

# The Beacon

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VOL. 34, NO. 8

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AUGUST 2022

## Pianist not held back by stroke

By Stuart Rosenthal

Classical pianist, teacher and composer Haskell Small has an impish sense of humor. Visitors to his home in northwest D.C. may find what appears to be a small ice cream cone melting atop his piano's keys, dripping off onto the floor. It's a plastic party trick, but it frequently fools people.

That sense of humor helped keep Small going through arduous physical therapy after a stroke 18 months ago nearly paralyzed his entire left side.

Small, 74, credits his wife, Betsy, with saving his life that fateful day by calling 911 almost immediately after he told her, "Something is wrong." Later in intensive care, when he realized he had suffered a stroke, he told her, "My life is over."

But through the course of painful daily physical therapy in two rehabilitation hospitals, his irrepressible sense of humor bubbled back up. He and his PT began to refer to his left hand and left leg by pet names ("Herb" and "Pete," respectively), lightening the mood as he worked to regain use of them.

Later, his creative energies led him to channel the emotional experience into a new composition he named, "Diary of a Stroke: The Adventures of Herb and Pete."

### Rock and roll days

Music has been part of Small's life since he was very young. Somewhat surprisingly for a classical musician, however, his school years were spent playing and composing jazz and rock 'n' roll.

He attended Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie Mellon) to major in electrical engineering. But it was the 1960s, and he soon dropped out and went to San Francisco in hopes of becoming a rock star.

When that didn't pan out, and he tired of



After a stroke that paralyzed his left side, pianist Haskell Small began transcribing classical piano works for just the right hand so he could continue to perform. After months of physical therapy, he's now able to play once again with both hands in concerts he calls his "celebration of healing."

the lifestyle, he enrolled in the San Francisco Conservatory of Music to study classical piano. His mother, a pianist herself, had taught him to play in his youth, but he wanted to improve.

He now says one of his teachers in San Francisco, the late Robert Sheldon, changed his life by opening his eyes to the wonders of classical music. After a year or

so, Small returned to Carnegie and completed a degree in music, studying both performance and composition.

Over the years, Small developed his style as a composer while building up a reputation as a fine performer and teacher. For many years, he chaired the piano department at

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# Musings about nature

I was having a conversation the other day about all the rain we've had this summer and, in response to another person's complaints, I noted how much easier it was for me now than during the summertime drought a few years back, when we had to water our trees with a hose every evening and got a shocking water bill.

I am so impressed how efficiently a short thunderstorm can quickly water an entire neighborhood, all at no charge!

But then our lawn care person told me that our trees and lawns have had more than enough water lately, and the additional rain was "not doing them any good."

It doesn't seem to have hurt the kudzu growing on most of our rear neighbor's trees, however. That plant has flourished so well that it has managed to reach and start to envelop one of our oak trees nearest the back fence.

I find that a powerful example of the plant

world's will to live (along with the wide variety of weeds that invariably fill any blank spots in our front flower beds over a matter of days following a weeding). Opportunists just won't be deterred.

Of course, there are many reasons people compare human beings to plants; among them is the effect of injury and aging.

The other night during dinner, my wife and I heard a loud crash and turned our heads to the window to see a limb from another of our oak trees had fallen into a different neighbor's yard, crashing through our vinyl fence on the way. Fortunately, no person (and no other object, living or otherwise) was harmed.

We were later told that last winter's ice storms appeared to have weakened that branch (and others, perhaps?), leading to the eventual damage. And that was one of our healthier trees, at least as far as we know.

My wife and I have found Mother Na-



## FROM THE PUBLISHER

By Stuart P. Rosenthal

# The Beacon

IN FOCUS FOR PEOPLE OVER 50

The Beacon is a monthly newspaper dedicated to inform, serve, and entertain the citizens of the Greater Washington DC area, and is privately owned. Other editions serve Greater Baltimore and Howard County, Md. Readership exceeds 400,000.

Subscriptions are available via first-class mail (\$36) or third-class mail (\$12), prepaid with order. D.C. and Maryland residents: add 6 percent for sales tax. Send subscription order to the office listed below.

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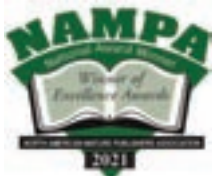
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**Submissions:** The Beacon welcomes reader contributions. Deadline for editorial is the 10th of the month preceding the month of publication. Deadline for ads is the 15th of the month preceding the month of publication. See page 47 for classified advertising details. Please mail or email all submissions.

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ture's backyard gifts to be bountiful, but sometimes costly. We have been nursing another oak through many years of something called bacterial leaf scorch disease as well as chestnut borers and ambrosia beetles.

We're talking a tree more than 75 feet tall (and probably as many years old), and it's being undermined by bugs you can hardly see.

Towards the opposite end of the size scale, I have been privileged to see, and be impressed by, other vignettes of tiny nature in recent weeks.

I was walking slowly by some low trees when I saw something that stopped me in my tracks. A thin, squiggly green worm maybe half an inch long appeared to be suspended in space right at my eye level on the side of the trail. It was clearly in some kind of distress, as it was squinching up and straightening out over and over again.

At first, I thought it might be caught somehow in a spider web that I couldn't see. But as I looked more closely, I realized the little fella was apparently climbing up a thread he himself had spun, which seemed to be attached to a limb a couple of feet above him.

My assumption was that he (she?) had spun a thread to lower itself from a higher branch to what it hoped was a lower one or perhaps the ground, but when it had reached nothing solid after a long descent, decided to climb back up its own ladder to where it started.

I hung around for the next 15 minutes or so, watching him do exactly that. When

some young people came walking by, I pointed out the scene to them and they also ogled for awhile at the intense effort and magical appearance of the suspended worm.

Turns out, these are apparently fairly common silk-spinning worms, "oak leafrollers," that feed on leaves and eventually spin cocoons and turn into moths.

This next observation may be something you've noticed too. After one of those summer downpours followed by the sun coming out, take a stroll along a forest path or maybe just look closely at some of the plants and trees in your yard or neighborhood.

Water droplets collect on the waterproof surface of many leaves, and when the sun hits them just right, there appear to be diamonds galore sparkling everywhere.

Well, maybe diamonds are the wrong analogy, as the drops are round or oval and totally smooth. But they shine and glitter and refract multicolored light just like the most impressive jewels.

On a recent occasion, I pointed this phenomenon out to some youngsters, and one of them blew on the leaves as hard as she could, spraying diamond-water droplets everywhere and giggling uncontrollably.

I imagined Mother Nature was looking down, smiling back at her.

