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**Lemonade plus**

They say human beings are “social animals,” and that deprived of human contact, we wither away. But what are we to do in an age when social distancing can be a matter of life and death? Fortunately, we humans are also highly creative and resourceful, so there are many answers to that question: We hold FaceTime or Zoom conversations, virtual events, and small-scale, outdoor gatherings as best we can.

If I were to ask you how much these substitutes feel like the real thing, what would you say? Would your answer be, “It’s the best we can do under the circumstances,” “It’s almost as good as it used to be,” or “Actually, in some ways it’s better than it used to be?”

I know I’ve been in situations these last few months where I came away with each of these feelings. Certainly, attending a wedding, anniversary and other family gatherings via a computer screen, without all the hugs and kisses, personal conversations and shared experiences, can be painful. It’s just not the same.

Attending a networking event or business conference can have some of the same downsides, but also saves one the time, expense and aggravation of air travel, staying in hotels and living out of a suitcase.

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**FROM THE PUBLISHER**

By Stuart P. Rosenthal

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There’s more of a balance there.

So, what’s an example of something that’s actually better virtually? I’m going out on a limb here, but I’m going to say that 50+Expos might be such a situation.

Our newspaper publishing company has hosted live 50+Expos in Maryland and Virginia for more than 20 years. For me, they almost feel like family gatherings now. There are so many familiar faces I get to see only once a year, and so many lovely conversations I get to have with our readers as well as our exhibitors and wonderful speakers.

So, I certainly wouldn’t have asked for this year to be one where we couldn’t in good conscience hold an in-person expo event.

But the more we thought about it, the more we realized there could really be some huge benefits to having an Expo virtually.

First, there’s the time issue: An in-person Expo event takes place over a day; two at most. If you’re not available at that time, or aren’t feeling your best, you miss it.

Our Virtual Expo lets you visit every class, speaker and exhibitor whenever you want for a full three months! (And we are holding weekly door prizes for each week’s visitors, so you’re not missing out on that nice aspect of live Expos, either. Come back and enter as many weeks as you like.)

Then, there’s the space issue. No matter how big the convention center (or tent), we’re going to have some trouble fitting in all the entertainment, speakers and classes we’d like to offer, while still leaving room for an exhibit hall of any significant size.

With a web-based Expo, there’s nothing stopping us from providing all the interesting subjects and types of entertainment you could possibly want to enjoy.

To enjoy our Expo, you need only an internet connection and a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone. Come and go as you please, wearing whatever you like!

Just get online and enter beacon50expo.com. There you’ll find a very simple, user-friendly web page with four main choices: Classes, Speakers, Entertainers and Exhibitors.

Click on any one of them and you’ll see a few categories to choose among to help you decide which video to view first. Altogether, there are literally dozens of programs available to you to start and stop at any time of day or night for a full three months.

Okay, you might say, I can surf the internet for centuries and not see everything there is to offer. What’s the point of that?

The difference is, we have pulled together the information and material you have told us you most want to see. The hundreds of readers who answered our survey back in July gave us direction that we have done our best to follow.

For examples of who our speakers and entertainers are and what classes and exhibitors will be available, see our partial listing on page 6 of this issue.

Our hope is that we have done a good enough job to make it worth your while to come once, twice, maybe even many times to beacon50expo.com in the coming weeks and months.

And don’t forget to register each time you visit, as we are having a weekly door prize drawing for that weeks’ visitors. You could win $100 or more. Please encourage your friends and family to visit beacon50expo.com. We’re sure you’ll find many things to talk about with them after you’ve “been to” our Expo!

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**Let\**\**ers to the editor**

Readers are encouraged to share their opinion on any matter addressed in Fifty Plus as well as on political and social issues of the day.

Mail your Letter to the Editor to Fifty Plus, P.O. Box 2227, Silver Spring, MD 20915, or email to info@fiftyplusrichmond.com.

Please include your name, address and telephone number for verification.

Dear Editor:

I’m enclosing a potential story idea, but don’t mistake the praise I have for the October issue of Fifty Plus Richmond as a veiled attempt to promote the story suggestion.

I look forward to viewing the 2020 Virtual 50+Expo. What a great and welcome idea.

I hope many facing the Medicare decision will read her article first, because while Medicare Advantage appears cheaper than Original Medicare, there are a number of hidden pitfalls.

Thank you. We appreciate your article Liz Weston has written the only balanced article I have read to date on the subject.

I hope many facing the Medicare decision will read her article first, because while Medicare Advantage appears cheaper than Original Medicare, there are a number of hidden pitfalls.

William S. Hogate
Glen Allen, Va.

**Ed. Note:** Thank you. We appreciate both the praise and the story suggestion!

Readers are encouraged to let us know about interesting individuals and organizations in the Richmond area that they would like to see profiled in Fifty Plus.
Avery Point is the new Erickson Senior Living™ continuing care retirement community coming to Short Pump, Virginia!

This new community will feature:

**Great convenient location**—located just two miles west of Short Pump Town Center at Route 288 and W. Broad Street.

**A variety of stylish apartment homes**—choose from a range of apartment homes that are low on maintenance and big on style.

**Easy access to amenities**—swim, dine, or take a class. With so many incredible amenities, it’s like you’re living at a resort.

**Services and affordable value to enhance your well-being**—property taxes, homes repairs, and most utilities are just a few of the everyday costs included.

Avery Point will be the twenty-first campus in Erickson Senior Living’s portfolio, which spans 11 states and serves over 27,000 adults age 62 and older. While every campus is unique, Avery Point is a community like no other.

Learn more! Call 1-800-349-4221 today for your free brochure.
The turning point in Mark Lilly's life came in 2008, when the former Marine decided to take a course at the University of Richmond, where he worked.

As part of the emergency management class, titled “Hazards and Threats of the Future,” Lilly had to create a 20-year projected scenario of a disaster; in his case, famine in the West in the year 2029.

When he predicted a pandemic that would lead to a crisis in the food supply, he never imagined he would actually experience it.

Today, Lilly is an outspoken advocate for food security and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). He’s best known for his “Farm Bus” — a mobile farmers’ market selling produce, meats and other products from local, small farms directly to families. He and the bus have been featured on BBC World News, the “Rachael Ray Show,” CBN News and in People magazine.

This year, Lilly and his Farm Bus have been a lot of action, traveling all over Virginia and Washington, D.C.

“We want to transform Richmond, raise food, educate people to be empowered and food secure — and most importantly, create jobs,” Lilly said.

“We can’t make the positive changes to our current toxic food system unless people make a conscious effort to engage with their local food producers and providers. The alternative is not sustainable. We all have to take action now,” he said.

From Marine to entrepreneur
Lilly grew up in Richmond, joined the Marines, then attended Virginia Commonwealth University. After earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts, he backpacked across Europe solo.

“I wanted to experience everything I could while I was young,” he said.

When he returned and started working as a manager in the dining service at the University of Richmond, he took the course offered there in disaster management. In his imagined scenario, Lilly predicted a pandemic and the food crisis it might trigger.

What he learned during the project shifted his life. It taught him that our food supply in the U.S. is contingent on a few megacorporations. They’re too big to fail, but if they did, we would be unprepared to quickly find alternatives.

In Lilly’s mind, the answer to this threat was to increase the profitability of the numerous small farms that dot the Virginia landscape. He decided to start making it easier for local farmers to sell directly to families.

In 2009, Lilly started his business — Farm to Family — to bring attention to these problems, maximize the use of local small farms and help them thrive.

He said he used his “last pennies” to buy an old school bus and retrofit it as a traveling market. Stocked with food, including meat, breads, fruits and vegetables from small farms, he drives it directly to consumers.

Bringing food to many, Lilly also used the bus as a teaching tool to bring the concept of local and sustainable farming to schools across the state.

“Farm to Family has the potential to circumvent many issues with local food distribution and awareness. It is the future,” he said.

Sustainable agriculture, Lilly added, “will only grow in demand and popularity as consumers become more conscious of issues with conventional food growing methods and the industrialized food complex as a whole.”

The importance of sustainability
What is sustainable agriculture? At present, Americans get much of their fruits and vegetables from California and Florida. However, in winter, we rely on Central America and Mexico for produce. We raise most of our own meat, but import about 20% from other countries.

During a war, plague or environmental disaster (such as extended drought, fires or floods), we might not be able to rely on food from other countries.

The world heavily relies on just a dozen plants and five animal species, according to National Geographic magazine. Therefore, small farms that grow heirloom breeds without GMO (genetically modified organisms) can establish pockets of biodiversity and “islands” of pure plant and animal stock.

These are critical in case of potential disease or widespread failure of GMO breeds. The value of smaller, local farms is that, while providing additional support now to our food chain, in a crisis, they would be able to sustain a supply of fruits, vegetables, grains, beef, poultry, eggs and dairy.

COVID gave business a boost
When the coronavirus pandemic hit this country in March, people avoided large grocery stores. As a result, Lilly’s home-delivery business boomed.

And when meatpacking factories temporarily closed due to COVID-19, it was a boon for small cattle, bison, chicken and pig farmers.

In 2020, after 10 years in the business, Lilly is having his best year ever. Overnight, he had to expand, hiring helpers and buying another truck.

When the pandemic is over, Lilly suspects some new customers will stick with his delivery model, while others will go back to shopping at large grocery stores. However, he hopes they will also shop at his small store/urban farm and garden on Mechanicsville Turnpike, called the Farm to Family Market.

What the Farm Bus delivers
Lilly’s business is not confined to the summer season. He sells a wide variety of winter vegetables (collards, kale, squash, pumpkins, carrots and beets) along with meat, cheese, milk and breads.

He drives all over the state, picking up products from as far as the Shenandoah Valley to get a varied inventory.

A weekly delivery to a household might include the following items, based on the season: three ears of corn, four sweet potatoes, two pears, six apples, two squashes, two bell peppers, bok choy, green onions, kale and a pint of berries.

Customers can add bread, their choice of meat — bison or beef burgers, lamb, chicken or trout — or dairy products — milk, yogurt and/or cheese, as well as...
A 50+Expo like you’ve never seen before: More than 60 hours of speakers, classes and entertainment, 100 exhibitors, and 3 months in which to enjoy it! Plus, weekly door prizes

A sampling of our programs:

**Classes:** Meditation 101; Line Dancing; Avoiding Frauds & Scams; Healthy Cooking

**Speakers:** Low Vision Solutions, Interview with the Oldest Living Tuskegee Airman; Caregiving During COVID; Options for Intergenerational Activity

**Entertainment:** Jazz piano; Stand-up Comics; Classical String Quartet; Rock ‘n Roll, Barbershop Chorus

All online at a new website designed just for this event: www.beacon50expo.com

The Virtual 50+Expo goes live Sunday, November 1 at noon, and continues through January 31, 2021.

Brought to you free of charge by the Beacon Newspapers, in partnership with the Baltimore County Department of Aging and the Howard County Office on Aging & Independence.

www.beacon50expo.com

Businesses and organizations interested in exhibiting/sponsoring: Call Alan at (443) 285-9336.
Here is a selection of the classes, entertainment, vs speakers available at www.beacon50expo.com from November 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021:

**SPEAKERS**

**KEYNOTE:** Ken Dychtwald, PhD  speaking about decades of research on aging and how to make the most of retirement

Women’s Heart Health,  Women’s Heart Specialist & Cardiologist Daisy Lazarous, M.D. Courtesy of Adventist HealthCare Adventist Medical Group

The Latest Information on Low Vision Research  Dr. Emily Chew, National Eye Institute of the National Institutes of Health, courtesy of Prevention of Blindness Society

The Oldest Living Tuskegee Airman  interview with Brig. Gen. Charles McGee, courtesy of Silver Spring Village

Everything You Always Wanted to Know about the Cuban Missile Crisis  from a CIA insider, courtesy of Silver Spring Village

How to Create Harmony in Your Life  interview with Serge Mazerand, composer, pianist and author of The 7 Keys to Serenity

Designing Camelot  a discussion with the co-authors of Designing Camelot: The Kennedy White House Restoration, courtesy of the White House Historical Association

A, B, C and D’s of Medicare  Sherry Kolbe, State Health Insurance Assistance Program Manager for Baltimore County, courtesy of Baltimore County Department of Aging

**ENTERTAINMENT**

Stand-up comedy  Four over-50 comics do their thing, courtesy of Silver Spring Town Center SPARKLE program

Alexandria Harmonizers Christmas Concert  award-winning barbershop men’s chorus from Alexandria, Va., courtesy of the Harmonizers

Maxim Lando, 18-year-old classical piano phenom  protégé of Lang Lang, performs Kapustin’s Concert Etudes, courtesy of Candlelight Concerts

Dance to music from a live ballroom orchestra  courtesy of dancewithnancy.com

**CLASSES**

Mindful Meditation Seminar  including guided meditation practice, courtesy of Brooke Grove Foundation

Intergenerational Volunteer Activities You Can Do from Home  a panel including GrandInvolve, Age-Friendly DC, Link Generations, Experience Corp, Montgomery Connects and JCA Heyman Interages Center, courtesy of Empowering the Ages

Go, Grow and Get Active  Video special featuring tai chi fit, laughter yoga, Zumba and more, courtesy Montgomery County Aging & Disabilities

Avoiding Coronavirus Frauds and Scams, courtesy of AARP VA

Cooking with Chef Francis, an Embassy Chef Challenge award-winner, courtesy of Gold Sponsor, Maplewood Park Place

Dance with Nancy  lessons with Nancy Hays in Electric Slide and Achy Breaky line dancing for exercise and fun, courtesy of DancewithNancy.com

Playing Billiards  a demonstration of techniques and shots, courtesy of Maplewood Park Place

Zumba, Tai Chi and Core & Stretch classes  courtesy of Baltimore County Department of Aging

Rearview Mirror Duo  Iris Hirsch and Glenn Bullion perform a blend of rock and roll, R&B, pop, country, standards from the Great American Songbook, disco, and Motown from the 50s, 60s, 70s

Shades of Gray rock and roll band, performing memorable songs, courtesy of Ken Hunter

Music by Black American women composers performed by the Chin Family Quartet and Victoria Bragin, courtesy of the Friday Morning Music Club

French, Latin and American Jazz recital by Steve Baddour, courtesy of the Louise P. Zanar Fund

Beethoven Sonata No. 10 in G major, for violin and piano Lisa Weiss and Yeou-Cheng Ma (sister of Yo Yo Ma), courtesy of Lisa Weiss
A surprising cause of falls: multitasking

By Brad Manor

A few years ago, my grandmother fell and broke her hip. She has never fully recovered and is now constantly fearful of falling, and has significantly limited her activities to prevent a fall from ever happening again.

