

# Vitality

YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO AGING WITH  
GRACE, PURPOSE AND WELL-BEING

March 2021

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**VITALITY**

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**On the cover:** As the former owner of Just Baked Cupcakes, 60-year-old Pam Turkin used her experience with baking during the pandemic to teach others how to create sweet baked goods and fresh breads in the comfort of their own home via Zoom instruction.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PAM TURKIN

**SENIOR LIVING****MACOMB COUNTY**

**Centerline Towers:** 8033 10 Mile, Centerline, 48015

**Chesterfield Library:** 50560 Patricia, Chesterfield, 48047

**Chesterfield Senior Center:** 47275 Sugarbush, Chesterfield, 48047

**Macomb Daily Building:** 19176 Hall Road, Suite 200, Clinton Township, 48038

**Macomb County Seniors:** 21885 Dunham, Clinton Twp, 48036

**Pine Ridge Assisted Living:** 36333 Garfield, Clinton Twp, 48036

**Clinton-Macomb Library:** 35891 S. Gratiot, Clinton Twp, 48035

**Clinton Twp Senior Center:** 40730 Romeo Plank, Clinton Twp, 48038

**Heritage Senior Place:** 15430 18 Mile/ Hayes, Clinton Twp, 48038

**Eastpointe City Rec:** 16435 8 Mile, Eastpointe, 48021

**Fraser Senior Center:** 34935 Hidden Pine, Fraser, 48026

**Tucker Senior Center 26980 Ballard, Harrison Twp, 48045**

**Macomb Senior Center:** 19925 23 Mile, Macomb Twp, 48042

**Mt Clemens Library:** 150 Cass, Mt. Clemens, 48043

**New Baltimore Library:** 36480 Main, New Baltimore, 48047

**Romeo Park and Rec:** 361 Morton, Romeo, 48065

**Roseville Senior Center:** 18185 Sycamore, Roseville, 48066

**Roseville Library:** 29777 Gratiot/ Common, Roseville, 48066

**Shelby Senior Center:** 51670 Van Dyke, Shelby, 48316

**Sunrise Assisted Living:** 46471 Hayes, Shelby, 48315

**Utica Senior Residence:** 7650 Greeley, Shelby/ Utica, 48317

**St Clair Shores Library:** 22500 11 Mile, St. Clair Shores, 48081

**SCS Parks and Rec:** 20000 Stephens, St. Clair Shores, 48080

**Sterling Heights Senior Center:** 40200 Utica, Sterling Heights, 48313

**Henry Ford Medical:** 3500 15 Mile Rd/ Ryan Rd, Sterling Heights 48310

**Andreas Rest:** 12/ Bunert, Warren 48088

**Warren City Hall:** 29500 Van Dyke between 12 & 13, Warren, 48093

**Warren Community Center:** 5460 Arden, Warren, 48092

**OAKLAND COUNTY**

**Auburn Hills Senior Center:** 1827 N. Squirrel, Auburn Hills, 48326

**Orion Center:** 1335 Joslyn Road, Lake Orion, 48360

**OPC Rochester:** Letica Rd, Rochester, 48307

**Troy Senior Center:** 3179 Livernois, Troy, 48084

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## MONEY &amp; SECURITY

# Risks of selling your home on a land contract and other real estate questions answered

**Q**: We are in the process of buying a used home. The last time my wife and I bought a home 32 years ago we were provided a copy of a survey from the mortgage company. Now we are being told that they no longer do surveys. Is that correct?



**Steve Meyers**  
Columnist

**A**: Yes, that's correct. Mortgage companies stopped requiring mortgage surveys many years ago. It's very rare to see one at a closing today. As a Buyer, you do have the option to ask for a survey to be done at your own expense or if you want a title policy issued without standard exceptions that would also be done at your own expense.

**Q**: We have a small house that we use as a cottage up north and are thinking about selling it. We mentioned it to a neighbor and they said one of their friends' kids would buy it if we sold it to them on a land contract. What do you think of selling on a land contract?

**A**: Once in a while this question is asked and I'll say the same thing that I always say. I think it's a terrible idea unless your property is undesirable by most Buyers or has negative issues that would make it non-mortgageable. There are so many downsides to a land contract for a Seller. Previously I contacted an attorney that I know and respect (contact me if you want his name and number) to get his input on land contracts and here is what he had to say:

"I would never recommend that a client take on the role of a bank by entering into a land contract. If the potential home buyer is considered too risky for the bank, it should be considered too risky for you as well. This has been an area for senior mortgage fraud where a buyer would come along and buy property with a portion financed through a bank (first lien), and the balance on a land contract (second lien) with the senior. They would then default on the second, and the land contract holder would often not know how to pursue their remedies and would be stuck. When you enter

a land contract, you as the owner, give up your POSSESSION right to the property and can only regain after default, and an often-lengthy legal process. Worse, is if a senior is depending on the contract income, and the contract goes in default, again the party on the other side of the land contract does not have a stellar payment history; then the income they relied on is gone, defeating the purpose of agreeing to the land contract in the first place. In a nutshell, seniors often look at land contracts because they like the idea of the property producing income, but when they are in default, they end up with no income, and they have to sue to gain back possession."

As a Realtor, another concern that I have for a Seller is what if the Buyer damages the property or strips it? (Removes kitchen cabinets, plumbing fixtures, air-conditioning unit, etc...) It happens! Now you have to spend anywhere from \$10,000 to \$50,000 or more to put your property back in order or take a very big loss on selling it in 'as is' condition. If the Buyer has decent credit, he/she should be able to get a mortgage; no need to take such a large risk.

**Market Update:** January's market update for Macomb County and Oakland County's housing market is as follows. In Macomb County prices were up by more than 18% and Oakland County prices were up by almost 12% for the month. Residential home/condo on market inventory was down again. Macomb County's on market inventory was down by almost 57% and Oakland County's on market inventory was down by almost 50%. Macomb County average days on market was 30 days and Oakland County average days on market was 36 days. Closed sales in Macomb County were up by almost 7% and closed sales in Oakland County were up by more than 6%. (All comparisons are month to month, year to year.)

*Steve Meyers is a Realtor at RE/MAX Metropolitan in Shelby Twp. and is a member of the RE/MAX Hall of Fame. Contact him with questions at 586-997-5480 or at Steve@AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com You can also visit his website: AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com.*



## Brian J. Kurtz

AIP FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.  
2041 East Square Lake Road, Suite 200  
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(June 2004)

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**LTC COVERAGE:** Should you buy long-term care insurance? Maybe... or maybe not. I can inform you of ALL the options available to set aside funds for your own care, and help you make an informed decision on which method is best for you.

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## MONEY &amp; SECURITY

# Ask the Financial Doctor: What are the Social Security and Medicare taxes for 2021?

**Q** : What is the annual exclusion gift?



**Richard Rysiewski**  
Columnist

**A** : You can gift \$15,000 per year to anybody for any reason without paying any gift tax. The annual gift will not affect the gift/estate exemption. The recipients do not have to report the gift as tax-

able income and the giver does not receive a tax deduction. A married couple can gift \$30,000 per year.

**Q** : My mom is helping me pay for my college tuition. Can she pay directly to the college and treat the payment as a gift to me?

**A** : Direct transfers for education and medical services are tax-free and do not have to be reported to the IRS. Di-

rect transfers have no dollar limitation. If the tuition is \$70,000 then your mom can make a direct payment to the school tax-free. Tuition gifts could reduce financial aid eligibility.

**Q** : I am 76 years old and had wages of \$10,500 in 2020. Can I contribute to a traditional IRA or ROTH IRA and what is the maximum amount?

**A** : Yes, you can contribute. Beginning with the 2020 tax year, there is no maximum age restriction for IRA contributions. The maximum contribution is \$6,000 plus \$1,000 if you are age 50 or older.

**Q** : I have several issues with the IRS. Can I set up a meeting to discuss my situation?

**A** : Yes, you can call the IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center (TAC) for an in-person meeting to discuss your situation. The Detroit TAC is at 500 Woodward (313) 628-3722. Fortunately, many issues can be resolved online or

by phone, call 800-829-1040 (individuals) or 800-829-4933 (businesses).

**Q** : What are the Social Security and Medicare taxes for 2021?

**A** : The Social Security tax is 6.2% on wages up to \$142,800. The maximum Social Security tax is \$8,854. The Medicare tax is 1.45% on all wages earned.

**Q** : Do ROTH conversions from traditional IRAs have a specific deadline?

**A** : ROTH conversions have no deadlines. If I convert a traditional IRA into a ROTH IRA on April 1, 2021, the 1099-R form will be for the 2021 tax year.

**Q** : For the 2020 tax year, I need to file for an extension. In case I miss the due date of October 15th, what do you recommend I do?

**A** : Estimate your tax liability and send a check together with a note explaining why you missed the deadline. Finish your tax return as soon as possible to avoid additional IRS penalties and interest.

**Q** : What is the open enrollment for Medicare?

**A** : People under Medicare coverage can switch from the traditional Medicare to a Medicare Advantage program and to other Medigap insurers from October 15 through December 7. Medicare Advantage plans

## HELPFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS FOR ANY TAX CONCERNS

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**MI Help:** 517-636-4486

**IRS Forms:** 800-829-3676

**MI Forms:** 517-636-4486

**IRS Refund:** 800-829-4477

**MI Refund:** 517-636-4486

are offered by private insurers that cap your out-of-pocket expenses and most cover dental, hearing and vision care. As long as your doctor belongs to the network, a Medicare Advantage plan offers significant benefits. If you stay with the traditional Medicare then you should purchase a Medigap policy to contain your medical expenses.