*If you enjoy such musings about nature, I invite you to share some of yours by sending us a letter to the editor. See box below.*

## Letters to the editor

*Readers are encouraged to share their opinion on any matter addressed in the Beacon as well as on political and social issues of the day.*

*Mail your Letter to the Editor to The Beacon, P.O. Box 2227,*

*Silver Spring, MD 20915, or email to [info@thebeaconnewspapers.com](mailto:info@thebeaconnewspapers.com).*

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**Dear Editor:**

I heartily endorse writing your memoir, which Margaret Foster described on the cover of the June Beacon.

I've worked with more than a dozen seniors on their memoirs, and I'd suggest when writing your memoir that you think of three to five specific episodes of your life and consider what life lessons they taught you. In other words, what are the themes of your life?

If you can identify these themes, then your writing becomes more focused and interesting.

**Alice Heiserman**  
Via email

**Dear Editor:**

I enjoyed your cover story in July on the Senior Olympians.

I've been playing table tennis for 71 years. I won gold medals at four consecutive Maryland Senior Olympics in table tennis, and won a gold medal at the National Senior Games in Ft. Lauderdale in

May in men's singles 80-84 table tennis.

**Stuart Goldberg**  
Silver Spring, MD

**Dear Editor:**

I have a comment in response to the following [edited] report from Montgomery County's Office of Consumer Protection (OCP):

OCP has been receiving calls and email messages from homeowners who are concerned about the alleged ease with which a crook can file a "quitclaim deed" in the Circuit Court Land Records to change the ownership of a consumer's house and property.

These predatory advertisements [from companies that claim to protect homes from being stolen in this way] seek to capture customers through fear and missing information, making consumers believe that they will be subjected to financial harm if they do not purchase their services...In fact, house stealing by filing fraudulent quitclaim deeds

See **LETTERS TO EDITOR**, page 45



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# Fitness & Health

## LIGHTS OUT

For better sleep, filter out blue light from screens and smartphones

## BEDTIME SNACKS

Foods like oatmeal, rice and bananas contain melatonin for deeper sleep

## SOUPED-UP SHOTS

The CDC now recommends stronger flu shots for people over 65

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## Is once-daily aspirin still recommended?

Dear Savvy Senior,

I've been taking daily aspirin for almost 20 years now because I have a family history of heart disease. But I recently read that using aspirin is not recommended anymore. What can you tell me about this change in philosophy?

—Confused Aspirin User

Dear Confused,

There's no doubt that taking low-dose daily aspirin is beneficial to most people who've had a heart attack or stroke. But if you don't have heart disease, should you take it as a preventative measure?

The answer for most people is probably not, according to new guidelines from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), a widely respected independent panel that develops recommendations on preventive healthcare.

Here's what you should know:

### New guidelines

For years, aspirin has been a go-to pill Americans use to help ward off cardiovascular disease because of its blood thinning

capability. But like most medicines, it can cause serious side effects.

Aspirin irritates the stomach lining and can cause bleeding in the stomach, intestines and brain, which can be life-threatening. And the risk of bleeding increases with age.

About one-third of Americans age 40 and older, and more than 45 percent of people over age 70 — who don't have cardiovascular disease — already take a daily aspirin to help prevent cardiovascular disease because it's been recommended for decades by many different health experts.

But in the past few years, new research has emerged showing that for many people without diagnosed heart disease, the risk of bleeding may outweigh the benefits of taking a daily aspirin.

This research, along with the advent of other effective therapies in preventing heart attacks and strokes that don't cause bleeding — better blood pressure drugs and statins for lowering cholesterol — has narrowed the role aspirin plays.

Here's a breakdown of the updated USPSTF guidelines of who should — and shouldn't — take a daily aspirin, and for

those who should, how to take it safely.

### Who should take it?

There are two categories of people who can still benefit from using aspirin.

First, people with established cardiovascular disease, especially those who have already had a heart attack or stroke: There's strong evidence that taking a daily low-dose aspirin significantly reduces the risk of a second cardiovascular event.

Second, adults ages 40 to 59 with a 10 percent or higher risk for a cardiovascular disease over the next decade: They may see a small benefit to daily aspirin, but it should be an individual decision and discussed with your doctor.

### Who should skip it?

People who are 60 and older — without established cardiovascular disease — who do not currently take a daily aspirin to prevent heart disease should not start now.

This is particularly true for people with a history of bleeding, say from ulcers or aneurysms, or those taking medications such as blood thinners, steroids, or anti-in-

flammatories such as ibuprofen or naproxen.

If they already take a daily aspirin now, they should ask a doctor about how to proceed, because there may be a serious risk to suddenly stopping.

### Ask your doctor

The best approach is to talk to your doctor about the potential risks and benefits of aspirin specifically for you.

Because the risk of bleeding rises with dosage, if aspirin is recommended, take the lowest possible amount, which for most people is an 81 mg. baby aspirin. And if you experience any stomach pain, talk to your doctor.

You should also know that in 2016 the USPSTF suggested that daily aspirin use could also help lower the risk of colorectal cancer along with cardiovascular disease. But the group now says there's not enough evidence to support that claim.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit [SavvySenior.org](http://SavvySenior.org). Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of *The Savvy Senior book*.

## Beware of heat exhaustion and heat stroke

By Nancy J. Schaaf, RN

In all weather conditions, the body works to maintain a normal temperature ranging from 97 to 99 degrees. When temperatures are extreme, like on a scorching summer day, it can be more difficult for our body to maintain its ideal temperature.

Extreme sweltering heat can be hazardous to our health. One way the human body can typically regulate its temperature is through sweating.

Our bodies have nearly four million sweat glands. The hypothalamus controls our body temperature by regulating sweat output and blood flow to the skin.

When it is hot, our body sweats to keep cool. Perspiration comes to the surface of our skin, and as it evaporates, we begin to feel cooler.

When it is humid, it is more difficult for the sweat on the surface of our skin to evaporate because the air is already saturated with moisture. That explains why people often say it is not the heat but the humidity that makes it unbearable to be

outside on a hot day, though both play a role in our body's overheating.

Continued sweating eventually leads to dehydration. However, more severe health risks are heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which can escalate rapidly, leading to delirium, organ damage and even death. According to the National Safety Council injury facts, in 2019, 884 people died, and 2,061 were injured in the U.S. from exposure to excessive heat.

Anyone can suffer from heat-related illness, but some people are at greater risk than others, including children, older adults, those working or exercising outside, and those with pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes.

### Signs of heat exhaustion

Heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses excess water and salt, usually due to sweating. The American Red Cross advises that the warning signs can vary among individuals. Still, common symptoms of heat exhaustion include dizziness, nausea,

vomiting, fatigue, heavy sweating, muscle cramps, rapid heart rate and headache.

To treat heat exhaustion, move to a cool location, drink lots of water, and use cool compresses. Heat exhaustion can evolve into heatstroke, so treat this condition quickly.

### Signs of heat stroke

Life-threatening heatstroke occurs when

our body temperature reaches at least 103 degrees. At this temperature, our body loses the ability to regulate temperature.