As a scientist focused on translational research in mobility and falls in older adults, of course I asked her how she fell. She stated that she was standing in the kitchen, reading a recipe, when the phone rang. When she turned and started to walk over to the phone, her feet “weren’t in the right spot.” She fell sideways and, unfortunately, her hip was unable to absorb the impact without breaking.

For older adults, falls are a leading cause of hip and wrist fractures, concussions, mobility disability, loss of independence and even death.

As it turns out, the circumstances leading up to my grandmother’s fall were typical. In fact, the majority of falls occur when an individual is “dual-tasking” — that is, standing or walking while at the same time performing a separate cognitive task (such as reading), a motor task (carrying groceries), or both (walking while talking and carrying a cup of coffee).

Why does dual-tasking (or multitasking) often lead to falls in older adults? It turns out that the seemingly simple acts of standing upright, or walking down an empty, well-lit hallway, are quite complex.

To complete these tasks, we must continuously stabilize our body’s center of mass — a point located just behind our sternum — over the relatively small base of support that we create by positioning our feet on the ground. This control requires quick reflexes, as well as strong muscles of the trunk, hips, legs, ankles and toes.

However, to avoid falling we also need to pay attention to our body and environment, predict and perceive unsafe movements of our body, and adjust accordingly. Our brains need to quickly make sense of information coming from our eyes, ears and bodies to produce patterns of muscle activity that appropriately adjust our body’s position within the environment.

Therefore, tasks of standing and walking are in fact cognitive tasks, and these tasks require more and more cognitive effort as we grow older and our senses and muscles no longer work as well as they once did.

For my grandmother and many others, dual-tasking led to a fall because it diverted shared cognitive resources away from the critical job of controlling her body’s center of mass over her feet on the ground.

Training may prevent falls

Older adults who are cognitively impaired are more than two times as likely to fall compared to those who are cognitively intact.

A recent study by researchers at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine has shown that even subtle differences in the brain’s ability to dual-task when walking are predictive of future falls in healthy older adults.

Specifically, the researchers asked their volunteers to walk while completing a word-generation task in their laboratory, and used a technology called functional near-infrared spectroscopy to measure brain activity. Those volunteers who required more brain activity (mental effort) to complete these tasks were more likely to fall during a four-year follow-up period.

Thankfully, these startling studies have prioritized our balance above all else. Multifactorial strategies therefore appear to be the best “medicine” for the avoidance of falls.

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Pros and cons of dietary supplements

By Rozalina McCoy, M.D.

Dear Mayo Clinic: Why does my doctor want to know what supplements I’m taking, even if I don’t have any health problems and don’t take more than the recommended amounts?

A: It’s important to tell your healthcare provider about any dietary supplements you take. Although you don’t need a prescription for most supplements, that doesn’t mean they can’t significantly affect your health.

Dietary supplements are useful in some situations — for example, calcium and vitamin D for bone health, and iron for iron-deficiency anemia. But they also can be harmful, especially if taken in certain combinations, with certain prescription medications, or before surgery or other medical procedures.

By knowing the supplements you take, your healthcare provider can ensure they are a good fit for you.

Nutritional or herbal?

There are two general categories of dietary supplements: nutritional and herbal. Nutritional supplements are designed to provide vitamins and minerals your body needs that you may not get enough of in your diet. Calcium, vitamin D, vitamin B12, iron and fiber are common nutritional supplements many people take.

Herbal supplements, sometimes called botanicals, are supplements derived from plants that are touted as having health benefits. Popular herbal supplements include echinacea, ginkgo and flaxseed.

People take dietary supplements to improve their health or prevent illness. One concern about supplements, though, is lack of oversight in their production and unproven claims manufacturers make about their benefits.

Prescription and over-the-counter medications are closely regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

But the FDA doesn’t regulate or oversee supplement content or claims to the same degree as it does for medications. Just because a supplement is approved for sale doesn’t necessarily mean it’s safe or effective.

Benefits come with possible risk

Although supplements aren’t regulated in the same way medications are, they have active ingredients that can affect your body and your health.

And keep in mind that anything strong enough to produce a positive effect — such as lowering cholesterol or improving mood — also is strong enough to cause potential health risks. That’s one of the key reasons it’s important to talk with your healthcare provider about your supplements. He or she can review the potential benefits and side effects, and evaluate if the supplement is safe for you.

When you take your supplements can be a factor you need to discuss with your healthcare provider, as well. For example, the absorption of some supplements can be influenced by whether you take them with food or on an empty stomach.

Some supplements also can prevent the absorption or action of medications, so it may be important to take them separately.

Interactions are an issue

It is particularly important for you to review your supplements with your healthcare provider if you take more than one supplement, or if you take any prescription or nonprescription medication. In some cases, taking a combination of supplements, or using supplements while taking certain medications, could lead to harmful or life-threatening results.

You mention that you don’t take more than the recommended amount of your supplement, and that is wise. Taking more healthcare provider can ensure they are a good fit for you.
How to select the best winter squash

By Bruce Weinstein and Mark Scarbrough

All varieties of delicious winter squash are packed with the antioxidants alpha and beta carotene. Here you’ll find some tips on what varieties to look for and how to choose them.

**Shopping tips**

Choose squash that is very hard: press firmly all over to make sure the rind isn’t soft (a sign of immaturity or improper storage).

Look for vivid colors — the skin color should not look washed out. Later in the year, after the squash has been stored, the skin color may fade as the flesh becomes sweeter.

Also, the skin should not look shiny — a sign that it’s either underripe or that it’s waxed, possibly masking bad quality.

Choose squash with a remnant of the dried-out stem still attached, like a small knob at one end. A missing stem can be a sign of mold and bacteria growth inside.

**Storage tips**

Store squash in a cool spot with good air circulation (not the refrigerator, but a cool pantry or cellar) for up to a month. If you buy pre-cubed squash at your market, make sure the pieces are dry, firm and vivid in color, and use promptly. Avoid those that look wet or desiccated, with sunken striations in the flesh.

**Varieties to try**

**Acorn:** A moderately sized variety almost always available in supermarket bins, even in the summer. The flesh can be watery; prolonged cooking concentrates the flavor.

**Buttercup:** An old-fashioned squash with a characteristic little cap at the stem. Full of natural sugars and fiber, it’s a delectable treat in midwinter.

**Butternut:** Perhaps the most versatile winter squash, sweet and light when cooked, but also substantial — and thus able to stand up to both long cooking and quick sautés.

**Hubbard:** Available in blue or gold varieties with somewhat warty skins. Ranges in size from 5 to 40 pounds; perfect cubed and roasted or for purees.

**Kabocha:** A name for a set of squash varieties from Japan with consistently deep, honey-scented flavors.

**Red kuri:** Now sometimes called “red curry,” a relative of the kabocha with many seeds, less meat, and with a deep, pear-scented taste.

**Spaghetti:** Oblong, yellow and mild in flavor, when cooked its flesh yields myriad threads, sort of like little spaghetti strands, best removed with a fork.

EatingWell.com is a magazine and website devoted to healthy eating as a way of life.

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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**Ongoing TEH SUPPORT FOR SENIORS**

Telehealth Access for Seniors provides online resources to help set up Gmail accounts, access free Wi-Fi, and use MyChart to facilitate successful telehealth appointments. Visit www.telehealthforseniors.org.

**FREE COVID-19 TESTING**

Chesterfield County is providing free, walk-up COVID-19 testing at multiple locations throughout the county on multiple days. For specific dates, times and locations, visit http://bit.ly/FreeCovidTestinginCC.

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**Farm bus**

*From page 4*

home-canned jams and other pantry items.

When he’s not transporting food, Lilly is a sought-after speaker on food security. Along with his wife, Suzi, he heads the Richmond Mayor’s Food Policy Council Sub-committee on Food Security.

In his public speaking appearances, Lilly hopes to inspire others. His mission, he said, is “to create a local, regenerative, highly resilient model that others can follow.

“Our goal is to support and sustain a local food system and uplift our communities through local food.”

Farm to Family offers weekly and biweekly subscriptions to its CSA program. All food and products are grown and sourced within 150 miles of Lilly’s store at 2817 Mechanicsville Turnpike. Delivery is available for $10 to those within five miles of the store. Several area pick-up locations are also offered.

To reach Farm to Family, call (804) 397-7337 or (804) 728-1343. To subscribe or for more information, visit its website at thefarmbus.com or its Facebook page, facebook.com/Farm2Family.
Swallowing issues are common, treatable

By Magnus Halland, M.D.

Dear Mayo Clinic: My mother is in her 80s and sometimes has trouble swallowing when she’s eating. She says it’s not bothering her much, but I feel like it’s starting to affect how much and how often she eats.

Is there anything that can be done to treat this problem?

A: It’s likely your mother’s problem with swallowing can be better understood and potentially helped, but it will require a medical evaluation. Having difficulty swallowing is a common concern that has several possible explanations. A thorough assessment of your mother’s condition can uncover the cause and guide treatment.

When a person is having trouble swallowing — the medical term is dysphagia — the first step is to identify the point in the swallowing process where the problem is happening.

There are two phases of swallowing. The first is the oropharyngeal phase. It involves the mouth and throat. The second is the esophageal phase. It involves the transport of food or fluids from the throat into the stomach through the esophagus (food pipe).

Determining whether swallowing difficulty is related to oropharyngeal transfer or esophageal transit often can be accomplished by reviewing the symptoms people experience when they swallow.

First phase difficulties

The oropharyngeal phase requires proper function of muscles in the palate, as well as appropriate tongue motion and airway protection during swallowing. This all happens in a coordinated sequence that allows for smooth transit of food and fluid from the mouth, through the throat and into the top of the esophagus.

With oropharyngeal issues, patients typically begin to choke, cough or gag almost immediately after attempting to swallow. Material may come out the nose or slip out of the mouth.

If an oropharyngeal problem is suspected, a healthcare provider may ask a patient to drink some water so the provider can observe what happens.

When an oropharyngeal problem seems to be the cause, a pharyngeal swallowing study typically is performed with X-rays. This study can reveal structural issues, or problems with muscle coordination or strength in the mouth or throat.

Conditions that cause oropharyngeal swallowing difficulties include many neuromuscular diseases, such as stroke and Parkinson’s disease.

Second phase issues

In the esophageal phase, the muscles of the esophagus have to contract and relax in a coordinated fashion to move food to the stomach. The passageway within the esophagus also must be wide enough to allow food through it easily.

If the problem is related to esophageal transit, the material clears the patient’s mouth and throat without incident, and he or she can breathe easily.

But the patient feels as if something is stuck behind the breastbone or there is pain in the esophagus while swallowing. Eventually what was swallowed will typically pass, but in some cases the material is regurgitated.

If it appears to be an esophageal concern, the first test usually is endoscopy. During this procedure, a thin, flexible and lighted instrument, called an endoscope, is passed down the throat so the doctor can see into the esophagus to check for blockages, narrowing, inflammation or other structural issues. In some cases, tissue samples may be taken.

If narrowing of the esophagus is found, expansion of the esophagus may be performed during an endoscopy, too.

When results of an endoscopy are normal, you will want to follow the advice of your healthcare provider. It’s important to address dysphagia.

Specific treatment for swallowing difficulty depends on the underlying cause. In most cases, however, problems with swallowing can be relieved or significantly reduced once the source is identified.

It is important to address dysphagia. Not only can swallowing difficulty interfere with nutrition and potentially trigger unhealthy weight loss, it can also cause quality of life issues.

Some people who have swallowing difficulty are embarrassed by it and avoid socializing in settings that involve food. That can lead to social isolation and potentially depression.

Encourage your mother to see her healthcare provider for an evaluation soon.

— Magnus Halland, M.D., Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota

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Supplements

From page 7

than the recommended daily values can increase the risk of side effects.

