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Senior Perspectives

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MARCH | APRIL 2022

Page 10 – Recipes ■ Page 15 – Social Security Q & A ■ Page 16 & 17 – Games
Page 26 – Preventing Falls ■ Page 32 – Assistive Technology



MARCH | APRIL 2022 ■ WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| 04 My first solo drive
<i>by Dick Hoffstedt</i> | 11 Manage your Social Security
<i>by Vonda VanTil</i> | 18 Purest of Human Pleasures
<i>by Janet Hasselbring</i> | 26 Preventing Falls
<i>by Joe Stapel</i> | 30 The Power of Newspapers
<i>by Tricia McDonald</i> |
| 06 Volunteering in your community
<i>by Lisa Tyler</i> | 12 Let's Try This
<i>by Michelle Fields</i> | 20 Bunions
<i>by Jan Smollen, DPM</i> | 27 He Called It My Magic Lantern
<i>by Jackie Lindrup</i> | 31 Advance Care Planning
<i>by Kelly St. Martin</i> |
| 08 The Graying Globetrotter:
A grand experience!
<i>by Jay Newmarch</i> | 13 Earning a Badge of Courage
<i>by Louise Matz</i> | 22 Soul Food
<i>by Gil Boersma, M.Div</i> | 27 Watering Can to the Rescue!
<i>by Jackie Lindrup</i> | 32 Everyday Assistive Technology
<i>by Christine Wistrom</i> |
| 10 Senior Perspectives Recipes | 15 Social Security Q&A
<i>by Vonda VanTil</i> | 23 A Flash in the Sky
<i>by Jerry Mattson</i> | 28 Your Health Action Plan Part I
<i>by Holly Lookabaugh-Deur</i> | 34 Not ready to retire?
<i>by Vonda VanTil</i> |
| | 16 Game Page | 24 Star Dust
<i>by Joel Dulyea</i> | | |

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Happy
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from
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JAN/FEB WINNER: CHRIS MERGENER OF GRAND HAVEN
The conversation heart was found in the graying globetrotter story on page 8.



BY
DICK
HOFFSTEDT

My first solo drive in my Dad's new car

My dad never gave me too many warnings about things to watch out for as I grew up. As I approached my 16th birthday in the summer of 1950 and was about to receive my very first driver's license, he told me this: "Make sure you use the rear and side view mirrors."

Every Saturday evening, it was my job to walk approximately three city blocks to the local news stand and pick up the Sunday edition of the newspaper my parents liked. In nice weather this was not a big deal. Winter was another story.

Earlier that year my dad had purchased his first new car. It was a beautiful metallic green, four-door Pontiac Chieftain. He was so proud of that car but allowed me to use it to pass the driving part of my license test.

Around October or November of that year, it turned very cold...no snow but cold. Dad thought it was maybe time for me to solo, so one bitter Saturday night he gave me the keys and let me drive alone for those three short blocks. I was ecstatic. We lived on a side street

that allowed curb parking on both sides of the street, which didn't allow much room for two cars to pass each other. I pulled away carefully from our curb and slowly crept down the street. Everything went just fine.

I spotted an empty space and carefully parallel parked that marvelous car. I was so proud of myself that I sat for a while savoring my accomplishment.

I could see the little old man who ran the newsstand. I was so anxious to tell him I didn't have to walk anymore that I opened my door to get out and heard a very loud "WHACK" and noticed my car door was gone. It was lying across the street leaning on the other curb. The car that hit the door kept on going and turned right around the newsstand and disappeared. I was frozen. Not from the cold but fear. There was no one around. The little old man at the news stand never budged. I had to do something. No phones were handy, so I simply got out, went and picked up the door and put it hastily in the back seat.

When I got home, I parked the car outside our house and went in. The first thing my dad asked was how it went. I told him there was something he needed to see. He came out, took one look and said calmly, "You didn't use the mirrors, did you?"

He didn't get angry and had the door fixed that week. He let me drive the car many times after that for a variety of errands. I never had another problem. I don't know if I could have handled such a situation so calmly.

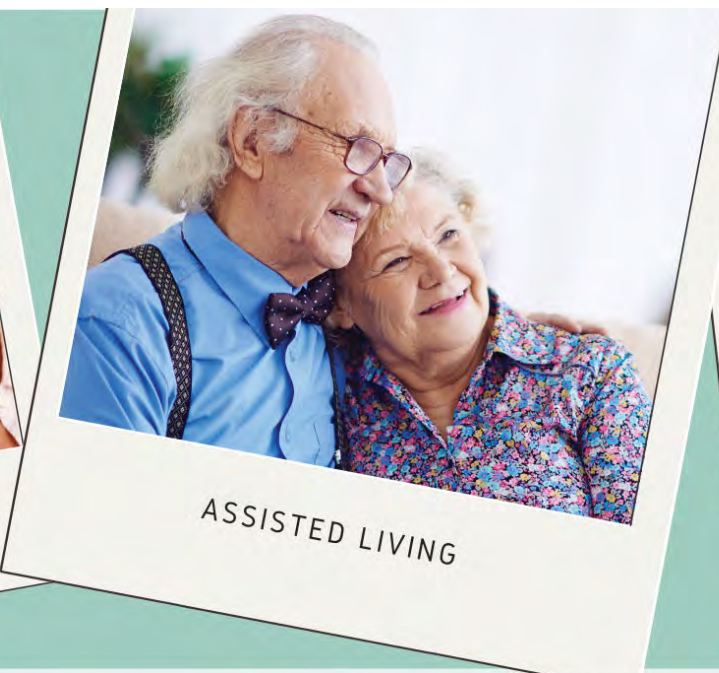
By the way, we never did get the Sunday papers that weekend.

Richard Hoffstedt was born to Swedish immigrants in 1934 and raised in Chicago. He is a U.S. Army veteran. He has been married to Shirley for 66 years. Richard has six children, five grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Richard is an engineer by profession. His interests are music, reading, travel, riding his adult tricycle, Mark Twain and John Steinbeck.





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Volunteering in your community



BY
LISA
TYLER

Are you looking for a meaningful way to volunteer, but not quite sure where or what you want to do? The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) may be just the outlet for you.

RSVP is an AmeriCorps Seniors program, funded by the federal government and serving Muskegon and Oceana counties through United Way of the Lakeshore. The RSVP purpose is simple: connecting people over the age of 55 to volunteer opportunities in their community to use their skills to support

local families while providing them with a high-quality volunteer experience.



“Volunteerism is a great way of helping to build a stronger community,” said Laura Carpenter, volunteer chair of the local RSVP. “It’s also an opportunity for seniors to utilize the skills they have developed over their lifetime to help others; it’s a proven fact that there are health benefits by being engaged mentally and physically.”

RSVP volunteers serve the community in a variety of ways:

- Health care – access to care, creating systems to allow people to age in place, feeding the hungry, and more. These programs can include senior medical transportation, delivering meals to older adults, medical dispatchers, blood services, telephone reassurance, food pantries, Medicare/Medicaid assistance, and more.
- Education – working with classroom assistance, tutoring, mentoring,



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and hands-on learning experiences for young people and their families. Opportunities include museum education guides, camp/swimming course, and more.

- Disaster services, cultural heritage, environmental, income stability, veterans, capacity building, and more. While the primary focus areas are health care and education, RSVP serves a multitude of other organizations. Volunteer activities can include VITA tax preparation, office support, museum teams, nonprofit ambassadors, performing arts, and more.

What makes RSVP stand apart from other volunteer gigs? As an RSVP member you will receive supplemental liability insurance while volunteering, be exposed to other volunteer placement opportunities critical to our community, be recognized for your service, and become part of a network of over 200,000 seniors 55-plus nationwide working to make local communities and our nation better.

There are more than 100 volunteers, 20-plus station partners and more than 30 job descriptions in Muskegon and Oceana counties. Volunteers are matched with open opportunities at station partners to ensure the best fit for a great experience. An orientation is offered to ensure there is understanding of the volunteer role and responsibilities.

Carpenter said she joined RSVP as a VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) volunteer, which led her to learning about even more opportunities in the community. "I am very proud to say I am a member of a national program such as RSVP and to stand shoulder to shoulder united in volunteerism with so many other Americans."

To start volunteering, contact United Way to sign up for their weekly orientations. You can call 231-332-4047, email Lynn Keech at lynn@unitedwaylakeshore.org, or visit United Way at 31 E. Clay Avenue, Muskegon MI 49442. There is also an online form at <https://www.unitedwaylakeshore.org/VolunteerRSVP>.

While Ottawa County does not have RSVP, they also have many volunteer opportunities through Greater Ottawa County United Way. You can contact them through www.ottawaunitedway.org or call 616-396-7811.

Lisa Tyler is the Communications Director for Senior Resources. She and her husband Aaron are the proud parents of Hannah, a junior at Hope College, and Nicholas, a graduate of MSU. Lisa is also an alumnus of MSU, loves scrapbooking and travel, and being involved in her community. She is treasurer of the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District Board of Education, chair of the Kids' Food Basket Muskegon advisory committee, board member for CALL 2-1-1, and a member of the Muskegon Rotary and Greater Muskegon Service League.





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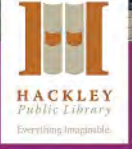


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BY
JAY
NEWMARCH

The Graying Globetrotter A grand experience!

I grew up on trips to Mackinac Island. What kid isn't mesmerized by an island where your only means of transportation are bicycles or horses? Not a car in sight. But it was in early adulthood when my love of Mackinac Island grew exponentially. It was the trip when I made the decision to stay on the island overnight. After the throngs of families have left and quiet comes over the island, the real magic begins.

I remember that as the air cooled and night arrived, a light fog rolled in off the water. The fog created a gauzy light, pierced only by the street lights lining the roads. Layer on the clip clop of horse hooves and I was transported to another time. That magical memory will be with me for life.

Every subsequent trip involved staying at least one night on the island.

Fast forward to this year. The year of the pandemic. Travel opportunities have been sparse and adventure close to home seemed the most prudent. I

hadn't been to the island for a number of years, so the destination climbed up my mind's list. As I researched dates, I came upon a special history weekend at the Grand Hotel that would take place in October. Special weekend, special fall price. I was in.

