

# Vitality

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

December 2022

## CUTTING COSTS

Minimize holiday  
spending with  
homemade gifts

PAGE 6

## HEALTH & FITNESS

Study suggests whole foods  
can decrease dementia risk

PAGE 13

## SOCIAL & WELL-BEING

Warren woman still active in  
community at age 95

PAGE 21





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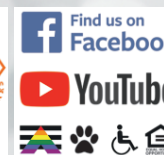
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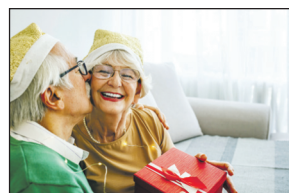
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PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

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**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

**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:** 2250011 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:** 350015 Mile Rd/Ryan Rd, Sterling Heights 48310

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

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

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

## OAKLAND COUNTY

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

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

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

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



## Brian J. Kurtz

AIP FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC.  
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## MONEY &amp; SECURITY

# Ask the Financial Doctor: Can I change my Social Security number after identity theft?

**Q** : What is the annual gift-tax exclusion for 2023? What is the lifetime estate tax exemption for 2023?



**Richard Rysiewski**  
Columnist

**A** : For 2023, the annual gift-tax exclusion will increase from \$16,000 to \$17,000. The lifetime estate exclusion will be \$12.12 million for individuals and \$24.24 million for couples.

**Q** : What is the standard deduction for 2022 and 2023?

**A** : The standard deduction for 2022 is \$12,950 (individuals) and \$25,900 (couples filing jointly). For 2023, the standard deduction is \$13,850 (individuals) and \$27,700 (couples filing jointly). For couples, each partner 65 or older will get an additional \$1,500.

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

**A** : People under Medicare coverage can switch from the traditional Medicare to a Medicare Advantage program and to other Medigap insurers from Oct. 15 through Dec. 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 contain your medical expenses.

**Q** : I am under age 65. Can I qualify for Medicare coverage?

**A** : You are eligible for Medicare if you are a citizen, lived in the U.S. for five years in a row and are disabled and have been receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) for at least 24 months. If you have end-stage renal disease and are getting dialysis treatments you could qualify for Medicare. If you have Amyotrophic Lateral Disease (ALS) you will automatically be enrolled in Medicare when you receive your first monthly check from SSDI.

**Q** : I am 74 years old and I have never taken a distribution 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 1st in the following year after age 72. In your case, you should have taken at least two distributions. You have violated the IRS rules and the penalty is 50% of the required minimum distributions (RMD) plus interest. I recommend that you seek a tax professional to correct your situation. If you have a ROTH IRA then you have



COURTESY METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in America.

no problem because there are no mandatory distributions.

**Q** : How much of the Social Security benefits are reduced if I apply earlier than my full retirement age (FRA)?

**A** : Anybody born in or after 1960 has a FRA of 67. A worker who started receiving benefits at 62 will get a 25% or 30% benefit reduction depending on the FRA of 66 or 67.

**Q** : My wife and I own a brokerage account jointly. If both of us die what happens to the assets of our brokerage account?

**A** : The brokerage account would belong to the estate of the last person to die. In the case of simultaneity of death, a "will" can specify who the last person is. A brokerage account can have a "trust" name and upon

death the trust document takes over. If you do not have a "will" or a trust then you can set up a transfer on death (TOD) designation on the brokerage account to name your beneficiaries. The TOD will override any named beneficiaries in your "will" or "trust." Additionally, the TOD will avoid the probate process.

**Q** : Somebody stole my social security number and is impersonating me. Can I change my Social Security number and reclaim my identity?

**A** : You can't easily change your Social Security number even if it has been stolen. Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in America. First, contact one of the three major credit-reporting agencies — Equifax, TransUnion, or Experian to place a fraud alert on your credit file. Second, call the IRS at

800-908-4490 to prevent the thief from filing a fraudulent tax return in your name. Third, contact the fraud department of each company that you suspect fraudulent activity.

**Q** : I am considering a nursing home for my husband who is suffering from dementia and Alzheimer's disease. The nursing home refuses to admit him because I have no power of attorney. What can I do?

**A** : You can go to court and be appointed the conservator of your husband, check with the nursing homes on their rules. If you still have difficulty then I recommend that you consult with an elder attorney.

**Q** : My uncle recently passed away and owned several U.S. savings bonds with a face value of \$35,000. These bonds

are 37 years old. Are these bonds earning any interest?

**A** : No, these bonds have stopped earning interest after 30 years and need to be redeemed. The accumulated interest will be over \$25,000 and either the beneficiaries or your uncle's estate will have to pay the federal taxes on the interest income.

**Q** : What is the federal credit amount if I buy an electrical vehicle (EV)?

**A** : The federal credit for an EV or plug-in hybrid is \$7,500 if you satisfy three rules.

- Rule 1: The van, truck or SUV must have a Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) less than \$80,000; for a regular car the MSRP must be less than \$55,000.

- Rule 2: Your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) must be less than \$150,000 (single) and \$300,000 (joint).

- Rule 3: The vehicle must be assembled in North America and have 40% of the critical battery materials sourced in the United States or in a country which the United States has free-trade agreement. In 2024 the percentage increases to 50%

*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.*



## MONEY &amp; SECURITY

# Real estate: What is a 'chain of title'?

**Q:** We are selling my aunt's home and were told that the buyer's mortgage company asked to review a chain of title. Not sure what that is?



**Steve Meyers**  
Columnist

**A:** A chain of title is the recorded history of matters which affect the title to a specific parcel of real property, such as ownership, encumbrances and liens, usually beginning with the original recorded source of the title. This is something that the title insurance company handling the sale would provide; nothing that you would have to do.

**Q:** I'm going to be selling our house in the spring, but need to replace the hot water heater now. Does it matter if I replace it with the same kind as we have now, a basic 50-gallon tank or would it be better to install a 50-gallon high efficiency tank? Would we get more for the house?

**A:** It's amazing how often I get this question. Hot water heaters seem to have a mean sense of humor because they'll usually go out around

Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, Superbowl Sunday or when you're out of town or have out of town guests visiting. In my opinion, because you're going to be selling soon, I would just replace it with the basic tank like you already have and save the additional expense of the increased cost of the tank and the additional high efficiency conversion installation cost because you will not get it back in the sales price of your home. In my almost 25 years of experience, I have never witnessed a Buyer's decision to buy a house come down to whether or not it had a high efficiency hot water tank. Buyers are more concerned about the age and condition of the unit. Also, keep in mind that if your power goes out, the exhaust vent motor on top will not operate which means no hot water!

*Steve Meyers is a Real Estate Agent/ Realtor at RE/MAX Metropolitan located in Shelby Twp., Mich., 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](mailto:Steve@AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com). You can also visit his website: [AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com](http://AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com).*

## MARKET UPDATE

A balanced market between Buyers and Sellers is when there is a six-month supply of inventory. Inventory has been going up the last several months but has been stalled out at a two-month supply. October's market update for Macomb County and Oakland County's housing market is as follows. In Macomb County prices were up by more than 3% and Oakland County prices were up by more than 5% for the month. Macomb County's on market inventory was up by 7% and Oakland County's on market inventory was down by almost 7%. Macomb County average days on market was 28 days and Oakland County average days on market was 30 days. Closed sales in Macomb County were down by more than 23% and closed sales in Oakland County were down by almost 31%. (All comparisons are month-to-month, year-to-year.)



