

September 2025

# LIFE LESSONS

Southfield woman  
thrives after  
contracting polio

PAGE 7

## LEGALLY SPEAKING

What exactly is a  
power of attorney?

PAGE 3

## HERE TO HELP

Mental health  
counseling is  
available

PAGE 4

# Vitality

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





# INDEX

## MONEY & SECURITY SOCIAL & WELL-BEING

**Real estate:** What responsibilities come with having power of attorney? **PAGE 3**

**Money talk:** You're retired and need cash. Is a HELOC the answer? **PAGE 6**

**What to know:** These financial and tax issues affect 'gray divorce' **PAGE 13**

## HEALTH & FITNESS

**Talking it out:** AgeWays offers one-on-one mental health counseling for older adults **PAGE 4**

**Facing a dilemma:** When they don't recognize you anymore **PAGE 10**

**Honey, sweetie, dearie:** The perils of elderspeak **PAGE 8**

**Connections:** How to maintain a caring relationship with someone with Alzheimer's **PAGE 12**

## WORK & PURPOSE

**Flourishing:** After contracting polio as a child, Southfield woman thrives through every stage of life **PAGE 7**

## CALENDAR

Recreation, trips, classes and event listings **PAGE 14**



**On the cover:** Born just months before the polio vaccine was widely introduced, Bożena Lamparska contracted the virus at 10 months old. After many surgeries, she's excelled throughout her life, finding a love for music.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BOŻENA LAMPARSKA

## VITALITY

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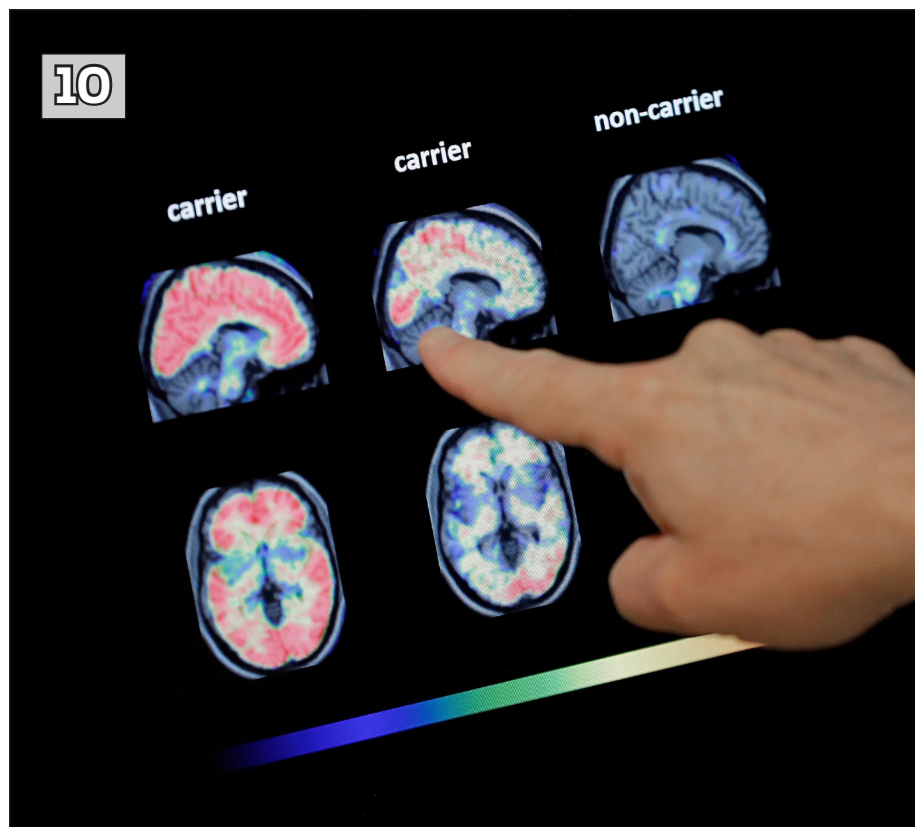
Greg Mazanec,  
mipublisher@medianews-group.com

**Vice president of news:**  
Don Wyatt, 248-285-9652,  
dwyatt@medianews-group.com

**Custom Content Editor:**  
Jason Alley, 734-246-0143  
jalley@medianewsgroup.com

**Calendar announcements:**  
Joe Gray, 248-284-1481  
jgray@medianewsgroup.com

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## MONEY & SECURITY

# Real estate: What responsibilities come with having a power of attorney?

**Q** : I have a power of attorney for my parents. Is there anything else that I need to sell their house or am I all set if something happens to them?

**A** : I'm going to make this a public service announcement, but first, my disclaimer: I'm not an attorney, nor am I giving legal advice. There is one common error I see that gets folks into trouble. What a lot of folks don't know is that a power of attorney is only valid while the person is alive. Upon death, the power of attorney no longer exists. After death, the executor of the estate handles all of the financial and legal matters. Many times, I have heard statements like this: "When my Mom or Dad or Uncle Pete or Aunt Sally dies, I'm all set. I have a power of attorney to take care of everything." If that's all you have, you have nothing.

I highly recommend to those of you who are reading this column and have not done any type of estate planning or if your parents or elders that you're responsible for have not either, do yourself a big favor and pick up the phone and call an attorney who specializes in estate planning. If you do not know one, feel free to contact me and I will put you in touch with an attorney I highly trust.

### Home maintenance tip

Do you have a basement or crawl space that has a sump pump? When's the last time you checked it to make sure it's working? When's the last time you re-

placed it?

When I'm looking at homes/condos, I always look at the sump pump in the basement if it has one. A lot of times, the water will be up to the top because the pump is not working.

Sometimes a shake of the discharge pipe coming out of the sump will free up a stuck float and it will start pumping. Other times, if it has a plug-in float switch, I can unplug the float switch plug and plug the sump pump in directly and it will start to pump the water out.

I also see a lot of sump pumps that are so encrusted with mineral buildup on them that I can tell they've been there a long time, like 10-plus years. A good quality sump pump, if not in a high usage area, can last seven to 10 years. Lower quality ones have a shorter lifespan. If your sump pump is older than seven to 10 years, it's a good idea to have it replaced before it fails and you have a flooded basement or crawl space.

Remember Murphy's Law — The pump will probably fail during a holiday, when you have company over or when you're out of town. Back-up systems are a good idea, too!

*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](mailto:Steve@MeyersRealtor.com). You also can visit his website at [AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com](http://AnswersToRealEstateQuestions.com).*



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## MARKET UPDATE

July'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 3% and Oakland County's average sales price was up by less than 1%. Macomb County's on-market inventory was up by almost 9% and Oakland County's on-market inventory was up by almost 13%. Macomb County's average days on market was 24 days and Oakland County's average days on market was 22 days. Closed sales in Macomb County were down by more than 8% and closed sales in Oakland County were up by more than 8%. (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 July, the state of Michigan's inventory was at 2.7 months of supply. Macomb County's inventory was at 2.3 months of supply and Oakland County's inventory was at 2.5 months of supply. By definition, it's still not close to a buyer's market.



## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# AGEWAYS OFFERS ONE-ON-ONE MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING FOR OLDER ADULTS

**By AgeWays**

*Formerly Area Agency on Aging I-B*

Have you or someone you love been feeling more anxious, down or withdrawn lately? You're not alone — and help is available.

An estimated 1 in 5 older adults (60 years and older) experiences mental health challenges, yet fewer than half seek counseling, according to the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine at the University of Utah.

The reasons vary, from not knowing where to find help, to worrying about the cost, to assuming that loneliness, grief, anxiety and depression are a natural part of aging. They are not.

"A lot of older adults have low-level depression that comes with retirement, the loss of loved ones or declining physical health. People think it's a normal part of aging, but it's not and is treatable," says Anna Tolis of the Michigan Medicine Geriatrics Center in Ann Arbor.

## Support for seniors struggling with mental health challenges

AgeWays Nonprofit Senior Services aims to make it easier for older adults to find the help they need to face anything from health-related stress to depression to grief.

The agency's new mental health counseling program pairs licensed mental health counselors with older adults for regular, confidential, one-on-one telephone or video sessions. Counselors will create a personalized support plan and services are billed to Medicare.

"Our program is designed to support older adults navigating stress, anxiety, depression, grief and social isolation," says Aimee Page, AgeWays' chief of clinical and healthcare strategy officer.



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO EDITORIAL SERVICES

An estimated 1 in 5 older adults (60 years and older) experiences mental health challenges, yet fewer than half seek counseling, according to the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine at the University of Utah.

"We want people to feel more connected, empowered and hopeful in their daily lives."