Even though fall was a bit late this year, it was still a beautiful drive north. The leaves were beginning to turn and there was a chill in the air.

Although years had passed since my last visit, as I got closer I seemed to instinctively remember my way to the Shepler dock. Sort of like birds who migrate north, I guess!

One perk of staying at the Grand Hotel is that you can drop your luggage at the Shepler dock and the next time you'll lay eyes on those suitcases is when they are in your room. A very nice perk.

After a quick, beautiful trip over to the island, we made our leisurely way to the hotel. It was a beautiful day for a



walk. As we approached the imposing hotel, it provided us a special little spark to think that this place was our home base for the weekend.

Itinerary in hand, we visited our room before the welcome reception prior to dinner. The room was bright and beautiful with a view over the porch, pool, and out toward the Mackinac Bridge.

Even without the historical focus of the weekend, you can't help but be awed by the history of the place. There are photos and memorabilia everywhere, sharing the hotel's 134-year history.

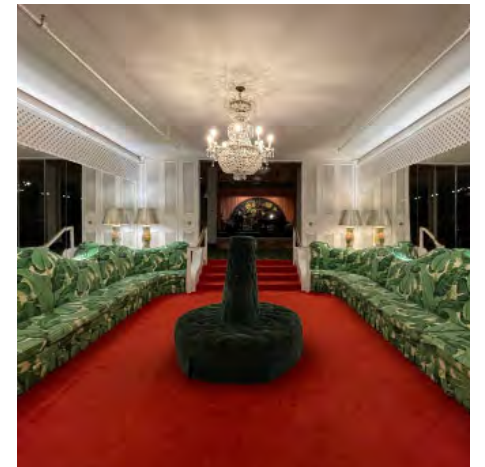
If we weren't already excited, the reception with our historian, Bob Tagatz, enthralled us all the more, as he shared little tidbits to tide us over until Saturday's lecture. We left with an encouragement to return for that evening's movie, *This Time for Keeps*, starring Esther Williams, for whom the hotel's pool is named, by the way.

If you purchase one of the Grand Hotel's special packages, you not only save on the room rate, but dinners and breakfasts are included in the package. Even if you don't purchase a package, I'd suggest at least one dinner in the dining room. While the meal alone is

worth it, the dining room and dining experience are something on their own.

If you enjoy dancing, you'll be smitten by the Terrace Room. But, even if you're not a dancer, the Grand Hotel orchestra will make you sway and tap your foot along with the music. Tucked away up the stairs from the main lobby, it is a quiet, intimate space that's just right for an after-dinner stop.

As promised, Saturday's lecture shared the history and some of the secrets of the iconic hotel. In the late 1800s, shipping and railroad companies were throwing up resort hotels all over the country. In 1904, there were 1,200 such resort hotels catering to the second generation of the robber barons. While the robber barons were hard at work making their fortunes, their offspring were hard at work figuring out how to spend those fortunes. They had time on their



hands and a desire to leave the dirty, hot cities during the summer.

Transportation companies wanted them on their ships and trains, but needed to offer places for them to go. They didn't WANT to build these grand hotels, they NEEDED to.

Only eleven of the 1,200 hotels still exist. But, interestingly, they weren't really built to last. That wasn't the intention. The fact that the Grand Hotel still exists, and is more grand than it was built to be, is quite a feat.

These hotels were never really meant to be money makers, either. Again, they were a means to an end. They existed



to lure the rich to travel on company ships and trains. The Grand Hotel was only open during July and August. But, when the rich booked a room, they booked it for the entirety of the season.



They weren't spending a weekend like I did, they were spending the season at the hotel. They needed a nice room, good food, and ways to keep themselves entertained. One family reserved the same room for the entire season for fourteen years. That was what the transportation companies were after.

Another fascinating story is how the hotel was physically built. From dragging 1.5 million board feet of lumber across



the frozen straits to the 600 laborers who constructed the hotel in just 90 days, the fortitude and urgency makes your heart race.

The builders had to wait for the straits to freeze over, but also had to have the hotel ready to open for the season. There was no room for error. But, there was error. That's the interesting tidbit. Take a walk around and you'll see floors that tilt and hallways that rise and fall. The laborers were all working different areas and when they met up, their work didn't always follow suit. So, if your end was eight inches higher than your cohorts', the connection would rise or fall to meet the other.

But, open they did. With an experimental power plant that offered nine lights outside and three chandeliers inside. A grand hotel in the wilderness with power, lights, and working elevators? Imagine the spectacle!

Days were spent with made up activities like egg races, tennis, croquet, obstacle courses, horse racing and afternoon teas on the lawn. They even tried

dog racing, using mutts from the island. The dogs proved unruly and the racing was a bust until someone had an idea that would ensure the dogs would race. They towed them out to a floating dock offshore and dumped them into the water. The first one to reach shore was the winner. A successful, albeit cruel way to entertain the guests.

But, don't let that darken your view of the hotel. The dog races are gone, but the grandeur and history remains. It is well worth a trip to take in this incredible Michigan treasure.



A special treat!

For some reason, prior to my stay at the Grand Hotel I had never watched the movie *Somewhere in Time*. Well, forty-two years after it was released, I watched it for the first time in the very place it was filmed. What a thrill to know that I was just steps away from the very places that were showing on the screen. It was worth the wait!

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Cathay's Cooking Corner

BY
CATHAY
THIBDAUE

Brownies with Frosting

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder

Frosting:

- 3 tablespoons butter, softened
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour an 8-inch square pan. In a large saucepan, melt 1/2 cup butter. Remove from heat, and stir in sugar, eggs, and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Beat in by hand 1/3 cup cocoa, 1/2 cup flour, salt, and baking powder. Spread batter into prepared pan. Bake in preheated oven for 25 to 30 minutes. Do not overcook.



To make frosting: Combine 3 tablespoons softened butter, 3 tablespoons cocoa, 1 tablespoon honey, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract, and 1 cup confectioners' sugar. Stir until smooth. Frost brownies while they are still warm.

Cathay is the Network Manager, Certified HIPAA Security Professional, Certified Medical Practice Security Professional, Certified PCI-DSS Security Compliance Professional, Certified Healthcare Cybersecurity Professional, and has a Certificate of Leadership in Healthcare Management Proficiency at Senior Resources of West Michigan. She also enjoys boating, fishing, and spending time with her family.



BY
STACI
GERKEN

Blue Cheese and Steak Salad

Ingredients:

- 12-16 ounces steak
- 2-3 cups lettuce
- Cherry tomatoes
- Red onion
- Carrots
- Blue cheese

Dressing:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1-2 tsp honey
- Salt and pepper

Directions:

- Season steak on both sides with salt and pepper. Cook over high heat on either a grill or a stovetop to desired doneness. Let rest for several minutes and then slice into strips.
- Place washed and dried lettuce in a bowl.
- Whisk together the dressing ingredients. Pour over salad and toss to coat the lettuce.
- Wash and dry the veggies. Slice tomatoes in



half, thinly slice or chop the red onion, and grate the carrot. Place them on top of the lettuce in the bowl.

- Add sliced steak and desired amount of blue cheese.
- Enjoy!

Staci Gerken is a Registered Dietitian and the Nutrition Contract Administrator at the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan where she works with congregate and home delivered meal partners in a nine-county region.

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Representative Payees Help You Manage Your Social Security



BY
VONDA
VANTIL

Some people who receive monthly Social Security benefits or Supplemental Security Income payments may need help managing their money. When we receive information that shows you need help, we'll work with you to find the most suitable representative payee to manage your benefits. A representative payee receives your monthly benefit

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- Personal care items
- Clothing
- Rehabilitation expenses (if you have a disability)

If you need help managing your benefits, tell a Social Security representative that there is someone you want to be your representative payee. Your representative payee should be someone you trust and see often, and who clearly understands your needs. Social service agencies, nursing homes, or other organizations are also qualified to be a representative payee. Ask them to contact us.

You can write to us within 60 days of being assigned a representative payee if you don't agree that you need one or if you want a different representative payee.

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Vonda Van Til is the Public Affairs Specialist for West Michigan. You can write her c/o Social Security Administration, 3045 Knapp NE, Grand Rapids MI 49525 or via email at vonda.vantil@ssa.gov.

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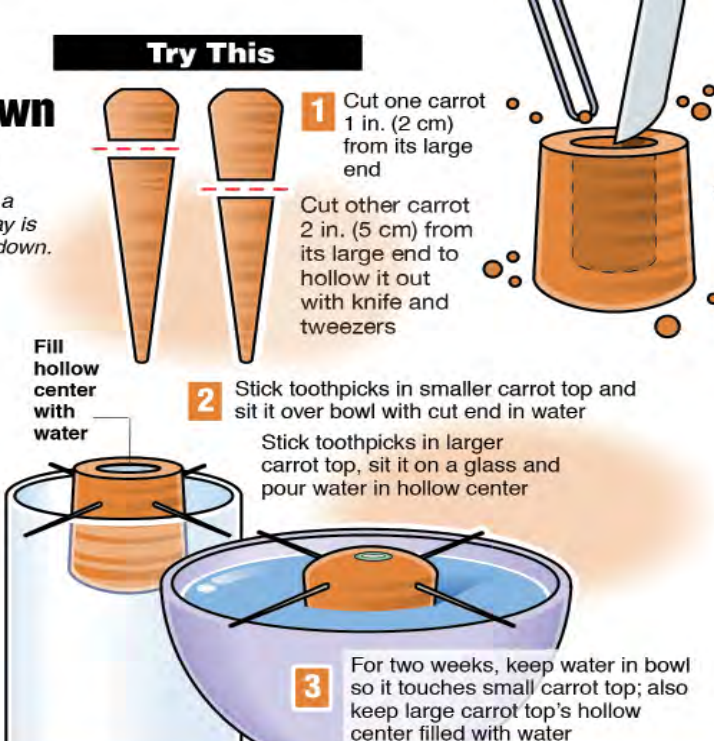
Try This

Upside-down gardening

You can test whether a plant knows which way is up and which way is down.