**Q** : The stock market keeps going higher and higher and my mom is getting nervous. She wants to sell all of her securities and place the funds in a savings account. Is this a prudent strategy?

**A** : This is not a prudent strategy. If your mom is nervous, she should liquidate some of her securities and place them in a savings account but she should not liquidate all of her securities. The stock market is at an all-time high because of improving corporate profits, accommodating Federal Reserve Bank, growing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and tame inflation. Nobody can predict the next downturn or recession but if you are a long-term investor it should not matter. For the long-term perspective your mom should

consider her lifespan, her children's lifespan and her grandchildren's lifespan. Today, there are several blue-chip stocks that pay a significantly higher dividend rate than bonds and savings accounts.

**Q** : I am 68 years old and plan to work till age 75. I have quite a few years with zero wages because of raising kids. Will working past age 70 increase my Social Security benefits? Should I apply for Social Security benefits after age 70?

**A** : If you apply after age 70, you are losing money because Social Security does not give you any retirement credits (8% per year) after age 70. Any wages earned through your planned retirement age of 75 will increase your benefits. The Social Security Administration uses the 35 years with the highest wage record. Each year of earnings is multiplied by an inflation factor to arrive at an indexed earning for that year. After age 60, the inflation factor is always one. Any year with no earnings will always be zero for the indexed earnings. By replacing the years having zero earnings, you will increase your Social Security benefits.

*Submit your tax and finance questions to Richard Rysiewski, Certified Financial Planner, at Richard Rysiewski, Financial Doctor, 3001 Hartford Lane, Shelby Twp., MI 48316 or call (248) 651-7710.*

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## TECHNOLOGY

# The future of driverless cars is now

By Craig Miller

Next Avenue

In a series of conversations between film director Martin Scorsese, 78, and the famously acerbic humorist Fran Lebowitz, in the Netflix series “Pretend It’s a City,” somehow the subject of self-driving cars came up.

The knee-jerk response from the 70-year-old queen of New York curmudgeons: “Who wanted this?”

It’s one of the central questions to arise around the emerging technology. Can we trust it?

Like objects in your side-view mirror, driverless cars or autonomous vehicles (AVs), as they’re known in the industry, are closer than they appear. Instead of rolling up to your door as a fait accompli, the technology is arriving in dribs and drabs.

New cars already have some autonomous features, such as automatic braking when they detect obstacles, adaptive cruise control to maintain safe intervals on the road and even the ability to back out of tight parking spaces on their own.

Even the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated adoption and development of AVs as an ideal vehicle for “no-contact” deliveries of everything from prescriptions to pizza.

### Game Changer

But more than that, passenger AVs could be a major game changer for older people faced with declining mobility. Ever since Henry Ford, automobiles have supercharged Americans’ sense of independence.

“Mobility is the very glue — if you will — that holds all those little things that we call life, together,” says Joe Coughlin, who heads the AgeLab at MIT and is a Next Avenue Influencer in Aging.

An Agelab study found

consumers across the age spectrum generally favorable toward using forms of artificial intelligence like AVs, but with more enthusiasm among male respondents and those with more advanced knowledge of the technology.

Ignacio Alvarez, a former BMW engineer, now working on the Mobileye AV initiative at Intel Labs, says AVs will “fundamentally change” the way we live and work. He sees the car becoming a “transitional space” where, liberated from driving chores, occupants’ time on the road becomes more productive. It’s “going to basically change everything we’ve known in the history of the automobile,” Alvarez predicts.

Not all at once, though.

“The vehicle that takes you from Harvard Square to Times Square in a snowstorm is probably fifteen years away,” says Ryan Chin, co-founder of Optimus Ride, a pioneer in passenger-oriented autonomous vehicles. “It’s not gonna be: you wake up one day and autonomous vehicles will be everywhere and you flip a switch and all of a sudden the vehicle will drive itself anywhere.”

The company’s CEO, Sean Harrington, agrees. “Where we see AVs getting adopted first is where there are short trips concentrated around specific hubs of activity,” he says.

### Paradise on Wheels

Optimus Ride currently has more than 40 self-driving electric cars doing limited duties around the country. When the company’s first driverless shuttles began whirring around Paradise Valley Estates in Fairfield, Calif., residents could be forgiven a little skepticism. But the wheeled robots are already winning over residents, some in their 90s.

Paradise Valley is a “continuum of care” community that runs the gamut from independent living to skilled nursing for more than 500 residents. Still in their testing phase with Optimus Ride engineers onboard, the Estates’ three all-electric driverless cars have been deployed delivering meals to residents, after pandemic precautions forced the communal dining rooms to shut down.

“Eventually we want to be a hundred percent autonomous,” says Jeff Rausis, who directs marketing and technology for Paradise Valley.

Once mapping and testing is complete, completely autonomous vehicles will shuttle residents around the 78-acre campus and perhaps beyond. Eventually, after AVs become more mainstream, they’ll likely be used there for shopping errands and medical appointments.

Once widely available, though, AVs have the potential to reopen the world to people of all ages. “This would return them to their youth,” says Rausis, “they just have to hop in their car and go, whenever and wherever they want.”

### But Are They Safe?

Harrington says a version of that dream is not a major stretch beyond the limited scope of his company’s current service at Paradise Valley.

“Extending out from the campus to a set of destinations that are known as highly trafficked and recurring, but still reasonably short and in a constrained environment around that hub, is absolutely doable in the near term,” he projects.

Despite a few well-publicized mishaps involving self-driving cars in the testing phase, most experts agree that autonomous cars will be safer than those with human drivers.





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## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# How naps can keep you happy and healthy

**By Barbra Williams  
Cosentino**  
*Next Avenue*

I love napping. I've been known to fall asleep on a jerking, lurching New York City subway train. I once slept through the clanging bells of a college fire drill. My greatest pleasure is swinging in a hammock, gently lulled into oblivion until I'm asleep like a very contented baby.

Bestselling author Sarah Ban Breathnach wrote, "We sleep to recharge our bodies. We nap to care for our souls." And the best news is that not only do naps feel good, but they are (mostly) good for you.

The National Sleep Foundation Sleep Health Index 2014 reported that 53% of

adults nap regularly, defined as napping at least once every week. Men tend to nap more often than women. Older people and retired individuals are also more frequent nappers.

There are several types of naps:

- Recovery naps, sometimes called replacement naps, make up for lost sleep.

- Planned prophylactic naps, taken when you anticipate losing sleep, prepare you for a late night out.

- Appetitive naps (my favorite) are taken just for the sheer joy of it!

## Why Nap?

Naps increase energy, improve reaction time and reduce daytime sleepiness. They lower stress and help to regulate mood, reduc-



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Overall, more research on the correlation between health and taking naps is needed.

ing anxiety and depression and inducing relaxation. They enhance creativity, increase productivity, boost

problem-solving abilities and improve many cognitive abilities.

"Naps are beneficial for

memory because the brain is 'offline,' not taking in any new information, yet is actively consolidating memories," says Marissa Bowman, a doctoral student in the Clinical-Health Psychology program at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research focuses on sleep disturbances.

## The Science of Sleep

There are four stages of sleep.

Stage one, the transition between wakefulness and sleep, is only five to 10 minutes, during which time eye movements and heart rate begin to slow.

In stage two, which lasts for 15 to 25 minutes, brain waves and heart rate decrease further, and body temperature begins to

drop. But it is still a light sleep from which you can easily be awakened.

During stage three, 45 to 90 minutes after falling asleep, blood pressure drops and the brain begins to produce slower brain waves known as delta waves. If someone (or an alarm clock) wakes you during this stage, you're probably going to be groggy, disoriented and cranky, a state called "sleep inertia."

Stage four, also known as Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep, is reached about 75 to 90 minutes after sleep begins. In REM sleep, heart rate and blood pressure rise, eyeball movement increases and dreaming occurs.