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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING



PHOTOS BY DEBRA KASZUBSKI — FOR MEDIANEWS GROUP

Jackie Macha showcases one of the handmade baskets a person can buy at the Rochester Older Person Commission's Artisan Marketplace at the Mary Elizabeth Gift Shop. The shop features a collection of homemade gifts and is open to the public Monday through Friday.

# Hands on

## Minimize holiday spending with homemade gifts

**By Debra Kaszubski**  
For MediaNews Group

For most people, the holidays include great food, gathering with family, and all-around cheer. Although an overall joyous time, the holidays also come with a hefty price tag for those tasked with buying gifts for family and friends. With inflation running high in recent months, some people may be forced to cut back on their holiday spending, especially those living off fixed incomes or retirement nest eggs.

The holidays don't have to bankrupt gift-givers, especially with a little planning. Making a gift is not only sentimental, but it is also

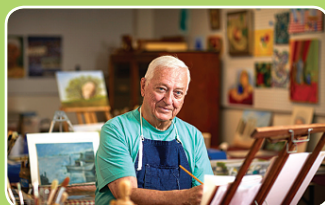
**HOMEMADE » PAGE 8**



Sheila Shah and Adrienne Crawford of Rochester Hills fashion silver necklaces which they plan to give to relatives as holiday gifts.

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## Homemade

FROM PAGE 6

usually at cost savings versus buying something new. Almost every senior center offers some type of art or craft session, with many geared specifically for holiday gift-giving.

At the Rochester Older Persons Commission (OPC), members were recently using lapidary machinery and silversmith tools to polish and fashion stones into wearable jewelry. Margaret Afheldt of Rochester Hills was creating a necklace using a small piece of a blue bowling ball as a gift for a friend.

"You could go out and buy something, but it's not as meaningful as something you've made," she said as she was shaping the blue stone. "This is so unique, and I'm even going to give it the name of 'bowl-ite'. I know she doesn't have anything like this."

Afheldt is making several pieces of jewelry for friends

and family, saving hundreds of dollars. Although the cost saving is a bonus, that's not why she makes the gifts. "I give away almost everything I make. It's fun and people like getting something you've made," she said.

Rochester Hills residents Sheila Shah and Adrienne Crawford were creating unique necklaces as gifts. The gems were also fashioned from rocks. "This is for my daughter because she wanted a black stone with a white line in it," Crawford said. "This is unique. It's one-of-a-kind and she will remember that her mom made it for her."

Marianne McCauley, Programming Manager at the OPC, believes the best gifts are those that are handmade. Not only does she cherish the china her mom painted decades ago, but she also loves the handprint stepping stones her grandchildren crafted. She is creating a piece for her stepdaughter using wood from a tree her father planted.

"When we are younger,

we are more materialistic: we want, want, want. When we get older, we know what matters. Those stepping stones, those blotches of paint, those are the things that we want more of," McCauley said.

Kathy McKinn owns The Basket Sampler in Highland, a studio where people visit to learn how to weave. She also visits senior centers throughout the area to teach the art. The baskets McKinn created with a small group of novice weavers at the OPC will be used to adorn dining room tables, hold loaves of bread, or simply store everyday items.

She said once people learn basket weaving, they can create sentimental gifts for a fraction of the cost. "I could make five of these (baskets) for 1/3 of the cost of one," she said. "A lot of people, once they learn how to do this, will go onto give these away as gifts."

Paula Bedsole, Fine Arts and Crafts Manager at the OPC, said several homemade gifts are on sale at the Cen-

**GIFTS » PAGE 12**



PHOTO BY DEBRA KASZUBSKI — FOR MEDIANEWS GROUP

Margaret Afheldt of Rochester Hills uses a lapidary machine to smooth out a piece of a bowling ball. She plans to give the finished product to a friend as a holiday gift.





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Debbie Buffa, of Oakland Township (from left), Nina Carverhardiewich, of Macomb Township, and Nancy Greve, of Rochester Hills, practice their basket weaving skills at a recent class lead by Kathy McKinn, owner of the Basket Sampler in Highland.



Kathy McKinn, owner of the Basket Sampler in Highland, gives some advice on how to weave.

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## Tips for Keeping Seniors Connected



**Find an activity that you enjoy or learn something new.** You may have fun and meet new people.

**Volunteer.** You'll feel better by helping others.

**Get moving!** Exercise decreases stress, boosts your mood, and increases your energy.

**Stay in touch** with family, friends, and neighbors in person, online, or by phone.

**Consider adopting a pet.** Animals can be a source of comfort and may also lower stress and blood pressure.



*Oakland Audiology*

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PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

The holidays can come with a hefty price tag for those tasked with buying gifts for family and friends. Choosing to make a gift instead of buying something can help alleviate some of that financial stress.

## Gifts

FROM PAGE 8

ter's Artisan Marketplace at the Mary Elizabeth Gift Shop. Handmade by OPC members, the unique items — all handmade — provide an alternative for those who still want a one-of-a-

kind gift. Proceeds from the sales at the new shop, which is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday, support the OPC.

Those who are not interested in taking a senior center class could consider putting together a family cookbook to pass down to generations; framing family photos; or even volun-

teering to provide a helpful act of service such as cooking a favorite dish, picking up groceries, or taking an older relative for a night-time ride to see a holiday light display.

"Handmade gifts are those which are given and received with love. It's good on both ends: for both the giver and the receiver," Bedsole said.



## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# Study: Eating more whole foods can decrease dementia risk

By Rebecca Myers,  
MSN, RN

For Next Avenue

A study published in July 2022 in *Neurology*, a journal from the American Academy of Neurology, suggests that eating whole foods might decrease dementia risk. The research was done on 72,083 adults over age 55 with no dementia at baseline in the UK Biobank.

The authors investigated the association between ultra-processed foods (UPF) and dementia, where participants' diets were evaluated based on how much UPF was consumed. The highest group had a diet of 28% UPF compared to the group with the lowest consumption of UPF at 9%.

The results implied that



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Learning to evaluate food labels and ingredients is critical.

for every increase of 10% in the daily dietary intake of UPF, the risk of dementia increased by 25%. Con-

versely, replacing 10% of UPF foods with whole (unprocessed or minimally processed) foods was asso-

ciated with a 19% lower risk of dementia.

"Ultra-processed foods are meant to be convenient

and tasty, but they diminish the quality of a person's diet," said study author Huiping Li, Ph.D. of Tianjin Medical University in China.

"These foods may also contain food additives or molecules from packaging or produced during heating, all of which have been shown in other studies to affect thinking and memory skills negatively."

"Our research not only found that ultra-processed foods are associated with an increased risk of dementia, but it also found replacing them with healthy options may decrease dementia risk."