### Recognizing when to seek help

Recognizing depression and other mental health challenges is the first step in seeking help, but it's not as easy as it sounds, says Tolis.

Unfortunately, depression is still stigmatized among older adults, Tolis adds.

"Many people feel they should be able to manage these feelings on their own. If they start to feel down, they believe they should figure it out themselves, or that

their situation isn't as bad as someone else's," she says. There is help to manage these emotions.

### If you're concerned about a loved one ...

Failing to seek help can lead to worse physical and cognitive health. Untreated depression is connected with a higher risk of developing dementia and can also lead to suicide, an unfortunately common occurrence among older adults, particularly men. According to the CDC, men 75 and older have the highest rate of suicide in the U.S.

So, encourage your loved one to get help and offer to go with

them to talk to their health care provider. Primary care doctors can help address mental health problems, prescribe antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications, and provide you with the proper referrals.

You can also encourage your loved one to walk or otherwise get outside — and join them. This will give you a chance to connect and to learn more about what's going on with them.

### Seeking help is easier than you think

Since the pandemic, many counselors offer virtual sessions, making mental health counseling

## SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS IN OLDER ADULTS

- Noticeable changes in mood, energy level or appetite
- Feeling flat or having trouble feeling positive emotions
- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Difficulty concentrating, feeling restless or on edge
- Increased worry or feeling stressed
- Withdrawing from people and activities
- Anger, irritability or aggressiveness
- Ongoing headaches, digestive issues or pain
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs
- Sadness or hopelessness
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts
- Engaging in high-risk activities
- Obsessive thinking or compulsive behavior
- Thoughts or behaviors that interfere with work, family or social life
- Engaging in thinking or behavior that is concerning to others
- Seeing, hearing and feeling things that other people do not see, hear or feel

more accessible.

You can take that first step. Call AgeWays at 800-852-7795 to be connected to our mental health counseling program.

You may also talk with and get a referral from your primary care doctor. There are plenty of clinics in the area with counselors who can treat older adults.

If you are worried that a loved one is having suicidal thoughts, call 988.



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## MONEY &amp; SECURITY

## YOU'RE RETIRED AND NEED CASH — IS A HELOC THE ANSWER?

By Taylor Getler  
*NerdWallet*

If you're a retired homeowner, there's a good chance that your property is worth far more than you paid for it — and that equity could be a lifeline.

Back in 1995, the typical home cost \$114,600. Today's median sale price is nearly \$400,000, according to the National Association of Realtors.

A home equity line of credit (HELOC) is one way to take some of that value and turn it into cash.

But is a HELOC the right solution during retirement? Let's look at a few scenarios.

### Scenario 1: You're worried about the economy

Recent headlines have given retirees plenty of fuel for doomsday-level fears about their financial future. From concerns about the stability of the Social Security Administration to questions about the ripple effect of tariffs and global market volatility on 401(k)s, it's understandable to look for ways to buffer your finances.

A HELOC can seem like an appealing backup plan to access cash without tapping retirement accounts during a downturn. Theoretically, it could buy you an additional 10 years to wait out the economic rollercoaster until you're in a better position to pay your principal balance. But this strategy comes with substantial risk.

"Taking on debt in retirement requires careful consideration of expected income and expenses," says Lori Trawinski, PhD, CFP and senior director at the AARP Public Policy Institute in Washington, D.C.

"Older borrowers may face increasing health costs, death of a spouse, or other situations that reduce available funds for debt payments."

Using a HELOC as a hedge against a market slump also assumes that the economy won't get worse. If it does, you could still be in a shaky financial po-



PHOTO COURTESY OF DESIGNER491/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES PLUS

sition — only now your home is on the line.

"A HELOC might look like an easy way to avoid triggering certain tax thresholds or tapping into retirement accounts. But in practice, it can add complexity and stress," says Jordan Leaman, CFP and branch operations manager at Churchill Mortgage in Wyoming, Michigan.

"Ideally, retirees should have a well-thought-out income plan in place, with a diversified portfolio that can weather market downturns without the need for additional debt. Planning ahead with liquid assets and a solid strategy for cash flow is key."

### Scenario 2: You want "fun money" in your golden years

After years of responsibly paying your mortgage, you may wonder if pulling cash out of your home equity could help you en-

joy a higher quality of life. After all, who wouldn't love to spoil their grandchildren or splurge on a memorable vacation?

However, even if a HELOC initially seems like an affordable way to access extra cash, it's not worth risking your home. In an uncertain economic climate, this danger is even more pronounced.

"When interest rates rise and inflation increases, consumers may face difficulty making payments," says AARP's Trawinski. "Since most HELOCs have variable interest rates, they can be particularly risky in a rising interest rate environment since minimum payments will rise as a result."

If you don't read the fine print, a HELOC's affordability can also be a bit deceiving.

During the HELOC's 10-year draw period, borrowers are usually only required to pay interest. But once you enter the repayment period (which usually lasts

20 years), you'll pay interest and principal.

"What seemed like an affordable loan can quickly become a lot more expensive, adding unnecessary strain," says Leaman.

If you can't pay, you could lose your home.

### Scenario 3: You're paying for home improvement

A home improvement project can be one of the best reasons to get a HELOC.

Ideally, this project will add to the value of your home, such as financing a new roof or replacing old siding.

That way, you're reinvesting the cash back into your home equity. There's also a potential tax benefit: HELOC interest may be tax-deductible if it's used to "buy, build, or substantially improve the residence," according to IRS guidelines.

Even if your project doesn't

directly raise the home's value — say, you're adding ramps or a stair lift for mobility — it might still be worth getting a HELOC if the changes can make your home more livable and allow you to age in place.

You'll still have to be prepared if your HELOC's variable interest rate rises, so your payments shouldn't be at the top of your budget. As long as you can afford the potential larger payments, a HELOC can be a solid financing solution.

### Scenario 4: You need help covering living expenses

This is a tough one. If you need a bridge to cover a temporary financial setback — like a medical bill — and you know there's an end in sight, a HELOC might work for you.

But if paying your bills is a consistent struggle, adding to your debt could make things worse in the long run.

In this case, you might consider a reverse mortgage. A home equity conversion mortgage, or HECM, is a reverse mortgage backed by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). It allows homeowners 62 and over to convert part of their home's equity into cash without monthly loan payments. You receive funds based on the value of your home, which you can use toward your living expenses.

Keep in mind that the loan needs to be repaid when the home is sold or when the borrower dies, so unless your heirs can repay the HECM, they likely won't be able to keep the house. But you are allowed to live there indefinitely, as long as you pay your property taxes.

### The bottom line on HELOCs in retirement

HELOCs can be a great financial tool for the right reasons, in the right circumstances.

Before signing on the dotted line, consider your finances and retirement goals and how a HELOC could help (or hinder) your ability to achieve them.



WORK & PURPOSE

# AFTER CONTRACTING POLIO AS A CHILD, SOUTHFIELD WOMAN THRIVES THROUGH EVERY STAGE OF LIFE

By Susan Thwing  
For MediaNews Group

Bożena Lamparska's life began with an obstacle, but she has spent every chapter since pushing forward, crafting a life rich in art, intellect and resilience.

Born in January 1955, just months before the polio vaccine was widely introduced, Lamparska contracted the virus at 10 months old.



Lamparska

"No one ever figured out how I got it," she says. By the age of 14, she had already undergone a dozen surgeries. But instead of letting limitations define her, Bożena found expression through music — a suggestion from her doctor to keep her hands active that would become a lifelong passion.

Lamparska went on to teach applied music at St. Lawrence University, specializing in voice, harpsichord and piano. "I wasn't going to be a Vladimir Horowitz," she said, "but I played and I taught."

Her musicality flourished despite physical limitations, and she became a respected performer, frequently called on as a last-minute soloist due to her impeccable sight-reading skills.

Over the years, Lamparska wore many professional hats — musician, educator, administrative assistant, researcher, mental health counselor and IT specialist.

"I got bored easily," she said. After moving into computer work in the 1990s, she led the IT department at a major nonprofit in Philadelphia and became a certified Microsoft engineer. She even helped safeguard data during the Y2K scare.

Lamparska's life took her from her native Rhode Island to Baltimore, upstate New York, Philadelphia, Maryland's Eastern Shore and finally to Michigan, where she now lives at Brookdale Southfield. While mobility has become more difficult, she now uses a motorized wheelchair due to a complex mix of post-polio complications, aging and Parkinson's — her sense of purpose remains clear.

"I try to feel useful," she said. "Whether it's helping someone with computer issues or singing along with medieval and Renaissance recordings, I still find ways to stay engaged."

Though she no longer performs as she once did, music remains central to her life.

