

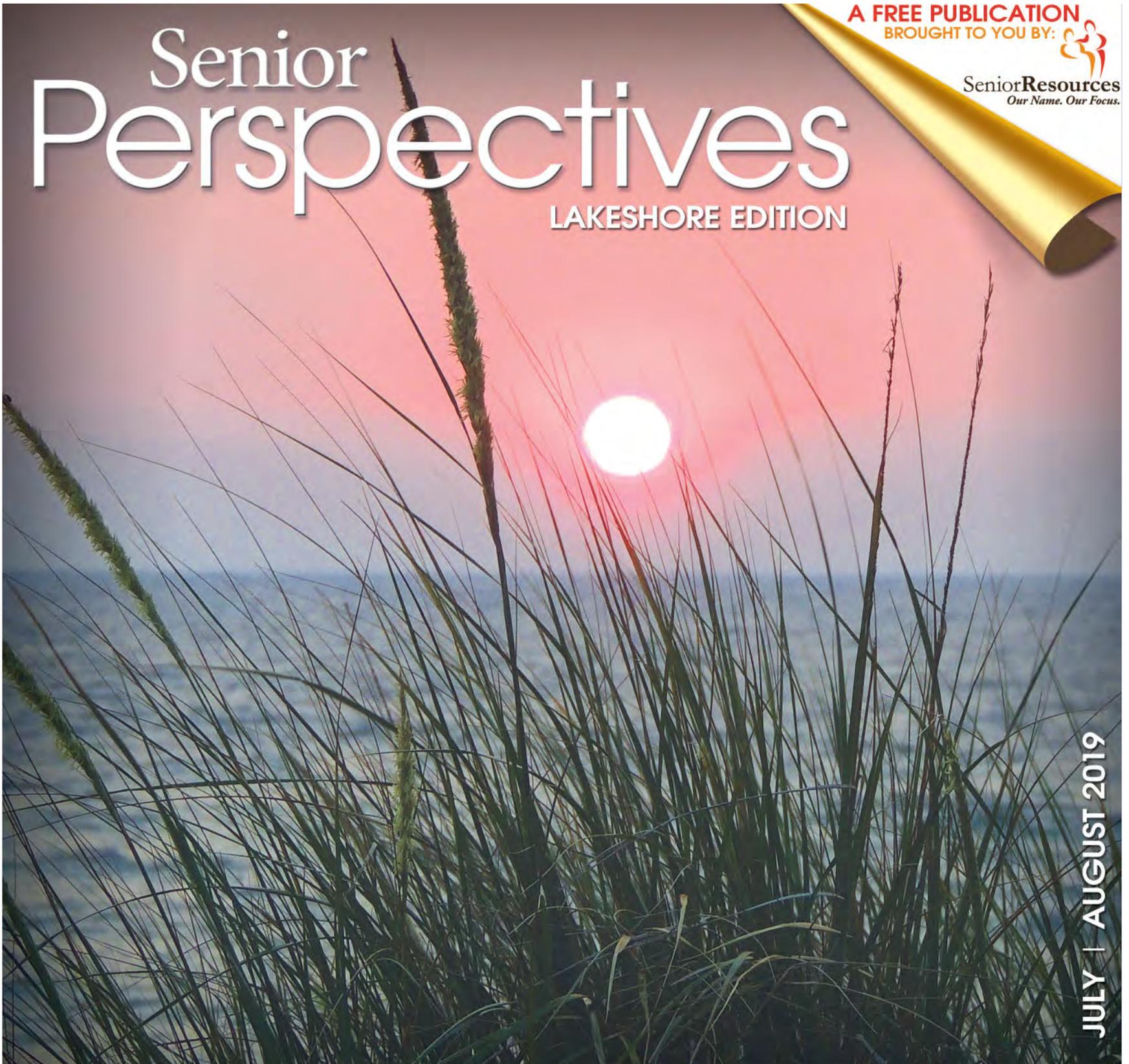
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# Senior Perspectives

LAKESHORE EDITION



JULY | AUGUST 2019

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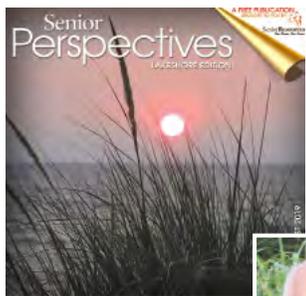
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## Soul Food

# A Time to Grow

BY GIL  
BOERSMA,  
M.DIV.

Oh, how we long for summer in Michigan. No matter how old we are, we enjoy the longer days and the beauty that transforms the world outside.

This is the time of year we can open our doors and windows on a cool and sunny morning or evening and breathe in the growth and freshness of creation. If you are able to do so on your own, the outdoors invites you move and explore. You may choose to experience summer sitting in a safe and shaded location, and silently pray. If you are not independent, family members or friends are usually happy to help you visit a garden. The summer creation that has come alive once more is a joy to observe.

Just as there are seasons of the year, there are seasons of spiritual formation. We spend much of our lives growing physically and acquiring knowledge, which together help us discover our

gifts, and choose work to become independent. Besides the development of our body and our mind, we often choose a faith tradition to deepen our understanding of the spiritual dimension of life. Not everyone seeks to grow spiritually—however, humans are the only beings in creation that develop this interest. Spiritual formation most often becomes important in our adult years, especially after marriage and the arrival of children. This does not mean that children are not able to have spiritual awareness before their adult years. You may be one who experienced attending worship with your family as a child or youth.

I was one of those children who grew in interest about the meaning of faith. When I was growing up our family had already moved to a large city, primarily due to our father's profession. We became active in a small Methodist church. When I was young the denomination wasn't a matter

of focus. My spiritual education was about the story of Jesus and his disciples. Now that I am a grandfather it is abundantly clear to me that my spiritual formation came largely from the direction of my mother. My mother or father would see to it that I was aware of certain adult leaders and how I could benefit by the program for which each one was responsible. The Boy Scout troop was one of them.

What I have come to treasure over time are the individuals that my mother introduced me to. Some were deeply loved friends with unique spiritual gifts. It became such a treasure to me as an adult to have been introduced to individuals outside our family who were uniquely gifted with a love of God that was personal, not defined by a denomination. As we had fellowship with individuals who shone with the Spirit of God, even my mother's wisdom was more present than at home. Spiritual formation, from then to this very day, is the treasure that is everlasting.

*Soul Food is written by Rev. Gil Boersma, M.Div., a Board Certified Chaplain and retired Pastor. He can be reached at boersmagil71@gmail.com*



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# The Stigma of Mental Illness



BY  
CHRISTINE  
WISTROM

Why is it we think of mental illness as something to be ashamed of when we don't feel the same way about physical illness? Mental illness is a medical problem, the same as COPD or arthritis, or any number of other physical illnesses. We don't associate physical

illness with feeling ashamed and try to keep treatment a secret, but we often do just that with mental illness.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, almost one in five adults in the United States experiences some form of mental illness. One in twenty-four has a serious mental illness, and one in twelve has a diagnosable substance use disorder. That's a lot of people, a lot of us, who are affected.

When we are ashamed of having a mental health problem, we may refuse to seek treatment, yet those treatments work! Those who have mental illness are often not only ashamed, but they are isolated,

persecuted and are often treated with great prejudice.

I have a good friend who went through a bout of clinical depression a while back. She was treated and came out stronger and healthier for it. Yet, when she went to her primary care physician for a physical health problem, she was told the problem was likely "in her head." Her doctor refused to run the necessary tests to find the cause of the problem because of her history of mental illness even though she was not currently having a mental health problem. Fortunately, another doctor diagnosed her physical illness and provided appropriate treatment.

Even professionals who should know better may fail to focus on the individual rather than the label of mental illness. At some time in our lives, most of us have bouts of depression, or extreme anxiety, perhaps not to the extent that it has the same impact on our lives as someone who is clinically depressed, but you would think it would help us understand and support those who are experiencing serious mental illness.

So, how do we change the attitudes that drive this stigma? We need to see individu-

als with mental illness as people who are human and know that any one of us could be in the same situation tomorrow. We need to support the person who recognizes s/he has a problem serious enough to seek treatment and not do anything that makes them feel embarrassed or ashamed. It takes courage to go for treatment; it is a sign of strength, not a weakness. We need to accept that mental illness is not something we can control.

At some point in life, any of us may find that we must deal with mental illness... it may happen to you or me. Showing acceptance and support is the only way we are going to change society so those who need treatment can get it without hiding in the shadows. It's time we bring mental illness out of the dark ages. People who seek treatment need our support, not our scorn.

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



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FREE INFORMATION



## “Seniors matter!” “My home is my choice!”

Those were some of the chants from the 1,000 estimated at Older Michiganians Day on May 15 at the state capitol in Lansing. Older adults represent about 25% of Michigan’s population, or roughly 2.5 million people, organizers told the crowd.