## UPF vs. whole foods

UPF is made for convenience. Think ready-to-eat or ready-to-heat. These

foods are high in sugar, fat, and salt and low in protein and fiber. A few examples of UPF include fatty, sweet, savory, or salty packaged snacks.

Also, baked products made with ingredients such as hydrogenated vegetable fat, sugar, yeast, whey, emulsifiers, and other additives, ice creams and frozen desserts, chocolates, candies, pre-prepared meals like pizza and pasta dishes, and distilled alcoholic beverages such as whisky, gin, rum and vodka.

On the other hand, whole foods are unprocessed or minimally processed, such as fresh fruit, vegetables, fish, seafood, legumes, milk, eggs, grains, spices, meat and fermented alcoholic beverages (think alcoholic cider

WHOLE » PAGE 14

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PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

The 2022 study not only found that ultra-processed foods are associated with an increased risk of dementia, but it also found replacing them with healthy options may decrease dementia risk.

## Whole

FROM PAGE 13

and wine).

Minimally processed foods leave the nutrients intact. This contains methods like canning, vacuum packing, and refrigeration — which extend the food item's life, including adding vitamins and pasteurization (as in milk).

### How to tell the difference?

Lena Beal, media spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, says that labeling is the answer.

"Ultra-processed foods (UPF) involve baked goods, snack cakes, chips, and candy at the grocery store's check-out counter. They also include soft drinks, sweet breakfast cereals, ice cream, mass-produced bread and flavored yogurts."

Beal advises, "Look at two labels: Cheetos and tortilla chips. Then, look at the long list of ingredients on the Cheetos bag compared to tortilla chips. Tortilla chips have corn, salt, and some plant seed oil, right? So, it could be safflower, sunflower or canola. Three ingredients."

### Why are UPFs so popular in the U.S.?

"Two words: convenience

and cost," says Beal. In the U.S., UPF consumption increased from 53.5% of calories (2001-2002) to 57% (2017-2018). During the same period, whole food consumption decreased from 32.7% to 27.4% of calories.

According to Beal, "Americans eat 31% more packaged food than fresh foods than nearly any other country. Ultra-processed food comes from substances extracted from food through processes like milling or extrusion with added ingredients. They are highly manipulated and take on more of a chemical presence than food."

The perceived convenience and the cost of UPF play a factor in their popularity. Not to mention advertising. Marketing UPF makes them seem delicious and harmless, but learning to read nutritional labels is essential.

In addition, choosing to eat healthier might entail prepping your meals at home. Why? Because it can be a special time shared with family or a partner as well as a nutritious path to adding more fruits and vegetables (fresh, pre-cut, or flash-frozen) to one's diet.

When it comes to wholesome go-to's, "use nuts (full of Omega-3s for heart and brain health), raisins, and dark chocolate to make a trail mix," suggests Beal. "Seeds, nuts, cut-up fruits and vegetables are nature's

fast food. Make a smoothie out of fresh fruit and dairy. Use peanut butter on celery sticks."

### Traveling and eating out

Beal suggests asking for condiments and dressings on the side when dining out. For instance, choose a sauce you can see through instead of cream sauce. Also, order baked meat or fish instead of fried, skip the pre-meal bread or eat less of it (whole wheat is also a better alternative to white bread).

Lastly, when traveling, locating a grocery store near where you are staying will make finding whole foods easier than getting all your food from restaurants.

### The bottom line

Good news! You are in charge of your diet! So each time you choose what to eat or drink, ask yourself: what is the best, minimally processed, healthy choice for nutrition?

Learning to evaluate food labels and ingredients is critical. Begin to prepare food at home and opt for small healthy lifestyle changes to improve how you age and feel your best.

*Rebecca Myers, MSN, RN is a freelance health journalist with over 15 years of nursing experience.*



## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# Diet changes can improve sleep apnea, even without weight loss

By Anahad O'Connor  
The Washington Post

Every night, millions of people lose sleep because of obstructive sleep apnea, a chronic disorder that causes periodic disruptions in nighttime breathing.

But a growing body of research suggests that improving your eating habits by cutting out ultra-processed foods, cutting back on alcohol and increasing your daily steps can reduce symptoms of sleep apnea and potentially even eliminate it.

The findings are important because sleep apnea is one of the most common causes of bad sleep, affecting an estimated 1 in 5 people worldwide. The condition occurs when the muscles in the back of your throat relax and block your airway

as you're sleeping, causing you to stop breathing. These apnea episodes can last for more than 10 seconds and occur many times a night, leading to gasping, snoring and frequent, abrupt awakenings as your body struggles for air.

Because of the heavy strain it puts on your body, sleep apnea can raise your blood pressure and increase your risk of developing diabetes and heart disease.

Obesity is a particularly strong risk factor because excess tissue in the mouth and throat can block your airway at night. But the new research shows that lifestyle and diet changes can reduce sleep apnea, even if you don't lose weight.

In one recent study published in JAMA Network Open, researchers in Spain recruited 89 overweight and

**"It wasn't a restrictive, low-calorie diet. We just taught them how to eat a healthy diet."**

— Almudena Carneiro-Barrera, the lead author of the study and a researcher at Loyola University Andalusia in Spain

obese men who had moderate to severe sleep apnea and split them into two groups. One underwent a simple diet, exercise and lifestyle intervention. The participants were counseled to eat more healthy whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, beans, olive oil, seafood, poultry, eggs and herbs. They were also encouraged to avoid ultra-processed foods, processed meats, salty snacks and sugar-sweetened beverages.

"It wasn't a restrictive, low-calorie diet," said Almudena Carneiro-Barrera, the lead author of the study and a re-

searcher at Loyola University Andalusia in Spain. "We just taught them how to eat a healthy diet."

The participants were encouraged to reduce their nightly alcohol consumption, and those who smoked were urged to stop. They were also advised to increase their daily step count by 15 percent a week.

The second group of participants, meanwhile, served as controls: They did not receive the lifestyle intervention.

Participants in both groups used a medical de-

vice called a CPAP machine, which delivers a gentle and steady flow of pressurized air through a tube and a mask that users wear while they sleep. CPAP is the standard treatment for sleep apnea. It prevents apnea episodes, but it can be uncomfortable, and many people stop using it or struggle to keep it on at night.

After just eight weeks, the group that adopted healthier habits had a 51 percent reduction in the number of apnea episodes they experienced during each hour of nightly sleep. About 15 percent achieved complete remission of their sleep apnea, and 45 percent no longer needed their CPAP machines.

On average, the healthy habits group lost about 16 pounds - roughly 7 percent of their body weight. By

six months, they had sustained their weight loss, and the number of participants whose sleep apnea went into remission doubled. Roughly 62 percent of them no longer needed their CPAP machines.

They also had significant reductions in blood pressure, which, according to the researchers, lowered their risk of dying from a stroke or heart disease by more than 30 percent.

By comparison, the control group lost on average less than a pound of body weight and had little or no improvement in the severity of their sleep apnea.

"The results were far better than we expected," Carneiro-Barrera said. She and her colleagues are now recruiting 500 women with sleep apnea for a larger, follow-up study.

