

February 2025

GETTING CLOSE

Ballroom dancing
brings couples
together

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Vitality

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

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Couple in their 90s tie
the knot

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BE MINE
Local things to do for
Valentine's Day

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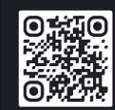
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Box: Ken Rogghe and Elaine Welch enjoy ballroom dancing at Dance on Main in Rochester.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANCE ON MAIN

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SOCIAL & WELL-BEING

STEP INTO HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

THE MAGIC OF BALLROOM DANCING



'Dancing builds stamina, keeps the mind sharp, and brings joy into our lives'

By Susan Thwing
For MediaNews Group

Ballroom dancing is more than just a graceful art form — it is a pathway to better health, deeper relationships and endless fun.

Studies have shown that ballroom dancing can significantly improve balance, cardiovascular health and reaction time, particularly for older adults. Regular ballroom dance practice — just 30 minutes three times a week — has been linked to a 50% improvement in balance and a reduced risk of falls, according to the National Institutes of Health. Unlike other forms of exercise, ballroom dancing provides a low-impact yet highly effective way to build strength, flexibility and endurance.

At Dance on Main in Rochester, owners Bryan and Mari Bowen believe people of all ages can enjoy the many benefits of dance. They teach in a 5,000-square-foot ballroom, complete with live music.

According to Mari Bowen, ballroom dancing is uniquely suited for individuals over 50.

"Ballroom dancing has always been a favorite healthful hobby for years. Many people who are ages 50 and up enjoy this low-impact, fun way to stay active," she said. "This is an incredible way to keep the mind sharp and active, as well as improve cardiovascular health, balance, coordination and so much more. It's also been shown to reduce the risk of Alzheimer's

and dementia."

For Ken Rogghe and Elaine Welch, longtime private lesson students at Dance on Main, the health benefits of dancing have been remarkable: "We're in much better shape physically and mentally. Dancing is our happy place," Welch said.

Mel and Debbie Blackford, who have been dancing for over a decade, agree.

"We both do regular workouts, but adding dance to our routine has improved our balance and coordination. Dancing builds stamina, keeps the mind sharp, and brings joy into our lives," Debbie Blackford said.

The social and emotional joy of dance

Beyond physical benefits, ballroom dancing fosters strong social connections and emotional well-being. Many students at Dance on Main initially join for social reasons and end up staying for the friendships and the sense of belonging.

Rogghe and Welch, who started dancing 15 years ago, were looking for a way to be more social and meet new people. While their first class left them feeling uncoordinated, they stuck with it and soon found themselves not only improving their dance skills, but also strengthening their relationship as a couple.

"We are more in tune with each other's rhythm and emotions," Rogghe said. "Dancing together has definitely brought us closer."

Bowen emphasizes that

Dance on Main is a community where every step is celebrated: "We provide weekly group classes, private lessons, and dance parties for everyone of all levels. Couples and singles alike can enjoy dancing with us because each step you take is supported and celebrated."

For the Blackfords, the supportive community at Dance on Main has become a cherished part of their weekly routine. "We look forward to our lessons every week," Debbie said. "The atmosphere is fun, the people are wonderful, and dancing is a great way to unwind and connect."

Overcoming challenges and building confidence

Many newcomers to ballroom dancing worry about feeling awkward or making mistakes, but Bowen encourages newbies to stick with it.

"The first lesson is often about overcoming the fear of the dance floor," she said. "By the second and third lessons, students begin to develop muscle memory, making movements feel more effortless and enjoyable."

Welch recalls their early struggles with learning to dance as a couple: "At first, we felt very uncoordinated. Trying to synchronize our movements was a challenge, but we kept practicing and improving."

The Blackfords faced a common challenge — learn-

Mel and Debbie Blackford have been dancing for more than a decade.

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SOCIAL & WELL-BEING

THEY MARRIED AT 98 AND 96

'WHO DOESN'T LOVE A GREAT LOVE STORY?'

By Sydney Page

The Washington Post

It started with an invitation to his 98th birthday party.

"I wanted her to be there," Bernard Snyder said of Jo Cartwright, 96.

Snyder and Cartwright — both widowed — live at the same retirement community in Austin. After knowing her for several years, Snyder started developing a crush on Cartwright. He mustered the courage to invite her to his birthday party in January 2024, and to his delight, she showed up. (He invited two of her friends, too, to improve the odds of her attending.)

"I was very much aware at his birthday party that he kept staring at me," Cartwright said.

When Snyder later confessed to his cousin that he had a crush on Cartwright, the cousin urged him to make his move. He needed to be bolder than a simple birthday party invite.

"If you're interested in this young woman," he recalled his cousin advising him, "give her some flowers and some ice cream."

Snyder heeded the advice and left a bouquet of roses and a tub of chocolate ice cream (which melted by the time she got home) outside Cartwright's door. He came by a couple of hours later to make sure she got it.

"I wondered who in the world would leave ice cream at the door," Cartwright said.

Still, she was excited by the attention. She thanked her admirer and gave him a kiss on the cheek.

"Well, that got me," Snyder said.

Sparks were suddenly flying between the two — neither of whom expected to have a second shot at love, especially so late in life.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GAYLE ADARMES

Jo Cartwright and Bernard Snyder kiss on their wedding day.

Cartwright was married for 67 years, and after her husband died in 2014, she did not consider dating. She moved into Westminster, the senior living community, in 2017, around the same time Snyder and his wife arrived. Snyder's wife — to whom he was married for 73 years — died in July 2023 after a lengthy illness.

"I was lonely," said Snyder, a World War II veteran, adding that he rarely went downstairs for dinner. Instead, he'd eat alone in his room.

When Snyder's wife was still alive, Cartwright took note of how well he treated her.

"I was so impressed with what a gen-

tle, kind man he was to her," said Cartwright, explaining that she occasionally socialized with the Snyders and got to know them both.

Snyder said he hadn't considered the prospect of finding love again, until he spotted Cartwright at a chicken restaurant in town several months after his wife died.

"I saw Jo looking at a big piece of chicken," Snyder said. "She didn't know what to do with it; she needed someone to help her."

"I had never seen anything like it in my life," said Cartwright, explaining that the chicken seemed too big to handle. "I remember looking at that thing and thinking 'How in the world do I start this?'"

For whatever reason, Snyder was tickled watching Cartwright contend with the chicken, and that's when his crush came to be. A few weeks later, he invited her to his birthday party. Then came the flowers and ice cream, followed by some dinner dates. Things got serious fast.

"I enjoyed her as a dinner partner, and we seemed to be getting closer and closer," Snyder said. "I never thought I'd fall in love with somebody again. When you're married 73 years, you don't think there's anybody else out there that would be interested in you, and you'd be interested in them."

Although Cartwright was a bit tepid at first, in a matter of weeks, she was smitten, as well. In addition to going for dinner, the couple enjoyed taking walks in the courtyard and exercising together. Snyder — who works out three times a week — began bringing Cartwright to the gym.



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Story

FROM PAGE 6

"He is such a gentleman, for one thing. You don't see that very much anymore," Cartwright said. "He is just a precious man and dear and kind and very loving and attentive. It's nice at age 96 to have someone like that."

The closer they grew, the more Snyder was convinced he had stumbled upon a special relationship. It was more than companionship and convenience, he said. It was a relationship of genuine love and mutual respect.

"She is the warmest, kindest person of anybody I've ever seen," Snyder said of Cartwright.

Unabashedly in love, Snyder wasn't afraid to make his feelings for Cartwright known to the rest of the retirement community. He had no problem initiating public displays of affection.

Early on in their courtship, "this sweet man, with people everywhere, walked over to me when I stood up from the table and just kissed me right there, in front of all those people," Cartwright said.

A few months after they started dating, as they got more serious and spent more time together, Snyder suggested they get married.

"We're at the end of our lives, but we still fell in love with each other," Snyder said, adding that he felt it wasn't enough just to be together. He wanted to make it official.

"That was the last thing on my mind," said Cartwright, who initially wasn't in favor of getting married, but over time, she warmed to it. "We really did fall in love. I didn't know it could happen again."

In July, they decided to get their families together — Cartwright and Snyder each have three children — to discuss the idea of them tying the knot.

"We felt like we needed to talk to them," said Cartwright, adding that they wanted to be especially sensitive to Snyder's children, who lost their mother about a year before.

When they told their collective children that they had some news, Cartwright's son jokingly said: "Are you pregnant?" to his mother.

Although they were somewhat shocked, to the couple's relief, their families approved of the couple's plan to get hitched.

"I was extraordinarily excited," said Donna Snyder, one of Snyder's three daughters. "My dad had been the most devoted husband, and it had been a really rough end-of-life for my

mother and for him, caring for her. ... I couldn't think of anything more beautiful than having a second love."

"I think it's going to help them both stay alive longer," she added. "Certainly, it's going to help them enjoy life to the fullest."

Plus, Donna Snyder said, "When we first met her family, we just bonded."

Cartwright's kids agreed.

"We loved them instantly," said Catherine Todd, Cartwright's daughter. "Bernard is so sweet, and he has just lovely daughters. They've been very welcoming to Mom."

And so began the wedding planning process. They settled on Nov. 1 for their wedding date and decided to have the ceremony in the gazebo of Westminster, and the reception in a hall at the retirement home. They invited about 40 guests to attend the ceremony — mainly close family and a few friends — and 130 people to the reception.

Snyder is Jewish and Cartwright is Protestant. The couple wanted to have an interfaith ceremony, with both a rabbi and a pastor present, but the pastor misunderstood the ceremony start time and ended up arriving late, so the rabbi did the ceremony solo.

"The rabbi did a wonderful job; I was very impressed," Cartwright said.

As Snyder broke the glass — a Jewish wedding tradition — everyone cheered. Their late-life marriage also brought joy to staff and residents throughout the retirement community.

"Our residents and associates have found their newfound love and relationship very heartwarming and inspiring," said Chuck Borst, executive director of Westminster. "Who doesn't love a great love story?"

Two days after the wedding, Gayle Adarmes, Cartwright's daughter, took Snyder and Cartwright to visit their respective late spouses' gravesites. They brought a flower arrangement left over from the wedding for each of them. It was Snyder's idea.

"It was really sweet," Adarmes said. "Every time I think about it, I get teary-eyed."

Snyder and Cartwright said married life is so far, so good.

"We love each other more every day," Cartwright said.

They still have separate apartments, though they mostly stay at Cartwright's. They're in the process of finding a place that is big enough for both of their belongings.

The couple said they hope their story reminds people to never give up on love.

"There's hope," Cartwright said. "We want everyone to have what we have."



PHOTO COURTESY OF DONNA SNYDER

A recent photo of Jo Cartwright, 96, and Bernard Snyder, 98.

Dancing

FROM PAGE 4

ing how to lead and follow.

“I had to stop trying to push Mel across the dance floor,” Debbie said. “And he had to learn to take the lead. But working together to get the dance steps right strengthened our bond and communication.”

For many students, participating in Dance on Main’s Showcase Formal Events is a highlight of their ballroom dancing journey.

These elegant evenings bring together students, friends and family to enjoy live music, performances and plenty of dancing.

Rogghe and Welch fondly remember the excitement of performing their first West Coast Swing showcase. “It was so satisfying to see all our practice pay off on the dance floor,” Welch said.

Mel Blackford echoes that sentiment, recalling the thrill

of learning a new routine for their first showcase: “It was a big challenge, but also incredibly rewarding. We never imagined ourselves performing on stage, but with the support of our instructors, we did it!”

Advice for beginners

For anyone hesitant to try ballroom dancing, the students have a simple message — just go for it.

Rogghe and Welch encourage others to “dance like no one is watching.” They describe ballroom dancing as “a fun, stimulating and mentally challenging experience” that anyone can enjoy at their own pace.

The Blackfords emphasize there’s no need to feel intimidated.


“Everyone starts somewhere. With practice, confidence will come,” Debbie said. “Dancing is a great way to stay active and social — and it’s much more fun than sitting on the sidelines at weddings or events.”

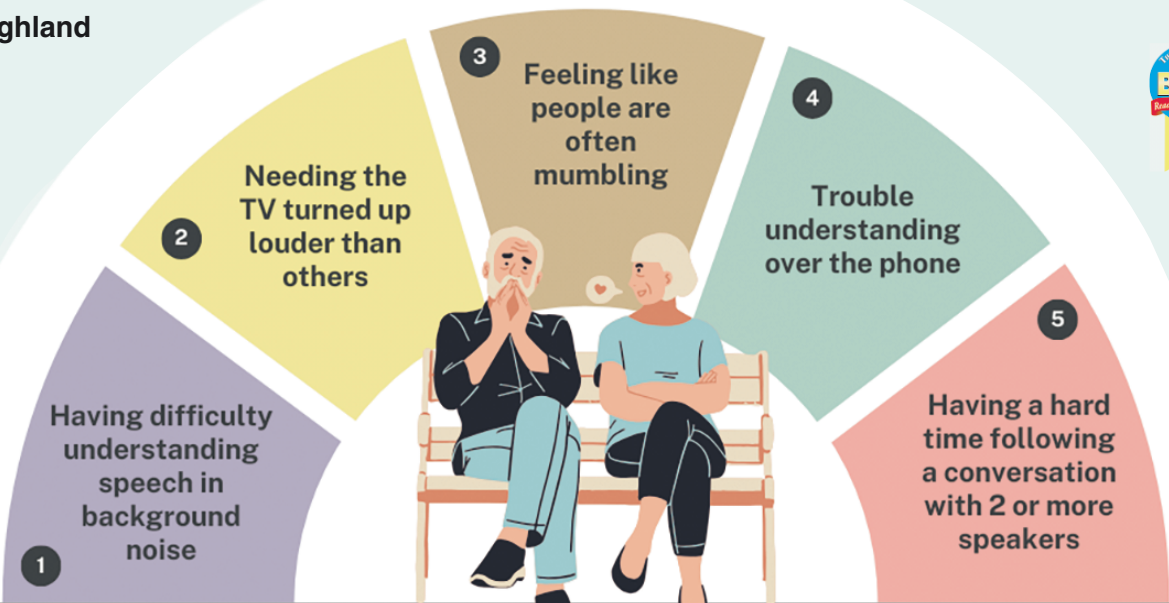


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Dance on Main in Rochester features a 5,000-square-foot ballroom, complete with live music.

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SOCIAL & WELL-BEING

HEATING UP THE ROMANCE

7 FUN THINGS FOR COUPLES TO DO FOR VALENTINE'S DAY IN OAKLAND, MACOMB

By Susan Thwing
For MediaNews Group

Valentine's Day is the perfect time to celebrate love and connection, and if you're in Macomb or Oakland County, there's no shortage of fun and unique experiences to enjoy with your special someone. Whether you're looking for a cozy night out, a hands-on adventure, or a peaceful retreat, this list has something for every couple.

Savor a wine tasting experience

Where: Filipo Marc Winery, 39085 Garfield Road, Clinton Township

Wine lovers will adore a romantic evening at Filipo Marc Winery, where you can sip on expertly crafted, custom-blended wines in an intimate setting. Elevate your Valentine's toast with a special bottle to take home. Visit filipomarcwinery.com for details.

Where: Michigan by the Bottle Wine Tasting Rooms, locations in Auburn Hills, Royal Oak and Shelby Township

Combining events like trivia, calligraphy classes, live music and more with tastings of fine wines, wine lovers can enjoy an evening of tasting and fun. A full schedule is available at mbtbtasting.com.

Where: OPC Social & Activity Center, 650 Letica Drive, Rochester

If you prefer an intimate dining experience, attend a wine pairing dinner with expert sommelier Christel Gaillard from Woodberry Wines from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Feb. 20. This event features paired wines and gourmet dishes in a cozy, romantic setting. Tickets are \$40 for OPC members and \$45 for nonmembers. Call 248-659-1029 for reservations.

Enjoy a live show together

Where: Meadow Brook Theatre, 378 Meadow Brook Road, Rochester

Immerse yourselves in the magic of live theatre with a Broadway-style performance at Meadow Brook Theatre. This professional venue offers an enchanting date night experience, from musicals to dramas. The current offering is "The Angel Next Door." It's "a screwball comedy ... about people in love with theater, who know that, sometimes, even reality needs a rewrite to reach a happy ending."



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO EDITORIAL SERVICES

Whether it's a wine pairing or simply a fun night out, there are plenty of options for Valentine's Day throughout Oakland and Macomb counties.

Where: Macomb Center for the Performing Arts, 44575 Garfield Road, Clinton Township

From musical performances to plays to dance, The Macomb Center for the Performing Arts is often referred to as the cultural hub of Macomb County, and is a provider of year-round cultural enrichment experiences. Check out February attractions by visiting macombcenter.com.

Where: OPC Social & Activity Center, 650 Letica Drive, Rochester

Enjoy "A Night with the Stars: Rod Stewart & Elton John Tribute," a high-energy tribute show featuring the singers' legendary sounds. This romantic and lively event will have you singing along to time-

less classics. Tickets are \$25 and must be purchased by calling 248-659-1029. The show is 6-7:30 p.m. Feb. 13.

Take a cozy winter stroll

Where: Stony Creek Metropark, 4300 Main Park Drive, Shelby Township

Bundle up and embrace the winter wonderland with a serene walk through Stony Creek Metropark. Enjoy the snow-covered trails, frozen lakes and peaceful wooded paths — perfect for a romantic escape into nature.

Get hands-on with a cooking class

Where: Sur La Table, 2801 W. Big Beaver Road, Suite 264, Troy

Why go out for dinner when you can learn to cook a gourmet meal together? Sur La Table offers hands-on cooking classes where you can master everything from pasta-making to decadent desserts. Visit surlatable.com/cooking-classes.

Where: Mirepoix Cooking School, 1203 S. Main St., Royal Oak

A full schedule of February classes, including a Valentine's Wine Pairing, can be found at mirepoixcookingschool.com. Both in-person and virtual events are held.

Unwind with couples' yoga or meditation

Where: Your favorite studio

Find your Zen with a couples' yoga session or meditative Tai Chi experience. These activities promote relaxation and wellness and strengthen your bond through mindful movement and connection.

See a classic movie on the big screen

Where: Your favorite theater

Transport yourselves back in time by catching a throwback movie screening at a local theatre. Many cinemas feature romantic classics or cult favorites around Valentine's Day, making for a cozy and nostalgic date night. Imagine theater's Flashback Cinema airs favorites such as "Casablanca," "Gone with the Wind" and "Moonstruck." A different movie is presented each week. Visit emagine-entertainment.com/flashback-cinema.

Try a unique artistic workshop

Where: Local artisan studios

Get creative with a painting, sculpture or even a glassblowing class, where you and your partner can craft a one-of-a-kind keepsake. Many studios in the area offer hands-on workshops, allowing you to create something memorable and personal. Check out Painting with a Twist, which has multiple locations throughout the area, or Hawaii Fluid Art, 1426 N. Rochester Road, Rochester Hills, for Valentine's special deals.

MONEY & SECURITY*Real estate: Can I be forced to scrap septic system and connect to city sewer?*

Q : We bought a home in Macomb County that was a for sale by owner. As part of the negotiation, we waived the home inspection, including the septic test. We had a company come out to test the septic system and found out it does not work properly. The company that did the testing says that because of regulations, it cannot be repaired and that we need to connect to the city sewer. Not sure why we can't have it repaired. The company that did the testing estimates the cost for connecting to the city sewer at \$12,000 to \$14,000. Does this sound right?

A : Yes, it sounds right. In August 2002, Macomb County changed its regulations governing on-site sewage disposal systems evaluation and maintenance.

If your system fails and a public sanitary sewer is available, your home must be connected to the public sewer system. Macomb County's definition of an available sewer is as follows: "A

public sewerage system located not more than 200 feet at its nearest point to a premises from which sanitary

sewage originates, the use of which is permitted by the responsible governmental entity." If a public system is not available, then the septic system must be repaired, expanded or replaced as deemed necessary by the Health Department.

Some municipalities require you to use a contractor that is on their approved list for well and septic. I recommend con-

tacting your municipality first to see if they have an approved list and then get multiple estimates. I have heard that if it's a minor repair, some of the municipalities will allow a repair depending on what it is.

Q : My wife and I are looking to downsize and sell our home that we've been in for many years and buy a condo. It concerns us to sell our home because there doesn't seem to be a lot of condos for sale in the areas where we're looking. A double move is

out of the question.

A : I recommend that if you have the financial ability, to buy the condo first and then sell your home after.

Another option is to list your home with the sale subject to you finding a replacement property within "x" number of days. (There is a lot more language that needs to be included with this option, but not enough room here to include.) In today's market, inventory continues to be low. Your house will sell so that's not a concern. Finding a condo to buy will be more of a challenge, but not impossible.

Steve Meyers is a real estate agent/ Realtor at Realty Executives Home Towne in Shelby Twp. He can be contacted with questions at 586-997-5480 or email him at Steve@MeyersRealtor.com. You also can visit his website at AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com.



Steve Meyers

Market update

December's market update for Macomb County and Oakland County's housing market (house and condo sales) is as follows. In Macomb County, the average sales price was up by almost 14% and Oakland County's average sales price was up by almost 11%. Macomb County's on-market inventory was down by almost 3% and Oakland County's on-market inventory was down by almost 13%. Macomb County's average days on market was 34 days and Oakland County's average days on market was 31 days. Closed sales in Macomb County were down by almost 2% and closed sales in Oakland County were down by almost 3%. The closed sales continue to be down as a direct result of the continued low inventory. Demand remains high. (All comparisons are month to month, year to year.)

By the long-standing historical definition from the National Association of Realtors, which has been in existence since 1908, a buyer's market is when there is a seven-month supply or more of inventory on the market. A balanced market between buyers and sellers is when there is a six-month supply of inventory. A seller's market is when there is a five-month or less supply of inventory. Inventory has continued to stay low. In December, the state of Michigan's inventory was at 2 months of supply. Macomb County's inventory was at 1.8 months of supply and Oakland County's inventory was at 1.6 months of supply. By definition, it's still not close to a buyer's market.

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SOCIAL & WELL-BEING

MAINTAINING A CLOSE-KNIT CIRCLE



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METRO EDITORIAL SERVICES

FEELING CONNECTED IS KEY TO TACKLING SOCIAL ISOLATION

By AgeWays

Formerly Area Agency on Aging 1-B

Good friends keep us happier and healthier.

A recent survey of adults older than 50 by the Michigan Poll on Healthy Aging found that most of them have a close friend who will encourage them to take care of their health. Those who don't have a close friend face more isolation, and they tend to be in worse physical and mental health.

The poll grew out of the National Poll on Healthy Aging that has been run by the University of Michigan's Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation since 2017, with support from AARP and Michigan Medicine. There were 1,175 survey participants.

"We know that Michiganders as a whole, and older Michiganders especially, have more risk factors for serious health conditions than other Americans, including obesity, tobacco use, low rates of physical

activity, and high rates of chronic conditions," said poll director Dr. Jeffrey Kullgren, a doctor at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System and associate professor of internal medicine at U-M. "Any help that Michiganders over 50 can get from their close friends to support and improve their health and well-being and stay on track with taking medication and getting care, will go a long way."

Developing good friendships isn't easy, but it can be especially tough for older

adults. Some don't have enough contact with others for a variety of reasons — a lack of transportation, having an illness, or simply not knowing where to go to find companionship. Others don't admit to being lonely, either to themselves, others or both.

Robert Miller, a social worker at AgeWays Nonprofit Senior Services, emphasizes the importance for older adults of feeling connected. Miller works with participants in the MI Choice Medicaid Waiver

Program, many of whom are challenged by a lack of mobility or serious health problems. Some don't have family or a caregiver who regularly checks in on them.

When Miller visits to assess a participant or calls them: "They talk a lot more. It's a social opportunity for them. They don't realize they're missing it."

Finding friends online

Miller says online interaction, via Facebook, Tik Tok or Instagram, can be a good social outlet for older adults.

He hopes more seniors get comfortable with using social media, a good way to reconnect with old friends or meet people with like interests. (Keep in mind that there are plenty of scammers lurking on social media who are looking for vulnerable people. Don't give out personal information and don't agree to meet with anyone in person.)

Virtual meetings via Zoom or other video platforms are another good way to interact with people.

Finding friends at senior centers

Some older adults don't see themselves as "senior," so heading to a local senior center sounds dreadful, Miller says.

But bingo isn't always on the menu — or at least the only activity on the menu. Plenty offer themed nights with games or live music, pickleball games, day trips to museums and theaters, and courses in using social media.

Joining a group for lunch at a center or church that offers congregating dining (dining with others) is another way to get out of the house and into a new friend group.

Call AgeWays at 800-852-7795 for a list of sites. Call your local senior center to get

a schedule of events.

Finding friends with a call

Friendly Caller programs are offered throughout southeast Michigan. Typically, volunteers will call a homebound senior on a schedule to check up on them. At least one organization, Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers, offers in-home visits.

Call AgeWays to get a list of programs: 800-852-7795.

Key points of the Michigan Poll on Healthy Aging

- Of Michiganders ages 50 and older, 88% have at least one close friend.
- Overall, 24% said they do not have enough close friends; among older adults who described their mental health as fair or poor, 49% said they do not have enough close friends.
- The percentage of poll respondents who said they don't have enough close friends was twice as high among older adults who described their mental health as fair or poor (49%) and was also higher than the overall percentage of those with fair or poor physical health, at 34%.
- Of those with a close friend(s), 76% said they can definitely count on them to provide emotional support in good times or bad.

This content is provided by AgeWays Nonprofit Senior Services, a nonprofit that serves older adults and family caregivers in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair and Washtenaw counties. We provide services, programs and resources that are designed to help seniors age safely and independently. Call us at 800-852-7795 to get connected.

Some older adults don't see themselves as "senior," so heading to a local senior center sounds dreadful, Miller says.



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO EDITORIAL SERVICES

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ATTENTION ORGANIZATIONS GROUPS & CLUBS

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Deadline is February 26, 2025

To be included in our next edition please Email to:

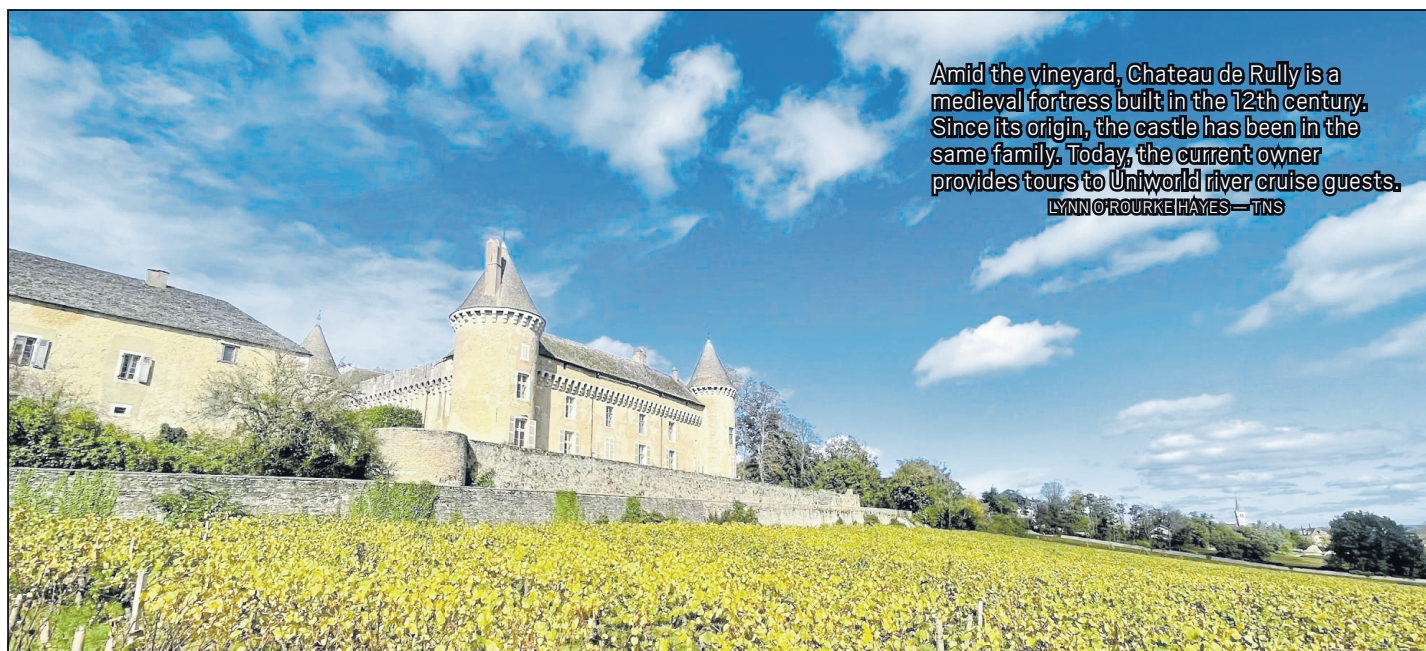
**VITALITY
Groups & Clubs**

Email: Joe Gray

jgray@medianewsgroup.com

Subject Line: Vitality Community Calendar

SOCIAL & WELL-BEING



Amid the vineyard, Chateau de Rully is a medieval fortress built in the 12th century. Since its origin, the castle has been in the same family. Today, the current owner provides tours to Uniworld river cruise guests.

LYNN O'ROURKE HAYES—TNS

A RELAXING VACATION CAN HELP SOON-TO-BE GRANDPARENTS PREPARE FOR BUSY TIMES

Lynn O'Rourke Hayes
FamilyTravel.com

Do you have a grandchild on the way? Are you hoping to assist when the new bundle of joy makes his or her debut?

Here's a way to make sure Grandma is rested and ready to be a part of the little one's life. Put a Grannymoon on the calendar. Plan for yourself or gift a soon-to-be grandparent.

Here are five ideas to consider:

Opt for an alpine adventure in Vail

A visit to Vail in Colorado delivers high mountain adventure as well as the opportunity to shop in chic boutiques, sample gourmet fare in chef-owned restaurants and relax around a cozy fire surrounded by Rocky Mountain vistas.

The Four Seasons hotel's on-site spa provides refuge for those eager to wind down after a thrill-filled day. Soak in the hot tub or revive in the cold plunge.

Or, prepare for the next adventure with the Peak Performance muscle-soothing salt scrub followed by a therapeutic sports massage. Those who struggle to sleep at altitude or at home may want to opt for the Sleep Ritual, a treatment designed to guide the body and mind into deep slumber. It's

a skill every grandparent can put to use.

For more: fourseasons.com/vail/spa

Fish the Florida Keys

During a grown-up getaway, chase big bonefish, tarpon and permit in the Florida Keys, one of the world's top spots for saltwater fly-fishing. Practice your side casting and work on that double haul.

Then prepare to be mesmerized by the reefs, flats and blue waters of these southern waters. Islamorada, comprised of six islands and billed as the "sportfishing capital of the world", is a popular spot for eager anglers. It's said backcountry and saltwater fly-fishing were launched in this Florida community. Key Largo, the longest island in the archipelago, is said to host more than 600 species of fish.

For more: fla-keys.com; visitflorida.com

Explore via a river cruise

Whether you choose to float a river in India, France, Spain or Italy, you'll board a Uniworld ship that is unique to your destination. From the color palette to furnishings, art and antiques, you'll feel right at home where you are.

Settle into your luxurious cabin, unpack once and let the exploration begin. Each day, your excursions will provide an in-

depth experience, wading into local cultures, shopping, museums and dining. You'll visit a local vineyard, dine inside a 1,000-year-old castle or sample handmade cheeses or chocolates. For those seeking more active outings, itineraries offer walking, hiking, cycling and kayaking options. Onboard each boutique ship, expect premium wines and spirits, farm-to-table cuisine, musical entertainment and warm and friendly service.

For more: uniworld.com

Value the views and the vibe in Hawaii

It's a lush island of contrast, where seafaring activities and land adventures compete for your attention. Play a round of sunset golf on the stunning, oceanside Jack Nicklaus Signature Manele Golf Course, where the views will take your breath away. It doesn't get much better than this coastal feast for the senses located on the southeastern shores of the island. Built on lava outcroppings, you'll be hard-pressed to keep your eye on the ball.

Your biggest hazard on at least three holes? The Pacific Ocean. Complimentary clubs, including sets for junior players, are available. Off the course, relax amid

the towering pines, tropical flowers and brightly hued birds on the property. Spend a day at the beach where surfing, snorkeling, kayaking and turtle watching are on the itinerary.

For more: fourseasons.com/lanai

Create Mediterranean-inspired memories in Barcelona

Treat yourself to the beauty and bounty of Barcelona, a city known for innovative design, culinary creativity and its location on the magical Mediterranean.

Visit the Picasso Museum, stroll La Rambla and marvel at Sagrada de Familia and Park Guell, two of Antoni Gaudi's modernist masterpieces. Check into the well-situated and towering Hotel Arts Barcelona, a destination in itself, for world-class views, easy access to the beach and a rooftop spa and outdoor pools that overlook the city and the shimmering sea. Choose from well-designed guest rooms and suites, or splurge for a duplex penthouse. For a top-notch treat, plan to experience Enoteca, the hotel's highly acclaimed, two Michelin-starred restaurant, from Paco Perez, Catalonia's highest awarded chef.

For more: ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/spain/barcelona; enotecapacoperez.com/en

SOCIAL & WELL-BEING

How these 6 steps can help you travel the right way after retirement

By Morayo Ogunbayo
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

One of the things new retirees look forward to is having the time to travel. Without PTO limits, vacations after retirement can be something new and different.

It can be so new and different, however, that it can be hard to know where to start.

Here are a few golden rules you can follow to make each trip as smooth and worthwhile as possible:

Don't overschedule

Family trips and vacations in your youth were likely packed with activities and excursions that could sometimes make them exhausting instead of refreshing.

During retirement, however, there is no rush.

"Before, my travel was based on what I was going to achieve and bring home," J. Patrice Marandel, a retired art curator, told Condé Nast Traveler. "Now, it's about my pleasure."

Go your own way

With time constraints on travel while employed, you may have had to follow a strict itinerary to visit every hot spot in your destination.

After retiring, take things easy and see everything you want.

"We know where we're going to stay

along the way, but we hold that really loosely and give ourselves the opportunity to make something else happen," retiree Kim Kelly Stamp told Condé Nast Traveler.

Start the day early

During previous trips, you may have had to plan things later in order to accommodate the whole family. Without the kids, however, you can start the day earlier and beat the lines of tourists.

Travel slower

Once there is no is no reason to rush back to work, you should make an effort to travel slowly and truly take in your surroundings.

When you cram too much into a single trip, two retirees told Condé Nast, "the whole experience just kind of becomes a blur."

Explore

This is the best time to book your holiday travel this year

Don't wait for tomorrow

If there is something you truly want to do, do it. Trips like these should be treasured and not taken for granted.

Ruthie Maldonado-Delwiche, a retiree who spoke to Condé Nast, said she cherishes this advice, because she believes "tomorrow isn't promised."



SIMONA PILOLLA — DREAMSTIME/TNS

One of the things new retirees look forward to is having the time to travel.



GIZMO

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MARCH 13, 2025

SOCIAL & WELL-BEING

SENIOR SLEUTHS ARE THE HOTTEST THING IN MYSTERIES

HERE ARE 5 WHO TAKE A PAGE FROM 'MURDER, SHE WROTE'

By Chris Hewitt

The Minnesota Star Tribune

Everything old is old again in Richard Osman's latest comic mystery, "We Solve Murders."

It's not part of Osman's "The Thursday Murder Club" series, but his fifth book to feature detectives who are old enough to collect pensions and read *Modern Maturity*. And it's part of a wave of mysteries with sleuths who are more likely to pore over clues while clicking away at their knitting than to race down an alley after a maniac.

Many current series feature older detectives, so it's a legit trend. But it's not exactly new.

These contemporary books, including beloved series by Jesse Q. Sutanto and Alexander McCall Smith, follow in the footsteps of the legendary Agatha Christie. Her Hercule Poirot ("And Then There Were None") was already a retiree when he made his debut in the 1920s. And Miss Marple was described as quite elderly when she appeared in her first novel, "The Murder at the Vicarage," in 1930. (Both continued to detect for more than four decades, barely aging in the process.)

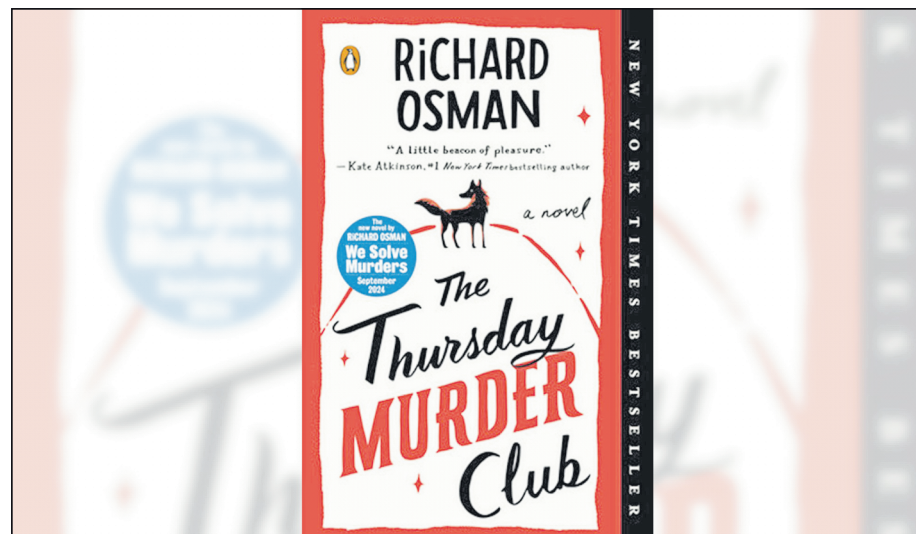
New, older detectives are popping up all the time: Brothers Ian and Will Ferguson just released "Mystery in the Title," which features a has-been TV actor who keeps stumbling over corpses. In June, a series debuts with a Jamaican-British woman who's retired from nursing but not from solving crimes, "A Murder for Miss Hortense."

Here are five series, in order of preference, with gumshoes who, like Miss Marple and "Murder She Wrote"'s Jessica Fletcher, are lifelong learners. Because these characters have so much character, the books often de-emphasize crime solving and pump-up humor and human interaction. So, we've included a ratio to help you determine how much mystery to expect:

The Great Hippopotamus Hotel

Alexander McCall Smith

Who's detecting? Precious Ramotswe, a "traditionally built" Botswanan who operates the No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency, along with assistant Grace Makutsi. They're self-taught detectives, so it's a good thing this sweet, humane series finds them investigating not murders but why a daughter is suddenly ill-behaved or a small business' ledger



HANDOUT — PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE/TNS

It's not part of Osman's 'The Thursday Murder Club' series, but his fifth book to feature detectives who are old enough to collect pensions and read *Modern Maturity*.

no longer balances.

Ratio: 20% mystery/80% African life.

Why age is a plus: Precious has a ton of experience evaluating human nature, which has proved useful in the series' 24 previous books, with a new one almost annually since "The No. Ladies Detective Agency" debuted in 1998. We're not sure how old she is, but she already was middle-aged in 1998 and she seems to age roughly in real-time. That means she has developed a broad network of distant relatives that reaches to the corners of her small African nation, so she almost always knows somebody who knows somebody who can help solve her latest case.

The Thursday Murder Club

Richard Osman

Who's detecting? Like the "Mission: Impossible" gang, it's a group of people, each with a specific skill set. Former special agent Elizabeth enlists three neighbors to help solve the murder of a property developer at the retirement village where they live: Elizabeth has detecting know-how developed over many decades; Joyce is a talker who sometimes elicits surprising information from suspects; Ibrahim is a silent type whose psychiatry background often comes in handy; and tough guy Ron, a former union activist, never trusts anyone or backs down from a challenge. "Thursday" appeared in 2020 and Osman produced a

sequel in each of the next three years ("The Last Devil to Die" is the most recent). The next one is due in 2025.

Ratio: 70% murder/30% chess and tea.

Why age is a plus: Collectively more than 300 years old, the Thursday Murder Club members are underestimated by virtually everyone they meet — and they're good at using that to their advantage.

We Solve Murders

Richard Osman

Who's detecting? First the bad news: Osman's latest is not a "Thursday" book. The good news? It's almost as much fun, and it's not all that different. Instead of the four "Thursday" retirees, "We Solve Murders" has three sleuths: a randy, 80ish romance novelist who's a bit like an American Joan Collins and two Brits, a retired police officer and his daughter-in-law, a security expert. All three get involved in a string of murders at which clues are planted to cast suspicion on the daughter-in-law.

Ratio: 50% mystery/50% comic character stuff.

Why age is a plus: The police officer has practice at fading into the background so he can observe, a quality that comes in handy, and the novelist has accrued a lifetime of cash, private planes and influential friends, all of which play a part in solving the murders.

Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers

Jesse Q. Sutanto

Who's detecting: Vera, who's 60 and bored, is a widow. She has lots of time on her hands because business is slow and her adult son, rebelling against her meddling, ignores her. She operates a tea shop at the beginning of "Advice for Murders," but when it is trashed and a body is left behind, she shifts from brewing tea to hunting clues.

Ratio: 60% mystery/40% matchmaking.

Why age is a plus: Vera doesn't know much about detecting (she often makes wildly inaccurate guesses), but she's learned a lot about mixing teas to create exactly the blend a customer needs. That tea savvy turns out to be a metaphor for an uncanny insight into human behavior. Vera thinks she knows what's best for everyone — and she might be right. A sequel, "Vera Wong's Guide to Snooping (on a Dead Man)," is due in April.

Agnes Sharp and the Trip of a Lifetime

Leonie Swann

Who's detecting? Agnes, an 80ish British woman, gets help from a handful of elderly boarders, some of whom — like Agnes — have a police background. "Trip of the Lifetime" is the second in the series, following "The Sunset Years of Agnes Sharp."

Ratio: 70% mystery/30% chit-chat.

Why age matters: One of the most compelling things about "Trip of a Lifetime" is that it explicitly pays homage to Miss Marple. Agnes gets an unexpected trip to a deluxe resort, where a victim is found clutching a copy of "A Caribbean Mystery," a Christie book in which Marple is given a trip to a deluxe resort. That feels like both a hat tip to Christie and an acknowledgment that senior sleuths have a superpower: six (or more) decades of life experience. The "Agnes" books would be more satisfying if Swann told us more about her characters, especially the victims. It is compelling, though, how Agnes meets her fellow crime solvers: Strapped for cash, she must take in renters, who form a sort of sleuth commune. And that she has had trouble sleeping as she has aged, which gives her lots of time to hunt for clues.

HEALTH & FITNESS



DREAMSTIME — TNS

Strength training builds muscle mass and strength, increases bone density and improves balance, which in turn helps prevent falls.

STRENGTH TRAINING MAY BE THE KEY TO LONGEVITY

HOW TO DO IT SAFELY AS YOU AGE

By Deborah Vankin
Los Angeles Times

I started strength training about nine years ago for admittedly vain reasons. Fresh off a breakup at the time, weight training offered a welcome distraction and the prospect of a revenge body.

I trained two or three times a week — nothing crazy, just good old fashioned bicep curls, weighted squats, plank holds. But the results were astound-

ing: I lost more than 20 pounds, sculpted my body and had never felt stronger. It was empowering.

Almost a decade later, my weight training is now about being grounded and strong; but the same moderate routine is causing challenges. My elbow barks every time I bicep curl; my SI joint is creaky from sitting all day, which makes my glutes and lower back tight.

Then I sprained my neck and shoulder recently at the gym, which concurrently pinched a

nerve. It led to excruciating pain, sleepless nights and an infuriating quest through the medical care system to discover what happened.

“You need to keep those muscles strong because we lose muscle as we age,” one nurse warned while checking my blood pressure. “That’s how injuries happen.”

I couldn’t help but see the irony: Attempting to stay strong is what led to the injury in the first place.

My situation provided a clear conundrum: Copious research shows that strength training, particularly for older adults, is a critical piece of the health and longevity puzzle. Strength training builds muscle mass and strength, increases bone density and improves balance, which in turn helps prevent falls. It enhances joint mobility and reduces joint stiffness. It plays a role in metabolic health, reducing blood pressure and improving glucose metabolism. It even aids cardiac

health.

“It’s probably the most important fitness modality out there for longevity,” says Dr. Christina Chen, a Mayo Clinic geriatrician and host of the podcast “Aging Forward.”

But also, strength training gets harder to do during the period of life when we need it most. The older we are, the more susceptible to injuries. Decades of a sedentary lifestyle, osteoporosis, ar-

Age

FROM PAGE 17

thritis and other conditions can lead to weakened muscles, more fragile bones and unstable, painful joints, not to mention balance issues. All of which can present challenges — or dangers, if training improperly — at the gym.

After my own injury, I set out to make sense of these two realities. And one thing became certain: The benefits of strength training, even for those in their golden years, still outweigh the risks.

“Every intervention has a risk associated with it, and exercise is no exception,” says Dr. Joshua T. Goldman, a UCLA sports medicine physician. “If you sit in your house in a bubble, you won’t have exercise risks, but you’ll die of heart disease and diabetes or some other disease. The aging population is at risk of getting injured more in general, but it’s certainly very possible to gain muscle as we age. It’s just that more goes into it. You have to be smarter about how you train.”

It’s not a matter of simply weight training as you age, it’s about proper execution, too. So I spoke to doctors, researchers and physical trainers for crucial tips on how to gain muscle without getting injured.

1. Start low, slow and supervised

If you’re new to weight training, supervision is key, says Goldman. Work with a personal trainer or a friend who’s knowledgeable. They’ll keep an eye on your form and give you real-time feedback. And proceed with caution: Begin with low weights and just a few repetitions. There’s benefit to lifting even two or three pound weights, in sets consisting of just six or eight

repetitions.

“Start with someone who understands progressions and increases in load, which is a huge risk of injury for young and old alike,” Goldman says. “Progress slowly. It’s not a race.”

2. Keep a journal

What does “start low and slow” even mean? It’s different for everyone, says Casey Johnston, author of the weightlifting newsletter “She’s a Beast.” Find the starting point that’s right for you and then progress based on how your body feels.

“You can’t tell everybody to lift 20 pounds — for some that’s impossible and others, easy,” Johnston says. “The important thing, is: Where is that person at in their general health and training life — have they recently been sick? Did they eat breakfast? — all of these things can affect your experience of a workout. So a huge part of it is learning what different stimuli feel like and monitoring how you respond.”

Towards that end, Johnston suggests weight-training newcomers keep a journal. Record what you did at the gym and how you felt both during and after the workout, including your level of soreness the next day. For each exercise, note how heavy the weight was, how many repetitions you did and how many sets. Rate sets on a scale of one to 10, with zero being “it feels like no effort at all” and 10 being “I can’t do even one more rep.”

“It’s important to approach it as a practice and as a learning experience,” Johnston says, “rather than something you’re just supposed to know off the bat.”

3. Practice functional fitness

The best way to strength train as you get older, says Chris Ryan, a New York-based certified strength

and conditioning specialist who was featured on NBC’s “Strong,” is through compound movements that mimic everyday life.

“You have to think: What’s the goal? For most people, it’s living an independent life — you want to be able to do basic things, like reach up to grab a dish, play with your grandchildren,” he says. “So: practice squatting or sitting down to a bench or chair and standing back up again and squeezing your butt tight at the top. Do light step-ups a few inches high, mimicking climbing a set of stairs and that also helps with balance control and coordination. Do pulling exercises, like farmer’s carries, which helps pull the shoulder blades back, the chest up and keeps the core engaged.”

Your body will get smarter, your muscle memory sharp.

“If you can do those things at the gym, you can do those same movements in your regular life,” Ryan adds. “Your body will know how to do it because you’ve practiced it — and your joints and ligaments and tendons will respond because they’ve already done it with more load at the gym.”

4. Warm up and cool down

As we age, the body is less resilient. Our tendons become drier, thinner and less elastic; muscles, in general, become smaller. So warming up before strength training to increase blood flow to the muscles and loosen joints, as well as doing a few minutes of recovery work after exercising — like stretching or foam rolling — is that much more important in order to optimize tissue health. You have to put in the work to do the work, says Dr. Lyndon Joseph, an exercise physiologist and a program officer at the National Institute on

Aging, part of the National Institutes of Health.

“Warming up is so important because it helps reduce the risk of injury,” Joseph says, adding that warm ups and cool downs don’t have to be complicated. He suggests riding a stationary bike, at a low intensity, for 5 or 10 minutes to warm up and doing a few walking laps around the gym, until your heart rate slows, to cool down.

“You don’t do a 100-meter dash off the bat,” he says. “You jog before you sprint — it’s the same with any exercise.”

5. Modify

There are myriad ways to strengthen a particular muscle. Minor adjustments in form and using props can alter the level of difficulty of an exercise or diffuse pain. Don’t be afraid to make an exercise yours, so that it’s more suitable for your body.

“Most older people have some stuff,” says UCLA’s Goldman. “If you’re severely arthritic in both knees, weighted squats are probably not the best plan for you. I’d recommend knee extension and hamstring curl exercises for lower leg strengthening. A stationary bike with high resistance is also a suitable alternative. Work around restrictions and injuries. Work within the stuff you’ve got.”

Cedars-Sinai’s Gulati notes the many different forms of strength training beyond the stereotypical image of iron dumbbells or a hulking barbell. She suggests body weight exercises such as push ups — on the floor or even against a wall — as well as planks and lunges. Yoga and pilates, too, offer strengthening benefits, she says, as does less intense Tai Chi.

“You can also use bands, a way to increase resistance over time, and it may not feel like you’re lifting a heavy weight but they are tough. Even people

with joint problems can do that.”

Trainer Ryan suggests aquatics training. “Everything about water is good for the human body,” he says. “It’s easy on our joints. It’s also hard to move through, so there’s tension. So just moving back and forth, treading water, deep water running, arm movement patterns — it’s all resistance training.”

6. Don’t be discouraged by pain

Sudden or sharp pain at the gym is not OK. But also don’t let preexisting, low-level pain keep you on the couch. An arthritic joint may be uncomfortable to strength train, but inactivity leads to stiffness, which can make pain worse.

Start by working out below the pain threshold, says the NIH’s Joseph. Progressively increase the weight and the sets so that you’re not experiencing pain throughout the full range of motion.

“Keep it consistent,” he says. “And over time, the pain threshold will increase even more.”

Training the glutes, hamstrings, quads and core, in particular, can help prevent pain and injuries elsewhere in the body, Johnston adds.

“Deadlifting takes pressure off the lower back — you’re learning to bend down properly — and it can be corrective to a lot of the everyday pains that people experience,” she says.

7. Be mindful of your heart

Strength training is even better for your heart than previously thought: a 2024 study, authored by Dr. Martha Gulati, director of Preventive Cardiology at Cedars-Sinai, found that women who strength trained two to three times a week reduced their cardiovascular mortality rate by about 30% compared to

those who don’t.

Nevertheless, proceed carefully, Gulati says. For older adults who are new to weight training — or for those returning to exercise after a long break — Gulati stresses talking to your doctor first and getting an exercise prescription as well as a cardiac screening, especially if you have a preexisting heart condition. Baseline cardiac testing will ensure your heart can tolerate a heavy load.

8. Find what you love and do it consistently

Consistency is crucial to maintaining exercise benefits, says Joseph.

“It’s like if you have diabetes, if you stop taking the medication, you’ll go back to baseline,” he says. “The same is true of exercise. Think of it as a lifestyle change.”

To set yourself up for success, choose exercises you enjoy in a milieu in which you feel comfortable.

“Some people don’t like going to a gym, or they’re intimidated by going to a gym,” Joseph says. “So maybe you participate in a community setting, like an exercise group in a park, or do it by yourself at home. If you find pleasure in it, you’re more likely to be consistent and keep up with it.”

9. Focus on the big picture

Forget vanity. We lose 3 to 8% of our muscle mass per decade after age 30 and the rate of decline increases after age 60 — it’s called sarcopenia — and our goal should be to fight that muscle loss, Gulati says.

“Falls can be catastrophic as we age and building our muscle mass is really important,” she says. “It’s not about becoming a bodybuilder, it’s about preserving your health. Just to be healthy and strong is a beautiful thing.”

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Calendar of trips, activities and events

To have an event included in the Vitality calendar, email the name of the event, the time, date, address, cost (if applicable) and contact information to jgray@medianewsgroup.com.

FEBRUARY

Feb. 13: Shelby Gardeners present Nancy Butty, Ascension's trauma prevention specialist, Reducing Risks for Hurting Yourself in the Gardens and in Life in General. Program held at Burgess-Shadbush Nature Center, 4101 River Bends Dr., Shelby Twp. Programs are from 1-2 p.m. \$5 admission. For more information, call Ivy Schwartz, publicist, at 586-873-3782.

Feb. 13, 20 & 27: Music and Movement with Music Maker Marge at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Thursdays, Feb. 13, 20, and 27 at 10 a.m. Bring your little ones to Music & Movement with Music Maker Marge. Songs are stories set to music. This program is geared toward children walking through age 5. Enjoy singing stories and dancing with Ms. Marge! No registration required. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 13: Valentine's Lunch & Bingo at the Clawson Senior Center: Enjoy a festive Valentine's-themed lunch followed by a lively bingo session with exciting prizes. Perfect for a fun and social afternoon. Lunch begins at 12:00 p.m., and bingo kicks off at 1 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 13. \$6 per person. Don't forget to register in advance. Call to register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

Feb. 14: Financial Friday. Investment Strategies for Seniors, Feb. 14, 10:30 a.m., \$2. Learn how to preserve wealth, generate income and manage risk in retirement, as well as safe strategies and tips to help

secure your financial future. Presented by Rochester Wealth Strategies Vice President Xenia Woltmann, AWMMA. Open to the public. Please pre-register by calling (248) 659-1029. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit OPC-center.org.

Learn While Lunching: With Professor John Todd — Understanding the U.S. Supreme Court, Feb. 17, 1 p.m., \$12. This engaging and informative presentation offers a deep dive into the U.S. Supreme Court, one of the most important and powerful institutions in the American government. The session will explore the Court's rich history, how it works as well as important cases. For more information, call (248) 659-1029 or visit OPC-center.org. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester.

Feb. 18: Check Mates: Chess Club at the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave Roseville, Tuesday, Feb. 18 at 6 p.m. Ages 12 to adult, No registration required. Whether you're a Grandmaster or just learning the game, there's a place for you in our Chess Club! We'll meet one evening a month to socialize, discuss strategy, play the game, and most of all, have fun! This program is open to everyone age 12 and up. Registration is not required. You are welcome to bring your own Chess set or use one of ours. The more the merrier so we strongly encourage you to bring a friend. We will be meeting in the City Hall lobby for the next several months as the Library is renovated. Please continue to enter the building from the Library main entrance facing Kelly Road. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov

Feb. 18: Tech Time at HTPL: Intro to Libby & Hoopla at the Harrison

Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Tuesday, Feb. 18 at 6:30 p.m. Join the adult librarians for monthly Tech Time at HTPL! Learn the basics of popular library apps Libby and Hoopla. These apps are perfect for reading e-books, playing audiobooks, and streaming other content—all free with your library card! Registration is preferred. Call, click, or stop by to register. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 18: Adult Take and Make: Tiny Origami Bookshelf at the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave Roseville. Pickup: Tuesday, Feb. 18 — all day (and up to 2 weeks after). Registration required. Discover the joy of origami and fold your way to a miniature library. The craft must be picked up at the library within two weeks of the date of the event. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov

Feb. 18: Royal Oak Musicales at the Clawson Senior Center: Experience the joy of live music with the talented Royal Oak Musicales. Relax and enjoy an afternoon of melodies sure to uplift your spirits. Bus departs at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18. \$3 per person. Register early to save your seat. Call to register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

Feb. 19: Coffee & Conversation with Lakeshore Legal Aid at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Wednesday, Feb. 19 at 10 a.m. Join us at the library for free coffee and donuts with a representative from Lakeshore Legal Aid. Learn about Lakeshore Legal Aid's services and how they support the older adult demographic. Ask questions about topics like end-of-life planning and connect with others in your community.

Registration is encouraged but not required. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 19: Savvy Seniors. Elder Law, Feb. 19, 9:30 a.m., \$5. Attend an informative session with Attorney Michael Rutkowski as he discusses important legal topics for seniors. The program will cover essential legal issues such as estate planning, wills, powers of attorney, and ways to protect against scams. Whether you're looking to update your legal documents or seeking peace of mind, this session offers valuable insights and guidance. Bring your questions and take the first step towards securing your future. This event is sponsored by Comfort Keepers. Register by calling (248) 659-1029. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit OPC-center.org

Feb. 19: Lunch & Learn at the Clawson Senior Center: Boost your health knowledge while enjoying a complimentary lunch. This engaging session will provide valuable tips for staying healthy, active, and informed about their services. Wednesday, Feb. 19, 11:30 a.m. Reserve your spot now. Call to register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

Feb. 20: Trivia Night at Total Sports at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Thursday, Feb. 20 from 6:30-8 p.m. Test your knowledge at HTPL Trivia Night, hosted at Total Sports! Tickets include trivia plus unlimited pizza, salad, and soft drinks. Tickets can be purchased at the library for \$7.00 in advance or purchased at the door on Trivia Night for \$8. Cash or check only! Arrive with a team, or we'll team you up. Teams are limited to six players. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 20: Wine Pairing Dinner With Sommelier Christel Gaillard from Woodberry Wines. Feb. 20, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Member: \$40 Non Member: \$45 Open to the Public. Whether you're a wine enthusiast or a casual connoisseur, this evening promises great conversation, exquisite flavors, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere. It's the perfect way to celebrate the season with friends and neighbors. Cheers to good company and great taste! Sponsored by American House Senior Living Communities. Register by calling (248) 659-1029. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit OPC-center.org

Feb. 20: Mystery Book Club: Book Discussion group at the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave Roseville, Thursday, Feb. 20 at 6:30 p.m. No registration required. This month, we will discuss "Still Life" by Louise Penny. You are welcome to join us even if you have not finished the book. More about the selection: Chief Inspector Armand Gamache of Canada's Surete du Quebec is called to Three Pines, a tiny hamlet south of Montreal, to investigate the suspicious hunting "accident" that claimed the life of Jane Neal, a local fixture in the village. We will be meeting in the City Hall lobby for the next several months as the Library is renovated. Please continue to enter the building from the Library main entrance facing Kelly Road. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov

Feb. 20: Wheel of Fortune at the Clawson Senior Center: Spin the wheel for a chance to win fantastic prizes in this exciting game show-style event. Don't miss out on the fun. Thursday, Feb. 20, 1 p.m. Register early to join in. Call to register at 248-589-

0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

Feb. 21: Free Tax Prep with VITA Program at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Friday, Feb. 21 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Macomb County residents with an annual income under \$67,000 per year are eligible to receive free tax help from VITA. Receive free assistance for federal, state, and city tax returns. Service includes e-filing and direct deposit. Please bring all valid identification, income documentation, proof of expenses, direct deposit information, and last year's tax returns. Appointments are required. To schedule an appointment, call (586) 463-2537 or visit macomb-ca.itfrontdesk.com/vita.

Feb. 21: Visually Impaired Group, Feb. 21, 10-11:30 a.m. Support group providing information, socialization, support and speakers to those with low vision. Register by calling (248) 608-0246. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit OPC-center.org.

Feb. 21: The Single Way, a group for Christian singles, is sponsoring a potluck dinner and movie night on Saturday, Feb. 22 at 6 p.m. Cost is \$5 and includes the dinner main course, snacks and beverages. Each person should bring either a salad, starch, or dessert to share with others. If coming, a reservation is required by Friday, Feb. 21. To make a reservation and for location, call 586-774-2119.

Feb. 21: Grief Support Group. Feb. 21, 10-11:30 a.m. The death of a loved one affects your head, heart and spirit. A Grief Support Group is an opportunity to gain an understanding about grief and receive support and healing with other caring individuals who have experienced a loss. Many people report a feeling of relief in knowing they are

not alone as they share their experience with others. Walk-ins are Welcome Questions: (248) 608-0249. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit OPCcenter.org.

Feb. 21: OATS Tech Talks: Estate Planning Resources & Tools at the Clawson Senior Center: Discover helpful tools and resources to simplify estate planning and secure your future. This informative session will provide actionable insights for anyone looking to protect their assets. Friday, Feb. 21, 1 p.m. Advance registration is required. Call to register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

Feb. 21: Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers Group, Feb. 21, 1:30—3 p.m. Support group for those caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's or Dementia. Respite care is available. OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. Call (248) 659-1036 or visit OPCcenter.org for additional information.

Feb. 22: Gardening 101: Sensational Succulents at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Saturday, Feb. 22 at 1 p.m. Join Sue Keehn from the Harrison Township Beautification Commission for her outdoor lecture series at the library. Sensational succulents have gained popularity as indoor plants and great features for outdoor containers and landscaping. Come and learn about the different varieties and how to propagate and care for them. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 24: Memory Café at OPC, Feb. 24, 1-2:30 p.m. A welcoming social gathering for individuals affected by memory challenges and their care partners. Some activities include art, music and games with light refreshments provided. Sponsored by Waltonwood Main. RSVP to Theresa Gill (248) 659-1036 or tgill@OPCcenter.org.

The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, call (248) 659-1029 or visit OPCcenter.org.

Feb. 25: Tuesday Night Book Group: "The Dictionary of Lost Words" by Pip Williams at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Tuesday, Feb. 25 at 6 p.m. Join the Tuesday Night Book Group as we discuss The Dictionary of Lost Words by Pip Williams. Get your copy and join us! About the Book: In 1901, the word "Bondmaid" was discovered missing from the Oxford English Dictionary. This is the story of the girl who stole it. Registration appreciated but not required. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 25: Knitting and Crochet Circle at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Tuesdays, Feb. 25 from 10 a.m. to noon. Welcome knitters and crocheters of all levels! Hang out and share your creativity with other knitters. Please bring your own projects and supplies. The group creates and donates to charitable organizations like Beaumont Little Angels, Project Linus, Compassion Pregnancy, and more to provide comfort items during times of need. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 25: Winged Wonders Workshop at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Tuesday, Feb. 25 from 6-7 p.m. Fly into the library for this fun Tuesday evening activity, where we will soar to new heights with our newly built winged wonders! We will create and fly several flying machines. Whose will soar the furthest? Whose will stay in the air the longest? Registration is encouraged but not required. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 26: Easy Bake Oven Bake-Off at the Harrison Township Public Library,

38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Wednesday, Feb. 26 from 6:30-8 p.m. Tweens, teens, and parents, sign up for this fun and unique activity. Teen and parent partners will compete to create an "easy baked" creation that is both delicious and good-looking! Register your parent/child team beforehand. Call or stop by the library to register. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 26: BINGO Games, Feb. 26, 12:30 p.m. \$10. Join us for Bingo in the Dining Room. Ticket price includes 8-10 games with up to 4 BINGO cards per player and pizza. Sponsored by the Village at Orchard Grove. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, call (248) 659-1029 or visit OPCcenter.org.