BY  
LISA  
TYLER

Older Michiganians Day 2019 had four main points in its Platform for Legislative Action:

- Rebalance Medicaid Long Term Care by increasing funding to the MI Choice Medicaid Waiver program. Michigan is 46th of 50 states, spending only 40% of its long-term care services and supports dollars on home and community-based services, compared to 60% allocated to long-term care facilities. There are more than 3,000 people on state wait lists for Waiver services.
- Support the Direct Care Workforce – there is a statewide shortage of direct care workers providing long-term care to older adults; it may be as high as 32,000 by 2020. Nearly 30% of direct care workers have household incomes below the federal poverty level. Advocates want to set professional standards, training requirements and certification; include work-

ers in state talent development initiatives; and increased funding streams to increase wages and training.

- Support AASA In-Home Services – The Aging and Adult Services Agency (AASA) funds in-home services including home-delivered meals, personal care, homemaking and respite. Research shows older adults receiving in-home services are five times less likely to have been in a nursing home than those on a wait list. The Silver Key Coalition is requesting a \$6 million increase in AASA’s FY2020 budget to support the more than 6,200 seniors on waiting lists for in-home and nutrition services.
- Promote a Dementia Capable Michigan – More than 500,000 family members in Michigan are caring for loved ones with dementia. Policies are encouraged to promote the well-being and safety of people living with dementia, recognizing dementia as a public health priority, mobilizing partnerships to strengthen the service-providing network, and enacting policies to strengthen families, communities, and the economy to achieve a dementia capable Michigan.

Muskegon, Oceana and Ottawa counties were well represented with 68 Senior Corps members (Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions), as well as Senior Resources

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staff and volunteers. A number of area lawmakers took time to meet with our group.

“Advocacy is such an important role for area agencies on aging,” Senior Resources CEO Pam Curtis said. “There is something about standing among other advocates, talking about the same issues. I appreciated talking with our legislators and their staffs. It forges better relationships.”

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Director Robert Gordon told the crowd, “Nothing great was ever achieved without struggle or advocacy.” MDHHS emphasizes values of empathy and dignity, Gordon said. “You want what all of us want – to participate for as long as you want. It’s our job in government to help you share in the richness of our common life. We are blessed to have one of the nation’s largest senior populations – that’s more people to share their wisdom and experience and sharing challenges of aging. We need to honor all of those who



work to enable older Americans to live lives of dignity.” He especially recognized direct care workers and family caregivers for all that they do for older adults.

Speakers from the Michigan Dementia Coalition spoke of a roadmap to



improve quality of life for people with dementia. The state must work to reduce stigma, have more collaboration on research, increase awareness of brain health, develop more inclusive environments, and have more employers assisting family caregivers. The coalition has four

primary goals:

- People – promoting the health, safety and well-being of people living with dementia at all ages and stages
- Partnerships – mobilizing multisector partnerships to strengthen the service network
- Public health – recognizing and promoting dementia as a public health priority
- Policies – enacting policies that strengthen families, communities, and the economy

*Lisa Tyler is the Communications Director for Senior Resources. She and her husband Aaron are the proud parents of Hannah, a recent graduate of Mona Shores High School, and Nicholas, a junior at MSU. Lisa is a proud alumnus of MSU, loves scrapbooking and travel, and remaining involved in her community. She is president of the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District Board of Education and chair of the Kids’ Food Basket Muskegon advisory committee.*

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# Travel Considerations

BY JIM POWERS, LMSW

**Question:** As a caregiver recognizes changes in their loved one's cognitive abilities, what considerations need to be taken into account when planning trips?

**Answer:** The caregiver may need to determine if a day or overnight trip is in order, based on past experiences and current observations of their family member. When was the last time the two of you traveled overnight? What do you recall from the trip? Has the disease progressed significantly since the last trip? Generally speaking, the more extensive the dementia, the more challenging the trip becomes.

**Question:** Are there specific behaviors to look for that might indicate a lengthy trip may not be practical?

**Answer:** If the caregiver has noticed their loved one needs a strict daily routine to avoid getting upset, finds new settings stressful, has late afternoon episodes of confusion and cannot be readily redirected once upset, these are indications a day trip may be more practical to undertake than attempting a more extensive outing. A day trip can be a productive and fulfilling experience for both the caregiver and loved one and there are certainly many points of interest within a two-hour radius of the lakeshore area to explore. If a loved one is in an earlier phase of their dementia, an excursion out of

the area for a week or two may be a reasonable option to consider. A more extensive trip of this nature would be undertaken if the caregiver is relatively confident the loved one can eat and reside in a variety of different settings, can tolerate noise and crowds, is able to communicate his/her needs and will stay in proximity to the caregiver without wandering. Arranging to have medication available to ease the anxiety of travel may be a means of avoiding undue anxiety for your loved one.

**Question:** How can a caregiver know if he/she is emotionally prepared for an extended trip with the loved one?

**Answer:** Caregivers need to take personal inventory and assess to what extent they can handle an unexpected crisis, are flexible with scheduling the itinerary and able to manage embarrassing social situations that might arise during the trip.

**Question:** Despite the caregiver's best of intentions, what if a catastrophic reaction should occur while on the trip? Should the caregiver have a plan B if return home early is the most practical arrangement?

**Answer:** It is always important to have a contingency plan if the vacation does not go as planned and a return home is the best course of action. Ideally it would be prudent to have another family member or friend accompany the caregiver on the trip as an additional source of support if the trip has to be terminated.

*Jim Powers is a licensed social worker who has clinical experience in the mental health field at the local, state and federal levels. He currently serves as the caregiver support group leader at the Little Red House Adult Day Care Services in Spring Lake. The group meets on Thursdays at 10 a.m. at the Little Red House. Jim can be reached at [powersj@charter.net](mailto:powersj@charter.net)*

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# Liberty Weekend 1986

BY  
JOEL  
DULYEA

The day was Friday, July 4, 1986. The place was Liberty State Park, New Jersey; the closest landmass to Liberty Island and the Statue of Liberty. I was part of a joint military chorus that would sing with the Boston Pops Orchestra in celebration of the rededication of the Statue of Liberty. There were plenty of celebrities, and VIPs attending the event; from Cubby O'Brian, an original Mouseketeer with The Mickey Mouse Club, to President Ronald Reagan. However, the festive mood of the event seemed to consume our attention and erase the differences by which we sometimes measure, and sometimes categorize one another. Lady Liberty was dressed in her best, holding a new torch and we, her children, were enamored with her.

The morning arrived with crystalline clear blue skies that framed five blimps that lazily grazed the skies over Upper New York Bay. The Manhattan skyline, Ellis Island, Governor's Island, and Liberty Island seemed

almost reachable on foot for all the pleasure craft anchored like stepping stones along the shores of the bay. Operation Sail brought the largest flotilla of tall ships to assemble in modern history. Some were anchored across the bay off Brooklyn's shore. To the south, the Verrazano Bridge was the gateway through which we witnessed the entrance of the aircraft carrier *USS John F. Kennedy* into the bay. After the concert, President Reagan would address the world from the carrier and his speech would be followed by the largest fireworks display in American history.

The chorus had a center-stage view that looked over the orchestra to the ground in front of the stage. Gathered there was the largest crowd I have ever seen; a tightly woven human carpet of red, white and blue that cov-



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ered the entire park. The concert started with the National Anthem. I missed singing the first three measures, startled by a squadron of F-15 fighters that flew overhead.

When the fireworks began, I leaned against a rail at the back of the stage, next to singer John Denver, and viewed the panorama of fireworks that surrounded the Upper Bay. After the concert, it took two hours for our Soldiers' Chorus and The United States Army Field Band to walk 200 yards and assemble at our buses. After midnight, as our vehicles squeezed through the crowd, I wrote in my diary, "The chorus is in quiet conversation or asleep in their seats. The event of our lives is over."

I kept a diary on that day – July 4, 1986. It lacks one memory that remains most prominent after all these years. In the crowd was a church friend from Ann Arbor. Her name was Zatha. She still is known as the pink lady (she always wore pink) who liked to push our toddler daughter in her swing. Zatha paid her bus fare from Ann Arbor to New York with the money she redeemed from bottles and cans she picked up on her walks. She carried a bed sheet which she slept on in the bus stations on her way there and back home. One of Lady Liberty's enamored children. I still marvel at her story.

*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. Happy fourth of July 2019!.*



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# Beach, Sun, and Barefoot Fun



BY TARIN  
PAPARELLA,  
DPM

Thinking about ditching those shoes this summer? These common conditions might have you second guessing walking around barefoot!