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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# Enduring the agony of losing a pet

By Craig Miller

For Next Avenue

It's a familiar story.

Nearly 20 years ago, when Sarah Bang of Los Angeles came upon her cat, Bastet, it was a rescue. Bang, 50, says it was a "horrible abuse case," so not surprisingly, Bastet was a handful at first, sometimes requiring oven mitts to handle her. But last year, when Bang had to say goodbye to Bastet after 19 years of bonding, it was unclear who rescued whom.

"She taught me how to be human," Bang recalls.

Nearly six months after Bastet (named for the Egyptian cat goddess) "crossed the rainbow bridge," Bang maintains a closeup of Bastet's emerald-green eyes as the cover photo on her Facebook page. And she still mourns her feisty little Bengal.

"The grief comes in waves," she says. "And comes at unexpected times. I'll hear the wind move the blinds and for a second I think it's her walking along the window." It's not surprising that Bastet's "ghost" looms so large for Bang.

"Animals represent all that is good in this world," says Coleen Ellis, 57, executive director of the International Association for Animal Hospice and Palliative Care, and founder of the Two Hearts Pet Loss Center, an educational group based in Southlake, Texas.

"Their characteristic traits represent things that we as human beings can only wish we could do," says Ellis, who is considered a "pet loss guru."

"They're loyal to us, they trust us unabashedly. They don't judge. They can just sit there and be with us."

Bang echoes the thought,



PHOTO COURTESY OF SARAH BANG

Sarah Bang with her cat, Bastet

almost verbatim. "I do notice when I'm having a tough day, I feel her absence even more," she says, reflecting on the loss of Bastet. "She was always my comfort. She didn't ask questions. She was just there to lay on me and love me."

This kind of unconditional, uncomplicated bond contrasts starkly with the messy relationships that all humans share with one another. It's one reason psychologists say the loss of an animal companion hits us so hard.

## Warm fuzzies

Another reason is the fundamentally tactile nature of furry friendship. Research has shown that just petting an animal — a literal

"warm-fuzzy," to use a pop-psychology term from the 1970s — reduces heart rate and produces endorphins, hormones associated with happiness and well-being.

"When you think about how we're designed as human beings, the deepest bond we have is touching," says Margo Forbes, 75, a psychotherapist in Novato, Calif. "We touch our kids for the first time; put your child on your breast and help them hear your heartbeat. So we're designed to have a touching relationship as the deepest kind of bond. It's the highest form of connection."

The importance of the tactile connection has been heightened at a time of "social distancing," when



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Spurred by the loneliness inflicted during the COVID-19 pandemic, pets of one form or another now reside in an astonishing seven in 10 U.S. households.

many are feeling more isolated than ever. Spurred by the loneliness inflicted during the COVID-19 pandemic, pets of one form or another now reside in an astonishing seven in 10 U.S. households.

## 'Grief is in a big box'

Another factor driving the intensity of feeling about our pets may be that grief is cumulative. "Grief is in a big box," says Forbes, "and every time you have another loss, it brings up all the previous losses." For this and other reasons, loss of a longtime pet can be especially tough on older owners, according to Kathleen Cooney, 49, a veterinarian who teaches euthanasia, animal hospice and welfare at Colorado State University.

"So many of my families have been 'senior humans' and this will be potentially the last cat that they'll have," says Cooney. "So it makes this last goodbye even more meaningful. It's kind of a culmination of many, many years of pet ownership and all those other losses tend to come to the surface."

Social media has provided highly visible platforms for expressions of pet grief, but full-on funerals

for pets are becoming more mainstream, according to Ellis, who says the trend is being driven by human demographics.

"Baby boomers started empty-nesting about fifteen years ago and they weren't done spoiling children," she says.

Likewise, many of those millennial fledglings who weren't quite ready for kids of their own, opted for fur babies instead. "And so you've got the two largest population bands in our country who started making that change," says Ellis.

Sometimes the grief can be compounded by well-intended expressions of sympathy. "A lot of folks will say, 'Oh, 23 years — you know, she had a good run,'" reflects Bang on the loss of Bastet. "But I think that makes it harder because you had so much more time to see them sort of transition from a young cat to an older cat, and you see them change and you're changing with them."

"I think it's important for people to stop saying, I know they were just a cat, or just a dog, or just a bird," Bang says. "She taught me how to be a human being

and she taught me how to be selfless when it came to making decisions for her, because she trusted me to do that."

And then she adds, with obvious anguish, "But there's that terror in knowing that you have to make the decision that's best for her."

## The hardest moment

Cooney teaches veterinarians the gentle art of home euthanasia, when vets make house calls to perform the final, agonizing service for animals and their owners. It's pricier than in-office euthanasia — sometimes significantly — but a field that she says is "growing in parallel with the human animal bond." Cooney says about half of her clients are older and often more willing to go the extra mile for their companions.

"You're thinking about your own loss of your existence," Forbes adds. "It seems kind of counterintuitive that we would have pets, because they're gonna die before we do. There's this agreement: 'Okay, I'm going to form a bond with you and it's going to include grief.'"

Forbes says we could take a cue from our animals and the grace with which they exit this world.

"I think it's a valuable thing actually, that our pets do for us, in preparing us for our inevitable loss of our deep personal relationships with our loved ones and in our own existence."

*Craig Miller is a veteran journalist based in the northern Catskills of New York. His reporting is focused on climate science and policy, energy and the environment. Follow him on Twitter @VoxTerra.*



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## WORK &amp; PURPOSE

# Lessons in leaving the working world

By Erin Flynn Jay

For Next Avenue

At 69 years old, Steve Lopez loves his job and the jolt of energy he gets from writing a newspaper column that serves as a catalyst for conversation in the country's second-largest city.

But he wonders what it might be like to live without ever-present deadlines hanging over his head. If his knees hold out, he'd like to play more tennis, to travel, to hike.

Lopez is a Los Angeles Times columnist and four-time Pulitzer Prize finalist. He has written three novels and a nonfiction book, "The Soloist," a New York Times bestseller and winner of the PEN USA Award for literary nonfiction. The book was made into a DreamWorks movie by the same name in 2009.

His latest book, "Independence Day: What I Learned about Retirement from Some Who've Done It and Some Who Never Will," was published last month.

Next Avenue spoke to Lopez via phone about planning ahead, questions of identity, financial limitations, and what to do with your precious life when the obituary pages are no longer filled with strangers.