**NAPS » PAGE 22**



# Vitality

YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO AGING WITH GRACE,  
PURPOSE AND WELL-BEING

Vitality publishes every month, and is specially written and produced for older adults 55 and over. Monthly features include • Health Care

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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# Wayfaring seniors start to consider travel

Expect a tidal wave of bookings for 2022, experts say

**By Debra Kaszubski**  
For MediaNews Group

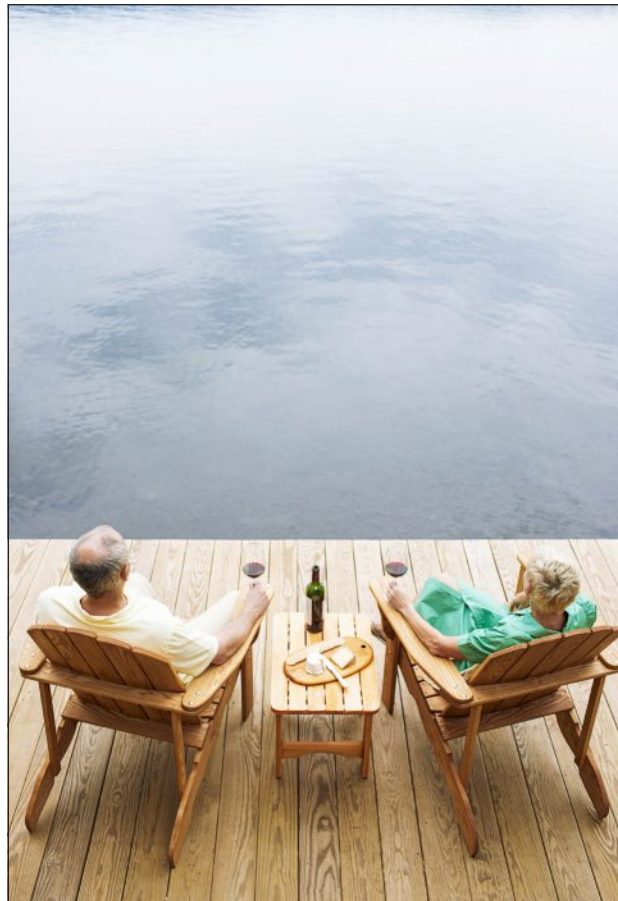
After quarantine living, some people lately have begun leaving home and taking trips; more are expected to do so this summer and fall.

Some local senior centers have even started adding group trips to their agendas, like the Clinton Township Senior Center, which is sponsoring a Cape Code getaway in June, a New Orleans trip this October, and a few others. Likewise, the Sterling Heights Senior Center is sponsoring an October trip to the Grand Hotel at Mackinac Island.

However, these trips, like others, are contingent on COVID-19 restrictions and are not set in stone just yet. For example, an Alaskan cruise sponsored by the Sterling Heights Senior Center for September of 2021, was recently cancelled due to cruise restrictions.

"We currently have just started to gauge our seniors' interest in senior travel since the COVID-19 shutdown of 2020. Many of our members have been vaccinated and are becoming more comfortable traveling in and around our state with precautions in place," said Matt Makowski, Director of the Clinton Township Senior Center. "Trip interest has started to gain popularity as the temperatures rise and the sun shines."

Many people are anxious to get away and this has industry experts buzzing about increased demand for travel in 2022, according to Ed McKenna, of Collette Travel, an agency which hosts trips for senior centers and others.



More and more older adults are considering travel as the cold weather breaks and as the COVID vaccine is becoming more readily available.

"If they are planning on going away in 2022 they should book now because once the virus is under control there will be a tidal wave of bookings for 2022," McKenna said. "Book early to save your spot with the senior center's trips, and if they don't have what you're looking for, book through your travel agent now while the space still exists."

McKenna also suggests buying insurance any time you book a trip, but especially now due to the uncertainty tied to the pandemic. If you want to buy travel insurance, get a policy that

lets you cancel for any reason (as few insurance policies cover pandemics). Just understand that such policies are generally much more expensive than other ones.

Hotels typically allow cancellations up to 24 hours in advance of the stay. Many travel companies have offered incentives to re-book rather than cancel. For instance, you might have received a discount for a future lodging stay if you rolled over your booking to a new date.

If you travel this year, expect to see new policies



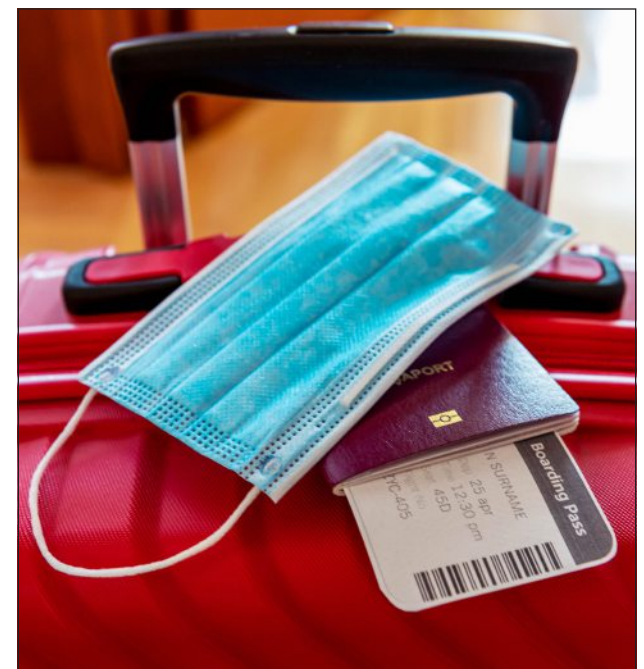
PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Many people are anxious to get away and this has industry experts buzzing about increased demand for travel in 2022.

for social distancing and sanitation at airports, on planes, with tour operators and at hotels. Motorcoach trips will require distancing between passengers, and even different seating patterns in restaurants to comply with local mandates.

You'll likely notice hand sanitizers and masks at check-in points. And expect to find your hotel room will have been thoroughly cleaned and left vacant for a period longer than in the past.

"We encourage everyone to be flexible and understanding. Itineraries may have to be altered at times, but bottom line, if you can be flexible, you will have a great time," Makowski said. "We are extremely encouraged at the opportunities that are starting to emerge as we continue to open our country back up."



If you travel this year, expect to see new policies for social distancing and sanitation at airports, on planes, with tour operators and at hotels.





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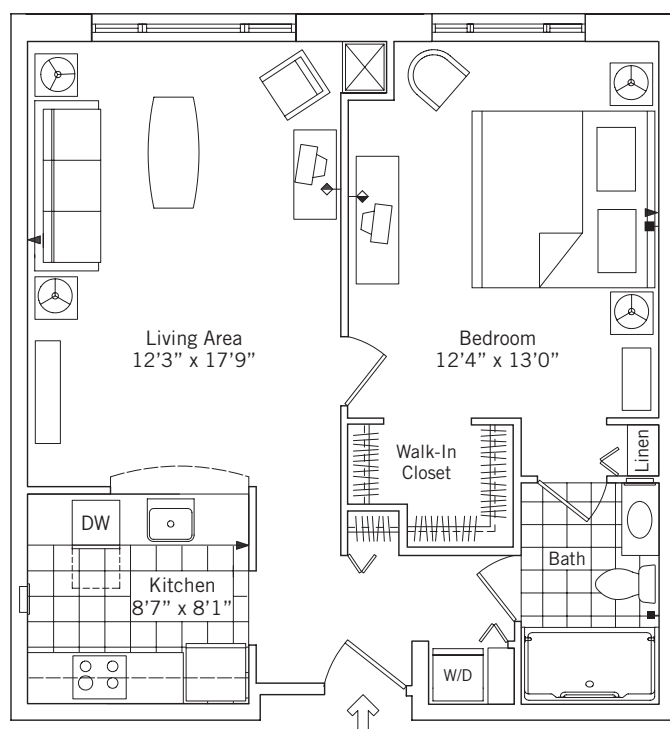
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## HEALTH & FITNESS

# Green tea, coffee linked to lower death risk after stroke, heart attack

Drinking large amounts of green tea or a single cup of coffee each day may reduce the risk of death for people who survive heart attacks and strokes, new research shows.

The study, published recently in the American Heart Association journal *Stroke*, found Japanese stroke survivors who drank at least seven cups of green tea daily lowered their risk of death from any cause by 62% compared to non-tea drinkers. Heart attack survivors who drank one cup of coffee daily lowered their overall risk of death by 22% compared to people who didn't drink coffee regularly. Researchers had followed participants for up to two decades.

Previous green tea research among the general population in Japan has shown three to five cups a day of the commonly consumed beverage lowered the risk of death from heart disease. Similarly, studies in other parts of the world have shown moderate coffee consumption may reduce the risk of dying from heart disease and other causes.

In this study, researchers compared green tea and coffee consumption among 46,000 people in 45 communities in Japan. Study participants, ages 40 to 79, included those who had previously had strokes or heart attacks and those who had neither.

While researchers found drinking green tea had no impact on overall death risk among people without a history of stroke or heart attack, that group did see a 14% lower risk drinking one or more cups of coffee



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

In a recent American Heart Association study, heart attack survivors who drank one cup of coffee daily lowered their overall risk of death by 22% compared to people who didn't drink coffee regularly.

weekly.

The study did not explore why drinking green tea or coffee may protect against heart-related deaths. However, researchers noted other differences in the diets and medical histories of green tea and coffee drinkers.

Those who drank more green tea were also more likely to eat fish, fruit and soybeans, regardless of whether they had a history of stroke or heart attack. Tea drinkers with no history of heart problems also had a lower rate of diabetes. Coffee drinkers with no history of stroke or heart attack had lower rates of diabetes and high blood pressure, but higher rates of mental stress and were less likely to eat fish.

Researchers say they need to look deeper into the lifestyle of heart attack and stroke survivors for answers.

“There is a strong need

for scientific evidence on the lifestyles among survivors of stroke and heart attack considering the rapidly aging population and the need to improve life expectancy following these cardiovascular events,” study author Dr. Hiroyasu Iso, a public health professor at Osaka University in Suita, Japan, said in a news release.

He also cautioned against comparing tea and coffee drinking in Japan to how it is consumed elsewhere.

“An important distinction to make is that in Japanese culture, green tea is generally prepared with water and without sugar,” Iso said. “The healthiest way to prepare these beverages is without an unnecessary amount of added sugars.”