You'll need

- Two large, fresh carrots
- Toothpicks
- Small sharp knife
- Small bowl
- Large glass
- Tweezers



- 1 Cut one carrot 1 in. (2 cm) from its large end
- 2 Cut other carrot 2 in. (5 cm) from its large end to hollow it out with knife and tweezers
- 3 Stick toothpicks in smaller carrot top and sit it over bowl with cut end in water

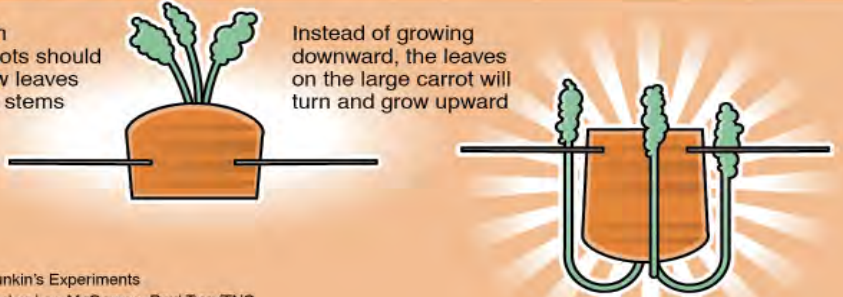
Stick toothpicks in larger carrot top, sit it on a glass and pour water in hollow center

For two weeks, keep water in bowl so it touches small carrot top; also keep large carrot top's hollow center filled with water

What happened?

Both carrots should grow leaves and stems

Instead of growing downward, the leaves on the large carrot will turn and grow upward



Source: Hunkin's Experiments
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Paul Trap/TNS



Earning a Badge of *Courage*



BY
LOUISE
MATZ

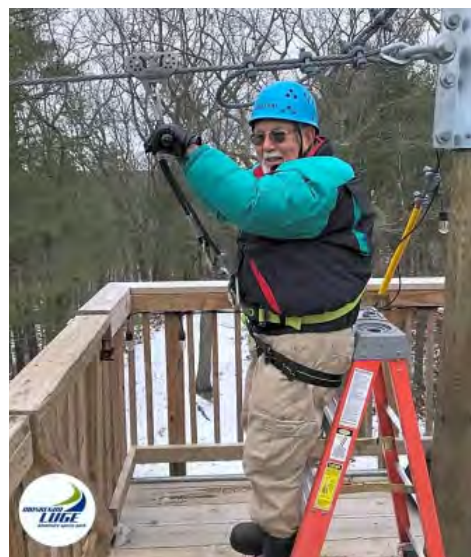
Monday after New Year's Day I asked my pickleball friend Linda Peterson Parker (age 73) if she had a good holiday. To my surprise, she told me about her exciting adventure instigated by her friend Larry DeVoogd, age 93. Larry made reservations for the two of them to ride the zip line at the Muskegon Luge Adventure Sports Park. Linda was a little anxious, but definitely willing. Larry had hopes of being the oldest one to ride. He was disappointed that one older person had already been recorded.

According to the website for the park, the zip line distance is 1,400 feet. It's a dual operation. You'll race alongside a friend with a view of the treetops over Muskegon State Park, traveling over the top of the winter and summer luge tracks. All zip line participants will get two runs down each side of the zip line. Each run

takes 50 seconds to one minute. Before zipping you will be outfitted by a zip line guide with a harness and helmet. You will then go to the top of the luge track sand dune where the zip line starting platform is located. A guide will attach your trolley and ensure your harness is properly secured. When ready, you'll be instructed to step off the 25-foot platform to begin your descent over the tracks and through the tree canopy to the landing platform, where zip line guides will detach your trolley.

CONGRATULATIONS LINDA AND LARRY. YOU DID IT!!! You earned your badge of courage. We are so impressed and inspired.

Louise has been writing for Senior Perspectives for over ten years. She enjoys family time, reading, walking, biking, and golf. Pickleball and mahjonnig have been added to the list since retirement. She also loves to join her husband for turkey hunting and fishing in the Florida Keys.



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Shamrock or blarney?

An Irish shamrock is a wildflower, but the ones sold in U.S. flower shops are often impostors, clover-like sorrels easily grown in greenhouses.

'Original' Irish shamrock

"Shamrock" comes from the Irish "seamrog" or little clover

- Probably closest to today's ***trifolium repens*** (white clover), which originated in Europe
- **May have a triangular mark** (a crescent or watermark) on upper surface
- White flowers, sometimes with pink hue

Familiar shamrock

Oxalis acetosella (wood sorrel) is a variety sold often for St. Patrick's Day

- **Three heart-shaped leaflets**; easily mistaken for clover, but leaves are paler green, softer
- **Fold easily at midrib**; many plants fold leaves up at night
- White or pink flowers

White clover



Wood sorrel



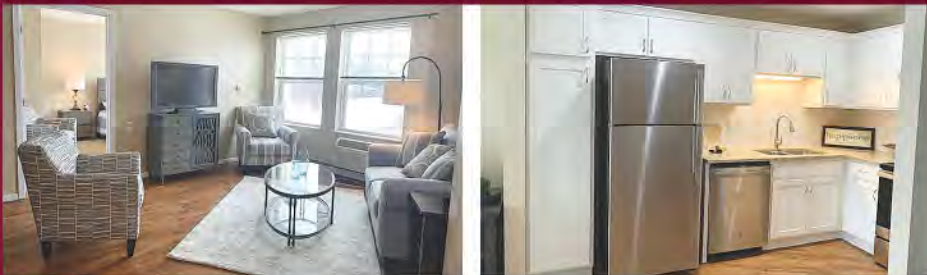
Why shamrocks?

According to legend, St. Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity to Christian converts in Ireland

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, University of Vermont, Peterson Field Guides: Wildflowers
Graphic: Staff, TNS

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Question: How do I report a lost Social Security card?

Answer: You do not have to report a lost Social Security card. In fact, reporting a lost or stolen card to Social Security will not prevent misuse of your Social Security number. You should let us know if someone is using your number to work, call us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

If you think someone is using your Social Security number, there are several other actions you should take:

- Contact the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) online at www.ftc.gov/bcdp/edu/microsites/idtheft or call 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338).
- File an online complaint with the Internet Crime Complaint Center at www.ic3.gov.
- Contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Identity Protection Specialized Unit by calling 1-800-908-4490, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.
- Monitor your credit report.

Question: How are my retirement benefits calculated?

Answer: Your Social Security benefits are based on earnings averaged over your lifetime. Your actual earnings are first adjusted or “indexed” to account for changes in average wages since the year the earnings were received. Then we calculate your average monthly indexed earnings during the 35 years in which you earned the most. We apply a



formula to these earnings and arrive at your basic benefit. This is the amount you would receive at your full retirement age. You may be able to estimate your benefit by using our Retirement Estimator, which offers estimates based on your Social Security earnings. You can find the Retirement Estimator at www.ssa.gov/estimator.

Question: I've decided I want to retire. Now what do I do?

Answer: The fastest and easiest way to apply for retirement benefits is to go to www.ssa.gov/retireonline. Use our online application to apply for Social Security retirement or spouses benefits. To do so, you must:

- Be at least 61 years and 9 months old.
- Want to start your benefits in the next four months.
- Live in the United States or one of its commonwealths or territories.



BY
VONDA
VANTIL

Question: I'm not sure when I'm going to retire so I want to estimate my retirement benefit at several different ages. What's the easiest way to do that?

Answer: Using our Retirement Estimator is easy at www.ssa.gov/estimator, and it's the best way for you to get a good idea of what your monthly benefit payment may be after you retire. The Estimator gives estimates based on your actual Social Security earnings record. Keep in mind, these are estimates and we can't provide your actual benefit amount

until you apply for benefits. You can use the Estimator if you have enough work to qualify for benefits and aren't currently receiving benefits. If you are currently receiving only Medicare benefits, you can still get an estimate. You can learn about this subject by reading our publication, Retirement Information For Medicare Beneficiaries, available at www.ssa.gov/pubs.

Question: I am receiving Social Security retirement benefits and I recently went back to work. Do I have to pay Social Security (FICA) taxes on my income?

Answer: Yes. By law, your employer must withhold FICA taxes from your paycheck. Although you are retired, you do receive credit for those new earnings. Each year Social Security automatically credits the new earnings and, if your new earnings are higher than in any earlier year used to calculate your current benefit, your monthly benefit could increase. For more information, visit www.socialsecurity.gov or call us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778).

Question: Are Social Security numbers reassigned after a person dies?

Answer: No. We do not reassign Social Security numbers. In all, we have assigned more than 460 million Social Security numbers. Each year we assign about 5.5 million new numbers. There are over one billion combinations of the nine-digit Social Security number. As a result, the current system has enough new numbers to last for several more generations. For more information about Social Security, visit our website at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Vonda Van Til is the Public Affairs Specialist for West Michigan. You can write her c/o Social Security Administration, 3045 Knapp NE, Grand Rapids MI 49525 or via email at vonda.vantil@ssa.gov.

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Game Page Answers
on Page 35

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5		6		3		8		
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By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



INSTRUCTIONS: Find as many words as you can by linking letters up, down, side-to-side and diagonally, writing words on a blank sheet of paper. You may only use each letter box once within a single word. Play with a friend and compare word finds, crossing out common words.

BOGGLE POINT SCALE

- 3 letters = 1 point
- 4 letters = 2 points
- 5 letters = 3 points
- 6 letters = 4 points
- 7 letters = 6 points
- 8 letters = 10 points
- 9+ letters = 15 points

YOUR BOGGLE RATING

- 151+ = Champ
- 101-150 = Expert
- 61-100 = Pro
- 31-60 = Gamer
- 21-30 = Rookie
- 11-20 = Amateur
- 0-10 = Try again

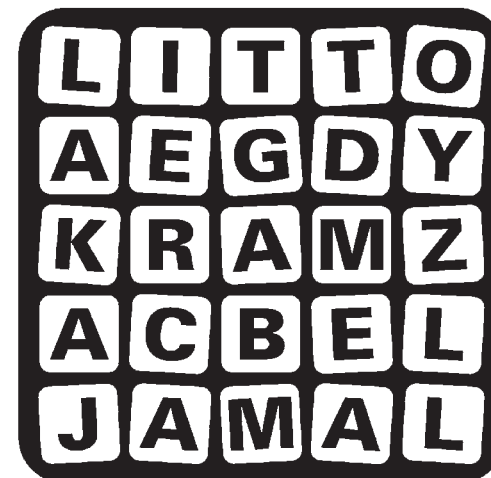
Boggle BrainBusters Bonus

We put special brain-busting words into the puzzle grid. Can you find them?