## What would Mel Brooks do?

Lopez took a year to consider retiring and wrote about the process. He interviewed Mel Brooks because he is in his 90s and still working. "Maybe there's something there about the creative force that in order to stay alive, if you're a writer, a storyteller, you've got to just keep doing it," Lopez explained. "He said, 'Look, you're always gonna

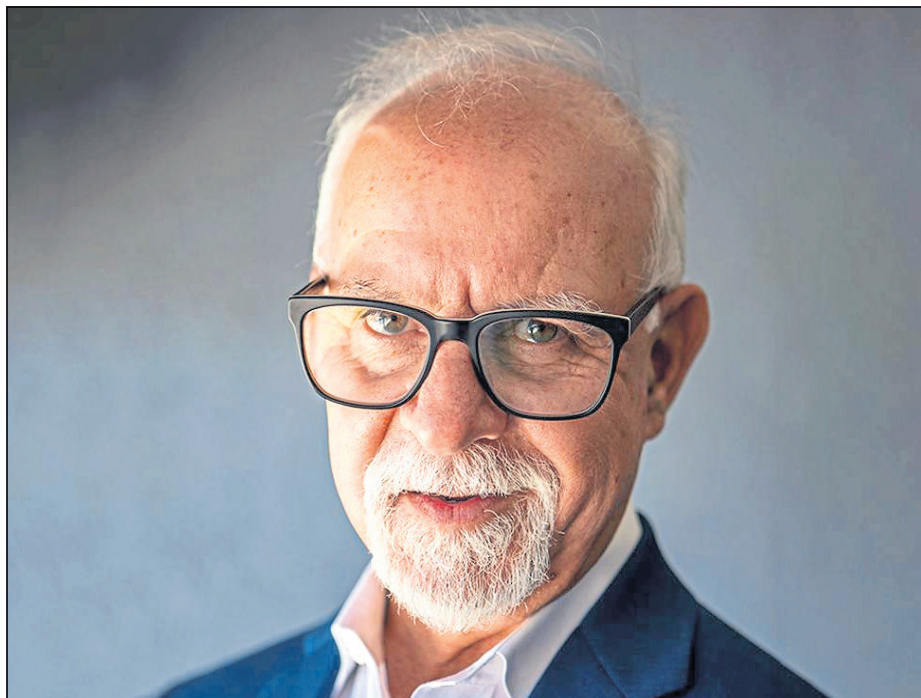


PHOTO COURTESY OF NEXT AVENUE

Next Avenue speaks with columnist Steve Lopez, 69, about planning ahead, questions of identity, financial limitations, and what to do with your 'golden years.'

be writing.' Here I am still writing but enjoying a little bit more off time to do these things that I wanted to do."

Lopez scaled back by tripling his amount of vacation time. And when he's on vacation, he's just taking it easy. When he's working, it's just a regular work week. He gets up on Monday morning and starts chasing columns, juggling different ideas and seeing what works that week.

He just got off the phone with the mayor of Los Angeles for a column about water conservation amid a drought scientists attribute to climate change. The next day, he shifts gear and accompanies a doctor who makes home visits with formerly homeless people, trying to keep them healthy and in good enough shape to maintain their housing.

## Casting a wide net

To write his new book, Lopez corresponded with dozens of people at a retirement community who shared their retirement experiences — ranging from those struggling with a lack of focus and those who took to it right away to people who had to return to work.

Lopez found that people who had retired from certain occupations, such as teachers, lawyers and law enforcement, found that their identity was very much formed by the work they had done.

About 12 years ago, Lopez was in recovery from a knee replacement when he went into cardiac arrest and had to be resuscitated. He ended up with a pacemaker and is in regular contact with a cardiologist.

"My parents had heart issues," he said. "We don't

know how long we're going to be around because of our health. So many people who get to this age are dealing with the limitations that declining health delivers them in such a merciless way. That was something that made me think it's really time to do something."

## Who am I if I retire?

Lopez wanted to make his book more about identity. "If you are identified in part by what you do for a living, and if you feel some usefulness, some relevance in that work, then aren't you headed for an identity crisis (when you retire), and how do you handle that? How do you create a new profile of yourself in ways that are meaningful for you?" he asked.

One person Lopez went to for advice was a rabbi who had her own career

**"Maybe there's something there about the creative force that in order to stay alive, if you're a writer, a storyteller, you've got to just keep doing it. (Mel Brooks) said, 'Look, you're always gonna be writing.' Here I am still writing but enjoying a little bit more off time to do these things that I wanted to do."**

— Steve Lopez

change when she found that being a full-time rabbi was very gratifying but did not leave time for her to also be a mom, wife and author. She created her own synagogue where members meet once a month, leaving her time for other things she wanted to enjoy.

"Her advice to me was don't wait until you retire — start to try to experience those things (you want to do) and see if the reality matches the ideal," said Lopez. "Do you really think you're going to play the guitar at the age of 75 and enjoy that? I've been playing the guitar for a year. If you think you're going to pursue language, you better find out if that really is going to be as rewarding and engaging as you imagine it will be."

Lopez started working on his Spanish trying to get fluent enough to conduct in-

terviews that he feels comfortable quoting in his own column. He is playing the guitar on average an hour a day.

## Steve Lopez, the Soloist

As Lopez contemplates retirement, the pandemic served as a learning tool because his office has been closed since it began. Lopez's wife is a freelance writer who also works out of their house.

Older adults also need to deal with empty spaces in the house. "Your daughter has gone off to college and then you've got to deal with the house shrinking again, and there you are with your wife all day instead of just several hours a day," he said.

"And so, you've got to rebuild relationships," he continued. "The pandemic has helped as sort of a preview of what retirement would be like, at least in terms of where I spend most of my hours."

Lopez said he and his wife have both agreed that they need to work harder building a different kind of life.

"I'm nurturing friendships that went by the wayside because I was too busy with work," he said. "The pandemic has helped me understand that I've got to get out of the house. I've got to find activities that involve my wife, but also don't involve her, but involve a network of friends. I think that's healthy for retirement and healthy for a relationship."

*Erin Flynn Jay is a writer, publicity expert and author of "Mastering the Mommy Track: Juggling Career and Kids In Uncertain Times."*



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## WORK &amp; PURPOSE

# Avoid caregiver burnout this holiday season

Just over half of people 50 and older in the U.S. regularly help an older adult with health, personal and other care needs. It may come as no surprise that a majority points to emotional or physical exhaustion as the steepest price they pay.

On the other hand, the vast majority of the more than 2,100 adults randomly sampled for a poll about caregiving say that helping an older adult is more rewarding than not.

In July, the University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging surveyed 2,163 adults 50-80 years old in the U.S. about their experiences helping a 65-plus adult with their care needs. That includes making or attending doctor appointments; cleaning house or doing yard work; shopping or preparing meals; paying bills or banking; dressing or bathing; managing medications; and coordinating care and health insurance.

The poll wanted to get at what kind of assistance is being offered to help older adults age in place rather than the level of support or its intensity, says Courtney Polenick, PhD, a caregiver researcher and assistant professor in the UM Department of Psychiatry. As the senior population is set to explode in the next few decades, it is important to learn where help is most needed — and how those helping need support, she says.

The report showed that 65% of caregivers say they struggle with emotional and physical fatigue, work-caregiving balance, time for themselves, and balancing time with family and friends, in that order.

Those helping an older adult with mild cognitive impairment, Alzheimer's disease or another type of dementia — 28% of those surveyed — found caregiving to be the most stressful.

