Community service since 1849

Proud recent graduates of Jewish Family Services’ personal care aide program display their certifications after completing 46 hours of specialized training. The Richmond nonprofit has been caring for area residents for 170 years.

Photo by Jewish Family Services

www.fiftyplusrichmond.com
Not in our family

Back in the 1970s, a progressive TV sitcom poked fun at certain members of an older generation for their prejudices and beliefs, at the same time revealing a glimpse of the humanity that could sometimes shine through the tough, stained exterior of a bigot.

The family portrayed in All in the Family consisted of Archie Bunker, a man full of more bunk than one would have thought possible, his chesless but loveable wife Edith, their flighty daughter Gloria, and their radical son-in-law Michael (aka “Meathead”). It was a cast of stereotypes brought together to crush other stereotypes.

All in the Family was a phenomenon. It ran for nine seasons, and was literally at the top of the Nielsen ratings — the most-watched TV show in America — for five consecutive years.

The opinions expressed by Archie were decidedly backward. He was an uncouth bigot who relentlessly stereotyped women, gays, African Americans, Latinos, Jews, you name it. Yet, we loved to watch him, even though he couldn't comprehend the changes in attitudes and behaviors that were occurring in America in the 1960s and '70s. He was an embarrassment to his daughter, but he was still her Daddy. She loved him, and he still loved her (and yes, in a way, his son-in-law).

Archie helped us see how senseless and baseless racist, sexist and anti-Semitic views were, but we could laugh at them coming from a poor, uneducated, backward old white man, knowing that the world he represented was quickly changing and he was the one being left behind.

And yet, even as we tuned in each week to laugh with our family and friends at whatever outrageous opinions Archie would spout this time, we all knew that certain members of our own families or workplace shared some of Archie’s beliefs. We might even occasionally have thought to ourselves, “Gee, do I sometimes say or think that?”

In its over-the-top way, the show and its immense popularity generated a subtle pressure on people to change their attitudes, open their minds and see things from another perspective.

And perhaps most importantly, All in the Family helped us see that by laughing at others (and ourselves), we could more easily let go of opinions and attitudes that didn’t withstand scrutiny in today’s world.

My, how times have changed!

We no longer laugh at bigots, or even make allowances for bigoted behavior that may have taken place years ago at a time when standards were very different.

It’s one thing when the behavior rises to the level of abuse of others, or when the behavior has continued into the present day. Here, I’m thinking of the parade of Hollywood execs whose appalling treatment of starlets and others was so recently splashed across the papers almost daily.

But more recently, we have learned of people in high positions whose insensitive acts appear to have occurred long ago. And yet, they may not only be ostracized or criticized for it, but can lose their jobs, their reputations, their fortunes, their past awards and honors, and even their friends.

Certainly, past ill behavior raises a question about a person’s character, which is not some ephemeral thing, but rather should reflect a person’s core values.

Even so, don’t we also believe that people make poor decisions sometimes? And that they can change their attitudes and behavior, sincerely apologize for past insensitivity, learn from their mistakes and, at some point, do sufficient penance, or show evidence of a new heart, so that they deserve some type of forgiveness?

In individual cases we may decide a particular person or behavior does not deserve to be forgiven. But to close off the very possibility of forgiveness — what is called today zero-tolerance, even of past sins — seems too harsh to me.

Is that really a standard we can all live with? Especially when the list of behaviors now seen as irredeemable seems to grow by the day.

We can — and should — raise our standards and boost our expectations of our leaders over time. But as we do so, we need to remember we are all human, and that means we all have failings.

That, to me, was one of the chief takeaways from the All in the Family sitcom. Every character had failings galore, in one area or another. But even so, they all remained family.

Those were the days...
Celebrating 170 years of caring

By Glenda C. Booth

Every day, the telephone rings at the home of Richard, a Richmond widower (who asked that his real name not be used). Since his wife’s death several years ago, he’s had trouble coping, he said, and the daily call makes his day.

“Every morning I get to talk to people who actually care about how I am doing,” Richard said. “They make me feel like somebody.”

Those phone calls come from volunteers at Richmond’s Jewish Family Services (JFS), a nonprofit human services agency that started as the Ladies’ Hebrew Benevolent Association 170 years ago this year.

Among those volunteers is Irving Scherr, a retiree who’s been on JFS’s telephone reassurance team for 15 years. He checks in with older or isolated people to see, for example, if they’re out of bed and have had breakfast.

Scherr, married to his wife for 62 years, said he particularly enjoys calling “lonely widows, the suddenly single, to give them sunshine into their lives.”

Although he has never met many of the people on the other end of the line, he feels he knows them. “I bring a little joy and let them know we care,” Scherr said.

Meeting needs since 1849

With the motto “Transforming lives, Strengthening our community,” Jewish Family Services is a cadre of professional and volunteer caregivers who love caregiving.

Since 1849, it has helped, among others, Confederate soldiers, widows, orphans, refugees, transients, draft dodgers, the sick, the poor, the elderly, the disabled, the lonely, the unemployed, runaways, children, families — basically, anyone needing support.

The group provides an array of services — from adoptions to home health care to companionship — to people in the Richmond area of all ages.

“People ask, ‘What can you do?’” CEO Wendy Kreuter said. Her answer is, “What do you need?”

That in a nutshell is the philosophy of Jewish Family Services. With a staff of 150, “If we can’t do it, we can find a resource” who can, Kreuter said.

She added that their nurses, social workers, LPNs, RNs, home care aides and others “learn a lot as we go. We’ve changed with the times.”

The organization practices the Jewish tradition of tiklum olam (“repairing the world”) through acts of kindness and service. But its services are available to all, regardless of religious affiliation (70 percent of its clients are not Jewish).

Many social services, such as the YMCA and Catholic Charities, have their origin in churches, which fulfilled a need long before social services became a paid or degree profession.

Similarly, in 1849, women from Richmond’s Beth Ahabah synagouge, inspired by Rabbi Maximilian Michelbacher, formed the Ladies’ Hebrew Benevolent Association.

“To Jewish women, charity was more than a nice gesture. They considered it their duty as Jewish women to help the unfortu-
Want to quit? E-cigs beat patches, gums

By Matthew Perrone

A major new study provides the strongest evidence yet that vaping can help smokers quit cigarettes, with e-cigarettes proving nearly twice as effective as nicotine gums and patches.

The British research, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, could influence what doctors tell their patients and shape the debate in the U.S., where the Food and Drug Administration has come under pressure to more tightly regulate the burgeoning industry amid a surge in teenage vaping.

“We know that patients are asking about e-cigarettes and many doctors haven’t been sure what to say,” said Dr. Nancy Rigotti, a tobacco treatment specialist at Harvard Medical School who was not involved in the study. “I think they now have more evidence to endorse e-cigarettes.”

At the same time, Rigotti and other experts cautioned that no vaping products have been approved in the U.S. to help smokers quit.

Smoking is the No. 1 cause of preventable death worldwide, blamed for nearly 6 million deaths a year. Quitting is notoriously difficult, even with decades-old nicotine-aide and newer prescription drugs.

More than 5 percent of U.S. smokers try to quit each year, and only about 7 percent succeed, according to government figures.

Less harmful, more effective

Electronic cigarettes, which have been available in the U.S. since about 2007 and have grown into a $6.6 billion-a-year industry, are battery-powered devices that typically heat a flavored nicotine solution into an inhalable vapor.

Most experts agree the vapor is less harmful than traditional cigarette smoke since it doesn’t contain most of the cancer-causing byproducts of burning tobacco.

But there have been conflicting studies on whether e-cigarettes actually help smokers kick the habit. Last year, an influential panel of U.S. experts concluded there was only “limited evidence” of their effectiveness.

In the new study, researchers tracked nearly 900 middle-age smokers who were randomly assigned to receive either e-cigarettes or nicotine replacement products, including patches, gums and lozenges.

After one year, 18 percent of e-cigarette users were smoke-free, versus 9.9 percent of those using the other products.

“Anything which helps smokers to avoid heart disease and cancer and lung disease is a good thing, and e-cigarettes can do that,” said Peter Hajek, study co-author and an addiction specialist at Queen Mary University of London.

The study was more rigorous than previous ones, which largely surveyed smokers about e-cigarette use. Participants in this experiment underwent chemical breath testing.

Smokers in the e-cigarette group received a $26 starter kit, while those in the nicotine-replacement group received a three-month supply of the product of their choice, costing about $159. Participants were responsible for purchasing follow-up supplies.

“If you have a method of helping people with smoking cessation that is both more effective and less costly, that should be of great interest to anyone providing health services,” said Kenneth Warner, a retired University of Michigan public health professor who was not involved in the study.

Some caveats

Several factors may have boosted the results: All the participants were recruited from a government smoking-cessation program and were presumably motivated to quit. They also received four weeks of anti-smoking counseling.

The researchers didn’t test e-cigarettes against new drugs such as Pfizer’s Chantix, which has shown higher rates of success than older nicotine-based treatments.

Funding for the study came from the British government, which has embraced e-cigarettes as a potential tool to combat smoking through state-run health services.

Some of the authors have been paid consultants to makers of anti-smoking products.

There is virtually no research on the long-term effects of chemicals in e-cigarette vapor, some of which are toxic.

“We need more studies about their safety profile, and I don’t think anyone should be changing practice based on one study,” said Belinda Borrelli, a psychologist specializing in smoking cessation at Boston University.

The American Heart Association backed e-cigarettes in 2014 as a last resort to help smokers quit after trying counseling and approved products. The American Cancer Society took a similar position last year.

An editorial accompanying the study and co-written by Borrelli recommended e-cigarettes only after smokers have tried and failed to quit with FDA-approved products.

Borrelli also noted that after one year, 80 percent of the e-cigarette users in the study were still using the devices. Only nine percent of the participants in the other group were still using gums and other nicotine-replacement products.

Will regulation follow?

The FDA has largely taken a hands-off approach toward vaping. It has not scientifically reviewed any of the e-cigarettes on the market and has put off some key regulations until 2022.

FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb has said he doesn’t want to over-regulate an emerging industry that could provide a safer option for adult smokers.

The delay has come under intense criticism amid an explosion in teenage vaping, driven chiefly by devices like Juul, which resembles a flash drive. According to a government survey, teenage use surged 78 percent between 2017 and 2018.

— AP

Change Medicare Advantage plan by 3/31

Medicare Advantage enrollees get a new, second chance to find the right health coverage this year.

The government added another enrollment window that started Jan. 1 and lasts until March 31. It gives people with privately run versions of the federal Medicare program a chance to change plans or switch to regular Medicare.

Until now, Medicare Advantage customers who wanted to make a big switch outside the program’s annual fall sign-up period had to rely on a shorter, more limited window.

But finding better coverage is no simple task. Kaiser Family Foundation Medicare expert Tricia Neuman says people need to approach this new opportunity cautiously.

“In many areas there are more than a dozen plans available,” she said. “The choice can often be overwhelming.”

Here are some points to consider.

The rules

You can make one change during this new window and only if you’re already enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan.

You can switch to another Medicare Advantage plan or opt for original Medicare and then pick prescription drug coverage. This sign-up period replaces a shorter enrollment window that also started Jan. 1 and allowed Medicare Advantage customers to switch to original Medicare.

Any changes you make will start the first month after your plan gets your request, according to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Who might consider this

Anyone who dislikes their coverage or has had a change in care needs.

Medicare Advantage plans can include attractive options like low premiums, dental coverage or gym memberships. They also can change from year to year and limit the doctors covered in the plan’s network.

Enrollees might wind up with a plan that wasn’t as good as they thought when they signed up last fall. Others may have kept the same plan from the previous year and found out that it now excludes a favorite doctor.

See MEDICARE, page 6
When Ruth came, Mom's whole demeanor changed,” Clive said.

Ruth arrived, Mom could again do all the things she wanted to do because she had a new friend. Shopping, hair appointments…my mom is even teaching her to cook. She and Ruth are the best of friends.”

“She was on a downward slide. But when Ruth comes every day and helps her with bathing, housework and washing up. When Ruth came, Moni's whole demeanor changed,” Clive said.

“They gave me the whole environment, are clothed, fed, have the necessary medical attention, clean wholesome recreation and education within their capabilities.”

“The very old, like the very young, must be housed, clothed, fed, given medical attention, recreation, and often the care of nurses and attendants.”

“A history of service

Here are excerpts from old annual reports describing some of the services performed by volunteers from Richmond's Jewish Family Support Services over the years:

1921: “Our Association is looking after eight old men and women, as well as two boys at Covington, an incorrigible girl in a suitable institution, and also we had to place a mother in an asylum.”

“The question, which is confronting the U.S. at present and has since the end of the World War, is the one of Immigration — what to do with the hordes of poor and disheartened, who seek shelter under our gloriously free Stars and Stripes….It is hard to ignore their appeal in their hour of greatest need and distress.”

1940: “We look after orphans, half-orphans, children who have been deserted by their parents or who have been taken from them by the Juvenile Court….We must see to it that they have the proper environment, are clothed, fed, have the rights of volunteers for this program. Over the years of the program, JFS resettled more than 500 individuals.”
Medicare

From page 4

Compare everything

Medicare Advantage plans come with a maze of variables to consider. Don’t make a change for one reason — like keeping your favorite doctor — without considering other important factors.

Think about how the new coverage will affect your prescriptions. Consider how many local hospitals or cancer centers are included in the plan’s network in case you become sick. This is a decision you may have to live with until the next enrollment window arrives in October.

“People tend to look at premiums because premiums are easier to compare,” Neuman said. “There’s so many other factors that affect how good the coverage is.”

Confirm supplemental insurance

Enrolees who shift from Medicare Advantage to original Medicare may want supplemental coverage that picks up some of the costs original Medicare doesn’t cover.

But those plans have a big catch. In many states, insurers can consider your health when deciding whether to provide coverage.

Neuman said shoppers should apply for a supplemental plan first to see if they can get that coverage before dumping their previous plan.

Where to find help

The government operates a plan finder at www.medicare.gov that can help people compare options.

Insurance brokers also know how to guide customers through a search and what variables they should consider. But they may receive a commission for working with you.

For help from someone who doesn’t have a financial stake in your decision, contact the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program, VICAP at Senior Connections, (804) 343-3000.

— AP

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Apr. 3

UNDERSTANDING OBESITY EVENT

The Science Museum of Virginia welcomes Dr. Peter L. Goodman on Wednesday, April 3, from noon to 1 p.m. The gastroenterologist and former chief of medicine at Richmond Memorial Hospital will present “New Thoughts on the Problem of Obesity” at this free event. Bring your own lunch. The museum is located at 2500 West Broad St., Richmond. For more information, call (804) 864-1400 or visit https://smv.org/upcoming-events/lunch-break-science-april-3.
Q: My friend has bad kidneys and has to start dialysis. She said she also wants to get palliative care, but I told her that’s only for people who are dying! She doesn’t believe me; can you explain it to her?

A: It sounds like you are mistaking palliative care with hospice care, and you aren’t alone. Palliative care and hospice, or end-of-life, care are commonly thought to be the same.

It is true that palliative care and hospice are both considered comfort care. Both services can provide symptom relief and reduce stress. However, there are a few key differences between them. Hospice is designed for people who have six months or less to live. It’s important to note that a person receiving hospice services is no longer receiving treatment for their disease. Palliative care services, on the other hand, can be used at any stage of disease from diagnosis to cure. And palliative care does not replace treatment. Instead, it is offered together with medical treatments, such as dialysis in your friend’s case.