But be aware that vitamins and minerals are being added to a growing number of foods, including breakfast cereals and beverages. If you’re also taking supplements, you may be getting more of some nutrients than you realize.

Your healthcare provider can help you evaluate your diet and decide if you need the supplements that you’re taking.

The bottom line is that, although nutritional and herbal supplements may be useful, they aren’t risk-free. By talking with your healthcare provider about the supplements you take, and discussing their potential benefits and risks, you’ll gain a better understanding of the value those supplements have for your health overall.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Nov. 19

THE GREATER RICHMOND COMMUNITY JOB FAIR

Reilant Hiring Solutions is hosting a community job fair on Thurs., Nov. 19 from 1 to 4 p.m. This in-person event brings together job seekers and employers throughout the region. Registration is optional. For more information, visit http://bit.ly/ReliantJobFair.

Has COVID got you down? Feeling alone? Come see what life is like at Spring Arbor!

Our residents enjoy lively activities, safe family visits on our porches, and daily interaction with our caring, compassionate staff 24 hours a day.

Call to schedule a virtual tour today! Following all COVID guidelines.

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*No obligation to enroll.
How to safely dispose of unneeded meds

Q: I missed National Drug Take Back Day. How can I safely get rid of medications I am no longer taking?

A: One of the best ways to dispose of unneeded and unused over-the-counter and prescription medications is to drop them off at a location that will take back unused medications.

The Drug Enforcement Administration sponsors National Drug Take Back Day events, typically in October and April. For more information, you can visit the DEA website at takebackday.dea.gov.

But what if you missed a takeback event—or don’t feel comfortable visiting a drop-off location? You still have options.

Check with a pharmacy

One is to call your local pharmacy to see if they accept unused medications or if they know of any pharmacies that do. Often a pharmacy near you will take back medications all year and then safely dispose of them.

Some pharmacies charge a fee to take back unused medications, so you may want to call first.

The second option is to do it yourself. There are two simple methods to safely dispose of medications at home.

The first is to remove the medication from its original container, crush the medication, add a small amount of water, and then mix it with coffee grounds or kitty litter before disposing in the trash. This makes the medication unappealing to children and pets. It also makes it hard to find or use if someone is searching trash to find medications (such as opioid painkillers).

For liquid medications, mix them with kitty litter or flour to absorb the liquid. To prevent the medication from leaking out, place the mixture in a sealable plastic bag or an empty can. Make sure to remove or redact any personal information on the bottle to protect your identity.

Flushing not recommended

The second way to dispose of medications at home is to flush them down the toilet. But be very careful: Flushing is only recommended if a takeback method is not easily available and when the medication is extremely harmful to others in your household (such as opioids).

Flushing is not recommended for many common medications because drugs can eventually wind up in lakes, rivers and streams, which could have negative effects on living things in the environment.

To make sure that the medications you have are appropriate to flush down the toilet, refer to the Food and Drug Administration “flush list.” You can access the list at: fda.gov/media/109643/download.

Ultimately, the best way to get rid of unneeded over-the-counter and prescription medications is to take advantage of community drug takeback programs or the DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Days. But if you cannot participate in official drug takeback events, you should still do your part and safely dispose of unused or outdated medications.

Proper drug disposal is important to decrease the risk of unintended medication exposure to people or animals, as well as to decrease negative effects on the environment.

Adwoa Nyame is a fourth-year pharmacy student at VCU School of Pharmacy. She received her undergraduate degree in chemistry at Salisbury University. She plans to pursue a career as a clinical pharmacist with areas of interest in oncology, internal medicine and critical care.
Can ice cream be healthy — or healthier?

By Matthew Kadey

When it comes to frosty treats, ice cream reigns supreme. These days, you may have noticed that low-calorie options ranging in flavors from Birthday S’mores to Cookie Dough are one of the coolest food trends in the supermarket freezer aisle. Their growth owes largely to a desire for wellness, even in the dessert world.

But isn’t healthy ice cream an oxymoron? Well, certain ice cream brands are promising consumers a way to satisfy their ice cream cravings minus the caloric pitfall. Labels touting fewer calories, more protein and less sugar should theoretically let you dig in with fewer waistline repercussions.

But are these eat-the-whole-pint-style treats a godsend for health-conscious eaters who also scream for ice cream?

How the types differ

Regular ice cream contains more regular sugar and more cream — meaning more fat calories — than its low-cal brethren, whose core ingredients tend to be skim milk, milk protein (hence, the higher protein count) and a low-calorie sweetener like erythritol.

Other inclusions in the low-cal type can be flavorings, gums, thickeners and added fibers, such as corn fiber, that help give the products a taste and texture similar to regular ice cream.

There are also dairy-free options on the market, which swap out the cow’s milk for almond or coconut “milk,” a good option for vegans or those who can’t tolerate dairy.

Lower-calorie ice creams have been around for years, but the newer crop of creamy treats boasts a more drastic reduction, a stingy 300 to 360 calories per pint. So, a whole pint of “healthier” ice cream can have the same calorie count as just a half-cup of a premium version.

But ideas regarding portion control for desserts and snacks may become skewed as a result.

Portion size can be an issue

“One of the biggest drawbacks of these types of ice creams is that many individuals rationalize, because of the low calories, that they can eat more, and [so] lose sight of the actual intended serving size,” said Keri Gans, R.D., author of *The Small Change Diet.*

One study found that foods advertised as “low-fat” may lead people to eat up to 50% more than they might if no claim is made. Though the 300-calorie pints may seem less indulgent, if people eat them too often, they may gain weight.

“A portion of ice cream, even the lower-calorie stuff, should be no more than two-thirds of a cup,” Gans advised. But she said these ice creams can be a good way for people to cut back on their saturated fat intake if they are regular ice cream consumers.

Many of these lightened-up ice creams contain extra amounts of protein — up to 20 grams in a pint, which, sure, can add a boost of this nutrient to your diet. But most Americans already eat enough protein, and it certainly shouldn’t be a motivating factor to eat more dessert.

“At the end of the day, a low-calorie ice cream is still ice cream,” Gans said. “It doesn’t compare to the nutritional benefits of other higher protein foods, such as yogurt, cottage cheese, hard-boiled egg, nuts or edamame.”

A three-ounce piece of chicken breast or one and a quarter cups of black beans delivers the same amount of protein as a whole pint of “high-protein” ice cream.

Sugar substitutes and cravings

While many brands use less-caloric sugar alternatives like stevia and erythritol to help keep calorie counts down, research suggests relying on them is no guarantee for lasting weight loss success. No- or lower-calorie sweeteners may simply work to stoke a sweet tooth, leading to an increased intake of sugary calories elsewhere in the diet.

Gans stressed, however, that these alternatives have been proven safe for consumption, so they may be beneficial to those with diabetes who want to enjoy a bowl of ice cream.

Just remember that while these newfangled ice creams are lower in sugar, they’re not necessarily sugar-free. The amount of sugar can vary by brand, so it’s important to read labels to know how much you’re getting in a serving.

It’s also worth noting cost. For getting less (calories, fat, sugar), you will pay more. These gentrified ice creams can cost up to 50% more than the traditional options.

In the end, if you are yearning for ice cream, go ahead and wedge in a small amount of whichever type you want — calorie-stingy or high-fat — as long as you do so in the context of an overall balanced diet. As always, moderation is your friend.

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Evaluate hoarseness if it doesn’t go away

By Diana Orbelo

Dear Mayo Clinic: For the past few weeks, I have had a hoarse voice, even though I don’t have a cold. Is this something I should be concerned about?

A: It’s not uncommon to experience hoarseness once in a while, especially with a cold or even after cheering loudly at a sporting event.

But when a hoarse voice doesn’t go away after three to four weeks, it’s a good idea to see your healthcare provider. That’s because hoarseness can be more than a temporary nuisance and can result from numerous treatable problems.

Your voice is created when air from your lungs flows up through the vocal cords — also called vocal folds — in your voice box, or larynx. The vocal cords are made up of layers of delicate tissue from an elastic surface to deeper tissue of muscle, all within a cartilage framework.

As air passes through the vocal cords, they vibrate, producing sound. Alone, this sound is similar to a buzzing sound, but when the sound travels through your vocal tract, throat, mouth and nose, you shape this sound into speech.

Laryngitis is when the vocal cords are swollen and inflamed, a common cause of hoarseness. Most cases of laryngitis come on quickly and are cleared up in a few days to two weeks. Most often, laryngitis is associated with a viral respiratory infection, such as a cold, or extended periods of talking or singing.

In the case of respiratory infections, simple self-care tips that may help healing include drinking plenty of liquids, using throat lozenges or hard candy, and resting your voice for a few days.

When laryngitis occurs after talking, singing or yelling at a sporting event, self-care also may help. This is considered phonotrauma and can cause long-term and even permanent damage if the situation is repeated.

Get checked after three weeks

When hoarseness lasts more than three weeks, or if you have other worrisome signs or symptoms such as a lump in your neck, pain when speaking or difficulty swallowing, it’s time to see your healthcare provider. That’s because the list of potential causes grows much larger.

Your healthcare provider will review your medical history, symptoms and any potentially triggering factors. A visual inspection of your vocal cords may be performed with a mirror or a small camera attached to a thin, flexible tube.

The quality of your voice also may be evaluated. For example, your voice may sound breathy or weak, or have a tremor quality that may offer clues to the source of the medical problem.

In some cases, tests used to measure voice irregularities, airflow and other characteristics can help reach a diagnosis.

When laryngitis lasts longer than a few weeks, it’s considered chronic. This may be due to ongoing infection, smoking, allergies, other irritants, persistent vocal strain or reflux. Certain medications also can affect your voice.

Hoarseness due to chronic laryngitis typically improves by eliminating the underlying cause. This may mean not smoking, learning to use your voice more efficiently, and treating any allergies, reflux or other infection.

If medications seem to be the culprit, ask your healthcare provider for ways to minimize this side effect.

For example, if you are using a diskus-type inhaler for asthma, you may benefit from using a spacer to reduce depositing the medicine in your throat instead of your lungs. Also, if you use an inhaler, it is important to gargle and rinse your mouth after use.

Angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors, commonly known as ACE inhibitors, can cause throat irritation and dry cough. Many other medications can cause dryness.

Hoarseness also can be caused by non-cancerous growths along the vocal folds. These include small vocal cord swellings (polyps), calluslike patches (nodules) or small encapsulated lesions (cysts).

These may be due to phonotrauma, and smoking and reflux can be contributing factors. Lesions often heal by eliminating irritants, and with voice therapy. Surgery may be needed to remove persistent lesions.

The role of aging, other causes

Aging is another factor that can affect your voice. Vocal cords can naturally lose some tone and fullness as you age, often resulting in your voice sounding breathy or weak.

Voice therapy is a common treatment, but if these changes greatly impair your ability to communicate, your healthcare provider may recommend a surgical procedure in which an injection is used to add bulk and fullness to your vocal cords.

Other causes of hoarseness include vocal cord spasm, cancer, and complications of other conditions that affect areas of the brain that control muscles in the
Ginger is something you’ve probably walked past a thousand times in the grocery store and may have passed up.

It has some incredible medicinal benefits and offers people a natural approach to many ailments. Many women use ginger for morning sickness during pregnancy.

Sometimes you see it crystallized with sugar to improve flavor. But today I’m talking about the fresh ginger root you can buy in food markets.

**Pain relief, including arthritis**

We may think of fresh or powdered ginger as a flavor agent, but ginger is powerful medicine. It is an antioxidant and a strong analgesic.

Known officially as Zingiber officinale, ginger contains many therapeutic compounds, all of which have well-documented medicinal actions in the body.

In studies with people who ate dried ginger spice in their meals, 75% experienced relief from arthritic pain and swelling. Ginger contains dozens of compounds that have pharmacological activity.

Sometimes you have to heat or dry the ginger to extract a specific compound. For example, zingerone is negligible in fresh ginger; however, cooking it transforms the gingerol to zingerone. Fortunately, the dried (powdered) ginger spice does contain zingerone.

Zingerone is well researched, and it’s incredible. Studies have determined that it reduces inflammation, regulates blood sugar, eases muscle pain and spasms, helps with arthritis, speeds fat breakdown and ramps up immune function.

In an animal study, ginger compounds protected rodents from brain damage and memory loss, so now drug companies are trying to morph it and patent it into an Alzheimer’s drug.

I say just eat it! However, it can thin the blood, so you have to avoid or minimize it if you are taking anticoagulant medications.

**Fights free radicals**

Ginger can block your enzyme xanthine oxidase, which is good because that reduces ROS (reactive oxygen species).

The fact that ginger can degrade these ROS free radicals means it protects your DNA and mitochondria. In fact, ginger promotes mitochondrial health.

Mitochondria store energy for you in the form of ATP, and ginger root increases ATP production, according to one NIH study last year.

If you have liver disease or hepatic injury (for example, alcohol-related, or hepatitis), consider ginger in all of your recipes because studies show that zingerone has a hepatoprotective effect.

Here’s another fun fact: Ginger might have some heavy-metal binding abilities, because it can reduce cadmium levels, according to animal studies.

It can also reduce the body’s burden of organophosphate pesticides. If you have a PON1 gene, make ginger your friend!