**Question:** Why does the ball of my foot hurt?

**Answer:** Neuroma: A neuroma develops when the nerves running between the toes become enlarged and inflamed from constant irritation. Neuromas typically present as sharp shooting pains out to the toes, a sensation of walking on a marble, or the feeling of your sock bunched up in your shoe. Common locations of a neuroma are between the 2nd and 3rd toes and the 3rd and 4th toes.

**Metatarsalgia:** Lack of a proper fat pad or a high arched foot structure may cause the bones in the ball of the foot to be more prominent, feeling like you're walking on stones or marbles. Walking barefoot does not provide any additional cushion so the area may become painful.

**Question:** What if my heel hurts?

**Answer:** Plantar fasciitis: The plantar fascia is a ligament that runs from the heel to the ball of the foot to help maintain the arch. Plantar fasciitis is a condition where small tears occur within a tight fascia, causing sharp shooting pain in the heel. Walking without supportive shoes puts tension on the ligament, causing it to tear.

This condition may or may not be associated with a heel spur, and contrary to common belief, the spur runs parallel to the ground, not downwards into the ground.

**Question:** It's ok to go barefoot at the beach isn't it?

**Answer:** There are many dangerous things lurking at the beach in the sand and water. Wearing water shoes or sandals is a great way to avoid injury! Sticks, sharp rocks, or broken glass or shells can cause cuts or puncture wounds that can easily get infected. Also, don't forget about those little critters crawling around in the sand waiting to bite you! Lastly, those wonderful rays of sunshine quickly heat up the sand and sidewalks. Prevent burns on the bottoms of your feet by keeping them protected. Using sunscreen on your feet also helps prevent a deadly skin cancer called melanoma.

**Question:** So if you want me to wear shoes or sandals, what are some types you recommend?

**Answer:** Birkenstock sandals: These sandals have a cork-latex bottom that has molded arch support. The cork materials also molds to your feet over time to accommodate any bony prominences you might have and the stiff sole prevents excess wear and tear on the joints.

**Cros:** These shoes have molded foam that provides support and cushion. The strap on the back helps the shoes stay on while the holes in the shoe allow for appropriate ventilation. They are light weight and provide plenty of room for the toes.

Vionic, Spenco, and Sole are other good sandal options.

*Tarin Paparella, DPM is trained in both forefoot and rearfoot reconstructive surgery, correcting conditions such as bunions, flatfeet, and traumatic injuries. She is physician at Shoreline Foot & Ankle Associates with offices in Muskegon, Fremont, and Ludington. [www.shorelinefaa.com](http://www.shorelinefaa.com)*



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# Trying to Relax



BY  
JERRY  
MATTSON

At 235 pounds, I am no Tinker Bell and I don't suppose the pixie ever sat in a recliner. I have and do so many times each day. My wife and I bought an identical pair of recliners when we moved to the west side of the state about nine years ago. I have forgotten the brand name but they weren't cheap. Over the years they have served us well; hers more so than mine.

This is on my mind since we just ordered a new chair for her. The new one is not as large as the current one and won't require her to add pillows behind her back to make it comfortable. When it arrives, her old one will make a six-foot move to the right and become my new one.

She claims I am too rough on my chair. I plead guilty. I don't make any effort to "gently" ease into it or slowly pull the lever to raise the foot-rest. I do this, I suppose, in a manly fashion. It has a swivel option which amounts to a Lazy Susan-like assembly mounted to the chair and attached to a two-foot diameter wood composite base that does not stick to the carpet. Every few days one of us moves the chair back to its starting point, near the reading lamp and the end table.

Inadvertent furniture movement is not a big issue, but ending up on my back with my legs pointing toward the ceiling after leaning back in the chair, is. I turned it over to take



a look and found one of four mounting bolts had pulled most of the way through the composite disc. I unbolted the disc, cut out the five-inch square of broken material, glued in a piece of 3/4 inch plywood, drilled a counter-sink hole along with an attaching hole and reassembled it. It's been a successful fix, so far.

That was not the chair's first repair. I once heard a loud noise and found myself leaning to one side. I flipped the chair over and found a broken carriage bolt and a coil spring on the floor. A 1/4-inch bolt had sheared. After another one sheared, I replaced all these small, soft bolts with larger, hardened, ones.

Two days after we ordered the new chair, I found mine did not rock as far forward as it used to. I pulled the handle to recline, then released it to sit up two times, like rebooting a computer. That didn't help. This was a new issue I had to investigate. The problem showed up in bright green and was easily remedied. I picked out the lost mini-tennis ball, missing since our grand-puppy, Gizmo, last visited. No cost, no tools, no possible injury and no comments were heard about why I always try to fix things myself.

Now, I suppose I can look forward to doing most of these things again on my new, used, chair. Change the way I sit down in the recliner? Not a chance.

*Jerry is not exactly cheap, but prefers to redo, repurpose or repair things rather than buying something new right away. It's a bit like writing, where one tinkers with the words until a story, or the repair job, seems to be done properly*



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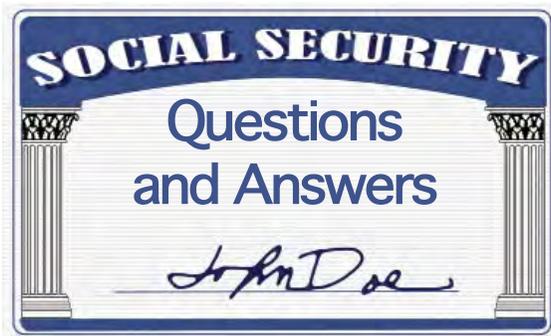
Michelle Giddings, BC-HIS, Board Certified Hearing Instrument Specialist #1379

**Question:** My wife and I live in Michigan, but plan to spend the winter in New Mexico. My wife will turn 62 while we are down south. Can she apply for benefits in New Mexico or do we have to wait until we get back home to apply for retirement at our local Social Security office?

**Answer:** These days, you don't even have to be near a Social Security office to apply for benefits. Regardless of where you and your wife are living, you can apply for retirement benefits online at [www.socialsecurity.gov/applytoretire](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/applytoretire). It's so easy to do and it can take as little as 15 minutes to complete and submit the application. If she prefers, your wife can file a retirement benefit application at any Social Security office—including the one closest to you in Michigan, New Mexico, or wherever you happen to be.

**Question:** Recently, I was told I shouldn't be carrying my Social Security card around. Is that true?

**Answer:** We encourage you to keep your Social Security card at home in a safe place. Do not carry it with you unless you are taking it to a job interview or to someone who requires it. Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in America and the best way to avoid becoming a victim is to safeguard your Social Security card and number. To learn more, visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber).



BY  
VONDA  
VANTIL

with funeral expenses. We suggest reading a copy of our online publication, *How Social Security Can Help You When A Family Member Dies*, at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10008.html](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10008.html).

**Question:** I'm 38 years old and have been approved to receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits. I was surprised to learn that my payment will be reduced because I live with my mom. Why's that?

**Answer:** SSI is a needs-based program, so any other income you receive—including non-monetary income such as help with your bills or other expenses—can have an effect on your benefit payment. Your SSI payments may be reduced if you are receiving food, shelter, or monetary assistance. If you move, or if the situation in your mom's household changes, be sure to contact Social Security. For more information, visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi).



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To find all of the services available and set up an account, go to [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount).

Vonda VanTil 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](mailto:vonda.vantil@ssa.gov)



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BY  
LOUISE  
MATZ

# Time to Quit?

Now, there's food for thought.

When shall I quit working? Should I quit driving? My balance isn't quite what it used to be, so should I quit walking, playing golf? How about some of the more active things we do? Biking? Hunting? Fishing? Tennis? Swimming? Gardening? Lawn maintenance? Raking? Shoveling snow?

I love playing pickleball. Over the past 15 years, I've had some bad falls playing pickleball. The first one was probably because of worn and improper shoes. Well, I fixed that by purchasing some good court shoes. So, no, I didn't quit. After the next fall I was off my feet for two weeks and unable to help my husband who was in a wheelchair at the time. Did I go back to pickleball? No, I quit. This time my decision might affect someone who depended on me. Eventually, he got back on his feet and I'm back to pickleball. However, I go at it a little differently. Now that I'm older and twice injured, I play with safety first in mind. And, I don't play the aggressive, go all out to win game that I used to play. To continue doing things I love, I've made adjustments.

Bowhunting can be very physically demanding. My husband and I usually hunt in the Upper Peninsula for the month of October. Over the past few years as we've aged, we've found it necessary to make adjustments in order to continue. Quitting time will come, but we are deferring it as long as we can by

making a few changes and slowing our pace.