Story courtesy of  
American Heart  
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## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# Tips for getting a vaccination appointment

By Jane Peterson  
For MediaNews Group

When the first COVID-19 vaccines were delivered and ready for older adults to receive, there was a lot of emotion. Many seniors were excited about the thought of being able to see their friends again, indulge in their favorite group activities and hug their grandchildren.

For some; however, that anticipation quickly turned to disappointment and frustration as they were repeatedly told to sign up for vaccination appointments online. Using technology poses a huge obstacle for some seniors who may not be comfortable with providing personal information online or who simply

may not have access to a computer and the internet at home, said Sheila Coté, Division Director, Office of Senior Services for Macomb County.

"Most seniors rely on family and/or friends to assist in registering," she said in an email.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services developed a program to provide support and training for older adults using technology, said Coté, but many seniors still preferred to call local health departments, drug stores and retailers offering the COVID-19 vaccine appointments.

"Our office takes the position that we need to communicate with seniors in a manner they are comfort-

able with, such as mailings, phone calls, etc. This is one reason why our phone volume is extremely high. We typically receive over 200 calls per day from seniors with a variety of questions or concerns," she said.

Andrew Cox, Director/Health Officer for Macomb County, said that there has been an incredible demand for the vaccine among Macomb County seniors. While that is good, it has created some frustration among those eager to secure a vaccination appointment. Adding to the complexity of the situation is the difficulty some older adults have with mobility and transportation. Sometimes seniors simply aren't able to get to a vaccination appointment due to trans-

portation barriers.

In mid-February, the Macomb County Health Department announced a new partnership with SMART and Richmond/Lenox EMS that was designed to help residents aged 65 and older receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The program was initially intended as a solution for seniors who rely on bus services, but it was expanded to any resident aged 65 or above, especially those with mobility or transportation issues. SMART will assist in fielding calls and registering seniors on a wait list, which the county will use to set up appointments when vaccines are available. SMART will also make transportation arrangements for those that request assistance.

Interested seniors should call the SMART Macomb Vaccine Hotline at (586) 421-6579 to register for the county waitlist. SMART representatives will be available to take

calls 3-7 p.m. Monday-Friday; 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays; and 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sundays.

"We remain committed to expanding access to the COVID vaccine for senior citizens across Macomb County," said Macomb County Executive Mark A. Hackel. "Our partnership with SMART and RLEMS allows us to aid those most vulnerable in our community, and illustrates our collective potential to get the vaccine to those that need it most."

Seniors or someone they know can avoid the call altogether by emailing the SMART Macomb Vaccine Hotline 24/7 at [macombvaccine@smartbus.org](mailto:macombvaccine@smartbus.org), and including their name, address, phone number and date of birth. This is the quickest and easiest way to get registered.

In Oakland County, Nurse on Call is available at (800) 848-5533 to answer health-related questions, make COVID-19 testing

appointments and assist those unable to complete the Save Your Spot form, which registers eligible residents for a COVID-19 vaccination appointment. You can register online at [oaklandcountyvaccine.com](http://oaklandcountyvaccine.com).

Seniors are also encouraged to register for an appointment through other Oakland and Macomb county COVID-19 locations, such as Meijer Pharmacy and Rite Aid Pharmacy. With many people putting their name on several lists, Cox reminds seniors and their families that once they receive the vaccine, they should cancel their other appointments and waitlists.

Michigan residents who don't have access to the internet or who need assistance navigating the vaccine scheduling process can also call the COVID-19 Hotline at (888) 535-6136 (press 1) from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

There has been a large demand among metro Detroit seniors for the COVID-19 vaccine, creating some frustration for those eager to secure a vaccination appointment.



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## MONEY &amp; SECURITY

# Tax season ushers in some changes due to pandemic

By Jane Peterson

For MediaNews Group

The past year affected people in many different ways. Some grieved a loved one's passing while many suffered with COVID-19 symptoms and others struggled financially due to a job loss. This year, tax season will also be impacted, from the process of having a tax preparer review your tax documents to some questions you might have regarding decisions you made about your personal finances.

## Tax services

Each year, many older adults attend free tax preparation events, such as those hosted at local senior centers and libraries. Low-income families may receive assistance through services provided by organizations like the Accounting Aid Society, the IRS' Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program and Macomb County Veterans Services. Many of these events have changed in order to address COVID-19 safety protocols.

Many local senior centers in Oakland and Macomb counties, for example, welcome AARP Foundation's Tax-Aide program, the largest free, volunteer-based tax assistance and preparation program. While volunteers are ready to assist people ages 50 and older and those who have low to moderate incomes with state and federal returns, this year there are four options:

- **In-person:** Tax counselors prepare and file tax returns in person with strict physical distancing and masking requirements in place

- **Low-contact:** Taxpayers meet with Tax-Aide volunteers in one or two short, in-person meetings to ex-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Tax season will look a bit different this year thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic.

change documents

- **Contact-free:** Taxpayers interact with Tax-Aide counselors online and by phone. Documents are exchanged electronically

- **Self-preparation:** Tax-Aide gives taxpayers free access to software so they can prepare their own taxes. They can also receive help from a Tax-Aide counselor to coach them through the process thanks to computer screen-sharing

Appointments are required and at some senior centers, appointments are full. Call your local senior center for more information or for the latest, updated information on Tax-Aide sites and services, visit [aarpfoundation.org/taxaide](http://aarpfoundation.org/taxaide). Additional information on filing your taxes this year is available at [aarp.org/taxes](http://aarp.org/taxes).

At Macomb County Veteran Services, virtual tax prep is available. Laura Rios, Chief Veteran Services Officer, said last year

the organization assisted with 1,800 tax returns. This year the goal is 1,900 tax returns and they are on track to meet or exceed that goal by continuing to help more than 200 people each week thanks to a core group of dedicated volunteers.

Rios recommends that seniors comfortable with technology take advantage of the virtual tax prep by emailing [Veteran.tax@macombgov.org](mailto:Veteran.tax@macombgov.org) for more information. Drop & Go services are available at the VerKuilen Building in Clinton Township from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday for walk-ins and at the Max Thompson Family Resource Center in Warren by appointment only on Thursday and Friday.

Participants will not be sitting down with a tax preparer during these Drop & Go sessions. Instead, they will have their temperatures checked at the door per COVID-19 protocol,

then proceed to stand in a prescreening line where volunteers will ask questions to determine your eligibility for the free tax assistance as they cannot handle more complicated tax returns. Volunteers will also check that you brought all the necessary documentation, including identification, W-2's, Social Security cards, proof of expenses, direct deposit information and past years completed returns. This information will be directed to volunteer tax preparers who will complete the return on their own while you leave and return to pick it up later.

Rios does not recommend that seniors attend walk-in hours for taxes prepared while you wait on Saturdays at the Macomb County Family Resource Center in Mount Clemens. She said the wait in line can often extend up to three hours and that can be hard on older adults.



There are many local resources for help with preparing one's taxes that area seniors can take advantage of.

Macomb County residents can schedule an appointment at [https://macombca.itfrontdesk.com/apptonline/landing.html?client\\_code=MACOMBVT](https://macombca.itfrontdesk.com/apptonline/landing.html?client_code=MACOMBVT).

## Didn't receive a stimulus check?

If you didn't receive a second stimulus check, it can be claimed on your 2020 tax return as a tax credit, said Rios. Known as the Recovery Rebate Credit, it is available to all who qualified but didn't receive funds via either direct bank deposit or by mail. Let your tax preparer know.

## Questions about unemployment

Many residents received unemployment benefits in 2020, if even for a short period of time. Those monies are subject to taxes. When you filed for unemployment, there was a question about withholding taxes. Taxpayers who choose not to have

taxes withheld from their benefits will owe any outstanding tax when they file this year. This may come as a surprise for some taxpayers, but there really is no way around it.

In January, those who received unemployment income should have received a Form 1099-G that outlined the amount of money they were paid during the year.

## Home heating credit

The Home Heating Credit can help you pay some of your heating expenses if you are a qualified Michigan homeowner or renter. This credit is designed to provide assistance to low income persons, individuals with a disability and disabled veterans, although other residents may also qualify for the credit.

You should complete the Home Heating Credit Claim MI-1040CR-7 to see if you qualify for the credit. The deadline for submitting this form is Sept. 30, 2021. For more information, visit [michigan.gov/taxes](http://michigan.gov/taxes).



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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# Pandemic heightening social isolation for LGBT seniors

Social isolation is nothing new for older members of the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) community, but COVID has made it all the more acute. It has also triggered painful memories of the AIDS epidemic that robbed the community of friends, family, and potential partnerships.

COVID has hit hard, says Angie Perone, executive director of SAGE Metro Detroit, a training, informational, social and advocacy organization that serves older adults in the LGBT community.

As it is, LGBT seniors don't have much support in the community and often rely on "families of choice," close friends who become their caregivers when they need them. LGBT adults are twice as likely to live alone and four times less likely to have children, says Perone.

"If your support network is older adults, you're navigating health issues together. During COVID, you don't have your support network. Many adults were not able to leave their home, so there was a big issue accessing food," says Perone.

SAGE has delivered food during the pandemic, created virtual social hours and a "tech buddy" program to distribute iPads. A friendly caller program the organization started in 2017 has turned out to be a blessing for older adults, who are paired with volunteers for weekly conversation. It has helped reduce the negative effects of social isolation – and it's brought a lot of cross-generational connections, says Perone. The program now has 50 participants.