Not only does ginger spice up your recipes, it makes for a quick and delicious tea. Look for a recipe on my website, as well as a free ebook called *Spices that Heal*.

Ginger is a delicious, safe and affordable way to improve health while adding a warming spice to your meals.

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

Suzy Cohen is a registered pharmacist and the author of *The 24-Hour Pharmacist* and *Real Solutions from Head to Toe*. To contact her, visit SuzyCohen.com.
More protein, yes; protein powder, maybe

By Emily Gelsomin

Eating enough protein is not just for athletes or would-be Schwarzenegger types. Protein is necessary for a healthy immune system and required for organs like your heart, brain and skin to function properly. The nutrient is also touted for its ability to help control appetite and enhance muscle growth.

How much protein you need typically depends on your exercise routine, age and health. (With age, many of us need more. See below.)

A look at protein powders

Whether to supplement protein intake with a protein powder has become a common query.

To make such supplements, protein is extracted from animal- or plant-based sources, which range from cow’s milk and eggs to peas, rice and soy.

During processing, naturally occurring carbohydrates, fats, minerals and fiber are often removed, while supplementary nutrients, herbs and even sweeteners and flavorings may be added.

Anyone considering protein powder should understand that it is classified as a dietary supplement, which means it is not regulated in the same way as food or medicine. Responsibility falls on manufacturers to ensure that their products are not hazardous, though many companies do not test for safety or efficacy before their offerings hit shelves.

Though the FDA created Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) to help minimize adverse issues, compliance with these procedures isn’t guaranteed. In 2017, roughly a quarter of supplement-manufacturing companies whose products were tested received citations related to purity, strength and ingredient content.

That said, there are accredited organizations, like NSF International, which independently test supplements, including protein powders.

NSF’s “Certified for Sport” designation ensures that contents match what is on the label, the product is GMP-registered, and the powder does not contain unsafe levels of toxic metals like arsenic and mercury.

How much protein do you need?

The amount of protein thought to be adequate for most healthy people, called the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA), is set at 0.8 grams per kilogram. For someone who weighs 150 pounds, this translates to roughly 55 grams of protein; a 200-pound person requires about 70 grams of protein.

Certain athletes undergoing intense training may enhance their progress by consuming more than double the RDA, but this doesn’t apply to most of us.

For many people, it is relatively easy to reach recommended amounts through their usual diet. One egg, one half-cup of chickpeas or a small handful of nuts all provide roughly 6 grams of protein. A piece of chicken or fish the size of a deck of cards offers about 30 grams.

On average, Americans consume 65 to 90 grams of protein each day. (Young women under the age of 19 and people older than 70 are more likely to be at risk for low protein intake.)

Individuals with kidney disease often benefit from consuming marginally less protein than the RDA. They should talk to a healthcare provider before supplementing with protein.

More may help older adults

Older adults may benefit from increasing protein slightly, regardless of their exercise routine. Research suggests older adults and exercisers looking to support muscle growth may benefit from eating one-and-a-half to two times as much protein as the RDA.

As we age, we lose muscle, and research shows boosting protein may help increase strength and lean body mass. But unless you have a restricted diet, such as a strict plant-based or vegan regimen, this increase is often still achievable through food.

For those looking to enhance the muscle growth that typically occurs with exercise, evidence supports consuming 20 to 40 grams of protein at a time (roughly the amount found in a can of tuna).

Larger quantities simply contribute calories and can actually reduce muscle-building potential. So, having several scoops of protein powder at once is unlikely to be helpful.

Plant-based powders often have less protein, but shouldn’t be discarded as an option. Rice and pea protein, for example, have been shown to stimulate muscle growth similar to whey, a milk-based protein touted for its high quality and quick absorption.

Unless you are an older adult with a limited appetite, have a restricted diet, or are a trained professional athlete, chances are you can adjust your food intake to get what you need. Protein from food is often cheaper, carries fewer risks, and naturally includes beneficial nutrients.

If increasing protein the old-fashioned way is not an option, taking a supplement can be both effective and convenient. But most of us don’t need to channel our inner Mr. Olympia by using a protein powder.

Emily Gelsomin, M.L.A., R.D., L.D.N., is a contributor to Harvard Health Publications. © 2020 by Harvard University
In November, we celebrate National Family Caregivers Month. In the Richmond Region, this is a time for us to call attention to the significant contributions that caregivers (family members and friends) provide every day of the year. This care helps to maintain and improve the quality of life for thousands of older adults in the Greater Richmond Region who are faced with chronic illnesses, injuries, or may be patients leaving hospitals, residents of long-term care facilities, veterans with disabilities and so many others.

As we observe National Caregivers Month, we recognize that quality of life is essential for all ages. At Senior Connections, our major focus is to address the needs of older adults and caregivers and to help them improve their overall quality of life by identifying and using available resources. Our vision for the future is “seniors with improved quality of life.” In this issue of Engage at Any Age, the focus is on caregiving and resources to support caregivers.

As we recognize the importance of caregiving, it is also an appropriate time to call attention to the significant support local governments provide for caregivers. More than ever, due to both the challenges and barriers presented by COVID-19, caregivers need support and assistance. The localities of Virginia Planning District 15 (the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan and the City of Richmond) along with PlanRVA are all commended for their support to caregivers in countless ways. The needs of caregivers are addressed through planning, education, services, resources, advocacy and, most recently, with assistance from the CARES Act for COVID-19 help.

In closing, I wish to take this opportunity to recognize our Board Member Emerita, Dr. Thelma Bland Watson, Executive Director, Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging.

See DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE, page B-3

The White House
Office of the Press Secretary
For Immediate Release

October 31, 2020

President Donald J. Trump Proclaims November 2020 as National Family Caregivers Month

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Each day in homes throughout our Nation, Americans with chronic or terminal illnesses, functional impairment, or disabilities receive compassionate care and support from family members and loved ones. During National Family Caregivers Month, we salute the more than 40 million people in the United States who serve as unpaid caregivers. With generous hearts and faithful devotion, they honor the sanctity of life and affirm the inherent value of all human beings.

Caregivers work long days and spend countless hours to meet and anticipate the needs of their loved ones, often facing challenges that can seem impossible to navigate. Errands, medical appointments, transportation, meal preparation, grooming, and companionship can consume significant time and effort, especially when caregivers must balance these duties with the pressures and responsibilities of their own lives, including employment and raising children. In spite of all of this, these extraordinary moms and dads, sons and daughters, siblings and friends showcase compassion and selflessness for the ones they love. Their faithfulness and dedication are indicative of the generosity of the American Spirit and reflect the very best of our Nation.

Because of the essential role they play in ensuring the health and wellbeing of those most in need, family caregivers deserve our unending support. In 2018, I signed into law two pieces of legislation, the RAISE Family Caregivers Act and the Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act, which provide for the development of strategies and support networks for family caregivers. Over the last year, the Advisory Councils created by these acts have made significant progress toward raising awareness and giving a voice to family caregivers. The work of these Councils, led by the Administration for Community Living at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), will yield a National Caregiving Strategy in 2021 that will include recommended actions that States, communities, health systems, and other private-sector entities and stakeholders can take to improve the lives and conditions of family caregivers. Working alongside existing initiatives like HHS’s National Family Caregiver Support Program, we are ensuring that family caregivers have the resources they need to provide essential care and support for their loved ones.

Our great veterans living with illness or injury are one of the largest groups who receive care from family members and friends. These caregivers, more than 5 million strong, play a vital role in the lives of these extraordinary men and women who have sacrificed so much for our country. In order to improve services and outcomes for patients and families who are dealing with the stress and uncertainty of caregiving, the Department of Veterans Affairs established the first National Center of Excellence for veteran and caregiver research. The advances made through this initiative, coupled with the resources and capabilities made available through the VA MISSION Act, which I signed into law in 2018, are helping to educate and equip families with the tools they need to provide even better care for our Nation’s veterans. America’s heroes have earned and deserve our respect and gratitude, and their caregivers deserve the same.

Family caregivers provide a vital lifeline of connection and hope to loved ones during challenging and uncertain days. These caregivers, who devote immeasurable time, energy, resources and heart, need our understanding, support, gratitude and encouragement. Throughout this month, let us remember these men and women who spend their days caring for others, and let us pray that they are sustained by grace and strength as they carry on this important work.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, DONALD J. TRUMP, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2020 as National Family Caregivers Month. I encourage all Americans to reach out to those who provide care for their family members, friends and neighbors in need, to honor and thank them.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth,
Senior Connections, CAAA

Local Government Connections

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Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging, is the designated Area Agency on Aging for Planning District 15, consisting of the City of Richmond and the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent and Powhatan.

Did you know Senior Connections has Care Coordinators serving each of these eight localities? Care Coordinators connect older adults in need to resources in the community. They discuss options for the future, determine what might be needed to accomplish long-term goals, and develop a plan to achieve them. Care Coordinators work with families who support the older adults in their life to help them find the best options for care for their loved ones. From arranging accessibility options, like ramps or grab bars, to assisting with finding resources for meals or in-home care, Senior Connections’ Care Coordinators are the “one-stop-shop” for making sure residents are aware of, and have access to, any and all resources that are available in the community.

City of Richmond

The City of Richmond's Office of Aging and Disability Services assist Richmond residents with aging in place through a well-coordinated network of community-based services. Help navigating community-based services and supports is available for adults, 55 and older, and for adult individuals with physical and sensory disabilities.

The Aging and Disabilities Help Line can be accessed by dialing (804) 646-1082. COVID-19 Programs & Services are:

- conducting care coordination assessments by phone;
- providing coordination of food distribution;
- providing coordination of financial assistance programs to provide financial support with expenses such as mortgages, rent and utilities;
- providing coordination of benefits and services such as SNAP, Medicaid, Adult Protective Services and more;
- providing well-check calls to those who may be socially isolated;
- providing assistance with accessing mobility devices and equipment, and
- providing virtual and phone programs of engagement to help with social isolation and loneliness.

Charles City

COVID-19 has greatly impacted older residents in Charles City County. As the community begins to re-open, the County remains committed to supporting the needs of older adult residents. The health and safety of Charles City residents is our top priority.

Residents should call the Charles City hotline at (804) 652-4701 if they have questions about where to get tested; are in need of food assistance; need to get connected with additional services, or have questions about Charles City County operations.

COVID-19 heightened our awareness of food insecurity in Charles City County in part due to the number of families seeking assistance through the temporary food pantry established at the Charles City County Public Schools' Vocational Building.

Charles City County’s designation as a food desert characterizes it as a home-place that compromises the health outcomes of residents simply by virtue of their location and the absence of convenient healthy food options. The County reached out to regional and state partners and was able to secure $22,000 in support from the Greater Richmond Community Foundation for the temporary food pantry and $500,000 from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to establish a permanent food pantry. Additional community benefactors support this effort, and County officials stated that the support of everyone is humbling and appreciated.

Charles City County seeks to be innovative in addressing the food security needs of its constituents by advancing a mission perfectly espoused by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation which posits that, “Where we live shouldn’t determine how long or how well we live.” In our communities, we all should be surrounded by conditions that enable us to live the healthiest life possible, such as access to healthy food, quality schools, stable housing, good jobs with fair pay, and safe places to exercise and play.

Chesterfield

Chesterfield County Office of Aging & Disability Services

Mission — Dedicated to providing information, resources, programs and engagement opportunities to residents age 50+ family members and caregivers who want to remain active, independent and vital contributors to their community.

For additional information contact us via:
Phone: (804) 768-7878
Email: AgingServices@chesterfield.gov
Website: https://www.chesterfield.gov/seniorgovt
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/chesterfieldsenior

Chesterfield Telephone Reassurance Program — “Reassuring Older Adults One Conversation at a Time”

The Telephone Reassurance Program enables volunteers to verify the well-being of county older adults who are disabled, live alone or feel isolated. The volunteers, who have been screened and trained, call program participants daily or weekly.

If you know of any Chesterfield County older adults who would benefit from a friendly phone call, please contact Chesterfield County Office of Aging & Disability Services at (804) 768-7878 or email AgingServices@chesterfield.gov

Chesterfield Council on Aging (CCA)

The Council seeks county residents and professionals from all industries who are dedicated to actively supporting our mission: “To enhance the quality of life for older adults with disabilities in Chesterfield County through education, advocacy, and community service.”

We invite you to explore our committees and CCA sponsored events to find where you can best contribute in terms of volunteering your time, resources or leadership.

Membership is FREE.

In light of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Chesterfield Council on Aging monthly educational programs have gone virtual, beginning April 2020. Please contact Chesterfield Office of Aging and Disability Services for information on future programs. The following presentations have been recorded and available to view by going to: https://www.chesterfield.gov/5027/Council-on-Aging-Meetings

Goochland

Goochland County Department of Social Services’ staff is working 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and available to assist clients by phone during those hours. Applicants may apply for benefits online at https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/, by phone at 1-855-635-4370, or for Medical Assistance only at 1-855-242-8282 (TDD: 1-888-221-1590). If a replacement EBT card is needed, the client may call 1-866-281-2448 or Goochland Department of Social Services at (804) 556-5880.

Goochland Community Action Program

Applicants making less than 125% of the federal poverty level can apply for up to $500 in assistance per year with utilities, rent, mortgage or medical supplies.