Feb. 26: Chess Club at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Wednesdays, Feb. 26 from 4-6 p.m. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced player, everyone is welcome to join HTPL's twice-monthly club, where you can learn and play chess at your own pace. Hone in on your skills or just enjoy a casual game—this club provides the perfect opportunity to immerse yourself in the world of chess. Ages 12 and up. Registration is encouraged, but not required. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Feb. 26: Parkinson's Care Partner Group, Feb. 26, 1-3 p.m. This group provides an opportunity for those who are caring for their loved one to come together for support, sharing and time to talk with others who are also living with Parkinson's. Call facilitator Kathy Walton 248.568.3549. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit OPCcenter.org.

Feb. 26: Health Screenings at the Clawson Senior Center: Stay proactive about your health with free screenings and personalized tips.

Take the first step toward better well-being. Wednesday, Feb. 26, 11 a.m. Register today. Call to register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

Feb. 27: Women's Luncheon. Women's Self Defense, Feb. 27, 1 p.m., \$15. Join Norbert Donnelly, 7th-degree black belt in Isshin-ryu Karate, for a practical self-defense presentation. Learn simple techniques and safety tips to boost your confidence and feel more secure in any situation. Empower yourself with valuable skills in a friendly, supportive setting. This program is sponsored by Wellbridge of Rochester Hills. Register by calling (248) 659-1029. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit OPCcenter.org

Feb. 27: Hollywood Casino Trips at the Clawson Senior Center: Try your luck at the Hollywood Casino. The bus departs at 10 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 27, and Friday, Feb. 28. \$12 per trip. Register today. Call to register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

Feb. 27: Melodies at the DIA at the Clawson Senior Center: Enjoy the soulful sounds of the Sean Dobbins Organ Trio at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Immerse yourself in an unforgettable musical experience. Bus departs at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 27. This event is FREE, but advance registration is required. Call to register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

MARCH

March 1: Incubating Guinea Fowl at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Saturday, March 1 at 1 p.m. Join us on Saturday as we receive our Guinea Fowl eggs to incubate here at the library! We will learn all about the birds, set up our incubator, and get ready

to watch! While waiting for them to hatch, we will livestream the incubator all month long. Registration is required. Click, call, or stop by to register. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

March 3: Slow Flow Yoga: Mon & Wed, 7—8 p.m. Our next session begins on March 3 at Graham Elementary Café located at 25555 Crocker Blvd, Harrison Twp. Cost \$100 (12 Classes) or \$50 (1 day a week only — 6 Classes). Register online at www.lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com or by calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330.

March 3: Lunch & Learn: Desmond Funeral Services at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Monday, March 3, 11 a.m. Gain valuable insights about end-of-life planning at this informative session hosted by Desmond Funeral Services. Enjoy a complimentary lunch while exploring ways to prepare for the future in a supportive and welcoming environment. Register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

March 4: Movie Bus Trip to MJR Theater at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Tuesday, March 4. Cost: \$3 for transportation; \$5 for movie ticket paid on event day (concessions at your cost). Hop on the bus and enjoy a relaxing outing to MJR Theater! The featured film and exact time will be announced closer to the event date. Reserve your spot for a fun-filled day at the movies with friends. Register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

March 5 & 19: Papotage & Cie: Talk-time in French at the Roseville Public Library, 29777 Gratiot Ave Roseville, Wednesdays: March 5 & 19 at 6 p.m. Ages 11 to adult, No registration required. Papotage & Cie is a program for French conversation practice with a French native speaker and librarian. The program is

open to any teenager or adult who speaks some French and wants an informal and safe place to practice with others. We will be meeting in the City Hall lobby for the next several months as the Library is renovated.

Please continue to enter the building from the Library main entrance facing Kelly Road. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or visit rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov

March 5: March Birthday Lunch at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Wednesday, March 5, noon. Celebrate March birthdays with a complimentary lunch at the Senior Center! This special event is open to everyone, but those celebrating a March birthday will dine for free. Advance registration is required. Register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

March 7: AARP OATS Tech Series: Chromebook Essentials at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court. Mondays and Fridays, March 7 — April 7, 1 p.m. (meet 2x per week). Learn the fundamentals of using a Chromebook in this comprehensive 5-week series. Perfect for beginners, this hands-on workshop will cover everything from basic navigation to practical tips for staying connected online. Register at 248-589-0334 or online at recreation.cityofclawson.com.

March 8: Gardening 101: How to Compost at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp. Saturday, March 8 at 1 p.m. Join Sue Keehn from the Harrison Township Beautification Commission for her gardening series at the Library. How to compost does not have to be a mystery. Learn how to do your own composting and create some great black gold that your plants will love. Sign up online or at the library. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

Poetry Page

THE MAN ON THE COUCH

A man awoke to find a friend
who smiled and declared that they could depend
on the day to be full of work, fun, and play
but the man shook his head and sighed in dismay
Didn't the friend see he was unfit and not strong enough?
He could fail, you know, he was not tough.
Yes, he would get up later to putter around
when energy and mood make him light and sound.
But not this time, on his couch he'd rather be
Why wouldn't the friend let him be?

Later, the same man awoke to find an ant
Crawling on his cheek where there was a crumb
Wham! His hand slapped the itchy cheek with full intent
to annihilate the creature that caused him discontent
To his surprise, the ant escaped to a colony at hand
Now the man was indignant that these ants squatted in his Lala land!
So he got up and, with full force, sprayed them furiously
with an insecticide that was bought years ago by the family
Soon the couch stank with an odor so noxious and heavy
that the man collapsed on the floor, thinking
Why couldn't those ants just let him be?

The man awoke to find the same friend
from that very morning when the ant thing happened
His friend had stopped by to find him unconscious
and placed him where his health was restored from damage so serious
The man wondered why the friend seemed light and happy
Surely, he did not know the woes and sufferings of many!
He asked the friend how long he was going to stay on
Not long, he said, for tomorrow he'd have an operation
to remove a tumor that was causing some pain
for a while now and was growing in the brain
But he would visit soon after it's over
To coax him to work, play, and have fun on a dare
The man from the couch choked and fought his tears with agony
and declared he was grateful his friend did not let him be.

By By Maria Odine of Troy, MI

MERRILY WE GO ROUND

The Ball drops, A New Year, a fresh start.
Candy, flowers and love beats in your heart.

Winter melts away and Spring opens her eyes.
Wet and wild the Bunny leaves baskets of surprise.

The earth explodes into blooms with honeyed scents.
It's a green light to go and enjoy the summer events.

Red, White, and Blue, America we salute you!
The Grand Finale begins of sizzling days under skies of blue.

Nature whispers a change of colors into a spectacular view.
Glowing trees and pumpkins that end with a spooky Boo!

The earth hardens as we give thanks with the seasons end.
Ho, Ho, Ho, A Holy Night and a peek of wonder around the bend.

Another Ball drops, another New Year, another chance for a fresh start.
Merrily, Merrily we go round and round with a hopeful heart.

By Lucia Allen of Roseville, MI

FIRST & LAST NAME: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____ NAME OF POEM: _____

MAIL TO: Poetry, Pets &
Be Kind Spotlight
Dawn Emke
53239 Settimo Crt
Chesterfield, MI 48047

If you chose to submit your Poetry, Pet Tribute or Be Kind Spotlight 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 Poetry, Pet Tributes & Be Kind Spotlights to: demke@medianewsgroup.com

**Look for other ads in this issue of Vitality for more information
on Be Kind Spotlight and Pet Tribute.**

NEXT ISSUE WILL BE MARCH 13, 2025

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



TEDDY

Member of the Boutin Family of
Sterling Heights

When Emma Comes Out to Play

When Emma comes out to play,
It is a very special day!

Pops and Gigi run to greet her
Because you know Emma's sweet to meet.

Her little feet run tap, tap, tap
Down the hallway floor.

"Chase me, chase me, Pops and Gigi"
"Oh, chase me some more!"

We have a day of laughter and songs of joy.
With our lunch,
We have raspberries to munch.

Oh!, what fun galore,
Now that dear Emma has come through our door.

When she has to leave,
We cry tears, grieve, and wipe our nose on our sleeve.

Every day we are hoping
We sit by our door moping.

Yay! Joy abounds
Our little darling comes around, twirling back to our door.

By Brenda and Mike Boutin of Sterling Heights, MI

FIRST & LAST NAME: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____ NAME OF POEM: _____

MAIL TO: Poetry, Pets &
Be Kind Spotlight
Dawn Emke
53239 Settimo Crt
Chesterfield, MI 48047

If you chose to submit your Poetry, Pet Tribute or Be Kind Spotlight 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.
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THE ROAD TO EASY LIVING



You can pick and choose from our many affordable choices to build the maintenance-free life you've always wanted. Join our family, connect with friends and find your true happiness. To find out more, call us today!

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BaldwinHouseSeniors.com

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(248) 545-0707

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LLOYD'S BAYOU
in Spring Lake
(616) 844-9001

OAKLAND
in Auburn Hills/Pontiac
(248) 335-7020