Find AT LEAST EIGHT BODIES OF WATER in the grid of letters.



By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



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- 0-10 = Try again

Boggle BrainBusters Bonus

We put special brain-busting words into the puzzle grid. Can you find them?

Find AT LEAST SEVEN TWO-SYLLABLE MAMMALS in the grid of letters.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

WEYRA

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NOGGI

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SORETE

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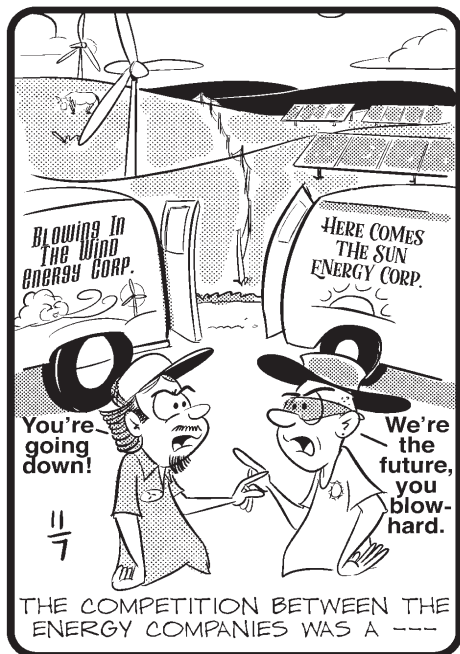
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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Check out the new, free JUST JUMBLE app

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

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LNAFK

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TCLOHB

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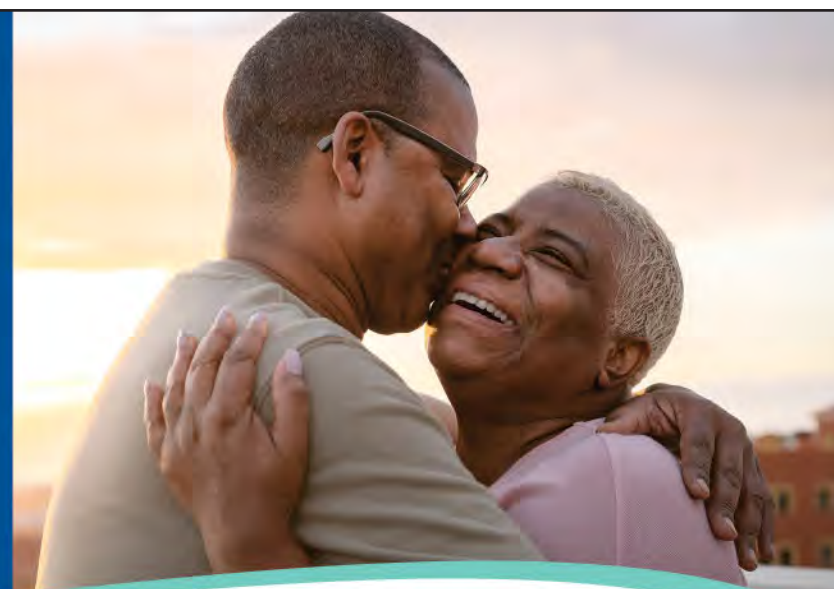
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Spring is coming - it's time to grab your gardening tools!



"My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece."

(Monet, Painter)

BY
JANET
HASSELBRING

In a hectare (two and one-half acres), French Impressionist painter Claude Monet mixed simple flowers, such as daisies and poppies, with rare varieties, and crafted a garden full of perspectives, symmetries, and colors. Later he would add the pond with its famous Japanese bridge covered with wisterias,



other smaller bridges, weeping willows, bamboo, and the famous nymphaeas (water lilies), which would be the focus of his artistic creations for more than 20 years.

By shaping subjects before painting them, he created his works twice. Always looking for mist and transparencies, he dedicated himself less to flowers than to their reflections in the water; a kind of inverted world transfigured by the liquid element.

We're fortunate to have a miniature copy of Monet's garden locally, in Muskegon, complete with a pond, a blue bridge and blue rose-covered archways. All flowers and shrubs in the garden are identical to those in Monet's. Other local memorial gardens include Heritage Memorial, Mike Miller Memorial and the John J. Helstrom Memorial at Muskegon Museum of Art.

Memorial gardens are planted for the specific purpose of remembering someone or something special. They often have a theme or focal point and exemplify the idea that "The love of gardening is a seed that once planted never dies." (Gertrude Jekyll)

My favorites:

1. Meijer Gardens, Grand Rapids, MI, known for its sculpture park and butterfly gardens; Olbrich Gardens, Madison, WI, sporting the Thai Pavilion (the only one outside Thailand); Selby Gardens, Sarasota, FL, famous for its orchids; and Chicago Botanic Gardens, Chicago, IL are botanical gardens, dedicated to the collection, cultivation, preservation, and display of a wide range of plants labeled with botanical names.
2. Many gardens focus on a single bloom. In Holland, MI, a palette of color heralds the arrival of spring. During the Tulip Time Festival, rows of tulips line the city streets, and mass plantings fill beds in fields and local parks. At Windmill Island, the only authentic operating Dutch windmill in the U.S., over 100,000 blooms, and a mass



planting of over 60,000 flowers, dazzle the eye. The Mable Ringling Garden, Sarasota, FL, was founded in 1913 and boasts 1,000 rose bushes representing more than 400 varieties of hybrids.

3. The Emily Dickinson Garden in Amhurst, MA, recreates flowers and plants loved and tended by the poet in her reclusive years.



4. While most gardens radiate a peaceful atmosphere, some have a special religious significance, such as the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem, where Mary met her risen Lord.
5. Some gardens have a special emphasis. The lavender labyrinth and herb gar-

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den at Cherry Point Market in Mears, MI offers a meditative space. Their lavender is making a comeback after it was destroyed by the 2019 polar vortex.

6. My favorite garden though, is my little piece of paradise, where I putter as I please. Whether you are working in your garden or visiting one, the rewards are many. Gardens keep you physically fit, relieve stress, make you happy, boost your health, create a healthy environment, produce oxygen, and are great for kids.

“God Almighty first planted a garden. And indeed, it’s the purest of human pleasures.”

(Francis Bacon, Essays).

*Did you know?

Of the 1775 official botanic gardens in 148 countries, the most notable is England’s Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, London. With 8.5 million items, it’s the world’s largest collection of plants.

One of the world’s largest privately-owned lavender farms is Australia’s Bridestowe Lavender Estate, with 260

acres of blooming purple beauty.

Lavender, part of the mint family, boasts 450 varieties worldwide and produces a mere 1/4 tsp. of lavender oil per pound of flowerheads.

75% of cut flowers grown in the States come from California.

The hybrid tea rose blooms on average every 49 days during the growing season. The average household spends \$503 on gardening annually, and nearly 1/3 of gardeners are aged 18–34.

During COVID 2019, approximately 16,000,000 people started gardening.

Janet lives in MI with her husband, Don and Welsh terrier, Snack. Jan drags herself off the tennis and pickleball courts occasionally to write. Her writings include Tales from Pelican Cove, a series of books featuring wild/ shorebirds from FL and beyond, Country Dairy, which describes life on her family farm, in west MI, in the 1930s, when her parents lived and worked on the land, and Tweets, A Twitter Feed of Short Stories and Articles. Her piano gets lonely because she chooses to whack fuzzy yellow balls and popping pickleballs instead of tickling its ivories.



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BY
JAN
SMOLEN, DPM

Bunions: What are they and what are the treatments for them?

A bunion is a bump that develops on the big toe joint. It is caused by the big toe (Hallux) drifting laterally over toward the lesser toes. The 1st metatarsal drifts medial to the inside and the joint slowly dislocates out of alignment.

The bunion by the big toe joint is the most common, but there are also other types of bunions:

- Tailor's bunion (bunionette) is a bump or prominence by the pinky toe or 5th toe.
- Congenital Hallux Valgus: Some babies are born with bunions.
- Juvenile or adolescent hallux valgus: Kids between the ages of 10-15 can develop bunions.

The causes of bunions include genetics. Chances are your mom, dad, or a grandparent passed your bunions onto you.

Another cause of bunions is flat feet or pronation. Talk to your health care provider about arch supports or orthotics if you have flat feet.

Other causes of bunions include:

- Wearing ill-fitting shoes or high heels for years.

- Foot injuries.
- Inflammatory diseases such as Rheumatoid Arthritis.
- Flexible ligaments and joints from conditions such as Downs Syndrome.

You should see a foot care specialist when the bunion is painful, if you develop red spots from shoes rubbing, or have open sores or blisters.

If you can't find any shoes that are comfortable, and your normal activities or daily living are being hindered we then consider various treatment options.

Nonsurgical treatment for bunions include:

- Padding such as moleskin pads over the bump.
- Stretching the shoe by the bunion. Shoe stores and shoe repair shops offer this service.
- One can consider wide toe box shoes or a soft bunion splint which is worn at night.
- Arch supports and orthotics are also viable options.
- Pain relievers such a Tylenol can help with discomfort.

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- Physical therapy can also be prescribed. Massage is applied to the foot to give relief.
- Exercises can also be given to strengthen the foot muscles.
- Topical lidocaine patches (do not cut the patches) are also another treatment option for patients in pain or discomfort.

If you still have pain, there are many surgical treatment options. Bunion surgery is performed on an outpatient basis, at a hospital or at a surgery center. It is usually done under sedation (like what you would have during a colonoscopy) and local injection to anesthetize the foot. There are many types of bunion surgical procedures and your surgeon will discuss which one is best for you based on your deformity, symptoms, and x-rays findings.

A very common bunion procedure is Austin osteotomy. It is a bone cut in the head of the metatarsal and the head is shifted laterally to realign the 1st MPJ joint. Screws or pins are used to aid in the healing of this bone cut. The patient may do partial weight bearing on the heel the day of surgery.

This procedure is for mild to moderate bunions. Healing time for this is approximately 8-10 weeks.