The program also offers a food voucher. The voucher is used at the local Food Lion and offers up to $100 dollars in nutritious groceries. Options include milk, eggs, cheese, cereal, bread, chicken, beef, orange juice, rice, select vegetables and fruits, flour, crackers, peanut butter. Seniors can also select three packs of nutritional supplements (Ensure, Boost, etc.). Call (804) 556-5880.

Medical Transportation

Goochland Cares offers citizens help maintaining a safe and healthy living environment. Goochland Cares with the support of Goochland Community Action program allocates $30,000 to Goochland Cares for their Home Repair Program. For more information and eligibility requirements, contact Angie Shiflett at Goochland Cares at (804) 556-6290.

Goochland Cares

Goochland Cares provides rides to and from medical appointments, inside and outside of the county, for clients without transportation. (Goochland County does not offer public transportation.) You must sign up ahead of time to use this service. Call at least 24 hours before your medical appointment. For more information, contact Goochland Cares at (804) 556-6290.

Medicaid/SNAP

Goochland Department of Social Services is the administrator of the Medicaid and SNAP program. The agency processes applications for Medicaid insurance and SNAP. Medicaid coverage includes community-based care and nursing home placement.

Hanover

Hanover Fall Resources and Reminders for Our Seniors from Hanover County

Are you a Hanover resident who is facing challenges with mortgage, rent, utility or food expenses due to the coronavirus national emergency? Financial assistance is available. Hanover County has partnered with United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg to distribute funding to a number of community partners to help those who need direct assistance during this time.

For older adults, Senior Connections is one of the partners that has received Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to assist seniors during the pandemic. For assistance from Senior Connections, call (804) 343-3000. For more information about other organizations serving Hanover residents through these funds, visit the Hanover County website, www.hanovercounty.gov, click the Quick Link for CARES Act Funding for Nonprofits. All funds must be expended by December 31, 2020.

“Making Holidays Bright” Wish List

Are you looking for ways to make the holidays bright for someone in need? Hanover County Dept. of Community Resources has compiled its annual “Making Holidays Bright” wish list from local organizations. The listing offers various ways that local civic clubs, groups, faith communities, businesses and individuals can make a difference for others this holiday season.

See GOVT. CONNECTIONS, page B-3

See GOVT. CONNECTIONS, page B-3
Govt. Connections

From page B-2

teer, sponsor a friend, collect or create items or make a donation. You can download the list from www.HanoverVolunteers.org or call (804) 365-4300 to obtain a copy.

Hanover Employees Support Senior Connections’ Seniors with “THANK-FALL” Gift Bags

What senior doesn’t deserve a little kindness right now? Hanover County employees will be donating toiletries, small activities/puzzles, note cards and other treats to show their thanks and compassion to Hanover Seniors. Youth from the Hanover Youth Service Council will be assembling the bags, which will be delivered to Friendship Café participants and other homebound seniors.

Hanover DASH Specialized Transportation

Did you know that there is an affordable transportation option for Hanover residents aged 60 and over or those under 60 who have a short-term or long-term disability? Hanover DASH will celebrate its first full year of service on December 12. So far, the program has provided more than 1,700 rides, including trips to medical appointments, shopping, banking, other personal business, formal social supports, employment and county government buildings.

The service area includes Hanover county and seven miles outside the county boundaries, as well as additional medical facilities such as the Hunter McGuire VA Hospital and medical facilities at Stony Point.

Transportation is provided curb-to-curb or door-to-door as needed. Wheelchair vans, medical sedans, taxis and rideshare transportation are available to provide personalized transportation and greater independence for registered riders. Masks and hand sanitizer can be mailed to registered riders upon request.

This countywide specialized transportation service is funded by a grant from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and Hanover County.

For more details, visit www.HanoverDASH.org or call (804) 365-DASH (3274).

Hanover’s Senior Services Specialist

Did you know that Hanover Community Resources has a Senior Services Specialist? Hanover’s Senior Services Specialist, Susan Richards, is available to assist you with information and referrals to local programs and services that best address your needs. Hanover also has an active Council on Aging appointed by the County Board of Supervisors to promote resources and services for positive aging. The Senior Services Specialist provides staff support to this Council.

For more information, contact Susan Richards at (804) 365-4181 or email srichards@hanovercounty.gov

Henrico

Henrico County’s EngAGE initiative recognizes the effects that social isolation and the COVID-19 pandemic have brought to the forefront. As a result, EngAGE has created programs and initiatives specifically combating social isolation.

Henrico County’s EngAGE initiative launched the EngAGEing Conversations: Telephone Reassurance program in July 2020 after transitioning the Outreach Call Center for Older Residents and Refugees into a permanent program. EngAGEing Conversations provides a friendly, compassionate voice to older adults in our community who are feeling lonely and/or isolated.

Volunteers conduct five- to ten-minute phone calls to four or five older adults each week during a two-hour volunteer shift. Older adult participants may be called up to three days per week for a friendly, social phone call. This is not intended to be an emergency system or case management service. However, if additional services are needed, the Advocate for the Aging will refer the participant to the appropriate resource.

EngAGE at Home, a partnership with The Longevity Project, is the second way the EngAGE initiative is promoting social connectedness! Join us every Tuesday at 11 a.m. for our telephone-based activities sessions. Each session is one hour in length and takes place over the telephone from the comfort of your own home. Each week is a new topic ranging from Journaling, Senior Safety, Crime Fiction Book Talks and so much more!

To sign up for any of these programs, contact Sara Morris, Henrico County Advocate for the Aging, at mor141@henrico.us or (804) 501-5065.

New Kent

The past months have brought a whirlwind of changes, updates, returns and opportunities for reflection. The pandemic has offered us all an opportunity to examine what we do, challenge our preconceived notions of how we do our business, and look to ways of doing the important work we perform.

New Kent Social Services remains engaged and committed to serving the children, families and adults of New Kent County. Our agency remains “open for business” during these difficult times. Despite the limitations surrounding everyone’s daily lives, our agency continues to be responsible for receiving and responding to reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation of children and adults in our community.

If you have a concern or question, please call (804) 966-1853, Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You do not need to be “low-income” to call and ask for assistance and information. To report a concern afterwards, please call 1-800-552-7096.

The residents of New Kent County now have a way to request Emergency Assistance online via the County website. The process is simple.

From the DSS webpage on the County website, our residents can click on Apply Now and follow prompts to request emergency assistance. Once we receive the request, families will follow up with the resident to determine what paperwork is appropriate, and will send the paperwork either through email or U.S. Mail to the client. This link will take you to the page: https://www.co.newkent.va.us/490/Apply-Now.

Upcoming Holidays

The 11th Annual Thanksgiving Day Feast is November 26, 2020, noon to 4 p.m. at the Providence Forge Recreation Center located at 9900 Carriage Road, Providence Forge, VA. Due to COVID-19, this year will be a “Grab and Go.” The meal is “all you can eat” for 99 cents and is available to all citizens. The Forge Foundation sponsors this event. Please contact New Kent DSS at (804) 966-1853 for more information.

Thanksgiving and Christmas — If you or anyone you know needs assistance, a Thanksgiving meal, and/or gifts for Christmas during the holiday season, please contact New Kent Social Services at (804) 966-1853 or visit https://www.co.newkent.va.us/490/Apply-Now.

Powhatan

Powhatan County Department of Social Services processes applications for Medicaid and SNAP, investigates reports of abuse or neglect, and receives screening requests for Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports. Call (804) 598-5630.

Since COVID-19 began, Powhatan County continues to connect with seniors regularly through a number of outreach efforts with a goal to improve the livability of Powhatan for older adults.

The Ride Assist Services (RAS) program through the Department of Social Services provides free transportation for basic needs to ambulatory adults who are unable to drive, are age 60 and over. Volunteer Drivers conduct five- to ten-minute rides, are age 60 and over. Volunteer Drivers conduct five- to ten-minute rides.

The Grandpals program in Powhatan works to connect the younger generation with older adults in the County. The program encourages interaction through the letters, stories and artwork of children of all ages. The goal is to support older adults during this time of isolation and uncertainty.

To learn more about the programs and services available to assist older adults in Powhatan County, please contact Jayne Lloyd at (804) 698-0438 or RAServices.PVA@gmail.com.

New Kent

When asked about caregiving, Mrs. Johnson shares her own experiences in caring for her husband, mother and daughter. She sums it up this way, “I consider caregiving like fruits of the spirit. It is done with love and comes from the heart. Every opportunity to serve is an opportunity to grow.”

Thank you all for helping us recognize and celebrate November 2020 as a time for recognition, awareness and support in the midst of challenges and opportunities.

Best wishes,

Dr. Thelma Bland Watson

Director’s message

From page B-1

Mrs. Gloria Johnson, who has served in many capacities with honor and distinction. Mrs. Johnson, a long-time resident of Henrico County, has served with distinction on the Board of Directors for Senior Connections and numerous other organizations.

Mrs. Johnson’s role as Board Member Emerita recognizes and exemplifies her outstanding contributions as retired educator, former caregiver, consummate volunteer and extraordinary community advocate.

Virginia Caregiver Coalition

Benefits for Members...
Free Membership and Participation
Interdisciplinary Collaboration
Education and Advocacy
Information about Statewide Legislation
Updates on local, regional, and statewide Resources
Research Participation

VCC Needs You!
We invite caregivers, not-for-profit, for profit organizations, colleges & universities, local and state agencies, businesses to attend our meetings, give presentations about your services and become members.

To Become a Member:

Call or Email Nick Slentz
- 804.588.3978
- Nick.Slentz@dars.virginia.gov
Are you a Hanover resident who is facing challenges with Food or Utility Expenses due to the coronavirus national emergency? Senior Connections has partnered with Hanover County and the United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg to help residents over 60 who need assistance through this time. Call Senior Connections at (804) 343-3000.

Are You a Family Caregiver in Need of Additional Support?

For information on: Caregiver Resources, Support Groups & Training

- Visit Senior Connections Website: seniorconnections-va.org
- Call our Caregiver Specialist: Dee Caras - 804.343.3000

CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH ALZHEIMER’S ISN’T EASY. REACHING US IS.

If you care for someone with Alzheimer’s disease, memory loss or dementia, you are not alone. We’re here day or night — whenever you need us — offering reliable information and support.

Free 24/7 Helpline: 800.272.3900
Alzheimer’s and Dementia Caregiver Center: alz.org/care
Avoid dirty money with no-touch payment

By Gregory Karp

If you’re looking for a self-improvement task in this pandemic era, try teaching yourself to use contactless payments with your phone or “tap-to-pay” credit and debit cards. Any germaphobe will tell you that the surfaces of bills and coins have always been gross. And handing your credit card to a cashier who has the sniffles and a hacking cough? Even in pre-pandemic times, gross.

Now, COVID-19 has prompted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to advise using touchless payments whenever possible in the brick-and-mortar world.

Americans have been relatively slow to adopt touch-free payments even though they’re more convenient and secure than swiping credit and debit cards. But maybe hygiene will be the tipping point as people seek a solution for, well, yucky money.

Simple and convenient

“I think the pandemic is a strong impetus to change,” said Jodie Kelley, CEO of the Electronic Transactions Association. “I think it’s going to stick and accelerate further. As people get used to it and understand how to do it and find that it’s simple and convenient, then they’re not going to shift back.”

Consumer interest in contactless payments has spiked during the pandemic. Since January, no-touch payments have increased at 69% of retailers surveyed by the research firm Forrester on behalf of the National Retail Federation. And two-thirds of retailers surveyed now accept some form of no-touch payment.

Learning to use contactless payments might be awkward at first, and some of your favorite retailers might not be equipped to accept them. The point is to give it a shot the next time you’re not in a rush in a checkout line that can handle contactless payments.

“The first time I went to pay with my phone, I didn’t quite know how to do it,” Kelley said. “I felt a little silly trying to figure it out. But once I figured it out, I loved it.”

Here are three ways to experiment with contactless payments and avoid dirty currency and much-touched payment terminals:

**Tap to pay**

True, the word “tap” doesn’t exactly scream contactless. But “tap to pay” credit and debit cards really only need to be within a couple of inches of the payment terminal. The cards have little antennas inside. How to tell if your payment card has contactless capability? It will have a logo that looks like a sideways Wi-Fi symbol of radiating waves. Retail payment terminals that accept contactless payments have the same symbol.

These cards don’t require a smartphone to complete a contactless payment, and you don’t have to use a PIN. Nine of the top 10 U.S. credit card issuers are actively distributing new contactless cards to customers. Visa has said, “For people who are not used to engaging with technology, I would say, first look at your card, see if it has the symbol. And if it does, the next time you’re at a retail location, all you have to do is touch that card to the terminal,” Kelley said. “It is incredibly straightforward. I encourage people to try it.”

**Smartphone payments**

With this option, you open your “wallet” app and hold your phone near the terminal, and your phone will ask for authentication. That’s the normal unlocking procedure with your phone, whether punching in a code or using thumbprint or face identification.

Many smartwatches work, too, as long as they have the required technology, called NFC, or near-field communication. The most popular services are Apple Pay, Google Pay and Samsung Pay.

Phone payments require a little prep work before you get to the checkout counter. First, you must enter your payment card information into your mobile wallet app. Then, the card is saved and available to use.