She listens to choral works, sings along with the scores, and surrounds herself with the compositions she loves most. "Music was real important to me," she said. "And I didn't fully realize just how important until I couldn't play anymore."

Her advice for others facing physical or emotional limitations is simple: "Just keep moving forward, regardless of limitations. Do the best you can."

And that's exactly what she's done.

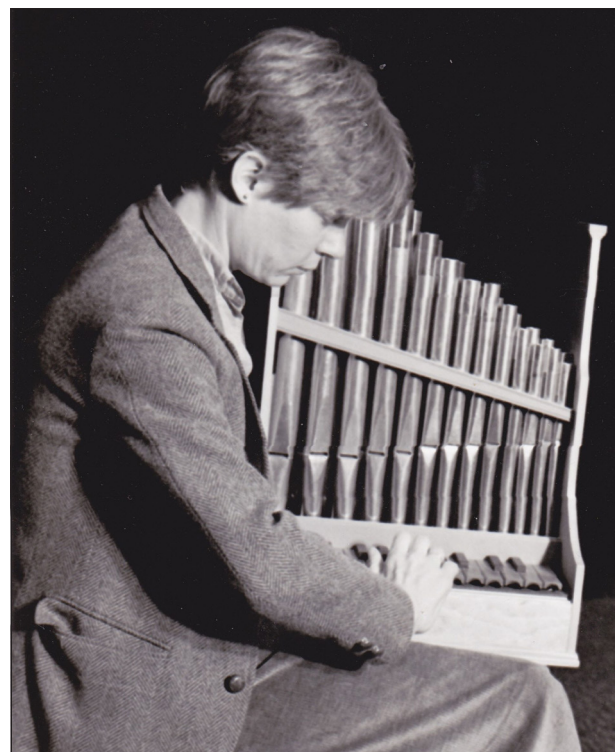


PHOTO COURTESY OF BOŻENA LAMPARSKA

Bożena Lamparska plays music years ago.

"I try to feel useful. Whether it's helping someone with computer issues or singing along with medieval and Renaissance recordings, I still find ways to stay engaged."

— Bożena Lamparska

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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING



**“Most of elderspeak is well intended. People are trying to show they care. They don’t realize the negative messages that come through.”**

*—Kristine Williams, nurse gerontologist*

PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO EDITORIAL SERVICES

# HONEY, SWEETIE, DEARIE: THE PERILS OF ELDERSPEAK

**By Paula Span**  
*KFF Health News*

A prime example of elderspeak: Cindy Smith was visiting her father in his assisted living apartment in Roseville, California. An aide who was trying to induce him to do something — Smith no longer remembers exactly what — said, “Let me help you, sweetheart.”

“He just gave her The Look — under his bushy eyebrows — and said, ‘What, are we getting married?’” recalled Smith, who had a good laugh, she said. Her father was then

92, a retired county planner and a World War II veteran; macular degeneration had reduced the quality of his vision, and he used a walker to get around, but he remained cognitively sharp.

“He wouldn’t normally get too frosty with people,” Smith said. “But he did have the sense that he was a grown-up and he wasn’t always treated like one.”

People understand almost intuitively what “elderspeak” means. “It’s communication to older adults that sounds like baby talk,” said Clarissa Shaw, a dementia care researcher at the University of Iowa Col-

lege of Nursing and a co-author of a recent article that helps researchers document its use.

“It arises from an ageist assumption of frailty, incompetence, and dependence.”

Its elements include inappropriate endearments. “Elderspeak can be controlling, kind of bossy, so to soften that message there’s ‘honey,’ ‘dearie,’ ‘sweetie,’” said Kristine Williams, a nurse gerontologist at the University of Kansas School of Nursing and another co-author of the article.

“We have negative stereotypes of older adults, so we change the way we talk.”

Or caregivers may resort to plural pronouns: Are we ready to take our bath? There, the implication “is that the person’s not able to act as an individual,” Williams said. “Hopefully, I’m not taking the bath with you.”

Sometimes, elderspeakers employ a louder volume, shorter sentences, or simple words intoned slowly. Or they may adopt an exaggerated, singsong vocal quality more suited to preschoolers, along with words like “potty” or “jammies.”

With what are known as tag questions — It’s time for you to eat lunch now, right? —



“You’re asking them a question but you’re not letting them respond,” Williams explained. “You’re telling them how to respond.”

Studies in nursing homes show how commonplace such speech is. When Williams, Shaw, and their team analyzed video recordings of 80 interactions between staff and residents with dementia, they found that 84% involved some form of elderspeak.

“Most of elderspeak is well intended. People are trying to show they care,” Williams said. “They don’t realize the negative messages that come through.”

For example, among nursing home residents with dementia, studies have found a relationship between exposure to elderspeak and behaviors collectively known as resistance to care.

“People can turn away or cry or say no,” Williams explained. “They may clench their mouths shut when you’re trying to feed them.” Sometimes, they push caregivers away or strike them.

She and her team developed a training program called CHAT, for Changing Talk: three hourlong sessions that include videos of communication between staff members and patients, intended to reduce elderspeak.

It worked. Before the training, in 13 nursing homes in Kansas and Missouri, almost 35% of the time spent in interactions consisted of elderspeak; that share dropped to about 20% afterward.

Furthermore, resistant behaviors accounted for almost 36% of the time spent in encounters; after training, that proportion fell to about 20%.

A study conducted in a Midwestern hospital, again among patients with dementia, found the same sort of decline in resistance behavior.

What’s more, CHAT training in nursing homes was associated with lower use of antipsychotic drugs.

Though the results did not reach statistical significance, due in part to the small sample size, the research team deemed them “clinically significant.”

“Many of these medications have a black box warning from the FDA,” Williams said of the drugs. “It’s risky to use them in frail, older adults” because of their side effects.

Now, Williams, Shaw, and their colleagues have streamlined the CHAT training and adapted it for online use. They are examining its effects in about 200 nursing homes nationwide.

Even without formal training programs, individuals and institutions can combat elderspeak. Kathleen Carmody, owner of Senior Matters Home Health Care and Consulting in Columbus, Ohio, cautions her aides to address clients as Mr. or Mrs. or Ms., “unless or until they say, ‘Please call me Betty.’”



PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO EDITORIAL SERVICES

In long-term care, however, families and residents may worry that correcting the way staff members speak could create antagonism.

A few years ago, Carol Fahy was fuming about the way aides at an assisted living facility in suburban Cleveland treated her mother, who was blind and had become increasingly dependent in her 80s.

Calling her “sweetie” and “honey babe,” the staff “would hover and coo, and they put her hair up in two pigtails on top of her head, like you would with a toddler,” said Fahy, a psychologist in Kaneohe, Hawaii.

Although she recognized the aides’ agreeable intentions, “there’s a falseness about it,” she said. “It doesn’t make someone feel good. It’s actually alienating.”

Fahy considered discussing her objections with the aides, but “I didn’t want them to retaliate.” Eventually, for several reasons, she moved her mother to another facility.

Yet objecting to elderspeak need not become adversarial, Shaw said. Residents

and patients — and people who encounter elderspeak elsewhere, because it’s hardly limited to health care settings — can politely explain how they prefer to be spoken to and what they want to be called.

Cultural differences also come into play. Felipe Agudelo, who teaches health communications at Boston University, pointed out that in certain contexts a diminutive or term of endearment “doesn’t come from underestimating your intellectual ability. It’s a term of affection.”

He emigrated from Colombia, where his 80-year-old mother takes no offense when a doctor or health care worker asks her to “tómese la pastillita” (take this little pill) or “mueva la manito” (move the little hand).

That’s customary, and “she feels she’s talking to someone who cares,” Agudelo said.

“Come to a place of negotiation,” he advised. “It doesn’t have to be challenging. The patient has the right to say, ‘I don’t like your talking to me that way.’”

In return, the worker “should acknowl-

edge that the recipient may not come from the same cultural background,” he said. That person can respond, “This is the way I usually talk, but I can change it.”

Lisa Greim, 65, a retired writer in Arvada, Colorado, pushed back against elderspeak recently when she enrolled in Medicare drug coverage.

Suddenly, she recounted in an email, a mail-order pharmacy began calling almost daily because she hadn’t filled a prescription as expected.

These “gently condescending” callers, apparently reading from a script, all said, “It’s hard to remember to take our meds, isn’t it?” — as if they were swallowing pills together with Greim.

Annoyed by their presumption, and their follow-up question about how frequently she forgot her medications, Greim informed them that having stocked up earlier, she had a sufficient supply, thanks. She would reorder when she needed more.

Then, “I asked them to stop calling,” she said. “And they did.”