SAGE is continuing the work it has always done – making the world a more inclusive, loving place for LGBT seniors, who face daily challenges that are marked by social rejection.

SAGE offers culturally responsive training to service providers in the aging network and companies that are committed to inclusiveness and to implementing antidiscrimination policies in the workplace. It works with senior center staff and leadership to help them "improve space not just for LGBT adults but for older adults in general who are excluded in the dining hall," says Perone.

"Participants feel really isolated from senior centers or other places where seniors go," she says. "Bullying is a big issue among older adults. You add that to prejudice, bias and lack of awareness, and a lot of seniors don't go to these places."

Housing is another problematic space for LGBT seniors, says Rachel Crandall Crocker, cofounder and executive director of Transgender Michigan.

SAGE relies on its community partners, like the Area Agency on Aging I-B, to promote inclusivity and tolerance.

The agency's specialists in the resource center, the first call most people make, had extensive training in working with LGBT seniors over the phone in order to become more "LGBT-affirming," to let people know they are safe and that "they will have a positive experience speaking with us," says Angela Lippard, Resource Center manager and a member of the SAGE board of directors.

"There are a lot of barriers to accessing services for the LGBT community that are exacerbated by aging," she says, and the training helps to raise awareness that "some older adults feel they need to go back in the closet because they don't feel safe receiving services."

The agency has mentored other Area Agencies on Aging in Michigan to help them become more culturally re-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

LGBT seniors don't have much support in the community and often rely on "families of choice," close friends who become their caregivers when they need them.

**As it is, LGBT seniors don't have much support in the community and often rely on "families of choice," close friends who become their caregivers when they need them.**

sponsive to the older LGBT community, she says.

"It's important to understand that LGBT older adults have experience throughout the years and situations throughout the decades where they've had difficulty accessing services. It's important to understand those barriers still exist," says Lippard.

Judy Lewis of Southfield is a SAGE trainer who is also a member of the LGBT community. She speculated that

for many of her peers, COVID feels like post-traumatic stress disorder.

"People are being bombarded with fear of death and COVID, just as they were in fear of being outed," she says.

For more information about SAGE Metro Detroit, call 734-681-0854 or visit Sage Metro Detroit at [sagemetrodetroit.org](http://sagemetrodetroit.org).

*Content provided by the Area Agency on Aging I-B.*



There are a lot of barriers to accessing services for the LGBT community that are exacerbated by aging.



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## CAREER &amp; EDUCATION

# LOCAL WOMAN FINDS JOY IN TEACHING OTHERS TO BAKE, ONE ZOOM AT A TIME

By Jane Peterson  
For MediaNews Group

Last year when the world came to a grinding halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic, people ended up spending a lot more time at home. Once they watched all the Netflix they could take and cleaned and organized until everything was properly in its place, residents started looking for other ways to invest their time.

Many turned to baking. Pam Turkin was one of them, but she took a different approach. As the former owner of Just Baked Cupcakes, she started using her experience with baking to teach others how to create sweet baked goods and fresh breads in the comfort of their own home via Zoom instruction.

At the time, she was looking to share her expertise, not grow a business from the ground up. However, the 60-year-old Bingham Farms resident became popular via word of mouth and before she knew it, she was getting calls from all over to lead cupcake classes for birthday parties, demonstrate simple recipes for corporate events and provide private lessons to novice bakers who wanted to learn more about basic bread and specialties like Challah and Babka.

In a typical week, Turkin may teach 100 people during online classes, which are designed for up to 25 people at a time. She sends them a list of ingredients to buy and the kitchen equipment they need as well as a Zoom link to join the class. Then, she bakes right along with participants, walking them through the entire process, showing them

how the dough should look at different stages and helping them problem solve when an ingredient is forgotten or things don't go quite right. Turkin takes them up to the point where the dough or batter goes into the oven, but depending on the recipe, there may be a short intermission during class as dough proofs.

Turkin said being able to bake along with others takes the intimidation out of the process. Class participants can ask questions and not worry if they are interpreting the recipe right. As they work, Turkin explains the science behind the ingredients and demonstrates food preparation techniques, such as how to properly melt chocolate. She added that baking in their own home also helps participants become more comfortable in their kitchens and more likely to continue baking on their own in their free time.

"It's really powerful to be able to bake in your own space," she said.

Baking is not only relaxing and provides a sense of accomplishment, but it helps people feel less lonely. They can connect with others online and then split extra baked goods with friends and neighbors by leaving a plate or basket on their porch. Many bakers have also joined the Babka Brigade, a Facebook group where members can share their baking achievements and provide encouragement to others. The group has developed a following of nearly 600 members in just a month.

"There are lots of people who have been wanting to learn how to bake



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PAM TURKIN

Pam Turkin stands in her kitchen.

but didn't know how to get started," said Turkin. "As winter dragged on, they decided to join a class."

Some participants are bakers who taught themselves at home. Others have no experience. To Turkin, it doesn't matter – she will gladly teach anyone.

Working from home does have its perks as there is no commute and the schedule is flexible. Her neighbors love her for the gift of sweet treats and there is always something good to eat in the freezer. However, there are also some minor hiccups, too, such as when deer visit

the backyard when she is on camera or when dogs start barking unexpectedly.

Some families come together for a private baking lesson and occasionally will share a family recipe that she re-engineers so they can make it together and create treasured memories.

"Baking is a great way to connect with family," said Turkin.

For information about upcoming baking classes, follow Pam Turkin on Facebook at [facebook.com/pam.turkin](https://facebook.com/pam.turkin) or send her an email at [pam@thebabkabrigade.com](mailto:pam@thebabkabrigade.com).



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF PAM TURKIN

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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# So many books: What we're reading during the pandemic

As always, books educate, entertain and help us escape — or confront — reality

By Patricia Corrigan

Next Avenue

Have you explored Daphne's back story in "Bridgerton: The Duke and I" by Julia Quinn? Hailed Sportcoat's persistence in James McBride's "Deacon King Kong?" Grieved with the boy's family in Maggie O'Farrell's "Hamnet?" Climbed into bed many an evening with Louise Penny's Chief Inspector Armand Gamache?

These and other fictional characters are entertaining many of us during the pandemic, but that genre represents only some of what we're reading. NPD BookScan, which tracks trends in publishing, reports that 2020 was the best-selling year for print books in the U.S. in the last decade, "with growth across adult non-fiction, adult fiction, juvenile and teen categories." E-book unit sales also rose.

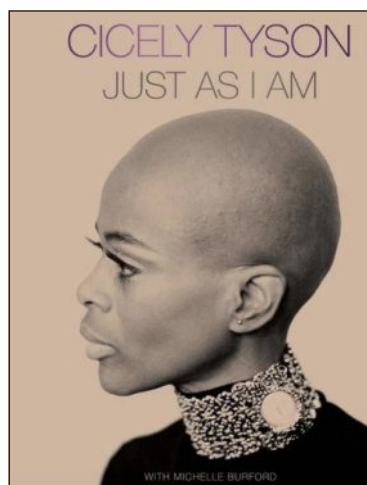
Industry analyst Kristen McLean notes that "sales growth came in waves," adding that the time many of us have had to spend at home "created a big appetite for reading."

According to the president of a publishing house; the manager for content curation at the Chicago Public Library system; booksellers in Boston and Fort Worth, Texas and an informal Next Avenue survey of avid readers, that big appetite has led us to delve into compelling new memoirs, read non-fiction books on racial justice, peruse books on historic figures and allow science fiction and fantasy to transport us to other times, places and realities.

Need something to read as we head into the second year of the pandemic? You'll find ideas here.

## Lives well lived, spirituality and kindness

"People are looking for tools to help them get through these



uncertain times," said Judith Curr, president and publisher of HarperOne Group, an imprint of Harper Collins Publishers.

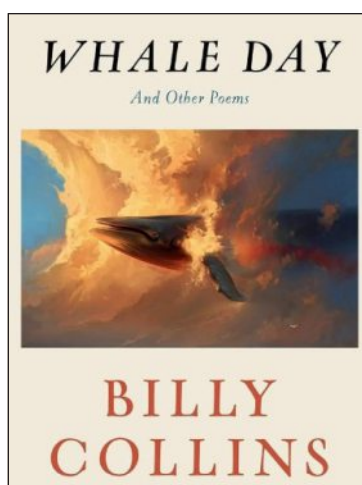
Curr recommended readers curl up with "Just As I Am," the new memoir by the late actress Cicely Tyson. "Big memoirs of lives well lived touch us, and Cicely Tyson lived an extraordinary life, one with guiding principles and purpose," Curr said.

For help with spiritual development, Curr suggested "Learning to Pray: A Guide for Everyone" by the Jesuit priest James Martin, SJ.

Looking for a volume full of heart? Curr is enthusiastic about "The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse," a bestselling illustrated book by British artist and author Charlie Mackesy. A reviewer in The Washington Post called it "a sweet tale rendered in swirly black calligraphy and watercolor," with universal messages.

"This book is about kindness, and it's very calming," Curr said. "It's for adults, for children — for everybody."