Other findings of the report:

- Married/partnered people with college degrees are more likely to be care providers
- Just over half of caregivers are 50 to 64 years old
- Men make up 51% of the caregiving force; females make up 56% (The reported percentages use survey weights to reflect nationally representative estimates)
- The most common task caregivers reported doing in the last two years was helping an older adult with



## Challenges providing help to adults age 65 and over AMONG ADULTS AGE 50-80

**54% reported helping older adults**

**65% reported at least one challenge:**

**34%** emotional or physical fatigue

**31%** balancing work or other responsibilities

**22%** lack of time for self-care

**21%** balancing time with family/friends

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### CAREGIVER COACHING

Caregiver Coaching, a new program offered by the agency, aims to ease caregiving by connecting caregivers with trained volunteer coaches who can help them navigate resources, work through challenges, and sometimes just listen.

Communications are typically by phone or Zoom using specific, HIPPA-compliant software to protect confidentiality and privacy. Partners set their own schedule.

The program is available to people who live in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw counties or to anyone who takes care of a loved one in one of those counties.

To learn more about the program, call (800) 852-7795, email [coaching@aaa1b.org](mailto:coaching@aaa1b.org), or visit [micaregivercoach.org](http://micaregivercoach.org).

### doctors

- Two-thirds of people caring for an older adult do not live with them
- About half of those surveyed said they help with 1-2 tasks; 29% reported helping with five or more care tasks.

Polenick says the results of the survey weren't surprising, but there were other "notable" findings, including that 96% of those polled reported at least one positive aspect of helping.

"We often think of helping an older person as stressful. However, an interesting finding is almost all the people who provide assistance to older adults experience rewards: two-thirds reported at least one chal-

lenge, but nearly all are getting some type of reward. It was a finding I was happy to see," she says.

A benefit, more than half of those polled said, was feeling appreciated.

But nearly 60% of adults who provide care for older adults said it's made them more aware of their own future health and personal care needs — a finding Polenick finds hopeful.

The National Poll on Healthy Aging reports on data collected by NORC at the University of Chicago for UM's Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation.

*Content courtesy of Area Agency on Aging 1-B.*

### CAREGIVERS: TAKE CARE

Caregiving for a loved one can be stressful, as studies have repeatedly shown.

Just one of those, the Caregiving in the U.S. 2020 report by AARP, found that from 2015 to 2020, caregivers' health declined. It didn't matter the age of the care recipient, hours of care provided, whether the caregiver was low- or high-income, married or unmarried, or whether the person chose to be a caregiver or not.

Staying healthy means taking care of oneself, another finding of multiple caregiving studies.

"We need to remember that we must take responsibility for our own health and well-being. It's important for us to take care of ourselves so that we can then help others. If our health diminishes, who will be there for the person we are caring for?" says Jeannine Roach, manager of health promotion at the Area Agency on Aging 1-B.

Roach and Julie Lowenthal, the agency's coordinator of volunteer & caregiver services, offer these tips for caregivers:

- Be realistic about what you can and cannot do to help yourself and others
- Schedule time for yourself each day or at least a few times a week to do something you enjoy
- Decide what you are going to do, when you will do it, how much will you do, and how often. The more specific you can be, the more likely you will be to do it
- Temper your expectations of your loved one(s)
- Don't be afraid or ashamed to ask for help. Asking for help is a strength
- Celebrate the milestones of your experience
- Know that self-care is paramount in your journey as caregiver



## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# Local pillar of Warren still staying active at age 95



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELEANOR BATES  
Eleanor Bates

**By Debra Kaszubski**  
*For MediaNews Group*

When Eleanor Bates was a teen, her sister-in-law joked that she must have been born in a hurry because she's always on the go.

Fast forward decades later and even at age 95, the lifelong Warren resident is still very busy. Bates is a member of the Warren Historical Society, the Warren Beautification Commission, the Warren Symphony Band Board, and the Warren Concert Band Board. This month, she finishes serving on the Van Dyke Public Schools Board of Education. She was elected in 2005.

When she's not busy with her many community service activities, she's an active bowler. She bowls in a league every Thursday. She also attends church regularly at St. Clements in Warren. "I keep

busy so I don't miss anything," she joked.

In the past, Bates was active with the Van Dyke Public Schools PTA, the Warren City Council, the Warren Community Development Corporation and more.

Bates has a lifetime of memories in Warren, starting from when she was young. After her father died in 1937 and her mother was committed to a sanitarium shortly after, Bates and her six siblings were raised by her oldest brother and his wife. Since her brother worked two jobs, Bates spent the majority of her time with her sister-in-law, who was a tough disciplinarian. "She made us clean and I had a curfew up until I was 21 years old," she said. "She was the boss and she sacrificed a lot for us."

Bates graduated from Lincoln High School in 1946. While she was in school, she was the senior

class president and played trumpet with the band. After she graduated, she took business classes at Macomb Community College (located then within Lincoln High School). Shortly after, she married Ted Bates, who would later go on to serve as the mayor of Warren for 14 years. The couple, who divorced years later, had five children.

A lifelong resident of Warren, Bates still lives in the home she built with Ted, her siblings, and a handful of contractors. The home, built in 1950, sits near her childhood home. Her children all attended the same high school she graduated from — Lincoln High.

She is quick to point out how much the community has changed in her lifetime. She remembers when the elementary, junior high, and high school students all attended the same

school in one building. She also remembers vacant fields of land.

"Yes, things have certainly changed quite a bit around here, but I'm still here," she laughed. "This has always been my home."

Although her time with the Van Dyke Public Schools is coming to a close, Bates has no intention of slowing down with her other community activities. She regularly attends meetings in person for the other nonprofits and is looking forward to visiting the beautifully landscaped homes and businesses for the Beautification Commission next year.

What advice does she have for those wanting to mirror her long, active life? She said she was blessed with good health, makes attending meetings her hobby, and said she avoids drinking, smoking, and "wild men," which amounts to "good clean living and keeping busy," she added.

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# Poetry Page

## Ode to a Grayton Lady

She was born of bricks and  
mortar and careful plans.  
Her windows were made of  
light and laughter.  
In her green velvet garden,  
the roses were just beginning to  
bloom and in her mind,  
it seems, it was always summer.

**Nan Alexandra Drinkard (2013)  
of Rochester Hills, 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 January 12, 2023.

**Poems due by December 30th.**

## Courage

Pride in our hearts united we stand  
Your love will light the way  
Filled with courage of strength  
While building confidence  
along the way

Remember time will  
guide you day by day  
Let the key of love,  
wisdom and courage  
Be your reference  
as you conquer  
Challenges by faith and love

Thru spiritual guidance  
you will find  
A balance of life  
for today and tomorrow.

