Fifty Plus

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Daphne Maxwell Reid — Not the retiring type

Richmond actress, author and advocate Daphne Maxwell Reid continues to act and serve on boards, but she also has branched out into photography and fashion, and published a cookbook/memoir last year.

Photo by Tim Reid

www.fiftyplusrichmond.com

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Your opinion, please

There’s only one thing that no one can give you or take away from you: your opinion. What you think in your mind and feel in your heart is uniquely and always yours. Your opinion might change from time to time, even from minute to minute. But at any point it’s still yours. And that’s something we should cherish.

Sometimes, however, we can feel we are being bombarded with opportunities to express our opinions, especially in a commercial or political context.

We shop in a retail store and the receipt invites us to go online to say how we feel about the salesperson. We order a product from Amazon and are asked to rate it or submit a comment. Especially during campaign seasons, we walk down the street and are asked to sign a petition or “answer a few questions” to help a pollster. We take a survey somewhere and find ourselves inundated with invitations to take more or join a focus group.

Yes, sometimes it seems overdone. Sometimes, in both business and political contexts, we might feel the requests are disingenuous. (“They don’t really care how I feel,” we might think. “They just want to use my opinion, if they like it, to influence others.”)

That could be true. But in most cases, I believe, businesses and political candidates really want to know what you think. A business can’t survive if it isn’t meeting the needs of its customers. A candidate or politician who wants to represent voters well needs to know what they think.

So try not to feel too jaded when asked for your opinion. Only you know what you think — until you are asked to express it. And that is when your opinion starts to make a difference elsewhere.

You oughta be in pictures

Speaking of surveys...

Here at Fifty Plus, we also frequently seek information from our readers regarding your views about our newspaper in general, as well as about particular articles, authors and events we sponsor, such as last year’s Celebration of the Arts.

We recently signed up for a new service that will allow you to respond to such survey questions via video. That way, we can both see and hear you sharing your opinion.

The idea for this service, called Talk Back Time, comes from a local senior with whom I’ve had the pleasure of working before, Allan Horlick. For a story about him and this new venture, see our Technology & Innovations section on page 4.

For now, we are eager to try it out. Will you help us? If so, using your smartphone camera scan the QR code (the box on the right), or using a tablet or a computer enabled with a camera (for Skype, for example) go to bit.ly/proudest, and after answering one question, you can tell us via video what you are most proud of in your life. You’ll have up to 30 seconds for your video.

Or if you prefer, you can share with us what you think about Fifty Plus, this column, or any other topic of the day that interests you.

We appreciate your reading Fifty Plus, and look forward to hearing — and seeing — what you have to say!

FROM THE PUBLISHER

By Stuart P. Rosenthal

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Sept. 19

AVOID MEDICARE FRAUD

Don’t get bamboozled by Medicare scams. Educate yourself at this free lecture about crimes that target older adults. Marly Santoro, director of the Virginia Senior Medicare Patrol Program, will teach you how to detect and report fraudsters. The information session at 10 a.m. on Thurs., Sept. 19, will be held at Southminster Presbyterian Church, 7500 Hull Street Rd., North Chesterfield. For more information, call (804) 768-7878.
Daphne Maxwell Reid enjoys the journey

By Catherine Brown

Though she recently turned 71, when actress Daphne Maxwell Reid appears at the Senior Connections’ Empty Plate Luncheon in Richmond on October 2, audience members shouldn’t expect the Richmond resident to talk about her quiet, peaceful retirement.

“I don’t retire,” Reid said. “I’ll take my pension, but I’ll still be busy.”

Reid has been busy for decades. After graduating from high school in New York, Reid left for Chicago to study architecture and interior design at Northwestern University, where she became the school’s first African American Homecoming Queen.

Before long, she found herself flying back and forth between New York and Chicago for modeling jobs, and she became the first black woman to appear on the cover of Glamour.

“I wasn’t thinking I had to be a model,” Reid said. “I thought, ‘This is fun, and when it stops being fun, I’ll do something else.’”

Unexpected success

She also had never planned to be an actress, despite having participated as a teenager in a group theater workshop in New York that became the Negro Ensemble Company.

“It was just fun,” Reid said. “A black woman could not make a living doing that in the 60s, so I didn’t even think about it.”

Reid may not have chosen the acting field, but the acting field chose her. Initially Reid scored her first television role on a 1979 NBC miniseries called “The Duke.” She worked with actor Robert Conrad on that show for about a year before he moved to Los Angeles.

When Reid’s marriage broke up a short time later, the trajectory of her life changed. She ventured to Los Angeles and reconnected with Conrad, who hired her for a new series, “A Man Called Sloane.” This time, Reid hired an agent.

“This happened to be a time in L.A. when there were not a lot of black women working, and they were testing the waters,” Reid said. “There weren’t a lot of people like me, so I got opportunities.”

Reid kept getting work without having to look too hard for it. “It was as easy as I’m making it sound because of the opportunities that presented themselves,” Reid said. “Actors have to wait to be chosen.”

A life partner

A life-changing event occurred when Reid reconnected with Tim Reid, an actor and director also working in L.A. The two had met before in Chicago, but both were married at the time and Reid admits she didn’t find Tim all that interesting.

This time, though, they went on what was supposed to be a five-minute date. That five-minute date lasted for five hours. The two married in 1982, and this year will celebrate their 37th anniversary.

With her husband, Reid appeared on “WKRP in Cincinnati” and “Simon & Simon” and then “Frank’s Place,” written by Tim Reid and Hugh Wilson. She describes that show as having the “richest, most delectable cast, words and situations.”

She went on to appear on many famous shows in the 70s and 80s, including “Hill Street Blues,” “Cagney & Lacey,” “The A-Team” and “Murder, She Wrote.”

Then came the show Reid is most well-known for: “The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air,” starring Will Smith.

“That was the one gig that didn’t come easily, Reid remembers. She had the opportunity to audition for the show in its early years, but in 1990 she was overwhelmed after shooting 72 one-hour episodes of “The Tim and Daphne Show,” so she declined.

Three years later, the opportunity arose again. The actress playing Vivian Banks left, and Reid was asked to audition.

“It took me two and a half weeks and about four auditions to get that part,” Reid recalled. “And I was so happy to get that job, I cried.”

Reid loved working on “The Fresh Prince” for its last three seasons, and she made connections with people who remain a central part of her life decades later. Even today, fans who meet her ask, “Mind if I call you Aunt Viv?”

She recently filmed a role in Harriet, an upcoming film about Harriet Tubman directed by Kasi Lemmons, whom she knew in LA.

For the past couple of years, she has appeared on “Jacklyn and Jilly” as the mother of director and actress Victoria Rowell. That hasn’t been too much of a stretch: Reid played Rowell’s mother in a film years before, and it turns out the two are distant cousins.

Reid is excited to see more black female producers and directors like Lemmons and Rowell. “It’s the empowerment we’ve been waiting for, and I want them to keep running with it,” Reid said.

“I can run with them for a little bit, but when it stops being fun, I’ll do something else.”

Giving back

Instead of acting, Reid has given much of her time and gifts to the community. She served on the board of Virginia State University for eight years, as well as on the board of Virginia Humanities. She is currently on the board of ChildFund International and the Richmond Ballet.

While working and volunteering, Reid has also used her skills to design and make clothing, and she has published a cookbook/memoir.

An avid traveler, Reid is also now a photographer. For years, she would take photos of the doors she saw while traveling abroad.

“Friends will be walking along the street with me,” Reid said, “and I will have run down an alley because I saw a door and wanted to take a picture.”

Encouraged by friends and family to take her photography seriously, Reid exhibited and sold her work, created postcards of her images, and published four books of doors from different travel destinations.

After a few years of community endeavors, including their new clothing lines, Reid and her husband, Tim Reid, are shown here at a 2014 reunion of television sitcom “WKRP in Cincinnati.” Married for 37 years, the couple serves on the boards of Richmond nonprofits and continues to pursue creative endeavors.
Tech startup aims to bring surveys to life

By Margaret Foster

Allan Horlick enjoyed a whirlwind career as a television producer that had taken him from managing the NBC television station in Washington, D.C., to launching CNBC and NBC Europe, based in London, and then serving as president of CNBC and NBC Asia from Hong Kong, and then serving as president of a local Starbucks. Five years ago, Horlick met former colleague Bob Okun for coffee, and Okun mentioned an idea to capture voter feedback about the presidential campaign via video.

“Thatheservation morphed into a company we started called Voteand-Video.com,” Horlick said, which became “the first iteration of what we’re doing now.”

The two started shopping their new idea to potential investors. Last year, they received a significant financial investment that enabled them to launch TalkBack-Time this past June.

Companies who use the service pay a monthly subscription fee. Customer service surveys are very common today, Horlick pointed out. “Every time I buy a meal, I’m asked to take a survey.”

While simple check-off-your-answer surveys provide “quantitative data,” such as how many people bought a product, they don’t provide “qualitative data,” the kind of information you can gather from a focus group or a conversation.

Videos that can convey a customer’s body language, expression and tone of voice provide much more of the latter than a traditional written or telephone survey could ever capture.

“To be able to look into the face of someone who probably is really happy with you — or really mad at you — you’re going to get a real sense of how they feel,” Horlick said.


Introducing ZOOMER!

The powerful, portable, folding mobility chair that offers easy one-handed operation

“I haven’t been this excited about something since I got my first bicycle!”

Remember when you were a child and got your first bicycle? I do. It gave me a sense of independence … I felt like I could go anywhere, and it was so much easier and more enjoyable than walking. Well, at my age, that bike wouldn’t do me much good. Fortunately, there’s a new invention that gives me the freedom and independence to go wherever I want … safely and easily. It’s called the Zoomer, and it’s changed my life.

If you are one of the countless Americans who need a little help getting around, there is a safe, simple and easy-to-use solution … the Zoomer. It is propelled by small yet powerful dual motors for speeds of 3.7 miles per hour over a variety of terrains, on up to a 10 degree incline. Its innovative airline-safe Lithium Ion battery enables you to go 8 miles on a single charge, and the automatic electromagnetic brakes let you stop on a dime.

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Footrest

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How to outsmart smartphone scammers

By Sean Pyles

Your smartphone is your confidante, your hand-held connection to the world — and one of your biggest vulnerabilities.

Scammers can take advantage of day-to-day tasks that seem innocuous, such as checking a bank balance or charging a phone at a public USB port, to exploit personal information for their profit.

To keep that data safe, start by understanding the threats. Your phone has three main areas of vulnerability: its hardware, its software and your phone number. Each carries a risk, but there are steps you can take to mitigate them.

Hardware vulnerability

A four-digit passcode alone isn’t enough to secure your phone from intruders.

One weakness comes from the charging port. Think twice before plugging into a public USB jack for a quick charge at a cafe or airport.

“Any time you’re using a mobile port, you can be vulnerable to viruses or malware if you’re sharing it with other people who are plugging in their devices,” said Lisa Schifferle, ID theft program manager at the Federal Trade Commission.

Using a public charging port at an airport is like “finding a toothbrush on the floor.”

Software and network risks

Hackers can modify these ports to install malware software, or “malware,” on your phone. Once installed, it can transfer your phone’s data to hackers. The hacked USB ports can also directly suck up your phone’s information.

To avoid the risk, use your USB cord with your own charging block that can plug into a standard electrical outlet, or use an external battery pack (which are convenient for recharging anywhere).

For daily security, go beyond the four-digit passcode if possible, said Gary Davis, chief consumer security evangelist at the cybersecurity company McAfee.