## HEALTH &amp; FITNESS

# WHEN THEY DON'T RECOGNIZE YOU ANYMORE

By Paula Span

KFF Health News

It happened more than a decade ago, but the moment remains with her.

Sara Stewart was talking at the dining room table with her mother, Barbara Cole, 86 at the time, in Bar Harbor, Maine. Stewart, then 59, a lawyer, was making one of her extended visits from out of state.

Two or three years earlier, Cole had begun showing troubling signs of dementia, probably from a series of small strokes. “I didn’t want to yank her out of her home,” Stewart said.

So with a squadron of helpers — a housekeeper, regular family visitors, a watchful neighbor, and a meal delivery service — Cole remained in the house she and her late husband had built 30-odd years earlier.

She was managing, and she usually seemed cheerful and chatty. But this conversation in 2014 took a different turn.

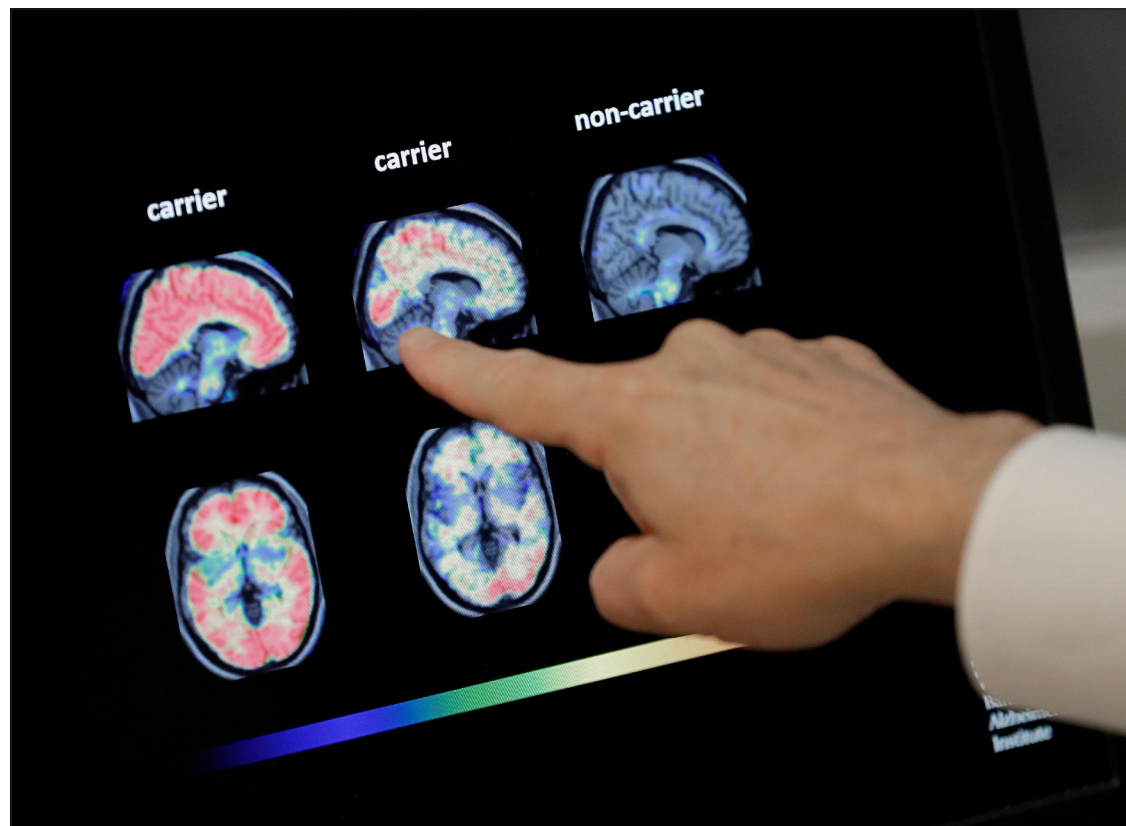
“She said to me: ‘Now, where is it we know each other from? Was it from school?’” her daughter and firstborn recalled. “I felt like I’d been kicked.”

Stewart remembers thinking, “In the natural course of things, you were supposed to die before me. But you were never supposed to forget who I am.” Later, alone, she wept.

People with advancing dementia do regularly fail to recognize beloved spouses, partners, children, and siblings. By the time Stewart and her youngest brother moved Cole into a memory-care facility a year later, she had almost completely lost the ability to remember their names or their relationship to her.

“It’s pretty universal at the later stages” of the disease, said Alison Lynn, director of social work at the Penn Memory Center, who has led support groups for dementia caregivers for a decade.

She has heard many varia-



MATT YORK, FILE — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A doctor looks at PET brain scans at Banner Alzheimers Institute in Phoenix, Arizona.

tions of this account, a moment described with grief, anger, frustration, relief, or some combination thereof.

These caregivers “see a lot of losses, reverse milestones, and this is one of those benchmarks, a fundamental shift” in a close relationship, she said. “It can throw people into an existential crisis.”

It’s hard to determine what people with dementia — a category that includes Alzheimer’s disease and many other cognitive disorders — know or feel. “We don’t have a way of asking the person or looking at an MRI,” Lynn noted. “It’s all deductive.”

But researchers are starting to investigate how family members respond when a loved one no longer appears to know them. A qualitative study recently published in the journal *Dementia* analyzed in-depth in-

terviews with adult children caring for mothers with dementia who, at least once, did not recognize them.

“It’s very destabilizing,” said Kristie Wood, a clinical research psychologist at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus and co-author of the study. “Recognition affirms identity, and when it’s gone, people feel like they’ve lost part of themselves.”

Although they understood that nonrecognition was not rejection but a symptom of their mothers’ disease, she added, some adult children nevertheless blamed themselves.

“They questioned their role. ‘Was I not important enough to remember?’” Wood said. They might withdraw or visit less often.

Pauline Boss, the family therapist who developed the theory of “ambiguous loss” decades ago,

points out that it can involve physical absence — as when a soldier is missing in action — or psychological absence, including nonrecognition because of dementia.

Society has no way to acknowledge the transition when “a person is physically present but psychologically absent,” Boss said. There is “no death certificate, no ritual where friends and neighbors come sit with you and comfort you.”

“People feel guilty if they grieve for someone who’s still alive,” she continued. “But while it’s not the same as a verified death, it is a real loss and it just keeps coming.”

Nonrecognition takes different forms. Some relatives report that while a loved one with dementia can no longer retrieve a name or an exact relationship, they still seem happy to see them.

“She stopped knowing who I was in the narrative sense, that I was her daughter Janet,” Janet Keller, 69, an actress in Port Townsend, Washington, said in an email about her late mother, diagnosed with Alzheimer’s. “But she always knew that I was someone she liked and wanted to laugh with and hold hands with.”

It comforts caregivers to still feel a sense of connection. But one of the respondents in the *Dementia* study reported that her mother felt like a stranger and that the relationship no longer provided any emotional reward.

“I might as well be visiting the mailman,” she told the interviewer.

Larry Levine, 67, a retired health care administrator in Rockville, Maryland, watched his husband’s ability to recognize him shift unpredictably.

He and Arthur Windreich, a couple for 43 years, had married when Washington, D.C., legalized same-sex marriage in 2010. The following year, Windreich received a diagnosis of early-onset Alzheimer’s.

Levine became his caregiver until his death at 70, in late 2023.

“His condition sort of zig-zagged,” Levine said. Windreich had moved into a memory-care unit. “One day, he’d call me ‘the nice man who comes to visit,’” Levine said. “The next day he’d call me by name.”

Even in his final years when, like many dementia patients, Windreich became largely non-verbal, “there was some acknowledgment,” his husband said. “Sometimes you could see it in his eyes, this sparkle instead of the blank expression he usually wore.”

At other times, however, “there was no affect at all.” Levine often left the facility in tears.

He sought help from his therapist and his sisters, and recently joined a support group for LGBTQ+ dementia caregiv-



ers even though his husband has died. Support groups, in person or online, “are medicine for the caregiver,” Boss said. “It’s important not to stay isolated.”

Lynn encourages participants in her groups to also find personal rituals to mark the loss of recognition and other reverse milestones. “Maybe they light a candle. Maybe they say a prayer,” she said.

Someone who would sit shiva, part of the Jewish mourning ritual, might gather a small group of friends or family to reminisce and share stories, even though the loved one with dementia hasn’t died.

“To have someone else participate can be very validating,” Lynn said. “It says, ‘I see the pain you’re going through.’”

Once in a while, the fog of dementia seems to lift briefly.