According to the CDC, signs of heatstroke include an absence of sweating, rapid pulse, difficulty breathing, vomiting, flushed skin, throbbing headache, mental

See **HEAT EXHAUSTION**, page 5

## Hot weather safety tips from the CDC

—Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible.

—Don't rely on a fan as your primary cooling source when it's sweltering outside.

—Drink more water than usual, and don't wait until you are thirsty to drink.

—Don't use the stove or oven for cooking; it will make you and your house hotter.

—Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.

—Take cool showers or baths to cool down.

—Don't engage in very strenuous activities and get plenty of rest.

—Check on a friend, neighbor or family member, especially the elderly, and have someone check on you.

# Heat exhaustion

From page 4

confusion, seizures, and extremely high body temperature.

Immediately call 911 if someone experiences these symptoms. As with heat exhaustion, a person experiencing heat stroke needs to be moved to a cooler place and given a bath of cool compresses until help arrives.

Knowing the symptoms and the proper response to these illnesses can save a

life. Become familiar with the signs and symptoms of heat-related conditions, especially if caring for children, the elderly or pets.

If you notice symptoms of heat-related illness, act quickly to help cool the victim down. If you, or someone else, is showing signs of a heat-related illness, stop the activity immediately, find a cool place to rest, hydrate, and seek medical attention if necessary. Remember, heat stroke is a medical emergency that can be fatal if not treated promptly.

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Aug. 29

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# How blue light from screens affects sleep

By Julie Corliss

Recently, my brother mentioned he was sleeping better since he got new prescription glasses with a blue-light filter. He wears his glasses mostly for reading screens (both computer and smartphone) during the day while at work.

I was intrigued, but a little skeptical: Could daytime use of blue light-filtering glasses make a difference in how well he slept?

How, when, and why blue light affects us seemed like good questions to pose to an expert before deciding whether those glasses could help me, too.

## What is blue light?

Visible light includes a short segment of wavelengths tucked into the electromagnet-

ic radiation spectrum. Together, the wavelengths of visible light captured by our eyes are translated into white light by our brains.

Measured in nanometers (nm), visible light wavelengths range from 400 to 700 nm. Blue-light wavelengths lie between about 450 and 495 nm. And different slices of blue-light wavelengths have different effects on our bodies, including on sleep and alertness.

## How does light affect our bodies?

In addition to helping us see, light also has nonvisual effects on the body, said Dr. Steven Lockley, a neuroscientist at the Division of Sleep and Circadian Disorders at Harvard-affiliated Brigham and Women's Hospital.

The 24-hour circadian clock in the brain regulates sleep and wake cycles, hormonal

activity, eating and digesting, and other important processes within the body.

"Special photoreceptors in the eye detect light to control our circadian rhythms," he said.

These cells contain a nonvisual photopigment called melanopsin, which is most sensitive to 480 nm light at the blue-green end of the visible light spectrum. Other visual photoreceptors called cones allow us to see even shorter wavelengths of blue-violet light at around 450 nm.

## How can blue light affect sleep?

During the day, blue-enriched light is desirable, since it helps synchronize our circadian clocks to a 24-hour day. Exposure to a regular light-and-dark cycle is vital to achieve and maintain good sleep.

Stimulation from certain wavelengths of blue light helps us stay alert, whether this comes from a natural source like the sun in daytime hours, or from electronic devices that emit blue light.

But blue-light exposure in the evening — for example, binging a TV series on your laptop right before bed — will stimulate the melanopsin-containing cells and alert the brain, making it think it is daytime. That can make it harder to fall asleep and may affect the quality of your sleep.

## Can filtering blue light help?

Although a recent systematic review suggested that blue light-blocking glasses may help people with insomnia, Dr. Lockley said there's not enough detail about the studies to draw that conclusion.

Most commercially available blue light-filtering glasses, and special coatings added to prescription lenses, aren't standardized. So you have no way of knowing which wavelengths are being blocked, and whether this affects only visual function, or important nonvisual functions such as alertness and the circadian clock. Also, the timing, duration and nature of the nighttime light exposure in the summary of these studies was not clear.

If you want to block stimulating blue light that could interfere with sleep, avoid screen use as much as possible after dusk — especially within two to three hours of bedtime.

You can also try using computer software that reduces the amount of blue light emitted. Examples include Night Shift (available on Apple devices) or f.lux, a free download available for all computers and related devices.

## Take breaks from screens

To help reduce eye strain, a common

See **BLUE LIGHT**, page 9



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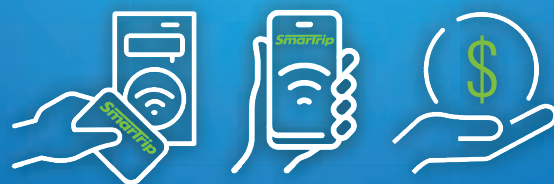
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# Natural melatonin sources may help sleep

By Suzy Cohen

When night falls and you feel the urge to sleep, it's because your pineal gland has just secreted a tiny amount of melatonin. After about age 50, the amount starts to slowly decline, which explains the frequent bouts of insomnia in older adults.

Did you know that melatonin is not just a human thing? It's found in the plant kingdom, too. Just like humans and animals, plants respond to light and dark cycles termed the "photoperiod." They make melatonin so it will act as an antioxidant in response to harsh environments.

Perhaps this is its most important role in your body, too. There are hundreds of studies affirming anti-cancer activity of melatonin, so we know it is protective of "harsh environments," even in the human body.

Melatonin not only helps induce sleep; it also regulates our circadian rhythm, general mood, our body temperature and even healthy bone metabolism. There is an impact on reproductive systems, immune function and vision.

Natural melatonin is not just made in humans and in plants. It is ubiquitously found in birds, fish, reptiles and some bacteria. I've been so fascinated with this since my garden is in full bloom that I decided to delve into the plant kingdom more.

## Plants containing melatonin

**Skullcap (*Scutellaria bicalensis*).** Sometimes also called Chinese Skullcap (*Huang-qin*), this plant has well-documented anxiolytic and sedative properties. That's why people take dietary supplements of it. The compound acts as a natural antiviral against certain pathogens. It makes people sleepy if taken in supplement form.

**Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*).** Extracts of feverfew help headaches, as does melatonin in people who are deficient. In 1997, The Lancet published a piece entitled "Melatonin in Feverfew and a Few Other Medicinal Plants."

Feverfew contains parthenolide, which provides help for some people with stiff muscles, asthma, tinnitus, psoriasis and

nausea. However, pregnant women are often warned to avoid this supplement.

**St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*).** Extracts are used for mild to moderate depression or anxiety. The Lancet refers to this plant as an "herbal tranquilizer," and that is partially due to the melatonin content.

There are teas of this herb you can drink. Topical oils and creams containing St. John's wort help with all kinds of skin problems.