“Passcodes aren’t as effective as biometrics, like fingerprint readers or facial recognition software, because people can do shoulder surfing to see your passcode and get into your phone if they steal it,” he said.

Phone number scams

Scammers can also target your personal information using unsecured wireless networks and software vulnerabilities.

— Network risks: Be wary of public Wi-Fi networks. “We advise against using public Wi-Fi, but if you’re going to use it, avoid logging in to sensitive accounts,” said Allen Spence, director of product leadership at IDShield, an identity theft protection company.

To protect yourself from using insecure Wi-Fi networks, adjust your phone settings to avoid auto-connecting to Wi-Fi.

— Software: Hackers can exploit vulnerabilities in phone software. Schifferle of the FTC suggests consumers routinely check for and download software updates for their phones, because updates often include security patches.

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Why can’t I hear what’s being said on TV?

Advertorial

If you notice you have trouble hearing the TV clearly, and specifically dialogue, you are not alone.

Part of the difficulty has to do with variations in the quality of the audio, which is mixed for each individual program or television channel. Movies are also mastered differently for audio.

Essentially this means that when watching TV, even with perfect hearing, you can expect a great deal of variability in the clarity of the TV audio, including the level of sound effects, music and, of course, dialogue.

The other factor is that all of the original mixing of television audio is done for those with normal hearing. The bottom line is, TV audio is often poorly mixed, with many movies and programs not well produced for those with even mild hearing loss.

Hearing loss and television listening

When we combine this problem with mild hearing loss, or a more significant level of hearing loss, the result is enormous difficulty hearing television dialogue clearly, and often the need to turn the television volume up above the preferred level of others in the house.

Hearing specialist Don Hudson says troubleshooting hearing is one of the strongest complaints by those with hearing loss. “Even those with the very best hearing aids often complain that television dialogue is unclear, and their family complains if the TV volume is turned up.”

Unfortunately, turning the TV volume up, or even purchasing a TV amplifying system, often doesn’t result in a significant improvement in clarity for the listener. Of course, this also presents a problem in the household for others who are disturbed by the loud volume of the TV.

Why aren’t my hearing aids helping?

Hearing aids work with the signal they receive from the air. For those with hearing loss and hearing aids, and even those with normal hearing, the listener is always at a disadvantage as sound waves get distorted as they leave the TV speakers. This is why many people complain that hearing aids don’t work for the TV.

Many assistive listening devices are available. The TV Voice Pro wireless system was developed by two prominent hearing specialists and audio engineers based on extensive client-centered audiology experience and clinical hearing test results. More than 1,000 audiograms were analyzed to enable the development of the best TV headphone sound quality for those with hearing loss.

TV Voice Pro uses wireless technology to deliver optimized TV audio directly to your ears. Following a complete recalibration and optimization of the television audio, the TV Voice Pro system transmits the audio signal directly from your TV audio output to the TV Voice Pro headset in digital form. The result is crystal clear television audio for the wearer.

How the whole family benefits from TV Voice Pro

TV Voice Pro allows the wearer to listen at their own volume, while the rest of the family can listen to television at their preferred volume or even turn it off entirely.

The TV Voice Pro can even be used from a distance, meaning the wearer can move into another room close by and still hear the television through the headset.

All TV Voice Pro system earpieces sit within the ear canal. The shape of the earpieces ensures optimal sound and audio clarity is delivered at the eardrum, and results in an enhanced TV watching experience for the user.

The device is rechargeable and guaranteed to connect to any television.

TV Voice Pro is $299 and is sold with a 30-day money back guarantee, free shipping and a one-year warranty. The company stands by its excellent customer service.

$40 Gift Voucher: As a Special Offer, Fifty Plus readers can use the code BEACON at the TV Voice Pro website checkout, or over the phone, for a further $40 off the purchase price of $299, valid until October 15th 2019. Your cost: only $259.

For more information, or to order TV Voice Pro, visit tvvoicepro.com or call (415) 277-2026.
When the hospital kicks you out, where do you go? Some options

IS ADDICTION FOREVER?
A former opioid addict explains how it’s possible to overcome addictions

By Uma Naidoo, M.D.

The human microbiome, or gut environment, is a community of different bacteria that has co-evolved with humans to be beneficial to both humans and the bacteria.

Researchers agree that an individual’s unique microbiome is created within the first 1,000 days of life, but there are things you can do to alter your gut environment throughout life.

In the relatively new field of nutritional psychiatry, we help patients understand how gut health and diet can positively or negatively affect their mood.

How are gut and mood related?

When we consider the connection between the brain and the gut, it’s important to know that 90% of serotonin receptors are located in the gut. (Serotonin, sometimes called a feel-good hormone, is a neurotransmitter associated with appetite, digestion, mood, sleep and more.)

When someone is prescribed an antidepressant such as a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI), the most common side effects are gut-related, and many people temporarily experience nausea, diarrhea or gastrointestinal problems.

There is anatomical and physiologic two-way communication between the gut and brain via the vagus nerve. The gut-brain axis offers us a greater understanding of the connection between diet and disease, including depression and anxiety.

When the balance between the good and bad bacteria in our bodies is disrupted, diseases may occur. Examples of such diseases include: inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), asthma, obesity, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, and cognitive and mood problems. For example, IBD is caused by dysfunction in the interactions between microbes (bacteria), the gut lining and the immune system.

Ultra-processed foods

What we eat affects our gut environment and increases our risk of diseases. It can also affect our mood.

Ultra-processed foods contain substances extracted from food (such as sugar and starch), added from food constituents (hydrogenated fats), or made in a laboratory (flavor enhancers, food colorings).

It’s important to know that ultra-processed foods, such as fast foods, are manufactured to be extra tasty by the use of such ingredients or additives, and are cost effective to the consumer. Therefore, these foods are very common in the typical Western diet.

Some examples of processed foods are canned foods, sugar-coated dried fruits and salted meat products.

Some examples of ultra-processed foods are soda, sugary or savory packaged snack foods, packaged breads, buns and pastries, fish or chicken nuggets and instant noodle soups.

Researchers recommend “fixing the food first” (in other words, what we eat) before trying gut modifying-therapies (probiotics, prebiotics) to improve how we feel.

They suggest eating whole foods and avoiding processed and ultra-processed foods, which we know cause inflammation and disease.

Diet and depression

A recent study suggests that eating a healthy, balanced diet such as the Mediterranean diet, and avoiding inflammation-producing foods, may be protective.

By Eric Holbrook, M.D.

When your sense of smell lets you down

By Eric Holbrook, M.D.

We spend our days interacting with the world around us through our senses of sight, sound and touch.

But anyone who has developed complete nasal obstruction from an infection or severe allergies has experienced what it’s like to be without one of our most basic senses: our sense of smell.

In other animals, the sense of smell is crucial for survival, reproduction and rearing of young. Although humans can survive without smell, research has shown that losing the sense of smell negatively impacts quality of life, even driving some people toward clinical depression.

Just as other animals depend on their sense of smell as an alarm system for danger, we also depend on smell to warn us of such hazards as smoke from a fire, natural gas leaks in the home or spoiled food. Also, the flavor of a meal depends heavily on our ability to smell.

Scents round out our experiences and are often integral parts of our memory of events. Memories of a perfume worn by your spouse or the bread being baked at your grandmother’s house when you were a child last for decades, and are often intricately tied in with strong emotions.

Problem is fairly common

Smell disorders affect 19% of the population over the age of 20 and 25% of the population over 53. If smell loss from aging alone is considered, one out of eight people between 53 and 91 will be affected over a five-year period.

The detrimental effect of smell loss on flavor of food could significantly impact how older adults, for whom diet and nutrition may already be a concern.

The sense of smell (olfaction) is dependent on millions of specialized nerve cells that are located in a deep protected recess high in the nasal cavity. Remarkably, these nerve cells normally die and are replaced throughout our lifetime. Therefore, the system has the capacity to repair itself after injury. But this isn’t always possible or complete.

The most common causes of prolonged smell loss occur as a result of upper respiratory infection, head injury, chronic sinus disease and aging. However, other conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease and tumors can also be associated with smell loss.

In some cases, the loss of smell is complete (anosmia), while in other cases there is only a partial loss (hyposmia).

In many instances where smell loss occurs, remaining smells are distorted. Most patients report that these distorted odors are unpleasant: “smoky,” “swamp-like,” “musty,” “garbage” or “chemical-like.”

Treating the condition

In cases where smell loss results from sinus disease, doctors have had some success in treating the condition. Oral and topical steroids often provide relief. Sometimes surgery is required to reduce the obstruction of odors to the sensory nerve cells.

Sinus disease usually requires long-term management, and fluctuations in the ability to smell are common.

Unfortunately, people with loss of smell resulting from head injury, upper respiratory infection or aging don’t often improve.

The natural ability of the olfactory system to repair itself allows for some patients to regain the sense of smell after a respiratory infection-related loss or head injury. This recovery can take over a year, and can be so gradual that people have difficulty recognizing the change.

If you experience any persistent change in your sense of smell, visit your doctor. Some rare forms of smell disorders may result from tumors in the brain, neurodegenerative disease or infection.

In addition, your doctor should talk to you about risks, such as depression and nutritional concerns that may stem from loss of smell.

Ongoing scientific work is investigating how stem cells in the nose replace dying olfactory nerve cells. In the future, we will be able to trigger these cells to make more neurons, or replace missing stem cells to regenerate the neurons.

Or we may be able to electrically stimulate a sensation of smell using an artificial implant.

Eric Holbrook, M.D., is a contributor to Harvard Health Publications.

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We should be careful about using food as the only treatment for mood, and when we talk about mood problems, we are referring to mild and moderate forms of depression and anxiety.

In other words, food is not going to impact serious forms of depression and thoughts of suicide. Seek treatment in an emergency room or contact your doctor if you are experiencing thoughts about harming yourself.

For a healthier gut and better mood
Eat whole foods and avoid packaged or processed foods, which are high in unwanted food additives and preservatives that disrupt the healthy bacteria in the gut. Instead of vegetable or fruit juice, consider increasing your intake of fresh fruits and vegetables. Frozen fruits without added sugars/additives are a good choice, too. Eat enough fiber and include whole grains and legumes in your diet. Include probiotic-rich foods, such as plain yogurt without added sugars. To reduce sugar intake at breakfast, add cinnamon to plain yogurt with berries, or to oatmeal or chia pudding.

Adding fermented foods such as kefir (unsweetened), sauerkraut or kimchi can be helpful to maintain a healthy gut. Eat a balance of seafoods and lean poultry, and less red meat each week. Add a range of colorful fresh fruits and vegetables to your diet, and consider choosing certain organic produce.

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Q: During a recent visit I noticed that my local pharmacy was advertising the flu shot. Is it too early to get the vaccine? What else can I do to prevent getting the flu?

A: It is not too early to receive your flu shot! Flu season occurs during the fall and winter months and typically peaks between December and February.

After you receive the flu shot, your body’s immune system takes about two weeks to fully respond and for you to be protected. Therefore, it is best to get vaccinated early in the fall, before flu season begins.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend that most people get a flu vaccine by the end of October.

The most important step to protecting against the flu is to get vaccinated. The CDC recommends a flu shot each year for everyone six months of age and older. Beyond getting your flu shot, you can protect yourself against the flu by:

—Avoiding direct contact with others who are sick
—Staying home if you are sick to prevent spreading the flu to others
—Washing your hands with soap and water to reduce the spread of the flu and other germs. If soap and water are not available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
—Covering your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing
—Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
—Encouraging your loved ones to get vaccinated

There are a number of common misconceptions about the flu vaccine. Let’s take a look at some.

“The flu shot can give you the flu.”
Flu shots have been designed so they do not cause the flu. Flu shots that are administered with a needle are currently made in one of two ways: With influenza (flu) viruses that have been killed, or with a single gene from the influenza virus, instead of the whole virus.

Both of these ways allow your body to safely produce an immune response to protect you from the flu without actually making you sick.

You may have a sore arm, a mild headache or other “flu-like” symptoms after getting your vaccine, which some people mistakenly think is the flu. However, most people get the vaccine with minimal to no side effects.

“My friend got a flu shot and still got sick. The flu shot doesn’t work.”
It is possible to be exposed to the flu before getting the vaccine or after, during the two-week period that it takes the body to develop immune protection. Most people develop flu within one to four days after being in contact with the virus. If exposed during these times, a person may get the flu.

Also, while the CDC and vaccine developers do their best to anticipate what types, or strains, of flu will be most common each year, there’s always a chance an unexpected strain that wasn’t in the vaccine becomes widespread.

“I got a flu shot last year. I don’t need one this year.”
The CDC recommends a flu shot every year even if the viruses that the vaccine protects against have not changed. Your body’s immune protection from the flu vaccine decreases over time, so getting a vaccine each year is the best way to protect yourself from the flu.

Many people get sick from the flu each year. Older people in particular are at risk from the disease and its complications.

These days a lot of pharmacies offer no-waiting flu shots right in the store, and many insurance programs cover most or all of the cost. If you have questions, be sure to ask your pharmacist.

Carolyn Hill is a fourth-year Pharm.D student at VCU School of Pharmacy. She majored in biochemistry at the University of Virginia. Her areas of interest include internal medicine and critical care.

Note: Fifty Plus’s parent publication, The Beacon, is sponsoring a free 50+Expo on Sunday, Sept. 22 at the Springfield Town Center in Springfield, VA. Please come and bring your friends.

At that event, Giant Pharmacy will be providing the following vaccinations: flu (regular and high-dose versions); pneumonia, tetanus and shingles (the new Shingrix vaccine).

Medicare and most insurances cover the flu and pneumonia shots; the others may require a co-pay, depending on your insurance. Please bring your Medicare and/or insurance card with you.

Also learn from our keynote speaker about Virginia’s new regulations allowing for medical cannabis and CBD oil in appropriate cases. See back page for more information about the 50+Expo.
A guide to grains for eating healthily

By Heidi McIndoo

Grains can be confusing. We hear “eat more whole grains” and then “cut out grains.” What should we actually be doing?

Grains are loaded with nutrients, including B vitamins and carbohydrates, your body’s main source of energy.

In addition, whole grains such as oats and brown rice are good sources of fiber, protein and even more vitamins and minerals. It’s recommended that at least half of your daily grains be whole grains.

Eat, but don’t overdo

The concern with grains isn’t so much that they aren’t nutritious. It’s the quantity consumed. A serving of up to one cup of grains provides beneficial nutrients. However, larger servings may contain more calories than needed daily from the grain group.

Grains are pretty easy to prepare — boil a liquid, add the grain, simmer — ta da! These days it’s even easier with the wide array of microwaveable pouches and cups on the market.

But how do these “instant grains” compare to traditionally prepared grains? Should they be included in a healthy eating plan?

As long as you stick to the basic grains, those without flavors or seasonings added, instant grains are comparable to traditional grains, nutritionally speaking. In fact, being able to heat up a pouch of brown rice or steel cut oats in 60 to 90 seconds, versus the longer simmering process of traditional cooking, may make including them in your diet much easier.

Helpful hints

Keep these ideas in mind the next time you pick up some instant grains:

—Season yourself. Flavored savory grains can be full of sodium. Your best bet is buying them plain and adding your own sodium-free herbs and spices.

—Don’t be heavy handed while dishing out. Most serving sizes for these are one cup. This is a decent amount for a side dish, it may be less than you are used to when compared to serving out of a large pot of rice or other grain.

—Sweetness. Flavored instant oats can provide substantial amounts of sugar. Some have nearly 5 teaspoons of sugar in one cup. Stick to the unflavored and sprinkle on your favorite spices or drizzle with a bit of maple syrup.

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How to find the right post-hospital care

By Eleanor Laise

For patients and their families, a hospital stay can be a confusing and stressful time. But for hospitalized Medicare beneficiaries who are very sick or have complex needs, the question of where to go after the hospital may be even more difficult.

Patients who need continued care after a hospital stay are destined for “post-acute care” — skilled nursing or therapy services that may be provided by long-term-care hospitals, nursing homes, inpatient rehab facilities or home health agencies. When it comes to picking the right post-acute care provider, however, patients and their loved ones are often left largely on their own. They may also be under intense deadline pressure, as a hospital discharge can come with less than a day’s notice.

Asking the doctor or hospital staff for guidance may be of little use. Medicare rules prevent hospitals from making specific post-acute care recommendations. And “there’s not a lot of clinical consensus about what setting is right for what patients,” said Brian McGarry, a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard Medical School.

Recent studies, meanwhile, raise new questions about the cost and quality of care in long-term-care hospitals, where some of the sickest patients are sent for post-acute care.

A study published by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), for example, called long-term-care hospitals “a case study in waste,” finding that patients discharged to these facilities owe more money out of pocket but don’t spend less time in institutional care or have better outcomes as a result.

A significant number need it

About 40% of Medicare beneficiaries who are discharged from a hospital receive post-acute care, which costs Medicare about $60 billion a year, according to the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission.

The quality of that care is critical: A bungled transition to a lower-quality provider could mean more days in the facility, deteriorating health, and a return trip to the hospital.

Patients with serious health conditions should understand the types of post-acute care providers that operate in their area and plan in advance when possible, researching local facilities’ quality of care, special services provided and potential out-of-pocket costs.

Here’s a look at the issues facing the sickest Medicare patients and tips for navigating post-hospital care:

Some of the most complex patients, including those who have traumatic brain injury or need prolonged mechanical ventilation, may be sent to long-term-care hospitals.

Because of a regulatory quirk, Medicare under certain circumstances pays long-term-care hospitals much higher rates than other post-acute care providers — and recent studies question whether the quality of care is worth the extra cost.

In 2014, the average long-term-care hospital stay was 26 days and cost Medicare $36,000 — three times as much as the average skilled-nursing-facility stay, which spanned 25 days, according to the NBER paper.

Patients discharged to a long-term-care hospital also owe an additional $2,420 out of pocket, but they get no clear benefit, the study found. A long-term-care hospital stay doesn’t improve patients’ odds of returning home within 90 days or reduce their mortality risk, according to the study.

High rate of injury

What’s more, nearly half of Medicare patients in long-term-care hospitals suffered harm resulting from their medical care, such as pressure ulcers or infections caused by contaminated equipment, according to a 2018 report by the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Inspector General.

The high rate of harm can be partly explained by the fact that patients have longer stays in long-term-care hospitals. The rate of harm per 1,000 days was still higher in long-term-care hospitals than in rehab hospitals or nursing homes, the inspector general found, but lower than in acute-care hospitals.

Given that long-term-care hospitals treat very sick patients, “the risks have to go up,” said Dr. John Votto, the industry’s chief medical officer. But in its own study, the industry found that a long-term-care hospital stay may improve outcomes for some patients, Koenig said.

As for the overall cost, he said, patients who wind up in these facilities are also more...
expensive in the 90 days before they enter post-acute care. “These patients are sick and expensive no matter where they go,” he said.

Plan ahead if possible

The choice of a post-acute care provider can be daunting even for healthcare experts. Lynn Rogut, director of quality measurement and care transformation at the United Hospital Fund, a New York nonprofit focused on improving healthcare, was a caregiver for her mother, father and aunt for more than a decade. Yet no hospital staff ever had a detailed discussion with her about how to choose post-acute care, she said.

At one point, her father was given 24-hours’ notice of hospital discharge, and she was handed a list of 30 facilities in Palm Beach County, Fla. — an area unfamiliar to her. “I’m sitting there paralyzed in the hospital room,” she said, “thinking, ‘Now what am I going to do?’”

Under Medicare regulations, hospitals are required to provide beneficiaries a list of nearby post-acute care providers, but they generally can’t recommend specific ones. Hospitals may have a financial incentive to discharge patients to a long-term-care hospital, so “you’re rolling the patient to this different facility that is in the same building, and suddenly Medicare is making much larger payments,” said Neale Mahoney, an economics professor at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and co-author of the NBER paper.

The hospital industry says it’s focused on treating patients in the right setting at the right time. “We support a patient-centered approach regarding the timing of discharges,” said Rochelle Archuleta, policy director at the American Hospital Association.

In recent years, many hospitals have established networks of preferred post-acute care providers. Patients and families should ask, “What criteria do you use to make this preferred provider list?” Koenig said.

Choices may be limited

No matter what guidance you receive from the hospital, understand your rights. If you have traditional Medicare, you have the freedom to choose any post-acute care provider that participates in Medicare — theoretically.

In reality, your options may be limited by the availability of beds and the fact that providers don’t have an obligation to accept every patient that’s referred to them.

If you have a Medicare Advantage plan, you’ll want to choose a provider that’s within your plan’s network to control your out-of-pocket costs.

When possible, start planning early. “Do some research on post-acute care providers while you’re well,” Rogut suggested. Medicare.gov offers comparison tools for long-term-care hospitals, nursing homes, inpatient rehab facilities and home health agencies.

Recent changes to Medicare’s Nursing Home Compare tool make it more useful for people researching post-acute care providers. In April, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services created a separate quality rating for short-stay nursing home residents. Rather than focusing on a nursing home’s overall star rating, people shopping for post-acute care should pay particular attention to the short-stay rating and some of the quality measures that comprise it, McGarry said, such as the percentage of short-stay residents who were rehospitalized.

Ask whether the facilities on your short list provide any specialized services you might need, such as on-site dialysis or dementia care, said Kristina Ramos-Callan, program manager at the United Hospital Fund. If there’s no dialysis available for a patient who needs it, she said, “a family member is going to have to do a lot of coordination of transport between the facility and a dialysis center and back again.”

October, the On the Air Radio Players will present a live radio show of original scripts from the early days of radio. Come join the audience at two free tapings on Tues. and Wed., Oct. 8 and 9, at 7:30 p.m. at the Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen, 2880 Mountain Rd., Glen Allen. For more information, call (804) 501-5138.

October, the Whiskey Rebellion will play at the Henrico Theatre, 305 E. Nine Mile Rd., Henrico, on Sat., Oct. 12, at 7 p.m. Tickets are $10. For more information, call (804) 652-1460.

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Is true recovery from addiction possible?

By Peter Grinspoon

I am now 11 years into recovery from my battle with opiate addiction, and I have always been fascinated with two related questions: Is there truly such a thing as an “addictive personality,” and do people substitute one addiction for another?

The addictive personality myth

The writer and television personality Anthony Bourdain, who killed himself last year, was criticized by some for recreationally using alcohol and cannabis, in what was seemingly a very controlled and responsible manner, decades after he quit heroin and cocaine.

Was this a valid criticism? Can a person who was addicted to drugs or alcohol in their teens safely have a glass of wine with dinner in their middle age?

It depends on which model of addiction and recovery you subscribe to. If you are a traditionalist who believes that addiction can be to either a substance or a process: gambling, eating, video game playing, Internet use, sex, work, religion, exercise or compulsive spending.)

The avoidance tactic seemed to make sense, as a person would have the same lifelong predispositions to an addiction: Genetic makeup, childhood traumas, diagnoses of anxiety or depression — all of which could plausibly set them up to become addicted to, say, alcohol, once they have put in the hard work to get their heroin addiction under control.

In medical terms, different addictions can have a common final pathway in the mesolimbic dopamine system (the reward system of our brain), so it is logical that the body might try to find a second pathway to satisfy these hungry neurotransmitters if the first one is blocked — a “cross-addiction.”

While in rehab, though, I was told a lot of other things that turned out to have no basis in scientific evidence. For example, I was told on a daily basis that “a drug is a drug.”

This mentality doesn’t allow for a difference between, for example, the powerful opiate fentanyl, which kills thousands of people every year, and buprenorphine (Suboxone) which is a widely-accepted treatment for opioid use disorder.

I have come to believe that an uncompromising “abstinence-only” model is a holdover from the very beginnings of the recovery movement, almost 100 years ago, and our understanding has greatly evolved since then.

The concepts of addiction and recovery that made sense in 1935, when Alcoholics Anonymous was founded, and which have been carried on by tradition, might not hold true in the modern age of neurochemistry and functional MRIs.

That said, mutual help groups today do have a place in some people’s recovery and they can encourage the work of changing and maintaining change.

Ways to avoid new addictions

No one definitively knows the answer about whether people substitute addictions. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, “A previous substance use disorder is a risk factor for future development of substance use disorder (SUD).”

On the other hand, “it is also possible that someone who once had an SUD but doesn’t currently have one has a balance of risk and protective genetic and environmental factors that could allow for alcohol consumption without developing an AUD [alcohol use disorder].”

One study published in JAMA in 2014 showed that, “As compared with those who do not recover from an SUD, people who recover have less than half the risk of developing a new SUD. Contrary to clinical lore, achieving remission does not typically lead to drug substitution, but rather is associated with a lower risk of new SUD onset.”

The authors of this study suggest that factors such as “coping strategies, skills and motivation of individuals who recover from an SUD may protect them from the onset of a new SUD.”

In other words, by making the life-affirming transition from addicted to recovered, we gain a recovery “toolbox” that helps us navigate life’s challenges and stresses in a healthier way.

We learn to connect with people, push our egos aside, and to ask for help if we need it. We might respond by exercising or calling a friend. As such, we substitute addictions with healthier activities that perform the function that the drink or drug used to.

People grow and change

We continue to add to our coping skills.
Sweet and spicy Indian turkey burgers

Sweet, spicy, fruity and jammy, mango chutney is a powerhouse ingredient common in Indian cuisine that can liven up even the most mild-mannered of dishes.

We first tried packing some chutney into our Classic Turkey Burgers by mixing it with the ground turkey, but the chutney’s high sugar content caused the patties to burn. Simply moving the chutney from inside the burger to on top of it solved the problem.

To complement the chutney, we added some garam masala (a popular Indian spice mixture) to the ground turkey, as well as a pinch of cayenne for a little fire. Stirring a little melted butter into the turkey mixture prevented the meat from drying out during cooking, and some Worcestershire sauce added extra flavor. A little mayonnaise generally goes a long way on a burger, but you can opt for creamy Greek yogurt instead, which nicely complements the other components.

We piled on some crunchy red onion for its savory allium flavor and sprigs of cilantro for a final fresh note.

Be sure to use 93% lean ground turkey, not 99% fat-free ground turkey breast, or the burgers will be tough.

Spiced Turkey Burgers with Mango Chutney

Servings: 4

Directions:

Break ground turkey into small pieces in large bowl. Add melted butter or margarine, Worcestershire, garam masala, cayenne, and pepper and gently knead with hands until well combined.

Divide turkey mixture into 4 equal portions, then gently shape each portion into 3/4-inch-thick patty. Using your fingertips, press center of each patty down until about 1/2-inch-thick, creating slight divot.

Season patties with salt. Heat oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Transfer patties to skillet, divot side up, and cook until well browned on first side, 4 to 6 minutes. Flip patties, reduce heat to medium-low, and continue to cook until browned on second side and meat registers 160 degrees F, 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer burgers to platter and let rest for 5 minutes.

Spread mayo or yogurt on bun bottoms and arrange lettuce on top. Serve burgers on buns, topped with chutney, onion, and cilantro.

Nutrition information per serving: 457 calories; 208 calories from fat; 23 g. fat (7 g. saturated; 0 g. trans fats); 121 mg. cholesterol; 787 mg. sodium; 31 g. carbohydrate; 1 g. fiber; 4 g. sugar; 32 g. protein.

— America’s Test Kitchen

Addiction

From page 12

toolbox throughout life, so the unhappy 18-year-old who is struggling is not the well-adjusted 50-year-old who has worked through many of their problems, or who has improved their life circumstances.

People aren’t static, which is what reminds us to never give up hope when dealing with an addicted loved one, no matter how dire the circumstances appear to be.

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FREE FOLK FESTIVAL

This year’s popular Richmond Folk Festival will take place on Fri., Oct. 11 through Sun., Oct. 13. Set up your picnic and listen to free live music on 30 stages situated between 2nd and 7th Streets and from Byrd Street to the James River. For the performance schedule and other information, visit richmondfolkfestival.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Oct. 11+

Are You A Veteran?

Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center is a Long-Term Care & Short-Term Rehab Facility that opened in January 2008. This facility was built specifically for our Virginia Veterans. Located conveniently on the campus of the McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond, Virginia, this state-of-the-art facility is owned and operated by the Virginia Department of Veterans Services.

Call today to schedule an appointment or tour (804) 489-5713 www.JenCareMed.com

4 Richmond Area Locations

COLONIAL HEIGHTS
524 Southpark Blvd.

HULL STREET
6530 Hull Street Rd.

MECHANICSVILLE
3806 Mechanicsville Turnpike

SHOCKOE BOTTOM
1712 E Broad Street
Wouldn’t it be wonderful to be able to nip Alzheimer’s disease in the bud before it got started — or at least nab it in its early stages? This has, of course, been the dream of researchers and medical professionals for several decades. Now it appears the dream might soon become a reality.

Last month, an article published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences reported on the findings of a research study, conducted at the University of Washington in Seattle, which tested the effectiveness of a new synthetic protein in stopping the progression of Alzheimer’s in its early stages.

The study targeted beta-amyloid, which is thought to be responsible for memory loss and general cognitive decline.

**False start**

For several decades, it was thought that the beta-amyloid plaques — the large clumps of beta-amyloid that accumulate around neurons — were the cause of the classic symptoms associated with Alzheimer’s.

However, over the past few years, evidence has been mounting that the plaques themselves are not the culprit. The toxicity of beta-amyloid lies in an earlier stage of the process of plaque formation.

Beta-amyloid in its simplest form is called a “monomer.” Monomers clump together to form what are called “oligomers.” The oligomers go on to form larger units known as “fibrils,” which then cluster together and form plaques.

The only stage in which beta-amyloid is harmful appears to be in the oligomer stage. Not only do oligomers cause damage to neurons (brain cells), but one form of oligomer is capable of spreading by converting surrounding non-toxic monomers into toxic oligomers. This ability to act as a “seed” from which new toxic oligomers spring is perhaps the most dangerous aspect of beta-amyloid oligomers.

Another aspect of beta-amyloid oligomer activity is its association with inflammation. Inflammation in the brain is one of the earliest signs that Alzheimer’s is setting in, even before the appearance of the beta-amyloid plaques.

Research conducted between 2012 and 2015 has uncovered many ways in which beta-amyloid oligomers give rise to inflammation, though the relationship between the two is not absolutely clear.

It is important to note that none of the other forms of beta-amyloid monomers, fibrils or plaques is associated in any way with inflammation, and they are therefore not contributors to the development of Alzheimer’s.

**Aiming for a new target**

The new approach to stopping Alzheimer’s targets beta-amyloid in its toxic oligomer stage.

Researchers created a new synthetic protein (known as a peptide). The synthetic protein mimics the shape of the oligomers and wraps itself around them, thus shielding the surrounding area from their toxic effects, and also preventing them from “infecting” non-toxic forms of beta-amyloid.

The study tested the new protein on animal models, which documented a 40% reduction in oligomer levels within 24 hours. The synthetic protein was also tested on the common roundworm or nematode (C. elegans) with positive results.

What does this mean for humans? First, researchers suggest that the new protein can be used to develop a test that measures the level of toxic beta-amyloid oligomers in the brain and thus provide an early diagnosis of Alzheimer’s before the symptoms appear.

Second, research is already under way to develop a treatment that will trap and remove the toxic beta-amyloid oligomers before they have a chance to do further damage. This sounds very promising and gives us every reason to be hopeful.

Veena J. Alfred, Ph.D., is a Certified Dementia Practitioner and CEO/Administrator of AlfredHouse Assisted Living.
Executive Director’s Message
Dr. Thelma Bland Watson
Executive Director, Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging

Empty Plate Luncheon: Thanks to Sponsors and Supporters

On October 2, 2019, we will hold our 16th Annual Empty Plate Luncheon and Recognition Program at Trinity Family Life Center. This event is made possible through the generosity of our sponsors and supporters.

This year marks the 16th Anniversary of our Empty Plate Campaign. We recognize our major sponsors Bon Secours, Dominion, Wells Fargo, Genworth and Mr. G. Gilmer Minor, III. We have many new sponsors joining this year and we are very grateful.

This year’s guest speaker is Mrs. Daphne Maxwell Reid, 2018 Christmas Mother for the City of Richmond, acclaimed actress and community advocate.

This year’s Eva Teig Hardy Award for Outstanding Corporate Service will be presented to Williams Mullen, for its pro bono legal assistance provided by Andy Nea. Mr. Nea has provided legal documents to hundreds of older adults in the Greater Richmond area for many years.

The Phoebe and Frank Hall Award for Humanitarian Service to Older Virginians will be presented to Mrs. Rita Randolph, Dominion Energy, and Ms. Wilda M. Ferguson, former Commissioner on Aging for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

With anticipated proceeds from this year’s luncheon, we will be able to fill more empty plates for needy seniors and caregivers who often have no other sources of assistance. We will be able to assist them with meals, rides, home care and other critical needs.

The generosity of our contributors gives much hope for the future. Therefore, as we prepare for this year’s luncheon, we extend special thanks to those who have already contributed to our Empty Plate Campaign.

We also extend a special invitation to others who may wish to contribute to this important effort before October 2, 2019. Your contributions will enable us to reach our goal of $150,000 that is needed to fill the empty plates of older adults and caregivers in our communities.

You may contribute on our website or send your checks to Senior Connections, CAAA at 24 East Cary Street, Richmond, VA 23219.

Please be sure to save the date for this year’s 16th Annual Empty Plate Luncheon and Awards Ceremony on Wednesday, October 2, 2019. We look forward to having you with us.

Thanks for helping us fill “empty plates” this year and into the future!

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Calendar of Events
Community Conversations for Caregivers

Decluttering and Downsizing – You Can’t Take it With You
Tuesday, September 17
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Senior Connections
24 East Cary Street
Richmond, VA 23219
Having too much stuff can impede people from relocating or getting services into their homes. This fun interactive presentation explores why stuff is so important for some people, and teaches practical, easy-to-follow tips on downsizing and decluttering. Lunch will be provided at no cost. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Limited to first 25 to register. Please register by Friday, September 13 by calling (804) 672-4498 or visiting the Senior Connections website at seniorconnections-va.org. For more information, contact Dee Caras at dcara@youraaa.org.

Wills Clinic
Tuesday, September 24
1:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Central Virginia Legal Aid Society, Inc.
101 W Broad St.
Richmond, VA 23220
Legal life planning documents prepared for free for qualified individuals. To confirm eligibility and sign up, interested individuals should complete an intake questionnaire with CVLAS and/or call Lisa Ben nett at (804) 200-6038 or email lisa@cvlas.org. Appointments are limited and are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Aging in America: Coping with Loss, Dying & Death in Later Life
Thursday, September 26
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Lucy Corr Village
Main Auditorium
9800 Lucy Corr Blvd.
Chesterfield, VA 23832
Presented by The Chesterfield Council on Aging’s Caregiver Committee For Professionals and Caregivers FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC 2.5 CEU’s for professionals – Cost $21 for CEU credits Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and all attendees must sign in.

A Caregiver’s Roadmap
Wednesday, October 9
2:00 p.m.
Heritage Public Library – Charles City Branch
10790 Courthouse Road
Charles City, VA 23230
If you are providing care to another person, come learn and share with others who are also on this journey.
PLANNING COMMITTEE AND SPONSORSHIP

Senior Connections

6TH ANNUAL RVA ACTIVE AGING WEEK
SEPTEMBER 29 – OCTOBER 5

ACTIVE AGING WEEK is an annual, international celebration. Since 2013, the RVA Active Aging Week Planning Committee has partnered with localities and community groups to host local events.

FREE EVENTS

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

FLASHBACK FIELD DAY
TIME: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
PLACE: Southside Community Center - 6255 Old Warwick Road
Sponsored by United Health Care.

DIVERSITY AND AGING FILM FESTIVAL
TIME: 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.
PLACE: RVA Triangle Players
1300 Altamont Avenue

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1

SHADY GROVE FAMILY YMCA
ANNUAL HEALTHY ADULT DAY
TIME: 8:30 a.m. – noon
PLACE: 11255 Nuckols Road

INTERGENERATIONAL PLAY IT FORWARD HARVEST FESTIVAL
TIME: 10 a.m. - Noon
PLACE: Deep Run Recreation Center - 9500 Ridgefield Parkway

NORTHSIDE FAMILY YMCA NUTRITION FOR THE ACTIVE AGING
TIME: 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
PLACE: 4207 Old Brook Road
Sponsored by Aetna.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2

INTERGENERATIONAL MOVIE MATINEE
TIME: 10 a.m. – Noon
PLACE: Henrico Theater
305 E. Nine Mile Road
Sponsored by Anthem HealthKeepers Plus.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3

FUN AT THE FAIRGROUNDS
TIME: 8:30 a.m. – Noon
PLACE: Chesterfield County Fairgrounds – 10300 Courthouse Road
Sponsored by Anthem Inc.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4

FUN FIT FRIDAY
TIME: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
PLACE: Hotchkiss Community Center – 701 East Brookland Park Boulevard

VCU GERONTOLOGY + ACTIVE AGING WEEK CELEBRATION
TIME: 3 – 5 p.m.
PLACE: Genworth Financial 6620 W. Broad Street, Building 4
Hosted by Greater Richmond Age Wave.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5

SWIFT CREEK FAMILY YMCA HEALTH FAIR
TIME: 10 a.m. – noon
PLACE: 15800 Hampton Park Drive

OTHER ACTIVITIES

SCIENCE FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART
DATE: Thursday, October 3
TIME: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
PLACE: Science Museum of Virginia - 2500 W Broad Street
FREE for low income seniors. Lunch included.
RSVP: To register, please call Britt Thurman at 804.864.1543 by Monday, September 30.

VISIT THE YMCA FOR FREE
YMCA branches are FREE to ages 55 and up on September 29 – October 5.

YMCA WELLNESS DAY
Walmart Health & Wellness will be offering YMCA branches complimentary vision, blood pressure and glucose screenings.
In addition, they will offer flu, pneumonia and tetanus vaccinations.
Visit your Y branch for more information.

Visit Facebook at RVAActiveAgingWeek for other activities.
What is the Empty Plate Campaign? This is a collaborative fundraising activity and community educational event. From 2003 to 2015, the event was co-chaired by the Honorable Eva Teig Hardy and the Honorable Frank Hall. The 2016 Annual Event was dedicated to the memory of Mr. Hall. From 2016 to 2018, the annual event was co-chaired by Mrs. Hardy and Mrs. Phoebe Hall.

In 2013, the Phoebe and Frank Hall Humanitarian Award for Service to Vintage Virginians was established and has been presented to the following individuals: 2013: Thelma Brand-Garson, Executive Director, Senior Connections 2014: Mrs. Sherry Peterson, Retired Executive Director, Alzheimer’s Association 2015: Mrs. Nancy Nagle Boilo, Retired Assistant to Mr. Hall 2016: Mr. Felix Sarfo-Kantanka, Dominion Energy 2017: Ms. Okpil Kim, Korean American Community 2018: Dr. Ayn Welleford, Department of Gerontology, VCU

In 2015, two awards will be presented: to Mrs. Rita Randolph and Ms. Wilda Ferguson. The 2015 event will be dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Phoebe Hall. The highlight of the event will be the presentation of the 2015 Phoebe and Frank Hall Humanitarian Award for Service to Older Virginians.

The event will also focus on the services provided with proceeds from the event. Many “empty plates” are filled each year for those in need as a result of the generosity and support of community members.

Community Connections to wider as more of our population ages.

He serves as counsel to Metro Richmond Habitat for Humanity, the Virginia Attorney for Senior Connections.

Mr. Nea has created a program to provide simple life planning documents to low-income seniors, veterans, at-risk moms and recovering addicts. Through clinics staffed by volunteer lawyers and assisted by either law students or community volunteers, thousands of individuals have been provided with a simple will, power of attorney and an advance medical directive.

Who benefits from the event – where does the money go? Proceeds from the Empty Plate Campaign will be used to support critical needs of older adults and caregivers. Funds are used for hospital to home care transitions, meals, rides, medications, home care, guardianship assistance and to support volunteer opportunities.

He is the recipient of the Richmond Bar Association’s John C. Kenny Pro Bono Award, the Greater Richmond Bar Association’s Benjamin Lacy Pro Bono Award, the Virginia Bar Association’s Roger D. Groot Pro Bono Award and the Virginia State Bar’s Lewis F. Powell, Jr., Pro Bono Award, for providing legal services to the poor and underserved. Mr. Nea has also received awards for his pro bono services from CancerLINC, Habitat for Humanity and Senior Connections.

Mr. Nea is listed in The Best Lawyers in America® and Virginia Lawyers Weekly. He is listed as one of Virginia’s “Legal Elite” by Virginia Business magazine and was listed in The Best Lawyers in America®. Virginia Lawyers Weekly named Mr. Nea among its class of “Leaders in the Law.” In addition, Martindale Hubbell has ranked Mr. Nea an AV preeminent attorney, its highest rating available.
Senior Connections

B-4  www.FiftyPlusRichmond.com

16th Annual Empty Plate Luncheon
&
Awards Ceremony
In Memory of Mrs. Phoebe Hall

Wednesday, October 2, 2019 • 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Trinity Family Life Center • 3601 Dill Road Richmond, VA 23222

Keynote Speaker: Mrs. Daphne Maxwell Reid, Actress
Community Advocate—2018 Christmas Mother, Richmond

A $60 Donation Fills a Plate 12 Times for a Needy Senior.
Essential services such as food, in-home care, emergency services, transportation, and social engagement programs are provided
through funds raised by our Empty Plate Luncheon Campaign. As the cost of living continues to rise and the number of adults in
our area continues to increase, your contribution is more important than ever. With the funds raised last year, we are meeting the
additional needs of seniors in our community. But we need your help to continue.

Our Mission: Empowering seniors to live with dignity and choice.
Our Vision: Seniors with improved quality of life.

We hope you will join us to help seniors live with dignity, choice, and an improved quality of life. Please complete the form below and
return it, along with your check made payable to Senior Connections.
Please make sure to note “2019 Empty Plate” on the memo line. You may also donate on-line at seniorconnections-va.org. If you
need additional information, please contact Angie Phelon at 804-343-3045 or aphelon@youraaa.org.

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS:

Number of Tickets for Lunch at $60 per ticket ____________

I/We would like to make a donation in the amount of $___________ in support of Senior Connections.
Please recognize this donation in the event program as follows: In Honor of/In Memory of: __________________________

SPONSOR OPPORTUNITIES:

☐ $10,000 Program Sponsor: Lunch for up to 10 guests, contribution can be targeted to a program of choice, special recognition at
luncheon, full-page “thank you” in program, name and logo featured in all event publicity, prime position on the donations page of
Senior Connections’ website, social media recognition posting, primary placement on Major Donors’ poster displayed year-round in
the Senior Connections lobby.

☐ $5,000 Presenting Sponsor: Lunch for up to 10 guests, special recognition at luncheon full-page “thank you” in program, name
and logo in all event publicity, prime position on donation’s page of Senior Connections’ website, social media recognition posting, pri-
mary placement on Major Donors’ poster displayed year-round the Senior Connections lobby.

☐ $2,500 Title Sponsor: Lunch for up to 10 guests, special recognition at luncheon, half-page thank you in program, name and logo
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By James K. Glassman

There are four ways to invest in stocks. You can buy a low-cost index fund, with holdings that reflect an entire market or a broad swath of one. You can buy a managed fund, hiring an expert to do the stock picking. You can conscientiously study data from individual companies and invest in their shares.

Or you can buy stock in companies that appeal to you subjectively — that is, invest with your gut. You like what they’re doing. You trust the product, the management or, best of all, the idea behind the business.

You can create a good stock portfolio by deploying all four of these methods. But it is the fourth, which I’ll call Big Idea investing, that is frequently overlooked or even derided.

Big Idea investing is more fun than the other strategies, potentially more profitable, and not necessarily riskier.

If markets are efficient — and I believe that they are the vast majority of the time — then today’s price for a stock reflects all known information. It is rational and fair.

But the market may not recognize the power of a Big Idea because it is hard to quantify using conventional tools. That means you as an investor, listening to your gut, may have an edge on the professionals.

Gut instincts

Big Idea investing is an act of faith. Though you may lack evidence today that a company will become an outrageous success, you believe it will, even if you are not sure how.

Probably the most famous practitioner of Big Idea investing was Peter Lynch, who, before he retired at age 46, was the most successful mutual fund manager of his day; producing average annual returns of 28% for Fidelity Magellan over 13 years.

His book, One Up on Wall Street, published 30 years ago, makes the case that average investors run across great prospects all the time just by keeping their eyes open and their imaginations vivid.

The way to score huge gains is to understand those prospects before they are reflected in the numbers. As Lynch wrote, “Remember, things are never clear until it’s too late.”

Follow your hunches

I bought Netflix (NFLX, $291) right after its 2002 initial public offering mainly because I thought the company had a Big Idea: letting you order movie discs online, mailing them to you immediately, and letting you keep them as long as you wanted.

Netflix killed the video store, but I also had an inkling that, if films could someday be downloaded swiftly from the Internet, Netflix would be well positioned. Okay, I sold Netflix after it had tripled — a “three-bagger” in Lynch’s parlance — and missed out as the stock became a 300-bagger.

(Stocks I like are in bold; prices are as of August 23.)

When I bought Netflix, it had almost no revenues and no earnings — really nothing for an investor to count on but the idea. Today, Netflix has about 150 million subscribers.

For the second quarter, the company reported weaker-than-expected subscriber numbers, and the stock plunged. I have seen such episodes before, and they don’t worry me. The strategy and brand are strong.

No profits yet? No problem

Don’t be afraid to invest in companies without profits. Jeff Bezos launched Amazon.com (AMZN, $1,750), the online retailer, in 1994. Five years later, it had annual sales of $1.6 billion but was losing $720 million, or nearly 50 cents on every dollar of sales. The firm did not eke out a profit until 2003.

In the first quarter of 2019, Amazon more than doubled its earnings compared with the same period a year earlier, to $3.6 billion, or $7.09 a share. Profits still represent only 6% of sales.

Even today, Amazon remains a Big Idea company, and the idea is being a technol-ogy-driven retailer that cares about mar-ket share and satisfying the customer, no matter what it costs in the short run.

As Bezos put it in a 2017 letter to share-holders, “Experiment patiently, accept failures, plant seeds, protect saplings, and double down when you see customer delight.”

What about Uber (UBER, $53)? The financial figures for the ride-sharing phe-nomenon are discouraging. In the first quarter of 2019, just before the company’s IPO, Uber’s operating loss more than doubled.

See INVESTING, page 16

Don’t be so sure you can ID a scammer

By Liz Weston

Believing that fraud can’t happen to us — because we’re too smart, logical or informed — may make us more vulnerable.

Successful scam artists skillfully overcome our defenses and get us into emotional states that override rational thinking, said Kathy Stokes, AARP’s director of fraud prevention programs.

“Scammers call it getting the victim under the ether,” she said.

Various studies have tried to identify characteristics that make people more suscep-tible to fraud. But that can create a “blame the victim” mentality and give the rest of us a false sense of security, she said.

“The majority of people are unwittingly deceived through no other reason than that the criminals are good at what they do,” Stokes said.

Those over 50 are targets

Research is mixed on whether older people are more likely to be defrauded than younger ones. One thing is certain, though: Older people are more likely to have money. People 50 and older control 83% of the wealth in the U.S.

One way to protect that money is to cut down on our exposure to sales pitches, fraud experts say.

AARP studies have found investment fraud victims were more likely than other investors to respond to sales pitches delivered by phone, email or television. They also were more likely to send away for free promotional materials, enter drawings, attend free lunch seminars and read all their mail, including advertisements.

To reduce your exposure to potential scams, consider the following steps:

— Put yourself on the federal Do Not Call list. (Call 1-888-382-1222 or go to donotcall.gov to register.)

— Sign up for a telephone call blocking system, such as NoMoRobo, and let unknown callers go to voicemail.

— If you give out personal information, be sure you know who you are giving it to and why they need it.

— Don’t make investment decisions based on a phone or email pitch or an ad.

Don’t be overconfident

Overconfidence can lead people to put off saving for retirement (convinced they can catch up later) or ignore warning signs of fraud (convinced that they can’t be victimized).

The risk may increase with age. Studies have found that our financial decision-mak-ing abilities peak by our early 50s and decline, sometimes precipitously, after that.

But our confidence in our abilities doesn’t drop — in fact, many of us become more self-assured.

“So as we age, this gap grows between actual and perceived ability to make good decisions,” said Chris Heye, co-founder of Whealcare Planning, a site that helps older adults and financial advisors plan for age-re-lated changes.

Seniors who get answers wrong on a financial literacy quiz, but who were the most confident they answered correctly, were more likely to be victims of fraud, according to a study by researchers at De-Paul University and the Rush University Medical Center.

See SCAMMERS, page 16
Investing
From page 15
compared with the same period a year earlier. Revenues rose 20%, but selling, general and administrative expenses rose 28%. Not a formula for success.

Still, my interest in Uber is the Big Idea, not the numbers. Ride-sharing is revolutionary, and, just like Netflix, Uber is positioned for the future — in this case, with driverless vehicles and any other business its leadership can devise to serve the people who take 14 million rides a day.

Ignore the P/E
Because most of us aren’t experts in software, energy exploration or high finance, we encounter every day.

Scammers
From page 15
Combat overconfidence by getting a second opinion on financial decisions from a trusted advisor or money-smart friend.

As we get older, it can also make sense to consolidate our accounts so there are fewer to monitor, and to switch to investments that require less hands-on management, such as target date mutual funds.

Romance scams growing
The Federal Trade Commission said romance scams cost people more money than any other type of consumer fraud in 2018. Reports of these scams have doubled between 2015 and 2018, while reported losses more than quadrupled to $434 million.

The scams often start via dating apps, social media or email. The con artists pretend to have a lot in common with their victims, then build trust over many weeks or even months before asking their targets to reveal personal data or send money for an “emergency.”

Once again, the young and old alike can be defrauded. One 90-year-old victim met a man via email who, many months later, told her he needed help with a business deal. She sent him eight infusions of cash, draining her $300,000 life savings.

“She sent all that money, and the only reason she knew that it was a scam was that he didn’t show up on Christmas day like he said he would,” Stokes said.

A reverse-image search using TinEye or Google Images may show if an imposter is using someone else’s photo, while sites such as Romancescams.org keep track of known scammers’ email addresses. But perhaps the best inoculation against being defrauded is to talk to someone you trust before you send any money.

—AP/NerdWallet

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— J. Fitzgerald, VA

You can’t always lie down in bed and sleep. Heartburn, cardiac problems, hip or back aches – there are dozen of reasons that it’s too much. Those are the nights you’d give anything for a comfortable chair to sleep in: one that reclines to exactly the right degree, raises feet and legs just where you want them, supports your head and shoulders properly, and operates easily.

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Considering a timeshare? Don’t you ever!

By H. Dennis Beaver

Over the past several years I’ve written about the nightmares that timeshare owners lived through, both when first purchasing — often under physical and mental duress — and then when attempting to get themselves out of their contracts.

I had never before said, “Don’t ever buy a timeshare!”

But no more. I now believe that because of the nature of timeshare contracts — and sales practices — they are the most dangerous purchase anyone can make.

I urge federal action to nullify provisions in existing contracts that keep buyers on the hook for thousands of dollars in yearly fees glued to a contract they can’t walk away from — even after years of paying for something they no longer use or are able to use.

**Seemed smart at the time**

Picture yourself on vacation with your family in Florida, Las Vegas or Mexico, staying in a spacious condominium-type unit in a beautiful resort.

It truly is lovely, you are all having the time of your lives, and are told, “For a one-time payment (which we can finance) of $15,000, plus modest yearly maintenance fees, you will have the right to come back, with your family, year after year.”

It would be far cheaper to pay as you go, but you don’t do the math, nor do you run this decision by your accountant or lawyer as you are convinced of how economical a decision it is.

Maybe for a few years your family uses the property, and then the kids grow up and there are no more family vacations. Or one of you gets ill and can’t travel.

But the yearly maintenance bills keep on coming, first hundreds, and then thousands of dollars out the window.

After asking to be let out of the contract, your request, “Please, just take the thing back!” is refused.

**Timeshare buyer scam**

It’s no wonder that people get excited when someone offers to buy their timeshare from them. But be very careful, because that proposition can be fraught with danger as well.

In 2017, Joe Corriveau of Lynchburg, Va., purchased a timeshare at the Villa del Palmar in Cancun, Mexico, for slightly over $14,000.

In early March of this year, he received a $25,000 offer from an organization calling itself Travel Pirates Mexico to buy it, and a few days later he was contacted by the Eric H. Anderson Law Group.

In reality, there was no buyer, only an appeal to greed, as “sellers” are required to wire thousands of dollars for various fees for what is a nonexistent purchaser.

“I researched the Eric H. Anderson Law Group based out of San Jose, Calif.,” Corriveau wrote. “Their website is very professional looking, but I could not find the actual Eric H. Anderson in San Jose, Calif. I only found him in Palo Alto, Calif., but could not locate a phone number.

“I came across your article online, ‘Be aware of the Mexican timeshare resale scam’ and called you.”

His research led to the discovery of a new Mexican timeshare resale scam, which became obvious when, on a conference call with him, I tried to reach attorney Eric Anderson.

We reached a nasty sounding guy who claimed to be an attorney, yet he would provide no name or other identifying information, and when learning that I am a journalist researching Mexican timeshare scams, he hung up!

**Attorney names ripped off**

According to Scott Morse, chief operating officer of Rockford, Ill.-based Resort Release (an A+ BBB rated company that legitimately helps to get people out of timeshares), “This scam has been refined over many years.

“They rip off the name of a real U.S. attorney, and create a fake website. The average person would have no idea how to quickly spot the scam, so I applaud your reader’s intuition for sensing that something was just not right.”

Morse discovered that the images on the firm’s website were stolen from a law firm in North Carolina. Also, the website was set up on March 3, 2019, making it just a few days old when Corriveau was called.

“These guys are the worst of the worst. Don’t respond to them, don’t call them, don’t answer them,” Morse said. “Block their number with your telephone provider. If you have provided them ANY banking information, change it immediately.”

**Just say NO**

If you are wondering if there is anything redeeming about timeshares, there is indeed. The big players in this industry woo potential buyers to their properties by offering a “Vacation Package,” which is usually a three-day/four-night stay at a huge discount.

The catch is a requirement to sit through their “90-minute sales presentation,” which typically feels more like 90 years!

These high-pressure sales events are conducted by some of the slickest salespeople — I was about to say con artists, but that wouldn’t be nice — you’ll ever encounter. So just pretend you are a two-year-old and only say ‘No!’ when pushed to buy. You are free to walk out of the sales room after going through the presentation, and do not hesitate to leave if the pressure becomes too much.

If couples are strong enough and can tolerate being in the company of people who will tell you anything — who will lie with a lovely, sincere smile — then go for it and enjoy an inexpensive getaway.

But if you can’t say no, feel guilty when a long, sad face almost starts to cry when you refuse to sign this grotesque real estate contract, then stay away!

I hope that the Federal Trade Commission or a U.S. senator will propose legislation that outlaws those sections of timeshare contracts that are simply unconscionable.

Beaver is an attorney and author of You and the Law. This article was written by and presents the views of the author, not the Kiplinger editorial staff. Check adviser records with the SEC or with FINRA.

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“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 275 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?

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Zinger is not intended for medical purposes to provide mobility to persons restricted to a sitting position. It is not a medical device nor a wheelchair. It is not covered by Medicare nor Medicaid.

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By Glenda C. Booth

There are many good finds in Pennsylvania’s Laurel Highlands, an undulating countryside 50 miles southeast of Pittsburgh.

Visitors to the 3,000-square-mile region, which encompasses Westmoreland, Somerset and Fayette Counties, will find Pennsylvania’s highest peaks, rolling hills, small towns, covered bridges and dense verdant forests that burst into blazing colors in the fall.

The area gets its name from the flowering laurel shrubs that bloom each June. But since 2001, the area has been best known for what happened on 9/11, when hijacked United Flight 93 crashed in Shanksville, killing all aboard.

A more comforting association would be with the children’s television hero Mister Rogers, who died in 2003. Fans of Fred McFeely Rogers — the soft-spoken, fatherly host of “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood,” which aired on television from 1968 to 2001 — can learn more about him at the Fred Rogers Center located in his hometown, Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

His popularity is currently on the rise. Last year, a successful HBO documentary about his life became the top-grossing biographical documentary in American history. In November, the movie A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood, will hit theaters, starring Tom Hanks in a signature cardigan.

A road that’s an experience

The best way to see the Laurel Highlands is via the Lincoln Highway, the road that changed America. Built in 1913 (pre-Pennsylvania Turnpike, pre-interstate highways), it connected New York City and San Francisco, stretching 3,142 miles from coast to coast.

In its heyday between 1913 and 1940, it fostered car travel and roadside enterprises like gas stations, restaurants and motels.

The 200-mile central Pennsylvania section of the Lincoln Highway has gentle hills, long slopes and remnants of roadhouses situated on mountaintops so car radiators could cool down after the climb.

Order a driving guide ahead of time and you can explore the highways’ neon signs and funky architecture, like old Burma Shave signs and Bedford’s 18-foot coffee- stop, built in 1927. It’s much more than a road; it’s an experience, promoters say.

The Lincoln Highway Experience museum, also in Latrobe, provides an education in the old days of auto travel in a former tavern and stagecoach stop. Here, nostalgia seekers can see vintage gas pumps, a tourist cabin and a 1937 Packard.

The average car speed in 1924 in Pennsylvania was 12 to 15 miles per hour, and gasoline cost 24 cents a gallon in 1950, according to exhibits. With their $14 admission ticket, visitors get a Lincoln Highway driving guide and are invited to enjoy a piece of pie and coffee in a restored 1938 diner.

A stagecoach and fort

In nearby Laughlintown, the restored log-and-stone Compass Inn and Museum was a stagecoach stop from 1799 to 1862. President Zachary Taylor and Senator Henry Clay stayed at the inn and tolerated rules like “Beds must be shared,” “Do not expectorate on the floor,” “Remove boots before crawling into bed” and “All singing and boisterous talk must cease by 9 o’clock.”

Docents in period dress explain that the on-site stagecoach from the 1830s carried 12 to 15 people, and that horses went full gallop downhill to this stop, where drivers changed their steeds.

The site also has a beehive oven, a blacksmith’s shop, and an 1830s Conestoga wagon that was “powered” by a walking teamster and six horses. Admission is $9 (with a discount for those 65+).

Just up the road, Ligonier is a walkable, picture-postcard town with a made-for-Holywood town green lined with boutique shops and restaurants. The town is most famous for its reconstructed Fort Ligonier, an active supply depot from 1758 to 1766 during the French and Indian War.

Every October, British, French and Native American re-enactors fill the town for Fort Ligonier Days (this year on October 11-13), commemorating the 1758 Battle of Fort Ligonier, a successful defense from a French attack.

Visitors can explore the fort’s four-gun batteries, dry moat, and walls protected by fascines (stick bundles) with enough dirt to absorb shot. The museum displays Prussian artifacts, swords, cartridge boxes, cannon balls, chamber pots and other artifacts of military life.

Fort guides will expound on 18th-century military fort engineering. One explained its French style, stressing that the

See LAUREL HIGHLANDS, page 21
By Don Mankin

One after the other, humpback whales arched their backs and slid into the frigid waters of Antarctica. As they flicked their tails in the air, rivulets dripped from the edges before they disappeared below the surface.

I stood up in the Zodiac, a small inflatable boat with an outboard motor, my camera poised for the next opportunity for a once-in-a-lifetime shot. I didn’t have to wait long. Wherever I turned, I saw whales—from spouts in the distance to nearby humps and tails glistening in the sun.

It wasn’t just the sheer number of whales in Antarctica (more than 100 or so) that boggled my mind. The marine mammals’ performance was framed by the icy splendor of mountains and glaciers in the background, along with icebergs and “bergy bits” (smaller chunks of ice) in the foreground.

Sculpted blocks of floating ice created a wonderland of blue shapes and textures, a polar landscape more beautiful to me than any other place I have ever seen.

Drawn back repeatedly
This was my third trip to Antarctica in 17 years. I am drawn by its remoteness, beauty, otherworldliness and the sense of adventure. My first visit involved a flight into the interior and sleeping in a tent for a week. The second was an adventure cruise much like this one but without the whales.

One Ocean Expeditions, my host, dubbed the one-week trip “Marine Mammals of Antarctica.” The excursion runs in February and March, near the end of the short Antarctic summer but at the height of migration for the humpback and minke whales of the Southern Hemisphere.

We also saw the usual year-long residents, such as seals and penguins, putting on fat to carry them through the long winter months ahead, and a huge variety of polar sea birds.

Crossing the Drake Passage, the area where the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans meet, was different this time. On my last trip in 2013, I spent the entire voyage braced against the constant swaying as our boat rocked from side to side. I ended up with sore muscles, bruises from bouncing off the walls, and cuts on my face after an ill-advised attempt to shave.

This time we experienced the polar opposite (pun intended). The weather was clear and sunny, and the seas were relatively calm. Our ship was a Russian research vessel, an austere, workmanlike vessel that was nonetheless quite comfortable and attractive.

Cabins were well appointed, there was plenty of outside deck space for chilly observations, and the boat had an attractive lounge with a fully stocked bar.

The tour also included some expert presentations on Antarctic mammals, birds and history, as well as ice, krill and, believe it or not, whale poop.

Dramatic and dynamic views
Once we reached the Antarctic Peninsula, the scenery was spectacular. On one of the first days, we went on an easy hike to a viewpoint that looked out over one of the most stunning views I had ever seen. A vast, open bay stretched in front of me. The mountains and glaciers ringing

Now you can ease your fear of falling while walking more naturally.

The Perfect Walker II enables you to walk upright and avoid falls.

What did you tell your children the whole time they were growing up? “Stand up straight, don’t slouch!” Well, now that you are one of the countless Americans who use walkers and rollators for safety and mobility, why aren’t you heeding your own advice? Until now, using these products meant shuffling along, hunched over, eyes down, with your weight centered on your hands and wrists. Instead of promoting safety, these products lead to bad posture, an unnatural gait and a risk of additional injury from not seeing where you are going. Now, there’s a better way.

The Perfect Walker II has solved the uncomfortable bent over posture that has plagued users of traditional walkers and rollators. It enables you to walk safely and comfortably in a natural, upright position. It features innovative forearm support cuffs that support your weight with your arms and shoulders, keeping you standing in a natural way. It is height-adjustable for users up to 6 feet tall. No more leaning forward, stretching, slouching or crouching-no worrying about toppling over or losing your balance. Best of all, when you are walking, you are looking forward, not down.

Look forward to going more places more often!

Perfect Walker II folds up for transit or storage with a dual-folding design, making it compact and easy-to-handle, weighing only 18 pounds. It’s extremely simple and convenient to take and use just about anywhere. It features an advanced braking system, a secure locking mechanism and a stable wheel base. The rear “walking space” of the Perfect Walker II is wider than traditional rollators, giving you a greater range of motion and a natural, comfortable walk.

So take your own advice, and stop slouching. Call today to find out how you can get a Perfect Walker II. You... and your children, will be glad you did. Call Now!
Laurel Highlands
From page 19
French were the military engineers of the day (and that the Brits "stole" their techniques). Admission is $12; $10 if 62 or over.

Beauty in art, outdoors
Half an hour away, the Westmoreland Museum of American Art in Greensburg displays art by Mary Cassatt, Winslow Homer and John Singer Sargent, in addition to a 1905 Tiffany window and bronze sculptures from late 19th century. Many of the artists’ works depict south-west Pennsylvania scenes: glowing, steel mill smokestacks and workers arriving for the night shift. Admission is free.

The 20,500-acre Ohiopyle State Park is famous for the Youghiogheny River’s rushing rapids and 79 miles of hiking trails. A bucket-list favorite is Fallingwater, the famous Frank Lloyd Wright masterpiece built over Bear Run’s waterfall as a signature for Japanese architecture.

A National Historic Landmark, its famous cantilevered terraces harmonize with nearby rock formations, and the sound of water permeates the site. Basic tours are $30 per person; more in-depth tours, some including brunch, cost $150 per person or more.

Flight 93 Memorial
One of the country’s newest and most powerful national memorials opened in the Laurel Highlands in 2015. The pastoral countryside near Shanksville was anything but that on September 11, 2001. At 10:03 a.m., United Airlines Flight 93 crashed and caught fire in a farm field, killing 40 passengers and crew members and four al Qaeda hijackers. The terrorists’ presumed target was the U.S. Capitol, 18 minutes away. But passengers and crew overcame them, leading to the downing of the plane in the field.

The somber Flight 93 Memorial looms into the natural landscape, reflecting his passion for Japanese architecture. The site’s design by Paul Murdoch includes a nearly mile-long walk to a wall of names and an overlook of the crash site. At the 93-foot-tall Tower of Voices, 40 individually tuned steel chimes ring in perpetuity for the deceased.

A self-guided tour offers the story of that day, minute by minute. In perhaps the most moving exhibit, visitors can listen to actual telephone conversations of passengers who called loved ones and authorities (13 people made 37 calls). One woman told her sister where to find her will. A wife assured her husband she was fine but warned that something strange was happening. And the recovered cockpit voice recorder captured the screams, struggles and breaking glass inside the airplane.

The comforting Mr. Rogers
After contemplating Flight 93, a visit to the Fred Rogers Center in Latrobe, a 50-minute drive away, can be soothing. The comforting Mr. Rogers loved one gift for a loved one...

One Ocean Expedition’s Marine Mammals 11-day tour starts at $11,295. Other tours to Antarctica start at about $6,000, not including airfare to Argentina, where most tours begin. For more, see the author’s website, adventuretransformations.com.

The Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children’s Media, located on the campus of Saint Vincent College, displays four of his signature cardigan sweaters, original puppets like Daniel Tiger and X the Owl, and the show’s anthropomorphic trolleys. Admission is free.

A Presbyterian minister, Rogers took his preschool viewers on field trips to factories, explained how bulldozers work, and tenderly advised them on topics like mishaps, conflicts, fears, loneliness, illness and loss.

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news,” Rogers once said, “my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’”

The Laurel Highlands is situated 285 miles from Richmond, and Fort Ligonier is 17 miles from the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Roundtrip flights to Pittsburgh on Southwest Airlines in October start at around $230. For more information, visit laurelhghlands.org or lhhc.org.

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!

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Nia fitness method adapts to all levels

By Catherine Brown

When 72-year-old Carla Magarity moved to Richmond from Los Angeles, where she had lived for 35 years, she was thrilled to spend more time with her daughter and grandchildren here. A health insurance broker, she had been flying back and forth for years until deciding to retire.

And Magarity wasn’t worried about finding a group of friends to connect with when she settled here. During her earlier visits, she had already discovered a community by taking classes in Neuromuscular Integrative Action (Nia), a fitness practice drawing from no-impact aerobics as well as martial arts and dance.

“Nia created the opportunity for me to meet people [in Richmond] and build an incredible community,” Magarity said.

“Many of us have been dancing together for years.”

This community of women of all ages was brought together thanks to Richmond native Marybeth Grinnan, who brought Nia to her hometown in 2008 and opened a studio here earlier this year.

“While the group is diverse, we focus on how much we have in common,” Grinnan said.

What is Nia?

The Nia technique was created in 1983 by Debbie and Carlos Rosas, owners of an aerobics studio in Santa Rosa, California. Practiced barefoot, Nia’s cardio-dance workouts are based on 52 simple moves.

At Richmond’s new SoulShine studio, participants in a Nia class enjoy low-impact aerobic exercise laced with dance and martial arts moves. The fitness classes let each participant choose their level of activity, balancing mindfulness, exercise and fun.

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

“Many of us have been dancing together for years.”

“While the group is diverse, we focus on how much we have in common,” Grinnan said.