A procedure for large and very large bunions with flatfeet is the traditional Lapidus which is a fusion at the metatarsal cuneiform joint with plates and screws. The post-op course is non-weight bearing to start for at least 5 days, working into partial weight bearing in 2-3 weeks. The healing time is 12 weeks.

The Lapifuse procedure is also for very large bunions. You may have seen a commercial for this recently. It has the advantage of allowing for 3 D triplane correction using special instruments and implants. The patient may start partial weight bearing in 2-3 days after surgery, which reduces the risks of blood clots. The healing time is approximately 12 weeks. An advantage to the Lapifuse bunion procedure is less chance of shortening of the 1st metatarsal bone which can avoid complications such as painful 2nd metatarsal, 2nd metatarsal stress fractures and calluses developing under the 2nd head

Jan Smolen DPM is board certified by The American Board of Podiatric Surgery and is a Diplomat of The American College Foot and Ankle Surgeons. She is a physician at Shoreline Foot and Ankle Associates in Muskegon with satellite offices in New Era, Fremont and Ludington.

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BY
GIL BOERSMA,
M.DIV., B.C.C.

After the snow and ice of winter, the renewal of the land with grass and flowers may renew our spirit as well. I am not suggesting that we cannot find spiritual growth any time of year. We might be challenged by the weather on any given day! I am suggesting that if you need a blessing or a renewal of faith, recognize your need and stay open to God's provision. Anyone can experience a dry or difficult stretch of time, just like an unexpected storm that changes your plans. If you are already on a trip, stopping for shelter or an over-night rest may be just what renews your energy and provides fellowship time with family or friends with whom you are traveling.

No matter what hardships or disappointments we experience in the journey of our lives, we must not let fear or failure define the totality of our lives. We are human, and there was only one person who touched this earth and remained perfect. The good news is that there are gifts of the Spirit that can heal us, guide us, and give great purpose to our lives; yes, any one of us! They are written in the New Testament. It took most of my life to recognize the gift that God gave me, and I am happy with the one He chose. Remember, the gift of the Spirit is just that, a gift. We don't choose it, and just one makes a huge difference in our journey and in our relationships.

"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the

same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines."

I Corinthians 12:7-11 (NIV)

Rev. Gilbert Boersma, BBA, MDIV, is an Elder in the United Methodist Church, and a Retired-Board-Certified chaplain. His wife Sara is retired from Muskegon Community Mental Health and offers counseling privately, part-time. Their two sons, one daughter-in-law and four grandchildren also live in Muskegon. Gil offers "spiritual direction" for those who have interest. You may contact him by email: boersmagil71@gmail.com



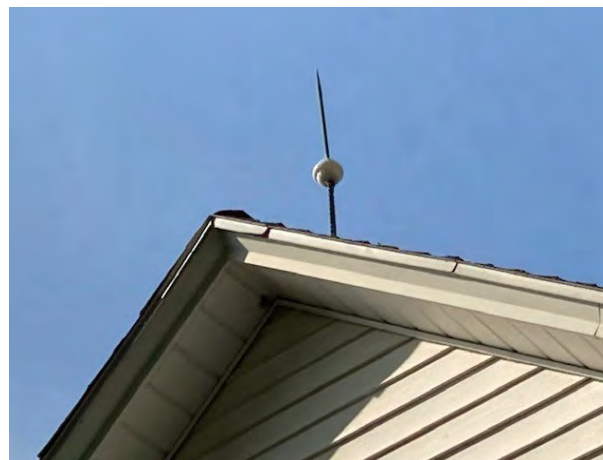
A Flash in the Sky



BY
JERRY
MATTSON

“Grandpa, what are those things on the roof of that old house?”

“Those are lightening rods. In a thunderstorm, if lightning struck the house it would go to one of the rods and a copper cable leading from the rods to a stake in the ground would absorb the energy and save the house.”



“Our house doesn’t have any of those. Does yours?”

“No.”

I hadn’t thought about lightening rods for a long time. When I was a kid, they were on almost every house in our rural neighborhood. When did they go out of favor, I wondered?

The ones Kyle had spotted were on an old farmhouse. They were probably three feet in length, each having a glass ball about midway on the metal rod. The ones from my childhood home were about the same length, without the decorative glass orbs.

“Let’s see if we can find any more of them,” I said. There was a good chance, since we were on a back road heading back to Muskegon from Coopersville. As we rode through farm country, we spotted several barns with shorter rods on them, but only one more house. Again, an older structure.

In times gone by, where property was used for agriculture, all trees were removed. On farmlands, often 40 acres or larger, the tallest structure might be a two-story house. A windmill, shed or barn could also provide a more direct path for lightning seeking contact with the ground. Lightning rods were then considered a necessity.

These same homes may now be surrounded by trees. The taller trees now may take a strike, saving the house.

In 2014, a friend of mine had lightning strike a tree about 40 feet from his home in the U.P. The top part of the pine tree exploded, leaving only about a twelve-foot stump. It left small pieces of wood scattered around the yard and on his house. Many other pieces were found stuck upright in the lawn, like misshapen wooden Jarts.

The strike followed a root that passed under a storage shed, damaging some aluminum trim around the door, shattering some plastic siding and melting an electrical outlet. The 25-foot path was marked by the ground, looking like a single-blade plow had been pulled through the area.

A scheduled visit was the next day, so my wife, Suzette, and I got to see the damage first-hand.



Lightning rods are not seen on many homes now, but taller structures including high-rise buildings, water towers and communication towers still have them.

Even with them, there is no guarantee against a fire. One person told me their house had rods on it and lightning struck about four feet away from one.

They were home at the time and the fire department kept damage to a minimum.

The old lightning rods still seen today may disappear the next time the roof is replaced. In the house I grew up in, when the roof was replaced, the long rods were replaced by much shorter ones. The next time, several years later, the rods were gone forever.

Grounded home electrical systems and improved building materials have led to fewer rods on homes. Nearby strikes can be unnerving, however. One morning Jerry looked for damage where a “close one” hit near their home during the night. He found nothing, but is sure damage was done somewhere nearby.



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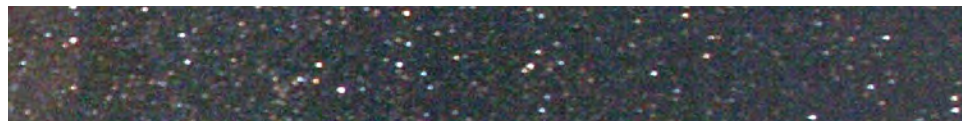
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Star Dust



BY
JOEL
DULYEA

How to describe my reaction to reading Bill Bryson's book, *A Short History of Nearly Everything*? The book is about science. The New York Times reviewed it as "Stylish, stunningly accurate prose. We learn what the material world is like from the smallest quark to the largest galaxy and at all the levels in between."

Before I answer the question, let me say my academic knowledge of science was limited to test tubes and Bunsen burners in Lyle McNitt's high school chemistry class and in another teacher's biology class that involved the dissections of pigs and frogs. I'd be rid of that memory but for the formaldehyde smell that preserves it. The astronomy class I took at Muskegon Community College gave students a rudimentary grasp on the subject which included how astronomers measure vast distances

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in space. It also involved an evening field trip to observe the night sky through a telescope. That was a wow experience. Our class took turns watching the moons of Jupiter circling that distant planet.

I left the study of chemistry and biology behind but occasionally still pick up a book that is science related. There was a book about Einstein's equation entitled $E = mc^2$. I still don't understand how this works but can at least translate the equation into English. Now I'll offer an unplanned question. Would I have considered a career in science if I had learned in high school the following fact from Bill Bryson? Fact: locked in an average-sized teenager there is enough energy "to explode with the force of a large number of very large hydrogen bombs." Regardless of my enjoyment of the television show *Myth Busters*, which blew up stuff every episode, I would not have become a scientist. What self-respectable teenager would consider being blown up? It would be more useful if we could harness them to heat our homes and power our vehicles.

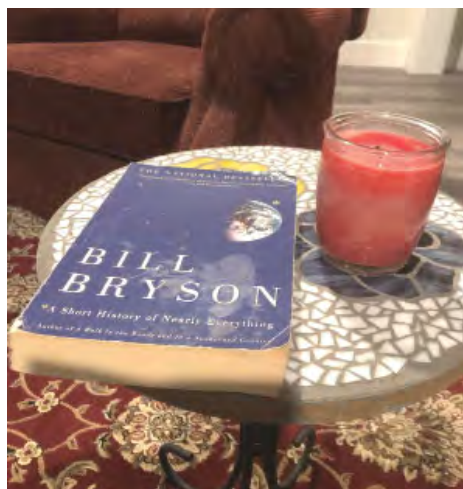
I've strayed too far. To answer my first question, Bryson's book on science was engaging, revelatory, funny, and astonishing – not bad for a category of knowledge in which the paramount discipline is to accurately measure everything from the "smallest quark to the largest galaxy."

It's been fifteen years since I first read the book. Other scientists have written that human beings, flora and fauna, and the earth itself are made of elements that originated in stars. From *A Short History of Nearly Everything* I learned we are made of star

dust. That caught my imagination!