## Common foods with melatonin

There are several foods that contain natural melatonin or spark more production of your own. They include oatmeal, rice, wheat/barley, tart cherries, Goji berries, bananas and grapes.

One note about drinking wine or alcohol: Drinking fair amounts of alcohol will negate the effect of melatonin. In other words, if you drink alcohol, you're making it harder for melatonin to do its job.

Another warning: taking excessive amounts of melatonin could lead to fatigue, stomach ache, drowsiness, low blood pressure, and mood changes like confusion or irritability.

For a longer, more comprehensive version of this article, please visit [suzycohen.com](http://suzycohen.com).

*This information is opinion only. It is not intended to treat, cure or diagnose your condition. Consult with your doctor before using any new drug or supplement.*

*Suzy Cohen is a registered pharmacist and author of The 24-Hour Pharmacist and Real Solutions from Head to Toe.*

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# Prostate cancer screening after age 70

By Howard LeWine, M.D.

**Q: I just celebrated my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday and am due for my yearly doctor visit. How does a man decide whether to continue PSA testing for prostate cancer?**

**A:** While some guidelines suggest stopping prostate cancer screening after age 70, the decision to continue depends on your general health and life expectancy.

The reason: Most prostate cancers are low-grade and will not shorten a man's life or diminish his quality of life. On the other hand, diagnosing higher-grade cancer at an earlier stage could lead to treatment to keep the cancer from spreading.

In the past, a man with a high or rising PSA level would have to choose between having an immediate prostate biopsy (to locate any cancer and assess its severity) or living with some uncertainty.

Today, other tests can help predict the presence of cancer, especially cancer that is more likely to spread. Examples include MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), specific subtypes of PSA blood tests, and urine testing for specific genetic markers.

For men who do opt for prostate cancer screening but may not want immediate treatment even if cancer is likely, the two main strategies are watchful waiting or active surveillance.

## Waiting vs. surveillance

Watchful waiting either before or after a biopsy means you don't get regular PSA tests or other monitoring. Only if symptoms occur would you have further diagnostic testing to determine whether and how to treat the symptoms.

An active surveillance strategy requires a prostate biopsy first to identify the cancer's size and probability of spreading.

High-grade and many intermediate-

grade prostate cancers don't qualify for active surveillance because treatment usually begins right away. However, this strategy is an option for men who would be comfortable with close monitoring for low-grade cancer.

Active surveillance involves more frequent PSA testing (to look for any rise in the level over time) and likely periodic prostate biopsies. Your doctor might order an MRI or a urine test for genetic markers to determine when a repeat biopsy is needed. If and when evidence arises that the cancer has become more active, then treatment would begin.

Studies comparing men with low-grade prostate cancer who choose active surveillance rather than immediate surgery or radiation show similar outcomes and life expectancy.

By choosing active surveillance, a man

can delay or even avoid treatment side effects, such as erectile dysfunction and incontinence. The downside is the small risk of delaying treatment of a cancer that grows faster than expected.

Howard LeWine, M.D., is an internist at

Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and assistant professor at Harvard Medical School. For additional consumer health information, visit [health.harvard.edu](http://health.harvard.edu).

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## Blue light

From page 6

concern for people who use screens often, the American Academy of Ophthalmology advises taking regular breaks using the 20-20-20 rule. Every 20 minutes, look away from your screen at an object about 20 feet away for about 20 seconds.

You should also get as much daylight exposure as possible in between screen use to provide a strong circadian and alerting stimulus, particularly if you spend most of your time indoors.

As for my brother, he doesn't watch much television and tends to prefer reading print books in the evenings. He agreed that he might be experiencing a placebo effect from the blue-light filter on his new glasses — or simply that he is sleeping better now that he has the correct prescription, and therefore less eye strain.

Julie Corliss is executive editor of Harvard Heart Letter.

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# Learn your hunger cues to limit cravings

By Steve Calechman

The challenge with resisting food is, well, the food. It tastes good. It looks good. It smells really good, and when we see everyone eating pizza, ice cream and chips, we want in.

Then we eat too much and swear that we'll do better, but when the next time comes...

We know that what we're eating isn't healthy, but no matter how hard we try, resisting feels impossible. It helps to realize that saying no involves more than trying harder.

"It's not about willpower," said Kathy McManus, director of the department of nutrition at Brigham and Women's Hospital. "It's about developing skill sets."

## Stress triggers hunger

It's good to start by asking why we eat

when we're not hungry. Chances are it's because we're anxious, stressed, mad, tired, sad or bored.

With these emotions perceived by the body as chronic stress, the brain releases cortisol, which can stimulate the appetite, said Dr. Lilian Cheung, a lecturer at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health's department of nutrition. As a result, we may turn to food.

Rarely is it cauliflower. The science of cravings is complex, but we're often seeking salt, fat and/or sugar. These hyper-palatable foods stimulate the release of dopamine, which can initially make us feel good and keep us wanting more, but "reaching for foods that comfort us may become habitual," she said.

Adding to the challenge? These snacks are seemingly everywhere, in easy-to-carry, easy-to-eat containers and bags — in

aisles, on racks and at the checkout line. That's not an accident, Cheung said: Companies pay a lot of money to place their craveable products within reach.

Eating well starts with awareness. McManus suggests tracking your food for three days, paying attention to time, quantity, what was happening before you ate, and how you felt afterwards.

You'll notice patterns and discover your personal cues. It could be that you tend to eat when you see others eat, or when a movie starts you need popcorn, or when you're sitting in traffic you grab a snack. Once you see the vulnerable points, you can start shoring them up, she said.

## Be mindful when eating

Too often people eat while watching television, doing work, talking on the phone. Multitasking causes you to drift, and then

it's "gobble, gobble, gobble," Cheung said. You have little chance to realize that you're full, and end up eating more.

Instead, you want to make eating as attractive as possible. Designate a space. Use a good plate and placemat. Sit down — standing equals speed — and savor the meal.

If you're with others, enjoy the company. It can be just 15 minutes, but everything slows down and you'll feel more satisfied. "We need to eat with all of our senses," she said.

And that goes for all food. There's no need to eliminate the things that taste good but aren't the healthiest.

Things like ice cream and cake are often connected to events worth celebrating. When you know they're coming up, you can budget in those foods, then have a reasonable portion and "really enjoy eating each bite," Cheung said.

Use smaller utensils and let the treats sit on your tongue, because when you fully immerse yourself in the experience, a smaller portion is usually enough.

## Slowly create new habits

Cheung adds that before you make any food decision, take a deep breath, coupled with your own personal prompt, such as, "Do I really want that?" or "How many treadmill minutes will that be?" That pause prevents you from being swept away and brings you back to your plan, allowing you to make your decision.