So many activities become increasingly difficult as we age. We know it's foolish to continue these activities the way we did when we were 20 years younger. Golfers may find that 18 holes is too much in one day. So, why not play just 9 holes? Bikers may find their usual route is too demanding either because of the distance or the traffic. So, take a shorter and safer route. Good gear is always important, but more so as we age. Be sure you have good walking shoes or good court shoes. Use your head on the golf course. Don't take foolish shots or put yourself in harm's way. Wear a bike helmet always. You could fall in your own driveway! If we wish to continue our favorite activities, we need to learn to slow down and think about safety first.

Sometimes situations demand that we quit. It's difficult, but there are other options. Find a new activity! When I had to quit pickleball, my sister Paula invited me to learn MahJongg. I loved it! Certainly not a physical activity, but it filled the void. My father played the violin and eventually had to quit playing, but he still enjoyed listening to violin music. Avid readers who now find it difficult to read may switch to audio books. Instead of mourning our loss, it's the perfect time to be adventuresome and find a new activity, related or unrelated.

*Golf, gardening and grandchildren were primary interests of retirement for Louise. Since that time, her interests have expanded to include walking, biking, pickleball and mahjongg. Reading and travel are also high on her list. She and her husband both enjoy bow hunting for deer in the Upper Peninsula, hunting turkeys, and fishing in the Florida Keys.*



L-R Sandy Peterson, Krista Woodring, Linda & Jim Richards.

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# Cathay's Cooking Corner

BY  
CATHAY  
THIBDAUE



## Fish Tacos

### White Sauce:

1/3 cup thinly sliced green onions  
1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro  
1/4 cup mayonnaise  
3/4 cup sour cream  
2 teaspoon grated lime rind  
1 small fresh lime, juiced  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
2 or 3 garlic cloves, minced,  
depending love of garlic

### Tacos:

1 teaspoon ground cumin  
1 teaspoon ground coriander  
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika  
1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder  
1 1/2 pounds lean white fish (tilapia,  
cod, halibut, mahi mahi) fillets  
1/4 cup olive oil  
8 (6-inch) corn tortillas  
2 cups shredded cabbage (I use green  
and red)

Combine green onions, fresh cilantro, mayonnaise, sour cream, grated lime rind, fresh lime juice, salt, pepper, garlic cloves in a small bowl; set aside.

Pour the olive oil into a small bowl and add cumin, coriander, smoked paprika, ground red pepper, salt, garlic powder. Mix well. Place the fish in a plastic bag and pour the marinade over it, making sure to coat the fish well on both sides. Allow to marinate in the refrigerator for 30 minutes to 4 hours, depending on time available.

Heat a nonstick sauté pan over medium-high heat. Remove the fish from the marinade and place in the hot pan (there is no need to add more oil). Cook the fish for 5 minutes undisturbed, then turn over, and cook for another 4 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and flake the fish into the pan with a fork, making sure to mix in all the marinade that has stuck to the bottom of the pan. Set aside.

Place four of the tortillas on a plate and sandwich them between two slightly dampened sheets of paper towel. Microwave on high for 45 seconds. Place the warm tortillas in a towel-lined basket or plate and cover.

Divide fish evenly among tortillas; top each with 1/4 cup cabbage and 2 tablespoon white sauce.

*Cathay is the Network Manager, Certified HIT Security Administrator and Certified HIPAA Security Professional Accelerated at Senior Resources of West Michigan. She also enjoys boating, fishing and spending time with her family.*

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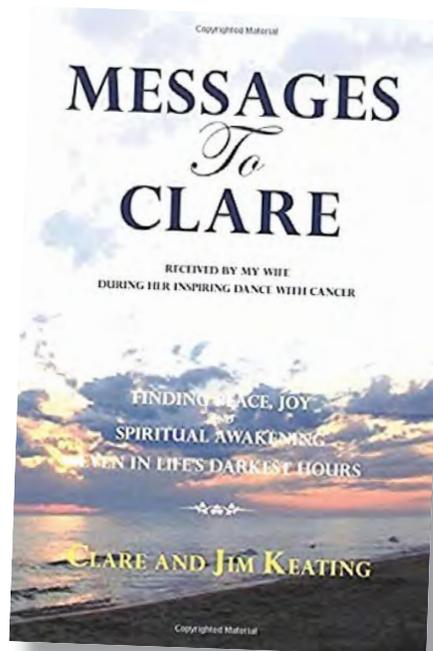
# Messages to Clare

## Book Review of *Finding Peace, Joy and Spiritual Awakening even in Life's Darkest Hours* by Clare and Jim Keating



BY JACKIE LINDRUP  
RDH, M.Ed.

A few years ago, I met Jim Keating at a Christmas party of a friend, and he told me the amazing story about his wife, Clare, who had received over 200 positive messages from the spirit world while she was battling breast cancer. The two of them were practicing therapists in Kalamazoo who had moved back to Clare's childhood home of North Muskegon during her illness and made a practice of meditating every day. One day Clare began receiving messages, told Jim about it, and asked him to write them down. He wasn't sure



how he was going to make these messages into a book, but he was determined to learn how! The result is a beautiful book of inspiring messages from a local author, instructing us how to live our best lives while here on earth. The messages have given readers joy and peace through the trials and tribulations of their daily lives.

Jim and Clare met at MSU and almost broke up over their religious background differences. She was Christian Reformed and he was Catholic with a seminary background. But they worked out their differences, Jim said, finally "believing that there are many paths to God." They were adventurous and traveled extensively while raising four children, ultimately visiting 36 countries, visiting Hawaii, taking their kids to explore Machu Picchu, skydiving in Hastings, Michigan, and parasailing in Cabo San Lucas. They got swept over a 12-foot waterfall while rafting with the family on the Inca Trail! Clare's battle with metastatic breast cancer lasted over 18 years. The doctors could not figure out how she lived so fully and so long, and told Clare and Jim "we are on uncharted ground." During the last four years of her battle, she began

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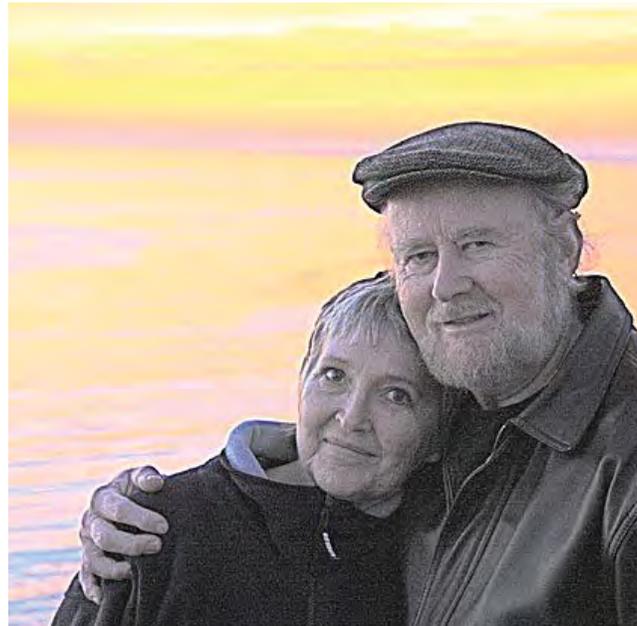
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receiving messages from spiritual beings who once lived on earth and whose purpose is to draw people closer to God. Jim's job was to write the messages down. When I asked Jim why he thought Clare received those messages he told me to read from page xiv where he wrote: "I personally believe that we are at a time in history where spiritual help is more readily available to all and that the veil between the physical and the spiritual world is thinning, allowing individuals to connect more easily to the God energy. The challenges, pace and distractions of modern life may be requiring this. These messages are offered as one more aid to all who are seeking." Other questions that Clare personally asked of these spiritual messengers was "Why me? Why cancer?" All are answered in the book.



Excerpt from the book: #99 JUMPSTART (page 183)

*"Loving God and letting that love show enhances the connections to God of those around you. This service is appreciated by our fellow man and by God."*

*"God wants us to be happy and our happiness is exponentially increased when we are connected to the Love of God that is within our hearts. The greater the connection, the greater the joy. Heaven on earth is present in those who carry God's love in their hearts, in their actions and in their smiles."*

The book is divided into short one- to two page-entries. The topic of the message is listed at the top of the page. One way to use the book is to read a page or two every day and consider the topic during your day. Many times I pick it up and read a few pages before I go to bed at night for its peaceful influence. The book can currently be found on Amazon.

*Jackie Lindrup RDH, MEd. lives in Muskegon, MI with her husband Tom. She enjoys traveling, hiking, biking and golfing. She is the director of Volunteer for Dental, a non-profit in Muskegon that offers free dental care for volunteer hours and a health education class. Jackie is a 2018 NAMPA award winner for travel writing (North American Mature Publishers Association – serving the Boomer and Senior Markets). You can reach her at jackielindrup111@gmail.com.*

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BY  
JANET  
HASSELBRING

# If I Had a Bucket List...



... I could cross off three adventures I had in the Yucatan this winter with my son and family.