**Touchless pay at the pump**

Many retailers, such as Starbucks and Target, have mobile apps that let you pay on your phone and bypass in-person payment completely. In those cases, you typically would get items delivered or visit the store for curbside or in-store pickup.

Another way to use a retail app is at major gas station chains. The apps download them at an app store or you can log in which pump number you’re at, then authorize you to use it. You fill your tank with gas, and the charge goes to whatever payment method you identified in the gas-station app.

Just be sure to clean your hands after using the pump nozzle.

**Is it secure?**

As you beam your next payment to a retailer’s checkout terminal, you might wonder, “Will my credit card number be stolen?”

The nontechnical answer is that it’s safer than the old method of swiping your card. That’s because the card or phone sends encrypted payment information to the terminal — it essentially masks your real credit card number. Even if the payment information was intercepted, it would be useless to a thief.

“It’s an incredibly safe way to pay,” Kelley said. These days, in more ways than one.

—AP/NerdWallet

A guide to giving for the greatest impact

By Kiplinger Consumer News Service

The recession and global pandemic are hitting charities where it hurts the most: in the wallet. Most fundraising professionals expect donations to decline in 2020 compared with previous years, a situation likely to continue through 2021, according to the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Meanwhile, the need for charity is climbing, particularly to combat rising poverty, hunger and homelessness from the pandemic’s economic fallout.

“There are so many needs that it can be overwhelming for donors,” said Una Osili, professor of economics and philanthropic studies at Indiana University and associate dean for research at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.

The U.S. has 1.6 million nonprofits, a figure that has quadrupled in the last 40 years, according to Kevin Scally, chief relationship officer for Charity Navigator, which evaluates nonprofits and rates their effectiveness.

Is it better to give to a large nonprofit or a small one? Should you go global or stay local?

“There’s no single answer, only ways to assess their effectiveness,” Scally said. “On a national level, the benefit of supporting a larger organization is they have more resources to do more. In addition, many national organizations, especially the good ones, will have local partnerships.”

**Charity starts at home**

Adela Crandell Durkee, 69, donates recurring amounts to PBS, NPR and Catholic Family Charities, but beyond that has struggled to find national organizations to support.

In the past, she and her daughter raised money for breast cancer through the Susan G. Komen walk, only to encounter recriminations from family and friends who opposed the Komen Foundation’s support of Planned Parenthood.

Durkee and her daughter donated hair to Locks of Love to make into wigs but then grew concerned that the organization wasn’t rated as favorably as others.

“It got to be too much work for me to sort through all the threads and truly give consciously. So, I changed my tactic,” she said. “I try to pick things that are local and where I can see the direct impact.”

Now, Durkee volunteers at a local food pantry, Habitat for Humanity and her church, where, she said, “the overhead is low and the feedback is plentiful.”

Some donors give in concentric circles: one local charity, one regional, one national and one international.

“On the local level, you as a donor have more of a connection to the work being done,” Scally said. “On a national level, the benefit of supporting a larger organization is they have more resources to do more. In addition, many national organizations, especially the good ones, will have local partnerships.”

**Philanthropy 101**

Once you know the causes you want to support, visit websites such as Give.org and CharityNavigator.org that evaluate nonprofits, provide comparisons, and even suggest charities if you search by topic or Zip code.

These websites provide details about a nonprofit’s activities, and some also rate

Learn more about online banking

**FIFTYPLUS — NOVEMBER 2020**

www.FiftyPlusRichmond.com

**RETHINK MEDICARE COVERAGE**

Look closely at your current Medicare coverage and evaluate other options that could lower your costs during this year’s Open Enrollment period, from now until Dec. 7

**NO TELLER NECESSARY**

The pandemic provides a good time to try making bank deposits and paying bills via computer or smartphone. Check out these answers to common questions about online banking
and rank charities according to financial efficiency, transparency and impact.

Akira Barclay, a philanthropic consultant, noted that on these sites larger organizations tend to get higher ratings because they have the resources to collect data and present themselves in a favorable light.

“A smaller nonprofit, just because they don’t have that concrete data, doesn’t mean they aren’t making an impact,” said Tracey Webb of Laurel, Maryland, a collective-giving expert and founder of Black Benefactors, which is based in Washington, D.C., and makes grants between $500 and $10,000.

Of course, check the nonprofit’s website for annual reports or newsletters. Evaluate the staff and board leadership, including their experience and background.

“I like to look at their social media pages,” Webb said. “Sometimes they’re updated more frequently than the website.”

For you to claim a tax deduction for your donation, the organization must be a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, fiscally sponsored or structured as a donor-advised fund.

You should be able to find the charity’s 990 form, which most nonprofits must file annually with the IRS, on irs.gov or through a service like Candid GuideStar or Foundation Center. This form contains financial results, revenue, expenses and the compensation of the nonprofit’s five most highly paid employees or contractors.

Assess whether the organization is a responsible steward of resources by looking at its results, the percentage of revenue that goes to overhead, and the amount of cash it has on hand to meet operating costs.

“If the organization isn’t sustainable, you may want to be a bit cautious,” Osili said.

The gift of time

Besides giving money, “there’s also the volunteering of time, talent and testimony,” Osili added. “How do you support the organization? Do you post on social media? They could benefit from that testimony.”

Consider volunteering, which can eventually lead to service on the board of directors.

“Donors that get involved in the organization tend to get more satisfaction,” Osili said.

Give as part of a group

Consider joining or starting a collective-giving group, which combines gifts for a greater impact. Some alumni do this by pooling contributions from a graduating class, for example.

“Anyone who’s making a choice to give during this time, their generosity is appreciated,” Barclay said. “It’s so important right now, more than ever.”

Reevaluate your Medicare coverage now

By Lifestyles After 50

It’s that time of year again: Medicare’s annual Open Enrollment period. Each year from October 15 to December 7, current Medicare users are able to compare and switch their Medicare and Part D prescription drug plans, if wanted.

New users are able to enroll during this period, so long as it is not their first time enrolling in Parts A or B. (Your initial enrollment period generally depends on the date you turn 65. If you miss that opportunity, your next one is during the “general” enrollment period, Jan. 1-March 31.)

According to MyMedicareMatters.org, a service of the National Council on Aging, here are the various changes you can make during this open enrollment period:

—Anyone with Medicare Parts A & B can switch to a Part C (Medicare Advantage) plan.

—Anyone with Medicare Part C can switch back to Parts A & B, or switch to a new Part C plan.

—Anyone who has or is signing up for Medicare Parts A or B can join, drop or switch a Part D prescription drug plan.

Any changes you make to your Medicare coverage plan during the 2020 open enrollment period will be effective as of January 1, 2021.

Why bother?

Each year, insurance companies are able to make various changes to their Medicare and Part D plans — including the doctors and prescriptions they cover and their various co-pays and deductibles. Naturally, these affect the out-of-pocket costs different consumers will face. You could also lose access to a trusted doctor.

So, it’s highly recommended that you use the open enrollment period to re-evaluate your current plan and consider changing to another one that could save you money or improve your coverage.

The benefits of annually evaluating your Medicare coverage plan, according to MyMedicareMatters.org, are these:

—Switching to better prescription drug coverage can reduce out-of-pocket costs and ensure drug plans still cover needed prescriptions. Research shows that the average consumer can save $300 or more annually if they review their Part D coverage.

See MEDICARE COVERAGE, page 18

Giving

From page 15

and rank charities according to financial efficiency, transparency and impact.

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Trying online banking? FAQs answered

By Chanelle Bessette

As the COVID-19 pandemic leads banking customers to lean into technology to manage their money, those trying online banking for the first time may find themselves with questions about how to handle things previously done in person or with paper documents.

If you’re stuck on how to handle some of the practical aspects of online banking, here are answers to common questions:

Should I save monthly statements?

Experian, one of the three major credit bureaus, recommends keeping bank statements for tax purposes to confirm your income or deductible expenses. If you do end up using your statements for your taxes, you may want to hang onto your statements for up to seven years in case the IRS decides to audit you. Even if your bank keeps digital records of your statements, you may want to print or download your statements just in case.

When should I shred the paper check from a mobile deposit?

Major banks recommend that after you’ve made a mobile deposit, you write “mobile deposit” and the date of deposit on the front of the check. Keep the check until you’ve made sure the deposit has gone through—which may take several days — and that the bank doesn’t need the original check for any reason. Once the check has been cleared in your account, it’s best to shred it.

How do I send money or pay bills through my mobile banking app?

If you want to send money to friends or family, your bank may have you covered with the Zelle money transfer service. Zelle, which is integrated with many major banks and also available as a separate app, allows registered users to receive and send money from their bank accounts.

You can also sign up for money transfer apps like Venmo or Cash App and link them to your bank account to send and receive money, as long as your sender or recipient has the same bank.

To pay your bills online, your bank might have the option to set up recurring payments to services like your cell phone provider or utility company, allowing you to automate your monthly bills.

Some banks can also send a check on your behalf if necessary. Wells Fargo, for example, offers online bill pay services, but you can also schedule paper checks to be sent for you if your service provider doesn’t accept electronic payments. Search your bank’s FAQs or reach out to its customer service department for details on its bill-pay features.

What should I do if my mobile banking app isn’t working?

It’s a universal truth that technology comes with occasional frustrations. Sometimes banks experience app outages and sometimes there are problems on the user side. Here are a few things you can do to diagnose the problem:

—Make sure your login credentials are correct. Entering an incorrect username and/or password is a common stumbling block and will prevent access to your account. Some banks might even lock you out after too many failed login attempts. If you’ve forgotten your login information, contact your bank’s tech support team.

—Check your email and your bank’s social media accounts. Your bank may have posted on its Facebook or Twitter accounts or sent an email notification about any known app problems. Many consumers today also use their banks’ platforms to flag problems themselves. If there’s an outage, your bank may post information on how long it’s expected to last and how you can access your account in the meantime. Bookmark or follow your bank’s social media accounts for quick access.

—Update your app and/or your phone software. Your version of the app could be out of date, or your phone’s software may need updating to use a newer version of the app. Go to your phone’s app marketplace (e.g., Apple App Store or Google Play Store), search for your bank’s app and see if there’s an option to update.

—Get technical support from your bank. For help, reach out to your bank’s customer service representatives by phone, email or chat, if available.

—Use your desktop login or visit a branch or ATM. If your app isn’t working, you may still be able to log in on a desktop computer. If your bank has physical branches, you should be able to get in-person service, although COVID-19 precautions may mean that hours are limited. If you’re trying to deposit a check or check your balance, you can use an ATM, as long as your bank offers use of a network.

—AP/NerdWallet

Bring the natural benefits of sunlight indoors.

Ever since the first human went into a dark cave and built a fire, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. Unfortunately, since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has remained relatively prehistoric. Modern light fixtures do little to combat many symptoms of improper lighting, such as eyestrain, dryness or burning. As more and more of us spend longer hours in front of a computer monitor, the results are compounded ... and the effects of indoor lighting are not necessarily limited to physical well-being. Many people believe that the quantity and quality of light can play a part in one’s mood and work performance. Now there’s a better way to bring the positive benefits associated with natural sunlight indoors.

A floor lamp that spreads sunshine all over a room

The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp will change the way you see and feel about your living or work spaces. Studies show that sunshine can lift your mood and your energy levels. But as we all know, the sun, unfortunately, does not always shine. So, to bring the benefits of natural daylight indoors, use the floor lamp that simulates the full spectrum of daylight. You will see with more clarity and enjoyment as this lamp provides sharp visibility for close tasks and reduces eyestrain. Its 27-watt compact bulb is the equivalent to a 150-watt ordinary light bulb. This makes it perfect for activities such as reading, writing, sewing, needlepoint, and especially for aging eyes.

Experience sunshine indoors at the touch-of-a-switch. This amazing lamp is easy on the eyes and easy on the hands. It features a special “soft-touch, flicker-free” rocker switch that’s easier to use than traditional toggle or twist switches. Its flexible goose-neck design enables you to get light where you need it most. The high-tech electronics, user-friendly design, and bulb that last 10 times longer than an ordinary bulb make this lamp a must-have.

Here is a guarantee that no other lamp can make. If the Balanced Spectrum® bulb ever burns out, we’ll send you a free replacement bulb, all you pay is a small fee for shipping and handling. The Balanced Spectrum® floor lamp comes with firstSTREET’s exclusive guarantee. Try this lamp for 90 days and return it for the product purchase price if not completely satisfied.

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How to avoid the latest Medicare scams

Every year during health insurance open enrollment season, scammers try to dupe unsuspecting consumers into sharing their personal information. You may receive a call (or recorded message) from someone who claims to be helping you navigate your Medicare options. They may call themselves a “healthcare benefits advocate” or a similar title.

The caller says they can enroll you in a “cheaper and better” Medicare program than what you currently have, and all you need to do is provide some personal information such as your Medicare ID number. Of course, the call is a scam, and sharing personal information merely opens you to identity theft.

In another version reported to BBB.org/ScamTracker, the caller is trying to frighten you by claiming your Medicare will be discontinued if you don’t re-enroll. Fortunately, you are told, this “Medicare advisor” can fix the situation, but you need to provide some personal information to get the process going.