Researchers at Penn and elsewhere have pointed to a startling phenomenon called “paradoxical lucidity.” Someone with severe dementia, after being noncommunicative

for months or years, suddenly regains alertness and may come up with a name, say a few appropriate words, crack a joke, make eye contact, or sing along with a radio.

Though common, these episodes generally last only seconds and don’t mark a real change in the person’s decline. Efforts to recreate the experiences tend to fail.

“It’s a blip,” Lynn said. But caregivers often respond with shock and joy; some interpret the episode as evidence that despite deepening dementia, they are not truly forgotten.

Stewart encountered such a blip a few months before her mother died. She was in her mother’s apartment when a nurse asked her to come down the hall.

“As I left the room, my mother called out my name,” she said. Though Cole usually seemed pleased to see her, “she hadn’t used my name for as long as I could remember.”

It didn’t happen again, but that didn’t matter. “It was wonderful,” Stewart said.



DREAMTIME — DREAMTIME/TNS

People with advancing dementia do regularly fail to recognize beloved spouses, partners, children, and siblings.

## BE KIND SPOTLIGHT

We are looking to recognize people that have impacted your life and/or the community. If you have someone that you would like to nominate to be recognized, please send a paragraph or letter, first and last name of the person and picture of the person to us (if you have one).

Must receive your info and story by  
September 24, 2025 for our  
October 9, 2025 issue.

Names and place of photo: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Submitting Form: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

Email: Form & Photo to [Demke@medianewsgroup.com](mailto:Demke@medianewsgroup.com)

Mail to: Vitality, Be Kind Page, Attn: Dawn  
53239 Settimo Crt, Chesterfield, MI 48047

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## SOCIAL &amp; WELL-BEING

# HOW TO MAINTAIN A CARING RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

By Helen Dennis

[Helendenn@gmail.com](mailto:Helendenn@gmail.com)

**Q** Some of my friends and acquaintances are having memory problems. Most are suffering from Alzheimer's disease. In keeping up my relationship with them, how can I most effectively communicate given their limitations?

Let's begin by talking about Alzheimer's disease. So, what is it? According to the National Institute on Aging, it is "a brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills, and eventually, the ability to carry out the simplest tasks." It most often affects older adults, so age is a risk factor. More than seven million Americans are living with the disease, according to the Alzheimer's Association 2025 report. With the increase of our older population, that number will only grow. It is the seventh leading cause of death.

Now to your question. I had a recent conversation with a 15-year-old whom we'll call Sally. Her perspective might be helpful.

Sally has a loving relationship with her 88-year-old grandmother, whom she describes as frail and remembers nothing from the present and lots from the past. She notes that her grandmother easily gets confused and may even forget to eat. She cannot be left alone since she tends to wander and is prone to falling. Her grandmother has a full-time care provider and has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

My question to Sally was: "How do you make this relationship work?" She told me her story, filled with experiences, philosophy and advice.

## Addressing the memory problem

Sally video chats with her grandmother regularly in addition to visits, which might be a few hours or the better part of the day. She said, "If I didn't see her so much, she wouldn't remember me." And added, "Of course, she always recognizes me and seems to forget the bad things." For example, her grandmother recently had hip sur-



GETTY IMAGES

How to create a positive relationship with someone with Alzheimer's disease.

gery and doesn't remember her physical limitations, trying to do things that may lead to a fall. In helping her, Sally feels like she needs to be her grandmother's second brain, but adds, "It's important to never make that person feel like they need a second brain."

## The conversation

Sally said she typically initiates the conversation as she would with anyone, asking, "How are you?" "What have you been up to?" What typically follows is a question about something her grandmother loves, such as her favorite horse at her family farm or her current constant dog companion. Sally noted that she never runs out of questions because her grandmother doesn't remember the questions asked. So, Sally may repeat the same question to her grandmother, not sequentially but intermittently. Asking the same ques-

tion with the same answer is just fine with Sally.

## Feeling normal

"I treat my grandmother as if she didn't have the disease. I want her to feel normal, even if it's just for a minute," she said. It was important to Sally that her grandmother not feel invisible. She said, "Even with the repeated same answers, it's important to be attentive and interested." And adds, "Act as though you heard what that other person is saying for the first time." Additionally, Sally suggests that others should always direct questions to the person with the disease rather than to someone who may be accompanying the individual.

## Advice from Sally

- Don't assume those with the disease are no longer aware. They need to

be included.

- Don't make them feel invisible.
- Don't take things personally if the person doesn't remember you. What is important is that you are with them.
- Even though they may not remember you, you are making a difference.
- Money and gifts don't matter; family and friends do.
- Know the brain can register when you are happy. If you are not treated well, you can easily become sad and depressed.

- Be clear and simplify. Instead of saying Tom's nephew is visiting, say our cousin Gary Smith will be visiting. Say the name of the person.

- You can set a standard. When others observe you, they can get the message, and there will be a chain effect.

I asked Sally for keywords that we need to remember in relation to a loved one with Alzheimer's disease. Here they are — "patience, inclusion, positivity, acknowledgement, encouragement, caring and love." Finally, I asked, "Do you feel you are making a difference?"

"Of course, I am," she said.

Here are some additional tips from the Alzheimer's Association: Ask yes or no questions. For example, ask, "Would you like some coffee?" rather than "What would you like to drink?" Avoid criticizing, arguing or correcting and maintain eye contact to show you care about what that person is saying. For more communication tips, see the National Institute on Aging.

I told Sally that with her insight, compassion, empathy and problem-solving ability, she will be successful in whatever she chooses to do with her life ... and others will benefit.

Stay well, everyone, and know small acts of kindness matter.

*Helen Dennis is a nationally recognized leader on issues of aging and the new retirement with academic, corporate and nonprofit experience. Visit Helen at [HelenMdennis.com](https://www.helenmdennis.com) and follow her on [facebook.com/SuccessfulAgingCommunity](https://www.facebook.com/SuccessfulAgingCommunity). Contact Helen with your questions and comments at [Helendenn@gmail.com](mailto:Helendenn@gmail.com).*



## MONEY & SECURITY

# THESE FINANCIAL AND TAX ISSUES AFFECT 'GRAY DIVORCE'

By Sheryl Rowling

Morningstar

Beyond the emotional strain of a "gray divorce," managing your finances is critical.

The first step is hiring an experienced divorce attorney. Although it might be tempting to avoid legal fees, going without professional guidance could cost you more in the long run. Additionally, understanding the key financial and tax issues that come with gray divorce is essential.

### 1) How to budget after divorce

The cash flow you had while you were married supported one household. After a divorce, that available income stream will need to fund two households. At best, you can expect your income to be cut in half.

Granted, you only have to cover your own personal expenses, but some expenses like housing, insurance and medical expenses could exceed 50% of your married costs.

Start with calculating a spending budget. To begin, itemize your fixed costs:

things like rent, car payments, insurance, groceries and utilities. Your variable expenses such as travel, restaurants and gifts can be adjusted based on your available income.

As your post divorce lifestyle becomes more certain, you can revise that budget.

### 2) Selling the house and downsizing after divorce

After a late-life divorce, you might be thinking that you'd like to keep the family home. This could be a double-edged sword. Keeping all the equity in the house means you'll get less of the other assets.

Also, the cost of maintaining a large home along with assuming a mortgage could squeeze your budget. Do you really want to be house-poor to keep a residence that might be too big for you?

### 3) Social Security divorce benefits

If you were married at least 10 years, your Social Security benefit will be the greater of your own benefit or half your ex-spouse's benefit. Certainly, if this makes

a difference for you, consider the timing of your gray divorce. For example, if you've been married for nine and a half years, you might want to delay the final decree for six months.

Additionally, if you are approaching age 62 (or older), you have a choice of taking benefits early for less of an ongoing monthly benefit or delaying to increase your monthly benefit. Your personal financial situation and life expectancy will be the primary decision-making factors.

### 4) Working after divorce

If you will be short on cash flow, returning to (or continuing) work might be a good solution. Depending on your shortfall, it might not be necessary to hold down a high-level full-time job. Many semiretired people supplement their income with substitute teaching, house- and dog-sitting and other part-time work.

Whether you continue your regular job or pursue something less demanding, there's a big advantage to bringing in income: You might be able to delay drawing from your investments.

### 5) Long-term-care insurance after divorce

When you are on your own, long-term-care coverage is important. This insurance will be less expensive and easier to obtain when you are younger (under age 60) and healthy. If you're not able to afford premiums, consider opting for a longer waiting period of 180 or 360 days. Paying for long-term care for six months to a year can be more easily handled than having to cover care for many years.

### Watch

There are two other options for covering long-term-care costs. One, you may be able to exchange a life insurance policy for a long-term-care policy. Second, consider moving into a "continuing care" retirement community.