**By Sharon Wilson  
of Waterford, MI**



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

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

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

MAIL TO: Vitality Poetry  
And Letters of Appreciation  
Dawn Emke  
53239 Settimo Crt  
Chesterfield, MI 48047

NEW  
ADDRESS

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

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14				15						16				
17				18					19					
20			21					22						
23						24	25						26	27
		28				29				30				
31	32					33		34	35	36			37	
38				39	40							41		
42				43						44	45			
46		47	48					49			50			
51					52	53	54			55			56	57
		58								59				
60	61							62	63				64	
65								66					67	
68								69					70	

### CLUES ACROSS

1. Product or \_\_ (abbr.)  
4. Zodiac sign  
9. S. China seaport  
14. Former OSS  
15. Early English printer  
16. Aphid genus  
17. General's assistant (abbr.)  
18. Aussies  
20. Dissuades  
22. Make law  
23. Drench  
24. Soak in a liquid  
28. Male child  
29. It cools your home  
30. Small constellation  
31. To call (archaic)  
33. Explores beneath the Earth  
37. Commercial  
38. W. hemisphere organization  
39. You can find it in a can
41. "Land of the free"  
42 36 inches  
43. Footwear  
44. Challenges  
46. They hold things together  
49. Of I  
50. Partner to flow  
51. Not connected by kinship  
55. Worries  
58. Garlic mayonnaise  
59. A way to take by force  
60. Legendary English rockers  
64. Your consciousness of your own identity  
65. Fencing swords  
66. Silly  
67. Actor DiCaprio  
68. Encircles with a belt  
69. Mails a message  
70. Longing

### CLUES DOWN

1. Horse mackerels  
2. It can be viral  
3. Prickly plants  
4. Consciousness  
5. Type of sarcoma  
6. Tax collector  
7. Sun up in New York  
8. One who scorches  
9. Influential psychotherapist  
10. Situated at an apex  
11. Communicative  
12. Forearm nerve  
13. Former CIA  
19. Folk singer DiFranco  
21. Employee stock ownership plan  
24. Large-scale  
25. School environment  
26. Remove  
27. Male parents  
31. Large rodent
32. Weighed down  
34. Held tightly  
35. \_\_ route: going there  
36. Explains again  
40. Exclamation of surprise  
41. Courteously  
45. Lying down  
47. Judge  
48. Forcefully took  
52. Loosely compacted sediment  
53. High mountain  
54. Portable conical tents  
56. Cereal grass  
57. Dining utensil  
59. Thoughtful  
60. Helps you walk  
61. Indicates near  
62. Midway between northeast and east  
63. Local area network

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to caregiving.

LHLYO

--	--	--	--	--

## CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH

W R O L J O Y A D I L O H N E L T J S S  
E R K R G D T K S M S T O M R Y K V L Y  
S R B H V S W A N H J I N E S V H O E T  
A V D A A C M J O M T G I E E L R I C G  
E F O O D T D P N A D N N U M A W E H F  
W M R B S D P U C E D C O C C A L R A N  
P N H I H I J A K E E H J Y N E N W J D  
L E R R N V V U E G R R W U B H H R A N  
R H D G E U H R A M I I G R P B I S O L  
C S E R O T S T I I U S A R E R K M O J  
P S U S E J H D E L B T K E E A J A O A  
J Y L T O E N C I B I I Y D E V T A G K  
V U B I R I Y S O O A A E V Y J E H J J  
U L C I G G T W N O I N D T U B V U L J  
C J N H L E V E U K K Y D T L R E E N W  
D G T R M R W V G P L I C H E J S K E S  
J W J F F C Y B S I G O E S T N A S J A  
H L O C D E C E M B E R A S I A O K C L  
H I C I J C C A U S O H W T D P R R U K  
I Y E R U N F V D N P R E S E N T S F R

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

### WORDS

CAROLS  
CELEBRATION  
CHRISTIAN  
CHRISTMAS  
COOKIES  
DECEMBER  
EVE  
EVERGREEN  
FAMILY  
GATHERING  
HOLIDAY  
JESUS  
LIST  
MIDNIGHT  
ORNAMENT  
PRESENTS  
REINDEER  
ROAST  
SHOPPING  
STORES  
TINSEL  
VACATION  
WREATH  
YULETIDE

### ANSWER:

N	E	Y		S	D	N	S		S	D	R	I	G	
O	E	L		E	N	V	N	I	S	S	E	E	P	E
O	G	E		N	I	L	E	P	P	E	Z	D	E	L
P	A	N	D	I	K			I	L	O	I	A		
S	R	V	E	F		D	E	T	V	E	R	N	U	
	B	B	E			M	E			S	G	E	P	E
S	E	R	V	D		S	E	O	H	S			D	Y
A	S	U		E	N	I	D	R	V	S		S	A	O
A	D			R	A	V	E	C		E	P	E	L	C
A	R	A	L					C	V		N	O	S	
D	E	T	A	N	I		M	A	R	I		S	U	S
		T	C	A	N	E		S	R	S		D	E	T
S	N	A	I	L	A	T	R	A	U	A		C	D	V
S	H	A	P	A		D	E		O	W		C	I	A
A	C	A	O		M	A	C	A	R	I	E	S	V	C

Answer: Holly

R	F	S	I	N	E	S	E	R	D	N	D	A	F	N	N	R	E	A	I
K	U	R	R	d	d	I	M	H	O	S	U	V	C	C	C	C	I	H	
T	C	K	O	V	I	S	V	R	E	B	H	E	C	E	C	O	T	H	
V	C	S	V	N	I	S	E	O	G	I	S	B	A	C	F	F	M	C	
S	E	K	S	C	E	H	C	I	T	d	g	A	M	R	W	R	L	G	
M	N	E	X	R	T	L	D	A	K	K	U	A	E	T	H	N	C	C	
C	T	U	A	B	U	L	D	N	I	O	N	M	L	g	g	I	C	U	
C	C	H	E	C	A	A	E	V	V	O	O	S	A	T	R	I	B	U	
K	G	V	L	A	E	D	A	I	I	8	I	C	N	E	O	L	T	A	
V	O	V	C	V	E	C	K	L	B	T	E	D	H	C	E	S	U	S	
C	O	W	K	R	E	V	S	N	I	I	S	L	O	R	E	S	C		
T	O	S	I	B	d	g	I	H	V	R	H	U	E	g	D	H	R		
N	V	H	H	B	U	M	R	R	g	E	U	A	V	N	R	E	T		
D	C	M	N	E	N	A	C	H	E	E	K	V	C	I	H	N	d		
N	V	R	T	V	C	C	O	C	O	d	S	U	S	B	R	W	M		
F	H	E	M	V	W	N	N	N	d	V	N	d	L	O	O	d	F	E	
g	C	I	R	T	E	E	I	g	T	W	O	C	W	C	V	d	A	V	
T	E	O	H	A	S	S	M	O	T	C	H	N	V	M	S	A	H	B	
A	T	A	K	A	R	R	O	T	S	W	S	K	T	d	g	K	R	K	
S	S	C	T	L	E	N	H	O	T	L	O								

ANSWER:





## Senior calendar of activities, trips 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).*

### December

**Dec. 8:** Booked for the Evening: "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens. Sponsored by the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave., Roseville, on Thursday, Dec. 8 at 6:30 p.m. in Erin Meeting Room and on Zoom. To join on Zoom, use the Meeting ID: 824 3372 8798. No registration required. Join us each month for a lively conversation about a great book! We read all kinds of books and are always happy to see new faces. You can join us in-person at the Library or connect with us virtually via Zoom. You are welcome to join us even if

you have not read the book. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit [rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov](mailto:rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov)

**Dec. 13:** Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers Group at the Older Persons' Commission, from 2-3 p.m. on Dec. 13. Support group for those caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's or Dementia. Respite care is available. Register by calling 248-608-0261. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit [opcsenior-center.org](http://opcsenior-center.org).

