

July 2022

# Vitality

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

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OPC hosts nonagenarian  
birthday celebration

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Four decades on the  
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**On the cover:** More than 40 local residents over the age of 90 gathered for cake, ice cream, singing and celebration at the Rochester Older Persons' Commission on Tuesday, July 5, for the OPC's first ever nonagenarian birthday party.

TERRY JACOBY — FOR MEDIANEWS GROUP

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### MACOMB COUNTY

- Centerline Towers:** 803310 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:** 1543018 Mile/ Hayes, Clinton Twp, 48038
- Eastpointe City Rec:** 164358 Mile, Eastpointe, 48021
- Fraser Senior Center:** 34935 Hidden Pine, Fraser, 48026
- Tucker Senior Center 26980 Ballard, Harrison Twp, 48045**
- Macomb Senior Center:** 1992523 Mile, Macomb Twp, 48042
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- 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

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- Auburn Hills Senior Center:** 1827 N. Squirrel, Auburn Hills, 48326
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- OPC Rochester:** Leticia Rd, Rochester, 48307
- Troy Senior Center:** 3179 Livernois, Troy, 48084

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## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# Determining when a loved one should give up driving

AAA 1-B provides safe transportation option for seniors in need

By Area Agency on Aging 1-B

Giving up the car keys can be a serious blow.

A car means independence, and it is distressing for many older adults to contemplate life without one, says Roberta Habowski, mobility project advisor at myride2, a transportation concierge service of the Area Agency on Aging 1-B.

"When you get your license at 16, it is your independence. As we age, being able to maintain that license means the same thing — it is your independence," she says.

As we get older, physical as well as cognitive changes may impact the ability to drive safely. If you believe an older loved one is no longer safe to drive, you may need to raise the issue. The conversation requires compassion and sensitivity.

"Like any of us, you don't want to hear what you don't want to hear. I put myself in the other person's shoes ... How would I want to hear that, and would I be receptive?" says Habowski.

She says a good approach is to frame the discussion around your own concerns.

"You should always try talking to them just to get their thoughts on it, always using 'I' statements, like, 'I was reading an article the other day about senior drivers' or 'I've noticed that you seem nervous when you have to drive to x, y or z,'" she says. You might also talk about your own problems with navigating roundabouts and other traffic devices. You could talk about the money saved by not having to buy auto

insurance and gas, suggest they sell the car or allow a grandchild to use it.

"Just have a conversation to get a foot in the door," Habowski says.

But it's not enough to simply lead an older adult to the conclusion that they may want to stop driving; you also need to provide an alternative for them to get to where they need to go. Have a plan to help," Habowski says. Suggest that they call myride2, which can help arrange rides for them, including helping them sign up for Lyft, a private ride service.

Don't be surprised if there is pushback.

There is never going to be one perfect thing that will be the same as having your own car," she says. "You have to be adaptable."

If the older adult seems to listen, let the idea sink in for a week or two.

If the older adult is willing to give up their driving privileges, they should and apply for a state-issued identification card. Check Michigan.gov/SOS for details.

It is also good to note that a conversation, no matter how sensitive, may not have the intended effect. And if the older adult has dementia, you may want to make it impossible to drive. This can be done by removing car keys from the house or even letting air out of the tires, says Habowski. The key is to prevent them from causing harm to themselves or others.

The state of Michigan has two excellent resources to assist older drivers, families, and professionals — Safe Drivers Smart Op-

tions and Michigan's Guide for Aging Drivers and Their Families.

## Request a Formal Driver Evaluation

If you are seriously concerned that an older adult should not be driving, you can file a DA-88 form with the Secretary of State office. This will alert the state that there is a concern and may result in the driver being scheduled for an evaluation of their driving abilities.

The driver will be notified by mail of the decision or need for the reexamination, and any information that may be needed, including medical forms to be completed by the driver and their health care provider. The person will not be informed about who filed the request.

The driver will be scheduled for a free driver assessment reexamination. That includes a written exam, a vision exam, and possibly a road test in the driver's own car.

An analyst will review the records and exam results. The reexamination won't necessarily lead to the revocation of the license, but may lead to restrictions, such as not driving at night, or an order for a driver rehabilitation course.

If the older adult's license is revoked, there is an appeals process.

Failure to appear for the reexamination could lead to a suspension of a driver's license, says Debra Anchak, manager of the Driver Assessment Section of the Michigan Department of State. She adds that age is

DRIVING » PAGE 5



## Brian J. Kurtz

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## MONEY &amp; SECURITY

# Ask the Finance Doctor: How to check if a charity is legitimate

**Q** : Did the IRS make a mid-year adjustment for the mileage deduction in 2022?

**A** : Yes, the IRS increased the mileage deduction starting in July. A taxpayer can deduct 58.5, 18 and 14 cents per mile for business, medical and charity from Jan. 1, 2022 to June 30, 2022. Effective July 1, 2022, the deduction increases by 4 cents per mile for business and medical but charity remains the same.

**Q** : I filed for an extension but I was unable to pay \$6,200 in taxes owed to the IRS. What should I do?

**A** : Any amount owed past the deadline of April 18, 2022 will incur interest and penalties. If you do not do anything, the IRS will send you a letter for a payoff or an installment plan. I recommend that you contact the IRS, explain your situation and work out a payment plan to minimize the IRS fees.

**Q** : An insurance agent is trying to sell me an annuity but I am not comfortable with this investment. What is an annuity?

**A** : If you are uncomfortable with any investment, do not invest. An annuity is a contract between you and the insurance company. A fixed annuity pays a fixed rate of interest for a specific period of time and a variable annuity allows you to select various investments. Annuities are not CD substitutes and are not life insurance policies. Variable annuities are expensive due to the layers of fees (management, administrative, mortality, etc.). If you cancel an annuity early, you will pay a surrender charge. Any gains from an annuity are taxed at ordinary rates and do not receive the favorable long-term capital gains rate.

**Q** : I will be 67 this October and want to start collecting my Social Security benefits. When do I apply to ensure that I receive my first payment in October?

**A** : You need to apply three months before your birthday. Your first payment will be in November since all Social Security benefits are paid in ar-



**Richard Rysiewski**  
Columnist

rearages. I recommend that you use the on-line filing system except for special cases like spousal benefits.

**Q** : My first Social Security check is scheduled to come in July. What date in July should I expect the automatic deposit to appear in my checking account?

**A** : The date will depend on your birthday. Anybody born between the 1st and the 10th of the month is paid on the 2nd Wednesday of the month; anybody born between the 11th and the 20th is paid on the 3rd Wednesday of the month; and anybody born after the 20th is paid on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

**Q** : My uncle donates to several charities and I am concerned that some are bogus. How do I check if the charity is legitimate?

**A** : You can check the IRS site for legitimate tax-exempt charities. There are several bogus charities that prey on human emotion and kindness. A bogus charity can have a similar name

to a real charity and frequently, will pop up after a natural disaster to solicit donations. An excellent rule is to never give money or credit card information to an unsolicited caller.

**Q** : I need a copy of my 2020 tax return to complete a mortgage application. Can I get copies of my tax return from the IRS?

**A** : The IRS will send you a copy of your tax return but will charge you \$43 for each tax year. A better way is to request a tax return transcript which is free and is available online or by mail.

**Q** : The Detroit metropolitan area is experiencing IRS phone scams. How can a taxpayer recognize an IRS phone scam?

**A** : Several variations of IRS phone scams exist but the tell-tale signs are an aggressive phone call from a "supposed" IRS agent that is demanding an immediate payment via credit cards, gift cards or wire transfers. Threats of arrest, deportation, and loss of driver's license are common. The IRS will never demand payment over the phone. If you re-

ceive one of these phone calls, hang up. The legitimate IRS always communicates by mail.

**Q** : What is a Health Savings Account (HSA)? Is it similar to an IRA?

**A** : An HSA is a tax-advantaged medical savings account available to taxpayers who are enrolled in a high-deductible health plan. For 2022, the maximum contribution is \$3,650 (single coverage) and \$7,300 (family coverage) plus a \$1,000 catch-up if you are age 55 or older. The contributions are tax deductible and the earnings are tax-deferred. The distributions will not be taxed if used for medical expenses. An HSA is similar to an IRA but is better because the HSA is completely tax-free if used for medical expenses. The HSA is the only savings account that is tax-deductible for the contributions, tax-deferred for the earnings and tax-free for the distributions.

**Q** : I am 62 years old and my ex-spouse passed away two months ago. Can I receive survivor benefits even though I remarried one year ago?

## Helpful websites:

- [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov)
- [michigan.gov/incometax](https://www.michigan.gov/incometax)

**A** : As long as you were married 10 years to your ex-spouse and did not remarry before age 60 (age 50 if disabled), you will qualify for survivor benefits based on your ex-spouse's work record.

Anyone who is entitled to their own benefits and the survivor benefits can select one benefit first and then switch later to maximize the benefit.

Benefits based on your work record will earn delayed retirement credits at 8% per year after your full retirement age (FRA) of 67.

Survivor benefits do not earn any delayed retirement credits. If the benefits are taken before your FRA, the benefits will be reduced.

*Richard Rysiewski, a Certified Financial Planner®, welcomes all questions on tax and financial matters. Please send to Richard Rysiewski, Financial Doctor, 3001 Hartford Lane, Shelby Twp., MI 48316 or call (248) 651-7710.*



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**Deadline is July 29, 2022**

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PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

As we get older, physical as well as cognitive changes may impact our ability to drive safely.

## Driving

FROM PAGE 3

not specifically considered in the request for a driver evaluation

### Driving, But Not Perfectly

Say your older loved one is of sound mind and body and appears to be a safe driver. That's good. Still, you may want to urge them to talk to their doctor about the effects of their medication on driving and about their health in general. If they are hearing — or sight-impaired, it's important to make sure they have hearing aids and corrective lenses in order to drive. If they have a chronic disease like diabetes, it's important that their blood sugar is controlled.

You may want to encourage them to pull over if they are anxious and to call you in case they need your help.

You might also look into assistive devices for drivers that make getting in and out of the car, steering and using the pedals easier. AARP offers virtual workshops that help drivers modify their car to fit them, teach new driving techniques and help older drivers understand new car technology.

Some local hospitals, including Henry Ford Wyandotte and Beaumont, offer driver assessments and

### For Your Information

Here are some signs that an older driver may be having difficulty driving:

- Scrapes, dings or dents on the vehicle or garage
- Trouble navigating
- Near misses
- Confusion, road rage, anxiety while driving
- Routinely getting lost
- Inconsistent acceleration
- Inability to recognize the right of way or keep track of speed limits
- Car accidents
- Difficulty turning when backing up
- Other drivers honking horns
- Confusing the brake and gas pedals
- Difficulty maintaining his/her travel lane
- Forgetting to signal when turning or switching lanes
- Failure to yield or stop at traffic signals or signs

Sources: *myride2*; *AginginPlace.org*; *AARP*; *Michigan.gov*; *Michigan Department of State*.

driver rehabilitation, but the cost can run into the hundreds of dollars.

### Plan for Driving Retirement

Patricia Heiler, the Michigan Department of State's aging driver program coordinator, says that even if your older loved one is a competent driver, it's a good idea to have a plan in place for 'driving retirement.'

"Similarly to planning for financial retirement, it's a process," she says. "Families create a contract early on that has expectations. I encourage families to have a conversation, and not just once, and to ride often with their loved one if they can." Heiler believes every-

one should keep their driving skills sharp with more driver safety training, testing and reexamination — regardless of their age. She encourages everyone to take advantage of the AARP safe-driver programs.

Our effort is to maintain mobility. It doesn't come down to a specific age; it happens differently for everybody as we age."

Call *myride2* at 1-855-697-4332 or visit *myride2.com* to learn about transportation options for yourself or your loved one and to find older driver resources. A mobility specialist can also help you to fill out a form that requests a driver assessment through Michigan Secretary of State office.



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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# Four decades on the Pacific Crest Trail



COURTESY MOUNTAINEERS BOOKS

Howard Shapiro (left) and Rees Hughes (right) have been hiking the Pacific Crest Trail together and separately for more than 40 years.

**By Mark Ray**

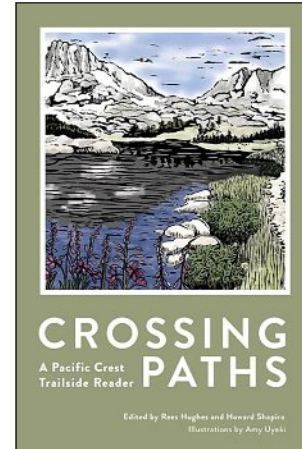
*For Next Avenue*

In the summer of 1981, Rees Hughes and Howard Shapiro, along with mutual friend Jim Peacock, set out to hike the section of the Pacific Crest Trail that runs through Washington state. It was their first encounter with the 2,650-mile PCT, which stretches from Mexico to Canada. Before kids and without major career responsibilities, taking time for a long hike was easy, even if the actual hiking was harder than they'd expected.

"We were just about finished with that hike — we'd been out for about a month — and we ran into these gentlemen who were ... probably in their mid to late sixties, maybe seventies," Shapiro says. The older men talked about how they tried to complete a section of the PCT each summer, which sounded pretty appealing to the younger hikers.

"They were going south, and we were going north," Shapiro says. "And as they walked away, we kind of all three looked at each other and said, 'We want to be those guys.'"

Four decades later, they are. In between raising families and building careers,



COURTESY MOUNTAINEERS BOOKS

"Crossing Paths: A Pacific Crest Trail Reader" tells the story of the PCT from the perspective of a diverse group of hiker-writers.

the men continued hiking the PCT together and separately, along with other trails around the world. Hughes finished his last section of the PCT in 2016 — he jokes that he broke a speed record — while Shapiro hiked his last mile in 2019.

"I started with Rees and Jim, and I finished with Rees and Jim," Shapiro says. "They both accompanied me on my last bit, and that was pretty profound."

Hughes had a similar ending. "I finished it a few years earlier, and Howard accompanied me on the fi-

nal stretch," he says. "And Jim had come with me earlier that same year to do one last section that I had to do down in the desert."

Recently, Hughes and Shapiro have been reflecting on their years on the PCT, not because they've hung up their hiking boots — far from it — but because they've been serving as co-editors of "Crossing Paths: A Pacific Crest Trail Reader."

Published in April by Mountaineers Books, the book tells the story of the PCT from the perspective of a diverse group of hiker-writers. Contributors include grizzled veterans like Hughes and Shapiro, but also newbies like Crystal Gail, a Black woman who started the trail as a solo hiker in 2016.

Here are Hughes' and Shapiro's thoughts on hiking the PCT in your 60s and beyond.

## Do older people commonly hike the PCT?

Hughes: There are older people than we are out on the trail. Now, not lots, but there are certainly ample numbers. It's sort of a bifurcated grouping: people before they have kids, who are

TRAIL » PAGE 7

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## Trail

FROM PAGE 6

young, early in their careers or unemployed, and people like us. It's people that are in the middle that struggle to find the time and the freedom to be able to get out on the trail.

### How challenging is the PCT in general?

Hughes: The PCT in general is a well-made trail. Especially the newer sections have been built to some specifications where there are sometimes very frustratingly long contours. (These make climbs less steep.) But there are lots of places where there's dicey footing, there are river crossings, there's snow and ice that adds a coefficient of difficulty to the trail.

Shapiro: One of the biggest challenges is working around fire. You're setting out with the idea that you're going to leave the (Mexican) border in March or April and you're going to get to Canada by late September or early October. But all that can be derailed by fire—and has been more and more over the last seven or eight years.

### How challenging is it for older hikers?

Hughes: Physically, I don't think that's the issue for most of us. I think the

issue is more between our ears, about what we convince ourselves that we can or can't do.

Shapiro: Everybody's older, you know? The chair is older, the cat is older, you're older, we're all older. But if we say we're old, that's self-limiting. I don't think that hiking is a young person's game necessarily — doesn't have to be — but it's easy to limit yourself.

### And what do older hikers bring to the experience?

Hughes: People who are older, I think, are more humbled in general by life, enough that we don't go into it with that sort of unrestrained overconfidence that I think we have sometimes seen on the trail.

### Much has changed on the PCT in 40-plus years. What stands out to you?

Shapiro: We've noticed the increase in numbers of people, and that's been mostly associated, or has a link to, Cheryl Strayed's book (the New York Times bestseller "Wild," which became a movie starring Reese Witherspoon). There are times when you meet up with a cluster of thru-hikers, so you really notice how many people are out there.

Hughes: For years and years, we never saw anybody but white guys on the trail, and I think one of the won-

derful things about the slow evolution of who's out on the trail is that there are a lot more women and increasing numbers of people of color. I think that that is one of the things that is really important: to make the wilderness a welcoming place for everybody. It's just not our place; it's everybody's place.

### Do you ever pine for the good old days?

Shapiro: I think we're just making good old days all the time, you know? When we go out together, it's very celebratory, in my view, and so we're sort of making good old days.

### How can older adults get started with backpacking?

Hughes: I think you start with walking in general, and then I think you start with an overnight or a weekend backpacking trip in a place that's pretty benign. It's like so many things. You take the foundation and you build on it, and you learn every time.

Shapiro: I think fun has to be a key factor in it. If you can build it for some fun, then you're — without making a pun — a step ahead.

*Mark Ray is a freelance writer who has written for Scouting, Eagles' Call, Presbyterians Today, Kentucky Homes & Gardens and other publications.*



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Hiking and backpacking can be a great way for older adults to stay active, strengthen friendships and make new connections while on the trail.



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## MONEY & SECURITY

# Medicare fraud and abuse: How seniors can protect themselves

When people steal from Medicare, it hurts us all and is big business for criminals.

June 2022 marked the 25th anniversary of the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program. To commemorate this anniversary, the SMP created the national week focused on Medicare fraud prevention.

### How bad is Medicare fraud and abuse?

Medicare loses an estimated \$60 billion each year due to fraud, errors, and abuse. Every day, issues related to these problems affect people across the country, often costing them money, time, and well-being. Medicare-related errors contribute to this annual loss even though errors can be honest health care billing mistakes. However, a pattern of errors committed by a physician or provider could be considered a red flag of potential fraud or abuse if not corrected.

Some common examples of fraud or abuse:

- Charging for services or supplies that were not provided
- Misrepresenting a diagnosis, a person's identity, the service provided, or other facts to justify payment
- Prescribing or providing excessive or unnecessary tests and services

### How can we prevent Medicare fraud?

The most effective way to stop fraud from occurring is to prevent it in the first place. Educating yourself and your loved ones on how to prevent Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse is the best place to start.

Everyone plays a part in the fight against fraud:

- Medicare beneficiaries

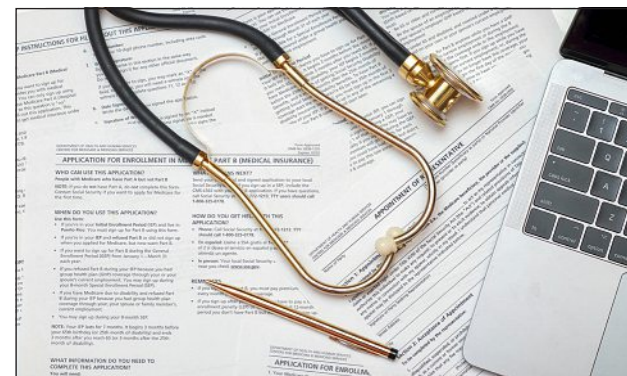


PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Medicare fraud causes \$60 billion annually in losses due to fraud, errors, and abuse.

can monitor their insurance statements to make sure products and services received match what is on the statements. They can request free My Health Care Trackers from their local SMP. ▪ Caregivers can help by being on the lookout for items such as durable medical equipment (like boxes of knee braces) lying around the house that may have been shipped to the beneficiary without their or their doctor's approval. They can remind their client or loved one to never give out their Medicare number or other personal information over the phone. ▪ Families can help by talking to their loved ones about protecting their Medicare number just as they would a credit card number. They can help their loved ones create a Medicare.gov account to access their Medicare statements online or remind them to open and review them when they come in the mail. They can also register their phone number on "do not call" lists and go to [optoutprescreen.com](http://optoutprescreen.com) to opt out of mailings. ▪ Partners and professionals can help by sharing SMP information on social media, referring clients and consumers to SMP, and invit-

ing SMP to speak during a shared event. ▪ Health care providers can help by talking to patients about health care-related scams such as those related to durable medical equipment and genetic testing schemes. They can remind patients that products and services should only be ordered by physicians they regularly see. Needed medical items should never be ordered through TV ads or unsolicited calls. ▪ Community members can help by looking out for older neighbors. When in public, they can be aware of older individuals purchasing gift cards in large amounts. They can encourage those they know to talk to a trusted source about their Medicare questions and tell neighbors about the most recent Medicare scams. They can even consider volunteering with the local SMP.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) also has a Reporting Medicare Fraud & Abuse webpage with helpful fraud prevention tips and examples of the most common types of Medicare fraud and abuse.

*Story courtesy of the National Council on Aging*



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## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# 7 behavioral health tips for older adults

Older adults experiencing a behavioral health issue such as anxiety or depression may be embarrassed and think they simply need to “pull themselves up by their bootstraps,” but helping them seek help can empower them to live their best lives, according to experts.

“Everyone is different, but there are tools for better health, including therapy, medication and self-care,” said Dr. Lindsay Evans-Mitchell, medical director for behavioral health for Cigna Medicare Advantage.

Behavioral health disorders affect one in five adults over 55. Older men have the highest suicide rate of any age group or gender. Among men who are 75 and older, the suicide rate is 40.2 per 100,000 — almost triple the overall rate.

The most common behavioral health disorder in older adults is dementia, and its incidence is growing as the Baby Boomer generation ages. Experts project that more than 9 million Americans 65 years or older will have dementia by 2030. Anxiety disorders and mood disorders are also common among older people.

Dealing with a behavioral health issue? These self-care tips can help:

## 1. Find a Provider

“Cognitive disorders, such as dementia and mood disorders, often look the same,” Dr. Evans-Mitchell said. “Only a trained professional can make an accurate diagnosis.” For help finding a provider, reach out to your primary care physician or health plan, such as Medicare or Medicare Advantage. Also consider virtual therapy. It’s easy to schedule and offers the convenience of seeing a therapist without leaving home.

## 2. Nurture Yourself

Good nutrition feeds the body and mind. If you have questions about nutrition for older adults, consult your physician or a registered dietitian. Additionally, drink water throughout the day. “Dehydration can worsen cognitive issues,” Dr. Evans-Mitchell said.

## 3. Sleep Well

Like all adults, older people need seven to nine hours of sleep nightly. Dr. Evans-

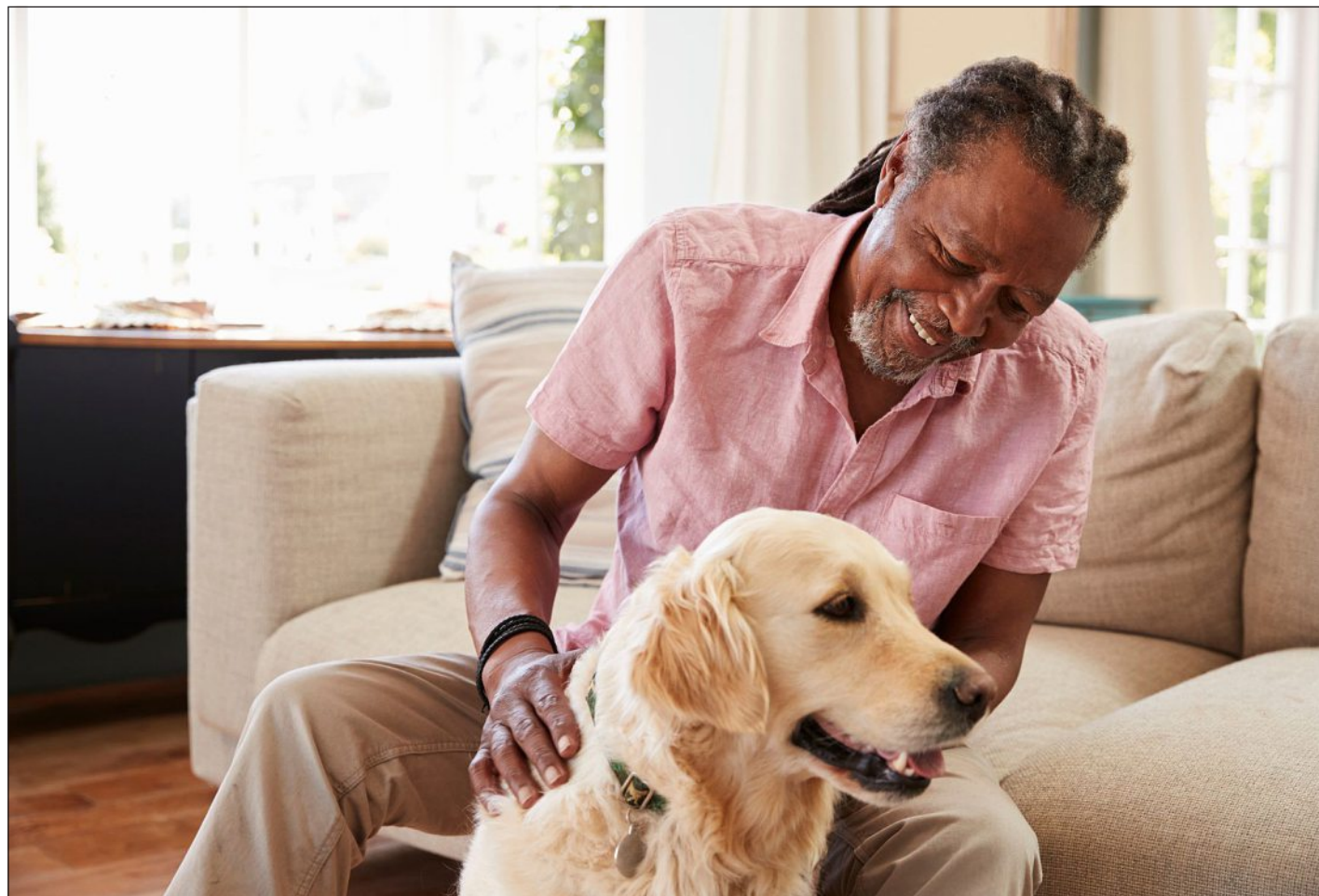


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Behavioral health disorders affect one in five adults over 55.

Mitchell noted that older people’s tendency to go to bed early, wake up early, and nap throughout the day can disrupt healthy sleep cycles and limit rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, potentially contributing to behavioral health issues.

## 4. Exercise

Even moderate exercise can improve mental and physical health. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans describes benefits such as improvements in brain health, better cognitive function, and reduced risk of anxiety and mood disorders. People who exercise also tend to sleep better. Having trouble getting started? Some Medicare Advantage plans include a fitness benefit, which can pay for a gym membership or provide at-home fit-

ness tools.

## 5. Head Outside

Being outside has numerous benefits, including vitamin D absorption needed for cognitive health. Additionally, research has shown that chemicals released from trees can stimulate brain functions. Don’t forget the sunscreen though, as skin cancer is most common in people older than 65.

## 6. Buddy Up

Papa, available through some Cigna Medicare Advantage plans, connects older adults and their families with “Papa Pals” for companionship and support. “Papa Pals” can provide transportation, help with everyday tasks — or simply be a friend, do-

ing activities like watching movies or playing games.

## 7. Parent a Pet

Caring for pets generates positive emotions and can reduce anxiety. Just petting a dog has been shown to lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol, and pets provide a bond that can elevate two feel-good brain chemicals: oxytocin and dopamine. Dogs also encourage people to exercise outdoors.

“Behavioral health issues can be complex and confusing to navigate, but taking positive actions can be empowering,” Dr. Evans-Mitchell said. “It’s never too late to make a new start.”

*Story courtesy of StatePoint Media*

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## WORK &amp; PURPOSE

# At 80, Paul McCartney shows us how to age gracefully

By Jon Friedman

For *Next Avenue*

Having just celebrated his 80th birthday, Paul McCartney is still “The Cute Beatle” — and so much more.

The nickname-happy media gave McCartney that label around the time that “A Hard Day’s Night” came out, at the dawn of worldwide Beatlemania in 1964. McCartney has allowed himself to look his age with great dignity. He lets his generous amount of gray hair shine through. There may now be a bit of a puddle around his mid-section — not that most guys wouldn’t love to trade physiques with him — but big deal. What McCartney radiates will always allow him to look on the sunny side.

Do you want to know a secret? Paul McCartney acts his age. Happily!

Yes, a cynic would say dismissively, “Of course, he always looks happy. He’s worth a billion dollars!” As the Beatles once sang, on “She’s Leaving Home,” “fun is the one thing that money can’t buy.”

McCartney remains philosophical. Remember the sentiment that he expressed on the cover of his first solo album, “McCartney,” in 1970, which contained a photograph of a spilled bowl of cherries: Life is not always a bowl of cherries.

Since those heady days, the man who went on to give us “Yesterday,” “Eleanor Rigby,” “Penny Lane,” “Hey Jude,” and “Let It Be,” not to mention a slew of hits as a solo recording artist, has had to cope with his share of setbacks, heartbreaks and losses.

Somehow, though, like a fine watch, he keeps right on ticking. Like a gutsy prize fighter, he rises off the canvas. How does McCart-

ney stay so productive and upbeat? And what lessons can we mere mortals learn from his shining example?

## Getting Better

McCartney has exhibited his hopeful nature in public. During an interview he did on Howard Stern’s radio show on Jan. 14, 2009, Stern asked him how he had been coping with the 2001 death of band mate George Harrison and McCartney answered philosophically.

“How are you doing with everyone dying? Your mom and dad. I’ve lost both my parents. I lost John (Lennon), lost George, lost (first wife) Linda. It’s very tough. You want them back. You want them back all the time. But I think in the end, you do what I do, what most people do: just remember the great stuff.”

Even beyond McCartney’s grieving, he had his mind on coping with the state of the world, which was in a worrisome place at the time of the conversation with Stern. The global economy had tanked, and our morale was low.

Stern: “Are you depressed by the world’s situation now?”

McCartney: “I’m not exactly happy about it. But I’m an optimist. You’ve been around a little while, you’ve seen stuff. You’ve seen Vietnam. You’ve seen Nixon. 9/11.”

McCartney has always been an optimist — an attitude and life philosophy that has served him well. Does he think the glass is half-full? Just look at his songwriting credits.

As a songwriter in the Beatles, he was the one who sang “it’s getting better all the time” even as his songwriting partner, John Lennon, answered with a smirk in the same song, “It couldn’t get much worse”.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PBS GREAT PERFORMANCES

Having just celebrated his 80th birthday, Paul McCartney is still “The Cute Beatle” — and so much more.

McCartney sang, “We can work it out.”

When the Beatles were in the process of breaking apart and McCartney was distressed, he solved his existential crises by counseling, “Let it be.”

He urged us to “Take a sad song and make it better.”

He believes in yesterday. You say goodbye. Paul McCartney says hello.

## The Long and Winding Road

The Beatles broke up in 1970, ending the reign of what their music publisher Dick James once called “the perfect entertainment machine.” After privately despairing the termination of his brilliant collaboration with John Lennon, George Harrison and Ringo Starr, McCartney put the pieces together and struck out on his own — and, at first, anyway, strike out he did.

Music critics savagely panned his first few post-Beatles albums. On a 1971 song called “How Do You Sleep?” Lennon dismissed McCartney’s new music as “Muzak to my ears.” Coming from Lennon, McCartney’s boyhood his idol and

ex-partner, those unusually harsh words especially stung.

McCartney released the worldwide hit “Band on the Run” in 1973 and got back on his feet, creatively. But in 1998, Linda, his beloved wife of 29 years, died of breast cancer, the same disease that had claimed his mother, Mary, when Paul was 14 years old.

A second marriage in 2003 to British activist Heather Mills, 26 years his junior, proved explosive fodder for worldwide tabloids and ended after only five years. Happily, he and his third wife, Nancy Shevell, a New York business executive, continue to go strong after a decade.

As he navigates his own long and winding road, Sir Paul — born James Paul McCartney to a working-class family in Liverpool, England during the height of World War II — has personified a remarkable capacity for aging gracefully.

He has been utterly unselfconscious about embracing — even celebrating — his advancing years. When you remember that McCartney remains one of the world’s most photographed and identifiable people, this

disdain for looking falsely youthful makes him a wonderful role model.

## A Day in the Life

McCartney has sported a head of natural-looking gray hair for so long that it seems hard to think of him in his Beatle days. He is comfortable looking his age and not losing any sleep about whether he will keep up with his fellow rock stars, who seem willing to strike a deal with the devil just to look young again.

But McCartney’s hair color is merely a cosmetic decision. Far more crucially, he has kept up a demanding workload. Proclaimed in the media to be a billionaire, McCartney clearly doesn’t make new music or go on tour or stay in the public eye for the money.

Despite any aches and pains that come naturally in one’s twilight, Paul McCartney has never lost his love for the work he does so well.

I’ve never met McCartney. But I have gained a sort of understanding about the rock and roll mentality and aging. I wrote a book about McCartney admirer and peer, Bob Dylan, in 2012 called “Forget About Today: Bob Dylan’s Genius for (Re) Invention.”

In the course of my research, I interviewed many people who were or continue to be close to Dylan. I asked a family member, “Why does he still tour so much?”

This is the same point you could raise to McCartney, Pete Townshend and Roger Daltrey of The Who as well as the likes of Elton John, not to mention Mick Jagger, Keith Richards and Ronnie Wood of the Rolling Stones — all men who have been making music for more than five decades and have happily stayed prolific

over the years.

When I asked the Dylan insider that key question, he nodded thoughtfully, as if underscoring the public’s curiosity to learn the holy grail of how a rock star ages.

He said: “He likes to work. Touring helps him stay in good physical shape. He gets to travel around the world and see old friends. He loves singing the songs he wrote, which still mean so much to him.” At that point, my interview subject smiled and added: “And yeah, he likes the money.”

Paul McCartney, it appears, likes it all. He enjoys reminiscing in interviews. You’d never catch him in a “Sunset Boulevard” kind of weakness, when he yearned for the good old days. He respects what he has accomplished but won’t allow himself to get stuck in the past.

While the world was be-moaning life during the global pandemic, McCartney got back to work. He couldn’t tour, of course. Instead, he rolled up his sleeves and recorded an album of new songs.

Nothing seems to keep Paul McCartney down for long.

His life philosophies enable him to turn the page time after time. He knows his place in the world. We should all be so lucky to have this gift of self-awareness.

Yes, he once sang a song called “I’m Down.” But he also sang, “It really doesn’t matter if I’m wrong — I’m right. Where I belong, I’m right.”

*Jon Friedman is the author of the ebook “Goo Goo Ga Joob: Why I Am the Walrus is the Beatles’ Greatest Song” (2014, Miniver Press), and will be teaching The Beatles: Music and Legacy in the 2022 spring semester at Stony Brook University.*

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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# OPC hosts first ever nonagenarian birthday celebration

By Terry Jacoby

For MediaNews Group

*“For there is assuredly nothing dearer to a man than wisdom, and though age takes away all else, it undoubtedly brings us that.”*

— Roman philosopher Cicero

Wisdom and age are often linked for a reason, and among the famous sayings, such as “count your age by friends, not years,” and “count your life by smiles, not tears,” were all on jubilant display at the Older Persons’ Commission (OPC) facility in Rochester on July 5. There were plenty of friends, smiles, hugs and memories as the OPC hosted its first ever Nonagenarian Birthday celebration.

And what an amazing turnout it was as more than 40 local residents over the age of 90 gathered for cake, ice cream, singing and celebration. OPC Executive Director Renee Cortright helped create the event and was beaming throughout as she met each guest with a red rose and huge smile.

“We’re so pleased to take this moment to celebrate these remarkable seniors — all nonagenarians, aged 90 plus, and learn their secrets to longevity,” Cortright said.

“It’s truly humbling to hear from so many of them about the power of activity, socialization and positivity, and the role that the OPC has played into keeping them active and engaged.” OPC has 135 active nonagenarians within their membership.

After some cake and ice cream and a performance by a group of OPC singers — including a wonderful rendition of “Sweet Caroline” sung by Ray, 84 — some



PHOTO BY TERRY JACOBY — FOR MEDIANEWS GROUP

The Rochester Older Persons’ Commission held a special birthday celebration for more than 40 of its nonagenarian residents on Tuesday, July 5.

of the guests offered their “wisdom” and shared their secrets for not only longevity but happiness.

Thelma, 97, suggests people need to stay active regardless of how many candles are on the cake.

“I believe in exercise and I started swimming when I was 1 year old,” she said. “I started doing aerobics at OPC in 1988 and still come here to exercise, and I read and listen to books and I just love everyone here.”

Yeah, it was one of those magical events. Bob, 95,

and a member of the singing group, was quick to echo the overall sentiment in the room and sing about just how amazing OPC is and how it plays such a vital role in keeping people active, involved and happy.

“You get your monthly newsletter and sit down and plan out what you are going to do for the next month,” he said.

“Then all you need to do is sign up or call up and enjoy the place.” Glenn, 90,

said people should come to OPC and “do a little walk-

ing, a little talking and a lot of laughing.”

Toni, who is 97, says “I’ve exercised almost every day of my life, eat a balanced diet and still regularly play bridge.” Wayne, 97, said, “It’s important to have a good sense of humor.”

Jean, 91, said: “It’s always important to stay positive because there is always a brighter side.” Other advice included making younger friends, volunteering and “use it or lose it.”

Paul Landsberg was the oldest in the room at

99 years old. He served in World War II in the South Pacific and with the Occupation Forces in Japan, and still proudly talks about his time serving his country and how that experience led him to a lifelong career.

“I served on a submarine and it was a real education,” said Landsberg, wearing his U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II hat. “I was one of four people out of 94 in the class chosen for sub duty. I learned how being in the sub changed the disposition over everybody and

as soon as we hit fresh air a completely different attitude took over.”

Landsberg — who said that what he learned in the military he used throughout his life in the heating, cooling and air conditioning business — now has 24 great grandchildren and 20 grandchildren.

*For more information about upcoming activities and events at the Rochester Older Persons’ Commission, visit [opcseniorcenter.org](http://opcseniorcenter.org).*



PHOTOS BY TERRY JACOBY — FOR MEDIANEWS GROUP

**Above and below:** Guests were all smiles at the OPC's birthday party for its 90 and older members on Tuesday.

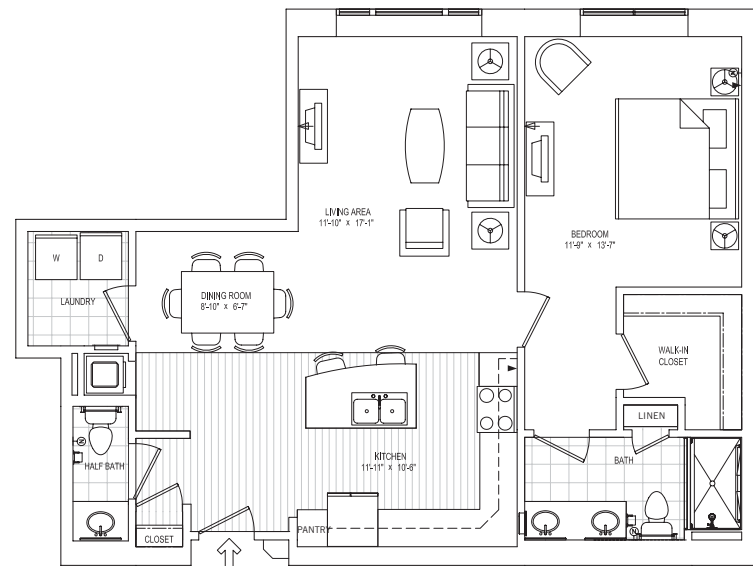


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## WORK &amp; PURPOSE

# Using social media to market startup businesses

By Leslie Hunter-Gadsden

For Next Avenue

The means of marketing a business comes in many forms but with the number of times a day that prospective customers check their social media platforms, it is a good idea for small business owners to at least explore using social media to spread the word about their startup. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, and others offer business pages as an option to share content, beyond the realm of personal pages.

As with any marketing tool, there are do's and don'ts associated with social media; being unsure about which is which is why Patricia Wynn, owner of lifestyle assistant company Patricia Services LLC in Hillsborough, North Carolina, has yet to jump on the social media marketing bandwagon.

Wynn, 53, currently has an online presence for her company with a website through Vistaprint and a listing on Care.com. "I haven't taken the time yet to look deeply into setting up business pages on social media," Wynn said, "but when I get some free time, I will look at starting with the Facebook business page option. There is also an app called Nextdoor.com for local networking that I want to learn more about."

Wynn has a personal Facebook page and a LinkedIn profile, and a friend has posted links on Facebook to this series of Next Avenue articles about Wynn and her new business.

"If you Google me, my website for Patricia Services LLC comes up, and I updated the information on my LinkedIn profile when



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEXT AVENUE

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other platforms can connect you directly to people already interested in what you offer.

I opened my business in 2021," Wynn said.

Kimberly A. Eddleston, the Schulze Distinguished Professor of Entrepreneurship in the D'Amore-McKim School of Business at Northeastern University in Boston, said social media is a good tool for small businesses to stay "top of mind" with customers.

"Social media is a great way to stay relevant," she said. "It should be used as a strategic marketing tool ... to establish a consistent image, which also helps you build legitimacy and credibility," she said.

Eddleston, a senior editor of the Entrepreneur and Innovation Exchange (EIX), which is a funder of Next Avenue, said one big mistake that entrepreneurs should not make on social media is to "mix personal and business information."

She added, "If you have a business, don't put pictures of your kids and pets on a business Facebook page, for example. It's a place to include special promotions that your startup may be running or where you can show how you are contributing to the community."

Wynn, who provides her

clients with housecleaning, cooking, running errands and caregiving through her lifestyle assistant company, would want a social media account for her startup to "bring me more clients, business, and contacts with other local businesses that I could network with."

She knows that she must be cautious when deciding what to post on a business-related page. "With social media, you have to be careful with how you use it," she said. "Make sure that you aren't posting anything that could harm your business."

## Post About Your Business, Not Your Politics

Eddleston agrees that a business page on social media should be a source of consistently communicating with potential customers and offering inspiration rather than bombarding the market.

"Each industry is different, but you need to stay relevant," she said. "A small restaurant, for example, might put recipes on their page, because that relates to their business."

"It is important to not get involved in posting on sensitive topics, like politics, because you are going to alienate a portion of your customer base. Any negative stance is going to hurt you. It's always better to be supporting something," said Eddleston. "I would suggest if you enjoy debating political topics, perhaps use an anonymous personal social media account."

According to a 2021 article published by the Forbes Business Council, there are three main ways that social media platforms can assist startups. First, it can help small businesses generate brand awareness and spread information about the services they offer, potentially reaching millions of people quickly and efficiently. Second, it can direct traffic to a startup's website. Third, it can be used to directly market products and services and help entrepreneurs to target their prime audience.

Social media platforms, noted the Forbes article, provide small businesses with an opportunity to grow and engage with a cohesive group of present and future customers.

## Focus on Local Efforts

As startups develop a social media presence, Eddleston said they must remember that they're "trying to establish themselves as a credible, consistent, trustworthy business." That includes having the colors and fonts in their social media profile be similar to what they use on their website and highlighting any programs they've been involved in that support the community.

"Nowadays people feel good when they are supporting a business that is showing social responsibility," Eddleston added. "If your business has supported anything from a local school sports team to minorities in S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering and math) to women in engineering, put that on your social media page. If your business has been featured in the press for involvement in any community outreach programs, post that on your social media page also."

As she considers the best way to develop her own small business social media page, Wynn has had the benefit of seeing one of her clients design a page.

"I do some cleaning for Katherine and Mark Bland, and Mark has a tennis club," she said. "He has shown me his Facebook business page for the club, and I've shared with him some tips on keeping the club clean according to Board of Health requirements."

For entrepreneurs like Wynn, once decisions have been made on which social media platforms they want to use and what content they want to post on their page, the next big decision is figuring out how often they should post.

The answer to that ques-

tion depends on which platform is being used and what message a business wants to share with its audience. There is going to be some trial and error, but remember, startups can use the free analytics tools that are integrated into most social media platforms, which will help them to measure the engagement they are getting on posts.

## Need Help Posting Regularly? There's an App for That

According to MeetEdgar.com, a social media scheduling application that costs companies about \$50 a month to use, small businesses might want to schedule daily Facebook and Instagram updates on stories or posts, while making updates on LinkedIn once or twice a week, for example.

Entrepreneurs can schedule posts live themselves, or pay a fee to have a social media management app such as Buffer, Hootsuite, Sendible and SocialPilot, among others, simplify the process of creating and scheduling posts.

These tools range in price from \$15 to \$100 or more per month for small businesses, but some have free versions and several offer free trials.

With social media, consistency is the key, noted Eddleston. "You don't want to start something and then have it go dormant," she said. "If there's no engagement, you have to wonder what you are doing. Whatever you decide to do should be strategic."

*Leslie Hunter-Gadsden is a journalist and educator with over 25 years experience writing for print and online publications.*



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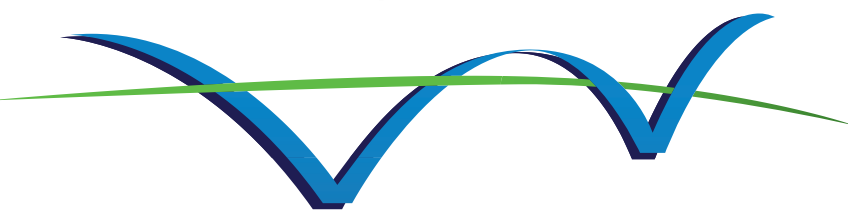
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**Q:** I am going to be putting an offer on a condo. I understand that I have to give a deposit with the offer. Is there a certain amount that it has to be?

**A:** This question comes up for both Buyers and Sellers and there are several moving pieces to this answer. In the State of Michigan, Real Estate Law does not require an Earnest Money Deposit for a Real Estate Purchase Agreement to be valid. However, what is normal practice is for a Buyer to give an Earnest Money Deposit with the offer that gets applied to what funds the Buyer has to bring to closing. The reasoning for this is so Buyers don't just put offers in on properties

and walk away for no good reason. If the Seller is accepting an offer and taking the property off the market in good faith, they want protection that the Buyer is serious. Typically, Purchase Agreements are subject to contingencies such as; home inspections and unless it's a cash sale, mortgage approval which includes an appraisal.

Now there are reasons when a Buyer is entitled to get their deposit back after an offer is accepted which includes; a dissatisfactory home inspection that can't be resolved, an appraisal below the agreed upon sales price that can't be worked out between Buyer



**Steve Meyers**  
Columnist

and Seller, or a mortgage problem. If all the contingencies have been satisfied and you're just waiting for closing and the Buyer reads their horoscope two days before closing and it says don't buy a house on a

street named after a tree (the house is on Ash Street) and that's their reason for backing out, then the Buyer is going to forfeit their Earnest Money Deposit. As far as the dollar amount of the Earnest Money Deposit goes, that fluctuates with the sales price, type of financing or if it's a cash sale. Normally it's at least \$1,000 on the low end. Your realtor will guide you through this.

**Q:** I am getting re-married. My fiancée and I are going to buy a condominium. My niece said we should watch how our names are listed on the property in case something happens to one of us. I'm not sure what this is all about.

**A:** What your niece might be referring to is how you are going to hold title to the property. Normally in residential properties there are two ways to hold title.

The first is "Joint Tenancy." Joint tenancy is the ownership of real estate by two or more persons, each of whom has an undivided interest with the right of survivorship. Typically used by related per-

sons. Example: Husband and wife own a condo in joint tenancy.

Each owns half of the entire property. Upon husband's death, wife will own the entire property, and vice-versa. The second way is "Tenancy In Common." Tenancy in common is an ownership of real estate by two or more persons, each of whom has an undivided interest, without the right of survivorship. Upon the death of one of the owners, the ownership share of the decedent is inherited by the party or parties designated in the decedent's will.

You may also want to set up a Trust and have a Will drawn up or a Life Estate Deed (aka Lady Bird Deed) etc... My advice to

you would be to contact a good attorney and discuss this matter with him/her. (Wills and Trusts are something that everyone should talk to an attorney about. If you don't know a good one, give me a call and I will refer you to one).

*Steve Meyers is a Real Estate Agent/Realtor at RE/MAX Metropolitan located in Shelby Twp., Michigan and is a member of the RE/MAX Hall of Fame. He can be contacted with questions at 586-997-5480 (voicemail) or email him at Steve@AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com You can also visit his website: AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com.*

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## WORK &amp; PURPOSE

# Tips for landing a seat on a corporate board

By Nancy Collamer

For Next Avenue

Serving on a corporate board of directors can be a rewarding second act, especially if you're eager to keep learning and earning after retirement. But finding and landing a corporate board seat isn't easy.

Debra Boggs, a job search and resume expert who helps executives find board seats, offered some pointers in a session on "Board Resume Best Practices" at the annual Career Thought Leaders conference in Philadelphia in April.

Here's what she said about what corporate boards look for in new members, how to prepare for board membership and tips for designing a board resume:

## What Makes Someone a Strong Board Candidate?

Let's start with the fundamentals. Corporate boards seek directors with deep industry and functional knowledge, who offer a mix of skills and perspectives that are missing from their current board. Typically, boards look for candidates with a specific skill-set, such as legal or IT expertise, or who have experience leading a business through a crisis or transition period, such as a merger or acquisition.

Increasingly, boards need members with strong digital transformation skills, who know how to leverage technology to keep a business competitive. Expertise in "hot" areas, such as sustainability, diversity and inclusion, or cybersecurity, is also a plus.

Traditionally, directorships were reserved for C-



PHOTO COURTESY OF GETTY/NEXT AVENUE

Serving on a board provides an opportunity for management-savvy older adults to learn and earn, and age is actually an advantage.

suite executives (those with the word "chief" in their job titles, such as chief executive or chief operating officer) and existing board members, meaning the majority of seats have gone to candidates who were white men. But now, with companies under pressure to diversify their boards, opportunities for candidates from underrepresented groups — many of whom come from roles outside the C-suite, such as functional or line leaders — are on the rise.

How quickly are boards diversifying? Consider these stats from the executive search firm Spencer Stuart's 2021 Board Index, which tracks board composition trends:

- Nearly half — 47% — of the 456 new independent directors are from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, and 43% are women.

- One-third (33%) of all new independent directors are Black/African American, the most since Spencer Stuart began tracking this data in 2008.

- Female representation on S&P 500 boards increased to 30% this year from 28% last year and 16% a decade ago. In short, it's a good time if you're a board candidate from an underrepresented group — and there is still ample opportunity if you're not.

"I sometimes hear white male candidates say they feel like they are at a disadvantage now, but that's not necessarily true," said Boggs noting that most boards still aren't diverse enough. "They just might have to work harder than in the past to be considered."

## How to Prepare for Board Service

No matter how impres-

sive your professional background, it's unlikely that you'll land a corporate board seat without prior board experience. Boggs offered four ways to improve your board readiness:

- Serve on a non-profit board. The easiest way to build your board skills and learn about board governance is to join a non-profit board. Look for boards where you can gain the skills and leadership experiences that would be most valued by a for-profit board.

- Become a member of the National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD). As long as you serve as a director on a board — even a not-for-profit — you can join the NACD. As a member, you'll gain access to a variety of educational and networking opportunities. ▪ Enroll in a board-

readiness training program. A number of universities, including Yale, Harvard and Northwestern/Kellogg, offer programs that teach aspiring and current board members about the tactical, legal and logistical issues of board membership. Some programs, such as Yale's Women on Boards, while others are open to a broader audience. Admission criteria and fees vary by program.

- Nurture your network. Most board seats are filled by networking, or through searches conducted by executive search firms. So, work on building-up your network long before launching your board search. "Having a wide industry network really helps," said Boggs. "It really is difficult to land a board role without one."

## Tips for Drafting a Board Resume

Many executives hire professional resume writers to help them create a board resume. But if you prefer to do it on your own, here are a few recommendations:

- Keep it short. While most board resumes are one-page documents, they can run two-pages if you have many board roles, publications or speaking engagements. There is no need to include day-to-day responsibilities and accomplishments for every position. Instead, focus on your highest-level accomplishments and general scope of responsibility. This sample resume on Boggs's site will give you a better sense of what a board resume should look like.

- Showcase your board experience at the top of the resume. List the organization's name, a description of who they are and what they do, your role (e.g., board member) any committees you sit on (chair of the Governance Committee or member of the Audit Committee) and the dates.

- Include any "board adjacent" experience, such as presentations you've made to a board or board committee, roles you've had on an executive committee or team, or experience with corporate-wide committees or task forces. Finally, don't worry about hiding age or dates on your board resume. This is one arena where your advanced age plays to your advantage.

*Nancy Collamer, M.S., is a semi-retirement coach, speaker and author of *Second-Act Careers: 50+ Ways to Profit From Your Passions During Semi-Retirement*.*

# Proud Grandparents Page



**ZOE ARCURI**

*Proud Grandparent is:*  
Mary Przekaza-Ptaszek  
of Chandler, AZ



**NICK PARASILITI**

*Proud Grandparents are:*  
Mr. & Mrs. Parasiliti of Waterford, MI  
Mr. & Mrs. Radtke



## In Loving Memory



**BETTY**

Betty's favorite pastime is sitting on her lounge chair soaking up sun waiting for her bowl of ice cream with lots of sprinkles that Grandma gives her when no one is looking!

**Submitted with Love By:**

Betty's Grandma (Joanne Morreale-LaRose) of Clinton Twp, MI



## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# Connect with nature and de-stress through forest bathing

By Debra Kaszubski  
For MediaNews Group

A short quarter-mile walk might take well over an hour. Some walkers might hug a tree, while others might take in a deep breath of pine-scented air. Participants aren't climbing a mountain or traversing treacherous terrain. They're partaking in what the Japanese call "Shinrin-yoku," or forest bathing.

Rochester resident Amy Wargo, 55, owns Earthly Connections, a newly-formed LLC which offers forest bathing sessions at local parks and other locations to individuals and groups.

She also lectures about the benefits and methods associated with forest bathing at senior centers, com-

munity organizations and other places.

Wargo is certified in forest bathing, an art form she discovered while volunteering at local parks after noticing the positive health and mental effects of connecting with nature.

"Shinrin' means forest and 'yoku' is bath so together this means bathing in the forest atmosphere or taking in the forest through our senses," Wargo said.

Forest bathing is a slow and mindful way of walking that forces participants to engage the senses and allows for reflection.

As participants move along the trail, they are invited to use their senses to take in the sights, sounds, and smells of the forest. They may also be encouraged to touch a tree, flower,

or plant during a forest walk. Even walking outside barefoot might be encouraged as a way to connect with the earth.

During a typical session, which might last up to 90 minutes, Wargo will extend "invitations" to the group, which are usually simple instructions on how to connect with their surroundings.

An example of an invitation includes finding a rock and assigning life's distractions and problems to this rock. Participants may symbolically put the rock to the side or even throw it in the river. Other invitations are more straightforward connections to nature, Wargo said.

"We will find a tree and talk about the importance

**FOREST » PAGE 23**



PHOTO COURTESY OF AMY WARGO

Rochester resident Amy Wargo, 55, offers forest bathing sessions through her newly formed LLC called Earthly Connections.



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## Forest

FROM PAGE 22

of the tree and how similar they are to humans: they breathe and they provide oxygen.

Then we spend time with the tree. We ground ourselves by touching a tree. So very simple things, that once people get the concept of Shrinin-yoku and the benefits, then it's very easy for anyone to do," she said.

Although the name "forest walking" implies this practice must take place in a forest, for some, it's not always possible to walk in the woods.

A simple walk in the backyard, eating a salad, or smelling essential oils, for example, might be enough to connect with nature,

"We are a part of nature, but we just got away from it," Wargo said. "Most of us

are inside 96% of our day, so we forget we are part of nature. Once we do these things (forest bathe), it becomes second nature."

Regardless of where these walks occur, the benefits — whether physical, mental or both — cannot be discounted.

Participants often feel calm and clear-minded, which may help with creativity. Some have experienced lower blood pressure by simply connecting with nature regularly.

To learn more about Wargo and Earthly Connections, visit her website at [ourearthlyconnecti.wixsite.com/natureheals](http://ourearthlyconnecti.wixsite.com/natureheals) or call 248-917-1476.

**Right:** Forest bathing is a slow and mindful way of walking that forces participants to engage the senses and allows for reflection.

PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION



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## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# Acupuncture could reduce tension headaches by half

By **Linda Searing**  
*The Washington Post*

People who have chronic tension headaches might be able to reduce the frequency of those headaches by as much as 50% with acupuncture, according to research published in the journal *Neurology*. Tension headaches, which are the most common type, are sometimes described as feeling pressure as if you had a tight band around your head. They are considered chronic if they regularly occur at least 15 days a month.

The study involved 218 people who had experienced tension headaches for an average of 22 days a month for 11 years. They were randomly assigned to one of two groups, either to

be given what the researchers describe as “true acupuncture” or “superficial acupuncture.” Acupuncture, a component of centuries-old traditional Chinese medicine, involves penetrating the skin at specific points with extremely thin needles and then gently moving them.

The aim is to improve the flow of energy in the body (known as “qi,” also spelled “chi”), which is believed to improve health. When needles are inserted to the proper depth, the de qi sensation occurs, and the patient feels a numbness, heaviness or tingling. This sensation is considered key to successful acupuncture treatment. Study participants in the “true acupuncture” group achieved

the de qi sensation, but in the “superficial acupuncture” group, needles were not inserted deep enough to create this sensation. Both groups were given 20 treatments in a two-month span and then tracked for six additional months.

The number of tension headaches gradually decreased after treatment for people in both groups, but about two-thirds of those given true acupuncture experienced at least a 50% reduction, compared with half of those given the superficial type. For the “true” group, headache days fell from 20 a month at the start of the study to seven days a month at the end, compared with a drop from 22 to 12 days a month for the “superficial” group.

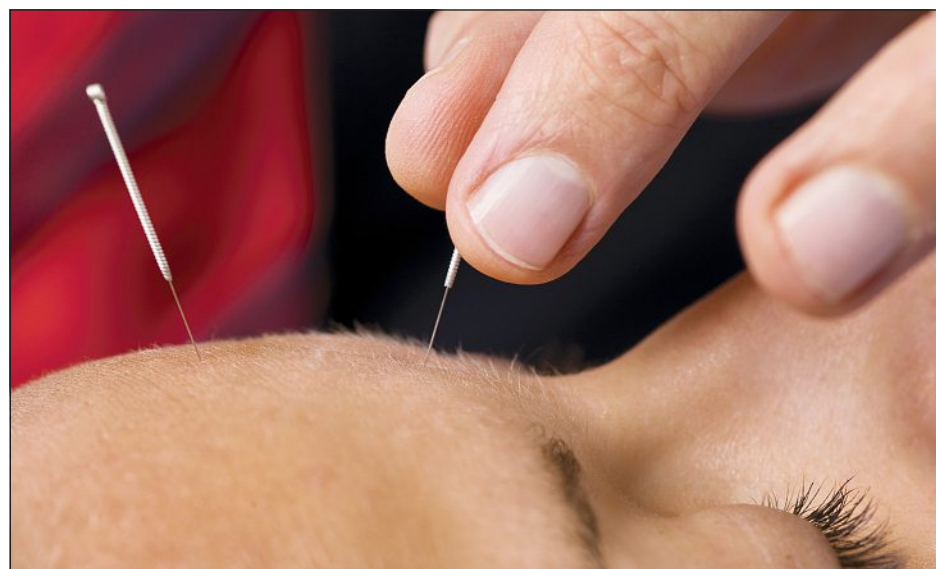


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Acupuncture, a component of centuries-old traditional Chinese medicine, involves penetrating the skin at specific points with extremely thin needles and then gently moving them.

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## Calendar of activities and events

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](mailto:jgray@medianews-group.com).

**Crafters wanted:** Sept. 17 in the barn at the Loren Andrus Octagon House at 26 Mile & Van Dyke in Washington Twp. All crafters are welcome. Please contact Myra Harrison for information at 586-648-0908. Proceeds are for the benefit of the Friends of the Octagon House, a 501c3 museum.

### July

**July 14:** Booked for the Evening: Reader's Choice at the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave, Roseville, Thursday, July 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the library and on Zoom. Zoom Meeting ID: 824 3372 8798. Join us in person or virtually. Bring a book of your choice with you that you would like to talk about for a few minutes. It can be new, new to you, or an old favorite. If you want to talk about it, we want to hear about it! We will also discuss our fall titles at this meeting. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit [rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov](mailto:rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov)

**July 18:** Regency Aesthetics: Bridgerton's Costumes, Locations and Décor at the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave, Roseville, Monday, July 18 at 6 p.m. Registration required. Bridgerton is Netflix's latest hit and the most-watched English language show in the streaming service's history. Michelle Fitzgerald, curator of the Johns Hopkins University Museums, will talk about the material world of the hit Netflix series and what it might teach us about the real 19th century. Enjoy light refreshments as Michelle joins us via Zoom. You must have a Roseville

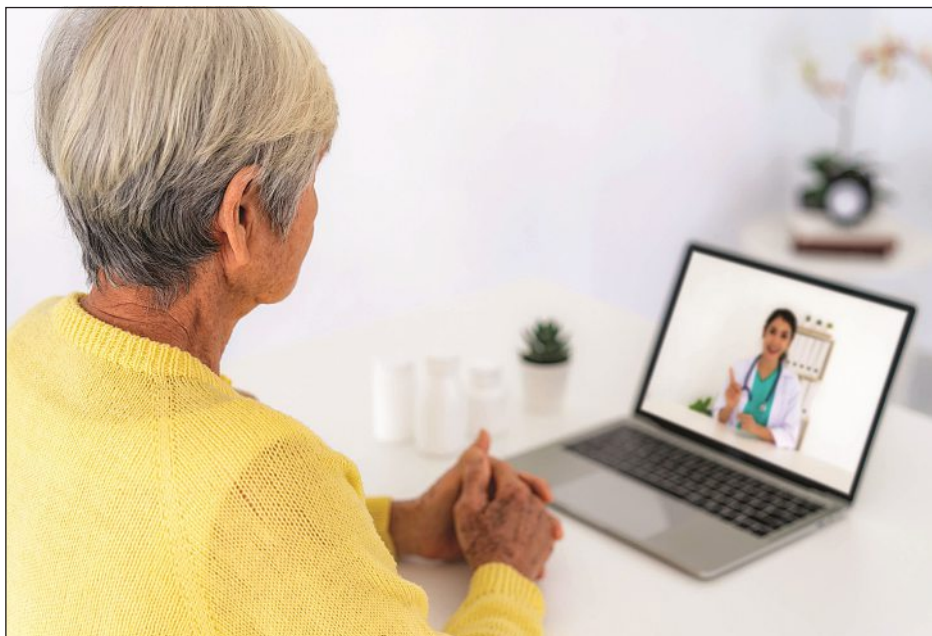


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library card in good standing to register for this program in the first week. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit [rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov](mailto:rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov)

**July 28:** Raising Monarch Butterflies at the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave, Roseville, Thursday, July 28 at 2 p.m. Registration required. Lori Smith will visit to talk about Monarch butterflies, which she has been raising for nearly a decade. The program will include the life cycle of butterflies, how to raise them, and the native Michigan plants that nourish them. Lori will show how you can help save the Monarch butterfly population by growing the plants they eat and lay their eggs on as well as how to take care of the caterpillars and help them to grow into butterflies. Changing weather patterns have had a profound impact upon the Monarch population. Depending on their health at the time, Lori may be able to bring a few live caterpillars to the Library to give you a close-up look! She will also

bring photos and videos of her butterflies, as well as seeds for Common Milkweed & Swamp Milkweed plants, which Monarchs love. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit [rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov](mailto:rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov)

### Monthly events

**Confident Communicators Club:** Meets monthly for people who seek improving public speaking skills and leadership confidence. This supportive Toastmasters group meets online the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 8-9:30 a.m. Many of our members have gain skills needed to become a better salesperson, grow their business, get promoted, and engage students. Register for any of our meetings to get the Zoom Link -<https://confident-communicators-club-meeting.eventbrite.com>. Contact our VP Membership to get more information [vpm-1196053@toastmastersclubs.org](mailto:vpm-1196053@toastmastersclubs.org)

**Breakfast Sponsored by Widowed Friends**

**Ministries:** Breakfast (3rd Tuesday of each) at 10:30 a.m., Pancake Factory, 13693 23 Mile Rd, NE corner of 23 Mile & Schoenherr, Shelby Twp. Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries. Contact Ellen 586-781-5781.

**Bowling held at Collier Bowl:** 879 S Lapeer Rd. (M24), Oxford every Tuesday. Arrive at noon for lane assignments. Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries. Cost is \$7.50 for three games, (shoes extra at \$2.50). Lunch afterwards optional. Call Joe at 248-693-2454 or Nadine at 248-475-9036.

**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.

**Breakfast every Wednesday:** Sponsored by

Widowed Friends Ministries. Join us at 10 a.m. at Cavis Pioneer Restaurant, 5606 Lapeer Rd., Kimball. Call Rita, 810-334-6287 for more information.

#### 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.

#### Dancing every Tuesday:

at Polish Century Club, 33204 Maple Lane, Sterling Heights. Doors open at 6 p.m. Music from 7-10:30 p.m. Cost is \$8 per person with a cash bar. A table is reserved for Widowed Friends. Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries Contact Kate at 586-344-3886.

#### 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 are purchased. 4 punches \$23 resident, \$29 NR; 11 punches \$60 resident, \$66 NR. For more information, call 586-752-6543.

#### Fish Fry Every Friday:

Join us for dinner/music at the American Legion Hall, 1026 6th St., Port Huron. Food served from 4:30-7 p.m. Music goes from 5-8 p.m. Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries. Contact Rita, 810-334-6287.

**Cards/Games/Friendship:** Ss. John and Paul, (1st Thursday or every month), 1:30-4 p.m. at, 7777 28 Mile Rd. Bring a snack to share

and your own beverage. Ss. John and Paul supports the Agape Center, a resource center for the most vulnerable members of society and would appreciate it if you could bring a canned good (vegetable, meat, fruit) when you come to play. (Dinner afterward at Romeo Family Restaurant, 66020 Van Dyke Rd., between 30 & 31 Mile is optional.) Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries. Call Ellen, 586-781-5781.

#### Men Only Breakfast:

Lukich Family Restaurant (1st & 3rd Thursday), 3900 Rochester Rd., Troy, at 9 a.m. The Widowed Men's Group invites you to meet with other widowed men for breakfast at either of the Men's Fellowship locations whichever is more convenient for you. Many topics & ideas help you become involved in the activities of Widowed Friends. Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries Contact Ray at 248-585-5402.

**Eastside Movies:** (1st Tuesday of each month) at Chesterfield Crossing Digital Cinema 16 (known for free soda & popcorn refills also offers discount matinee pricing) 50675 Gratiot Ave., Chesterfield Twp. Early dinner afterwards TBD. Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries. For more information, contact Marion at 586-703-1427

#### Metamora — Dinner Club:

(3rd Wednesday of the month) at 5 p.m. Join us at The White Horse Inn, 1 E High St., Metamora. Reserved seating. Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries. Please RSVP to Sharry 248-840-0063. No walk-ins. Please call if you must cancel your reserved seating.

**Breakfast at Avenue Family Restaurant:** 31253 Woodward Ave., Royal Oak, at 9:30 a.m. (2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month). Sponsored by Widowed Friends Ministries.

# Poetry Page

## AS A TREE

I am an oak  
with raised arms to reach what's unseen.  
Yes, rough skin, but I am rugged.

I am a weeping willow.  
Clutch my dangling fingers  
to cheer me up.

I am a maple, an aspen, a dogwood  
with golden, auburn, crimson hair,  
until the wind shakes off my curls.

With what's left of my color,  
oh, a bad hair day,  
or a stylish shaved head.

I am evergreen  
with sturdy shoulders to support snow,  
to shelter sparrows from the cold.

I am a December tree  
adorned with ornaments,  
a star, the guiding light, crowning me.

I am a tree.  
I am a tree.  
I AM A TREE.

**By Sherrill Alesiak  
of Clinton Twp, MI**

## IN MEMORY OF OLIVER

A special cat came to stay,  
across the way; with "Elliot" grey  
and "Belle" marmalade.  
He was large and his coon-cat-coat  
was a fun-piece gray.  
He baptized the nickelodeon in places  
secret to the eye. When it was  
played, "aromas" and music filled the air;  
and his dancing eyes followed the hammers  
as the songs went on.  
He would sit by his bowl wanting more food;  
as his illness grappled with his body functions.  
He put on a good show and loved his  
neighbors as joyous times unfolded, to prepare  
us for his passing. He was cared-for  
and loved; as in return, gave comfort and  
peace to all those who loved him.

We will love you Oliver.....ALWAYS

**By Margherita Wiszowaty  
of Saint Clair Shores, 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 August 11, 2022.

FIRST & LAST NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

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

MAIL TO: **Vitality Poetry  
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Dawn Emke  
53239 Settimo Crt  
Chesterfield, MI 48047**

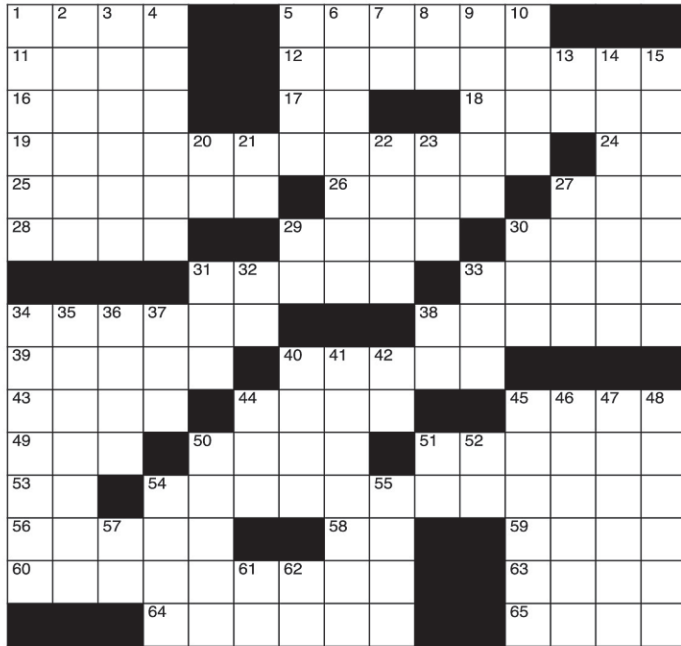


If you chose to submit your poem or letter of appreciation through email, please include your first and last name along with your phone number and the city, state you reside in. You will not be solicited and all information will be kept confidential.

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.

# PUZZLE PAGE



## WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to cooking.

**LIGLR**

--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Grill

## SUMMERTIME WORD SEARCH



Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

### WORDS

- AUGUST
- BACKYARD
- BARBECUE
- BEACH
- COOLING
- ENJOYMENT
- FAMILY
- FAN
- GRILL
- HOT
- JULY
- POOL
- RELAXATION
- REST
- RETREAT
- SEASIDE
- SHADE
- SUMMER
- SUNLIGHT
- SUNSCREEN
- SWIMSUIT
- ULTRAVIOLET
- VACATION
- WARMTH



ANSWER:

### CLUES ACROSS

1. Ancient Greek sophist
5. Genus of insects
11. Culinary herb
12. Neutralizing antibody
16. Plan
17. Pa's partner
18. A city in S Louisiana
19. TNT sportscaster
24. Atomic #25 (abbr.)
25. Well-known bug
26. Body parts
27. Monetary unit of Albania
28. Kids' play things
29. Coastal city in Malaysia
30. Famed French physician
31. Flourishing
33. Excessively overweight
34. Pampered

### CLUES DOWN

38. Emerged
39. Order of tailless amphibians
40. Indian term of respect
43. Shift sails (Brit.)
44. Beloved Mexican dish
45. Scottish tax
49. Health insurance
50. Monetary unit of Samoa
51. Move about
53. Execute or perform
54. Taste property
56. Unit of dry measure
58. Blood group
59. Something you can up
60. In great need
63. Breezes through
64. Spoke
65. Become acquainted with
1. A particular part
2. Spanish neighborhood
3. Business
4. Reddish browns
5. Extinct Hawaiian bird
6. Disney town
7. Part of the Bible (abbr.)
8. Atomic #22 (abbr.)
9. The distinctive spirit of a people or an era
10. In a moment
13. Monetary unit of Vietnam
14. Submerge in a liquid
15. Yellowish cotton cloth
20. -, denotes past
21. Hoopster Morant
22. Not
23. Indian title of respect
27. Horsley and Marvin are two
29. One thousandth of a liter (abbr.)
30. Hoover's organization
31. Round globular seed
32. University officia
33. Spherical body
34. Iraq's capital
35. To any further extent
36. Swollen lymph node
37. Anger
38. Technological marvel
40. Peruvian district
41. Salt of acetic acid
42. What Santa says
44. Israeli city \_\_ Aviv
45. Late Heisman winner
46. Reveal the presence of
47. Long upholstered seat
48. Most wily
50. Sword
51. Respiratory disease
52. The Ocean State
54. Fleshy watery fruit
55. Lying down
57. Superheavy metal
61. The ancient Egyptian sun god
62. Indicates position

### ANSWER:





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