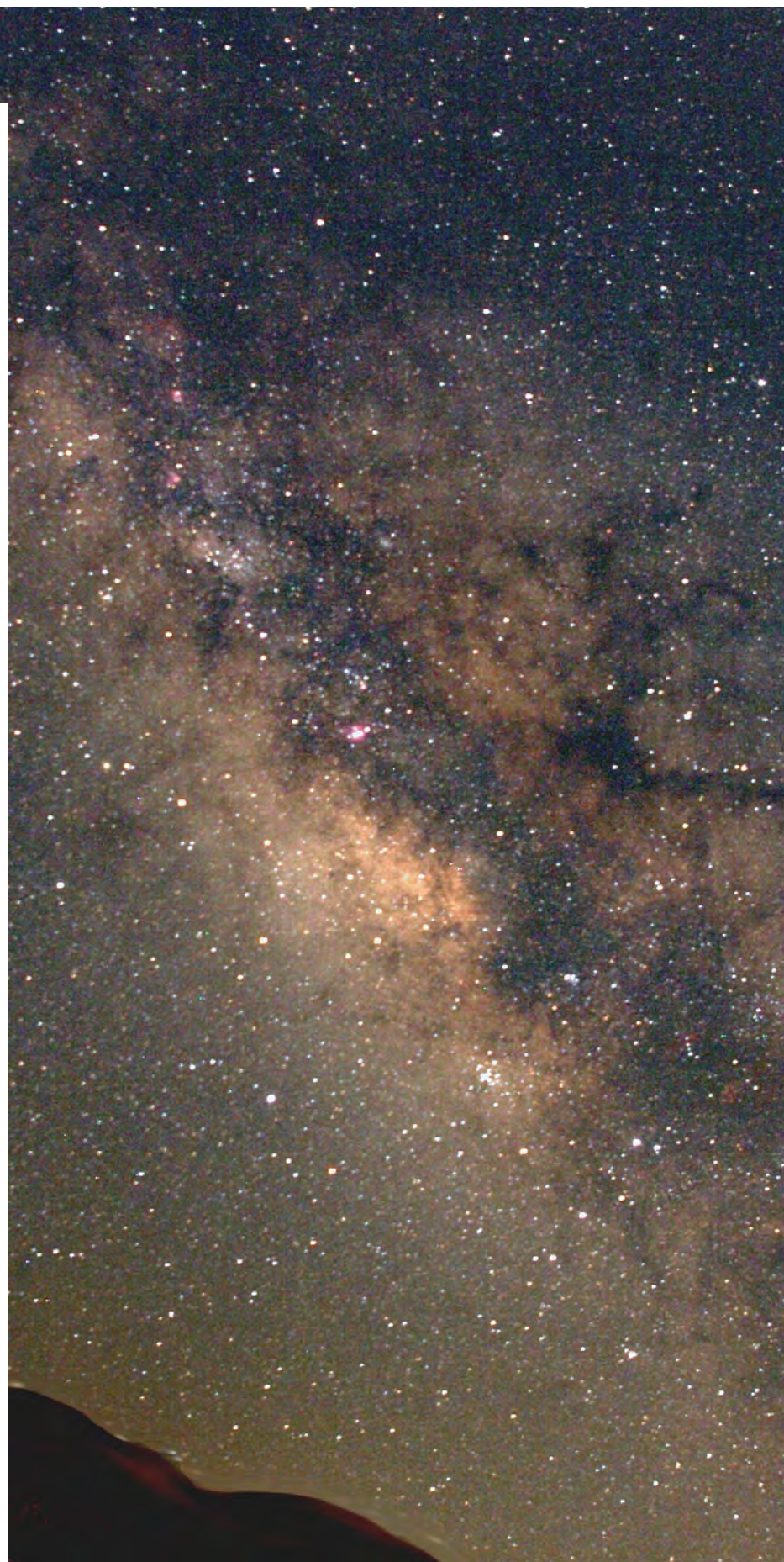
It was very early on September 19, 2015, when I awoke in the Spanish town of Castrojeriz.

I swung my backpack into place and fixed a head lamp on my forehead. Above us darkness revealed the Milky Way in all its glory. A Roman road built 2,000 years ago stretched across the dark valley unseen and undiscoverable except for the string of fireflies -- other pilgrims who dared the early hour.



At the far side of the valley the starry sky outlined a steep climb. Halfway up, I paused to inhabit the stars, then turned to marvel at the lights stretched from the sleeping town and through me to the ridge above. Soft steps kept company with the quiet. Quiet and soft steps, then awe. We were not cresting the ridge. Our lights accepted the invitation from the stars.

Joel Dulyea is a United States Army retiree who loves to sing with his wife Merijo, spend time with his daughter and son-in-law, dote on his granddaughter and spoil his wire-haired dachshund, Heidi.





BY
JOE
STAPEL

Preventing Falls

Falls result in more than three million injuries treated in emergency rooms annually, resulting in over 800,000 hospitalizations. Among older adults, 1 out of 45 falls causes serious injury, including 90% of hip fractures and 51% of traumatic brain injuries. The average direct cost of non-fatal falls resulting in injury is \$9,780 per fall. Falls lead to the deaths of more than 32,000 older Americans each year. In 2019, 34,212 older Americans died from preventable falls.

With one in four Americans aged 65 and older falling each year, it is wise to know the fall prevention strategies to help keep you safe.

Here is a review of some safety tips to help prevent falls in the home.

1. Remove all scatter rugs. Repair frayed carpet by taping or tacking down loose carpet edges.
2. Arrange the furniture to allow adequate space for safe walking between and within all rooms.
3. Clean up spills immediately.
4. Use step stools to reach high shelves. Do not stand on chairs.
5. Place safety strips or a non-skid mat in the bathtub and install hand rails. Do not use towel racks for support when sitting or standing.

6. Keep closet doors and drawers closed to prevent bruises or tripping.
7. Keep walking aids within reach and have a night light or a flashlight within reach of your bed.

Review these statements to assess your risk of falling.

Answer Yes or No to each statement.

- I have fallen in the past year. Yes or No
- I use or have been advised to use a cane or a walker to get around safely. Yes or No
- Sometimes I feel unsteady when walking. Yes or No
- I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home. Yes or No
- I am worried about falling. Yes or No
- I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair. Yes or No
- I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb. Yes or No
- I often have to rush to the toilet. Yes or No
- I have lost some feeling in my feet. Yes or No
- I take medication that makes me feel lightheaded or more tired than usual. Yes or No

If you answered YES to four or more statements, you could be at risk of falling. You may want to have a discussion with your doctor.

Stay safe and secure through these winter months.

Joe Stapel has a degree in Criminal Justice from Ferris State University. He has worked full and part-time as a police officer for three different agencies in Muskegon County. He also was a Licensed Private Investigator in the State of Michigan for 9 years.

Joe worked for the Meijer Corporation Loss Prevention Department in Grand Rapids for 28 years as a Security Officer and as the company's first Safety Specialist. He worked for Baker College of Muskegon as the Campus Safety Director for 11 years with a staff of 27 armed officers and 8 dispatchers. Joe held the position of Ordinance Enforcement Officer for Laketon Township in Muskegon County for 3 and 1/2 years.

*References:
National Safety Council
University of Michigan
AARP*

He Called It My Magic Lantern

I am thinking about my father. He passed away in September at age 97 and a half. Up until his last year, he emailed me every day and called me every night at 9 p.m. He took three walks every day. He used to get such a kick out of my cell phone and everything it could do! He called it my Magic Lantern.

“Did you bring your Magic Lantern, Jack?” he would ask when I visited him at Porter Hills. “Can you find out what time the Tigers play on Saturday?” Or, “Let’s call Charlie and see what’s going on in Florida!” A common request in the summer was, “Let’s go to the driving range and take videos of your golf swing. Be sure to bring your Magic Lantern!”

He would compare the ease of the cell phone as he reminisced about the olden days, remembering the film, the heavy camcorder on his shoulder, or the movie camera with the hot bright lights we squinted into for Christmas pictures by the tree as kids.

Then he’d say, “Let’s go to Brann’s for lunch next time you’re in town and I’ll play big shot. What’s that special with the little steak and baked potato called and how much is it again? Can you find that out on your Magic Lantern?” At Brann’s he’d always ask our servers’ names, and where they went to school. They would smile and chat, happy to tell Dad about themselves. One 30ish gal even called him “Adorable!” We got a big kick out of that and laughed about it for weeks! He loved to take rides downtown through the old neighborhoods of Grand Rapids and was comforted by the fact that if we got lost or turned around, I could ask my Magic Lantern to get us back home and she, Siri, would speak the directions out loud!

Dad never purchased a cell phone but he loved to see how it worked by asking me to use mine. Thanks, Dad, for reminding me that my Magic Lantern is truly an amazing device and how much fun it was to see it work through your eyes! Love you!



BY JACKIE LINDRUP
RDH, M.Ed.

Jackie Lindrup is a retired dental hygienist who loves to paint, read, golf, hike, visit my kids and grandkids in New Orleans and travel. So far, I’ve visited 17 countries! As a retired dental person, I also love to promote “Volunteer for Dental” which is a non-profit I helped begin in Muskegon with other dental professionals. VFD is a one-of-a-kind program and national model for helping under-insured adults (students to seniors) who trade their volunteer time for dental care in over twenty private dental offices. If you know someone who needs dental care but has no insurance, this could be the opportunity of a lifetime! I would love to hear from you at jackielindrup111@gmail.com



Watering Can to the Rescue!

I had just driven into the garage from a quick trip to the library and Aldi. I got out of my car and was shocked when I saw the back of it! The trunk and rear window were totally covered with dirt from all the dirty water on the road splashing up onto them. It was an opaque ugly brown. I couldn’t see any of the bright blue paint at all.

The weather forecast was calling for a little snow later, so I felt I just had to clean all the grime off before it was permanently stuck to the car. I looked around the garage and saw my plastic watering cans lined up along the wall and lifted one to see if it still had water in it. It was empty. I checked the other can and it was almost full.

I poured water over the back of the car starting at the roof, going side to side to the bottom of the trunk, then grabbed an old towel that fortunately was with some gardening supplies. I wiped off a layer of grime. Then I poured more water over the back end of the car. I was beginning to see the blue color of the car peek through. I found another towel in a bucket my husband Tom uses to clean our cars in the summer. I gently wiped off another layer and the magnets on the rear of the car came clean. I could just hear Tom say “Don’t scratch the paint!!!” if he saw my impromptu car washing technique. Then the license plate came clean. With one last pour and final rinse the grime was gone. Now the back of the car matched the sides and the front.

It didn’t snow as predicted and I have a pretty blue car again. I’m happy and I have already washed the towels, so no one will ever know except my neighbor across the street who says she sees everything!! It will be our secret!



Conquering Two Years of COVID-19:

Your Health Action Plan Part I



BY HOLLY
LOOKABAUGH
-DEUR

The New York *Times* reported the number of deaths related to COVID-19 as above 5 million people, with 800,000+ United States deaths making the coronavirus pandemic the deadliest in American history. This occurred despite pharmaceutical efforts as well as social distancing, environmental disinfection, physical distancing orders, closed schools and venues, bans on gatherings, contact tracings, quarantines, and travel bans. While the social, political, economic, and occupational challenges and changes continue to be the primary focus of the news, the long-term effects of the United States' pandemic reactions have yet to be determined. We simply don't know what we don't know yet. In a country that prides itself on staying ahead of the curve in education, technology, and health care, Americans are struggling. Uncertainty is everywhere. Unreliable, disputed information and changing rules and regulations in our communities complicate daily life. The news is negative; friendships and relationships may feel different; sickness and worry are all around us. The number of referrals to psychological support for anxiety and depression management has never been higher. Accessing health care services is challenging.