You can choose independent living, which is similar to having your own apartment. As you age and require more care, you can move to assisted living, health-care, or memory-care facilities within the community.



## PET TRIBUTE PAGE

**WE'RE GIVING YOU A CHANCE TO HIGHLIGHT YOUR SPECIAL PET ON OUR TRIBUTE PAGE BY SENDING US YOUR PHOTO. YOU MAY ALSO TELL US 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.  
Next issue will be October 9, 2025.

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

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**Mail to: Vitality Pet Page**  
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\*Any photos received after photo page is full will be held and used in future issues.

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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@medi-aneWSgroup.com](mailto:jgray@medi-aneWSgroup.com).

### SEPTEMBER

**Sept. 1-30:** Sept. is Library Card Sign-Up Month at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Did you know that Sept. is National Library Card Sign-Up Month? It's one card with endless possibilities! Register for a library card or renew your existing card during the month of Sept. to receive a special HTPL prize! Be sure to check out our interactive display, where you can let us know what you love about the library all month long. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Sept. 4-Oct. 23:** HBP Control: A Hypertension Self-Management Program offered for free by Corewell Health. Local 8-week In-Person Classes Do you have high blood pressure? Are you looking for ways to control it? High blood pressure puts you at risk for heart disease, stroke, kidney damage, vision loss and other health concerns. This is an eight-week evidence-based workshop designed to provide you with information, tips and tools to help you take control of your blood pressure. Participants learn about the basics of hypertension, stress management, the importance of nutrition, incorporating physical activity and more. Location: Troy Community Center, 3179 Livernois, Troy, from 1-2:30 p.m. Thursdays, Sep. 4 — Oct. 23. To register, call 313-738-1678, or visit [corewellhealth.org/classes-events/southeast-michigan](http://corewellhealth.org/classes-events/southeast-michigan)

**Sept. 8-Oct. 20:** AI 101 — AI for Everyday Life — Beginners, Mon/Wed Sept. 8 — Oct. 20, 4-5 p.m. AI 102 — AI for Everyday Life

— Intermediate, Mon/Wed Sept. 8 — Oct. 20, 5:15-6:15 p.m. Questions: (248)608-0249. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org).

**Sept. 11:** OPC Food Truck Rally sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center. Live Music, Food Trucks, Kid Zone, Beer & Wine. Thurs., Sept. 11, 4-8 p.m. Free. Save the date and Join us for our first ever Food Truck Rally! This intergenerational family-friendly event has something for everyone with eight different food trucks offering delicious menu items, live music by the Killer Flamingos, a Kid Zone with bounce houses and games, 50/50 Raffle, and yard games. There is no admission fee and is open to the public. Sponsored by LMCU, KiddieKlub, Rochester Mills Brewery, Chief Financial Credit Union, DTE Energy, Bellbrook Senior Living, American House Elmwood & Stone, and Town Village Sterling Heights. For more information, call (248)659-1029 or visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org). The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester.

**Sept. 12:** Financial Friday: The Ins and Outs of Social Security sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Friday, Sept. 12. At 10:30 a.m. \$2. Gain a better understanding of how benefits work and what to consider when planning your financial future. Presented by Rochester Wealth Strategies Vice President Xenia Woltmann, AWMA. Open to the public. For information or to register please call 248-659-1029. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester.

**Sept. 13:** Adult Field Trip to The Whiskey Factory: Detroit City Distillery at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Saturday, Sept. 13 at 10 a.m. Join us for a guided tour of The

Whiskey Factory in Detroit, home to Detroit City Distillery. Experience an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour and tasting at the historic home of Stroh's Ice Cream and Goebel Brewing Co. This is a 21+ event, and a valid ID is required. The cost is \$15 per person, payable by cash or check only. We will meet at the library and depart promptly at 10 AM. Our tour will begin at 11 a.m. and we expect to return to the library by 1 — 1:30 p.m. Registration is required. Sign up in person at the library. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Sept. 15:** Movie at the Library — "Dead Poets Society," sponsored by the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, at 1 p.m. at Blair Memorial Library. Popcorn, a great movie, and good company. Relax and enjoy the classic "Dead Poets Society" on the big screen. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Advanced registration required with the Senior Center. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>

**Sept. 15:** Stage & Style Meadow Brook Theater Costume Fashion Show sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, at 6 p.m. \$10. Step into the spotlight and enjoy a one-of-a-kind stage evening of theatrical fashion! Meadow Brook Theater Guild brings the magic of the stage to OPC with a live fashion show featuring original costumes from past productions. Modeled by OPC members and Guild volunteers, each outfit comes with behind-the-scenes stories from Liz Goodall, the designer behind the seams. Sponsored by: Motus Real Estate. For more information or to reserve tickets, call (248)659-1029 or visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org). The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester.

**Sept. 15:** Mark Tisdell Concert sponsored by

the OPC Social & Activity Center, from 6-7:30 p.m. \$15. An evening of timeless tunes and easygoing melodies. Mark's warm vocals and acoustic style set the perfect mood. Light Appetizers & Refreshments included. For more information or to reserve tickets, call (248)659-1029 or visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org). The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester.

**Sept. 15-Oct. 20:** Powerful Tools for Caregivers, at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, 6 Weeks, Mondays at 10 a.m. This FREE program is made just for caregivers! Learn self-care strategies, reduce stress, and connect with others who understand your journey. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Advanced registration required. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>

**Sept. 15:** Guitar lessons for adults. All classes are held at Kawaii Music Studio located at 12745 23 Mile, Shelby Twp. Fall Session begins the week of Sept. 15. Adult Beginner Guitar on Saturday 11:15 a.m. — 12pm or Tues 7:15 — 8 p.m., Cost \$168 (8 Classes). Adult Beginner Piano on Monday 7:15 — 8 p.m., Cost \$168 (8 Classes). Register online at [Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com](http://Lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com) or by calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330.

**Sept. 16:** Knitting & Crochet Circle at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Tuesdays, Sept. 16, 23, and 30 at 10 a.m. 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.

**Sept. 16:** Alzheimer's/Dementia Caregivers Group sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Tuesday, Sept. 16, from 1:30-3 p.m. Support group for those caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's or Dementia. Open to the public. Respite care is available. OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. Call (248)659-1036 or visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org) for additional information.

**Sept. 16:** Check Mates: Chess Club at the Roseville Public 29777, Gratiot Ave., Roseville, Tuesday, Sept. 16, from 6-7:30 p.m. Ages 12 to adults are welcome. Once a month, local Chess enthusiasts gather at the library to socialize, trade tips, and challenge each other to this classic game of strategy. Whether you are a master player or just learning the game, you are welcome to join us. You may bring your own set or use one of ours. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or email [rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov](mailto:rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov)

**Sept. 16:** Join us for a fun day in Frankenmuth, Tuesday, Sept. 16. The day starts out with some time to shop in Frankenmuth's unique shops. Afterwards, we'll enjoy Zehnder's Plated 2-piece Chicken Luncheon. Lunch comes with sides, dessert and beverage. Following lunch, we'll enjoy Zehnder's featured show, "Beach Party Boys," a Beach Boys Tribute Concert. The show has been described as the "Ultimate Beach Party" and will include such hits as "Barbara Ann," "Help Me Rhonda," "Surfin' USA," "Little Deuce Coupe," "God Only Knows," "Wouldn't It Be Nice," and "Good Vibrations." The day ends with a cruise down the Cass River aboard the Bavarian Belle Riverboat, an authentic paddlewheel riverboat. Trip departs at 8:30 a.m. from the back parking lot of the

John Armstrong Performing Arts Center, 24600 F V Pankow Blvd, Clinton Twp. Cost \$125. Register online at [www.lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com](http://www.lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com) or by calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330.