Many adults and children in Chicago, a city of 2.7 million people, are patrons of one of the largest public library systems in the country. "With our eighty-one locations, we're right up there with New York City and Los Angeles," said Stephen Sposato, the system's manager for content curation. "We've got our central library, three regional buildings and seventy-seven branches."



## Racial Justice, Politics, Nature and Fantasy

"If you looked at a list of the most circulated titles, you wouldn't know anything was different about 2020 because the best sellers dominated the way they do every year," Sposato said. That said, due to an increased demand for books on racial justice since last summer, Sposato reported that such titles as "How to Be an Antiracist" by Ibram X. Kendi, "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo and "Caste" by Isabel Wilkerson "shot up in popularity."

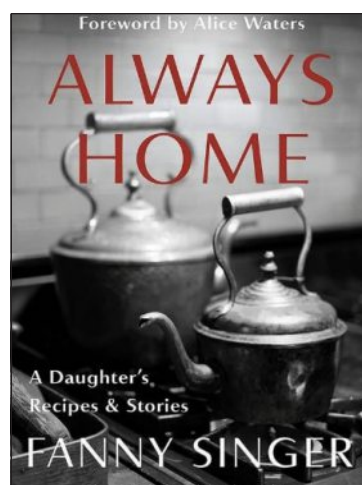
Political books, including memoirs by both Michelle and Barack Obama, also were among the ones patrons have checked out most often.

Said Sposato: "With people experiencing more restricted routines, we've also seen a renewed sense of appreciation for books on nature and the environment, such as Helen Macdonald's 'Vesper Flights.'"

And some readers, Sposato noted, have turned to the classics, "older books people always meant to read" or favorites from childhood.

Regardless of which titles we've picked up, Geoffrey Raywood Jr., the manager at Trident Booksellers & Café in Boston, reported we've seemed less reluctant to bail on books that don't hold our interest.

"We've heard from folks who start books and then don't finish



them and they come back looking for something different," he said. "It's as though if they have only so much time to read, they want to devote that time to something they really want to read."

Raywood said many of his customers have embraced reading primarily for pleasure, too. "We've seen a lot of interest in science fiction, fantasy and romance — positive stories like 'The Wedding Date' by Jasmine Guillory or Elin Hilderbrand's books." Popular action-adventure books include "The Broken Earth" trilogy by N. K. Jemisin.

## Race Relations, Romance and Science Fiction

Other customers have sought out "nonfiction, memoirs, books on art and culture and academic books by people of color," Raywood reported.

In response, his store compiled some recommendations, including "Between the World and Me" by Ta-Nehisi Coates, "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" by Emmanuel Acho, "Just Us: An American Conversation" by Claudia Rankine and "Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America 1619-2019" by Ibram X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain.

Customers have purchased those same titles from The Dock Bookshop in Fort Worth, which for almost 13 years has special-

ized in books on Black history and culture.

"The marker was the death of George Floyd in May," said Donna Craddock, who owns the store with her sister Donya Craddock. "After that, a lot more people started reading what some call 'race relations' books. That's very encouraging."

A change in the store's customer base also is encouraging, Craddock said. "About ninety-nine percent of our customers used to be African American. Now, we have a base of amazing diversity because many people are being intentional about their shopping, buying Black and buying local." Laughing, she added, "We've stopped just being shocked when white people come in, and started having good conversations instead."

Romance titles have always done well for Craddock's store, and since the pandemic began, demand for those books and for science fiction has grown. "We've also seen a big increase in sales of children's books," Craddock said. "Area schools are sending in teachers to see what we have and we also partner with local libraries, to help them diversify their collection."

## Something for Everyone's Reading List

Interested in diversifying your genres?

You may want to sample some of these titles now on the bedside tables of friends and friends of friends:

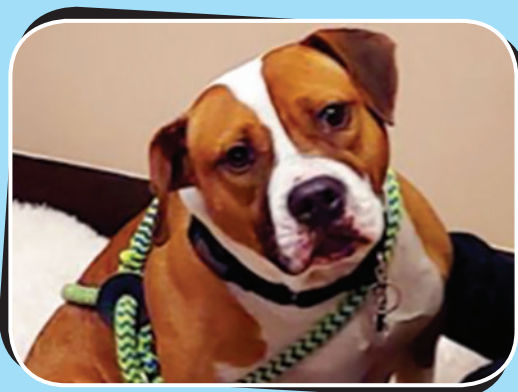
- "Chronicles, Volume One" by Bob Dylan
- "The Salt Path: A Memoir" by Raynor Winn
- "Hate Inc.: Why Today's Media Makes Us Despise One Another" by Matt Taibbi
- "Always Home" by Fanny Singer (Chef Alice Waters' daughter)
- "The Genius of the System: Hollywood Filmmaking in the Studio Era" by Thomas Schatz
- "Quite a Year for Plums" by Bailey White





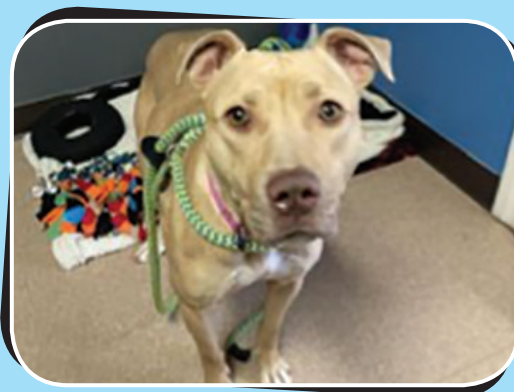
# Adoption Page

## Looking for our Forever Home!



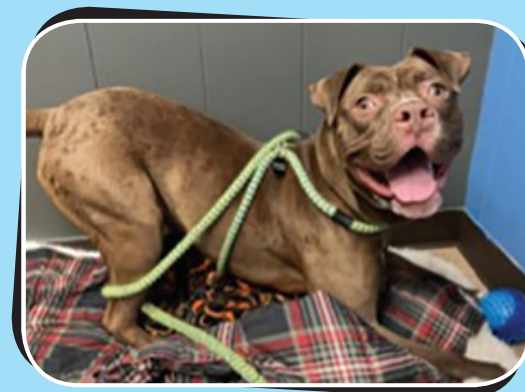
### CHIP

- Boxer, American Staffordshire Terrier, Mixed
- Spayed/Neutered
- Up-to-date with routine shots
- Young Male/Large



### SIA

- Labrador Retriever, American Staffordshire Terrier, Mixed
- Spayed/Neutered
- Up-to-date with routine shots
- Adult Female/Large



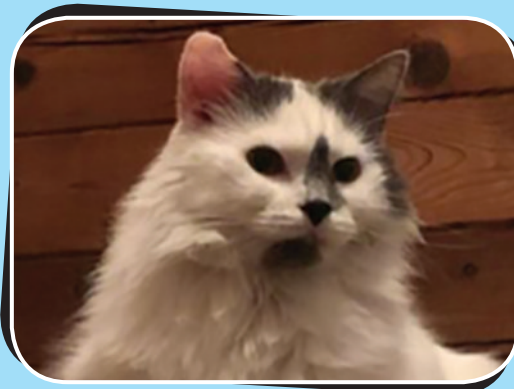
### RANDY

- American Staffordshire Terrier, Mixed Breed, Mixed
- Spayed/Neutered
- Up-to-date with routine shots
- Young Male/Large



### BROWN SUGAR

- Boxer, American Staffordshire Terrier, Mixed
- Spayed/Neutered
- Up-to-date with routine shots
- Adult Female/Large



### MONTIE

- Ragdoll, Domestic Long Hair, Mixed
- Spayed/Neutered
- Housebroken
- Declawed
- Up-to-date with routine shots
- Male/Large



### CRYSTAL

- Domestic Medium Hair
- Spayed/Neutered
- Housebroken
- Declawed
- Up-to-date with routine shots
- Senior Female/Large

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## Reading

FROM PAGE 20

- "Abe: Abraham Lincoln in His Times" by David S. Reynolds
- Suspense/mystery novels by Keigo Higashino
- A few more:
- Christopher Fowler's Bryant and May mysteries
- "Sing, Unburied, Sing" by Jesmyn Ward
- "Americanah" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- "The Splendid and the Vile: A Saga of Churchill, Family, and Defiance During the Blitz" by Erik Larson
- "Red Comet: The Blazing Art and Short Life of Sylvia Plath" by Heather Clark
- "His Truth Is Marching On: John Lewis and the Power of Hope" by Jon Meacham

Here's a personal recommendation: Billy Collins' "Whale Day and Other Poems." Now a year out from my last appointment, just reading "Massage" caused my pandemic-weary shoulders to drop.

Story courtesy of Next Avenue

## Naps

FROM PAGE 8

According to the National Institutes of Health, individuals over about age 60 show reduced amounts of slow-wave (deep) sleep and a shortened time spent in REM sleep, a critical stage when the brain replenishes itself and processes and stores information.

As we get older, there are more episodes of nighttime waking and earlier morning awakening. Can you compensate for this with a daytime nap? A study in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society found that, depending on its length and timing, a nap can help to increase total sleep time without affecting nighttime sleep quality or duration, and provides measurable cognitive benefits.

Wondering how long a snooze to take? "Power naps," 20 to 30 minutes long, allow you to wake up refreshed and rejuvenated, giving you added pep on a day when you're dragging.