This series will focus on creating understanding of what factors we can control, mitigating risk for the "long hauler" syndrome – a complex condition ranging from mild to severe symptoms that last beyond three months of initial infection. The impact of long-term stress on our physical and mental health is complex at best, well documented in the literature. Rising levels of circulating cortisol, a hormone released in response to stress, contributes to chronic inflammation that simply does not shut off. Mental sluggishness, weight gain, depression, gastrointestinal changes, and even fertility and heart disease are some of the effects of chronic stress. Sleeping is a crucial time for cell repair and resetting our inflammatory markers, and stress may significantly interfere with this stage of self-care. Prolonged stress impacts our health profoundly. Now, more than ever before, our focus on individual health and well-being is absolutely critical.



It's time to take back some control and change the trajectory of our health. No one can take better care of you than YOU. We make choices every day that can either push us to the positive side, or just as easily pile on to the negative.

Part I: Fundamentals of COVID-19 and its impact on the neurological system

Extensive virology pathology discussion is beyond the scope of this article; however, a basic understanding of this virus is necessary. SARS-COVID 19 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome–Coronavirus–discovered in 2019) is a microscopic infectious agent that can only replicate within the living cells of a host. It enters through the nasal (nose) and laryngeal (throat) mucus membrane and then migrates to the lung tissue within the respiratory system. Depending on the individual's immune system and resistance to further infection, the virus may or may not enter the blood stream causing a state of viremia (virus in the blood.). Once it is in the blood, the virus can invade other organs through special receptors (ACE-2) on organs such as the heart, kidney, gastrointestinal tract and brain. Initially in the disease process, "protector" white blood cells actually decrease in number.

Common symptoms of COVID-19 are well known from many media sources:

- fever
- dry cough
- dyspnea (shortness of breath)
- headache
- dizziness
- generalized weakness
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- anosmia (loss of smell)
- dysgeusia (alteration in taste)

Some people show mild to no symptoms during infection, while others show evidence of a multi-system inflammatory response, resulting in hospitalization and acute care. Additionally, the body's release of cytokines, usually a part of normal inflammation, may lead to an autoimmune response (internal cells attacking internal organs). This may lead to clotting and vasculitis (inflammation of the linings of vessels), without warning or other symptoms. Even very mild cases of COVID-19 with no hospitalization have resulted in respiratory, neurologic, or fatigue symptoms that can persist 3-9 months post-infection. Persistence of these symptoms is diagnosed as long-term or long-haul COVID. "Long Haulers" may develop myalgia encephalomyelitis/

chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/ CFS) -- which is a lot of words to describe an individual who is incapable of completing his/her usual activities and often becomes exhausted even after performing a very low level of activity. Some individuals may end up with problems with thinking and concentrating, described as a “brain fog,” along with diffuse pain and dizziness.

Let’s focus on common neurological questions in Part I: (references available upon request)

- How long does the loss of taste and smell last?
 - o Several factors impact this answer, including age and co-existing conditions. In general, the sense of smell and taste begins to return by three weeks, but some report months of altered or absent taste and smell. 95% will likely have full recovery.
- Why do patients of COVID-19 often present with “brain fog?”
 - o It isn’t a medical diagnosis, but it does describe how people feel when they are experiencing sluggish, slow and fuzzy thinking. It is thought to be caused by an inflammation of brain tissue, hindering the speed and ability of neurons to communicate with each other in the brain. Poor sleep quality, stress, anxiety, depression and side effects of medications are likely contributing factors
- How long will the “brain fog” continue?
 - o There is no clear timeline in the literature at this time. Some have reported weeks or months post-respiratory symptoms with continued sensation of brain fog. Sleep, nutrition, hydration, no alcohol and light exercise have been proven to alleviate symptoms.
- What is the probability of stroke in people who have had COVID-19?
 - o The risk of stroke may be increased due to general inflammation and the hyper (increased) coagulation. Of course, there are many other risk factors related to stroke, but early research does show approximately 5% of hospitalized adults over 65 experienced strokes while hospitalized.

SELF CARE TIPS FOR YOU:

- Unless you have a condition that requires fluid restriction, the Institute of Medicine has altered its hydration guidelines to be more specific:
 - o Shift away from sugar-sweetened beverages towards nutrient-dense fluids such as milks or juices.
 - o Tart cherry juice is recommended daily for sleep enhancement and to combat inflammation
 - o 13 cups (for men) or 9 cups (for women) of water and beverages per day. Although some hydration is obtained from food, it is important to consume water separate from food.
- Sleep is absolutely ESSENTIAL to re-setting and reducing inflammation and improving cell repair. If an individual can’t sleep for four hours

- without waking up, seek the help of a physician or health care provider.
- o Over the counter use of melatonin, no “screen time” within two hours of sleeping time; setting a sleep schedule; exercise and other factors impact sleep.
 - o Excessive snoring that interrupts sleep may require a sleep study and possible use of a CPAP machine (continuous positive airway pressure)
 - o Stress and worry are the biggest factors in prevention of sleep. In certain cases, medication may be helpful. Psychological support and regular contact with support individuals may also be helpful in the improvement of sleep.

The journey to feeling better – strong, happy, fulfilled, and positive – begins with each of us every day. Look for inspiration in nature and with those whom you love. Let’s all work hard to be our best selves and lift others up around us.

Part II will focus on management of fatigue. Stay tuned!

Holly Lookabaugh-Deur is a board certified, clinical specialist in geriatric physical therapy, with 40+ years of experience. As the Director of Clinical Services for Ivy Rehab, she integrates programming and training for over 300 clinics. She is part of the adjunct faculty for Central Michigan University’s Physical Therapy program and holds offices within the American Physical Therapy Association. She can be reached at holly.lookabaughdeur@ivyrehab.com with comments, questions or discussion points.

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Authors of West Michigan

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BY
TRICIA
McDONALD

Newspapers were significant in Dan Salerno's childhood. He helped two older brothers with their Detroit

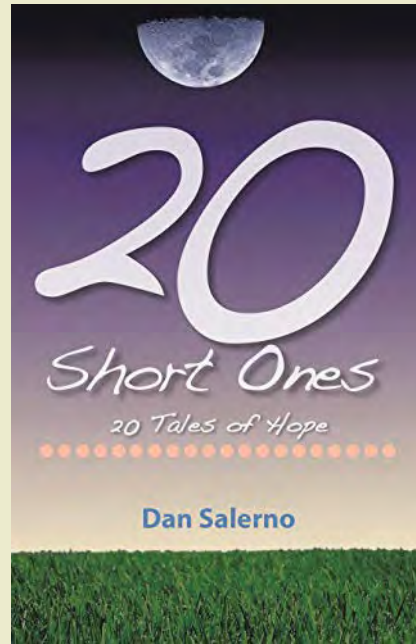
Free Press and Detroit *News* paper routes. In addition, his father worked for the (then) New York Central Railroad and received free passes to travel by train. Wherever he travelled, he picked up the local newspaper and brought it home. Is it any surprise Dan learned how to read by reading newspapers?

After his dad brought home an old Underwood typewriter, Dan taught himself how to type, and in the first grade created his own weekly newspaper. His mom made a special bag so he could deliver it like a "real" newspaper.

Over the years, Dan worked as a freelance journalist for a number of magazines and newspapers. Then in 2013, he published his book *20 Short Ones: 20 Tales of Hope*, a collection of short stories that fit into the Christian faith-based fiction/romance genre. The book was revised in 2021.

Dan grew up the fourth of eight siblings whose names all start with the letter D. There are 20 years between the oldest and the youngest, and Dan is in the middle. "I am a typical middle child in temperament," he said. He grew up in West Michigan but traveled to Northern Ireland and Japan on church ministry trips. While earning his master's degree, he lived in New York City and worked for the National Coalition for the Homeless.

"There is something to be said for experiencing different cultures," Dan said. "Plus, reflecting on those experiences



gives you something to write about."

Some of those reflections became fodder for the short story collection in his book, in that they take place in Northern Ireland, Colorado, New York City, Chicago and Michigan (among other places). The common thread in the stories is relationships and in each, the beginnings of a relationship are explored.

The book is not a self-help book and doesn't offer information for relationship-building or romance, nor is it preachy. "The main take away I'd like for readers to have is hope," he states. Dan has always been interested in telling stories about relationships as he sees himself as socially awkward. "So much of everyday life makes it difficult to form solid friendships, but we need them."

Dan does his best thinking and reflecting through writing. "In general, writing has always been a natural way for me to make sense of things," Dan said. "I do my best thinking by writing my thoughts down."

His writing routine is to write something every day, "even if it's only a paragraph or two." He sees the process of writing as "a lot of fun," and the creativity of writing motivates him to continue.

Dan has also written a collection of Christmas stories and is currently working on a collection of stories about his mom's hometown, Metropolis, Illinois.

Tricia L. McDonald is an internationally published author, public speaker, and writing coach. Her middle-grade book, The Sally Squad: Pals to the Rescue, was published in 2020. Her Life With Sally series (four books) is a compilation of stories chronicling life with her miniature bull terrier, Sally. Quit Whining Start Writing is a guide to help writers put away the excuses and get the writing done.

The Bookman is excited to continue featuring authors living in Western Michigan. Contact The Bookman to purchase and read this author's book.



The Value of Advance Care Planning

National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD) exists to inspire, educate, and empower the public about the importance of advance care planning (ACP). NHDD is April 16, just a day after Tax Day. Discussing your healthcare wishes is not an easy topic. It can evoke fear, misunderstanding, reluctance, and vulnerability. However, the conversation can bring relief, hope and satisfaction.



BY
KELLY
ST. MARTIN

Chartered Healthcare Planning Coalition offers free ACP, virtually or in person. Chartered is a community coalition supported by Harbor Hospice, Harbor Palliative Care, Senior Resources, LifeCircles PACE, Professional Med Team, Muskegon Community College, and the Muskegon Community Health Project. Physician offices understand the value and offer Chartered's ACP services when appropriate or requested.