But it doesn't always work, and it's difficult to be constantly aware. McManus said that's all right. Perfection is never the goal, especially at the beginning. You're trying to end an old habit and create a new one. "It's a slow process," she said.

Cheung suggested that at first, when you resist one of your weaknesses, praise yourself. The next month, resist a few more, and share your successes with your family, letting them know what you're trying to do and that your intent is to stay healthy for them.

"It's an ongoing practice," she said. "You will build up your degree of mindfulness, and over time you'll see a major difference."

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# Treatment varies for rotator cuff injuries

By Christopher Camp, M.D.

Dear Mayo Clinic:

I have been experiencing pain in my right shoulder every time I hit the tennis court, and when I try to lift objects at home. How do I know if I tore my rotator cuff? What are the options for treatment, and can I get back to playing?

A: People can injure their rotator cuff in several ways. Accordingly, it can be hard to know if that is the primary source of your shoulder problems.

For some people, a distinct injury or accident results in a rotator cuff tear. For others, it could be a slow, gradual increase in pain over time.

For those with distinct injuries, these

usually occur when trying to lift heavy objects overhead or lifting things away from the body. You also can injure your rotator cuff during traumatic falls or accidents.

### Common symptoms

Generally speaking, rotator cuff problems tend to produce three main symptoms: shoulder pain, decreased shoulder motion and weakness. Although most patients will have some level of each of these symptoms, not everyone with a rotator cuff tear will have all three symptoms.

In terms of the pain, if you have a rotator cuff injury, you typically have pain over the lateral, or outside, portion of the shoulder, around the deltoid muscle. This pain generally worsens when you try to lift your arm

overhead or lift objects away from your body.

Other injuries around the shoulder can result in similar symptoms. Some of the more common injuries are biceps tendinitis, acromioclavicular joint injuries, or arthritis.

Understanding where your pain is originating from can help differentiate these problems from pain caused by your rotator cuff. If you have pain on the lateral, or outside, part of your shoulder with decreased range of motion and difficulty lifting objects, you may have a rotator cuff injury. Oftentimes, this can be some mild tendinitis that will improve with a few days of rest.

Talk to your healthcare provider. He or she can typically diagnose a rotator cuff tear based on your symptoms, a physical exam and possibly imaging, such as X-rays and an MRI.

### When is surgery called for?

When I diagnose a patient with a rotator cuff injury, the most common question I get is whether surgery is necessary.

For most patients with tendinitis, which is inflammation of the rotator cuff tendon without a complete tear, as well as pain and other symptoms, they generally improve without surgical intervention.

The most common forms of treatments for this are anti-inflammatory medications; icing the shoulder regularly; modifying your activities, including avoiding heavy lifting and overhead lifting; and physical therapy.

For patients with complete tears of the tendon, the situation is a little bit more complex. If the tear is small or the patient is relatively low risk, some patients with complete tears may still be able to avoid surgery.

The treatment plan for them would be the same options listed for tendinitis above. Although physical therapy won't

heal the small tears, it can help optimize the other muscles around the shoulder that are still intact, which allows them to compensate for the tendon with the tear.

For active patients with a complete tear of the tendon, surgery may be optimal because it offers the most predictable and successful way of restoring function.

Rotator cuff repair surgery typically is done as an outpatient procedure through a minimally invasive, or arthroscopic, approach. Using these small incisions can reduce pain and improve recovery long term.

After undergoing rotator cuff repair, the arm is kept in a sling for approximately six weeks after surgery to allow things to heal. After this time, the sling is slowly discontinued, and formal physical therapy is initiated.

The early focus of physical therapy is on restoring range of motion. This typically takes three or four months from the date of surgery. Around two or three months after surgery, gentle strengthening exercises are introduced. Then patients will progress to additional rehabilitation.

While there is significant variability, the average overall recovery time following rotator cuff repair is approximately six months. Once everything is healed, we generally allow patients to get back to all activities, as tolerated.

However, it is a good idea to avoid any unnecessary overhead lifting over the long term. This reduces the risk of having recurrent problems and injuries down the road.

*Mayo Clinic Q & A is an educational resource and doesn't replace regular medical care. E-mail a question to MayoClinicQ&A@mayo.edu. For more information, visit mayoclinic.org.*

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# Pros and cons of artificial sweeteners

By Howard LeWine, M.D.

**Q: I hear so much about the evils of sugar. Are artificial sweeteners a good alternative, especially to help me lose weight?**

**A:** While they are not magic bullets, smart use of non-nutritive sweeteners could help you reduce added sugars in your diet, therefore lowering the number of calories you eat. Reducing calories could help you attain and maintain a healthy body weight.

In fact, the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and American Heart Association (AHA) have given a cautious nod to the use of artificial sweeteners in place of sugar to combat obesity and diabetes.

The FDA has approved six artificial sweeteners: saccharin, acesulfame, aspartame, neotame, sucralose and advantame. It has also approved one natural low-calorie sweetener, stevia.

Research looking into the potential health effects of artificial sweeteners has offered up a mixed bag. Some studies have actually linked these products to higher rates of weight gain and diabetes. But oth-

ers have found an association with weight loss and lower body mass index, and no adverse health effects.

Why might artificial sweeteners potentially cause weight gain instead of weight loss? These products change the way we taste food. Non-nutritive sweeteners are far more potent than table sugar and high-fructose corn syrup. A miniscule amount produces a sweet taste comparable to that of sugar, without comparable calories.

Artificial sweeteners are extremely sweet — hundreds to thousands of times sweeter than table sugar. So, people who habitually consume them may end up desensitized to sweetness.

Healthful, satiating foods that are less sweet, such as fruits and vegetables, may become unappetizing by comparison. As a result, the overall quality of the diet may decline. The calories removed from the diet by the sugar-for-sweetener swap may sneak back in, in the form of refined carbohydrates and low-quality fats.

In other words, use of artificial sweeteners can make you shun healthy, filling and highly nutritious foods, while consuming

more artificially flavored foods with less nutritional value.

Artificial sweeteners may play another trick too. Research suggests that they may prevent us from associating sweetness with caloric intake. As a result, we may crave more sweets, tend to choose sweet food over nutritious food, and gain weight.

Even with FDA approval of artificial sweeteners, there remains some doubt about the long-term safety of daily high doses of these products.

Studies leading to FDA approval have ruled out cancer risk, for the most part. However, those studies were done using smaller amounts of diet soda than the 24 ounces a day consumed by many people who drink diet soda.

Personally, I have taken a moderate approach. I use an artificial sweetener in my daily morning coffee, and try to limit simple sugars throughout the rest of the day.

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Losing a sense of connection and community can affect how people see the world, may cause serious mental and health conditions, and even make it very difficult to do everyday tasks.

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Volunteering increases social connection, provides a sense of purpose, and is good for your brain health; it decreases social isolation and may even help with depression. Despite the continued challenges presented by COVID-19, volunteers throughout Montgomery County are finding safe ways to give back to the community, be it in-person or virtual.