"The duration and timing of what is sometimes called a 'strategic nap' is important," says Bowman. "We want to minimize the effect the nap will have on circadian rhythms and your ability to sleep at night. The best time is usually early afternoon, when bodies are programmed to need sleep and you might naturally feel a dip in your alertness."

### Are Naps Good for Our Health?

As for how naps affect health and cardiovascular functioning, there is conflicting evidence.

Several studies show that daytime napping is associated with increased risk of mortality from all causes. But, Bowman says, you need to consider the differences in nap duration and timing.

"If a nap occurs too early or too late in the day, this can affect circadian rhythms, as well as the ability to fall asleep and stay asleep at night, both of which can be related to cardiovascular disease," she says.

A 2019 study reported in the British Medical Journal found that people who nap once or twice weekly have a lower risk of cardiovascular disease than others, with no association found for more frequent napping or napping duration.

A 2020 study by the European Society of Cardiology found that naps longer than 60 minutes were associated with a 34% higher risk of cardiovascular disease. When nighttime sleep was taken into account, however, these long naps only appeared potentially problematic for those who slept more than six hours per night.

Shorter naps, especially those less than 30 to 45 minutes, were found not to be risky and indeed might improve heart health in people who sleep insufficiently at night.

Some studies have suggested that excessive sleep and daytime naps are associated with higher levels of C-reactive protein, a marker for systemic inflammation which can be related to heart disease and other disorders. Other studies suggest

that naps can improve immune function.

### The Joy of Napping

For Fred Popper, 69, of Concord, Mass., most of his naps are accidental. "I may be watching a movie or something good on TV and before I know it, I'm snoring away," says Popper, an artist, photographer and retired graphic designer.

"Sometimes, I have a twenty-minute snooze and feel great," he adds. "But other times, I've slept for an hour or more and it takes me forever until that confused, 'What day is it?' feeling goes away. Still, napping whenever I want to is one of the great pleasures of retirement."

Alicia Schlesinger, 68, a retired RN and artist from Little Neck, N.Y., acknowledges she doesn't sleep well most nights and finds napping to be beneficial both physically and emotionally.

"When I'm overtired and my thoughts begin to get all jumbled up, I find that a nap is like rebooting a computer," she says.



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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Mail to: Vitality Pet Page**  
**Attn: Dawn Emke**  
**53239 Settimo Crt**  
**Chesterfield, MI 48047**

\*Any photos received after photo page is full will be held and used in future issues.

## ATTENTION ORGANIZATIONS GROUPS & CLUBS

Send in your information for meetings, seminars, events and press releases for our monthly calendar. Our next edition will run Thursday, April 8, 2021.

**Deadline is March 31, 2021**

To be included in our next edition please Email to:

**VITALITY**  
**Groups & Clubs**

**Email: Joe Gray**  
**jgray@digitalfirstmedia.com**  
**Subject Line: Vitality Community Calendar**

# Next Issue of Vitality



will be on

**THURSDAY**  
**APRIL 8, 2021**



## Calendar of activities, events and trips

**Editor's Note:** With the cancellations of community events due to COVID-19, The Vitality calendar listings will begin with events beginning in September. The ongoing monthly events will also be listed. Before attending an event, contact the organizers to find out if it has been cancelled.

To submit information for the calendar, email [jgray@medianewsgrp.com](mailto:jgray@medianewsgrp.com).

### New groups forming in the Chesterfield area:

Widowers and Widows On With Life. Duplicate, Party and Rubber Bridge. Euchre, Pinochle and Hand & Foot. To be placed on the Contact List call Jackie 586-6465636 after Aug. 1.

### March

**The Shelby Township Senior Softball League:** (for those 55+) seeking players. Play starts in May

with 9inning games at 10 a.m. Monday and Wednesday mornings in a 24 game regular season schedule. The League plays at Ford Field (23 Mile Rd west of Van Dyke) and Mae Stecker Park (24 Mile Rd east of Van Dyke). Most players, of all skill levels, hail from the Metro Detroit area with the majority from Macomb, Oakland and Wayne Counties. With almost 20 teams in the league, most have current openings as clubs may roster up to 20 players. While the minimum age to qualify is 55, players in their 70's are still very active in the league. So, if you are an active senior (pickle ball, running, tennis, volleyball, basketball, hockey, etc.) or looking to get back in the 'swing' of things, don't miss out on reliving those old ball playing heroics while creating new memories with the camaraderie of other senior athletes. Batting cages are

available now to "shake" off those blahs. The next league managers' meeting is in early March. For more information, call Mike at 586-944-7450.

**March 18:** Friends & Family Game Night (At Home!). Poetry for Neanderthals, sponsored by the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Avenue, at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 18 via Zoom. Meeting ID: 918 5599 8242. Help your team guess the item on your card using only single syllable words. We'll be playing a different party game each month on Zoom. Get your family or friends together to form a team, or go it alone. Your team can play together in the same space or remotely. We will have to modify a rule here and there for some of these games to make sense on Zoom, but that will just add to the fun. No registration necessary. For more information, call 586-445-

5407.

**March 23:** Must hear podcast, 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 23 on Facebook and YouTube. Sponsored by the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Avenue. Podcasts have taken over the world! They're growing more popular by the day as millions listen. But are you searching for a new podcast to listen to or don't know where to start? Check out this video of recommended podcasts about health, entertainment, literature and more. For more information, call 586-445-5407.

**March 30:** Take & Make Craft: Bunny Butt Flower Pots at the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Avenue, Tuesday, March 30 (Register beginning March 9). Register for your materials to make this fun craft. An instructional video demonstrating how to put the craft together will be posted

to Facebook and YouTube at the date listed above. Supplies are limited so don't forget to register on our website. For more information, call 586-445-5407.

### April

**April 12-17, 2021:** This is a wonderful trip SHOW to Nashville, Tennessee. We will see two great shows, The Grand Ole Opry and the Nightlife Dinner Theater. We will enjoy 5 nights lodging three consecutive in Nashville, a guided tour of Nashville and the Belle Meade plantation, admission to country music Hall of Fame, a ride on the Delta Flatboats, etc. The trip is \$709 per person with double occupancy and it includes 8 meals: 5 breakfasts and 3 dinners. The trip is expected to sell out. For questions or to make a reservation, call Mary Ann at 586-530-6936.

### Monthly events

▪ **Volunteers needed:** Volunteers are needed to help immigrants with conversational English during English workshops at the Troy Community Center. Neither educational qualifications nor experience is required, but volunteers should be natural-born Americans who speak the standard American dialect. Volunteers may sign up for one or both schedules, 1 to 3 p.m. Tuesdays and 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays. For more information, contact Ed Lee at 248-926-2288 or [edlee@toee.org](mailto:edlee@toee.org).

▪ **Confident Communicators Club:** Meets monthly for people that need self improvement skills in public speaking and confidence with leading people confidently, in any clubs, schools, travel, families, churches and it is a free non profit

CALENDAR » PAGE 24

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# Calendar

## FROM PAGE 23

club the first three visits. The group meets at Washington townships senior center 57900 Van Dyke upstairs level on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 8-9:30 a.m.

■ **Senior Card Playing:** Come and join a fun group of card players who play a wide range of card games. Everyone brings a snack to share while playing. Free. Mondays from 1-4 p.m. at 35248 Cricklewood Blvd. (Cricklewood Recreation Building). Call 586-725-0291.

■ **New Baltimore Senior Club:** Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This welcoming group of seniors has all sorts of fun. We play bingo, hold luncheons, go on trips, and play cards. Monthly dues, \$2. Location 35248 Cricklewood Blvd. (Cricklewood Recreation Building). Call 586-725-0291.

■ **Zumba Gold:** from 10:30-11:30 a.m. every Monday and Wednesday at the Washington Center, 57880 Van Dyke, Washington Twp. Cost depends on how many punches purchased. 4 punches \$23 resident, \$29 NR; 11 punches \$60 resident, \$66 NR. For more information, call 586-752-6543.

■ **Line Dancing:** Join us for line dancing every Thursday at our Washington Activity Center (57900 Van Dyke, Washington) Intermediate/Advanced starts at 10:30 and Beginners starts at 11:30. Call for more details 586-752-6543

■ **Pickleball:** is played from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday at the Romeo Activity Center, 361 Morton St. Drop in to play or call 586-752-9601 for more information.

■ **The Warren/Center Line Senior Connection:** invites adults ages 55 and older to join Macomb County's vibrant senior group. The

group meets on the second Monday of the month at DeCarlo's Banquet & Convention Center, 6015 E. 10 Mile Road in Warren, just east of Mound. Doors open at 5 p.m., and programs start at 6 p.m. Dues are \$10 per year, and members receive the following: free refreshments, coffee, soft drinks, juices, and snacks; music by a disc jockey and dancing; and information from guest speakers. Featured speakers throughout the year include officials from federal, state, county, and city governments; doctors of all specialties, from internal medicine and gerontologists to cancer specialists; elder law attorneys; and fraud prevention speakers. For more information, call 586-268-9452, 586-264-5657, or 586-755-6112.

■ **Pickleball:** is going strong at the Romeo Activity Center (361 Morton Street, Romeo) every Tuesday and Thursday from 10-11. Please call for more details 586-

752-6543.