When your friend starts to receive palliative care, she will have a team of physicians, nurses, pharmacists and other specialists working with her. The palliative care team will also work with her other providers. They will make sure she receives the best possible care so that she can have the best quality of life. The palliative care team will work to help her better understand her disease and treatment options. They will offer emotional support for the stress she may be experiencing due to her disease. And they will discuss her goals for treatment and her desires regarding her quality of life.

In addition to these services, the palliative care team will work with your friend to provide relief of symptoms such as:

- Pain or discomfort
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Sleep problems
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Constipation
- Lack of appetite

Palliative care is a great option for anyone living with a serious illness who is also dealing with pain, stress and other symptoms that are a result of that disease.

Most insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid, will cover it. People with any of the following health conditions could benefit from palliative care:

- Alzheimer’s disease or dementia
- Cancer
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Congestive heart failure
- HIV/AIDS
- Kidney or liver disease
- Parkinson’s disease
- Stroke, and more

Palliative care may not always be suggested by a person’s primary care provider. If your friend is thinking about palliative care, she should let her doctor know. Her doctor can give her a referral, or she can visit www.getpalliativecare.org for a directory of providers.

Jessica Roller, R.N., is a fourth-year Pharm.D. student at VCU School of Pharmacy. She earned an associate of applied science in nursing from J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College and a bachelor of science in biochemistry from Virginia Commonwealth University.

**DR. RX**

By Jessica Roller

**MID-DAY MEDITATION AND BACH**

Experience the music of Johann Sebastian Bach with a heightened sense of awareness. A Chrysalis Institute instructor leads an introduction to meditation before a performance by a solo instrumentalist every Wednesday in March from 11:30 a.m. to noon at 1708 Gallery, 319 West Broad St., Richmond. This event is free; no prior experience with meditation or classical music necessary. For more information, visit bit.ly/meditationandbach.

**ONLINE GENEALOGY**

Registration opens on Saturday, March 30, at 10 a.m. for a free “Introduction to Online Genealogy” class happening at LaPrade Library on Saturday, April 13, from 2-3 p.m. Learn how to conduct genealogical research using the library’s free online tools, including Ancestry.com. The library is located at 9000 Hull Street Rd., North Chesterfield. For more information, call (804) 318-8988 or visit bit.ly/April13genealogy.
Health Shorts

Nearly half of us have cardiovascular disease

A new report estimates that nearly half of all U.S. adults have some form of heart or blood vessel disease — a medical milestone that’s mostly due to recent guidelines that expanded how many people have high blood pressure.

The American Heart Association said in its annual report that more than 121 million adults had cardiovascular disease in 2016. Taking out those with only high blood pressure leaves 24 million, or 9 percent of adults, who have other forms of disease, such as heart failure or clogged arteries.

Measuring the burden of diseases shows areas that need to improve, the heart association’s chief science and medical officer, Dr. Mariell Jessup, said in a statement.

Other highlights of the report:
— Heart and blood vessel disease is linked to 1 of every 3 deaths in the United States and kills more Americans than all forms of cancer and respiratory diseases like pneumonia combined.
— Certain groups have higher rates than others: 57 percent of black women and 60 percent of black males.
— Coronary heart disease, or clogged or hardened arteries, caused 43 percent of cardiovascular deaths in the U.S., followed by stroke (17 percent), high blood pressure (10 percent) and heart failure (9 percent).

New drug may protect brain cells in Alzheimer’s

One of the hallmark traits of Alzheimer’s disease, a debilitating disorder marked by memory deficits and general cognitive decline, is the accumulation in the brain of a protein called b-amyloid. These proteins form “plaques” and bind to unique proteins on the surface of brain cells called receptors, causing widespread cell death.

Now, UCLA researchers have discovered a drug that blocks b-amyloid plaques from attaching to brain cells, preventing the extensive cell death. The study was published in the journal Nature Chemistry.

Lin Jiang, Ph.D., assistant professor of neurology, working with David Eisenberg, a professor of chemistry and biochemistry and of biological chemistry at UCLA, first identified the plaque binding site of b-amyloid.

Jiang and his team then used computer software to assist them in searching for a drug “that could block the receptor like a shield, preventing b-amyloid from binding to and killing brain cells,” Jiang said.

In order to find molecular candidates to block the b-amyloid/brain cell interaction, Jiang and colleagues searched a library containing more than 32,000 molecules.

This list contained drugs that are approved for human use, are currently in clinical trial, or are naturally occurring. This meant that many characteristics of the drug candidates were already known and they were safe for human use.

From this list of molecules, one drug, ALI6, showed promising results in cell-based experiments.

Jiang and his team cultured mouse brain cells and exposed them to the toxic b-amyloid proteins, then treated some cells with ALI6 and compared levels of cell death between groups.

ALI6 treatment almost completely prevented the cell death caused by b-amyloid, suggesting that the drug could eventually be explored to treat Alzheimer’s disease. ALI6 is a promising candidate. Not only is it non-toxic but it can also move from the bloodstream to the brain, a critical trait for any drug aimed at treating central nervous system disorders such as Alzheimer’s disease.

Alzheimer’s disease is the sixth-leading cause of death in the United States, with an estimated 5.5 million people currently living with the disease.

The findings of this study would need to be confirmed in further tests in animals before human studies could begin.


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Q&A: Joints and weather; heartburn diet

Q: My friend swears that changes in the weather cause her joints to ache more than usual. Is this real or just a myth?
A: The belief that weather affects aches and pains in the joints is longstanding. But there is no convincing science to back that up.

The question has been studied extensively. While a definitive answer is impossible to provide — because it’s hard to prove a negative (prove that something does not exist) — researchers have been unable to make a strong case for a strong connection.

A recent study finds no connection between rainy weather and symptoms of back or joint pain. This conclusion was based on a staggering amount of data: 200 patients followed for three months, 11 million medical visits occurring on more than two million rainy days and nine million dry days.

Not only was there no clear pattern linking rainy days and more aches and pains, but there were slightly more visits on dry days.

An earlier Australian study found no link between back pain and rain, temperature, humidity or air pressure. This study collected data regarding features of the weather at the time of first symptoms, and compared it to the weather a week and a month before.

But a different study found that among 198 people followed for three months, knee pain increased modestly when temperature fell or barometric pressure rose.

The so-called weekend warriors had a 40 percent lower risk of death from heart disease than people who were inactive. The findings reinforce what previous research suggests: in terms of longevity, you may lower the odds of dying from heart disease by being inactive.

However, there are other advantages if you can find even a little time to exercise during the week.

More frequent exercise even in small doses can prevent joint stiffness. And it may be less risky in terms of injuries, since it’s easier to pull a muscle if you exercise only once a week.

Also, a consistent, daily exercise pattern may lower stress and is more likely to help with weight loss.

The new Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans make it easier to reach your weekly physical activity goal. The recommended weekly exercise time is the same as the previous guidelines — at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise per week.

But now all activity, even a few minutes of movement, counts toward that goal — not just 10-minute bouts of activity, as past guidelines recommended.

Throughout the day, move more and sit less. Work toward reducing the amount of time you spend sitting every day.

If you sit at a desk, get up and walk around at a brisk pace every hour. Keep some lightweight dumbbells or a kettlebell at your work station to do some quick resistance exercises.

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Body makes trade-off in fighting viruses

A Yale research team has revealed how cells in different parts of the human airway vary in their response to the common cold virus. Their finding could help solve the mystery of why some people exposed to the cold virus get ill while others don’t, said the researchers.

Rhinovirus is a leading cause of the common cold, asthma attacks and other respiratory illnesses. When the cold virus enters the nose, cells that line the airways, known as epithelial cells, respond and often clear the virus before it can replicate and trigger symptoms.

But in other cases, individuals exposed to the virus get either mildly or seriously ill. A team of researchers, led by Ellen Foxman, set out to determine why.

The research team used epithelial cells from healthy human donors. The cells were derived from either the nasal passages or the lungs.

They exposed both cell types, maintained under the same conditions in cell culture, to rhinovirus. To their surprise, the researchers observed a more robust antiviral response in the nasal cells.

They also found that both cell types generated an antiviral response and a defense response against oxidative stress — a form of cell damage induced by viruses and other inhaled irritants such as cigarette smoke or tree pollen.

Multiple threats can overwhelm

In additional experiments, the research team found evidence for a trade-off: The defense response against oxidative stress shut off antiviral defenses.

To probe this further, the team exposed nasal cells to oxidative stress in the form of cigarette smoke, and then to the cold virus, and found this time that the nasal cells were more susceptible to the virus.

Q & A  
From page 9

The most common cause of heartburn is called gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). It occurs when stomach acid backs up into the esophagus, the tube connecting the mouth and stomach, usually because the ring-like muscles that prevent backflow stop working properly.

In addition to heartburn, GERD may cause nausea, a sour taste in the mouth, difficulty swallowing, a sore throat, coughing, and tightness in the chest.

Typical foods that trigger GERD symptoms include spicy foods, citrus, tomato sauces and vinegar. Fatty and fried foods linger longer in the stomach. That may increase stomach pressure and force open the muscles that keep stomach acid out of the esophagus.

Other common heartburn triggers include chocolate, caffeine, onions, peppermint, carbonated drinks and alcohol. But the foods that bother people with acid reflux are different for everyone. That’s why it’s a good idea to keep a journal noting which foods trigger your symptoms.

You can still enjoy lean meats, fish, poultry, vegetables, legumes, fruits and whole grains. The trick is making them flavorful.

Eat vegetables raw. Tomato sauce may bother you, but a fresh tomato may not. Instead of vinegar or citrus dressing for your salads, consider a yogurt-based dressing.

Or make a pesto. Blend basil, pine nuts, Parmesan cheese and a dash of olive oil or water. Pesto goes great with pasta.

By Howard LeWine, M.D., an internist and assistant professor at Harvard Medical School. © 2019 President and Fellows of Harvard College. All rights reserved. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

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Protein powder can be useful supplement

By Matthew Kadey, M.D.

Among muscle men, protein powders have been held in high regard for several decades. But now, protein powders are being marketed to more than bodybuilders and frat boys, turning it into a multibillion-dollar industry.

The products are popular for a wide variety of reasons: Many users like that they are a convenient, dependable and portable source of protein to fit into busy lifestyles.

Athletic individuals believe they can improve muscle recovery and growth after workouts. And vegetarians might feel like their diets are lacking in this particular macronutrient otherwise.

The powders’ increase in popularity also coincides with the recent push towards eating higher protein diets to help spur weight loss. Satiating protein may help waylay hunger to keep overall calorie intake in check.

The basics

Protein powders are essentially made by isolating the protein in a food item such as milk or yellow split peas and then dehydrating it into a powder. Each serving of a protein powder generally provides at least 15 grams of protein; some have up to 30 per serving.

They’re typically mixed with water or other ingredients in blended smoothies, but the powders can also be stirred into items like oatmeal, yogurt and pancake batter.

So, do you need it? It’s recommended that at a minimum we get 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. That translates to about 51 grams of protein for a 140-pound woman. Certainly, this level can be achieved by eating protein-rich food.

But many nutrition experts suggest we’re better served by consuming more protein than this conservative level, and some people find that adding a scoop or two of protein powder to their daily menu is an insurance policy worth taking out to make sure they’re getting enough.

Diet should be analyzed on an individual basis to determine whether a protein powder is helpful to meet dietary needs or if it would simply contribute an extra expense. A dietitian can be a great resource to help with this decision.

New and improved

The good news is that a new generation of protein powders on the market has improved what is available, with consumers now finding more options that are less heavily sweetened and gritty tasting.

You can even now find whey protein sourced from grass-fed cows, and powders enriched with vitamins, antioxidants and probiotics.

The emergence of “complete” plant-based protein powders — meaning they contain all the necessary amino acids — has made it easier than ever for vegetarians and vegans to get what they need.

Just be sure to read product labels carefully so you understand what you’re buying, and be wary of fanciful marketing claims.

The bottom line is that while using a scoop of protein powder to boost your morning smoothie likely won’t hurt, these powders should be looked upon as supplements, not food.

You should still be getting most of your protein from foods like yogurt, beans and fish that provide a nutritional mix no powder can match.


Viruses

From page 10

bility to rhinovirus infection.”

The study, she said, shows a mechanistic link between environmental exposures and susceptibility to the common cold. It also may explain why smokers tend to be more susceptible to rhinovirus infection.

The researchers hope the finding will lead to the discovery of new strategies to combat respiratory viruses, which cause an estimated 500 million colds and two million hospitalizations in the United States per year.

A Wellness Update is a magazine devoted to up-to-the minute information on health issues from physicians, major hospitals and clinics, universities and health care agencies across the U.S. Online at www.awellnessupdate.com.

Tired? Four simple ways to boost energy

By Matthew Solan

When I’m dragging and feeling tired during the occasional low-energy day, my go-to elixir is an extra cup (or two or three) of black French press coffee. It gives my body and brain a needed jolt, but it may not help where I need it the most: my cells.

What we call “energy” is actually a molecule called adenosine triphosphate (ATP), produced by tiny cellular structures called mitochondria. ATP’s job is to store energy and then deliver that energy to cells in other parts of the body.

As we grow older, our body has fewer mitochondria. “If you feel you don’t have enough energy, it can be because your body has problems producing enough ATP and thus providing cells with enough energy,” said Anthony Komaroff, M.D., professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School.

You may not be able to overcome all aspects of age-related energy loss, but there are ways to help your body produce more ATP and replenish dwindling energy levels. The most common strategies revolve around three basic concepts: diet, exercise and sleep.

Eat small, frequent meals

Boost your ATP with fatty acids and protein from lean meats like chicken and turkey, fatty fish like salmon and tuna, and nuts.

However, while eating large amounts can feed your body more material for ATP, it also increases your risk for weight gain, which can lower energy levels. “The excess pounds mean your body has to work harder to move, so you use up more ATP,” Komaroff said.

When lack of energy is an issue, it’s better to eat small meals and snacks every few hours than three large meals a day, according to Komaroff.

“Your brain has very few energy reserves of its own and needs a steady supply of nutrients,” he said. “Also, large meals cause insulin levels to spike, which then drops your blood sugar rapidly, causing the sensation of fatigue.”

Drink enough water

If your body is short on fluids, one of the first signs is fatigue.

Although individual needs vary, the Institute of Medicine recommends men should aim for about 13 cups of fluids per day, and women about 12 cups.

Besides water and beverages like coffee, tea and juices, you can also get your fluids from liquid-heavy fruits and vegetables that are up to 90 percent water, such as cucumbers, zucchini, squash, strawberries, citrus fruit and melons.

Get plenty of sleep

Research suggests that healthy sleep can increase ATP levels. ATP levels surge in the initial hours of sleep, especially in key brain regions that are active during waking hours. Talk with your doctor if you have problems sleeping through the night.

Exercise regularly

Exercise can boost energy levels by raising energy-promoting neurotransmitters in the brain, such as dopamine, noradrenaline and serotonin, which is why you feel so good after a workout.

Exercise also makes muscles stronger and more efficient, so they need less energy and therefore conserve ATP. It doesn’t really matter what kind of exercise you do, but consistency is key.

Some research has suggested that as little as 20 minutes of low-to-moderate aerobic activity, three days a week, can help sedentary people feel more energized.

When to visit your doctor

You should see your doctor if you experience a prolonged bout of low energy, as it can be an early warning of a serious illness.