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# Getting therapy when cost is a barrier

By Sara Rathner

The race to find mental health treatment can feel like a marathon when you may not have the energy or ability to even make it to the starting line. You may be faced with limited affordable options and a lack of available therapists.

“Prior to the pandemic, we had an inadequate workforce to meet the mental health demand of the country,” said Vaile Wright, who has a doctorate in counseling psychology and is the senior director of healthcare innovation at the American Psychological Association. “And that has only been exacerbated by the pandemic.”

According to the APA’s 2021 COVID-19 Practitioner Survey, 43% of psychologists reported an increase in overall number of patients compared with 2020. At the same time, 41% of psychologists said they couldn’t keep up with demand and 46% felt burned out.

Thankfully, there are multiple ways to access care at a variety of price points, including telehealth options.

## Available resources

Your employer may offer an employee assistance program, or EAP, which can connect you, your spouse or partner and your children with various services including short-term counseling. Review your benefits to see what your EAP provides, if you have one.

And don’t forget primary care physicians and OB-GYNs. Annual preventative care visits, which are free with insurance, are an opportunity to talk about your mental health.

Your doctor might prescribe medication or refer you to other practitioners. Dr. Carlene MacMillan, co-chair of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Consumer Issues Committee, recommends setting aside time during your routine appointment to talk about your mental health.

“If you’re healthy mentally, physically it’s easier to take care of whatever else is going on,” she said.

## Find providers who take insurance

You can search for in-network providers through your health insurance company, but MacMillan cautions that the information there might be out of date.

Double-check with *Psychology Today* (yes, as in the magazine). Its website has a search tool you can use to find therapists, psychiatrists, treatment centers and support groups. According to MacMillan, the search results from this tool could be more up to date than some insurance databases.

Alma (at helloalma.com) and Headway (Headway.co, not .com) are two additional websites where you can search for providers who accept your health insurance.

## Ask for reduced pricing

Many therapists set aside appointment slots for patients who can’t afford the full hourly rate. Ask therapists in your area if they accept patients on a sliding scale, meaning they lower their rates based on

your income. And if you’re open to group therapy, that can cost less than seeing a therapist one-on-one.

You can also look beyond private practices. “Most places, at least cities, have community mental health centers that offer a sliding scale,” said Nance Roy, chief clinical officer at the Jed Foundation, or JED, a nonprofit with the goal of supporting and protecting mental health for teens and young adults.

Open Path is a nonprofit that can help you find affordable care if your annual household income is less than \$100,000 and you either lack health insurance or your insurance plan doesn’t offer mental health benefits.

You can join their mental health collective by paying \$59 for a lifetime membership. From there, you’ll be able to access therapy for a per-session fee of \$30 to \$60 for individual counseling, or \$30 to \$80 for couples or families.

Hospitals and universities in your area may have programs where you can see a clinician in training, who is supervised by a licensed practitioner, for a lower cost. Look for local teaching hospitals or colleges with psychology programs.

## Get help virtually

Use of telehealth expanded because of COVID-19, when privacy regulations adjusted to allow more ways for patients to communicate with medical professionals.

Even now that in-person appointments are back, virtual appointments are still an option that’s especially convenient for anyone who previously had to take off work or pay for a babysitter to attend sessions.

Mental health platforms like BetterHelp and Brightside make it possible to communicate with a therapist on a video or phone call, or through text.

## Add on some self-care

While you search for a therapist, or in between appointments, it can be helpful to incorporate mindfulness practices into your day, like meditation, breathing exercises, or even just going for a walk and observing everything around you.

“The research is clear on the value of mindfulness in terms of promoting mental health,” Roy said. “It’s not about stopping your thoughts; it’s about letting them pass.”

—AP/NerdWallet

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# Foods that can help you fight allergies

By Lori Zanteson

Summer means warming temps, longer days and beautiful new blooms. It also means heightened allergies for a growing number of people.

Whatever the allergen — pollens, pet dander, dust — symptoms like sneezing, runny nose, congestion, and itchy, watery eyes affect about one billion people worldwide. Finding relief isn't easy, but making small, simple changes to your eating habits may help ease symptoms.

Eating fewer inflammatory foods — processed foods often laden with added sugar, refined grains and preservatives — and replacing them with anti-inflammatory whole, mostly plant-based, foods can have many health benefits, including protection

against disease (allergies, too). Enjoy more of these foods to give your diet an allergy-fighting boost.

## Onions, broccoli and grapes

These foods contain the powerful plant compound quercetin, known for anti-allergic properties. This antioxidant-rich flavonoid may boost the immune system into action by inhibiting histamine release and acting as an anti-inflammatory agent.

Research supports its efficacy in reducing many causes of allergic symptoms, with no significant side effects. Plant extract of quercetin is the main ingredient of many potential anti-allergic drugs and products.

Onions are the most studied quercetin-

containing food, but this compound is also found in cruciferous vegetables, like broccoli and cabbage, along with apples, berries, citrus, grapes and wine.

## Citrus, peppers and potatoes

Choosing foods high in vitamin C can be an effective way to help reduce the severity of allergic reactions. An antioxidant and an antihistamine, vitamin C supports the immune system and protects the body's cells against damage from harmful free radicals.

Research has shown that vitamin C may decrease inflammation, swelling and other symptoms of allergic reaction. Studies show that vitamin C seems to be most effective against upper respiratory allergy

symptoms caused by allergens like pollen, mold or pet dander.

Natural vitamin C-rich foods include oranges, grapefruit, lemons, bell peppers, strawberries, Brussels sprouts and potatoes.

## Kefir, kombucha and kimchi

Probiotics — a mixture of live bacteria and/or yeast that live in the body to help keep us healthy — may also have beneficial effects on allergy symptoms. Probiotics may help stimulate the immune system to improve the body's defenses and reduce allergic inflammation.

According to a recent review of studies,

See **ALLERGIES**, page 17



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# To tamp down chronic inflammation

**Choose a healthy diet.** Individual foods have a rather small impact on body-wide inflammation, so no, eating more kale isn't likely to help much. But making sure you eat lots of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats and legumes — sometimes called an anti-inflammatory diet — may reduce inflammation and lower risk for chronic illnesses like diabetes and heart disease.

Not only can these diets help reduce inflammation on their own, but avoiding foods that increase inflammation (such as sugary drinks and highly processed foods) benefits your body, too.

**Exercise regularly.** Physical activity may help counter some types of inflammation through regulation of the immune system. For example, exercise has anti-inflammatory effects on white blood cells and chemical messengers called cytokines.

**Maintain a healthy weight.** Because excess fat in cells stimulates body-wide inflammation, avoiding excess weight is an important way to prevent fat-related inflammation.