■ **Volunteers needed:** Volunteers are needed to help immigrants with conversational English during English workshops at the Troy Community Center. Neither educational qualifications nor experience is required, but volunteers should be natural-born Americans who speak the standard American dialect. Volunteers may sign up for one or both schedules, 1 to 3 p.m. Tuesdays and 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays. For more information, contact Ed Lee at 248-926-2288 or edlee@toee.org.

■ **Euchre parties:** Disabled American Veterans 129 and Operation Yellow Ribbon hold euchre parties from 4 to 6 p.m. on the second Sundays and 7 to 9 p.m. on the fourth Thursdays of every month at 47326 Dequindre Road in Shelby Township. The cost is \$7 (plus quarters for euchre). Refreshments will be available. Reservations are needed one day in advance. Call 248-425-2722 or 248-953-4901 to register or for more information.

■ **The Mi Stitchin' Time Crochet Group:** meets from 5:30 to 7 p.m. every Tuesday at the Romeo District Library's Kezar Library, 107 Church St. For more information, call 586-752-2583.

■ **Detroit region retirees:** If you live in the metropolitan Detroit area, are retired, and would like to meet new people from other walks of life, the Detroit region retirees group meets five times a year at various restaurants in the area. For more information, contact Stanley Hreneczko at 586-268-3656.

■ **Cards and games:** Widowed men and women of all ages are welcome to meet for cards and games from 6 to 9 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month at Sts. John and Paul Catholic Church, 7777 28 Mile Road, in Washington Township and on the third Thursday of each month at St. Isidore

Church, 18201 23 Mile Road, in Macomb. Cards and games will be provided. Bring a small snack to share and your own beverage. For more information, call 586-781-5781 or 586-991-7374.

■ **Fine art classes:** The Older Persons Commission, 650 Leticia in Rochester, offers fine arts classes such as Chinese brush painting, watercolor painting, drawing, clay jewelry, or pottery wheel hand building. Days and times vary. For more information, visit opcsenior-center.org and click "about us" and then the "newsletter" tab.

■ **Club 55:** meets from 9 a.m. to noon every Tuesday at Classic Lanes, 2145 Avon Industrial Drive in Rochester Hills. The cost is \$5 per person for three games and shoes. Guests receive complimentary coffee and cookies. For more information, call 248-852-9100.

■ **Widowed men and women:** are invited for a movie and dinner on the third Sunday of each month at the AMC Forum 30 Theatre in Sterling Heights, followed by dinner at UNO Restaurant in the same complex. To RSVP and find out movie selection and time, call 248-917-3733 or email angelway11@comcast.net.

■ **All widowed:** are invited to meet on the third Wednesday of each month for dinner at area restaurants at 5 p.m. Order from the menu, separate checks. RSVP and find out location by calling 248-840-0063.

■ **Widowed men and women:** are invited every third Thursday from 6 to 9 p.m. at St. Isidore Church, 18201 23 Mile Road, for cards, games, and friendship. Bring a small snack to share and your own beverage. For more information, call 586-991-7374.

■ **Widowed men and women:** are invited to meet at 10 a.m. each third Tuesday at The Pancake Factory, 13693 23 Mile Road, in Shelby Township. For more information, call 586-781-5781.

■ **Widowed men and**

**women:** are invited to meet at 10 a.m. each second Monday at Wildflower Restaurant, 42900 Garfield in Clinton Township. For more information, call 586-264-1939.

■ **Widowed men and women:** are invited to meet for breakfast on the second and fourth Monday of every month at Sero's, 925 Gratiot Ave., in Marysville. For more information, call 810-334-6267.

■ **Widowed men and women:** are invited to meet for breakfast at 9 a.m. on the fourth Thursday of the month at Country Inn, 35229 23 Mile Road in New Baltimore. For more information, call 586-991-7374.

■ **Widowed men:** are invited to attend breakfast every first and third Thursday monthly at 9 a.m. at Lukich Family Restaurant, 3900 Rochester Road in Troy. For more information, call 248-585-5402.

■ **Widowed men and women:** are invited for an evening of cards, games and friendship 6-9 p.m. each first Thursday at St. John and Paul, 7777 28 Mile Road, in Washington Township. For more information, call 586-781-5781.

■ **Widowed men and women:** are invited to bowl at 10 a.m. every Wednesday at 5 Star Lanes, 2666 Metropolitan Parkway in Sterling Heights. Drop-in league, pay when play, and cards are drawn to form teams. Lunch afterward is optional, and checks will be separate. For more information, call 586-755-0597 or 586-254-8199.

■ **Dance:** every Sunday afternoon away at the American Polish Cultural Center, 2975 E. Maple (15 Mile) at Dequindre in Troy. A DJ will provide music. Guests can perform the waltz, fox trot, swing and Latin dances and more. Dance lessons are available from 3 to 4 p.m., and open dance will be held from 4 to 7 p.m. For more information, call 248-778-6261.



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Proud Grandparents are: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Any photos received after photo page is full will be held and used in future issues.

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# Poetry PAGE

## Lita

GOD Reveals Her Deepness...  
 Lita – Love is the answer.  
 Hold on to love and don't let go.  
 When it came, "Call her Lita!"  
 I thought, "Now where did this come from?"  
 It's to embrace her with a truth,  
 Reminding All  
 Whenever she's in sight...  
 That simply by saying her name  
 You're bringing the highest to Light.  
 LITA  
 Although what you bring to my life  
 Is beyond words, there is one word befitting...  
 Grace!

By Sahara F Russell  
 of Detroit, MI

## Path of Life

The road down the path of life  
 Is like a walk in the woods.  
 Trees standing tall in the stretch of a mile,  
 Deers stand and stare in the stillness of the air.  
 The calmness of the wind blowing in the forest...  
 Birds flying near and far,  
 Squirrels running back and forth,  
 Your soul pauses in the moment.  
 Feeling the LIFE forces all around,  
 Leaving all troubles behind,  
 And seeing all that is profound.

By Alethea Monk Howard  
 of Sterling Hgts, MI

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 300 words or less and  
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ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF POEM: \_\_\_\_\_

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 And Letters of Appreciation  
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 Chesterfield, MI 48047

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Email: order: demke@medianewsgroup.com

Thank you for your interest in sharing your creativity. We look forward to reading your poems and letters of appreciation.



# Poetry CORNER

## Vows of Faith for the Journey

We recall the time when the liturgical season  
for reflection and reconciliation had only just begun;  
Then Satan unleashed his global plan of viral devastation  
to cancel Lent and our Easter celebration of God's Risen Son.

In answer to an urgent plea for "All hands on deck!"  
our Ships of comfort and of Mercy quickly arrived at our Na-  
tion's shores;  
To lend their hearts and hands in service with our Minds  
of Medicine to fight an unseen enemy in an invisible war.

Now, it's been more than a year since we first faced the fear  
and the wrath of our viral invader;  
Make no mistake, we are most grateful to date,  
for the vaccines that arrived sooner rather than later!

For far too long, many were suffering alone, longing for a  
reunion with loved ones and a reason for celebration;  
surely, none among us could find solace as we witnessed  
from afar endless days of illness and separation.

In their memory, we can...and we WILL...persevere;  
put aside anxiety and fear...and pledge to do ALL we can  
for our fellow man as Children of God  
and heirs of our glorious Nation!

By Joyce M. Watt  
of Clinton Twp, MI

## Nursing Home Dilemma

What place is this  
in which I sit in cold & shallow walls?  
What place is this  
in which I hear the sorrow down the halls?

Why am I here? What have I done?  
Who have I hurt? Why me?  
Have those I've loved and cared for  
chose this place for me?

I know I have not always been as I should be.  
My ears do not deceive me.  
My eyes they sometimes see.

Regrets I have so many.  
I know I am not well.  
Is this my punishment?  
Is this that place called Hell?

I'm sorry child,  
I understand you have your life to live.  
I'm in your way and I'm a burden  
You have no more to give.

This old and helpless body,  
just won't lay down and die.  
It gives me pain and misery  
and I'm too old to cry.

Why must I be so sad for me?  
I've lived, laughed and loved.  
Then there are those who  
have cared for me.  
My blessings from above.

I know you're there,  
the warmth of your hand  
I know you're at my side  
but I must move over now.  
A new born child just cried.

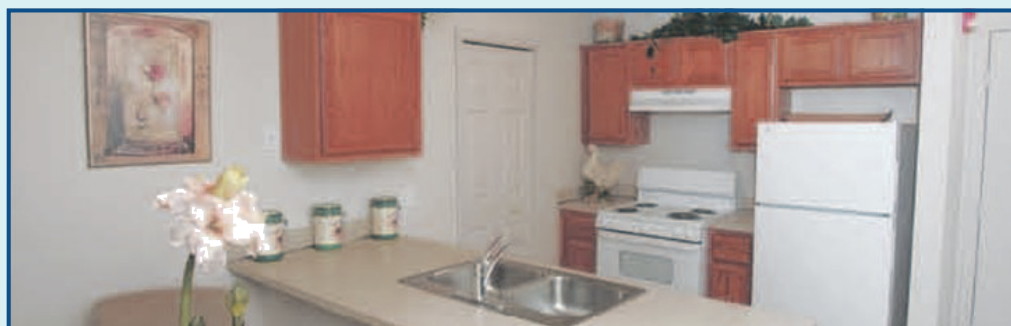
By Rosali Shaffer  
of Richmond, MI



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