BBB.org/ScamTracker is also getting reports about callers pushing “free” back or knee braces. This is also Medicare fraud. You can learn more about these scams at http://bit.ly/bracescam.

How to avoid being scammed

—Be wary of unsolicited contact. People representing Medicare plans don’t contact you by phone, email or in person unless you are already enrolled. Be especially cautious of calls that require quick action or immediate payment.

—Decline promotional gifts in exchange for personal information. Keep a healthy level of skepticism any time a broker offers you free gifts or other special deals. Never sign up with a broker who offers you an expensive “sign-up gift” in exchange for providing your Medicare ID number or other personal information.

—Beware of “free health screenings.” Some brokers offer this to weed out people who are less healthy. This is against Medicare rules.

—Guard your government-issued numbers. Never offer your Medicare ID number, Social Security number, health plan info, or banking information to anyone you don’t know.

—Go to official websites. You can enroll or re-enroll in Medicare at Medicare.gov.

If you’ve been the victim of a scam, please report it to BBB.org/ScamTracker. By sharing your experience, you can help others avoid falling victim to similar scams.

Try Finger Lakes for hikes, food and laughs

By Victor Block

One afternoon during a recent trip to the Finger Lakes region of Western New York State, I was clocking 80 miles per hour (zooming around an automobile racetrack). On another day, I slowed down on the road to pass a horse-pulled Amish buggy.

In between were hikes through other-worldly scenery, visits to intriguing museums, and opportunities to become acquainted with the opulent lifestyle of the wealthy.

The Finger Lakes region is within an easy six or seven-hour drive from Washington, D.C. You'll pass through countryside with splendid views of rolling farmlands and dense forests. When the drive ends, visitors face a long, diverse list of sightseeing and activities.

On something called the Empire State Road Trip, I followed an itinerary that linked enticing things to see and do with inviting accommodations along the way. The road trip was laid out by the Harbor Hotel Collection — three properties about a three-hour drive from each other in Chautauqua, Watkins Glen and Clayton, the latter located in New York’s Thousand Islands District (there actually are 1,864 islands).

Each location offers its own unique reasons to visit, while also sharing appealing traits and treats. Let’s begin with the latter.

Foodies be forewarned! You may have to loosen your belt during the sojourn in this diet-busting destination. Farm stands and pick-your-own fruit orchards vie with cheese shops and bakeries to tempt passersby with hard-to-resist tasty treats. Wineries, craft breweries and cideries provide beverages to accompany those delicacies.

Oenophiles may think they’ve gone to grape heaven. More than 70 wineries line the shore of Seneca Lake alone, almost half of them connected by a Wine Trail.

Museums to explore

The area’s museums range from tiny establishments to world-class collections. The often-overlooked Fenton History Center, located in the mid-19th century home of a former U.S. congressman, senator and governor, tells much more than his story.

One room is devoted to the War of 1812 between the United States and Britain, much of which was waged along the New York-Canadian border. Other exhibits bring to life the role of New Yorkers who supported the Union. Ball was born in Jamestown, which was nicknamed “Furniture Capital of the World” when that industry thrived there from about 1860 into the early 20th century.

Both museums are open, with COVID safety adjustments in place.

At the Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, the heart of the Thousand Islands area, visitors can see a priceless collection of over 350 vessels ranging from canoes and kayaks to sleek power boats. Even a landlubber like me can appreciate the beauty and craftsmanship of the exhibits.

A smaller but no less interesting site is the Mark Twain Study. Built in 1874 on a farm outside Elmira, the hometown of his wife, the tiny octagonal structure is where Twain (Samuel Clemens) wrote some of his most famous works. It now sits in a place of honor on the Elmira College campus.

At the National Comedy Center in Jamestown, a personal profile is created for each guest, and more than 50 immersive displays deliver content tailored to each person’s taste. All the famous names from comedy are represented, and a “Blue Room” delves into adult humor.

Close by is the Lucille Ball Desi Arnaz Museum, which explores the life of that popular couple. Ball was born in Jamestown and retained lifelong ties to the area. Her California home contained furniture made in Jamestown, which was nicknamed “Furniture Capital of the World” when that industry thrived there from about 1860 into the early 20th century.

Grand Prix speedway

Another ride provided a more adrenaline-boosting experience. I knew that Watkins Glen is a racecar fan’s dream des-
Pack.

The first chapter was written in 1948, when a race was held over a 6.6-mile route along streets in and around the town. After a mishap several years later, which resulted in the death of one onlooker and injuries to others, the Watkins Glen Grand Prix Race Course was constructed. Today the racetrack is open to the public between

tation but wasn’t sure why until I heard

I opted to try the “Drive the Glen” program and lined up my somewhat clunky Honda sedan on the track with eight other vehicles, including a snazzy Corvette, a stylish Nissan and the pace car that led the pack.

The motorway combines stretches of the racetrack is open to the public between races.

The motorway combines stretches of straightaway with banked pavement leading into sharp hairpin curves. Despite the admonition not to exceed 60 miles per hour, I must admit that after slowing to open the distance between my car and the vehicle I was following, I saw my speedometer hit 80.

Contrast that velocity and the roar of engines with the gentle clip-clop of a horse pulling an Amish wagon through quiet countryside. Here and there residents of local Amish communities cling to their traditional lifestyle. Those pockets of the past are comprised of tidy farms and massive barns, some with the image of a quilt painted on the side.

Hiking trails

Many trails crisscross the area, suitable for all skill and stamina levels. My personal favorites offer more than just a walk in the woods.

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Hiking trails

Many trails crisscross the area, suitable for all skill and stamina levels. My personal favorites offer more than just a walk in the woods.

Panama Rocks Scenic Park in Chautauqua County is an ancient forest that has been attracting visitors since the 1880s. A mile-long loop leads through a jungle-like world of towering rocks, deep crevices and small caves. Signs identify features with names like Paradise Alley and Indian Fireplace, which Native Americans used as a stone oven.

You’ll encounter a very different environment at Watkins Glen State Park, where a deep gorge cuts through a landscape of water-sculpted rock and dense northern forest.

Adding to the scene are 19 waterfalls squeezed into the first mile of the path. Some plummet over sheer cliffs while others trickle across flat rocks in the river bottom. The route requires climbing up (and down) a total of 832 stone steps.

If thoughts of this mountain-goat experience don’t excite you, other opportunities on the Empire State Road Trip certainly will. From picking apples in an orchard to chuckling at zany humor at the National Comedy Center, the challenge in the Finger Lakes region is selecting from among the long list of something-for-everyone choices.

If you go

The three Harbor Hotel properties share pleasant waterfront settings, AAA four-diamond caliber facilities, and touch-es of their locations and history. The use of stone, unpainted wood and water designs hint of their surroundings. Rates begin at $101 a night in November.

Among vintage photographs that line lobby walls in the Chautauqua Harbor Hotel are Frank Sinatra, who performed there, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, and even some depicting the amusement park that occupied the site from 1893 to 1962. Memorabilia related to car racing is scattered about the Watkins Glen property, while antique boats are a focus of photos and displays in the 1000 Islands Harbor Hotel.

The hotels’ dining rooms offer the same menu, plus nightly specials. A cheese plate of four choices plus sides ($19) is more than enough for two people to share. Two Maine lobster rolls ($19) and fettuccini with roast chicken ($27) are popular favorites.

The Drive the Glen experience, in which you drive your own car on a 3.45-mile Grand Prix circuit, costs $30. It is open July through October. Like Drive the Glen, many attractions are open seasonally, so it’s best to check before you visit.

NOTE: At the hotels, COVID restrictions are in place, restricting visitors from certain states, and requiring masks and social distancing at all properties. For more information, call (607) 535-3759 or visit harborhotelcollection.com/experiences/empire-state-road-trip.
Is there a travel adviser in your future?

For any upcoming trips, many of you will turn to a travel adviser to help with the arrangements — some for the first time. When internet travel agencies and search systems first blossomed, some observers predicted the "end" for conventional travel agents. And many such agencies did, in fact, disappear. But others survived, in part by morphing into travel advisers. Specifically, internet-age travel advisers found three useful niches:

- Using specialized knowledge to help consumers plan and arrange trips in today's complex travel marketplace,
- Taking over the workload of compiling and arranging complex travel arrangements, and
- Helping big corporations manage and control their business travel budgets.

Ordinary consumers aren't concerned — Helping big corporations manage and control their business travel budgets.

As with all services, your most reliable data source is word of mouth from friends, relatives and co-workers. Ask around.

The American Association of Travel Advisers (ASTA) posts an adviser locator that you can filter by specialty, such as "senior travel," "beach vacations" or "luxury travel," as well as by destination.

The main problem is that too many advisers claim special competence in just about everything. ASTA membership is certainly a plus, but the "ASTA Verified" certification is more a measure of how an adviser runs its business than confirmation of its travel knowledge.

Several large adviser chains operate multiple locations or affiliates around the U.S., including Internova, American Express and AAA (check websites for your state).

Some advisers focus on cruises exclusively, which is a good thing — they keep up with what's going on. If you want a cruise, consider a cruiser specialist, although AAA is also good with cruises.

Many local travel advisers are affiliated with one of a dozen or more worldwide outfits that back up individual advisers with current technology. Google your area for candidates.

And when you spot a likely candidate, don’t be reluctant to ask for — and check — references.

Email Ed Perkins at eperkins@mind.net.

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Stand Up Straight and Feel Better

Discover the Perfect Walker™, the better way to walk safely and more naturally

It’s a cruel fact of life, as we age, gravity takes over. Our muscles droop, our bodies sag and the weight of the world seems to be planted squarely on our shoulders. We dread taking a fall, so we find ourselves walking less and less — and that only makes matters worse.

Well, cheer up! There’s finally a product designed to enable us all to walk properly and stay on the go. It’s called the Perfect Walker™, and it can truly change your life.

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Why spend another day hunched over and shuffling along. Call now, and find out how you can try out a Perfect Walker™ for yourself... in your own home. You'll be glad you did.
Rebuilding Notre Dame medieval-style

By Elaine Ganley

With precision and boundless energy, a team of carpenters used medieval techniques to raise up — by hand — a three-ton oak truss last month in front of Notre Dame Cathedral, a replica of the wooden structures that were consumed in the landmark’s devastating April 2019 fire that also toppled its spire.

The demonstration to mark European Heritage Days gave hundreds of people a first-hand look at the rustic methods used 800 years ago to build the triangular frames in the nave of Notre Dame de Paris.

It also proved that the decision to replicate the cathedral in its original form was the right one, said Gen. Jean-Louis Georgelin, who heads the cathedral’s reconstruction.

“It shows firstly that we made the right choice in choosing to rebuild the carpentry identically, in oak from France,” Georgelin said in an interview. “Secondly, it shows us the...method by which we will rebuild the framework, truss after truss.”

Respecting tradition

A debate over whether the new spire should have a futuristic design or whether the trusses should be made of fireproof cement like in the Cathedral of Nantes, which was destroyed in a 1972 fire, ended with the decision in July to respect Notre Dame’s original design and materials.

A total of 25 trusses are to be installed at an unknown date in the cathedral nave. Philippe Gourmain, a forestry expert working on the cathedral project, said the carpentry phase will not come before 2022.

“The problem of Notre Dame is not a carpentry problem. We have the wood. We know how to do it,” Gourmain said. “The big issue is regarding the stone.”

Some stones — which support the carpentry — were damaged by the fire, and “it’s not so easy now” to find similar stone, he said.

French President Emmanuel Macron wants the cathedral reopened in 2024 in time for the Paris Olympic Games, a deadline that many experts have called unrealistic.

Still clearing away debris

For the moment, the delicate task of dismantling melted scaffolding, which was originally erected to refurbish the now-toppled spire, continues. That job, started in early June, will be completed in October.

The soaring cathedral vaults are also being cleared of debris by 35 specialists on ropes. The organ with its 8,000 pipes was removed for repair in early August.

It is not yet known what technique will be used to create and install the wooden trusses.

The truss mounted for the weekend display is a replica of truss No. 7, more advanced than the first six trusses, which were “more primitive,” said Florian Carpenter, site manager for the team from Carpenters Without Borders that felled the trees and used axes to cut the logs for the wooden frame.

With rope cables and a rustic pulley system, the carpenters slowly pulled the truss they built in July from the ground where it was laid out.

“It’s a moment to see, ancestral techniques that last. There is the present and the past and it links us to our roots,” said Romain Greif, an architect who came with his family to watch the display. “It’s an event.”

In a final touch, once the No. 7 truss replica was raised on high, a carpenter was cheered as he shinnied up the wooden beams to tie an oak branch to the top of the triangular structure — a symbol of prosperity and a salute to the workers, a tradition still honored in numerous European countries.

—AP

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Linda Ronstadt celebrates Hispanic roots

By Sigal Ratner-Arias

Growing up near the U.S. border in Tucson, Arizona, Linda Ronstadt was exposed to the music and culture of Mexico from an early age. Her father would often sing at their home in Spanish.

“I heard Mexican radio my whole life,” the American singer told The Associated Press in a recent phone interview.

It’s something that stuck with her even decades after establishing her professional career in the mid-1960s, singing everything from folk-rock, country and light opera to pop.

“All the time I was doing other kinds of music, I kept thinking there would be a chance, like trying to record some of my pop songs to Spanish. But there weren’t really good translations. And I just really wanted to sing rancheras and huapangos,” Ronstadt said.


A new honor

Now 74, the 10-time Grammy winner and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer has been recognized as a “Legend” at the 33rd annual Hispanic Heritage Awards. The ceremony, prerecorded and socially distanced due to the coronavirus pandemic, aired on PBS last month.

Other honorees included Selena Gomez (Arts Award), U.S. essential farmworkers (Heroes Award) and Sebastian Yatra (Inspira Award), who was also the host.

Ronstadt, attending remotely from her home in San Francisco, was surprised when Los Tigres del Norte’s Jorge and Hernan Hernandez showed up at her home with the award.

“It made me really happy,” she said. “I’m a huge fan of Los Tigres del Norte. I’ve loved their music for years, and I didn’t realize they were coming to my house to present me with the award.

“I thought they were gonna do it on the internet, you know? I hadn’t been hugging anybody because of COVID, but I hugged them. I was so excited. I said, ‘We’re Mexicans, we hug.’”

She was also serenaded with a bilingual tribute that featured The Mavericks with Carla Morrison, Gaby Moreno, Joy Huerta (from Jesse & Joy), Lupita Infante and La Marisoul (from La Santa Cecilia).

Parkinson’s hasn’t changed her

Ronstadt, who in 2012 was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease, said that her life changed “very little” during the pandemic because she stays home most of the time anyway. “But it changed so profoundly for other people, it breaks my heart.”

In an electoral year that has seen so much illness as well as social unrest and racial conflict, she said, “I wish we can have a dialogue with the greater community. I wish that Americans wouldn’t dismiss and marginalize immigrants or Mexican Americans or any people of Latinx descent. They shouldn’t just treat them like they’re pieces of furniture.”

Looking back on her most cherished moments of her career, the singer said “the most fun” she had was back in 1998 and 1999, touring with her Mexican music.

“I’d fall asleep on the bus, and I’d hear all these voices in Spanish and English talking and singing.” It reminded her of her childhood, she said.

Asked if she had any regrets in her life, she laughed.

“I wish that I had more time to work on the Mexican music. I would spend a lot of time learning how to play the jarana,” she said, referring to a guitar-shaped instrument from the southern region of the state of Veracruz, Mexico.

Among other accolades, Ronstadt was honored by the Kennedy Center last year and has received three American Music Awards, two ACM Awards and an Emmy.

She can be seen in “Linda and the Mockingbirds,” a documentary on her journey to Mexico with a group of young students in 2019, released digitally on Oct. 20.

—AP
To-dos and no-nos for your autumn yard

By Lela Martin

It’s hard for me to relax in my own back yard because I always see tidying to do. In the late fall, however, I can relax a bit. That’s because it’s easier and more environmentally friendly to leave leaves and ignore the decaying stalks of herbaceous plants. Overwintering insects, birds and other creatures make use of what looks unkempt to our eyes.

If allowing the plants in your yard to decompose naturally bothers you (or your homeowners’ association), try the mullet approach: formal in the front (yard) and looser/longer in the back (yard).

Don’t deadhead

Flowers and seedheads left in the garden provide food for wildlife. Those plants that have gone to seed in the late summer or fall provide resources for our winged winter residents: cardinals, chickadees, and robins, for example.

A great plant to appeal to cardinals is echinacea/purple coneflower, notable for its bountiful seedheads.

Check before trimming branches

In addition to enjoying berries such as those from the Easter red cedar, some birds also use shrubs and foliage as protection from both inclement weather and predators.

In addition, caterpillars of moths and butterflies may be attached to twigs and branches or nestled at the bases of herbaceous plants.

Caterpillars typically spend winter by themselves, but in some species, they overwinter in groups. The red-spotted purple, meadow fritillary and viceroy caterpillars hibernate among the vegetation, in seed pods, in silken nests and in rolled-up leaves.

While some caterpillars feed during mild spells, most cannot move during the winter; therefore, they are unable to escape pruners and shears.

Don’t discard odd-looking things

Some butterflies, such as the cabbage white, sulphurs and members of the swallowtail family, overwinter in chrysalis form.

Luna moths and cecropia moths, which both have a wingspan up to seven inches in moth form, hibernate as cocoons. The pupa is encased in a silk cocoon that is attached lengthwise along a stem or branch of the host plant or nearby plant. These may look unused if you find them, and are typically brown or green in color to be camouflaged within a tree or shrub.

Don’t cut ornamental grasses

Birds collect leftover plant fiber to build nests. Some of the more than 3,500 species of native bees hide away in the hollow stems of native flowers such as monarda (aka bee balm) or ornamental grasses.

Solitary bees, such as those commonly known as mason bees, overwinter in these cavities in an uninhabited state known as diapause. Leaf cutter bees and wool carder bees are also cavity nesters.

Make use of fallen leaves

Why bag leaves and then buy bagged mulch? According to 2015 EPA data, yard trimmings, which include leaves, created about 34.7 million tons of waste, about 13% of all waste generated.

Leaves protect root systems, preserve moisture, suppress weeds and fertilize the soil as they break down.

The National Wildfire Federation (NWF) encourages homeowners to skip raking or blowing leaves entirely. According to the NWF, “A leaf layer several inches deep is actually a natural thing in any area where trees naturally grow.”

The organization also points out that box turtles, earthworms, chipmunks, insects and other creatures rely on the leaf layer ecosystem.

For example, some adult butterflies find a snug piece of bark or a dried leaf to nestle under until spring. These species have evolved the capability to produce an antifreeze that stops ice crystals from forming if temperatures are below 32°F.

Native ladybug beetles winter outside, under rocks, in hollow snags or under leaves. (Only the alien species get into our homes to overwinter as pests.)

On the lawn, you can use your composting mower setting. Alternatively, you can move the leaves off the grass by mowing or raking to another location for composting or place directly on top of planting beds.

A leaf shredder can work on larger leaves, such as oaks, that blow and take time to decompose.

But don’t leave all leaves

There are some places where leaves should not be left.

Remove them from storm drains, which they can clog, and from driveways, patios and pathways, where they can be slippery. Also remove from wooden decks, where they can harbor moisture and cause rotting and staining.

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

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Cookbooks add creativity to your kitchen

By Dinah Rokach

Spend time with these cookbooks and expand your culinary skills.


The classic encyclopedia of home cooking dating back to the 1930s has been revived by a new generation. This ninth edition, the first since 2006, reflects current trends in the kitchen: avoiding food waste, streamlining cooking, preparing ahead. Irma Rombauer’s great-grandson John Becker and his wife, Megan Scott, have painstakingly retested the recipes.

Without changes to the format, this edition of Joy of Cooking contains 4,000 recipes — including 600 new ones — presented in 31 chapters. Additional segments cover techniques, ingredients, how to shop, what’s in season, nutrition, storage and food safety. Hand-drawn illustrations by John Norton are reminiscent of the original format.

Thanksgiving menu suggestions at the front reference the pages of the recipes inside — everything from butternut squash soup to classic roast turkey, stuffing with giblet gravy, Parker House rolls, pumpkin pie and mulled cider. There is also an index in the back.

This comprehensive exploration of the art of home cooking includes recipes for more than 65 vegetarian and vegan main courses. Charts list substitutions for common ingredients, the volumes of baking dishes, and other useful information.

Alas, the book doesn’t include calorie counts or nutritional information, but one section covers healthy eating and USDA recommended dietary requirements.

Big Night In: Delicious themed menus to cook & eat at home, by Katherine Bebo, 176 pages, Ryland Peters & Small hardcover, 2020

We’re spending lots more time inside, so let’s make it enjoyable. Big Night In is an easy-to-follow book of instruction with suggested menus for different occasions to celebrate at home. Each chapter provides suggested menus and recipes for 19 occasions including a night in at the movies, an indoor picnic and a Super Bowl watch party.

Learn how to prepare alcoholic drinks such as Pimm’s, delux, beer margaritas, cheesecake martinis and peach juleps as well as non-alcoholic homemade cola and root beer.

No longer be intimidated at the thought of preparing and serving potato pakorns, Scotch eggs, panzanella, Sardinali pizza and chorizo.

Expand your approach with these unique versions of go-to favorites such as chicken wings, kebabs, fries, potato salads and chicken noodle soup, among others. The desserts are unique versions of favorites: Hong Kong egg tarts, lemon drizzle cake, aquafaba pavlova meringue.

While there is a short chapter of vegan recipes, the emphasis of this book is on hearty meat fare. Serving sizes run from the ganmau from one to 20 and can be easily converted to your desired amount. However, neither calorie counts nor prep times are included.

The introductory chapter provides tips on entertaining, shopping, decorating your table, garnishing platters and preparing your meal. Color photographs accompany most of the more than 120 dishes created by an impressive array of more than 30 chefs.

Katherine Bebo is a British freelance writer whose career has taken her from London to Denver to Dubai. Though the recipes reflect a cosmopolitan and sophisticated approach to food, the preparation is simple and basic.

Stirring the Pot with Benjamin Franklin: A Founding Father’s Culinary Adventures, by Rae Katherine Eighmey, 304 pages, Smithsonian Books hardcover, 2018

This biography of a Founding Father combines the story of his life with recipes of his day. Author Rae Katherine Eighmey

See COOKBOOKS, page 26

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—Dana S., Texas

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FROM PAGE 26 ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD

See COOKBOOKS, page 26

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Tell them you saw it in Fifty Plus!

Florence Fabricant recommends the apple tart made with applesauce custard.

While preparation time is not included with the recipes, portion sizes are — as well as storage time for leftovers. A recipe index and an extensive bibliography, including cookbooks, are at the back.

Stirring the Pot with Benjamin Franklin describes the kitchen of yore. It may inspire older adults to conjure memories of childhood and Thanksgiving celebrations long past.

Crossword Puzzle

Daily crosswords can be found on our website: www.TheBeaconNewspapers.com

Click on Puzzles Plus

Salad Days and Movie Nights

By Stephen Sherr

Across

1. “__” and neuter your pets 6. iPhone download
9. Weak pair, in poker 12. Home of the Terlingua Chili Cook-Off
18. Gin flavoring 19. Arrived like Yankee Doodle 20. Image at the end of Dr. Strangelove 23. Keep the beat, digitally
34. Siesta 35. Like Steve McQueen in Bullitt’s car chase scene 39. Its first highlight show was broadcast in 1979
40. They float in the middle of $50,000,000 in timeshare debt and fees can-celled in 2019. Get free informational package and learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 855-626-8703.

1. Tulip handle 2. Westernmost nation in South America 3. Wood-choppers
4. Pleasure boat 5. “I wish I knew why I ____ anguished” (Marilyn Monroe)
6. Fortune teller’s map 7. Cop show, for example 8. Drive—window
16. Musical masterpiece 17. Most populated Hawaiian island
18. Subject of a Shakespeare tragedy 19. Dieters Jack, and his wife
20. Scored 1600 on the SAT 21. Yankees catcher, Jorge
22. Of highest quality 23. Good place to buy used baby clothes
25. Perfect score in Roman bowling 26. They come after L is said and done
27. They come after L is said and done
28. Tonight Show host before Fallon
29. Remove waste from a cell 30. Baptist, basically
31. “The only ____ for time is so that everything doesn’t happen at once” (Einstein)
32. Some say the darndest things 33. Fill up the washing machine

Answers on page 25.
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UpBed™ is the ONLY adjustable bed that puts your feet safely on the ground.

The only adjustable bed that helps you “Get Up and Go” by yourself!

For millions of Americans, “Rise & Shine” has become a thing of the past. Mobility and balance issues have forced many people to struggle getting in and out of bed. Not being able to get out of bed by yourself can be inconvenient, undignified and downright dangerous. To solve this problem, this product has been introduced in continuing care and other health care facilities. Now, thanks to firstSTREET, the leading marketer of innovative products for seniors in the United States, that same bed can enable people to get up, get going and live independently in their home. It’s called the UpBed™, and there is nothing else like it. The secret to the UpBed™ is its revolutionary system for raising the mattress to any position for a variety of activities. It features a state-of-the-art mattress with memory foam for a great night’s sleep… like sleeping on a cloud. With the touch of a button, it gently raises your upper body to a “sitting up” position, perfect for reading a book or watching TV. Another touch and it moves to a full sitting position, enabling you to eat, knit, play cards… all in a comfortable position. Time to get out of bed? It’s never been easier or safer. The bed elevates slowly, and the bottom of the mattress curls in, enabling you to put your feet firmly on the floor while the bed lifts you gently towards the “nose over toes” position where you simply stand and walk away. It’s easy, safe and no other bed can do it.

Nothing is worse than spending the night worrying about how you are going to get out of bed. Call now, and a helpful, knowledgeable product expert can tell you how you can try out the UpBed™ for yourself, in your own home. Delivery of the bed is most convenient as we offer to-your-door delivery or we can provide White Glove delivery and we will completely set up the bed where you would like. Call today!

Call now to find out how you can get your own UpBed!
Please mention promotional code 113929.

For fastest service, call toll free 24 hours a day. 1-888-970-3579

This bedding product cannot be returned, but if it arrives damaged or defective, at our option we will repair it or replace it. ©2020 by firstSTREET for Boomers and Beyond, Inc.