By comparison, the Mayan ruins of Chichen Itza were tame...

1. I didn't know what **zip-lining** was when we set off on a Mayan adventure, but I wanted to spend time with my grandsons, so when they chose to go zip-lining, I tagged along. We disembark from our tour bus, change into swim gear, strap into harnesses, and climb to docks high above a cove bordered by mangroves. After traversing a high-ropes circuit of hanging bridges, we arrive at the first zip line. I watch, fascinated, as my family members are hooked onto the line and pushed off. Then it's my turn. I make a mental note to put ziplining on my bucket list when I return home – if I return home. Whoosh. With a rush of adrenaline I streak across the cove to the dock opposite, where I come to an amazingly gentle landing. After three more jungle gyms and zip lines, our adventure is over. Hey, I'm just getting the hang of this!

## If only I had a bucket list...

2. Next we board a watercraft bound for a shipwreck. The boat and its captain seem sea worthy enough - comforting because once we leave the inlet, we charge, full throttle, into the choppy turquoise waters of the Caribbean. The boat smacks and slaps the waves. We hunker down.



Anchoring upstream from the shipwreck, our guide throws out **snorkeling** gear. "Be careful," he warns. "The current is strong!"

I'm still puzzling over the equipment when my family members jump overboard. Hastily I don my mask, clamber to the boat's edge, and plunge in. Giant waves wash over me. I swallow buckets of salt water. Gamedly I attempt a supine position but the current is so strong, I feel like a balloon tossed about at commencement. I've totally lost track of my family. Forget about snorkeling. This is survival.

Coughing and sputtering, I'm carried swiftly downstream, where I crash into jagged rocks surrounding the shipwreck. The rocks are scraping and gouging my legs, but I feel safe here. Our guide appears with a life ring. "Get away from the rocks!" he orders. Whatever you say! I grab the ring with a death grip and ease off my rocky refuge. I have the presence of mind to ask if my family members are okay and accounted for. My grandsons glide by. "You okay, Grandma?" Back at the boat, my guide offers a tip. "If water enters your snorkel, simply

exhale and you'll force the water out through the valve." Really? Now he tells me!



Exhausted, we tumble into the boat and remove our gear. I want to heave mine overboard. We head for a reef. This time I make sure the nose pocket of my mask is snug and the mouthpiece fits comfortably between my teeth. The water is calm here but the guide isn't taking any chances. With him

alongside, I explore the magic of an underwater world inhabited by multicolored fish, brain coral, reef sharks, sting rays, and sea turtles.

## If I only had a bucket list...

3. Finally something safe and peaceful unless Greta, our friendly dolphin, on loan, has tricks up her fins! I've watched dolphins' smooth glistening bodies arcing gracefully through the waters of the Gulf and the Caribbean for years; now I'm **swimming and frolicking with Greta**, kissing her moist nose, getting a ride on her fins! She "blows" at the surface of the water, exhaling, then inhaling fresh air. When it's time to go, she emits a mighty fountain of spray, forcefully exhaling and clearing away the residual water on top of her blowhole.

## Oh, If I only I had a bucket list...

Note: If you read my article "Six Little Ducks I Never Knew," (July 2018), stay tuned. There may be a sequel. Mrs. Mallard is sashaying around my neighborhood again. She's heavy with eggs and looking sheepish. After last year's tragedy she wouldn't think of laying her eggs anywhere near my house, would she?

Janet lives in MI with her husband, Don and Welsh terrier, Maggie May. They migrate to FL for the winter, where Jan drags herself off the tennis court occasionally to write books. Her series, *Tales from Pelican Cove*, features the wild/shorebirds of FL and beyond, and a second, *Country Dairy*, describes life on her family farm, in West MI, in the 1930s, when her parents lived and worked on the land. Her piano gets lonely because she chooses to whack fuzzy yellow balls instead of tickling its ivories.

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# A Caregiver's Perspective

BY  
ROLINA  
VERMEER

It's time to clear out more boxes and let go of the stuff that has nestled into my home, my garage and even an extra storage unit! I almost feel like a hoarder! But truthfully, it's not the "stuff" that matters to me as much as the memories all that "stuff" evokes. I want to celebrate those memories and enjoy the moments when even small items pass through my hands and remind me of the essence of someone whose love and legacy are precious to me.

I enjoyed, wistfully, such a moment while clearing out my father's desk when my parents' home had been sold and dad had already been gone from us for a number of years. Mom had kept so much in place. Dad's imposing desk seemed to wait for his return and I was reluctant to open drawers and dismantle that dream. I started with the top drawer.

Sliding the drawer open released a comforting, woody scent. Two small reams of vanilla velum, one monogrammed and one plain, lay in the back of the shallow drawer. Five matching envelopes were stacked to the side with a book of stamps tucked into the thin brown satin ribbon that held the envelopes in place. That was all. A letter writer's simple, well-chosen materials.

The stains in the bottom of the desk drawer reminded me of the trace of ink on my father's hands and how I had worshiped the words he wrote. He had

been eloquent and poetic and the creative musings he shared in his letters were always inspirational.

How unexpectedly heart wrenching it was to remove the contents of this drawer! The desk had been sold. An antique dealer had salivated over it and offered a price not to be refused. And besides, it was too large and bulky to be attractive to the generations left behind. But it was painful to give up the memories stained into the absorbent wood in the bottom of that little top right hand drawer.

I pulled out my cell phone and shot a quick photo of the open drawer and its contents. The ink stains featured prominently and I paused and fingered the pen and took one more quick shot, then scooped up the precious contents; the papers, the stamps and the fountain pen, and dropped them into a plastic bag for pondering another time. I pushed the drawer closed, and blew a wistful kiss and said a silent thank you.

When I returned home that evening, I took the bag out of my tote and laid it on my desk in the sunroom. A small trickle of ink had bled into a corner of the vellum stationary and I unzipped the bag, grabbed a tissue to wipe the extracted fountain pen clean and laid it gently, respectfully, on my own desk blotter. My fingers, now lightly stained with black ink, caressed the pen again and I breathed another soft thank you.

Such is the "stuff" of memories.

*Rolina Vermeer has won several national awards for her essays celebrating the life and inspiration of her mother.*

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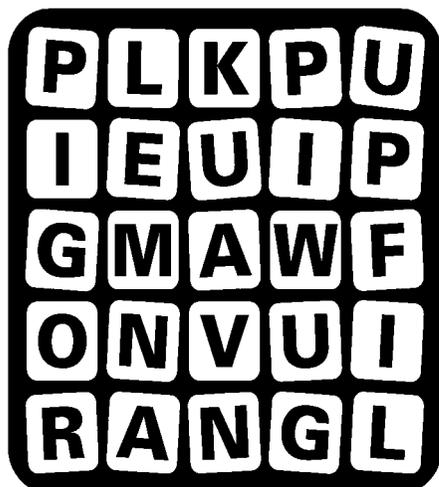
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								3
	5			9		6		
9		5				3		
8	2				9			
6			1	5	8			