See NIA FITNESS, page 23

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“I’m able to give back after all the years of working.”

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Shepherd’s Center of Richmond
Nia fitness

From page 22

combined into different 60-minute routines.

“Combining dance, martial arts and mindfulness, Nia tones your body while transforming your mind. More than just a workout, Nia is a holistic fitness practice addressing each aspect of your life — body, mind and soul,” according to Nia’s website.

Grinnan learned about Nia more than 20 years ago when trying to lose weight after having her second child. At that time, the then-30-year-old lived in Chapel Hill, N.C., and she was struggling to find a form of exercise she enjoyed.

When she first tried Nia, Grinnan immediately loved it. She had never thought of herself as a dancer, but with Nia, she didn’t worry about what she looked like or whether she could keep up with the choreography. “It is adaptable for literally everybody,” Grinnan said.

Grinnan also loved that the exercises attract all kinds of participants. “The class had women of diverse ages — some were younger moms, others were grandmas — and I was turned on by that,” she said.

About a year later, she decided she wanted to become a Nia teacher and began training. When Grinnan returned to Richmond 11 years ago, she enjoyed teaching Nia at ACAC, where she inspired many of her students to become teachers as well.

Earlier this year, with two of those students, Jessica Forsythe and Niki Schimmel, Grinnan pursued her dream of opening a boutique Nia and yoga studio.

Called SoulShine Studios, the facility in Stony Point Fashion Park also offers other programs of interest, including book clubs and acupuncture.

It features a lobby that feels like a family room. “It is a really uplifting, amazing space,” Grinnan said. “We want to be the home for Richmond Nia, the place people want to come hang out and support one another.”

Freedom of movement is key

In Soulshine Studios classes, the teacher guides the class in choreography, but with Nia, there is freedom of movement, allowing for participants to adapt to their needs.

“Students can move very little and keep their arms and legs close,” said Forsythe, “or take up more space as they feel comfortable.”

Unlike with other dance classes, participants don’t face the front of the room the entire time. Instead, they move throughout the space, weaving between one another.

When this author tried it, I found Nia a little daunting at first. But it soon became magical as I encountered the warm, smiling faces of the other participants, who ranged in age from their 30s to 70s. We were all too caught up in the joy of moving to think about what we looked like.

Grinnan is thrilled when she sees that her students are interactive, the yoga classes are more personal and inward-focused, Forsythe said.

As with the Nia classes, however, SoulShine Studios yoga instructors encourage participants not to overdo it.

“The classes are conducive to all levels of practitioner, regardless of age or ability,” Schimmel said. “A lot of older students think they can’t do things, but this philosophy lets them be more open in the moment.”

During her recent recovery from ovarian cancer, Magarity participated in SoulShine Studio’s Moving to Heal — Gentle Nia classes. “During that six months I was on chemotherapy, I couldn’t dance,” she said. “Every muscle in my body got tight from inactivity.”

But Grinnan’s class helped Magarity recover and feel less isolated. Nia is “a lot of fun,” she said, but there is an “incredible depth underpinning it. We’re moving every muscle and every joint with no impact, but we don’t have to know that. We can just come have fun.”

For a class schedule, visit soulshinestudios.com. Watch a Nia class at nianow.com.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Oct. 5+

JACKSON WARD STREET FESTIVAL

Celebrate historic Jackson Ward at this year’s 2nd Street Festival on the first weekend in October. The free festival will feature musicians, food vendors and artists. Walking tours of the “Harlem of the South” will be available. Located on N. 2nd St. downtown, the festival will take place Sat., Oct. 5 from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sun. 12 to 6 p.m. For more information, visit venturerichmond.com.

Sept. 24

GARDENERS, UNITE

Drop by a Master Gardener Open House to hear about the Master Gardener Program. You can speak with current Master Gardener Volunteers, apply for the 2020 training and enjoy light refreshments. The free event takes place from 2:30 to 6 p.m. at Central Library, 9501 Lori Rd., Chesterfield. For more information, visit (804) 751-4401.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Oct. 11+

HOME EXPO

Remodeling your house? Need some tips? Drop in to chat with experts and 250 vendors at the Richmond Home Show. On Senior Day, Fri., Oct. 11 admission is free for adults 60 years and up; otherwise, admission is $8. Senior Day will feature a product showcase, senior-focused presentations and activity sessions, and free coffee from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The expo, which runs from Oct. 11 to 13, is held at the Richmond Raceway Complex, 600 E. Laburnum Ave., Richmond. For more information, visit richmondhomeshow.com.

Sept. 21+

FREE MUSEUM WEEKEND

Many of Richmond’s historic sites will offer free admission through this year’s “Time Travelers” event. Download a “passport” from the websites of the city’s museums and historic houses and tour them all on Sat., Sept. 21 and Sun., Sept. 22. For more information, visit thevalentine.org.
ABCs of September gardening chores

By Lela Martin

Although the blooming sunflowers, asters and zinnias may still be providing some color in your yard, September is a good month to finish up the summer season and get a good start on fall. With the yellow bus at the corner, you might remember those first days of school.

Here are some suggestions for your garden chores based on the alphabet:

A: Add cool weather annuals such as pansies, colorful Osteospermum (African daisy) and ornamental kale, as well as cool weather garden crops. If you want fresh veggies this fall, sow chard, radishes, carrots, kale, spinach, turnips, beets and lettuce. With salad greens, sow small amounts every 10 days for continual harvesting. Direct sow one more row of bush beans and another crop of peas right now for fall harvest (and freezing).

Believe it or not, some hardy annual flower seeds can be planted in the garden for blooms in the following spring and summer. Lisa Mason Ziegler of The Gardener's Workshop in Newport News has written a book entitled Cool Flowers. In it she explains that the seeds of several flowers, such as bupleurum (Bupleurum griffithii) and larkspur (Delphinium consolida), can be planted directly in the garden six to eight weeks before the first frost in fall (October 21 in the metro Richmond area). They will overwinter as young plants and grow rapidly in the spring. Aerate, fertilize and overseed established cool season lawns. Warm days and cool nights provide ideal conditions for seed germination and establishment of tall fescue, Kentucky bluegrass, fine-leaf fescues, and perennial ryegrass. Mid-August to mid-September is the prime time for lawn-renovation, planting and reseeding.

B: Bring houseplants, such as begonia, coleus, geranium and ivy, indoors and repot if necessary. Start the transition by moving them in at night when the temperature drops below 60°F. Always check for pests before bringing pots inside. Most houseplants prefer a sunny window location where there is good airflow.

Begin a gardening journal. Note what performed well and what did not. You could include photos of the locations of perennials that fade over the winter. You don't want to plant something new, only to realize that it is too close to another plant. Your journal can include a wish list of plants to include in the spring and any other changes to the garden.

Buy spring-blooming bulbs for planting later in the fall. Remember that bigger is better when selecting bulbs.

C: Clean up plants as they fade. Cut back perennials when the foliage has turned yellow on daylilies, iris, peonies and bee balm, for example. However, leave rudbeckia, echinacea, sedum, grasses and clematis to provide habitat and food for birds over the winter months.

Stop deadheading in September if you want annuals to self-seed. Zinnias and sunflowers will drop their seeds and probably return next year.

Compost spent foliage from healthy plants in a compost pile or bin. Ideally, you should keep mulched grass clippings on the lawn to return nitrogen to the soil. If you must, add them to the compost pile. Keep the compost pile moist and turn it periodically to hasten decomposition. Add “cooked” compost to vegetable and garden soil to improve its tilth and fertility.

Control weeds. Spend a few hours each week to keep up with weeding in your garden. Diligent weeding helps prevent weeds from going to seed and also reduces disease in next season’s garden. If you have too many weeds in a particular area, smother them with corrugated cardboard, then lay a thick topping of mulch on top.

Catch water in a rain barrel for later use. Make sure that any trees or shrubs less than one year in the ground are thoroughly watered. Keep your vegetable and flower gardens watered while they house
**Letters to editor**

*From page 2*

verb (Carol Burnett Visiting Richmond), or occasionally the future (Carol Burnett Will Visit Richmond).

I encounter this relatively often in editing. It is important because this is a code in long-term use that allows us to use and understand something as telegraphic as a headline. When it breaks down, the headlines do not communicate.

Bland Crowder
Via email

**Dear Editor:**

Thank you, *Fifty Plus*, for venturing into a hot topic like “Should I shower every day?”

**Frances Nunnally**
**Richmond**

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**Gardening**

*From page 24*

growing plants.

Don’t waste water on lawns until you have sown grass seed to germinate. Cool season fescue lawns will bounce back from browning when cooler, moister days return.

Contact your local office of the Virginia Cooperative Extension if you have garden or lawn questions.

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

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I grew up in Vienna, Austria, at a time when houses and apartments had no bathrooms as such. However, at almost every street corner, the city maintained a “tropferlbad” for public use. There, for a small fee, a person could shower and then move into a “drying cube” where hot air and steam would do its job — no towels required.

So, to answer the big question about daily showers, how about a compromise? Every second or third day might fit the bill, not to mention lowering the monthly water bill.

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Across

1. White-knuckles the steering wheel
6. First victims of the Pied Piper
10. “I’ll have____, and tonic, please”
14. Sleep disorder
15. Glowing word in a dark theater
16. Part of a cantiata’s combination
17. Kindergartners’ formations
20. Good name for a retailer
21. Toll House Cookie chip sweetness level
22. DC area airport code
23. Gadget for checks and balances
26. Best Friends Forever, in text-talk
28. India’s Taj ______
30. Cook for a larger crowd
31. Think of the world of_____
32. Salad veggie
37. “The kissing disease”
39. Neither 1 Down nor liquid
40. ($59.99/month for 1 year! Call 1-855-338-8198 to schedule your FREE Pest Inspection.)
45. Reason to be banned from a fancy restaurant
46. Underground film location in The Third Man
47. Sing, dance, and act; for example
50. Unwilling to face the day
51. 24 hours
52. Pie in the ______
53. One of 15 regions under Gorby’s control
54. Deer, deer relatives
56. Federal Reserve Board (briefly)
60. Two slices, generally
66. Bestselling author, Leon
67. “____ there, done that”
68. Phrase with different literal and figurative meanings
69. “____, meeny, miny, moe”
70. Uses a straight or zigzag stitch
71. Prevent legally

Tuples

Stephen Sherr

4. Cribbage score-keepers
5. Satisfactory, as merchandise
6. Football flag dropper
7. Bush 43’s “____ of evil”
8. Piece of a roof or floor
9. Handle for a rose flower or winelass
10. End of Illumin- or Mason-
11. He said “Be the change that you want to see in the world”
12. Feature of Mars’ north pole
13. Cash register key
18. A female sprite (and anagram for “flee”)
19. Bartender’s garnishes
21. Man named in Genesis 2:19
24. Shore list heading
25. Elementary particle
27. ABC Western satire which premiered 9/14/65
29. More sore
31. Author Charlotte or Emily
32. Permissible to be eaten, to a Muslim
33. Cleaned up text
34. Health mag topic: “How to get ______ of belly fat”
38. Chem. or bio.
40. Accepts a loan
41. Excessively watery (as coffee)
42. Affectionately creative
44. Diner’s selection
47. Permanent marker
48. Creamy soup
49. Provide a guarantee
50. Satisfactory, as merchandise
52. Rotund (as to figure)
57. Be anxious about the jambalaya
59. Participates in an auction
61. Back part of “backwoodsy”
62. Switch settings
63. Facial blemish
64. San Diego’s is most visited
65. Sound booster

Answers on page 25.
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