**Dec. 13:** History of the Metroparks at 2 p.m. Sponsored by the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave., Roseville. No registration required. The Huron-Clinton Metroparks are a gem of southeast Michigan. This program will discuss the history of the parks, how they got started, and

how they are a part of our region's identity. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit [rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov](mailto:rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov)

**Dec. 14:** Mental Health and the Holidays with MCCMH — Speaker: Leslie Styer. Sponsored by the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave., Roseville, Wednesday, Dec. 14 at 6 p.m. in Erin Meeting Room and on Zoom. Registration required. The holidays can be a time of great sorrow, loneliness and increased feelings of isolation and depression for some. This seminar will provide information on how the holidays can present unique challenges and feelings of despair for many, how the COVID pandemic has exacerbated the mental health concerns of our community, and what you can do to help yourself and others. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit [rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov](mailto:rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov)

mi.gov

**Dec. 16:** Caring & Sharing Loss Support Group at the Older Persons' Commission on Dec. 16, from 10-11 a.m. for newcomers and 11 a.m. to noon for continued support. Participating in a grief support group can be a healthy step in the healing process. Meet others who are dealing with similar losses and gain a better understanding of the grief process. Register by calling 248-608-0261. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit [opcsenior-center.org](http://opcsenior-center.org).

**Dec. 16:** Coffee and donuts at the DSO featuring Home for the Holidays — share Detroit's favorite holiday musical tradition with family and friends and thrill to the spectacle of the season, from 9:15 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. Trip sponsored by the L'Anse Creuse Public Schools

Community Education Bus departs from 45400 Marketplace Blvd, Chesterfield. Cost is \$60. Tickets can be purchased online at [Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com](http://Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com) or calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330.

**Dec. 17:** The Single Way Christmas Chocolate Fondue at 7 p.m. on Dec. 17. Cost: \$5 (includes hot and cold appetizers and a chocolate fondue with fresh strawberries, pineapple and bananas for dipping). Reservation required by Dec. 16. For location and to make a reservation, call Tom at 586-774-2119.

**Dec. 17:** The Older Persons' Commission is hosting a Motor City Irish Dance Celtic Christmas, from 1-2:30 p.m. on Dec. 17. Enjoy Irish Tea and Cookies at intermission. OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. \$15. Open to the public.

Call 248-659-1029 or visit [opcseniorcenter.org](http://opcseniorcenter.org) for additional information.

**Dec. 20:** OPC 650 Mid-Day Club at the Older Persons' Commission from 2:30-4 p.m.. Jazz up your holiday with the music of Shelia Landis. Appetizers and refreshments. \$15. Open to the public. OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. Call 248-659-1029 or visit [opcseniorcenter.org](http://opcseniorcenter.org) for additional information.

**Dec. 21:** Les Miserables at the Fisher Theatre, from 11:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Trip sponsored by the L'Anse Creuse Public Schools Community Education. Bus departs from 24600 Frederick Pankow Blvd, Clinton Twp. Cost is \$97. Tickets can be purchased online at [Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com](http://Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com) or calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330.

CALENDAR » PAGE 25

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O

### MORNING BINGO Mondays

Open 10:00 a.m. - Starts 11:15 a.m.  
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# Calendar

FROM PAGE 24

## January

**Jan. 5:** Ford Rouge Factory Tour & lunch at Buddy's Pizza, sponsored by L'Anse Creuse Public Schools, on Jan. 5, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Bus departs from 24600 Frederick Pankow Blvd, Clinton Twp. Cost is \$80. Tickets can be purchased online at [Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com](http://Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com) or calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330.

**Jan. 6:** Coffee and donuts at the DSO featuring Twist and Shout — celebrating The Beatles in America, following their journey across the country as Beatlemania won the hearts of Americans everywhere. Sponsored by L'Anse Creuse Public Schools. Trip is from 9:15 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. Bus departs from 45400 Marketplace Blvd, Chesterfield,

MI 48051 — cost is \$60. Tickets can be purchased online at [Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com](http://Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com) or calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330.

**Jan. 12:** Computer Basics and Lunch at the Pankow Center — 3 classes (on Thursdays) starting Jan. 12. Sponsored by L'Anse Creuse Public Schools. Enjoy a lunch prepared by Pankow Center students and learn basic computer skills or specific tech issues you need help with. Held at the Pankow Center, 24600 Frederick Pankow Blvd, Clinton Twp., MI 48036 — cost \$40 for 3 sessions. Tickets can be purchased online at [Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com](http://Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com) or calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330

### Monthly events

▪ **Confident Communicators Club:** Meets monthly for people who seek improving public speaking skills

CALENDAR » PAGE 26



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

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@medianewsgroup.com](mailto:jgray@medianewsgroup.com).



YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO AGING WITH GRACE,  
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## Calendar

### FROM PAGE 25

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.



**WE'RE GIVING YOU A CHANCE TO HIGHLIGHT YOUR SPECIAL PET ON OUR TRIBUTE PAGE BY SENDING US YOUR PHOTO. YOU MAY ALSO WRITE A SHORT TRIBUTE OR POEM ABOUT YOUR PET.**

It's easy! Just fill out the form below and mail or email it to us along with your photo, tribute or poem. Photos will not be returned. We must receive photos by December 30, 2022 to be included in our January issue.

**PET TRIBUTE PAGE**  
LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY  
*Special Friend!*

Name(s) of Pets: \_\_\_\_\_

Member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Family.

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

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

**EMAIL FORM & PHOTO TO:**  
[demke@medianewsgroup.com](mailto:demke@medianewsgroup.com)

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

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



# Poetry Page

## I AM A TREE

A tree that nourishes, and gives strength and hope to the world.  
One that moves with the breeze of the wind,  
Carrying life energy that flows through the Universe.  
Can stand in the mist of a storm without being harm,  
Can see all comings and goings.  
I am a tree that watches over thee,  
I am open and free to be.  
A heart of grace and colors to relieve the soul of it's old age troubles.  
In a world of all there is, I stand firm in the center of it all,  
My trunk standing tall.  
Look up and see the beauty, find your calling  
In the stillness of thy core.  
Know that all is well and divine on this rooted earth,  
Where we come to find our purpose  
That leads us to the Spirit of Divinity.  
I AM A TREE!

**By Alethea Monk  
Howard of Detroit, MI**

## VOICES ARE SILENT

Like pictures on the wall  
Voices are silent.  
Personalities in space  
With no special time,  
No special place.  
Voices are silent.  
Culture is cancelled,  
And friendships weaken  
Fear and anxiety  
Halt communication.  
Voices are silent.  
While eyes tell the story,  
Of positive / negative emotions.  
Look to the skies and breathe.

**By Margherita J.  
Wisowaty of St. Clair Shores, MI**



# Sherry makes every day an adventure and takes our residents to their happy places.



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