## SENIOR PERSPECTIVES GAME PAGE

Answers on Page 35



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

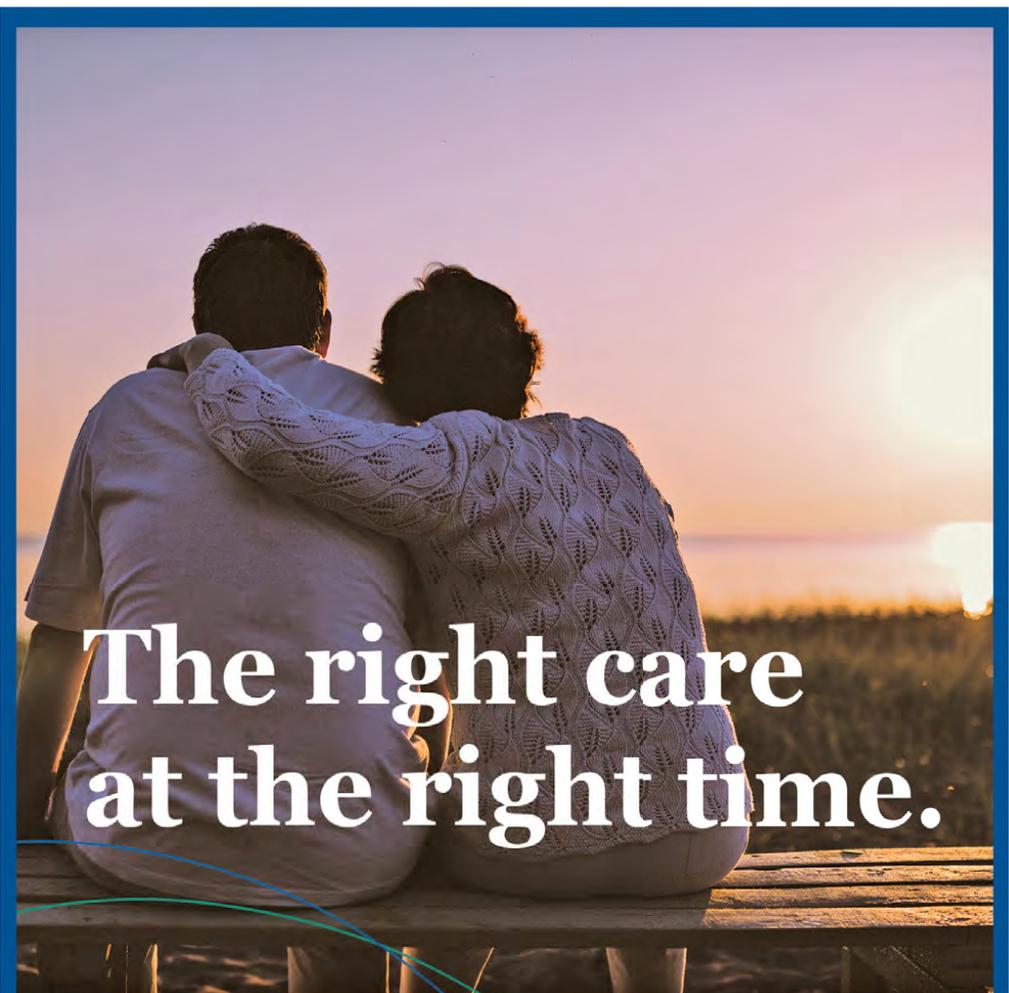
- 151+ = Champ
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# Authors of West Michigan Letters Tell the Story



BY  
TRICIA  
McDONALD

After her beloved grandmother passed away, Author Amy Johnson faced the heartbreaking task of emptying her grandparents' basement. What she found hidden away in file cabinets, were anything but heartbreaking. Her grandfather had kept handwritten letters between his brother and

himself during World War II. Amy felt the brothers had a story to tell and their letters became the impetus for Amy's book, *LETTERS lost then found*.

As a graphic designer, which Amy claims is essentially storytelling, her process for the book was writing her ideas on 3x5 white cards and putting them in a shoe box. She thrives on spontaneity and disorder and although this process was unorganized, she liked the challenge.

Amy designed *LETTERS lost then found* to engage readers in a number of different ways. The letters can be read sequentially from cover to cover, but there are also brief excerpts next to each letter that form a poetic series when read one after the other. The Day in History section on each page gives glimpses of what was happening in World War II at the time

each letter was written. And finally, a ticker tape, reminiscent of the Western Union Telegram, runs across the bottom of the pages.

A Grand Rapids native, Amy describes herself as curious, creative, considerate and clever. She believes dogs are better than people, and her two senior golden retrievers, Levi and Lucy, agree.

Although *LETTERS lost then found* is Amy's first published book (2016), it isn't her first attempt at writing. She wrote stories in elementary school and bound the pages with yarn. At the age of nine, she wrote her first book. Using illustrations and text, *Happy Land* was sixteen pages and told the tale of a little creature looking for a happy place to live. The focus of the book makes sense since Amy loves a good laugh.



Amy Johnson

Writing has provided a way for Amy to ease anxiety and get thoughts out of her head and onto the page. She is currently working on a sequel to *LETTERS lost then found*. It involves the rescue of the only survivor, Sg. Marvin Jacobs, of the plane crash on February 5, 1945.

*LETTERS lost then found* has won twelve awards, including the Best Overall Design Non-Fiction Category of the 2017 Next Generation Indie Book Awards, and First Place in the Military Category of the 2017 Royal Dragonfly Book Awards.

"These stories, treasures, and discoveries that were unearthed from the dark corners of my grandparents' basement will last me a lifetime," Amy said. We, as readers, are grateful

Amy shared these stories with us as well.

Tricia L. McDonald is an internationally published author, public speaker and writing coach. Her *Life with Sally* series: *Little White Dog Tails*, *Still Spinnin' Tails*, *Waggin' More Tails*, and *Princess Tails* are compilations of stories chronicling life with her miniature bull terrier. *Quit Whining Start Writing: A Novelist's Guide to Writing* is a guide to help writers put away the excuses and get the writing done.

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# Keith's World

## Canoeing the Sturgeon River



BY  
KEITH  
SIPE

Have you ever canoed the Sturgeon River? The Sturgeon River is close to 41 miles long, flowing through Otsego and Cheboygan counties. My son Brian, my brother-in-law Dave and his son Danny, my brother Ken (a canoeing expert) and another friend decided on the Sturgeon for a weekend of canoeing in the 1990's.

We started our trip on the Sturgeon River just north of Gaylord, Michigan. The Sturgeon River flows into Burt Lake by the Indian River community. To get started, we rented our canoes from a livery in the Indian River community and they took us by bus, with canoes, and dropped us off just north of Wolverine off highway 27.

The Sturgeon River is a great trout fishing stream, but we were not out for trout, we were out for a weekend full of fun and adventure in canoeing. The Sturgeon River is famous for its speed. It is said to have a slope of nearly 14 to 15 feet per mile and is the fastest river in the Lower Peninsula, being a class rating 1/11 river. Average depth is 3 to 4 feet, but you will find some deeper pools that may reach 5 to 8 feet deep. The temperature is on the cool side -- around 40 to 50 degrees.

Our goal was to canoe a few hours the first day, camp one night, and then finish a longer float the following day. There were many curves and twists on the way and even some rapids, which added to the excitement. The first night we set up a camp site just north of Silver Lake Road at Haakwood State Forest campgrounds.

It was a great weekend canoeing with family and friends. There was much laughter and excitement and we all wanted to come back next year for another float.

A few years later, the youth group of our church wanted to have a canoe trip so I suggested the Sturgeon River. Another chance for an adventure in canoeing, this

time with my daughter Mindy, so she could take the same trip as her brother Brian. We pretty much followed the same routine as the previous trip with my son and family.



We set up camp at the same place and did the short float the first day and camped for the night. The morning of the second day, everyone got ready to start the longer part of the trip on the river. Everyone was excited as we packed up our stuff and moved to the river.

During the second day of the trip, I explained to my daughter the hazards of trees when canoeing the river, and the proper technique of lying backwards in the canoe to duck under a tree. As we traversed under a tree, Mindy did a great job; she lay back and the tree moved over her graciously. "Great job, Mindy." But when it came to me...well, I got nailed, and into the cold water I went. She thought that was the funniest thing ever. I would agree, it must have been funny.

But...she went into the water right along with me, for I am bigger and couldn't get down as far as Mindy could.

I pushed the canoe down enough to where we both were dumped into the cold water. When Mindy came up from under the water, she was still laughing. Brrrr...the water was cold. On top of that, the canoe got away from us, and sped quickly ahead and got caught in the next bend in the river, lodged under another big tree. I could not get the canoe freed and our pastor Doug had to give me a hand.

It was a weekend full of laughter and fun while heading towards our destination of Indian River.

If you like canoeing, I would suggest the Sturgeon River. You can have an overnight camping adventure, as well as a day and a half of floating on the river. The views are wonderful along the way and when canoeing with friends, a recipe for a wonderful time.

I also must note that the last trip was 20 years ago and I wasn't even a senior then!

*Keith may be reached at [rightseat625bg@gmail.com](mailto:rightseat625bg@gmail.com) Please drop him a note, he loves the attention, well, he would love to hear from you. Keith enjoys writing, photography, flying, cooking, history, biking and lives in downtown Muskegon*

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# Coping with Grief



BY  
SARAH  
NESTELL

Summer in West Michigan offers so much to enjoy: 26 miles of beaches, 60 miles of bike trails, over 15 museums, and many beautiful state parks. You may be experiencing this summer a bit differently, though, if you're grieving someone you love.

Grief can feel more overwhelming in

the summer; it can be difficult to cope with grief when it seems that everyone else is having fun. Maybe it feels wrong to participate in an activity your loved one especially enjoyed, or maybe you're not ready to experience activities alone or in a different way with new people. That's okay.

In her book *On Grief and Grieving*, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross wrote, "The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same nor would you want to."

Consider these recommendations if you are grieving this summer:

Set realistic expectations and boundaries. Allow yourself to put a pause on activities you once enjoyed with your loved one, but don't be afraid to return to them if you are ready. You

may be surprised at the comfort it brings.

Allow yourself to be in community with others. It is especially important for your mental health to know that you are not alone. Find a person you trust that you feel you can be your genuine self with. It's okay to not be okay, but it's so much harder to feel that way alone. If you are a friend of someone who is grieving, set a "no expectations" rule.

