

September 2021

# Vitality

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

BELIEVE



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**On the cover:** More than \$1 million in donations passed through the gift shop during Bev Dingel-Hartman's tenure as buyer and bookkeeper for the shop at Bi-County Community Hospital in Warren.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BEV DINGEL-HARTMAN

## VITALITY

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## 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 Liver- nois, Troy, 48084

## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SHELBY TOWNSHIP SENIOR CENTER

The Shelby Township Senior choir, under the leadership of Clare Abt, performs at a past concert. Abt is teaching classes on music theory at the center in September.

## New music theory class offered to seniors in Shelby Township

Set for Sept. 14 and 21, the class will cover everything from basic notation to sight-reading

By Debra Kaszubski  
For MediaNews Group

Choir leader Clare Abt, 73, is skilled at teaching music to students eager to learn how to perform. Along with working with the Shelby Township choir for more than three decades, Abt is a longtime private music teacher.

Abt, a Shelby Township resident, is putting his teaching skills to the test once again when he leads a two-week music theory course at the Shelby Township Senior Activity Center.

The class is set for Sept. 14 and 21 and includes basic musical notations, vocabulary and application of those skills to sight-reading. Sight-reading is a term

musicians use when they perform a song for the first time without rehearsing or reviewing in advance.

Music theory is the study of the practices and possibilities of music. Typically it takes months to master the basics of music theory, and then additional time to learn how to perform. The subject matter, while challenging, will be presented for the beginner student.

"You got a big ocean of possible knowledge, and I just want to put their toes on the shoreline," Abt said. "Nothing is impossible if they really want to give themselves in music. It can be done. We can make it easy for them to assimilate music at a speed that is comfortable for them."

Shelby Township choir members in particular are encouraged to attend the class and that's because Abt has the goal of elevating the choir to the point where they will be able to perform all musical sections without hearing or being familiar

with a song. This skill will allow the choir to expand their repertoire and sound more professional.

"I'm trying to get them to use their eyeballs and then their ears," Abt said.

The Shelby Township Choir has performed at various locations for the past 32 years under Abt's leadership. He is recruiting members and is especially interested in recruiting those who know how to sing alto, tenor and base. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is limiting performance opportunities, Abt is considering recording some performances for broadcast on YouTube.

The choir meets from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Wednesdays in the Shelby Township Senior Activity Center. Membership is not limited to Shelby Township residents.

To learn more about the choir or to enroll in the music theory class, visit shelbytwp.org or call 586-739-7540.

## Brian J. Kurtz

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## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# COVID booster shot: Do I need it?

By Kathleen Cameron

The use of an additional dose or booster of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines made by Pfizer and Moderna for immunocompromised individuals was recently recommended by the FDA and CDC. The reason that this booster dose is needed is that these individuals do not get enough protection against COVID-19 from the recommended two doses of the vaccines.

Recent research shows that up to one-half of immunocompromised people who didn't develop antibodies or immune protection after two doses do get some level of protection after a third dose. However, the FDA stressed that even after a third dose, peo-

ple who are immunocompromised will still need to wear masks indoors, stay six feet apart from others, and avoid crowds. Also family members and other close contacts should be fully vaccinated to protect these persons.

This new authorization does not apply to the one dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, which has been used less frequently in the U.S. The FDA is still exploring updating its authorization about the Johnson & Johnson vaccine to determine if boosters will be necessary for immunocompromised individuals.

People who qualify to receive the COVID-19 vaccine booster dose are the following:

- Those who have had

organ or stem cell transplants, such as kidney or liver transplants, and take immunosuppressant treatments so that their bodies do not reject the transplants or cells

- People receiving treatment for blood cancers

- Those with rare genetic disorders that cause their immune systems from working properly

- Individuals with advanced or untreated HIV

- People on dialysis
- Those with certain chronic medical conditions such as chronic kidney disease and asplenia (living without a spleen)

- Individuals taking high dose corticosteroids, chemotherapy (drugs used to treat cancer), and medications that suppress the immune system

These groups all have or are at risk for weakened immune systems and therefore need the added dose, especially in light of the more contagious Delta variant that is spreading across the U.S. Approximately 7 million adults fall into one or more categories above and are at higher risk of breakthrough infections, being hospitalized or dying if they get COVID-19. They are also more likely to transmit the infection to others.

At this time, the new authorization for a third or booster dose is not intended for people whose immune system has decreased with age such as what happens with many other adults, especially those in nursing homes, or for people with chronic diseases such as diabetes.

## When can you get the COVID booster shot?

The third dose can be given 28 days or more after the second vaccine shot. For people who received either Pfizer or Moderna's mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, a third dose of the same vaccine should be used. If the mRNA vaccine given for the first two doses is not available or is unknown, either mRNA COVID-19 vaccine product may be administered. A person should not receive more than three mRNA vaccine doses.

## What are the requirements for getting a COVID booster shot?

An honor type system will be used for those who meet the categories listed above. No prescription or other kinds of documentation from doctors showing you have are immunocompromised will be required

for people to get the third shot of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. If you meet one of the categories above, you should bring your COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card with you when requesting the vaccine at a pharmacy, clinic, or other vaccination site. This is the card you received when you got your first shot and indicates the type of vaccine you received and dates of the first and second shots.

If you are uncertain if you are eligible for a COVID-19 booster vaccine, check with your primary care physician or other doctor if you are being treated for cancer or other conditions that compromise your immune system.

## When will the COVID booster shots be available?

The CDC is also considering the use of boosters for people whose immunity

**BOOSTER » PAGE 8**

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## WORK &amp; PURPOSE

# Genealogist helps connect families separated by time

By Debra Kaszubski  
For MediaNews Group

Royal Oak resident and professional genealogist Derek Blount has traced his ancestors back to the year 1066, and he believes a relative of his served in the Battle of Hastings. "I have been told that he was the admiral of the fleet that brought William (the Duke of Normandy) over to the battle," he said. "It's really very cool when you think about it."

Blount, who serves as vice president of the Oakland County Genealogical Society, has traveled the world and spent decades researching his family's history. His grandfather introduced Blount to genealogy when he was a youth before eventually turning over his 25 years of research. Thirty-

two years later, Blount works daily on his family's heritage. He has traced 45,000 people to his family database which goes back to the Viking age. He has also made a career of helping others trace their ancestors.

Blount owns Lost Branches, a professional genealogy company based out of Royal Oak. The business helps new genealogists get started and also assists experienced researchers who may need a boost. Lost Branches is Blount's second career. He opened the business in 2011 after he retired from AT&T, where he worked for 30 years. "I decided when I retired that I was going to do something that I'd enjoy doing," he said. "Genealogy has kept me off the streets as a retiree, and I'm thankful for

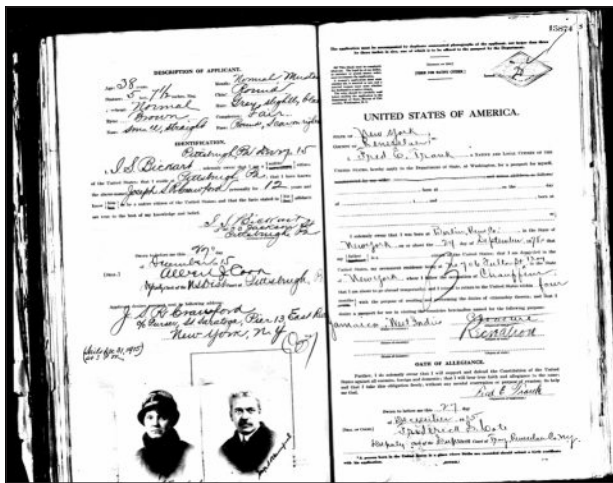


PHOTO COURTESY OF DEREK BLOUNT

Royal Oak genealogist Derek Blount uses a variety of historical documents to trace his family history, including birth and death certificates; probate, land and tax records; historical photos and more.

that."

Blount's work also con-

sists of digging up lost documents for clients who seek

official documentation for any number of reasons, including legal matters, dual citizenship, or membership into the Daughters of the American Revolution.

He also lectures in person at various metro Detroit locations and via Zoom. He has several lectures scheduled, including one via Zoom for the Detroit Society for Genealogical Research on Sept. 11 on what happened to Detroit's dead (cemeteries were moved and, as a result, records lost); another Sept. 23 via Zoom about past pandemics via the Dearborn Genealogical Society, and more. To register for one of Blount's lectures, visit the Detroit Society for Genealogical Research or Dearborn Genealogical Society websites.

At a recent seminar at

the Rochester Older Persons Commission (OPC), Blount provided information for beginning genealogists. Those starting research into their own family should begin by gathering information and, if possible, talking to close relatives, including grandparents, parents, and siblings.

Once new genealogists collect information by interviewing relatives, Blount suggests visiting an online resource such as the Oakland County Genealogical Society to download genealogy forms that will help the next steps. Blount warns new genealogists that the process of tracing one's ancestors is both rewarding and exhausting. He also suggests keeping digital records rather than paper.

GENEALOGIST » PAGE 8



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### Cornwell Turkeyville Dinner Theatre

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## Genealogist

FROM PAGE 6

"I will be up until midnight working on a problem and then realize I'm about to fall asleep at the desk," he said. "It gets interesting when you are following a trail, and you don't know where to go next. You have to look for all kinds of alternatives, including land records, probate records, tax records, and even dog licenses."

Blount said the effort is worth the reward, especially when he connects the dots on complicated cases. For example, he re-

cently helped a client trace family members who were separated by murder. Blount said after a young mother murdered her husband with an ax in 1910, she was sent to a sanitarium and her four children were separated by the court system. Through research into probate records, Blount helped his clients trace the missing relatives. In another case, Blount helped a metro Detroit doctor trace his relatives across nine countries.

"Every family that I've researched has an interesting story of one kind or another," he said.

For more information on Blount, his lectures, or Lost Branches, visit his website at [lostbranches.com](http://lostbranches.com) or call 248-224-9505.

## Booster

FROM PAGE 4

might have decreased since they received their second dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Older adults are of particular concern because 74% of breakthrough COVID-19 cases are among those 65 and over. Breakthrough cases are expected because no vaccines are 100% effective at preventing illness in vaccinated people. The boosters would provide added protection for those at greatest risk for breakthrough infections.

Further, recent reports indicate that the Biden administration may soon advise vaccinated persons to get a booster shot eight months after their second shot for added protection as the highly contagious Delta variant continues to spread across the U.S. The



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Individuals with weakened immune systems would benefit from the COVID-19 booster dose, as they are at higher risk of breakthrough infections, being hospitalized or dying if they get infected.

first people to receive this booster would be those in nursing homes, healthcare and emergency workers, and then older adults who were vaccinated this past winter. These booster shots could begin as early as mid-

September.

Additional information about the COVID-19 booster shots can be found on the CDC's website at [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov).

*Story courtesy of the National Council on Aging*

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



**MONEY & SECURITY**

# Ask the Financial Doctor: Can I make contributions to an inherited IRA?

**Q** : I received an inherited IRA as a non-spouse. Can I withdraw the IRA funds and do a 60-day roll-over?



**Richard Rysiewski**  
Columnist

**A** : No, a non-spouse beneficiary cannot do 60-day roll-over. A non-spouse IRA beneficiary can only do a trustee-to-trustee transfer as a properly-titled inherited IRA. If the non-spouse beneficiary withdraws the inherited IRA funds, they are taxable and the stretch IRA is lost. This mistake is a fatal error and cannot be reversed. If inherited IRA funds need to be moved, only move them as a direct trustee-to-trustee transfer.

**Q** : Can I make contributions to an inherited IRA?

**A** : No, contributions to an inherited IRA are not allowed. If you make this mistake then the entire inherited IRA becomes taxable. Assume you inherited a \$200,000 IRA and made a \$1,000 contribution. The entire amount of \$201,000 becomes taxable.

**Q** : I inherited an IRA as a non-spouse. What is the proper titling of the IRA to avoid any costly mistakes?

**A** : The proper titling for an inherited IRA is the deceased name first followed by the beneficiary's name. For example, "Richard Jones (deceased 6/17/2021) IRA, FBO Robert Jones, beneficiary." Some institutions do not use this account titling and internally record the account as a inherited IRA. This can cause confusion and possibly lead to errors.

**Q** : Can I name a non-relative as the beneficiary for a 529 educational fund?

**A** : Yes, you can. The beneficiary of a 529 plan can be a non-relative. However if you change the beneficiary it should be family related member, otherwise, the funds in the 529 plan become taxable.

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

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

**Q** : What is the full retirement age (FRA) for Social Security benefits?

**A** : The full retirement age (FRA) is 66 for anybody born in 1945 through 1954 and age 67 for anybody born after 1959. Anybody born in 1955 through 1959 will have an FRA that starts at age 66 plus two months and increases by two months for each year till 1959. A person could receive social security benefits at age 62 but the benefits would be permanently reduced by 25% for people with a FRA of 66 and reduced by 30% for people with a FRA of 67.

**Q** : I am 74 years old and I have never taken a distribu-

tion from my IRA. Do I have to take a mandatory distribution at a certain age?

**A** : Assuming that you have a traditional IRA, you must take the first distribution by April 1 in the following year after age 72. In your case, you should have taken at least two distributions. The penalty for not complying is 50% of the required minimum distributions plus interest. I recommend that you seek a tax professional to correct your situation. If you have a ROTH IRA then you have no problem because there are no mandatory distributions.

*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.*

**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, October 14, 2021.

**Deadline is October 6, 2021**

To be included in our next edition please Email to:

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## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

## 20 YEARS LATER

The mystery of Sept. 11 first responders and dementia

By Patrick Hruby

Special to *The Washington Post*

More than a decade after the twin towers fell, Ron Kirchner began forgetting things. Buckling his belt. Closing his car door. Once, while visiting a preschool class on the 13th anniversary of 9/11, he even neglected to wear his customary necktie and New York City Fire Department hat. “He was in a panic,” says his wife, Dawn. “He used to like to bring the kids something, like coloring books. And he couldn’t find anything.”

This was unlike Ron, who had always been devoted and dutiful. He frequently wrote Dawn love notes, hiding them around their house. He made time after work to play with his two children, Luke and Ava. He mopped the floors before going to bed, whistling while he pushed the handle. “He did it joyfully,” Dawn says. “Ronnie was a giver.” Ron brought the same enthusiasm to his job as a firefighter in Queens, where he obsessively cleaned his truck, stayed up all night waiting for calls, and — according to unit lore — once smashed an Xbox with an ax because he thought that some of his younger colleagues were spending too much time playing video games. “Dad thought they should be reading up on fire stuff, training and procedures,” Luke says with a laugh.

Ron was one of the tens of thousands of police, firefighters, construction workers and others who worked amid the ruins of the World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan following 9/11. Like many of those responders, he later paid a price. Diagnosed with asthma and a

lung disease both linked to Ground Zero exposure, Ron retired on disability in 2009 and moved to Arizona.

At first, life in the desert was good. Ron landed a comfortable job working private security for a wealthy client. He and Dawn visited the Grand Canyon. They saw the red rocks of Sedona. Ron would wheeze while hiking, and sometimes at night, but a nebulizer made his breathing less strained.

By 2014, however, Ron’s troubles with thinking and memory were becoming unmanageable. Back in New York, he had deftly maneuvered a fire engine along the city’s crowded streets; now, he struggled to parallel park the family’s SUV inside two spaces. He would put toothpaste on his toothbrush and not know what to do with it. He was let go from his security job — in part, Dawn says, because he struggled to use a smartphone.

One day in early 2015, Dawn received a call from her husband’s naturopathic doctor, who had given Ron the Montreal Cognitive Assessment, a brief test that screens patients for cognitive disorders. Ron had scored poorly, unable to draw a simple clock face with the correct time. Dawn took him to a neurologist, who diagnosed him with dementia. Ron was 51. The neurologist, Dawn says, told her that a magnetic resonance imaging scan of his brain was comparable to that of an 85-year-old.

Today, Ron suffers from seizures. He can no longer speak coherently, cut his own food or bathe himself. He requires round-the-clock care and supervision from his wife and children, lest he wander into the



PHOTO FOR THE WASHINGTON POST BY ANASTASSIA WHITTY

Ron Kirchner, seated, at home in Oceanside, N.Y., with son Luke, from left, wife Dawn and daughter Ava.

streets around his family’s home in Oceanside, N.Y., where they moved in 2017. “He doesn’t really know who I am,” Dawn says, “or who he is, or what his favorite thing in the world — the fire department — is.” She doesn’t think Ron knew he was being photographed for this article, and believes it would have been impossible to explain it to him. But Dawn feels that it’s important to share his story as a way of helping others — and that her husband, if he could still understand, would feel the same.

Ron’s condition is almost unheard of for a 59-year-old man, and it points to an emerging medical mystery: Twenty years after 9/11, Ground Zero first responders are suffering from abnormally high rates of cognitive impairment, with some individuals in their 50s experiencing deficien-

cies that typically manifest when people are in their 70s — if at all.

“That is the most extraordinary thing with these cognitive issues, and what blows me away,” says Benjamin Luft, director of Stony Brook University’s World Trade Center Health and Wellness Program, which cares for and studies responders. “You don’t expect this to occur in your 50s, because it doesn’t occur. And a lot of these people are in their early 50s.” Although most cases are not as severe as Ron’s, the number of responders showing memory loss and other signs of impairment has been rising over time. Scientists and doctors are now asking: Is 9/11 to blame?

♦ ♦ ♦

On the night of the attacks, Ron Kirchner arrived in Lower Manhattan with a group of firefighters. Be-

wildered by the sheer scale of the devastation, they froze — until someone in the group spoke up. What are we waiting for? Let’s go. “From that point on,” Luke Kirchner says, “they were working like crazy.”

When the planes hit the towers, it triggered an almost inconceivable catastrophe. Collapsing buildings pulverized hundreds of thousands of tons of cement, steel, glass and other materials, along with thousands of computers, miles of electrical cables, and hundreds of thousands of gallons of heating and transformer fluids. The destruction created a blizzard of pinkish-gray dust that seemed to coat everything; beneath the piles of rubble, jet fuel ignited fires that burned and smoked across a 16-acre area until Dec. 19.

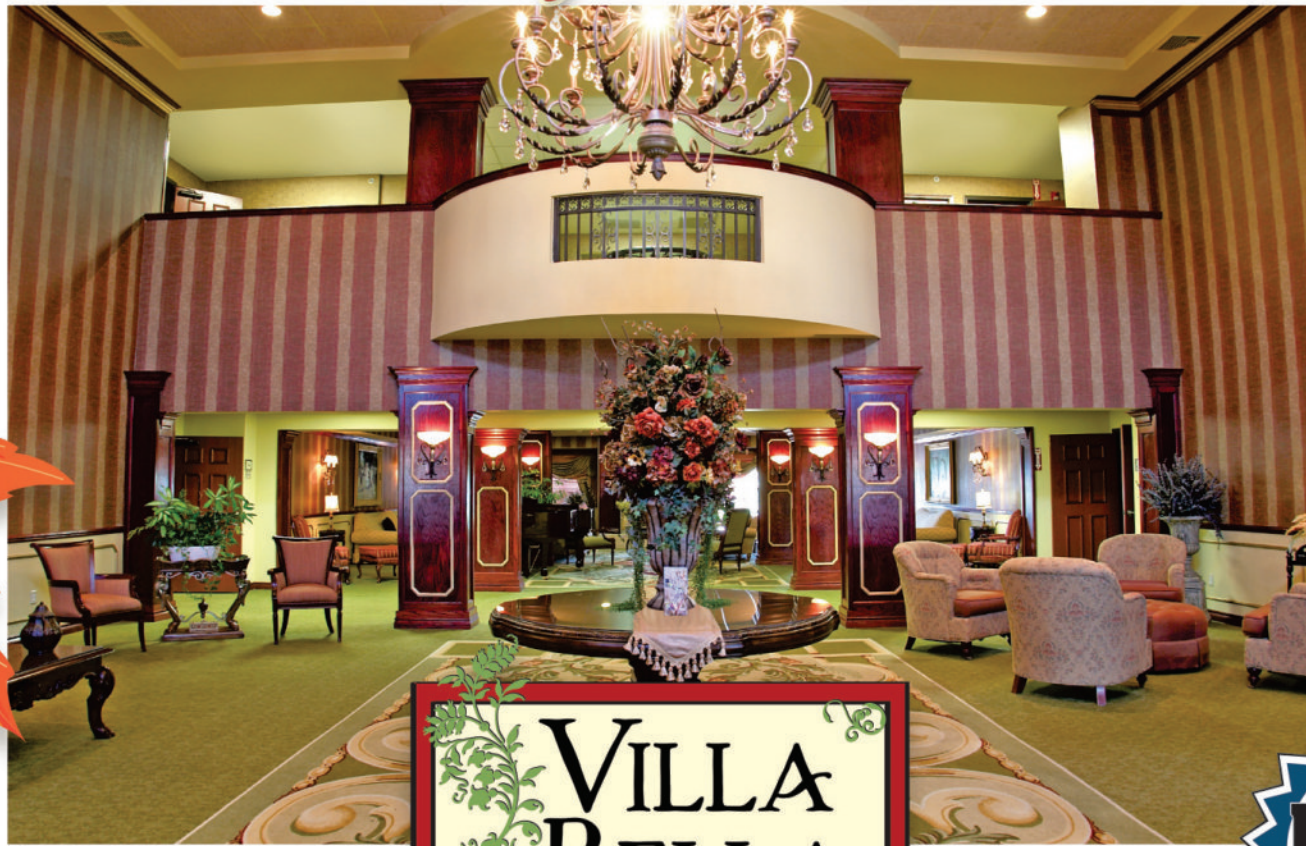
Seven days after the attacks, Environmental Pro-

tection Agency administrator Christine Todd Whitman reassured the public that the air around Ground Zero was safe to breathe. It was not. (In 2016, Whitman apologized for her remarks.) The dust contained glass fibers and other particles small enough to lodge deep in the lungs, as well as many substances and chemicals that are known toxins — including asbestos lead, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), a category of odorless compounds whose manufacture in the United States was banned in the late 1970s after they were linked to cancer. In 2003, an atmospheric scientist described the area’s smoking wreckage as a pollutant-spewing “chemical factory.” Four years later, an EPA analysis of Ground Zero air quality in the days following 9/11 found that ambient levels of dioxins — another group of chemical compounds known to cause cancer and other maladies — were the highest measurements “ever recorded anywhere in the world.”

Over the following weeks and months, many responders developed what doctors later dubbed “World Trade Center cough,” a syndrome that often includes shortness of breath, nasal congestion and acid reflux. Others suffered from nightmares and anxiety attacks. For some, the problems were temporary. But for others, they persisted — or got worse. In the years since the attacks, a wide range of chronic health conditions linked to 9/11 have emerged: asthma and sinusitis, sleep apnea and depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and a laundry list of cancers. Studies have found that New York



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# EPIC

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## WORK &amp; PURPOSE

## Sterling Heights resident celebrates half-century of giving back

By Susan Thwing

For MediaNews Group

Fifty years ago Bev Dingel-Hartman found herself with some time on her hands. Her oldest child was entering first grade, and her youngest began nursery school. Although she had been a kindergarten teacher for more than five years, she left teaching when her daughters were born — and now those girls were entering school, so they didn't need her at home all day.

"A friend of mine talked me into joining her as a volunteer in the hospital gift shop at Bi-County Community Hospital in Warren," she said. "And I stayed there until it closed in 2012. It was a wonderful time and I met so many friends. There is still a big contingent of former employees and physicians that get together for a reunion from time to time."

Dingel-Hartman's 50 years of volunteering since 1971 hasn't been limited to just the hospital setting. Over the decades, she was a Brownie and Girl Scout troop leader, school room mother, field trip guide, and cheerleading mom — but her most extensive accomplishments have been through her work at the local, district and state hospitals and the church.

And her accomplishments are notable. More than \$1 million in donations passed through the gift shop during her tenure as buyer and bookkeeper while at Henry Ford Bi-County Community Hospital.

In addition, she has donated countless hours of her time to the First United Methodist Church in Warren where she organized the "Tree of Love" at Christmas for 17 years. The fundraiser



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BEV HARTMAN

Hartman's years of service were acknowledged in 2009, when Henry Ford Health System honored her with the prestigious Volunteer of the Year Award at its annual black-tie Medallion Ball.

sold angels in memory or in honor of loved ones to raise money for the church.

But she didn't limit her hospital work to the gift shop. Instead, she took it on the road to help create a proactive, efficient network of statewide volunteers.

Working closely with hospital administrators on health advisory boards and executive teams, Dingel-Hartman eventually became president of the Michigan Association of Hospital Auxiliaries (now the Michigan Association of Healthcare Advocates) from 1988-1989. In this role she led all hospital volunteers for the entire state of Michi-

gan. This included six main state districts with approximately 145 hospital auxiliaries consisting of thousands of individual volunteers.

"It was such an honor to serve in this role, and to work with the many volunteers in the state," she said. Her efforts included leading educational training sessions on fundraising, conference and event planning, and volunteering best practices. "We held meetings and training sessions to help each other do our jobs better. We shared ideas, things that worked for us in fundraising, for example, and supported each other."



Bev-Dingel Hartman encourages others to consider sharing their time, as she says the rewards are immeasurable.

### Her accomplishments are notable. More than \$1 million in donations passed through the gift shop during her tenure as buyer and bookkeeper while at Henry Ford Bi-County Community Hospital.

When Henry Ford Bi-County Community Hospital closed in 2012, she turned her efforts to serve at Henry Ford Macomb Hospital in Clinton Township at the gift shop and volunteer office until COVID hit in 2020.

Dingel-Hartman's years of service were acknowledged in 2009, when Henry Ford Macomb Hospital honored her with the prestigious Community Service

Award at its annual black-tie Medallion Ball.

Although COVID has currently kept her away from hospital work, she still assists at First United Methodist Church-Warren, as Membership Chair, and Memorial Chair. She said she's noticed that not as many people are volunteering today as when she started 50 years ago.

"Many families need to have two incomes now,

they are busier, and many of us are retiring with not as many new volunteers signing up," she said.

But she encourages others to consider sharing their time, as the rewards are immeasurable.

Traveling across the state for her volunteer work, Dingel-Hartman said one of her biggest rewards is the friendships she developed.

"Once when I was in the U.P., I spoke with the CEO of a hospital there and we discovered that when I was a kindergarten teacher I taught his niece and nephew in Warren," she said. "I've met so many friends and wonderful people. No matter where I go I seem to meet someone that has a connection to my volunteering experiences."



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# 20 years

FROM PAGE 10

City firefighters who worked at Ground Zero are at increased risk for heart disease, and that people exposed to the dust cloud have a higher risk of developing autoimmune disease.

Luft, the director of Stony Brook's WTC Health and Wellness Program, is a renowned infectious-disease specialist who developed some of the first treatments for Lyme disease and AIDS-related infections. On 9/11, he spent the day preparing the Department of Medicine at Stony Brook University Hospital for an expected influx of wounded people. No one arrived. Survivors were too scarce. Days later, he visited Ground Zero; upon returning to his office on Long Island, he began establishing a clinic to care for responders.

His efforts and others like it have evolved into the World Trade Center Health Program, which is administered by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and provides medical monitoring and treatment to more than 100,000 responders and survivors through a nationwide provider network and at seven clinical centers in New York and New Jersey. Enrollment in the program has increased over time, and doctors continue to see new and unusual ailments. In 2018, for example, researchers found that firefighters who worked at Ground Zero are at elevated risk of developing a rare variant of a blood cancer precursor disease that was also more common among Vietnam War veterans exposed to the toxic herbicide Agent Orange.

■ ■ ■

In 2014, Sean Clouston began to see a disturbing trend. An epidemiologist and professor of public health at Stony Brook University, he had suggested giving the Montreal Cognitive Assessment to some of the nearly 8,000 responders, mostly living on Long Island, who were being followed by Luft's clinical center.

Of the 818 responders Clouston and his colleagues first tested, 104 had scores indicative of cognitive impairment, a condition that can range from mild to severe and that occurs when people have trouble remembering, learning new things, concentrating or making decisions that affect their everyday lives. Ten others scored low enough to have possible dementia. Clouston was stunned. As a group, the responders were relatively young. Many had to pass mentally demanding tests to become police officers and firefighters in the first place. They were some of the last individuals you would expect to be impaired, let alone at roughly three times the rate of people in their 70s. "We should have seen — maybe — one person" with dementia, he



PHOTO FOR THE WASHINGTON POST BY ANASTASSIA WHITTY

Ron Kirchner, at home in Oceanside, N.Y.

says. "...It was staggering."

Since then, other studies from Stony Brook researchers have found that within a group of 1,800 responders who were initially cognitively healthy, 14% developed impairment over a 2½-year period, and that responders with PTSD and impaired cognition have both blood and brain protein abnormalities similar to those seen in patients with Alzheimer's and related diseases. "We are slowly getting pieces of the puzzle," says Stephanie Santiago-Michels, a research coordinator for Stony Brook's WTC Health and Wellness Program. "We know that their brains are changing."

The evidence that 9/11 was responsible may not be definitive, but it is difficult to ignore. The air at Ground Zero contained chemicals and microscopic particles that are toxic to brain cells and have been linked to higher risk of Alzheimer's and other dementias. Clouston's group has found elevated levels of a protein linked to neuroinflammation in the brains of responders, with higher amounts corresponding with having spent more time on the pile.

And the explanation may not only be physical. Many responders have PTSD, in which people suffer from a variety of physical and emotional disorders — including flashbacks and difficulty sleeping — after experiencing dangerous or terrifying events. Among the responders Clouston has studied, PTSD correlates with lower scores on cognitive tests. And a study of New York City firefighters and paramedics conducted by the New York City Fire Department and researchers from the City University of New York and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine found that those who had more intense exposure to Ground Zero were more likely to report cognitive concerns and elevated PTSD levels than those with less intense exposure.

Clouston says that toxic air and PTSD could both be culprits — perhaps even joint accomplices, acting as a "one-two punch" to responders' brains.

"We're trying to understand that," he says. "Some of it is impossible to tease out." Many other important questions remain unanswered.



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## Calendar of activities, events and trips

**Editor's Note:** Before attending an event, contact the organizers to find out if it has been cancelled due to COVID-19.

*Vitality publishes the second Thursday of each month. To have an event published, it must be sent at least three weeks prior to the monthly publication date. To submit information for the calendar, email jgray@medianews-group.com.*

**New groups forming in the New Baltimore/Chesterfield area:** Widowers, Widows and Divorced Seniors On With Life. This group offers socializing, activities and rap sessions. For more information or to be placed on the contact list, call 586-646 5636.

### SEPTEMBER

**Sept. 11-19:** Mount Rushmore. Join Travel with Nance for \$989. 4 nites in South Dakota & two nites enroute each way. Badlands National Park, Borglum Historical Center, Mt. Rushmore National Cultural Center. Journey Museum & High Plains Western Heritage Center. Guided tour Deadwood. & Casino. Des Moines Botanical Center, Wall Drug, Corn Palace, Amana Heritage Museum. 6 dinners (2 with entertainment), 8 breakfasts. Call 313-535-2921.

**Sept. 25:** The Single Way Activities meeting at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 25. Barbeque dinner and games. Price: \$4 (includes full dinner and beverages). Reservation needed by Sept. 24. The meeting place rotates between members' homes so call for the address and more information from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., 586-774-2119.

### OCTOBER

**Oct. 3-9:** Cape Cod, Boston, Salem, Gloucester, MA. Join Travel with Nance for \$996. 4 nites at Commodore Inn on the Cape & 1

enroute each way. Guided tours of Boston, Salem, Cape Cod, Hyannisport & Plymouth. Cape Cod National Seashore, House of Seven Gables, dune buggy ride Provincetown, Cheers Bar, Fanuil Hall & Quincy Market, JFK Memorial, Sandwich Glass Museum, Plymouth Rock & Lobstering Cruise. 6 breakfasts, 1 lunch and 2 dinners. Call 313-535-2921.

**Oct. 6-19:** MHL presents Grand Canyon, Las Vegas and the Hoover Dam, Oct. 6 through Oct. 19. We're going to go for 13 nights, three consecutive nights in a Las Vegas casino hotel, with 19 meals (10 breakfast and 9 dinners), admission to the Hoover Dam Visitor Center, al visit to the Grand Canyon National Park including viewing an IMAX Grand Canyon movie, Petrified Forest National Park, Etc, Etc, Etc. The cost is \$1,559 with double occupancy. For more information, pick-up locations, times, and other details, contact Mary Ann Spisak at 586-530-6936.

**Oct. 10:** Belle Isle and Homes of Detroit. Join Travel with Nance for \$55. One hour Belle Isle narrated tour, City tour of Detroit: drive by 'Tiny Houses', Boston Edison District, James Scott Home, Indian Village. Lunch at American or Lafayette Coney Islands. Call 313-535-2921.

**Oct. 13:** Cornwell's Turkeyville & Marshall. Join Travel with Nance for \$85. Live musical matinee, of 'Johnny Cash' hits with turkey buffet lunch, gift shop, bakery. Narrated tour of Marshall (drive-by): Honolulu House, National Inn, Governor's Mansion, Capitol Hill School House. Call 313-535-2921.

**Oct. 18-22:** Nashville, TN. Join Travel with Nance for \$665. 4 nites hotel in the Nashville area. Guided City tour with stop at the Parthenon. Grand Ole Opry performance, Nashville Nightlife Dinner Theatre,

Grand Ole Opry Backstage tour. Country Music Hall of Fame, Belle Meade Plantation, Delta Flatboat Ride at Opryland Hotel. 4 brkfs, 4 dinners. Call 313-535-2921.

**Oct. 23:** The Single Way Activities games night at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 23. Price: \$4 (includes hot and cold appetizers, snacks, and beverages). Reservation needed by Oct. 22. The meeting place rotates between members' homes so call for the address and more information from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., 586-774-2119.

**Oct. 24-30:** Savannah, St. Simons & Jekyll Islands, GA and Beaufort, SC. Join Travel with Nance for \$789. 4 nites Savannah area, and one night enroute each way. Guided Trolley tour of Savannah plus Hop-On/Hop-Off Privileges. See Parris Island, SC, Beaufort. Tour St. Simons Island, tram tour of Jekyll Island. Evening show at Famous Savannah Theatre. Visit S.C. State Museum. 6 breakfasts, 4 dinners. Call 313-535-2921.

### NOVEMBER

**Nov 8-13:** Branson, MO. Join Travel with Nance for \$687. 3 nites hotel in Branson and 2 enroute. 7 Christmas shows including 'Jesus' The Musical at the Sight & Sound Theatre and the Showboat Branson Belle show while cruising on Table Rock Lake. 3 Dinners and 5 breakfasts. Call 313-535-2921

**Nov. 17:** Cornwell's Turkeyville & Marshall. Join Travel with Nance for \$85. Live musical matinee 'Dashing through the Snow' with Turkey Buffet Lunch, Gift Shop, Bakery. Narrated tour of Marshall (drive-by): Honolulu House, National Inn, Governor's Mansion, Capitol Hill School House. Call 313-535-2921.

**Nov. 27:** The Single Way Activities potluck dinner and movie night at 6 p.m. on

Saturday, Nov. 27. Price: \$4 (includes dinner main course and beverages). Each adult should bring a salad, starch or dessert to share with others. Reservation needed by Nov. 26. The meeting place rotates between members' homes so call for the address and more information from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., 586-774-2119.

### DECEMBER

**Dec. 3:** Historic Churches of Detroit. Join travel with Nance for \$60. Tor Historic Trinity Lutheran Church decorated for the Holidays, including Lunch (Chicken Salad Croissant, with chips, pickles, beets and Minestrone Soup, Cake and beverages). Tour three churches: Saint Paul Episcopal (tentative), Sainte Anne Roman Catholic (tentative) and Holy Cross Hungarian Roman Catholic (tentative). Complimentary holiday gift and goodie bag. For all. Call 313-535-2921.

**Dec. 5-11:** Christmas in the Smokies: Seven days six nights, Dec. 5-11, which includes a visit to the Titanic Museum, Admission to Dollywood Theme Park, Tour of the Biltmore House, souvenir gift, etc. and the price is only \$1,179 with double occupancy. For information and to make reservations, contact Mary Ann Spisak at 586-530-6936.

**Dec. 18:** The Single Way Activities Christmas Chocolate Fondue at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 18. Price: \$4 (includes chocolate fondue, snacks, and beverages). Reservation needed by Dec. 17. The meeting place rotates between members' homes so call for the address and more information from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., 586-774-2119.

### MONTHLY EVENTS

■ **New Baltimore Civic Club:** Euchre every Thursday at 36551 Main St. (corner of Blackwell) in New

Baltimore. Sign in at 6:30 p.m., play at 7 p.m. \$10 plus a quarter for each euchre.

■ **Octagon House Sit and Stitch is the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month from 1-4 p.m., 57500 Van Dyke, Washington. For more information, call 586-781-0084.**

■ **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.

■ **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 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 opseniorcenter.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 wom-**

**en:** 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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**August 5, 2003 – July 9, 2012**

Shiloh,

You were always our good little boy. With your pretty big brown eyes. You were our dog for nine wonderful years. You filled our heart and our life with joy and happiness and we loved you so dearly, and we always will. But you were ill and you were sick and you were so tired and you wanted to sleep. So you passed away on us too soon. And we will grieve and we will cry and feel sad too. But we will always remember you. The good times that we had. You will always be with us in our hearts and in our minds. God took you to heaven to hurt no more. May you rest in peace "Our Baby Boy".

Until we are with you again once more.

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## Getting Older

As I'm getting older, I'm losing my friends,  
and I sit here and ponder when my life will end.

I go to their funerals and sit there and cry, but  
I know I will see them in the sweet by and by.  
I do not fear death as I know it will come and  
angels will escort me to my Heavenly Home.

So you see dear friends enjoy life while you may.  
Be good to each other and look forward to each day.  
Life is what you make it be it good or be it bad,  
So go with good as that will make you glad.

Remember each day is a gift, unwrap it with care,  
as we read the good book in our ole' rocking chair.

By Shirley Kolosick  
of Sterling Hgts, MI

## Ok Lord, I'm Here

I have arrived, no more humanity,  
I live in immortality.  
My wings are spreading, my time is now.  
I go forward in the vastness of consciousness,  
To bring light and love to all formality.  
Let the spirit shine radiance within  
The vastness of my being.  
Bringing forth beauty, grace, love and integrity.  
OK LORD, I AM HERE IN ETERNITY

By Alethea Monk Howard  
of Detroit, MI

Do you have a creative side that you would like to share with your community readers? We are looking for original, unpublished poetry. This will be your time to shine in our Poetry Corner. Please keep poems and letters of appreciation to 300 words or less and print clearly. Next Issue will be October 14, 2021.

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Email Poems to: [demke@medianewsgroup.com](mailto:demke@medianewsgroup.com)

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



## People Need People

You cannot live in this big world selfishly alone  
 You need me and I need you; two is better than one  
 God created man and he took the woman from his rib and  
 The two bodies engaged in an intimate design.

Reproduction started and now the world is plenteous.  
 Hold my hand, take me with you, and never let me go. Watch  
 my back when it is turned for just a minute, and I'll look out for  
 you when you can't even see it. Equally yoked with common like-  
 minded characteristics, things tend to work out for our good.

God's manifested goodness extends forever. People need  
 people; and that settles it. Love, Peace, Joy, and prosperity is  
 purposely divine between us. We need each other, our blood is  
 the same color, let's set our house in order. Yes, we can make a  
 difference.

When I am in distress, pray for me, if I don't have a place  
 to stay, open your doors, If I'm hungry, feed me, If I don't have  
 transportation, give me a ride, and if I don't have any money  
 share the wealth; prayers of agreement work. People need  
 People; allow Love to dominate and create.

By Marie Zenon  
 of Clinton Twp, MI

## March Crossword Puzzles

11 March 2021

March 2 Crossword clue:  
 "17-syllable poem"  
 No doubt, that's **haiku!**

March 3rd Crossword clue.  
 Pertinent too, but more so!  
 "Anyone home? (hyph)"

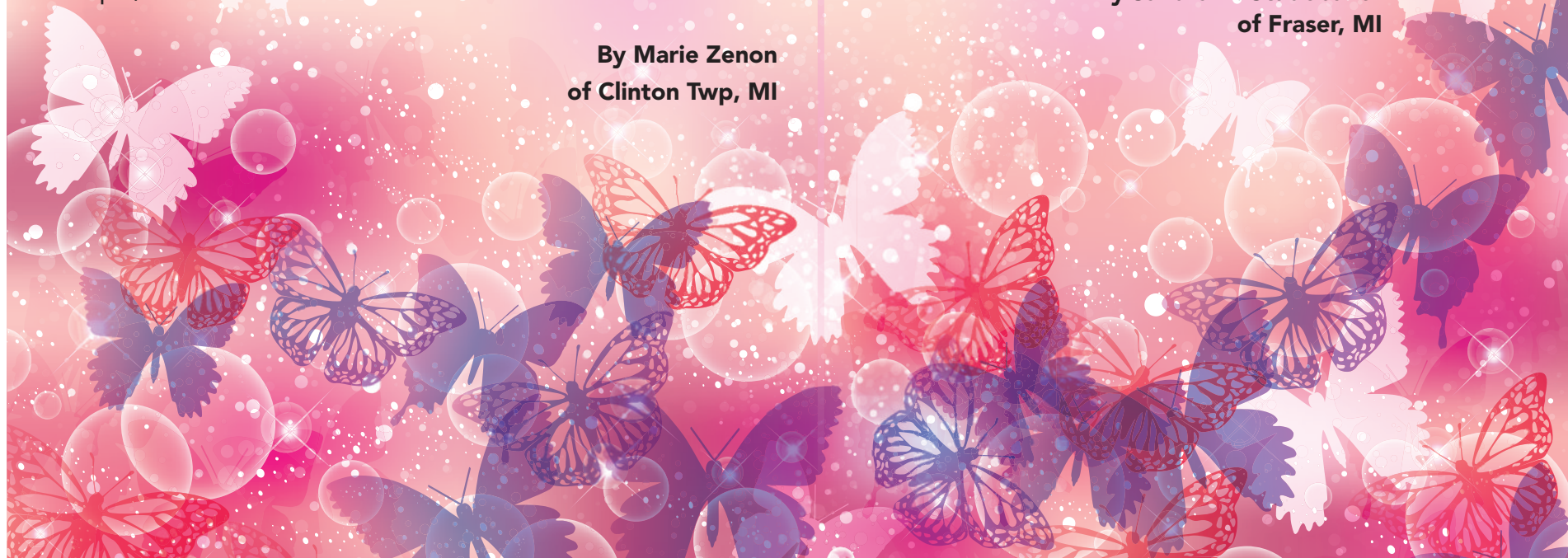
Answer was **yoo-hoo.**  
 Brought forth tears, 'cause Mom's version  
 was **ooh-hoo**, i.e.

Ooh-Hoo & Cowboy Jack  
 Penned March 2020; in  
 June Vitality.

Be alert to those  
 pertinent clues and answers  
 in Crossword Puzzles.

They may bring sadness.  
 But--if a sign from above--  
 they may bring gladness.

By Sandra A. Studebaker  
 of Fraser, MI







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