Most appointments are completed in the comfort of a home setting, as it often provides insight into what is most important in their lives. The important things in our lives drive our decisions. The following story is a glimpse into a recent referral. This experience gives a clear picture of the value of ACP.

During this referral, we talked about why the client chose now to talk about ACP and what he knew of the process. He explained he recently lost his father and wanted to complete the necessary paperwork to help his daughter, as he wished his father had done for him. We spoke about what he learned from navigating his father's death and if there was anything he would have done differently. He initially said, "I never want to go to the hospital." We talked about what not going to the hospital would mean.

As we processed the emotion behind his statement, he realized that what he feared most was dying alone, and he feared that hospitalization may lead to this. We both held space for his tears and spoke about how important his daughter was to him. We talked about what matters. Very articulately he stated his primary wish was for his daughter to be supported and that this would provide him the most comfort. This was a very powerful statement, and we wrote this directly into his power of attorney for healthcare. Clinicians will reference these clear statements to help guide care.



The topic of ACP can be heavy and because of this often avoided. But that day we peppered the conversation with small talk and chatted freely. We laughed and smiled and although we talked about death, what we were really talking about was life. His daughter and sister were both added as patient advocates, and he was left with the homework of finding two witnesses to complete this document. I scheduled a return visit to confirm completion and to upload the document into the healthcare system.

A few weeks later, because of the in-depth conversations and paperwork now in place, he felt empowered and consented to a hospitalization. He was treated briefly and released home to be cared for by family. His clearly defined wishes allowed for the care plan he desired.

ACP conversations often vary just like the people they serve. Regardless of age or health status, every ACP should represent the individual and their wants and wishes. As we recognize National Healthcare Decisions Day, please take the time to think about your own personal wishes and what is important to you. Who is your person? What is your plan?

The ACP Coordinator at Chartered Healthcare Planning Coalition is available to help you complete your healthcare power of attorney. Please feel welcome to reach out via email or phone to ACPCoordinator@CharteredMuskegon.org or 231-327-8573.

Kelly is the Advance Care Planning Coordinator for Chartered Healthcare Planning Coalition and a social worker for Harbor Palliative Care. Kelly has been promoting healthcare conversations for over two decades. When she is not encouraging the community to complete their advance directive, she is juggling the schedule of two teenagers or lounging on one of West Michigan's pristine shorelines.

Harbor Hospice and Harbor Palliative Care is committed to alleviating patients' symptoms and providing choices to help the patient achieve optimum well-being. For nearly four decades, Harbor Hospice has provided experienced, compassionate end-of-life care for terminally ill patients and their families, focusing on medical, emotional, and spiritual needs regardless of ability to pay. Learn more at HarborHospiceMI.org or by calling 231.728.3442 / 1.800.497.9559.



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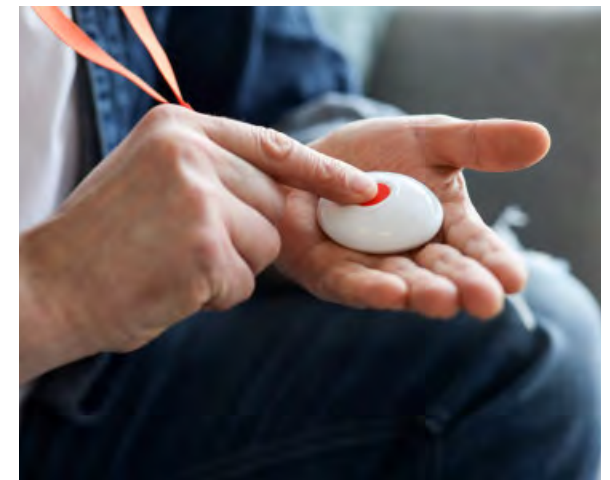
Everyday Assistive Technology



BY
CHRISTINE
WISTRUM

Most of us already use assistive technology (A.T.) on a daily basis: electric dishwashers, blenders, ice-makers, C-Pap machines, contact lenses, and the list goes on. A.T. has made our lives not only easier, but in some ways, possible. It's a good thing then to periodically look at what's new in the field, and what's typically making life easier for those of us who are getting older.

Most of us want A.T. items that provide more freedom and accessibility. A sock-aid is a good example. It's a plastic sleeve with rope handles. You pull your sock over it, then holding the ropes, place it on the floor and slide your foot into it and pull up on the ropes. The plastic slides over your foot placing the sock on your foot as it goes. What a simple process!



A magnifying glass makes working on crafts much easier. If you stay in touch with your family by texting, using the voice recorder program on your phone helps if you have problems with your wrists or hands. You might want to try a body air-dryer that you can install in your shower to blow your entire body dry! They cost anywhere from \$400 to \$1,000, but it's an interesting concept! How about an inflat-



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able cushion that you sit on when you're in the bathtub, and inflate when you're done to help you get out? The Mangar Bathing Cushion is available for \$747. The EOne watch is a smart-looking timepiece you can tell time with by looking at it or by touching it. It has a ball bearing that rotates through the minutes and hours. Imagine being able to tell what time it is when you're watching a movie without having any light to see your watch face!

Of course, the traditional "grabber" allows you to reach items that are further away from you, and zipper pulls to help zip up your coat or boots. Canes are another form of A.T. that many of us use. There are so many different styles now! Are you familiar with transport chairs as well as wheelchairs? The transport chair is similar to a wheelchair, except that it doesn't have footrests, so the user has to have someone push the chair or be able to wheel it at the same time they are holding their feet up. It's handy though if you've had surgery and can't walk far.

There are so many electronic devices that exist now to make life easier, such as the talking thermostat, or screen-reading software for your computer that reads what's on your screen out loud. Assistive technology makes our life easier. If you're struggling to get through the day, give us a call, and we might be able to suggest some A.T. items to make things easier for you. Call Disability Network/Lakeshore at 616-396-5326.

Chris is an Independent Living Specialist at Disability Network/Lakeshore in Holland, Michigan. Current interests include assistive technology, veterans' issues, emergency preparedness planning and service dog training.



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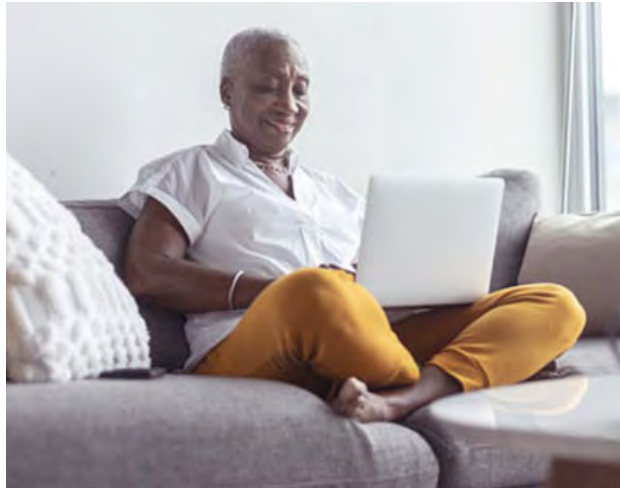
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BY
VONDA
VANTIL

If you want to start receiving Medicare at age 65, you must apply for Medicare no earlier than three months before your 65th

birthday and no later than three months after that birthday. We refer to this window of opportunity to apply for Medicare as your initial enrollment period.



Some Medicare beneficiaries may qualify for Extra Help to pay for the monthly premiums, annual deductibles, and co-payments related to the Medicare Prescription Drug program. You must be receiving Medicare, have

limited resources and income, and reside in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia to qualify for the Extra Help. For more information on Extra Help, visit www.ssa.gov/benefits/medicare/prescriptionhelp.

You may also want to read these publications:

- *Apply Online for Medicare — Even if You Are Not Ready to Retire* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10530.pdf.
- *When to Start Receiving Retirement Benefits* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10147.pdf.

Help a friend or family member by sharing this information. Our programs are here for those who need them.

Vonda Van Til is the Public Affairs Specialist for West Michigan. You can write her c/o Social Security Administration, 3045 Knapp NE, Grand Rapids MI 49525 or via email at vonda.vantil@ssa.gov.

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*If you just got a potted
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- Unwrap your plant immediately to prevent moisture buildup.
- Remove anthers, the tall stems that grow from the center of the bloom.
- Find a bright spot for it to grow. Avoid direct sunlight.
- Keep it cool. Keep away from heat sources or vents. Keep at 60°F to 68°F.
- Water when the soil is dry to touch. Promote growth by remove fading flowers.



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outside and
enjoy it
throughout
summer as
well**

Source: proflowers.com
Graphic: Staff, TNS

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Memories!



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www.oceanamcf.org



Warning: The people having fun in these photos are NOT actors. They are actual residents and employees of Oceana Medical Care Facility!

ANSWERS FOR GAMES ON PAGES 16 & 17

8	9	3	2	1	4	7	5	6
5	2	6	9	3	7	8	1	4
4	7	1	6	5	8	3	9	2
3	8	7	1	2	6	9	4	5
6	5	4	7	8	9	2	3	1
2	1	9	5	4	3	6	8	7
1	3	8	4	6	2	5	7	9
9	4	2	8	7	5	1	6	3
7	6	5	3	9	1	4	2	8

4	2	8	5	3	6	7	1	9
6	1	5	7	2	9	3	8	4
9	3	7	8	4	1	5	2	6
8	6	9	1	5	7	2	4	3
1	4	2	9	6	3	8	7	5
7	5	3	2	8	4	9	6	1
2	8	6	3	1	5	4	9	7
5	7	4	6	9	8	1	3	2
3	9	1	4	7	2	6	5	8

Answers - Boggle Game #1:

SEA GULF POND COVE LAKE
OCEAN INLET LAGOON

Answers - Boggle Game #2:

TIGER ZEBRA CAMEL OTTER
LLAMA JACKAL BADGER

ANSWER - JUMBLE PUZZLE #1:

SINGE FLANK BLOTCH FLAUNT

He told them that he grew great coffee,
but he was — FULL OF BEANS

ANSWER - JUMBLE PUZZLE #2:

WEARY GOING STEREO PUDDLE

The competition between the energy companies
was a — POWER STRUGGLE



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