Spend time outside. Lower levels of Vitamin D are linked to symptoms of depression. A dose of sunshine helps cope with stress.

Reflect on your traditions. What special events does your family celebrate in the summer? Discuss with those close to you if there are any traditions you'd like to set aside for now, or if there are new traditions you'd like to start in memory of your loved one.

Most importantly, remember that the best thing you can do for yourself when you're grieving is to experience

it on your own terms. Pressure from yourself or others can be unhelpful.

The Bob & Merle Scolnik Healing Center, a program of Harbor Hospice, hosts a variety of free grief support groups and individual counseling sessions. Counseling is available to anyone in the community at no charge. For more information on grief support, visit [HarborHospiceMI.org](http://HarborHospiceMI.org) or call Harbor Hospice at (231) 728-3442 and ask to speak with a bereavement counselor.

Harbor Hospice has provided community hospice care and support programs to residents in a five-county area for over 36 years.

*Sarah Nestell is a social work intern for Harbor Hospice. She is in an advanced clinical program, working towards her Masters of Social Work from Ferris State University. Prior to joining Harbor Hospice, she worked as a social work intern for Community Mental Health of Central Michigan – Osceola while completing her undergraduate degree.*



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BY  
CLIF  
MARTIN

## Martin's Meanderings Grand Artists

I am fortunate to have some talented artists in my family. My grandson Alex Lynn turns 20 years old this July and has been drawing since he was a kid. He created remarkable drawings of cartoon characters when he was very young. I remember the great fun we had in our Looney Toons hats when he was 13. He was Foghorn Leghorn and I felt just like Marvin the Martian. Alex was laughing because gramps had just done something that rhymes with "art." There is nothing more hilariously funny to young boys and old men. Alex still likes cartoons but he now does amazing drawings of people, like this one of Donald Glover, whom he names as his greatest creative inspiration. Among many other things, Glover created the "Atlanta" series on FX TV, wrote for "30 Rock" and will be voicing young Simba in the upcoming "Lion King" remake.



Another young artist in the family is great-grandson Connor Sikkema.



His 8th birthday was in March. What a talent this boy has. Here is his drawing of what a great Fortnite Burger looks like. Fortnite is a wildly popular video game. I tried to figure it out but it's way beyond me. Ask someone who plays it what skin he's in. Connor said if I tried to play it, I would be a noob. I think that's something like a "newbie" way back in the olden days.



Stay tuned for further bragging about offspring and their offspring. I've got lots to be proud of.

*Clif says he needs his calculator to figure it out. Seven grandsons, one great grandson, and 5 great granddaughters.*

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# Safety and Security

## Top 10 Safety and Security Tips for Seniors



BY  
JOE  
STAPEL

The definition of Safety is as follows: The condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger or risk of injury. The definition of security is the state of being free from danger or threat.

### The Top ten home safety tips every senior should know:

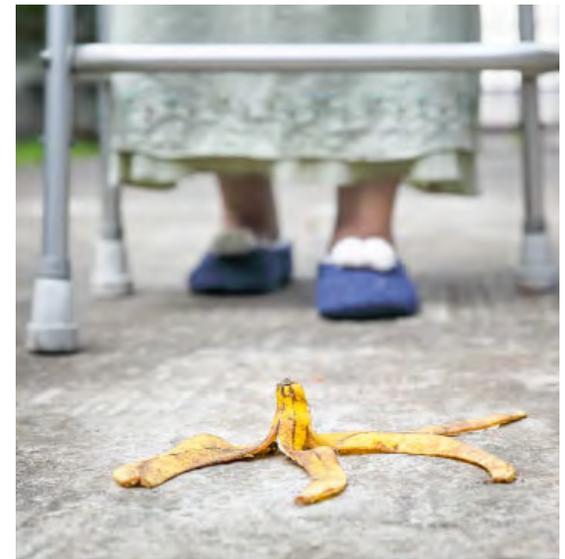
1. To prevent falls, remove all scatter rugs, repair frayed carpet, tape or tack down loose carpet edges.
2. Arrange furniture to allow adequate space for safe walking between and within all rooms.
3. When using oxygen, do not smoke or use an open flame.
4. Do not over-load circuits -- unplug appliances when not in use.
5. Wear close fitting sleeves to prevent spills and burns that could happen with loose, long sleeves.
6. Clean up spills immediately.
7. Use step stool to reach high shelves -- do not stand on chairs or stools.
8. Place safety strips or a non-skid mat in bathtub and install grab rails. Do not use soap dishes or towel racks for support when sitting or standing.
9. Keep closet doors and drawers closed to prevent bruises or tripping.
10. Keep walking aids within reach and keep a night light on or a flashlight within reach of your bed.

### Check your risk of falling.

#### Take the test:

Answer yes or no for each question.

- I have fallen in the past year.  
**Yes No**
- I use or have been advised to use a cane or a walker to get around safely.  
**Yes No**
- Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking.  
**Yes No**
- I steady myself by holding on to furniture when walking at home.  
**Yes No**
- I am worried about falling.  
**Yes No**
- I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.  
**Yes No**



- I have some trouble stepping up on to a curb.  
**Yes No**
- I often have to rush to the toilet.  
**Yes No**
- I have lost some feeling in my feet.  
**Yes No**
- I take medication that sometimes makes me feel lightheaded or more tired than usual.  
**Yes No**
- I take medication to help me sleep or to improve my mood.  
**Yes No**
- I often feel sad or depressed.  
**Yes No**

Add up your yes answers. If they total 4 or more, you may be at risk of falling and you may want to have a discussion with your doctor.

Until next time, let's be safe and secure out there.

*If you have any questions regarding Senior Safety and Security, Joe Stapel would love to hear from you. His email is [jyalan@comcast.net](mailto:jyalan@comcast.net)*



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# Ask the Provider

## The Importance of a Good Night's Sleep

Courtesy of Mercy Health

According to the Centers for Disease Control, "insufficient sleep is a public health epidemic." Sleep constitutes a third of our lives, which vastly impacts all areas of the remaining two thirds of our lives. Current estimates are that 50-70 million Americans of all ages are affected by sleep disorders. Most of these individuals remain undiagnosed, which is estimated to cost more than \$100 billion annually. The majority of these costs are related to adverse medical consequences, including motor vehicle accidents and resultant injuries, heart disease, stroke and cognitive impairment.

**Question:** How much sleep does an older person need each night?

**Answer:** Older adults need the same amount of sleep as younger adults. The current recommendation is 7-9 hours per night. As a person ages, hormone levels may become lower, leading to more interrupted sleep. This may also cause a shift in timing of sleep.



BY  
SARAH  
GUNTHER, DO

**Question:** What causes sleep problems?

**Answer:** More than 80 different sleep disorders are currently recognized by the medical community. The causes of these disorders are varied. A Sleep Specialist is a provider who is uniquely trained to identify sleep disorders, their causes

and treatment plans.

**Question:** What are the most common types of sleep disorders?

**Answer:** The top three sleep disorders are obstructive sleep apnea, insomnia and restless legs syndrome. *Obstructive sleep apnea* is characterized by pauses in breathing throughout the night. These pauses result in poor sleep quality and increased stress on the body, potentially resulting in multiple serious medical issues. *Insomnia* is characterized by an inability to either fall asleep or maintain sleep for a number of reasons. *Restless legs syndrome* symptoms consist of the profound urge to move the legs (or arms, in some cases) while trying to relax in bed. As a result, falling asleep can be challenging.



**Question:** When should a person consult a sleep specialist?

**Answer:** Individuals should seek an evaluation by a sleep specialist if they experience daytime sleepiness, difficulty falling or staying asleep, loud snoring, pauses in their breathing at night, or the inability to sleep due to leg movements. There are a number of serious medical conditions that may also warrant a sleep evaluation, such as heart disease, heart attack, stroke and abnormal heart rhythms.

A referral is required by a physician in order to start the consultation process. An assessment of sleep symptoms is available through the online sleep quiz at [www.Mercy-Health.com/sleep-quiz](http://www.Mercy-Health.com/sleep-quiz)

**Question:** Are there ways to prevent sleep disorders?

**Answer:** Given that there are so many sleep disorders, there are also many ways of preventing sleep disorders. Maintaining an optimal body weight and an active lifestyle are key components. A focus should also be made on maintaining good sleep habits, such as turning off electronics several hours before bedtime.

**Question:** Are there proven ways to treat sleep disorders?

**Answer:** There are many proven therapies for the large variety of sleep disorders. In the case of sleep apnea, treatment includes positive airway pressure (CPAP), oral mandibular advancement devices (specially designed apparatus that adjusts the lower jaw), and hypoglossal nerve stimulation, such as Inspire. For insomnia, the best proven therapy is cognitive behavioral therapy.