“Unusual fatigue is often the first major red flag that something is wrong,” Komaroff said. Lack of energy is a typical symptom for most major diseases, like heart disease, anemia, many types of cancer, and autoimmune diseases such as lupus and multiple sclerosis.

Fatigue also is a common sign of depression and anxiety. And fatigue is a side effect of some medications. © 2019 President and Fellows of Harvard College. All rights reserved. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Mar. 21

HEALTHY HABITS

The Alzheimer’s Association presents “Healthy Habits for Your Brain and Body” on Thursday, March 21, from 2-3 p.m. at Twin Hickory Area Library, 5003 Twin Hickory Rd., Glen Allen. Learn how to create a plan for healthy aging that includes the latest research on diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity and social engagement. For more information, contact the library at (804) 501-1920, ext. 5 or TwinHickoryEvents@henrico.lib.va.us.

If you can sit in a chair... you can get the benefits of walking.

Easy Exerciser is the motorized personal trainer that makes exercise convenient and safe.

The Easy Exerciser has been designed to provide passive leg exercise at any time of the day or night. You simply sit in a chair, place your feet on the footpads, flip a switch and OFF YOU GO! The rhythmic back and forth motion simulates the act of walking, increases circulation and engages your core muscles from your legs to your midsection.

It provides movement for the people who need it most. The special-designed footpads provide valuable acupressure for tired, aching feet. Once you’ve completed your “walk”, you can get out of your chair without the tingly feeling in your feet and legs that often leads to a fall. The unit is quiet, durable and can slide out of the way when not in use. It runs off a normal electrical outlet and there is even a two-speed adjustment switch so you can move at your most comfortable pace. Now almost anyone can get the benefits of walking without the danger of falling. If you are not completely satisfied with the Easy Exerciser, simply return it within 90 days for a refund of the product purchase price. Don’t spend another day without exercise, call now and get moving!

Easy Exerciser was $139
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Please mention code 110747 when ordering.

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The Shepherd’s Center of Richmond

The Shepherd’s Center of Richmond is a nonprofit service and education organization. Its mission is to encourage older adults to remain active and independent through lifelong learning and volunteer service to their peers.

Lifelong learning
spring programs begin
MARCH 25!

Celebrating our
35th Anniversary!

Open
University

MONDAYS, Mar. 25 - May 20,
at St. Luke Lutheran Church,
7757 Chippenham Parkway

THURSDAYS, Mar. 28 - May 23,
at First Presbyterian Church,
4602 Cary Street Road

9:45-10:45
Intermediate French
Great Epics of Indian Literature
Genealogy
Spanish - Light Conversation
Healthy Habits for Adults

11:00-12:00
Intermediate German
Stephen Sondheim’s Musicals
Opera
The Money Conversation
Landscape Design
Richmond Treasures
Celebration of John Marshall

12:30-1:15
Lunch Speakers

9:45-10:45
Intermediate German
Introduction to Latin
Anti-Semitism: A History
Intermediate Spanish
Humanism, Buddhism, Dickinson, and Inclusivity

11:00-12:00
The Joys of Reading Latin
A Musical Potpourri
Preventing a Fall
Women of the Bible
Politics and History
Medicine and Science

12:15-1:15
Low Intermediate Japanese
1:30-2:30
Beginning Russian II
Feldenkrais

12:30-1:15
Lunch Speakers

3/28 President Trump and the 116th Congress
Dan Palazzolo

4/4 DR. COPTR: The Flying Physician Who Kept His Promise to Tangier Island
Bill Lohmann

4/11 Silent Injustice: Casting Light on the Practice of Solitary Confinement in Virginia Prisons
Bill Farrar

4/25 The 2019 Virginia General Assembly: Policy and Politics
Jack Austin

5/2 What Does the Holocaust Tell Us Today?
Rena Berlin

5/9 Mental Health Reform in Virginia
The Hon. Creigh Deeds

5/16 Choose Kindness; Change the World
Virginia “Gini” Bonnell

5/23 The President as Leader: Attributes and Skills of Great and Near-Great U.S. Presidents
Tom Morris

See the complete schedule on our website.
TSCOR.org
Questions?
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A FREE lecture series.
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Lunch - bring a sandwich. Beverages and desserts provided.

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Lunch Speakers

Servant-First Leadership
The Hon. William C. Mims, Virginia Supreme Court Justice
3/27

DR. COPTR: The Flying Physician Who Kept His Promise to Tangier Island
Bill Lohmann, columnist, Richmond Times-Dispatch
4/3

Reseaching Richmond’s Historic Storms
John Boyer, meteorologist, Richmond Times-Dispatch
4/10

The Red Cross’s Role in the Community
James Hatcher, CEO, Virginia Region, American Red Cross
4/17
What’s your core, and why strengthen it?

By Lauren Elson, M.D.

When most people think about core strength, they think about an abdominal six-pack. While it looks good, this toned outer layer of abdominal musculature is not the same as a strong core.

What is your “core” and why is core strength so important?

The core is a group of muscles that stabilizes and controls the pelvis and spine (and therefore influences the legs and upper body).

Core strength is less about power and more about the subtleties of being able to maintain the body in ideal postures — to unload the joints and promote ease of movement.

For the average person, this helps them maintain the ability to get on and off the floor to play with their children or grandchildren, stand up from a chair, sit comfortably at a desk, or vacuum and rake the floor to play with their children or grandchildren without pain.

For athletes, it promotes more efficient movement, therefore preventing injury and improving performance. Having a strong or stable core can often prevent overuse injuries, and can help boost resiliency and ease of recovery from acute injury.

The core also includes the pelvic floor musculature, and maintaining core stability can help treat and prevent certain types of incontinence.

Problems with a weak core

As we age, we develop degenerative changes, very often in the spine. The structures of the bones and cartilage are subject to wear and tear.

Often, we are able to completely control and eliminate symptoms with the appropriate core exercises. Having strong and stable postural muscles helps suspend the bones and other structures, allowing them to move better.

Scoliosis, a curving or rotation of the spine, can also often be controlled with the correct postural exercises.

Having an imbalanced core can lead to problems up and down the body. Knee pain is often caused by insufficient pelvic stabilization. Some runners develop neck and back pain when running because the “shock absorbers” in their core could use some work.

How to improve your core

A good core program relies less on mindless repetition of exercise and focuses more on awareness. People with a strong or stable core can often control problems up and down the body. Knee pain is often caused by insufficient pelvic stabilization.

Scoliosis, a curving or rotation of the spine, can also often be controlled with the correct postural exercises.

Correct postural exercises.

Daily practice of core engagement can lead to healthier movement patterns that allow for increased mobility and independence throughout the course of our lives.

While building the core starts with awareness and control, athletes can further challenge their stability with more complex movements that can be guided by athletic trainers and other fitness specialists.

Physical therapists are excellent resources, as they can provide one-on-one instruction and find a method that works — for any person with any background at any ability level.

It sometimes takes patience for people to “find” their core, but once they do, it can be engaged and activated during any activity — including walking, driving, and sitting.

By Lauren Elson, M.D.
By America’s Test Kitchen

With its juicy oranges, tender chicken and a crunchy topping, Chinese chicken salad offers an enticing variety of tastes and textures.

But many versions seem to have lost their way, weighed down with gloppy sauces, lackluster chicken, sugary canned orange segments and watery greens.

We saw the potential to recast this salad in a healthier role by incorporating wholesome ingredients. To start, we traded canned oranges for fresh oranges rich in vitamin C and fiber.

We cut out segments to top our salad, and used the remaining juice as the basis for a bright vinaigrette, which we enlivened with fresh ginger, a pop of Asian chile-garlic sauce and just a touch of honey for sweetness.

We used some of this flavorful liquid to simmer our chicken breasts, then we shredded the meat and returned it to the skillet and let sit for 10 minutes.

For the salad’s base, we replaced the usual lettuce with nutrient-packed napa cabbage, red bell peppers, cilantro and scallions.

For crunch, we passed on sodium-laden fried chow mein noodles and added a much healthier handful of unsalted, dry-roasted peanuts.

Cut away peel and pith from oranges. Holding fruit over large bowl, use paring knife to slice between membranes to release segments; transfer segments to second bowl and set aside.

Squeeze juice from membrane into first bowl (juice should measure 6 tablespoons). Whisk vinegar, soy sauce, ginger, chile-garlic sauce, and honey into orange juice in large bowl. Transfer 1/2 cup orange juice mixture to 12-inch skillet.

Whisking constantly, slowly drizzle canola oil and sesame oil into remaining orange mixture in bowl; set aside.

Bring orange juice mixture in skillet to boil over medium-high heat. Add chicken, reduce heat to medium-low, cover and simmer 10 to 15 minutes, flipping halfway through cooking.

Transfer chicken to plate and let cool slightly. Using 2 forks, shred chicken into bite-size pieces. Off heat, return shredded chicken and any accumulated juices into skillet and let sit for 10 minutes.

Add cabbage, bell peppers, cilantro and scallions to vinaigrette in bowl and toss to combine. Transfer to serving platter and top with shredded chicken, orange segments and peanuts. Serve.

Nutrition information per serving: 326 calories; 150 calories from fat; 17 g. fat (2 g. saturated; 0 g. trans fats); 55 mg. cholesterol; 383 mg. sodium; 21 g. carbohydrate; 5 g. fiber; 14 g. sugar; 23 g. protein.

For more recipes, cooking tips and ingredient and product reviews, visit americastestkitchen.com.
There is much confusion about when to take herbal supplements, vitamins and medications. Do you take them on an empty stomach or with food? No matter what you take, you should be drinking a full glass of water to make sure the pill doesn’t linger in your esophagus and cause irritation.

When a dietary supplement, enzyme or medication states the directive to “take with food,” it usually means to take while you’re eating, or a few minutes beforehand. But since food stays in your gastrointestinal tract for a little while, it would be fine to take the pill right after you eat, as well.

Medications to take with food

**Antacids:** These help with heartburn or reflux. They should always be taken with food so that they can neutralize the acid that is secreted while you’re eating.

**Amoxicillin:** This is the most popular antibiotic, especially for children. I recommend it be given to toddlers and teens with food in order to reduce indigestion, nausea and vomiting.

**Aspirin and Ibuprofen:** Ideally these are taken with food.

**Corticosteroids:** These are used for pain, allergic reactions, rashes and overactive immune systems. Some examples include prednisone, hydrocortisone and dexamethasone. These should always be taken with food or milk.

**Enzyme supplements or medications:** Some people can’t digest food normally, so they take enzyme supplements, which break down the starch, fat and protein in a meal. Take these with meals. If a medication (e.g., Creon) is required to restore pancreatic function, it must be taken with meals.

**Metformin:** Taken for diabetes, this medication is best taken around meal time to reduce blood sugar levels after eating.

Supplements to take with food

**Ashwagandha:** This popular stress reducer should be thought of as food because it’s an herb. All herbs should be taken with a snack or a meal in order to amplify the benefits and reduce nausea.

**CoQ10:** Some people take this powerful antioxidant for cellular energy production to support their heart, pancreas, liver and brain. CoQ10 (ubiquinone) should be taken with food or a fatty meal to speed absorption.

**Fish Oil:** Some people take fish oil to help with cholesterol, triglycerides, depression and blood joint health. Taking fish oil supplements (EPA, DHA or both) with food or fatty meals is ideal because it boosts the absorption.

**Magnesium:** Some people take magnesium for depression, regularity, reduction of leg cramps and blood pressure support. Like most minerals, taking magnesium with a snack can minimize diarrhea and stomach discomfort.

**Multivitamins or prenatal vitamins:** Because there are so many constituents in these supplements, it’s best to take them with food in order to minimize stomach upset and nausea.

**Selenium:** This mineral is taken for thyroid inflammation, bone health, prostate support and immune support. It’s ideally taken with food.

**Vitamin D:** You can take this without regard to meals, according to the newest research. However, most of the older scientific literature says to take it with food since it’s fat-soluble.

This information is opinion only. It is not intended to treat, cure or diagnose your condition. Consult with your doctor before using any new drug or supplement.

Suzy Cohen is a registered pharmacist and the author of *The 24-Hour Pharmacists* and *Real Solutions from Head to Toe*. To contact her, visit www.SuzyCohen.com.
Senior Connections extends best wishes to all for a successful, happy and fulfilling year in 2019, which is well underway with numerous opportunities and challenges. We appreciate the tremendous support we receive from program participants, community partners, funders, contributors and supporters.

As we embrace 2019, we reflect on our rich history and plans for the future. We touch the lives of more than 24,000 individuals each year in important ways, and provide critical services to approximately 4,000 older adults and caregivers annually.

As in the past, we have received another “clean audit” without findings or recommendations for the period of October 2017 to September 2018. We have talented staff and volunteers who eagerly serve and support the needs of older adults and caregivers in communities throughout the region. We are extremely pleased to have numerous successful collaborations with community partners.

In the coming months, we look forward to many challenges and opportunities. These include:

- Senior Law Days for Legal Documents (Wills, Powers of Attorney, Advance Care Plans)
- Input Sessions for a New Four-Year Plan for Services (Home and Community Services for Older Adults and Caregivers)
- Open House at Senior Connections on Tuesday, May 21 (10 a.m. to noon)
- Five Year Capital Campaign for the Building at 24 East Cary Street, Richmond (Safe Environment, Work Efficiency, Accessibility, Appearance and Visibility)
- In April each year, time is set aside to recognize the special contributions of volunteers. This year, we are using the theme “Celebrate Service.” The value of volunteers for Senior Connections is priceless, and we celebrate them year-round.

You will see reflections about volunteer service in many of the articles in our newsletters and other publications. Thank you for joining us as we celebrate and thank the many volunteers who give generously of their time, talent and expertise.

During 2019, we will give considerable attention to continuing to “transform” our very popular newsletter from its long-time name, Mature Life, to its new one: Engage at Any Age. This is part of our effort to take advantage of the wide distribution of Fifty Plus by including our newsletter every other month inside that monthly publication.

Those who have been on our mailing list for Mature Life are being mailed this edition of Engage at Any Age. This will, however, be the last copy you will receive in the mail.

Going forward, to read our newsletter please pick up Fifty Plus at any of its more than 300 free distribution sites throughout Greater Richmond, look for a copy of this newsletter distributed locally at Friendship Cafés and other Senior Connections locations, or read it on our website at senior-connections-va.org.

Please share your comments and suggestions about these changes with us by calling Penny Jordan at 804-343-3046 or emailing her at pjordan@youraaa.org. Thank you for your support and interest.

Sincerely,
Thelma Bland Watson, Executive Director

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Companies are starting to realize the value of mature workers, and see their eagerness to continue working. Given that, many companies are hiring older workers for a variety of innovative programs.

According to the AARP article, workers 65 or older account for the net increase in employment that has taken place in the United States since 2000. That means about 17 million jobs are going to older workers.

Senior Connections’ Senior Employment Program helps seniors prepare for today’s job market by providing one-on-one support with Employment Specialists. Our employment specialists identify resources, provide training, and help find job leads in order to assist senior job seekers gain employment.

Jobseekers 55 and older no longer have to wonder where to start. They can simply connect with Senior Connections today!
By Shana S. Beverly, Volunteer Program Coordinator

Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging is supported by community volunteers who make our mission of "empowering seniors to live with dignity and choice" possible. We will never be able to sufficiently thank our 375 volunteers who contributed 42,057.19 hours of service to our community this past year.

We do understand how invaluable our volunteers are and hope they know just how important they are to our success. Let us tell you how Senior Connections’ volunteers help support our mission.

Compassionate Care Connection

Compassionate Care Connection volunteers assist older adults who are not able to afford necessary brand-name prescription medications. These volunteers help older adults apply for Manufacturer-Sponsored Patient Assistance Programs, referred to as PAPs.

If the Compassionate Care Connection volunteer is successful, program participants may receive their needed medications free of charge. Some PAPs are the last resort for the program participant. Older adults who have received help are so grateful!

VICAP Counselors

The Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) is supported by volunteers we call VICAP Counselors. Our VICAP Counselors spend thousands of hours counseling older adults about Medicare.

VICAP Counselors are able to dispel the fears and anxieties of Medicare beneficiaries and their families. By doing so, they enable older adults and their families to make informed decisions regarding their Medicare insurance coverage.

Our VICAP Volunteer Data Entry Specialists support the program by capturing the total amount of hours donated by VICAP Counselors, and submitting the information to a national database. As a result, we are able to evaluate the program and see how much time we spend counseling older adults in the community.

TeleBridges Program

TeleBridges program participants receive regular phone calls from our TeleBridges Volunteers, who check in with participants two to five times a week. TeleBridges Volunteers offer a listening ear and encouraging word, helping older adults feel comforted and safe.

The phone calls provide program participants with a sense of community that many no longer feel due to having lost family and friends. The calls also serve as a check-in to make sure the participant is doing okay.

TeleBridges Volunteers also send personalized greeting cards to program participants for holidays, birthdays, or just to let them know they are thought about.

Volunteer Money Management

The Volunteer Money Management program provides participants with help managing their finances. Money Management Volunteers visit program participants at their home each month and help them with writing checks and preparing their bills for payment.

Some participants, with volunteer support, are able to open and maintain a savings account. Program participants have said they experience a sense of security and safety when their trusted volunteer helps them with money management.

Friendship Cafés

Senior Connections sponsors 20 Friendship Cafés throughout the Greater Richmond area, and we rely on volunteer support to administer the program.

Friendship Café Volunteers assist café managers with food service and activities. They also greet and welcome program participants to the café. Their support is invaluable and allows Senior Connections to offer more activities for program participants.

Last year, our Deep Run Friendship Café had a visit from the Foreign Service Institute. Twenty-six diplomats volunteered and interacted with program participants by sharing stories and listening to program participants’ life experiences.

Additionally, for the sixth consecutive year, Branch Out college students volunteered for a week during their spring break. They spent the week interacting with the program participants at the Friendship Cafés, and developed meaningful relationships we hope will continue.

Office Volunteers

Our Office Administration Volunteers support our efforts in the Senior Connections office. They faithfully volunteer each week by preparing materials to take to presentations, transcribing phone messages, filing, organizing and providing other valuable program support. Their support allows us to extend our program to more community members.

RSVP Program

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program, or RSVP, is one of the largest volunteer networks in the nation for volunteers who are age 55 and older. RSVP is funded by the Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS).

RSVP volunteers serve at different types of organizations, such as hospitals, food banks and thrift stores. Some of the benefits available to RSVP volunteers include invitations to recognition events, mileage reimbursement, and additional insurance for accidents and injuries that may occur during the course of volunteering.

Foster Grandparents

Foster Grandparents are volunteers age 55 and older who serve as role models and mentors to children in their communities with exceptional needs. The Foster Grandparent program is funded by the Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS).

Foster Grandparents serve at nonprofit child development centers that help children learn to read, and provide one-on-one tutoring, care for premature infants or children with disabilities, and help for children who have been abused or neglected.

The hours of service donated by the volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors and Advisory Council represents time spent developing programs, establishing relationships with community partners, helping with fundraising goals and much more. Each member volunteer many hours each year in order to ensure Seniors Connections’ success.

We want our Senior Connections volunteers to know that we cherish them and are grateful for the time they spend helping us serve older adults and persons with disabilities in our community.

By Shana S. Beverly, Volunteer Program Coordinator

When people volunteer, it makes lives better. And it’s not just the recipient whose life is improved. The person who volunteers also experiences a better quality of life.

How do we measure the impact a volunteer has – both on their own life and on the lives of the people they serve? It’s pretty easy to count the total number of hours volunteered. It’s not so easy to calculate the impact. How do those hours make a difference?

TeleBridges is a Telephone Reassurance program at Senior Connections. The program provides older adults, who may be isolated and alone, a connection to the community through weekly phone calls.

Volunteers call program participants to check in on them and to give them a sense of belonging. Stephanie, a new TeleBridges volunteer, expressed her excitement recently in an email to me:

“I’m so excited! The entire time you and I were talking during orientation and training, I kept thinking about my grandfather and how this program would have been so awesome for him in his last days. I’m driven in large part to help seniors because of my love for my grandparents, who I no longer have with me.”

Shortly after receiving her new assignment, Stephanie wrote to me again. “It was exciting to get your email! When I saw the client’s last name, I thought to myself, ‘Oh! My granddaddy’s last name was the same.’ Then I opened the link to get the remaining information and saw the program participant’s birthday, and it was February 8, which also happens to be the grandaddy’s birthday. I realized that I have a connection to JB through my similarities to his grandmother.”

Stephanie has since shared this connection with Karen, who is the office specialist. “With Stephanie, it was even more special because she felt a connection to JB because of his similarities to her grandfather. This is how I replied to Stephanie: ‘Oh, Stephanie, I’m tearing up! I just shared this with Karen who is here with me in the office today and has volunteered with TeleBridges since 2005. Karen is tearing up, too!’

“She and I have both had the privilege of working with JB. JB was a volunteer caregiver for a former TeleBridges client who was one of his neighbors. And now he is in a place where he needs a friendly call. We appreciate all that he did to provide assistance to his neighbor when he was needed. And we are both glad he has been assigned to you, because we know he will be working with someone who is caring and kind.”

And as I thought about this connection, I remembered Bill Withers’ quote, “We all need somebody to lean on.”
The Benefits of Volunteering

By Mary France, CNCS Program Manager — Foster Grandparents & Retired Senior Volunteer Program

Research has revealed that volunteering leads to better physical and mental health for those who volunteer. At Senior Connections, we know this is true because of the experience of five older adults who volunteer in the Senior Connections Foster Grandparent Program, a program funded by the Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS).

Foster Grandparent Volunteers mentor young children in nonprofit child development centers. These volunteers have learned that they also benefit from helping others.

The following examples demonstrate how volunteering has improved the quality of their lives.

**Volunteering increases your social and relationship skills.**

Many older adults lose their sense of community when they lose family and friends as they age. In fact, social isolation in later life is a growing epidemic in the United States.

Volunteering helps older adults feel connected to the world and is an excellent prescription for fighting loneliness. Older adults are able to establish new relationships that are often meaningful and rewarding.

Edwina Van Zandt, 65, says volunteering has improved the quality of her life. "It is not good to sit home. Volunteering gives me the opportunity to socialize with teachers and children, and I enjoy feeling like a part of a community."

Joanne Pleasants, 65, explains her volunteer experience by saying, "Volunteering gets me out of the house, and I feel better when I help someone else."

**Volunteering is good for your mind and body.**

Performing volunteer work helps older adults increase their activity, especially if they are not active otherwise. In addition, volunteering helps reduce stress and symptoms of depression, while increasing self-confidence and providing a sense of purpose.

Volunteering helps Lillie Welch, 73, to be more physically active — and her cognitive functioning has improved. "Volunteering has improved my memory, increased my ability to spell words, and helped me communicate better with others."

Foster Grandparent Shirley Brown, 74, says, "Volunteering helps me not think about my aches and pains."

**Volunteering brings fun and fulfillment to your life.**

Volunteering is a fun and easy way to explore your interests and passions. It also provides you with renewed creativity and motivation.

Rosalyn Faines, 66, says, "Volunteering has given me a synergy for life, an emotional connection to others, and has restored laughter into my life."

Brown says, "Working with babies brings me so much joy," and Pleasants adds, "Working with children keeps me laughing."

If you are an older adult, consider volunteering somewhere. You may find that the individuals you are helping are not the only ones benefiting from your service.

How Serving Your Community Can Improve Your Quality of Life

By Lee Owens

It could be said that one of the keys to improving one’s quality of life is to take the opportunity to enhance the lives of others in the community through volunteering.

This has indeed been the experience of five volunteers who are participants in the Senior Connections Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) — a program funded by the Corporation for National Community Service.

RSVP volunteers generously donate their time by volunteering at various organizations throughout the community. By doing so, they enable many members of their community to live fuller, happier lives.

One of the benefits that RSVP volunteers receive is the knowledge that they are helping others in their community by providing for their needs and teaching them practical life skills.

This has been the case for Raymond Turner, 78, who volunteers with the Senior Connections Money Management Program. Turner explains that he finds satisfaction in using his money management skills to help others save money, curtail unnecessary expenses and safeguard against fraud.

This has also been the experience for Kathy Myers, 62, who volunteers for Mercy Mall. Myers helps by stocking the Mercy Mall boutique. She enjoys helping clients shop for needed items such as food, clothing and furniture.

Some RSVP volunteers feel that volunteering enables them to gain more empathy for others. This has been the experience of Bettie Walker, 74, who serves as an “I’m Okay” monitor for the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA).

She visits residents in order to make sure that they are safe and well. Walker says that volunteering in this capacity has given her a greater empathy for seniors and the challenges that aging individuals face.

Another benefit derived from volunteering is the opportunity to meet new people and make lasting friendships. Dorothy Hatcher, 74, also volunteers for RRHA. She states that she enjoys meeting people with many different backgrounds and personalities.

Sharing this sentiment is Carol Shepherd, 76, an RSVP participant who has volunteered at Bon Secours Memorial Regional Medical Center for over a decade. She states, “I’m not a morning person, but the people with whom I volunteer on Monday morning make it worth getting up early.”

Shepherd added that she has made many friends during the course of her volunteering tenure and that this has greatly improved her outlook on life.

All of these individuals have said, in one way or another, that their lives are positively affected because of helping others.
Dream Catching in My Seventies

By Carole Olsen

Now that I'm retired, my husband tells me that if my job is to have fun -- and I do a very good job at it. By no means did this attitude happen overnight. It took taking risks and going outside my comfort zone to attain this.

I have found that retirement is like a full-time job, but instead of a paycheck, you get rewards of fulfilling your dreams and living life to its fullest if you desire it.

By my late fifties, I was at a crossroads in my life. I started to realize that after all these years married to my husband I was scared to venture out on my own; my life was limited, and having friends scared me. "Either I change or I die," kept going through my mind. It was by far the lowest part of my life.

One sunny day, in an attempt to be relieved from my anxiety, my husband, Eric, and I ventured to the Blue Ridge Parkway. We hiked a trail near Humpback Rocks.

It was just a couple of miles, but this was the first time in a few years where I felt connected to anything spiritual. The air of silence was so refreshing to my racing mind; the nature surrounding me pacified my aching soul.

I knew this must be the way to heal. I had voiced this to Eric, who is a golfer and not much of a hiker. So here was where I had to leave my comfort zone and literally branch out on my own. But where do I start?

I found a computer site, Meetup.com. I told the Meetup people that I was interested in hiking near the Richmond, Virginia area, and their wise guru spit out hiking groups that I could join.

With a click of a button I joined a group, and immediately signed up for a five-mile hike in Shenandoah National Park. To be more specific, the hike was to venture up to the Rapidan Hoover Retreat Compound. This retreat cabin complex housed President Hoover and the First Lady when they needed a break from the White House. Hoover would fly fish in the Rapidan River. Mrs. Hoover pursued her endeavors with organizing the Girl Scouts of America. Altogether, it sounded like a very interesting first hike.

It was very nerve-racking experience for socially awkward me to meet this new group of people to hike with. They all were at least ten years younger than myself and seemed to be experienced trekkers.

We started our hike slowly over a couple of little creeks which led up to the Hoover's retreat. I really enjoyed the tour of the complex, but was nervous about keeping up with everyone after the tour.

It was a struggle at first, but I managed to get into the rhythm of it; then it went through my mind that I was really doing this and felt a part of it. I remember coming down the mountain after two miles, onto a wide grassy path where trees arched overhead, giving it almost an arbor effect.

This was a sign of a new beginning. I had made it to the other side of the mountain and a new way of life.

I have been actively hiking for several years since that day. I have covered thousands of miles throughout the U.S. and other countries, wearing out many pairs of hiking boots. I even backpack now, comfortably carrying a 25-lb. pack on my 4'11" 115-lb. frame, venturing out to sleep under the stars with the comradery of fellow backpackers.

I keep on thanking the God of the Universe for giving me legs to hike with; putting one foot in front of the other, bringing me to places I never dreamed I would see, not to mention the great hikes along the James River right here in Richmond.

I hiked the Great Smokies a few years ago for my 67th birthday. With a group, I summited, 6,594-foot Mt. Le Conte. It was a challenging hike, sometimes walking on rocky ledges and holding onto a safety cord so I didn't fall thousands of feet below.

The girl who couldn't walk to the top of the bleachers in high school for fear of falling was now dashing on ridges and depending on a wire bolted into a rock to keep her alive. Could this really be me?

I plan on doing this for as long as I can. Then I'll have to go back to the drawing table and see what else is in store for me. My mantra is, "A day of waking up (alive) is an opportunity to go through my fears and live out my dreams."

I hope this article has helped you see that anything is possible if you want it, and it is not as hard as you think. Just have a positive mind and show up.

Your dreams may not be like mine, but may be walking in a park, joining a theatre group or book club -- whatever goes through your mind and dares you to follow its path.

You may contact me at colsen954@gmail.com if you need a hand to hold for support, or some direction to pursue your passion. I would be happy to oblige.

Carole Olsen is a published author who has written articles for local publications. She resides in Mechanicsville, Virginia with her husband, Eric, and dog, Zoey.
Calendar of Events

There are many Caregiver Support Groups in the Greater Richmond Area. For a full listing of support groups, please visit the Alzheimer’s Association – Richmond Chapter website.

Diabetes Self-Management Workshop
February 28 – April 4
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
My Sleep Clinic
208 E Brookland Park Blvd.
Richmond VA 23222
March 1 – April 5
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Powhatan County Health Department
3908 Old Buckingham Road
Powhatan, VA 23139
The Live Well, Virginia Diabetes Self-Management Program was specifically developed for people living with diabetes. It includes many topics such as physical activity and exercise, dealing with difficult emotions, with monitoring blood sugar, skin and foot care, sick days, preventing complications, nutrition and other diabetes-specific topics. The companion book, Living a Healthy Life With Chronic Conditions, accompanies and supplements the material presented in the workshop. Sponsored by Senior Connections. For more information and to register, contact Kathy Brown at kbrown@youraaa.org or 804-343-3004.

Matter of Balance Workshop
March 4 through March 29
1 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Henrico Doctor’s Hospital
7607 Forest Avenue
Richmond, VA 23229
Cost: Free, registration required

A Matter of Balance is an award-winning program designed to reduce the fear of falling and encourage activity. Participants learn to view falls and fear of falling as controllable, set realistic goals to increase activity, change their environment to reduce fall risk factors, and exercise to increase strength and balance. Sponsored by Senior Connections. For more information and to register, contact Kathy Brown at kbrown@youraaa.org or 804-343-3004.

Leading Women of Richmond, Part 1
Wednesday, March 6
11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Huguenot Community Center
7945 Forest Hill Avenue
Building #26
Richmond, VA
Contact: 804-646-1082 – RSVP required
Sponsored by the City of Richmond, Office on Aging & Persons with Disabilities in association with the Valentine Museum.

Leading Women of Richmond, Part 2
Wednesday, March 13
11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Huguenot Community Center
7945 Forest Hill Avenue
Building #26
Richmond, VA
Contact: 804-646-1082 – RSVP required
Sponsored by the City of Richmond, Office on Aging & Persons with Disabilities in association with the Valentine Museum.

Kinship Connection Support Group
Thursday, March 21
4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Chesterfield Community Development Building Multi Purpose Room
9800 Government Center Parkway
Chesterfield, VA 23832
Contact: 804-748-7878
Cost: Free – child care provided with pre-registration

Kinship/Grandparent Connection is a program of the Senior Advocate’s office that offers two monthly support groups and resources for grandparents and other kin who are raising a child.

Our support group is non-threatening and non-judgmental. We offer complete confidentiality and a safe place to come and talk, cry or just listen. Come and share your experiences and concerns. The program is free and open to any grandparent (or other relative raising a child) in the area.

Healthy Habits for Adults
March 25
9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
St. Luke Lutheran Church Open University
7757 Chippenham Parkway
Richmond, VA 23225
Cost: Free

March 26 and April 25
11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Chesterfield Baptist Church
16520 Hull Street Rd
Moseley, VA 23129
Cost: Free
Participants enjoy a delicious nutritious snack they can make at home, and learn how to play fun games that get everyone moving at their own pace. Practical tips on healthy eating and physical activity will be presented, along with information about the U.S. obesity epidemic and the chronic illnesses linked to overweight and obesity. Sponsored by Senior Connections. For more information, contact Kathy Brown at kbrown@youraaa.org or (804) 343-3004.

Powhatan People
Wednesday, March 27, 2019
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Huguenot Community Center
7945 Forest Hill Avenue
Building #26
Richmond, VA
Contact: 804-646-1082 – RSVP required
Sponsored by the City of Richmond, Office on Aging & Persons with Disabilities in association with the Valentine Museum.

Chesterfield Council on Aging
Thursday, March 28, 2019
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Lucy Corr Village, Mast Auditorium
6800 Lucy Corr Blvd.
Chesterfield, VA 23832
Contact: 804-768-7878
Cost: Free and open to the public

The Chesterfield Council on Aging seeks to enhance the quality of life for older adults and adults with disabilities through education, advocacy and community service. Meetings include a speaker on topics relevant to older adults, as well as reports from Council committees and activities.

A note to our readers

Senior Connections’ longtime quarterly newsletter (formerly called Mature Life) used to be mailed upon request. In order to expand our readership and spread information more widely, our newsletter is being transformed into a bimonthly newsletter called Engage at Any Age. It will be appearing in Fifty Plus from now on.

Fifty Plus is a free publication that you can pick up every month at any Kroger’s or Wawa’s, as well as at public libraries, senior and recreation centers, government offices and dozens of other locations throughout Greater Richmond. You will also find copies at your local Senior Connections’ Friendship Café and other government offices. This edition of Engage at Any Age is also being mailed to our long-time mailing list, but it will be the last issue so mailed. Please look inside Fifty Plus for future newsletters.

Let us know what you think of our changes by calling Penny Jordan at (804) 343-3046 or emailing her at pjordan@youraaa.org.
Senior Connections’ Nutrition and Wellness Program

A Village Approach to Reducing Hunger, Social Isolation and Chronic Conditions

By Missi Boyer, Nutrition and Wellness Program Director

The Nutrition and Wellness Program of Senior Connections serves more than 1,200 older adults a week through the Home Delivered Meals Program, Friendship Café Program and Health and Wellness Program. We provide 2,400 meals each week on average.

Our Friendship Cafés also offer social activities, which help with social engagement for older adults who experience social isolation. In addition, we offer several health and wellness classes that make a difference in the lives of the older adults who participate in them.

To make this happen, we rely on many community partners who share our commitment to serving older adults.

The Home Delivered Meals (HDM) Program serves older adults who are homebound, unable to prepare a nutritious meal for themselves, and have no in-home support to make their meals.

Our HDM program is a success because of our partnership with Feed More, Inc. Feed More is a nonprofit agency that serves neighbors across Central Virginia through their Food Bank, Meals on Wheels program and Community Kitchen.

It is through our partnership with Feed More that we are able to provide nutritional support to older adults who are homebound in the Greater Richmond Area. Feed More recruits volunteers who help their staff make, serve and deliver tasty and nutritious meals.

Feed More serves more than 1,450 clients daily, and Senior Connections supports 575 of those older adult clients with a daily lunch meal. Feed More also supports some of our clients with evening or weekend meals, dietary supplements such as Ensure, pet food and registered dietitian follow-up.

Feed More’s meal delivery volunteers provide a daily safety check and friendly face to older adults who may not have daily human contact otherwise.

In addition, Feed More volunteers contact our Home Delivered Meal Coordinator whenever they observe a situation with a client that concerns them. Our Home Delivered Meals Coordinator then follows up with the client in order to make sure they are okay.

Feed More’s Meals on Wheels and Community Kitchen Director made the following statement regarding our partnership: “It’s a joy and privilege to experience the impact that our partnership provides. Not only do we provide nutritious meals, the partnership allows us to reach more and feed more. Our homebound seniors in the Richmond Metro Area will always be cared for as long as Senior Connections and Feed More are teaming up together to fight hunger in our community.”

The Nutrition and Wellness program also has an internal partnership with our Care Coordination Department, and this also contributes to the program’s success. Senior Connections’ Care Coordinators conduct an initial needs assessment with each new Home Delivered Meal participant. In addition, they visit program participants annually in order to do a reassessment and to determine if participants have any other needs.

Senior Connections Friendship Cafés are neighborhood gathering places where older adults receive a nutritious lunch in addition to participating in fun social activities, group exercise, recreation, lifelong learning, and health and wellness programs. Senior Connections operates 20 Friendship Cafés throughout the Greater Richmond Area.

Through the hard work of our staff members, we are able to create a dynamic program that participants enjoy. Providing a nutritious meal and offering social engagement is the heart of the Friendship Café experience.

Last year our Friendship Cafés served 39,000 meals to 720 participants. We also provided transportation to our cafés for 233 participants – a total of 14,000 trips.

Once again, it is our partnerships with community organizations that make our Friendship Café successful. Several groups and churches provide us with low-cost meeting space, which makes it possible for us to meet the needs of the community.

In the City of Richmond, we partner with the City of Richmond Parks and Recreation Department, the Linwood Robinson Senior Center, Good Shepherd Baptist Church, CAPUP Senior Center and the Korean Senior Center.

Senior Connections provides the meal service expertise and program support, and our partner organizations provide the meeting space and often staff the locations. More importantly, our partners coordinate a majority of the programming for the participants.

In Henrico, we partner with Henrico County Parks and Recreation in order to support more of our Henrico cafés – Deep Run and Highland Springs.

Charles City County recently remodeled space for us in the Ruthville Gymnasium Complex. This allowed us to open a Friendship Café in their county.

We also have partnerships with Guardian Place Apartments and the Better Housing Coalition. They host Friendship Cafés at their Monarch Woods, Rockwood Village, and Market Square Communities.

Senior Connections is also able to provide transportation for participants to 11 of our Friendship Cafés through partnerships with various transportation providers, such as CAPUP, VIP and Van Go.

And through a partnership with Morristown Senior Dining, we are able to provide a hot nutritious lunch that meets one-third of an older adult’s Recommended Daily Intake for nutrition, is low in fat and salt, but still full of flavor and tasty.

The Health and Wellness Initiatives offered by Senior Connections are a part of our Live Well Virginia Workshops. The workshops – Chronic Disease Self-Management, Diabetes Self-Management, Matter of Balance: Fall Prevention, and Oasis Healthy Habits for Adults – are Evidence-Based Self-Management and Health Promotion classes.

The community-based classes are offered and designed to help participants learn how their health condition affects their lives. The goal of the workshops is for participants to gain self-confidence in their ability to control their symptoms. The workshops are interactive and focus on skill-building, building social support and

(See Wellness program on next page)
Wellness program
(from previous page)

and sharing experiences.
"The YMCA Aging Strong Program is designed to help older adults improve health outcomes, increase socialization and maintain independent living. The program offers group fitness and other activities to promote socialization, improve cognitive functioning and raise awareness about fall prevention. These programs are offered through our Friendship Cafes and to the community at large. One of our Friendship Cafe participants, Ms. E., has this to say about the YMCA Aging Strong Program: "Since the YMCA has come to the cafe, I can do a lot of things I could not do before. I feel stronger and more confident." We are also able to offer these workshops to community members through partnerships with Sheltering Arms, VCU Medical Center and HCA Hospitals. Family members and caregivers are encouraged to participate.

In keeping with our goal of providing lifelong learning, Senior Connections also creates partnership opportunities with local nonprofits, businesses, museums and civic organizations to share resources and talents. We contribute to lifelong learning through partnerships with organizations such as the Valentine History Museum, the Visual Art Center and Glen Allen Cultural Art Center.

For example, The Valentine History Museum presents historical lectures at our Friendship Cafes. Other organizations, such as the Better Business Bureau, VCU School of Dentistry and local Extension Offices, join the cafe participants in order to provide important information.

Together we all make a difference! It takes a village to meet the needs of such a diverse older population. Whether support comes through the Friendship Cafes or the Home Delivered Meal Program, Senior Connections is committed to improving the quality of life for older adults in our community and empowering them to live with dignity and choice. For more information on Senior Connections, CAA's Friendship Cafe, Home Delivered Meals or Health and Wellness Programs, call 804-343-3000. You may also visit our website at www.seniorconnections-va.org.

Wellness program
(from previous page)

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Written by RVA Roundtable Members
For 10 years, a small group of individuals representing nonprofits, for-profits and public organizations have been coming together to end social isolation and loneliness within our region.
The mission of the RVA Reassurance Roundtable is to improve social connectedness among those who are experiencing, or are at risk of, social isolation. We hope to build protective factors to blunt the adverse effects that social isolation has on mind, body and spirit.
Members of the group include organizations with telephone and/or friendly visiting programs, and organizations that provide direct service to older adults, such as medical, nutritional or care coordination support. The group also includes advocates for the aging from four localities.
The group meets quarterly to share resources, ideas, support and encouragement among members as well as to provide professional support for those who want to develop new call programs or other related services. The Roundtable also supports the establishment and expansion of similar connectedness programs throughout the Greater Richmond area.
The Roundtable’s growth has been an organic and grassroots effort. In 2009, dedicated staff from JFS Richmond and Senior Connections came together with Chesterfield’s senior advocate to learn and share ideas.
Since then, the Roundtable has grown to include 14 organizations that offer programs and support to individuals. With the Roundtable’s assistance, new programs, like the telephone reassurance program at Commonwealth Catholic Charities, have been started and grown.
The work of the Roundtable is acknowledged with an honorable mention in the 2018 Commonwealth Council on Aging Best Practices Awards.
Fighting social isolation
These programs are fueled by studies showing how social isolation is linked to serious health problems. Social isolation is recognized now more than ever to be a threat to an individual’s ability to age safely.
Research shows isolation leads to a greater risk of memory loss, strokes, cardiovascular disease, and poor immune functioning.
The Roundtable’s programs collectively serve close to 3,000 individuals on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. The impact is personal and real, as these testimonials attest:
“I don’t know what I would do without them. They give me hope and focus.”
“You don’t know how much it means to me...it adds meaning to my day.”
“It has helped me a lot of times as I have struggled with depression.”
The impact is also with staff and our many volunteers. “I am so glad to be a part of this program... (The person I visit) gives just as much to me as I give to her;” one volunteer said.
The majority of the programs reach out to individuals who are aging in place and who, for a variety of reasons — such as chronic illness, disability, and lack of transportation — can no longer seek outside social connections.
The programs are designed for long-term support and allow staff and volunteers to build meaningful relationships with the program participants. This model can help identify needs in advance of a crisis and make necessary referrals for other services.
One main goal of the Roundtable is collaboration in order to increase the number of programs offering social support in the home — specifically through either one-on-one, or in-person support — as this type of human connection is crucial in diminishing the adverse health effects of social isolation.
Together with other organizations, volunteers and the community, the RVA Reassurance Roundtable hopes to build a coalition to end social isolation in the Greater Richmond Area.
Who is involved?
Care More’s Togetherness Program — Contact: Dayana Cossio, dayana.cossio@caremore.com, 804-801-2198
Chesterfield County Telephone Reassurance Program — Contact: Debbie Preston, preston@chesterfield.gov, 804-768-7787
Commonwealth Catholic Charities, Telephone Reassurance/Caregiver Support — Contact: Diane Hargraves, diane.hargraves@cccfolva.org, 804-545-5916
Family Lifeline Visiting Volunteers – Contact: Megyn Robertson, mrobertson@familylifeline.org, 804-249-5397
Feed More/Meals on Wheels – Contact: 804-521-2500; General Inquiries: info@FeedMore.org
Hanover County Community Resources Dept. – Contact: Wanda Trexler, wtrexler@hanovercounty.gov, 804-365-4181
Henrico The Advocate for the Aging’s Office – Contact: 804-501-4628
JFS Richmond Telephone Reassurance and Friendly Visiting – Contact: Judith Marston or Karen Rodman, jmarston@jfsrichmond.org or krodmann@jfsrichmond.org, 804-282-5644, ext 244
Richmond Office on Aging and Persons with Disabilities – Contact: Senior Help Line, (804) 646-1082
Senior Connections, Capital Area Agency on Aging RSVP – Contact: Lee Owens, lowens@youraaa.org, 804-343-3050
Senior Connections, Capital Area Agency on Aging TeleBridge Programs – Contact: Shana Beverly, sbeverly@youraaa.org, 804-343-3024
Shepherd’s Center of Richmond (Education, Transportation, Support) – Contact: Julie Adams-Buchanan, jadams@tscor.org, 804-355-7728
VCU Health Geriatric and Continuum Services (Health Care Caremore Together Program) – Contact: Dayana Cossio, dayana.cossio@caremore.com, 804-801-2198
For more info on RVA Roundtable, contact Diane Hargraves at Commonwealth Catholic Charities, diane.hargraves@cccfolva.org, 804-545-5916.
Meet Penny Jordan, Senior Connections’ new Information and Community Outreach Manager

Penny Jordan joined Senior Connections in June 2014 as the Public Guardian program manager. During her time in that role, Penny became a National Certified Guardian—a national certification few individuals in the Greater Richmond area hold.

Penny has also worked as a Care Coordinator in the City of Richmond and Goochland County, and she helped with Senior Connections’ community outreach efforts before accepting this new position on January 2, 2019.

Penny has been working in the nonprofit field for over 10 years and has held positions at the American Red Cross, the Make-A-Wish Foundation and JFS Richmond. Penny is a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University and has a Master’s in Public Administration.

Penny has assumed the position previously held by Hannah Robinson as the new coordinator of the Engage at Any Age newsletter (formerly Mature Life). This newsletter will now be a part of the Fifty Plus publication, and will continue to provide articles and information for older adults.

Penny is passionate about advocating for older adults and wants Senior Connections’ Engage at Any Age publication to “transform perspectives” by sharing information and stories that will help older adults age gracefully. While aging gracefully is not always easy, one’s attitude towards aging can make a big difference. Penny believes it is important to highlight the positive aspects of aging—such as the wisdom, resilience and maturity one gains as they live through life’s experiences. And she hopes this newsletter will provide a conduit to help older adults change how they experience the aging process.

Penny loves the outdoors and in the warmer months can be found on hiking trails, in the woods or by a camp fire. She also loves history and spends her spare time metal detecting around the community.

Attention all readers
This edition of Engage at Any Age is also being mailed to our long-time mailing list, but it will be the last issue so mailed. Please look inside Fifty Plus for future newsletters. Let us know what you think of our changes by calling Penny Jordan at (804) 343-3046 or emailing her at pjordan@youraaa.org.

Agency Welcomes Matthew Jones as New Care Coordination Manager

Matthew Jones joined Senior Connections at the beginning of the year as the Care Coordination Manager. He supervises a team of incredibly talented and hard-working coordinators, connects with community partners, and works to ensure that members of the senior population in the Capital area receive the best service possible.

Matt graduated from VCU with a Master’s degree in Social Work. In his previous positions, he has worked with middle and high school youth, refugees, immigrants and people experiencing homelessness.

His endeavors have enabled him to engage with communities statewide, and he is excited for the opportunity to find solutions for the growing population of older adults.

Colleen Wilhelm Rejoins Senior Connections as the Operations and Outreach Manager for “No Wrong Door”

Colleen Wilhelm is excited to rejoin Senior Connections as Operations and Outreach Manager responsible for building and strengthening the “No Wrong Door” partner network in the greater RVA.

No Wrong Door Virginia is a virtual system and statewide network of shared resources, designed to streamline access to long-term services and supports—connecting individuals, providers and communities across the Commonwealth.

Before returning to Senior Connections in January 2019, Colleen served as Vice President of Long-Term Support Services at Family Lifeline.

Colleen began her career working with older adults and persons with disabilities almost 30 years ago as a Care Coordinator at the Peninsula Agency on Aging. Since then, she has worked in the field for more than 15 years, first as an adult protective service worker in Montgomery County, VA, then with Senior Connections in the Meals and Wellness Program and at Family Lifeline as Director of Elder Friends.

Colleen has worked in management in the private sector as well. She graduated from Christopher Newport College and has completed graduate work at Virginia Tech. She considers herself a lifelong learner.
Some smart moves in a volatile market

By Rachel L. Sheedy

Down 650 points one day. Up more than 1,000 points the next. Down 660 points another day. That was the Dow Jones industrial average’s performance just during one week in January.

How should investors handle these market ups and downs? In the short term, just take a deep breath and don’t panic. “Turn off, or at least turn down, the financial talking heads,” said financial planner Paul Fain, with Asset Planning Corp., in Knoxville, Tenn.

Longer-term, the following steps can help you make lemonade when the market gives you lemons.

Keep a cash cushion

The best way to protect your portfolio from market blows is to have a cash cushion — ideally three or even five years’ worth of expenses. With enough cash to cover your essential costs, you can ignore market swoons and avoid selling low.

It’s best to build up your cash stash before a downturn, but dividends, interest and capital-gains distributions can go into the cash pile when markets are down.

As interest rates rise, aim to score a better return on your cash. You may find the best rates for your savings at online banks and credit unions. Check Bankrate.com and DepositAccounts.com for the latest rates.

Other places to park cash: money-market funds, Treasury bills and short-term bond funds.

Rebalance

If market swings have left your investment mix completely out of whack, rebalance to your target allocations of cash, stocks and bonds. Experts often suggest rebalancing if an allocation is 5 percent or more off target. Rebalancing requires selling assets that have performed well and buying those that haven’t — which can be hard to do. But when market conditions change, you may find you bought the laggards on the cheap.

When rebalancing, consider whether you need to reset your allocations. Has your risk tolerance declined? Do your current allocations still meet your needs? Is your portfolio well diversified?

Weigh whether you need to dial down stocks and other riskier investments and increase more-conservative holdings such as bonds.

“Market volatility is an excellent time to revisit clients’ risk tolerance, goals and overall financial plans to make sure their goals are supported,” said Sarah Carlson, a financial planner with Fulcrum Financial Group, in Spokane, Wash.

Harvest tax losses

When reviewing your portfolio, look to harvest any tax losses that can help trim your 2019 tax bill. Investors often harvest losses closer to year-end, but it doesn’t hurt to watch for tax-saving opportunities early in the year.

If you decide you want to reinvest in a stock you’ve sold for a loss, wait at least 30 days after the sale. Otherwise, you’ll run afoul of the wash-sale rules, and the loss will be disallowed.

Handling RMDs

If you’re over 70½, you know Uncle Sam requires you to take distributions from retirement accounts whether you want to or not. Where does that leave you when prices are down?

You don’t have to sell investments when you take required minimum distributions. Instead, you can transfer shares in-kind from the retirement account to a taxable account. The shares’ value on the date of transfer counts toward your RMD.

If the market is down, this strategy lets you satisfy the IRS without locking in a loss on your investments. This is a good strategy if you believe the stock will go up again someday.

You could do a single in-kind transfer or make the move gradually. If you have a $12,000 RMD, for example, you could transfer $1,000 worth of shares to a taxable account each month.

Convert to a Roth

Your traditional IRA may lose value in a down market, but the tax bill for converting those assets to a Roth will also be lower.

If the investments’ value revives after the conversion, all growth in the Roth will be tax-free.

But be aware that you can no longer undo Roth conversions; a conversion will increase your taxable income for the year.

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The rise of gray divorce: why or why not?

By Neale Godfrey

Till death do us part? Not so much. In the past 25 years, the divorce rate for Americans over the age of 50 has more than doubled.

While divorce rates for other age groups have leveled off or even fallen, one out of every four people going through a divorce in the United States is 50 or older, according to research by sociologists Susan L. Brown and I-Fen Lin.

Compare that to 1990, when fewer than 1 in 10 people who got divorced was over 50. The research went on to note that it wasn’t just remarried older people who were getting divorced — more than half of all “gray” divorces are with couples who have been married for over 20 years.

Tipper and Al Gore Syndrome

The story of the Gores is much the same as for many long-term marriages.

After having four kids and 40 years of marriage, they simply had grown apart and wanted to go it alone.

Tipper asserts that it was not that Al was dull and boring or cheating on her. They are a classic example of a gray divorce.

Are people expecting more of a sense of happiness and fulfillment today than they were before? It’s possible. It seems that couples are just not willing to put up with a loveless marriage anymore.

You may have grown up seeing your parents or your friends’ parents going through the motions of marriage, and not engaged in a loving partnership.

Have you ever been at a restaurant and seen couples eating and not interacting at all? Many of us just thought that was the way advanced married couples acted, that was the way it was supposed to be.

Why so many now?

Several factors are converging. The stigma of divorce is disappearing. Even Pope Francis and the Catholic Church are re-examining their posture toward the church’s stance on divorce.

People are also living longer, and so the prospects of remaining in an empty relationship don’t bode well for many people today. They are allowed to act to change their future.

Another reason for the increase in gray divorce appears to be the economic gains women are making, according to an NPR report quoting Brown. “Many no longer have to choose between a bad marriage and poverty.”

The advent of easy online dating may also have given older people hope for a better relationship. Online dating is accepted and is the norm for all age groups. Seniors are also meeting via activities and travel.

The prospect of living with someone you no longer love and respect appears to be a sacrifice not worth making for many.

Financial considerations

OK, you have decided to call it quits in your twilight years, what do you have to know about the money side of your relationship and life on your own?

Alimony is almost always granted after long-term marriages.

When you divorce in your younger years, usually “rehabilitative” alimony is granted, which will supply support while the spouse gets back on their feet.

However, if it’s a long-term marriage, in most cases alimony is given for life. If ending a second marriage that was short, alimony may fall in between the above circumstances.

See GRAY DIVORCE, page 18
Cash rules as stocks and bonds waver

By Stan Choe

Suddenly, cash is king again.

For years, cash languished at the bottom of the investment rankings, weighed down by nearly non-existent interest rates. But with the Federal Reserve raising short-term rates four times last year, money-market funds and online savings accounts began paying interest that came close to approaching inflation.

This while stocks, bond funds and gold all posted losses in 2018.

“It took us a while to get above zero,” said Deborah Cunningham, chief investment officer of global money markets at Federated Investors, about cash. “But now that we’re in a slow-growth environment with interest rates normalized, it becomes a pretty good place to exist.”

Investors now can find rates of 2 percent or higher while hiding out in cash, and that 2 percent looks even better when compared with the whipsaw-inducing ride that stocks forced investors to endure last year.

S&P 500 index funds lost more than 4 percent in their worst showing in a decade, but they also dragged investors through more than a dozen days where they lost more than 2 percent on the way there. The steady-and-not-so-slow-anymore returns for cash, plus expectations for even more market volatility in 2019, means strategists along Wall Street are seeing cash as a viable investment option for the first time in years.

Some investors have peeled off a portion of the big profits made from stocks in recent years and plugged it into cash in hopes of preserving it.

Others, meanwhile, have pulled back from the riskier bonds they bought in search of higher income when rates were at record lows, moving back into money-market funds, certificates of deposit and online savings accounts. Nearly $90 billion went into money-market funds during the first 11 months of last year, according to the Investment Company Institute. They were more popular than bond funds, which attracted a net $67 billion, and much more so than stock funds, which saw $171 billion head for the exits.

Even cash has its risks

But before jumping back into the safe embrace of cash, it’s key to remember that this may be close to as good as it gets.

The Federal Reserve has indicated it may slow its pace of interest-rate increases this year, with perhaps two more in 2019, which would cap the increase in returns that cash provides.

The Fed raised rates a total of seven times in the prior two years. Some analysts even expect the central bank could make zero moves this year as fears rise about slowing economic growth around the world.

And while the steadiness of cash can be inflexible. The grass looks greener on the other side of the fence, but sometimes, it’s not.

This article presents the views of Neale Godfrey, Financial Literacy Expert, President & CEO, Children’s Financial Network Inc., our contributing adviser, not the Kiplinger editorial staff. You can check adviser records with the SEC or with FINRA. © 2019 The Kiplinger Washington Editors, Inc. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Gray divorce

From page 17

Retirement money is usually cut in half. It doesn’t matter if this is a no-fault or at-fault divorce. Pension plans may be used to offset alimony, but make sure that you both are being advised on the tax implications.

The family house will become an asset that has to be valued and split. Make sure if you opt to keep the house that you don’t become house-poor. The house needs to be maintained, taxes and utilities paid, and those costs may greatly eat into any monetary settlements.

Remarriages are more likely to end in divorce, so think about a pre-nuptial agreement for your next marriage. In it, you can deal with a lot of these monetary issues before emotions are running at a fevered pitch.

There may be adult children on both sides to consider, other assets, and lots of other issues to think about. Seek professional advice from your lawyers, accountants and financial advisers. Your wills need to be adjusted to reflect your new circumstances, as well.

Gray divorce might not be a tragedy. You may be empowered to design and obtain a more fulfilling life than you may now have. How wonderful not to feel that your present marriage is a life sentence.

But also, I caution you: Maybe it’s better to work on your present relationship and not assume that your spouse will be

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Ways you can stop frustrating robocalls

By Jim Miller

Dear Savvy Senior:

Is there anything I can do to stop perpetual robocalls? It seems like I get five to 10 a day on my home and cell phone, and I’m sick of it!

— Frustrated Frank

Robocalls make up around 50 percent of all phone calls today, and it’s only getting worse. Americans were hit with 26.3 billion robocalls in 2018, a whopping 46 percent increase from the year before.

Fortunately, there are a variety of tools available today that can help you greatly reduce them:

Register your numbers

If you haven’t already done so, your first step to limiting at least some unwanted calls is to make sure your home and cell phone numbers are registered with the National Do Not Call Registry. While this won’t stop illegal robocalls, it will stop unwanted calls from legitimate for-profit businesses who are trying to sell you something.

But be aware that political organizations, charities and survey takers are still permitted to call you, as are businesses you’ve bought something from or made a payment to in the last 18 months.

To sign up, visit DoNotCall.gov or call (888) 382-1222.

Home landline tools

To stop calls on your home phone, set up the “anonymous call rejection” option. This is a free landline-calling feature available from most telephone companies. It lets you screen out calls from callers who have blocked their caller ID information — a favorite tactic of telemarketers.

To set it up, you usually have to dial “*77” from your landline, though different phone services may have different procedures to set it up. Call your telephone service provider to find out if they offer this feature, and if so, what you need to do to enable it. Another solution is to sign up for Nomorobo, which is a free service for landline phones (but only if you have a VoIP landline carrier). Nomorobo uses a “simultaneous ring” service that detects and blocks robocalls on a black list of known offender numbers. It isn’t 100 percent foolproof, but it is an extra layer of protection.

To sign up or see if Nomorobo works with your phone service provider, visit Nomorobo.com.

Cell phone tools

To stop unwanted robocalls and texts to your cell phone, ask your carrier about caller ID options that help identify, filter or prevent callers that aren’t legitimate.

For example, AT&T provides its subscribers a free app called “AT&T Call Protect” that has automatic fraud blocking and suspected spam warnings, and you can manually block unwanted calls. Starting this month, Verizon is offering free spam alerting and call blocking tools to their users. T-Mobile offers free “Scam ID” and “Scam Block” to combat robocalls and spam.

And Sprint customers can sign up for its “Premium Caller ID” service for $2.99 per month to guard against robocalls and caller ID spoofers.

Call blocking apps

Another way to stop nuisance robocalls on your smartphone is with call-blocking apps. These can identify who is calling you and block unwanted calls that show up on crowd-sourced spam and robocaller lists.

Some top call blocking apps for iPhones and Androids include Nomorobo (Nomorobo.com), Hiya Caller ID and Spam Blocker (Hiya.com) and Truecaller (Truecaller.com).

While Nomorobo is free for landlines, it costs $2 per month for cell phones. Truecaller and Hiya apps are free to use, but offer upgraded services for $2 and $3 per month.

Spam-proof phones

There are also phones you can buy — including the Samsung Galaxy S, Samsung Note and Google Pixel phones — that have built-in spam and robocall protection in place.

Samsung’s Smart Call feature flags calls it suspects are spam, while Google Pixel phones have built-in spam call protection.

With this feature, users with Caller ID enabled will get a warning if a suspected spam call or robocall is received.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of The Savvy Senior book.

— J. Miller

Please patronize our advertisers. They keep Fifty Plus free!
By Pat Mertz Esswein

We never dreamed that a short story about umbrella insurance would be the top-ranked article in Kiplinger’s monthly reader survey, but that’s exactly what happened when we tackled the topic in July 2018. The article also generated plenty of reader mail.

Many of you wrote to ask us to revisit the topic and help you determine how much umbrella coverage you need — and to do just that, we’ve developed a tool you can use.

Umbrella insurance — also known as excess personal liability insurance — sits on top of your automobile, homeowners and watercraft liability coverage.

What’s it for?

If you injure someone in a car accident or someone slips and falls on your property, your auto or home insurer will pay for damages up to the liability limits of your coverage. If the damages exceed those limits, the injured party may sue you for the difference.

An umbrella policy will pay a judgment or settlement if you’re found to be at fault, and will pay for your defense even if you’re not found at fault.

Umbrella insurance is generally sold in increments of $1 million. It costs about $150 a year for each $1 million of coverage up to $5 million.

Most insurers will sell you an umbrella policy only if you buy your homeowners or auto policy from them and carry a minimum amount of liability coverage — typically $300,000 for homeowners insurance and, for auto insurance, $250,000 for bodily injury to one person and $500,000 per accident, according to the Insurance Information Institute.

Assess your risks

A car accident is the most likely scenario in which a loss would trigger excess liability coverage because a permanent disability or fatality could easily result in a large judgment, said Spencer Houldin, president of Ericson Insurance Advisors, in Washington Depot, Conn. Your risk is higher the more you drive and if you insure teen or elderly drivers.

If you own a condo, you could be held responsible for damage to other units or even the entire building if a fire or water problem starts in your unit.

You may also be at higher risk if you employ domestic workers or own a swimming pool or trampoline, a dog, or a boat, RV or snowmobile.

You are more vulnerable to a lawsuit if you’re active on social media or serve on the board of your homeowners or condo association or a nonprofit organization.

If you checked just one of the risk factors listed above, you may need umbrella coverage, according to Chubb Insurance. Even if you selected several, your liability risk is higher than average.

Consider adding an endorsement to an umbrella policy for excess uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage, which covers you not only as a driver but as a passenger, bicyclist or pedestrian if you’re hit and the at-fault driver doesn’t carry enough insurance. It costs $100 to $200 per policy.

If you serve as a volunteer on a nonprofit board, your homeowners and umbrella policies typically cover you for bodily injury and property damage — but probably not for all potential lawsuits, said Houldin.

An endorsement for your umbrella policy for directors and officers coverage typically costs less than $1,000 a year for $1 million to $2 million of coverage.

(On the other hand, most nonprofit organizations will purchase a policy to protect their directors and officers, so look into that before buying your own.)

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Cash

From page 18

a comfort when markets are heaving, it has its own risks.

The biggest risk is being too conservative. An investor planning to retire decades in the future would likely get much, much higher returns from stocks than cash, which is only just starting to match the rate of inflation.

Even bonds, which carry the risk of falling prices if interest rates rise, would likely return more because they have higher yields. But the fact that investors are even pondering such questions, after years of not even considering the non-existent returns of cash, shows how much the market has changed.

“It’s a good feeling to have inflows, higher rates and good returns,” said Cunningham, whose suite of funds includes the $75 billion Federated Government Obligations fund, which returned 1.7 percent last year versus 0.3 percent in 2016. “It’s much more pleasant than having to explain why this and why that.”

—AP

Orthopedic surgeon invents an innovative mobility device that enables you to walk naturally and avoid falls.

If you’ve ever used a walker or rollator, you’re aware of how unnatural it is to lean forward, rest your body weight on your hands and wrists, shuffling your feet and walking in a hunched-over position. It’s hard on your arms, shoulders and back, and it’s impossible to get very far without becoming exhausted. Even worse, this slumped over position causes you to look down, leaving you off balance, unsteady and fearful of falling. In fact, this unstable, unnatural posture can actually cause “secondary Injuries.”

The Perfect Walker, which was designed by an orthopedic surgeon with over 30 years of experience, has solved the uncomfortable bent-over posture that plagues traditional rollators. Perfect Walker allows you to walk securely and comfortably in a natural upright position. It features a set of very unique, fully adjustable forearm support cuffs that keep your arms resting at a natural level. It is height adjustable for you to walk securely and comfortably in a natural upright position. It features a set of very unique, fully adjustable forearm support cuffs that keep your arms resting at a natural level. It is height adjustable for you to walk securely and comfortably in a natural upright position.

Look forward to going more places more often!

It folds up for transit or storage using a revolutionary dual-folding design resulting in a very compact, easy-to-handle unit weighing only 21 lbs. That means the Perfect Walker is extremely easy and convenient to take and use just about anywhere.

Also the Perfect Walker has an advanced braking system and secure locking. It’s been designed with a wider rear-wheel base. The “rear walking space” of this rollator is wider than is traditional, to reduce the chance of a trip-up and to provide a greater range of motion for a natural, comfortable walk.

The Perfect Walker has a comfortable, double-padded seat for resting purposes, with footrests that easily move into place when you’re seated so you can comfortably rest your feet and legs. The seat is also retractable to move into place where and when you need it, otherwise it retracts out of the way when you’re walking.

When you’re seated, The Perfect Walker can be easily used as a transport chair and pushed comfortably from behind.

Perfect Walker

Call now Toll-Free 1-888-544-0047

Please mention promotion code 110746.

“Dr. Birnbaum

The Perfect Walker has been ergonomically designed and patented to create a healthier walking position that will effectively reduce the stress and injuries that I have seen over many years as an orthopedic surgeon.”
“With my Zinger Chair, I can go anywhere and everywhere I want!”

More and more Americans are reaching the age where mobility is an everyday concern. Whether from an injury or from the aches and pains that come from getting older—getting around isn’t as easy as it used to be. You may have tried a power chair or a scooter. The Zinger is NOT a power chair or a scooter! The Zinger is quick and nimble, yet it is not prone to tipping like many scooters. Best of all, it weighs only 47.2 pounds and folds and unfolds with ease. You can take it almost anywhere, providing you with independence and freedom.

I can now go places and do things that I wasn’t able to go or do before. It has given me a new lease on life and I am so happy I found it!

—Dana S., Texas

Years of work by innovative engineers have resulted in a mobility device that’s truly unique. They created a battery that provides powerful energy at a fraction of the weight of most batteries. The Zinger features two steering levers, one on either side of the seat. The user pushes both levers down to go forward, pulls them both up to brake, and pushes one while pulling the other to turn to either side. This enables great mobility, the ability to turn on a dime and to pull right up to tables or desks. The controls are right on the steering lever so it’s simple to operate and its exclusive footrest swings out of the way when you stand up or sit down. With its rugged yet lightweight aluminum frame, the Zinger is sturdy and durable yet convenient and comfortable! What’s more, it easily folds up for storage in a car seat or trunk– you can even gate-check it at the airport like a stroller. Think about it, you can take your Zinger almost anywhere, so you don’t have to let mobility issues rule your life. It folds in seconds without tools and is safe and reliable. It holds up to 265 pounds, and it goes up to 6 mph and operates for up to 8 hours on a single charge.

Why spend another day letting mobility issues hamper your independence and quality of life?

Zinger Chair®
Call now and receive a utility basket absolutely FREE with your order.
1-888-630-7742
Please mention code 110741 when ordering.

Just think of the places you can go:
• Shopping • Air Travel • Bus Tours
• Restaurants—ride right up to the table! • Around town or just around your house

Zinger is not a wheelchair or medical device and is not covered by Medicare or Medicaid.

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Leisure & Travel

Scenic Oregon, unpretentious Portland

By Victor Block

Visitors to Oregon soon come to admire its varied landscapes, be fascinated by intriguing chapters of history, and enjoy its well-deserved reputation as a cornucopia of tasty fruits, vegetables and outstanding wine. No wonder the state has ranked high on many “best of” lists.

At the same time, Oregon is as much a lifestyle as a destination. It’s among the most environmentally-friendly states in the country, tops in recycling and producing renewable energy.

In addition, a combination of other endearing traits beckons many people to follow in the path of the historic Oregon Trail. (More about that later.)

Diverse in many ways

Laid-back and laissez-faire were among the first words that crossed my mind shortly after I arrived in Oregon. Those impressions were underscored by locals whom I encountered.

“We’re very accepting of various lifestyles,” a 30-something woman told me. “A lot of eccentric characters live here,” according to a gentleman whose gray hair was twisted into a long ponytail.

Another distinction is the pronunciation of places, some because of their Native American roots. Any version of the state name other than OARuh-gun is a source of amusement to the native-born. Other local dialect includes the Willamette (which comes out as will-AM-ette) River, named for an Indian tribe, and the towns of Helvetia (hel-VAY-sha), Tigard (TIE-gurd) and Tualatin (too-WALL-uh-tin).

The diversity that characterizes Oregon’s populace translates to its landscapes. They range from rugged ocean coastline to dense evergreen forests, from glaciers to barren desert, from grassy prairies to volcanoes.

That variety provides a wide choice of to-see’s and to-do’s. For some, it means opportunities to visit wineries that invite guests to learn about their craft, sample their products and understand why they’re advancing in the world of fine wines.

Those who follow wine trail routes enjoy a combination of sipping and scenery. For example, the 60-mile-long Vineyard and Valley Scenic Tour Route winds through serene countryside and showcases the commemorating of outstanding wine with history and agriculture. Farms and orchards line the route and, when in season, produce stands offer fresh-picked fruits and vegetables.

The agricultural riches of the area attracted Native Americans who settled in the northwest at least 14,000 years ago. An 1855 map of the Oregon Territory referred to various Indian tribes, including the Atfalati Tualatin Kpxuyan Indians, hunter-gatherers who made the fertile Tualatin Valley their home.

Lewis and Clark and beyond

After the Lewis and Clark expedition traveled to, and through, the Oregon Territory from 1804 to 1806, a trickle of pioneers followed, then a wave of farmers, hunters and others.

As word spread about the ideal farming conditions and other inviting characteristics of the area, a growing number of people took what became known as the Oregon Trail, willing to accept the very daunting challenges it presented.

The route ran more than 2,000 miles from its start in Missouri, and was the most heavily used trail in the westward expansion. Visitors today may follow sections of that trail and others that provide an immersion in various aspects of the local lore.

The past comes alive along the Mt. Hood Territory Heritage Trail. It includes stops at the Museum of the Oregon Territory and the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center.

A different experience awaits those who take the Mount Hood and Columbia River Gorge tour, which combines dramatic views of the breathtakingly beautiful canyon with plummeting waterfalls and stunning mountainous terrain, including the tallest mountain in the state.

And the 35-mile-long Hood River County Fruit Loop leads to 28 farm stands, berry farms and wineries.

For those who prefer walking tours, a self-guided stroll through the town of Canby traces its history from serving as a stop along a section of the Oregon Trail to a logging community, and introduces the fascinating cast of characters who played important roles in its past.

In an area of mountainous terrain, the snow-capped peak of majestic Mt. Hood, which tops out at a height over 11,200 feet, reigns supreme. On clear days, it can be visible 100 miles away. Given that elevation, it’s not surprising that the dormant volcano offers the longest ski season in North America, including runs on 12 glaciers and snow fields.

In summer, the dense wilderness, fields of wildflowers, Alpine lakes and rushing rivers in the million-plus acre Mt. Hood National Forest attract hikers, campers, fishermen and sightseers, along with ex-
### Sunshine Tours

**Let us show you America**

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<th>DATE</th>
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<td>Niagara Falls / Montreal &amp; Quebec</td>
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<td>June 2-8</td>
<td>Mystery Tour SSSHHH! It's A Secret</td>
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<td>June 9-16</td>
<td>Michigan &amp; The Grand Hotel</td>
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<td>Nova Scotia &amp; The Atlantic Provinces</td>
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<td>Canadian Rockies / Land / Fly</td>
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<td>June 20-22</td>
<td>&quot;Jesus&quot; / Lancaster, PA</td>
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<td>June 20-22</td>
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<td>June 22-23</td>
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<td>Alaska &amp; Canada Fly / Land</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 6-22</td>
<td>Canyonlands / Our Most Scenic Tour</td>
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<td>Alaska &amp; Canada's Yukon by motorcoach</td>
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<td>Summer New England / Martha's Vineyard</td>
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**Prices shown are for Double (2 to a Room) Occupancy. Quad (4 to a Room) and Triple (3 to a Room) Occupancy is Available at a Slightly Lower Per Person Price. Single (1 to a Room) is also available at a Slightly Higher Per Person Price. All Tours Include Roundtrip Transportation by Modern, Air-Conditioned, DVD and Restroom Equipped Deluxe Motorcoach, Hotel Accommodations and Admission to the Listed Attractions. Baggage Handling is provided at each night’s lodging as indicated in the catalog. Cancellation Insurance is NOT REQUIRED on any Sunshine tour, as we will REFUND ALL PAYMENTS (FLY TRIPS 45-DAYS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE) FOR ANY REASON WHATSOEVER if you find it necessary to cancel your reservation AT ANY TIME before the tour leaves.**
Oregon
From page 22
Experienced mountain climbers.
Humans share the woods with black bears, elk, mule deer and an occasional cougar.

Art all over
Not to be outdone by the beauty provided by Mother Nature, a number of Oregon’s cities and even small towns compete with collections of outdoor art that augment the splendor of the surroundings.

Among works that greet folks who follow several interconnected art trails in Tualatin are a 20-foot-tall metal statue representing the town’s namesake, and another that depicts a flock of geese.

The Gallery Without Walls in Lake Oswego includes both permanent and loaned pieces, some of which are for sale. Other communities, including Hillsboro and Forest Grove, host monthly art walks during which galleries extend their open hours and local artists showcase their work.

Art also enhances outdoor spaces throughout Portland, Oregon’s largest city. A collection of statues ranges from Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt to the Greek god Orpheus. An inviting open-air sculpture mall is decorated with statuary and a created waterfall.

The sites of Portland
Visiting neighborhoods that comprise Portland is a perfect way to experience and enjoy much that the city has to offer.

The Alberta Arts District is home to a number of quirky galleries, and hosts a monthly street festival that pays homage to art, food and other facets of that community.

Houses in the historic Old Town District, where the city was born in 1843, display a never-never land of ornate cast-iron scrollwork and filigree along with human and animal figures.

West End stretches between Powell’s City of Books — said to be the largest independent new and used bookstore in the world — and the downtown retail core, which is home to a growing number of fashion boutiques and design shops.

The Pearl District has evolved from a setting for warehouses, light industry and railroad yards to a collection of art galleries, specialty stores and upscale residences.

Strolling the streets also helps visitors understand the attitude and atmosphere that are unique to the city and its residents, and how it continues to cling to its special character and much of its small-town charm.

One aspect of its attitude is the motto, admittedly borrowed from another city: "Keep Portland Weird." Simple, unpretentious and "real" could be substituted for the last word to describe Portland and its people.

Another well-deserved boast is the city’s extensive and inviting collection of parks and gardens. The 160-plus parks range in size from massive to minuscule.

Hikers may find wilderness within the city limits in Forest Park, which is crisscrossed by 30 miles of trails. Waterfront Park includes a riverside promenade that passes boat docks, shops and restaurants.

Council Crest Park sits on a 1,072-foot hill and offers dramatic views over the city and to distant mountains. Mount Tabor Park occupies the only extinct volcano within city limits in the continental United States.

The sprawling International Rose Test Garden, which contains 400 varieties of roses displayed on more than 10,000 bushes, has spawned an annual rose festival and is a major reason why Portland is known as the City of Roses.

The nearby Japanese Garden is a tranquil sanctuary that includes a traditional sand and stone setting and a ceremonial tea house. The Lan Su Chinese Garden in the Old Town neighborhood is an oasis of winding paths and reflecting ponds.

Nearly two centuries ago hardy pioneers braved extreme hardships and overcame daunting challenges to seek a better life in what today is the state. The trip now is much less strenuous, but the rewards can be just as satisfying.

If you go
Accommodations can fit comfortably in Oregon’s idiosyncratic reputation. The McMenamins Grand Lodge near Portland gives new meaning to the word whimsical. Qualit, comic paintings and historic photos line the hallways, decorate guest rooms and even show up on headboards and exposed piping. Hidden rooms and a resident ghost add to the atmosphere.

Rates begin as low as $60 for a room with shared bathroom and $105 with private facilities. For more information, call (877) 992-9553 or visit mcmenamins.com/grand-lodge.