Keeping your weight in check also reduces the risk of Type 2 diabetes, a condition that itself causes chronic inflammation.

**Manage stress.** Stress hormones contribute to chronic inflammation. Yoga, deep breathing, mindfulness practices and other forms of relaxation can help calm your nervous system.

**Do not smoke.** Toxins inhaled in cigarette smoke trigger inflammation in the airways, damage lung tissue, and increase the risk of lung cancer and other health problems.

**Try to prevent inflammatory conditions,** such as:

**Infection.** Take measures to avoid infections that may cause chronic inflam-

mation: HIV, hepatitis C and COVID-19 are examples.

**Cancer.** Get cancer screening on the schedule recommended by your doctors. For example, colonoscopy can detect and remove polyps that could later become cancerous.

**Allergies.** By avoiding triggers of asthma, eczema or allergic reactions, you can reduce the burden of inflammation in your body.

—Robert H. Shmerling, M.D. © 2022 Harvard University. Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

## Allergies

From page 16

probiotics can reduce the degree of suffering from, and the duration of, allergy symptoms without side effects that often accompany allergy medications. Probiotics are found in fermented foods like yogurt, sauerkraut, sourdough, miso, kefir, kombucha and kimchi.

### Salmon, seeds and plant oils

Omega-3 fatty acids have been studied for their association with easing allergy symptoms. Growing evidence supports the beneficial effects of omega-3s in chron-

ic inflammatory diseases, including reducing the severity of symptoms in allergic diseases.

Sources include cold water fatty fish, such as salmon, mackerel, sardines, trout

and tuna, as well as some nuts and seeds, like walnuts and flaxseed, oils made from them, and some other oils, including canola oil, soybean oil and cod liver oil.

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### BEACON BITS

#### Ongoing

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If you or someone you know needs support after the loss of a spouse, attend a free online meeting offered through Zoom on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. To register or get more information, call (202) 537-4942 or check [wpodc.org](http://wpodc.org).

#### Tuesdays

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#### Ongoing

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# Health Shorts

## Not too late to get COVID-19 boosters

With new omicron variants again driving COVID-19 hospital admissions and deaths higher in recent weeks, states and cities are rethinking their responses, and the White House is stepping up efforts to alert the public.

The highly transmissible BA.5 variant now accounts for 65% of cases, with its cousin BA.4 contributing another 16%. The variants have shown a remarkable ability to get around the protection of-

ferred by infection and vaccination.

Global trends for the two mutants have been apparent for weeks, experts said — they quickly out-compete older variants and push cases higher wherever they appear.

Yet Americans have tossed off their masks and jumped back into travel and social gatherings. And they have largely ignored booster shots, which protect against COVID-19's worst outcomes.

Last month, the White House response team called on all adults 50 and older to urgently get a booster if they haven't yet this year — and dissuaded people from waiting for the next generation of shots expected in the fall when they can roll up their sleeves and get some protection now.

Vaccinations, including booster shots

for those eligible, lower the risk of hospitalization and death — even against the latest variants.

But fewer than half of all eligible U.S. adults have gotten a single booster shot, and only about 1 in 4 Americans age 50 and older who are eligible for a second booster have received one. —AP

## 988 hotline is 911 for mental health emergencies

Quick help for suicidal thoughts and other mental health emergencies is now as easy as 9-8-8.

The United States' first nationwide three-digit mental health crisis hotline went live on July 16. It's designed to be as easy to re-

member and use as 911. But instead of a dispatcher sending police, firefighters or paramedics, 988 will connect callers with trained mental health counselors.

Dispatching paramedics for heart attacks and police for crimes makes sense — but not for psychiatric emergencies, mental health advocates say. Calls to 911 for those crises often lead to violent law enforcement encounters and trips to jail or crowded emergency rooms where suicidal people can wait days for treatment.

The 988 system will build on the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, an existing network of over 200 crisis centers nationwide staffed by counselors who answer millions of calls each year — about 2.4 million in 2020. Calls to the old lifeline, 1-800-

See **HEALTH SHORTS**, page 19

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**Aug. 26+** **HELP CLEAN UP A PARK**  
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## Health shorts

From page 18

273-8255, will still go through even with 988 in place.

The federal government has provided over \$280 million to help states create systems that will do much more, including mobile mental health crisis teams that can be sent to people's homes, and emergency mental health centers, similar to urgent care clinics that treat physical aches and pains.

Some states already have comprehensive mental health crisis systems, but others have a long way to go. And widespread shortages of mental health specialists are expected to slow their ability to expand services. —AP

## CDC panel recommends stronger flu vaccines for those 65+

Americans 65 and older should get newer, souped-up flu vaccines because regular shots don't provide them enough protection, a federal advisory panel said in June.

The panel unanimously recommended certain flu vaccines that might offer more or longer protection for seniors, whose

weakened immune systems don't respond as well to traditional shots.

Options include: Fluzone High-Dose, Fluad with an immune booster, or Flublok which is made with insect cells instead of chicken eggs.

The panel's recommendations were adopted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and became the government's guidance for U.S. doctors and their patients. This is the first time the government has stated a flu vaccine preference for older adults.

Flu shots tend to be less effective than other common vaccinations, but they have often been particularly disappointing in seniors.

Health officials say there is persuasive research indicating some of the new shots work better in older adults, especially at preventing flu-related hospitalizations. Studies are limited, though, and there's little research comparing the three new versions.

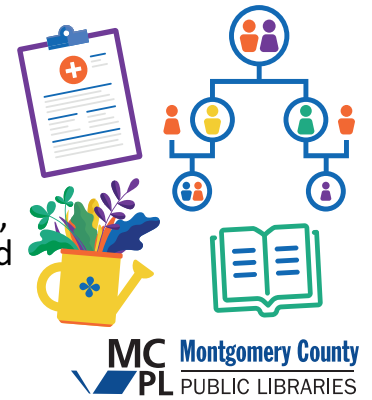
The new shots have caught on. About 80% of Medicare beneficiaries get the souped-up vaccines each year, mostly the high-dose one, officials said. The new versions can cost roughly three times more than standard flu shots, but they are covered by insurance programs.

CDC officials reported in June that the flu vaccine didn't work all that well this past winter, when most illness were caused by a flu strain that vaccines traditionally do a relatively poor job protecting against. —AP

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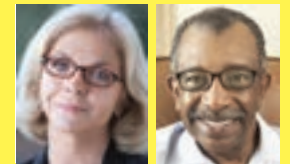
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# Distracted? Meditation improves focus

By Matthew Solan

Many, many years ago, I worked at the magazine *Yoga Journal*. Our small editorial team created thousands of stories highlighting the many uplifting qualities of the physical, mental and spiritual practice.

Ironically, it also was one of the most stressful work environments I'd seen.