**Question:** How effective are over the counter sleep medications?

**Answer:** Over-the-counter sleep medications should be avoided unless monitored by a physician. This includes melatonin and diphenhydramine. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recently published guidelines addressing these widely available medications. Current studies show no positive effect of these medications in treating insomnia, and the risks of the medications are incompletely understood.

*Dr. Sarah Gunther, DO, is with Mercy Health Neurosciences Sleep Center in Muskegon*

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# Beware of People Pretending to be from Social Security



BY  
VONDA  
VANTIL

Social Security is committed to protecting your personal information. We urge you to always be cautious and to avoid providing sensitive information such as your Social Security number (SSN) or bank account information to unknown people over the phone or internet. If you receive a call and aren't expecting one, you must

be extra careful. You can always get the caller's information, hang up, and — if you do need more clarification — contact the official phone number of the business or agency that the caller claims to represent. Never reveal personal data to a stranger who called you.

There's a scam going around right now. You might receive a call from someone claiming to be from Social Security or another agency. Calls can even

display 1-800-772-1213, Social Security's national customer service number, as the incoming number on your caller ID. In some cases, the caller states that Social Security does not have all of your personal information, such as your SSN, on file. Other callers claim Social Security needs additional information so the agency can increase your benefit payment, or that Social Security will terminate your benefits if they do not confirm your information. This appears to be a widespread issue, as reports have come from people across the country. These calls are not from Social Security.

Callers sometimes state that your SSN is at risk of being deactivated or deleted. The caller then asks you to call a phone number to resolve the issue. People should be aware that the scheme's details may vary; however, you should avoid engaging with the caller or calling the number provided, as the caller might attempt to acquire personal information.

Social Security employees occasionally contact people by telephone for customer-service purposes. In only a very few special situations, such as when you have business pending with us, will a Social Security employee request that the person confirm personal information over the phone.

Social Security employees will never threaten you or promise a Social Security benefit approval or increase in exchange for information. In those cases, the call is fraudulent, and you should just hang up. If you receive these calls, please report the information to the Office of the Inspector General at 1-800-269-0271 or online at [oig.ssa.gov/report](http://oig.ssa.gov/report).

Protecting your information is an important part of Social Security's mission. You work hard and make a conscious effort to save and plan for retirement. Scammers try to stay a step ahead of us, but with an informed public and your help, we can stop these criminals before they cause serious financial damage.

*Vonda VanTil 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](mailto:vonda.vantil@ssa.gov).*

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BY  
JAY  
NEWMARCH

## Traveler Tales

# Climbing the stairs to a different world

I recently ended up on a transatlantic flight to the Netherlands, flying in Business class, due to two factors. One, a flash sale on the KLM website offering cheapie ticket from Chicago to Amsterdam. And, two, an off-the-cuff airport counter discussion about possible upgrades.

As I was booking my trip just a couple months out and at 1 a.m. in the morning, I decided this would be a solo trip. While I enjoy travelling with others, I nonetheless am not beyond taking off on my own. My solo trips offer a different type of travel. I feel like a vagabond, wandering with no real agenda of which I feel I need to adhere. I have found this laissez-faire approach to travel tends to be far less appealing when traveling with others. Most people prefer some sort of plan.

Now, the reason for this story. When I went to check in online for my trip the night before my departure, there was a chance to upgrade to business class. A couple of things to note right off the bat. While I love to travel, I hate to fly. Especially when I'm flying overnight. I simply cannot sleep upright on planes. I have always dreamed (pun intended) of being in one of the seats that allow you to lie down flat. Still, I checked in with my far aft economy seat.

When I got to the airport, I decided to inquire at the airline counter. With a sizable chunk of miles and \$300, I could find myself in a prone position as I crossed the Atlantic. Out came my frequent flyer credit card. With a miles account that was a little lighter on miles and a credit card with a bit more debt, I found myself picking out a seat in the upper level of a 747. I headed off to the KLM lounge to wait for boarding. My off-the-cuff cheapie trip wasn't going to be so Spartan after all.

The lounge just happened to be located right next to my departure gate, so I found myself with a courtside seat when the 747 arrived at the gate. I suddenly realized, as I gazed upon this giant plane, that I was actually going to be sitting in the upper level of the plane. Now, I'm not sure if you share my interest in the nearly bygone era of civilized air travel, but I had always fantasized about what it would be like to travel in the rarified air of first class. I remem-

ber seeing photos of the lounge chairs and bar that awaited those flying first class on a 747 as they climbed the spiral staircase to the upper deck.

My first flight, when I was barely out of my teens, was on an Eastern airline flight from Detroit to the Bahamas. Now, I had never traveled in ANY plane, let alone a plane where I was served dinner on real plates with real silverware. Yes, that flight, in the early 80s was still that period when air travel was an experience. You felt special. While I knew that times had changed I, nonetheless, was about to step into another world and live out a long-held desire to fly first class (now business class) on a 747.

It felt somewhat surreal to be directed to the upper level stairs. I climbed the stairs and entered a world separated from the rest of the plane. Even though the lounge is gone, no bar, couch or club seats, it still feels like a very intimate space with only 20 seats. I must admit that I felt like an imposter. I was sure that at any moment I might be kicked out with a stern warning that I needed to get back to my seat in coach.

The flight staff at KLM have always been and continue to be both professional and welcoming. Really a step above any other airline I have flown over the years. And, yes, this includes flying in coach. Still, the service in business class was

especially attentive. Not surprising as they had three flight attendants for twenty passengers. It felt like stepping back in time as I was served a very nice dinner served on delft china with cloth napkins and real silverware. The salt and pepper were even tiny orange "wooden" shoes. A nice touch.

My delight was mixed with a bit of melancholy as I looked about this small, cozy cabin. It was really an end of an era that I was experiencing. For all intent and purposes, the 747 is no more. No new 747s are rolling off the assembly line. Airlines around the world are phasing out these planes, replacing them with more fuel-efficient planes. I felt both honored that I had this opportunity and saddened that this bit of aviation history was going away.

After dinner, I settled into to watch the rest of my movie as we flew into the night. With most around me already asleep, I reclined my seat and reclined it into a bed. Now, I have sat in so many seats, darkness surrounding me and longed to just lie in a prone position. To actually be able to lie down on an overnight flight was a luxury I can't fully put into words.

Was the extravagance worth the extra money? Oh, yes. As we landed in Amsterdam I felt rested and ready to go. No need to miss a day to exhaustion. My advice, buy a cheap ticket and check for upgrades. It is a good way to use accumulated travel miles. With a cheapie ticket and my upgrade, I still spent less than previous economy tickets across the Atlantic. Kudos to KLM and the queen of the skies, the 747, for delivering an experience that I will long remember.

*Jay Newmarch is a marketing professional and graphic artist living in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Jay designs the Senior Perspectives publication for Senior Resources and is an avid traveller who takes every opportunity to visit different corners of the world.*



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# Do you recognize any of these people?

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BY  
DELICIA  
EKLUND

Hundreds of vintage photos are donated to The Muskegon County Genealogical Society (MCGS) that have limited, if any, information available. This month we have a fun one! I love their expressions and the way they are being playful with the photo. We don't see that often in older photos! Do you know any of them? Do you know how to get me to them? Are you one of them? We would love to locate someone from the family and get the picture back to them! If you know them,

please give me a call and let me know!

Senior Resources of West Michigan has partnered with MCGS to assist in identifying these photos. This is where you come in. Future editions of the Senior Perspectives will feature photos of individuals, families and places from the Muskegon and surrounding areas. We try to find families who have links to Muskegon.



I will give you the information that I received while gathering the photos from MCGS. If you can help to identify any of these individuals or know the family, please contact, or have them contact: MCGS Pictures, C/O HPL-Torrent House, Local History & Genealogy Dept. 315 W. Webster Ave Muskegon, MI 49440. Email us [1972mcgs@gmail.com](mailto:1972mcgs@gmail.com)

*Delicia is a Quality Service Coordinator with Senior Resources. She grew-up in Norton Shores and loves everything history! She spends much time re-searching her own family, as well as local history. She loves spending time with her husband Andy, daughter Rowyn and son Alan. You can contact her at [deklund@seniorresourceswmi.org](mailto:deklund@seniorresourceswmi.org) or 231-683-2630 or 231-683-2630.*

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

## Answers for Word Search , Crossword Puzzle and Suduko on Pages 24 & 25

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

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

**Boggle Answers:**

FIG KIWI PLUM LIME LEMON  
 GUAVA MANGO ORANGE

**Jumble Answers:**

PRIZE AGAIN TUMBLE NEEDLE

**Answer:**

He tried to build a working teleporter,  
 but his plans never - MATERIALIZED



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