The setting is very different at Timberline Lodge, perched 6,000 feet high on Mt. Hood. It was built during the Depression as a Works Progress Administration project, furnished by artisans and decorated by artists. Rates begin at $127. For more information, call (800) 547-1406 or see timberlinelodge.com.

Typical of casual restaurants with a colorful history is the Rock Creek Cavern in Hillsboro. Its past includes being bombed, run over by a car and destroyed by a fire of questionable origin.

Try them for comfort food. For more information, call (503) 645-3822 or visit mcmenamins.com/rock-creek-tavern.

For fine dining, the Imperial in the historic Hotel Lucia offers Pacific Northwest cuisine at its best. For more information, call (503) 228-7722 or see imperialphx.com.

For Oregon tourism information, call (800) 547-7842 or see traveloregon.com. The least expensive non-stop roundtrip airfare from the Richmond area to Portland in late March is $592 from Richmond International Airport on Southwest Airlines. A roundtrip, one-stop flight on Delta costs $305.

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The Hamilton® CapTel® Captioned Telephone converts phone conversations to easy-to-read captions for individuals with hearing loss.

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Find places to stay for next to nothing

By Melissa Lambarena

Credit card rewards can be your ticket — literally your plane ticket — to a dream destination. But even if you’ve earned what you need to get to where you’re going, the accommodations could be a different story.

What do you do if you don’t have enough points or miles left for lodging?

You can slash those costs, too, if you’re willing to get out of your comfort zone. That might mean couch surfing with locals, agreeing to a home exchange, or signing up for housesitting.

Websites and apps can help you connect with frugal options domestically and abroad. You may be able to stay for free, or nearly free, if you’re flexible with dates and can abide by house rules.

Couch surfing

This option works for solo travelers or couples looking to make new friends over a few nights. Since you’re staying in someone’s home, you’ll likely need to “check in and out” at reasonable hours and clean up after yourself.

For Alexander Salas, who runs the YouTube channel Alex Travelbum, giving up some freedom is worth it. He uses the app from Couchsurfing.com, which has allowed him to sleep in 15 countries for free. His trip to Naples, Italy, was the most memorable, he said.

“I stayed with this woman who was just the most generous, nice person in the world, and we’re still friends till this day,” Salas said. “She made me all of this authentic Italian food and took me around town.”

Home exchanges

This option offers more privacy since you’ll swap your home temporarily with someone else. The GuestToGuest website charges about $11 a night or around $147 annually (and you’ll have to pay a damage deposit). You can offset costs by cooking in the kitchen to save money on meals. Some homeowners even let you borrow their car.

Housesitting

If you don’t mind pets or a few chores while you travel, you can see the world for less.

Nik and Angel Rowell, YouTubers at Roadtrip with Nik, have traveled to Costa Rica and several U.S. states, among other destinations. They frequently use TrustedHousesitters.com, which also has an app and charges $119 for an annual membership. They suggest considering the responsibilities of each housesit beforehand and how it might affect your stay.

“If you have a weeklong housesit in Hawaii that included caring for a dog that needed to go out in the morning, afternoon and evening, you wouldn’t be able to go explore the island all day long,” Nik Rowell said.

Wherever you stay, communicate with the host to match your expectations to the experience. If you need a kitchen or Wi-Fi, for example, ask whether you’ll have access.

Take precautions

If you’re staying with strangers, screen them first. Some subscription services have a verification process, but it’s not always as robust as a traveler might like.

Amanda Kelly, solo traveler and content creator at Amanda Round the Globe, generally seeks female hosts when she couch surfs. During a trip to Belgium, she said, she was deceived by a man pretending to be a female host.

“After that experience, I did take a lot more precautions by checking the reviews a lot more,” she said.

Other best practices:

• Look for hosts who have several positive references, photos and detailed descriptions.
• See how your host behaves on social media.
• Set up a video meet-and-greet.
• Make sure you’re on the same page with house rules and expectations of privacy.
• Have a plan B in case the accommodations aren’t a good fit.

—NerdWallet/AP

Thinking of ways to increase your sales?

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By Martha Steger

For years, tourists have purchased postcards to show others the interesting sites they have visited and the beautiful works of art they have seen.

But what did people do in the 17th century when travel was difficult and there was no photography? How did those who couldn’t travel themselves get a sense of what was out there in the world and what was happening in other lands?

In many cases, they relied on masterfully engraved etchings of famous works, places and events.

Today, Richmonders can see rare etchings of an execution in 1641, London before and after the Great Fire of 1666, as well as reproductions of artworks and detailed church interiors at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts’ (VMFA) newest show, “Hollar’s Encyclopedic Eye: Prints from the Frank Raysor Collection.”

Wenceslaus Hollar isn’t a household name, but he’s been called “the 17th-century Bill Bryson,” the kind of artist whose work touches on travel, history, geography and science.

Born into a noble family in Prague in 1607, Hollar lived through tumultuous times and was forced to flee his home several times — to Stuttgart, Strasbourg, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Cologne and, finally, London in 1636, sketching and etching all the way.

In 17th-century England and Europe, travel was a luxury, so art like Hollar’s was the only way most people could glimpse other places.

“Prints like these were a way to share information,” according to exhibition co-curator Colleen Yarger, VMFA’s curatorial assistant for European art and the Mellon collections, and interim head of the department of European art. “Through his work, we can gain a better understanding of the things that were important in Europe at that time.”

Hollar’s work, visitors should take advantage of the magnifying glasses the VMFA provides in each room. The contrast of Hollar’s soft lines — in women’s fur muffs, another’s work is plagiarism. But that was not so in the 17th century, when the only “mass media” were copies of other works through means such as etchings.

Once he arrived in London, Hollar took a job copying the art collection of the Earl of Arundel, including works by Albrecht Dürer and Leonardo da Vinci. The earliest of Hollar’s works, dated 1625 and 1626, are small, postcard-sized plates; one is a copy of a print by Dürer, whose work influenced Hollar.

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By Lela Martin

It’s March, and the lawns of Central Virginia are starting to green up. Warm-season grasses break dormancy as soil temperatures gradually rise above 50° F, and it usually takes three to four weeks for complete greening.

It’s as easy as 1-2-3 to establish or maintain your warm-season lawns.

1) Do research about your yard

   Determine your grass type

   The care of turf depends on whether you have warm-season or cool-season turfgrass. In the Richmond area, the majority of lawns are cool-season: Kentucky bluegrass, tall fescue, perennial ryegrass or fine-leaf fescues. Hot dry summers are usually hard on these cool-season grasses. On the other hand, warm-season turfgrasses thrive in the sun and heat. In this area, warm-season varieties are zoysia and bermudagrass. These turn golden brown during winter dormancy. You may be seeing more local lawns with warm-season turf, because we’ve had such extreme summers.

   Do a soil test

   The Virginia Cooperative Extension recommends sampling your soil to determine pH and nutrient levels every two to three years. Obtain free soil sample boxes and information sheets from your local Virginia Cooperative Extension office. For less than $10, a soil test is a great idea.

   Note: The standard soil test is $10; organic matter test is $4, plus postage to mail the sample box to Virginia Tech.

2) Follow the appropriate seasonal practices for warm-season grasses

   Control weeds responsibly

   The thick growth habits of zoysia and bermudagrass inhibit the growth of weeds. Some products that can be used in cool-season grasses are not safe for warm; read herbicide labels carefully. When you see forsythia or dogwood blooming, it is a good time to apply preemergence herbicides to suppress summer annual grassy weeds. Do not apply these weed controllers if you are planting seed now; however, Quinclorac (Drive™) can be applied just before or at seeding of bermudagrass for crabgrass control. Always follow label directions.

   Seed, insert plugs, spread sprigs, or install sod

   Mid-spring through mid-summer is the optimal time to plant warm-season grass seed, sprigs or plugs. Often warm-season grasses are more easily established vegetatively than by seed. Warm-season grasses need soil temperatures in the 65° to 75° F range for seed germination. Remember that many preemergence herbicides cannot be applied at the same time as seed.

   Fertilize if recommended

   Use the results of your soil test to determine the pH and nutritional requirements of your lawn. If you want early greening without a flush of growth, add iron in small amounts. Warm-season grasses perform best when fertilized between April 1 and August 15 in Virginia. Nitrogen (N) fertilization for warm-season grasses should take place only after spring greening is complete.

   Aerate

   Aeration on warm-season grasses should be done when the turf is actively growing and not during the spring transition period. It can be done anytime from mid-spring through mid-summer as long as the soil is sufficiently moist (not saturated) to allow for tine penetration.

   Mow properly

   Make sure that your mower blades are sharp. A crisp cut will be healthier for the grass. Cut no more than one-third of the length of the leaf blade at one mowing. Mow to a minimum height of 1 to 1 ½ inches. Keep your grass longer in the spring and summer. Vary your mowing pattern.

   Water as needed

   If you’re establishing a new lawn with sprigs, make sure to keep them moist. To maintain a healthy root system and reduce weeds, water deeply (to a 4-inch depth) and infrequently. Warm-season grasses are relatively water efficient; however, newly established lawns should receive adequate water.

   Consider reducing the size of your lawn

   Turn a portion of your grass into a mulched area and plant some native plants there this fall. You’ll attract and nurture more wildlife than with an expanse of turfgrass.

3) Get advice from reputable sources

   Contact your local Virginia Cooperative Extension. The advice from Master Gardeners is free and most programs are free or at a nominal cost:

   Chesterfield County: (804) 751-4401
   Goochland County: (804) 556-5841
   Hanover County: (804) 752-4310
   Henrico County: (804) 501-5160
   Powhatan County: (804) 598-5640
   City of Richmond: (804) 786-4150

   Lela Martin is a Master Gardener with the Chesterfield County office of the Virginia Cooperative Extension.

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New documentary of Beatles’ ‘Let It Be’

By Hillel Italie

The Beatles’ farewell documentary “Let It Be” is getting an encore, and a reinvention. “Lord of the Rings” director Peter Jackson announced recently that he is making a new film out of some 55 hours of footage — shot in January 1969 — that has never been seen by the public.

The original movie, directed by Michael Lindsay-Hogg, came out soon after the Beatles broke up in 1970, and has long been viewed as a chronicle of the band members growing apart. In a Rolling Stone interview given months after the film’s release, John Lennon recalled the making of “Let It Be” as a miserable experience, “set-up by Paul (McCartney) for Paul.” That is one of the main reasons the Beatles ended. I can’t speak for George, but I pretty damn well know we got fed up of being side-men for Paul,” Lennon said.

But Jackson says the additional footage tells a very different story. “It’s simply an amazing historical treasure-trove,” he said. “Sure, there’s moments of drama — but none of the discord this project has long been associated with.”

For Jackson, the Beatles movie marks another turn to documentaries after his recent “They Shall Not Grow Old” — a film that brings World War I to life after the director restored heavily-damaged, grainy footage, transferred it into 3-D, and even used expert lip readers to restore lost dialogue.

He is working on “Let It Be” with the cooperation of McCartney, Ringo Starr, and Yoko Ono and Olivia Harrison, the widows of John Lennon and George Harrison.

The new project was announced on the 50th anniversary of one of the highlights of “Let It Be,” the Beatles’ spirited performance on the roof of Apple Records in London.

No release date has been set. A remastered version of the original film, which won an Oscar for best original score, also is planned.

Early signs of tension

In 1969, the movie was meant to show the Beatles turning away from the psychedelic tricks of “Sgt. Pepper” as they jam on new songs such as “I’ve Got a Feeling” and “Get Back.”

But the Beatles seem far older and wearier than the joyous mop tops of a few years earlier. Harrison briefly walked out during filming, and on camera argues with McCartney over a proposed guitar part.

Harrison would later blame tension with McCartney and unhappiness with Lennon’s then-new relationship with Ono, who is often by Lennon’s side in the movie.

“Paul wanted nobody to play on his songs until he decided how it should go. For me it was like: ‘What am I doing here? This is painful!’” Harrison said in an interview for a 1990s video anthology of the Beatles.

“Then superimposed on top of that was Yoko, and there were negative vibes at that time. John and Yoko were out on a limb. I don’t think he wanted much to be hanging out with us, and I think Yoko was pushing him out of the band, inasmuch as

See BEATLES, page 29

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Hollar exhibit

From page 26

Hollar’s prints even if they weren’t able to see them in person,” VMFA’s Yarger said.

“That remains the case today, since some of Hollar’s prints — including his visual representations of works by Hans Holbein and Parmigianino — are the only existing examples of works that have been lost or destroyed,” Yarger added. “We owe an immense debt of gratitude to Hollar.”

The museum’s gratitude extends to collector Frank Raynor, who donated nearly 2,500 prints by Hollar to the museum. [See sidebar]

“Frank Raynor’s collection of this master 17th-century printmaker’s works rivals those held by the British Museum and the Queen’s Collection in London as well as the National Gallery in Prague and the Fisher Library at the University of Toronto,” said VMFA Director Alex Nyerges at the exhibition’s opening. With Raynor’s gift, the VMFA becomes one of the world’s five major repositories for works by Hollar, an artist whose “encyclopedic eye” still sheds light on history.

The VMFA is located at 200 N. Boulevard in Richmond. It is open 365 days a year from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (until 9 p.m. on Thurs. and Fri.), and admission is free. The Hollar exhibition will be in the Evans Court Gallery through May 5.

For additional information about the exhibit and Hollar-related programs, visit www.VMFA.museum or call (804) 340-1400.

Beatles

From page 28

she didn’t want him hanging out with us.”

“Let It Be” didn’t come out until May 1970, and Rolling Stone publisher Jann Wenner would speak of Lennon “crying his eyes out” when the two saw it together.

Meanwhile, the accompanying album led to a bitter dispute between McCartney and his bandmates. The group had pushed aside longtime producer George Martin and brought in Phil Spector, who infuriated McCartney by adding strings and a choir to the ballad “The Long and Winding Road.”

In 2003, McCartney oversaw a new and sparer version of the album — “Let It Be... Naked.”

Last fall, McCartney hinted at the upcoming revision of the film. “I know people have been looking at the (unreleased) footage,” he said in an interview aired on Canada’s Radio X.

“And someone was talking to me the other day and said: ‘The overall feeling is very joyous and very uplifting. It’s like a bunch of guys making music and enjoying it.’” —AP

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Across
1. Neither masc. nor fem. 8. Boxer who said “I should be a postage stamp; that’s the only way I’ll ever get licked”
2. Small woods 9. The “A” in A.D.
4. “Have a cookie...” 11. It carries melted snow from the It’s impressionist painting
5. Carries melted snow from the Alps to the North Sea 12. See a therapist
6. See a therapist 13. Frugated grunt sound
7. Frugated grunt sound 14. Kosher’s contraction
8. Kosher’s contraction 15. Separate cards by suit
9. Separate cards by suit 16. Maydaly!, for example
10. Maydaly!, for example 17. Customer service query
11. Customer service query 18. Bake draft
12. Bake draft 19. Confirmed a password
20. Confirmed a password 21. Letters that start halfway into the puzzle’s shortcomings
22. Letters that start halfway into the puzzle’s shortcomings 23. Content of Mars’ Korolev Crater
24. Content of Mars’ Korolev Crater 25. Repeatedly overpaying for your prescriptions! SAVE!Call our licensed Canadian and International pharmacy, compare prices and get $25.00 OFF your first prescription! CALL 1-888-681-7675 Promo Code CDC201725 SO-

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