Even though the magazine's topics were about calmness, attentiveness and inner growth, we dealt with the same job stresses everyone else does: tight deadlines, staff conflicts, workdays that routinely stretched into late nights.

This was why our boss stressed the anti-stress practice of meditation. From onsite classes to offsite retreats, meditation taught our busy brains how to stay "in the moment."

## Wide range of techniques

It's no secret that attention control is an essential element for time management and productivity. To stay focused on the task at hand, you can't let distractions derail your goals.

This is where practicing mindfulness comes in. Small studies suggest mindful meditation can be a valuable technique to calm a wandering mind and help a person maintain laser-like attention. In fact, just a few minutes every day can make a difference.

Meditation, by the way, is an umbrella term for a wide range of spiritual and relaxation practices. There are many styles of meditation and different ways to approach it.

Within this broad category, neuroscientists have looked at how two specific medi-

tation styles with roots in Buddhism can be used to enhance cognitive processing: focused attention (FA) meditation and open monitoring (OM) meditation.

Developing a regular practice of either one can help train your brain to increase attention, focus and concentration. Below is a look at each one.

## Focused attention meditation

This type of mindful meditation has four key elements:

- directing and sustaining attention toward a specific object or sensation,
- detecting distractions and mind-wandering,
- disengaging from distractions and shifting attention back to your focal point, and
- reframing distraction as "just a thought."

When practicing this meditation style, you keep your attention focused on a particular object or sensation, such as the sensation of air flowing in and out of your nostrils as you breathe.

To sustain this focus, you must constantly monitor the quality of your attention. If your mind begins to wander, you identify the source of the distraction, then return your attention to your focal point.

For example, if you note your attention has shifted from your breathing to a meeting scheduled for later in the day, don't let the thought linger. Instead, put all your focus back on your breathing.

How might the regular use of focused attention meditation improve your ability to pay attention? It supports three skills necessary for regulating attention:

- perceiving distraction without letting go of your object of focus,
- disengaging from distraction,

—promptly returning your attention to your focal point.

As you hone your FA meditation skills, it becomes easier to detect distractions and more quickly return to your object of focus. Eventually, maintaining concentration becomes virtually effortless.

In everyday life, this translates into an improved ability to direct your attention to information relevant to your goals, and to maintain this focus even when faced with competing input. It also helps you switch between tasks without becoming distracted.

## Open monitoring meditation

A second type of mindful meditation differs from focused attention meditation in the following ways:

- no specific object of focus,
- nonreactive observation and labeling of experience,
- detached awareness of automatic subjective interpretation of thoughts and emotions.

During this more advanced meditation practice, you allow your attention to flow from moment to moment without focusing on any particular object or sensation. The process helps you disengage from distractions and immerse yourself, instead of observing an ongoing stream of experience.

The goal of OM is to gain a clear awareness of aspects of your mental life that are usually hidden. By training your brain in this way, you can better observe and modify your thinking patterns and emotional habits. As a result, you're able to act intentionally rather than reactively.

*Matthew Solan is executive editor at Harvard Men's Health Watch.*

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# Pea protein is good non-dairy alternative

By Matthew Kadey

As the popularity of plant-based eating rises, protein sources from the plant kingdom have been flooding the food market. From hemp to *sacha inchi* to peanut, there are almost too many to keep track of.

There's one source of protein, however, that seems to have grabbed the lion's share of popularity: pea protein. It has made its way into many products, including protein powders, dairy-free versions of milk, ice cream and yogurt, chips, energy bars and veggie burgers as companies look to ramp up protein numbers to meet consumer demand for the macronutrient.

## What is pea protein?

To make pea protein, dried yellow split peas are ground into flour, which is then processed to separate the protein from the starches. Isolates go through an additional filtration step, creating a product roughly 90% protein by weight, meaning fewer carbs.

Companies have now worked out ways to give pea protein a neutral flavor profile and less grittiness, making it an attractive, relatively inexpensive addition to a range of packaged foods.

## Pros and cons

Many people are looking to increase protein intake to better maintain and build lean body mass — a key to healthier, more functional aging.

Research shows pea protein can be just as effective at increasing lean body mass as animal-based sources, such as whey, especially when paired with weight training.

Tests show pea protein has a high essential amino acid content as a percentage of its total protein. Essential amino acids are the ones you must get from your diet daily and are important building blocks of muscle protein and connective tissues.

One concern is that pea protein is not a "complete" protein, since it is low in the amino acids methionine and cysteine. But assuming you eat a varied diet with other foods that provide these amino acids, such as whole grains, it is not necessary to consume complete proteins at each meal. So pea protein's amino acid shortcoming shouldn't be something to fret about.

## May increase satiety

Some scientific investigations suggest

that consuming pea protein can bolster satiety. For people with tendencies for overeating and poor portion control, including this protein in meals and snacks could help better manage calorie intake.

This conforms with the overall evidence that protein is a more satiating macronutrient than carbs or fat. But eating whole peas may end up being more filling than isolated pea protein because they contain much higher amounts of fiber.

It's worth noting that pea protein has a very low risk of allergy or sensitivity issues, so it can be safely consumed by almost everyone. If you suffer from gout, however, pea protein contains purines, which may increase inflammation and pain.

Note that pea protein does not provide the levels of fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that you would get from whole peas, and should not be considered nutritionally equivalent.

If you're concerned about your protein intake, you can look for the types of packaged foods you normally consume that are beefed up with pea protein. Or blend pea protein powder into your smoothies.

Just remember that it is important to only consume protein-enriched packaged foods as a small part of a whole-food based balanced diet.

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# Pianist

From page 1

the Washington Conservatory of Music, where he still teaches lessons and frequently performs.

Small has always been a workaholic. A typical day for him, prior to the stroke, involved practicing for two to three hours every morning (sometimes up to eight hours a day, preparing for a concert), then teaching and composing in the afternoon.

His drive to be “the best I can be” came in handy (no pun intended) when the daily task in front of him was to get his reluctant left hand to move after the stroke.

In fact, he now says he was “essentially saved by my determination to play again somehow...I was determined not to accept what [the doctors] wanted to tell me.”

## Created his own exercises

While working assiduously on his left

hand, Small certainly didn't ignore his right one. In fact, during his recuperation, he wrote a number of new transcriptions of classical piano works for the right hand only.

Probably because pianists have always found their left hand to be less challenged (and hence, less dexterous) than their right one, there exists a large corpus of music written exclusively for the left hand.

Bach, Brahms, Ravel and Bartok are among the composers who produced such works, and there are also transcriptions of many two-handed pieces into left-hand-only works.

But Small had the opposite problem: His left hand wasn't usable, so he needed right-hand-only music. Since that didn't exist, he set out to create such music himself. He transcribed piano works by Schubert and Scarlatti and even Bach's “6<sup>th</sup> Suite for Cello” for the right hand.

Interestingly, years ago, