like a splinter that I can't get out. I don't think I have a blasted thing on any bucket list and can't think of a single thing to put on one either—even if I did want one.*

*My wife has a list a mile long and that just depresses me. I don't need a reminder that time is running out. She thinks I am avoiding reality and have given up. I don't like to think about all the things that I'd wish I'd done. Is that crazy? And why do I need to make a list of things I want to do? Now that I'm retired, if I get up and want to do something, I just do it.*

Don't forget that this movie is entertainment and not an instructional manual on life! Still, I agree that the premise of the film has served as a thought-provoking tool for many people. Maybe you're just getting stuck on the turn of a phrase.

# Literary Alchemist

Labeling some unfinished and unmet goals as a bucket list, i.e., something that you must do before you "kick the bucket" can have a ring of gloominess to it---especially if we have a strong fear of aging and death. And remember that the main characters in the movie were terminally ill and searching for a way to make their remaining time meaningful and rich. That's certainly a worthwhile goal for anyone at any stage in life.

Ask yourself what is the deeper reason that drives your unsettled feelings about this issue? Perhaps you have a persistent fear of the future. It sounds as if it also could be some misgivings about your wife having plenty of goals while you've settled for just being in the moment. If that's a comfortable place for you to be, that's fine. If not, take another look at what's still possible. Sure, it may be too late to be a professional football star, but you could attend a game as your favorite team plays on their home turf. Look for ways that you can translate the passions of your earlier life into realistic activities to enrich your life today.

And since it touches a sensitive spot, just drop the name "The Bucket List." Instead, concentrate on some things you'd like to achieve and enjoy this year, this month or even this week. These need not be momentous or earth-shaking activities, but having something to look forward to puts more positive emotion into our lives. That's something we can all use, with or without a list to guide us!



Solution to Early Spring 2009  
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T	R	A	F	A	L	G	A	R	S	Q	U	A	R	E
A	L	T	P	E	U	T	U	R	R	E	T			
			S	T	E	E	L	W	O	O	L			
L	E	A	P	S	L	O	E	S	E	R	B			
A	L	K	A	L	I	O	A	T	H	A	I	L		
B	E	R	M	U	D	A	T	R	I	A	N	G	L	E
E	G	O	G	E	N	E	T	H	O	L	E	S		
L	Y	N	N	I	R	M	A	V	E	S	T			
			A	B	Y	S	S	I	N	I	A			
N	A	S	S	A	U	S	I	C	U	G	H			
A	N	T	A	R	C	T	I	C	C	I	R	C	L	E
T	E	A	L	C	H	O	U	N	O	L	A	N		
O	W	N	S	A	O	N	E	G	O	A	D	S		

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45				46	47					48		49		
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53	54	55				56	57	58				59	60	
61						62								63
64						65					66			
67						68					69			

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## ACROSS

1. Sock
5. Yiddish 'trash'
9. Less
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Wolf
15. Van Morrison's homeland
16. Make the innocent look guilty
17. Like poultry allowed to forage
19. Most populous English-speaking country
20. Alchemist rewrites Charles Dickens classic
22. Wane
23. Nice Summer
24. Snake
27. City in the Evergreen State
31. School grp.
34. Decorated
36. 4,840 square yards
37. Art supporter?
39. Alchemist rewrites Alexandre Dumas classic (with 'The')
42. Mission San Antonio de Valero
43. Merit
44. Friend
45. Abbreviation in an ad
46. Withhold
49. Humor magazine
50. \_\_\_\_\_ -mo

51. Me in Montreal
53. Alchemist rewrites Ian Fleming classic
61. Seventh month for Moslems
62. Fine china
64. Saudi's neighbor
65. Draft status
66. SAS is based here
67. Parking spot and corner office, perhaps
68. Season to be jolly
69. Enthusiastic exclamation

## DOWN

1. Grp. with panda logo
2. Cowboy's concern
3. \_\_\_\_\_ code
4. Irritate
5. Like some dads
6. Peel
7. Hence
8. Sailboat stabilizer
9. "Desert Storm" aircraft
10. Bert's buddy
11. \_\_\_\_\_ vs. Roe
12. Author Ludwig
13. Scan
18. BBQ favorite
21. \_\_\_\_\_ Shannon
24. Draw a bead on
25. Climb
26. \_\_\_\_\_ colony
28. Pains' partner
29. Doctor
30. Four: prefix
31. Sacred song
32. Inventor Nikola
33. Synthetic resin used in paint
35. Like a night light
38. Doctors org.
40. Lacking certain defences
41. Unfriendly
47. \_\_\_\_\_ voyage
48. Zilch
50. Was offensive, in a way
52. Nome dome
53. Something on stage
54. Feeble
55. Not open, not closed
56. Stratford-Avon connector
57. California lake or park
58. Priceless?
59. \_\_\_\_\_ does it
60. Stir up
63. Negatives

# The Buzz on the Bay's Bees

The quiet buzz of bees can be counted on to fill the air of our warm, lazy days of summer. It's a comforting sound that we hope will be part of our world for generations to come. But if the die-off continues at its current rate, there are no guarantees. The busy bee, with four wings beating rhythmically up to 450 times a minute, rushes about from one flower to another gathering the nectar necessary to its survival while spreading pollen necessary for our survival. Without bees' telltale footprints through the dusty pollen, plant life could not survive. Honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) were introduced to the Colonies in the early 1600s by the Europeans, and spread quickly through the entire nation. Unlike most bees that prefer a solitary existence, the industrious honey maker is part of a complex social network that takes up residence in huge colonies in trees or in hives set out by farmers or beekeepers. The honey bee is only one of the over 3,500 species in the bee family, most populations of which have recently gone through a rapid decline. In 2008 it was reported to the U.S. Senate that the decrease has reached close to 35 percent!

Our increased pollution, much of it originating from emissions from power plants and automobiles has taken its toll. Interestingly, pollution masks the scent of flowers, which is what attracts the half-inch pollinator as it darts between blossoms in a constant search for nectar. To further aggravate the falling population of bees, both parasites and bacterial diseases have become a continuing threat. Often the causes are unknown, not easily treated and often discovered by the beekeeper too late to head off what can quickly wipe out an entire colony. Colony Collapse Disorder is also a real threat. Like the early Colonists on Roanoke Island, the bees can abandon their homes for unknown reasons, leaving no trace or clue as to what happened. This, along with pollution, increased use of pesticides, destruction of natural areas and irresponsible mosquito spraying has decimated many of the Bay's nearly 10,000 hives. As if that isn't enough to scare the yellow jacket off one of nature's little miracles, African bees are expected to eventually take up residence in the Bay area as they continue their slow but steady trek north. Aggressive in temperament, the African bees are unlike their docile but busy cousins, and are capable of unprovoked attacks. Although not popular with people who are highly allergic to bee stings and must keep an EpiPen handy, the honey bee is far too important agriculturally to ignore the signs of its decline. With most pollinating done by the bumble, digger and sweat bees, the honey bee continues tirelessly in his roll of reliable pollen spreader. Not only is the honey bee busy spreading pollen throughout the farmer's crops, but it also is a source of one of our most delectable sweeteners as well as products from the honey comb such as candles, cosmetics, polish and lubricants. In days gone by honey was used as an antiseptic that effectively drew the poison out of an infected wound and was also used to calm a cough or coat a sore throat.

Bees, our most reliable pollinator, followed closely by bats -- our nocturnal pollinator -- are responsible for spreading pollen to over one-third of our all important commercial crops. Without bees, the farmer will be further challenged to successfully produce adequate harvests. This honey bee decimation is not confined to the Bay area, but is worldwide, so the causes and cures need to be addressed on a worldwide level to prevent catastrophic results. With heightened awareness and a combined effort we could have a long and promising future with nature's pollinator. The quiet hum of bees, a sure sign of summer, needs to be a sound familiar to all future generations.



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