**Sept. 17:** Library Walking Crew sponsored by the Roseville Public 29777, Gratiot Ave., Roseville, Wednesday, Sept. 17 at Veterans Memorial Park, from 10-11 a.m. All ages welcome Join the Library Walking Crew for a fun, low-impact way to get moving while enjoying the outdoors! We invite you to meet up with library staff and fellow community members at Veteran's Memorial Park to stroll along the walking path. This is a great opportunity to get some fresh air, stay active, and meet new people in a relaxed, welcoming environment. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or email [rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov](mailto:rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov)

**Sept. 17:** Back Pain Management with Linda McParlan at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Wednesday, Sept. 17 at 6 p.m. Join orthopedic nurse practitioner Linda McParlan as she discusses back pain management, causes, and prevention. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Sept. 17:** Innovations in Heart Health sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, at 5 p.m. \$5. Discover a groundbreaking option for stroke prevention with the Watchman implant, a one-time, minimally invasive procedure that helps reduce stroke risk in people with atrial fibrillation (AFib). Dr. Choksi, MD, will explain how this innovative device offers an alternative to long-term blood thinners and provides lasting protection where it matters most. Sponsored by Arden Courts Promedica Memory Care. For more information or to register,



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

**Sept. 17:** Savvy Seniors: Taking the Fear Out of Falling sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Wednesday, Sept. 17, at 9:30 a.m. \$5. Gain confidence and take control of your mobility in this empowering session with Karen, from Age Strong, presented in recognition of Fall Prevention Month. Explore how mindset, home safety, and daily habits can help reduce the fear of falling. This supportive and engaging program is perfect for anyone looking to stay active, steady, and independent. 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 OPCcenter.org

**Sept. 18:** Mystery Book Club: "A Lady's Guide to Etiquette and Murder" by Dianne Freeman, Thursday, Sept. 18, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Ages 18 and up. Calling all sleuths! Get together with other mystery readers as we discuss crime novels every third Thursday of the month. This month, we will discuss "A Lady's Guide to Etiquette and Murder" by Dianne Freeman. You are welcome to join us even if you have not finished the book. For more information, call 586-445-5407 or email rsvlibraryservice@roseville-mi.gov

**Sept. 18:** Trivia Night at Total Sports sponsored by the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Thursday, Sept. 18 at 6:30 p.m. Come test out 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 \$8 in advance or purchased at the door on Trivia Night for \$9. Cash or check only. Max team size of 8. Arrive with a team or we'll team you up. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Sept. 18:** Let's go to the Ballpark, Thursday, Sept. 18. Detroit Tigers vs Cleveland Guardians at Comerica Park. We have shaded seats in section 114 rows 41 and 42. Enjoy a hotdog, chips and pop, all included. Trip departs at 11:45 am from the Walmart parking lot, Chesterfield. Register online at [www.lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com](http://www.lc-ps.ce.eleyo.com) or by calling L'Anse Creuse Community Education at 586-783-6330. Cost \$ 75.

**Sept. 19:** Grief Support Group sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Friday, Sept. 19, from 19-11:30 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. Open to the public. Walk-ins are Welcome Questions: (248)608-0249. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit OPCcenter.org.

**Sept. 20:** OPC Pickleball Mixed Doubles Tournament sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. \$35 per event. Round Robin pool play. US-APA rules will apply. Medals will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each event. Limited edition t-shirts will be available! Tickets are \$35 per event. Registration is Required. Sponsored by: HAP, Pomeroy Living and HealthQuest Physical Therapy. Open to the public. For more information, call (248)608-0278 or visit OPCcenter.org. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester.

**Sept. 22:** Secretary of State Mobile Office at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, from 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. Renew IDs, driver's licenses, and other common documents without leaving Clawson! The Mobile SOS Office will be at the Senior Center. For more information, call 248-589-0334.

**Sept. 22:** Reclaiming Inner Peace & Finding Joy sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center. From 4-6 p.m. \$20. Jan Miller, Mindfulness Educator, hosts an uplifting and

empowering 20hour session focused on silencing your inner critic and reconnecting with what brings you joy. Through humor, insight, and practical tools, Jan will help you recognize those self-sabotaging thoughts — and how you how to shift toward positivity, purpose, and peace. For more information or to register, call (248)659-1029 or visit OPCcenter.org. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester.

**Sept. 22-Nov. 10:** HBP Control: A Hypertension Self-Management Program offered for free by Corewell Health. Local 8-week In-Person Classes Do you have high blood pressure? Are you looking for ways to control it? High blood pressure puts you at risk for heart disease, stroke, kidney damage, vision loss and other health concerns. This is an eight-week evidence-based workshop designed to provide you with information, tips and tools to help

you take control of your blood pressure. Participants learn about the basics of hypertension, stress management, the importance of nutrition, incorporating physical activity and more. Location: Madison Heights Active Adult Center, 260 W. 13 Mile Road, Madison Heights, from 10-11:30 a.m., Mondays, Sept. 22 — Nov.10. To register, call 313-738-1678, or visit [corewell-health.org/classes-events/southeast-michigan](http://corewell-health.org/classes-events/southeast-michigan)

**Sept. 23:** Flu Shot & COVID-19 Booster Clinic at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Tuesday, Sept. 23 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Join us at Harrison Township Public Library for a convenient walk-in flu shot or the latest COVID-19 booster with Macomb Pharmacy! Don't forget to bring your ID and insurance card. Without insurance, the cost is \$40. For questions, please call Macomb Pharmacy at 586-333-

5526. Your participation not only safeguards your health, but also contributes to a healthier community.

**Sept. 23:** Tech Time at HTPL: Intro to Printing and Scanning at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Tuesday, Sept. 23 at 6:30 p.m. Join the adult librarians for monthly Tech Time at HTPL! Learn the basics of printing and scanning from various devices. We will have time for questions at the end of the session. Registration is preferred but not required. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Sept. 23:** At 1 p.m. A Widowed Friends event. A tour of The Leader Dogs for the Blind. 1039 S. Rochester Rd. Rochester Hills. Cost is \$5/ person. Lunch to follow at Hamlin Pub. 1988 S Rochester Rd., Rochester Hills. Host Elaine 586-291-2471 Limit 25.

CALENDAR » PAGE 16

## ATTENTION ORGANIZATIONS GROUPS & CLUBS

Send in your information for meetings, seminars, events and press releases for our monthly calendar. Our next edition will run October 9, 2025.

**Deadline is September 24, 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**



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**Sept. 24:** Parkinson's Care Partner Group sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Wednesday, Sept. 24, from 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. Open to the public. Call facilitator Kathy Walton 248.568.3549. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org).

**Sept. 24:** BINGO Games sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center Wednesday, Sept. 24 at noon, \$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! Daytime bingo Sponsored by the Village at Orchard Grove and Shelby Crossing. Evening bingo sponsored by Home Helpers Home Care. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, call (248)659-1029 or visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org).

**Sept. 25:** Euchre Tournament sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Thursday, Sept. 25. Registration Begins 4:30 p.m. OPC Members: \$7, Non-Members: \$10. Pre-registration is appreciated. 8 Games — 8 Rounds. Pay-out prizes to 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th place placers. Open to the public. This program is sponsored by Accent Care. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, call (248)659-1029 or visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org).

**Sept. 25:** Many Holidays Luncheon & Games at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, at noon, \$6. Celebrate all the holidays in one fun-filled afternoon! Festive decorations, a delicious lunch, and holiday-themed games included. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Register by Sept. 17. Advanced registration required. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>

[sonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/](https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/)

**Sept. 25:** Women's Luncheon: A Life in Libraries sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Thursday, Sept. 25 at 1 p.m. \$5. Meet Christine Hage — 1997 Michigan Librarian of the Year and a trailblazer in the library world. From building award-winning systems to shaping national policy, Christine will share highlights from her remarkable career, her impact on Rochester, and insights on the future of libraries. 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](http://OPCcenter.org)

**Sept. 26:** Visually Impaired Group sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Friday, Sept. 26, from 10-11:30 a.m. Support group providing information, socialization, support and speakers to those with low vision. Open to the public. Register by calling (248)608-0246. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org).

**Sept. 26:** Library Happy Hour at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Friday, Sept. 26, from 2-4 p.m. Celebrate Library Card Sign-Up Month with HTPL. Drop in (no registration required) and join us for mocktails, snacks, library-themed crafts, and more fun freebies. All ages welcome — be sure to sign up for a library card if you don't have one yet. For more information, call (586) 329-1261.

**Sept. 26:** All-Ages Library Happy Hour! at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Friday, Sept. 26 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Celebrate Library Card Sign-Up Month with HTPL! Drop in (no registration required) and join us for mocktails, snacks, library-

themed crafts, and more fun freebies. All ages welcome — be sure to sign up for a library card if you don't have one yet. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Sept. 26:** Memory Café sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, Friday, Sept. 26, from 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. Open to the public. RSVP to Theresa Gill (248)659-1036 or [tgill@OPCcenter.org](mailto:tgill@OPCcenter.org). The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, call (248)659-1029 or visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org).

**Sept. 27:** The Single Way, a group for Christian single adults, will be hosting a games day and full dinner on Saturday, Sept. 27 at 5 p.m. Price is \$7 and includes a complete barbecue dinner, dessert, snacks, and beverages. A reservation is required by Friday, Sept. 26. For more information and location, call 586-774-2119.

**Sept. 27:** Fall Claws 'N Paws Festival sponsored by the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, from 3-7 p.m., at Clawson City Park. Join the fun! Senior bake sale, pet adoptions, live music, vendors, and family-friendly activities for all ages. Free event open to the public. For more information, call 248-589-0334.

**Sept. 30:** OATS Tech Talk — Digital Genealogy Tools sponsored by the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, at 4 p.m. at the Blair Memorial Library. Trace your roots! Learn how to use digital genealogy resources to uncover your family history. Special guest City of Clawson Museum Curator Leah Davis. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Advanced registration required. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>

[web/](https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/)

**Sept. 30:** Tuesday Night Book Group at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Tuesday, Sept. 30 at 6 p.m. Join the Tuesday Night Book Group on Tuesday, Sept. 30 at 6 p.m. as we discuss "The Lioness of Boston" by Emily Franklin. Get your copy and join us today. About the Book: A deeply evocative novel of the life of Isabella Stewart Gardner, a daring visionary who created an inimitable legacy in American art and transformed the city of Boston itself. By the time Isabella Stewart Gardner opened her Italian palazzo-style home as a museum in 1903 to showcase her collection of old masters, antiques, and objects d'art, she was already well-known for scandalizing Boston's polite society. But when Isabella first arrived in Boston in 1861, she was twenty years old, newly married to a wealthy trader, and unsure of herself. Puzzled by the frosty reception she received from stuffy bluebloods, she strived to fit in. After two devastating tragedies and rejection from upper-society, Isabella discovered her spirit and cast off expectations. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

## OCTOBER

**Oct. 1-Dec. 19:** Bingocize — Move, Laugh, Win! at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, Wednesdays & Fridays at 1 p.m. A fitness twist on bingo—stay active, have fun, and win prizes while you play. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Advanced registration required. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>

**Oct. 2:** Haunted Gingerbread Houses at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Thursday, Oct. 2 at 6 p.m. It's officially spooky season and we are celebrating with a tasty

craft! Join us in making haunted gingerbread houses, just like regular gingerbread houses, but Halloween-themed. This is a teens-only event! Registration is required. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Oct. 4:** Cemetery Walk at Clinton Grove Cemetery, from noon to 4 p.m., sponsored by the Macomb County Historical Society and the Crocker House Museum & Gardens. Raffle baskets and refreshments. Tickets must be purchased in advance. \$20 for members, \$25 for nonmembers. For more information, call 586-465-2488 or visit [crockerhouse-museum.org](http://crockerhouse-museum.org)

**Oct. 8:** 50+ Senior Expo sponsored by the OPC Social & Activity Center, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 8. Questions: (248)608-0249. The OPC is located at 650 Letica Drive, Rochester. For more information, visit [OPCcenter.org](http://OPCcenter.org).

**Oct. 9:** OATS Tech Talk at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, 1 p.m. Boost your tech confidence! Join us for the next speciality topic on what's new in the digital world. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Advanced registration required. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>

**Oct. 14:** The Birmingham Metropolitan Women's Club presents at their monthly luncheon, Sharri Watkins — chief operating officer for the Motown Historical Museum at 10:30 a.m. The presentation will be followed by a delicious lunch. You do not have to be a member to give us a try. Reserve your place two weeks prior to the event by calling Chris — 248-303-7339 — lunch & program \$34, held at the Iroquois Club, 43248 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Twp. To learn more, visit [tbmwc.com](http://tbmwc.com)

**Oct. 17:** Halloween Happy Hour at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Friday, Oct. 17,

from 2-4 p.m. Celebrate the spooky season with mocktails, snacks, crafts, and other fun freebies! All ages welcome. No registration required. Costumes encouraged. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Oct. 21:** Coffee & Conversation — Advanced Directives at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, at 9:30 a.m. Over coffee, learn the importance of advanced directives and how to prepare them with Hospice of Michigan. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Advanced registration required. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>

**Oct. 22:** Pottery with Jan at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, at 1 p.m., \$45. Create unique pottery pieces with guidance from Jan in this fun, hands-on workshop. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Advanced registration required. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>

**Oct. 22:** Read It and Eat Cookbook Club at the Harrison Township Public Library, 38255 L'Anse Creuse, Ste. A, Harrison Twp., Wednesday, Oct. 22 at 6 p.m. Join us for the first date of our new "Cookbook Book Club." Reserve your recipe in our selected cookbook at the front desk. Cook the dish and bring it to share with the group! More details can be found at [htlibrary.org](http://htlibrary.org). Future dates for 2026 to be announced. Please be advised that food tasting is at your own risk. For more information, call 586-329-1261.

**Oct. 23:** Lunch & Learn — Medicare Questions with Chris at the Clawson Senior Center, 509 Fisher Court, Clawson, at 11 a.m. Have Medicare questions? Chris has answers—and lunch! Come hungry and leave informed. For more information, call 248-589-0334. Advanced registration required. Register at: <https://miclawsonweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/>



# Poetry Page

## THE SOUTHERN CROSS

I know, now, that I will  
never be under  
The Southern Cross.  
I will see it only part of the  
year in the north,  
In the north where, still,  
there are many stars.  
But the Southern Cross  
guided sailors  
From another world,  
another country,  
And was their only companion  
on the lonely  
Voyages before they found  
New Zealand.  
They looked at the sky as  
the sons of the sea  
Must always look.  
There are similar stars in my  
hemisphere to the north,  
Stars that also saved explorers,  
Stars that often guided  
me home safely.  
But the mystery and loneliness

of those southern sailors  
Will never translate to my  
searching.  
Mine has mostly been easier.  
Kept my feet on the ground,  
Although, on the earth  
that I stand,  
I know that it does not  
Go round and round in  
perfect circles.  
It wobbles like a ship on the  
sea.  
But my sky and my stars  
can be dependable.  
Even though the movement of  
the stars may seem crazy  
To the naïve or unsophisticated,  
The wisest of men know that  
the comets  
Will come back.

**By John Rivard Davis  
of Brighton, MI**

## TRAVEL THE ROADS

Have you traveled this  
country  
Far and wide  
Have you sat at the  
oceans side  
Watching the evening tide  
As you traveled from coast  
to coast  
What inspired you the most  
Is it the valleys where the  
green grass grows  
Or is it the mountains so  
very high  
Does this bring a sigh from  
your lips  
And a tear from your eyes

This is nature in all of  
its glory  
This is nature's wonderful  
story  
Open its book and travel  
its roads  
Let your eyes look at all  
that's great  
Do it before it's too late  
This is a story  
Written by nature.

**By Steve Pankewicz 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.

Email Poetry, Pet Tributes & Be Kind Spotlights to: [demke@medianewsgroup.com](mailto: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 OCTOBER 9, 2025**

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

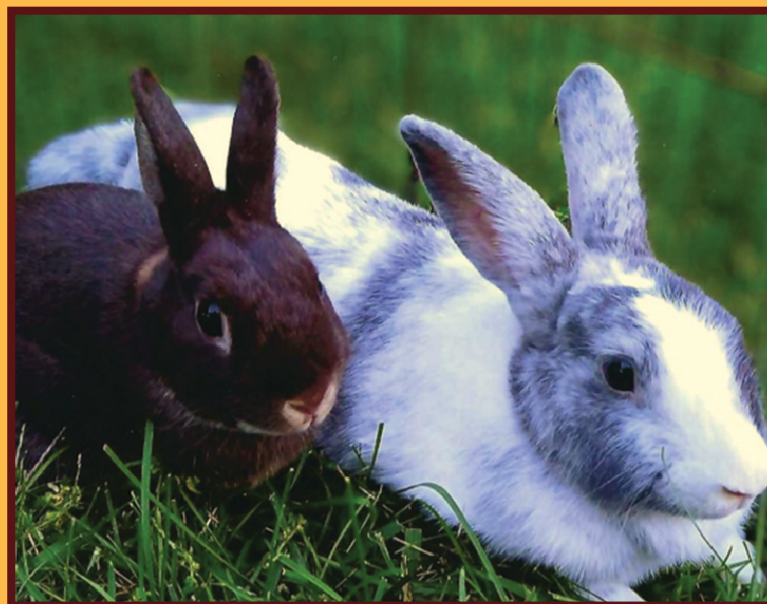


# Pet Tribute Page



## Leo

**Member of the Gellert Family  
of Harrison Twp, MI**



## Coco Puff Violet

**Grandbunnies of Mike & Brenda Boutin  
of Sterling Hgts, MI**

**Members of the Harnden Family  
of Sterling Hgts, 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](mailto:demke@medianewsgroup.com)

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

**NEXT ISSUE WILL BE OCTOBER 9, 2025**

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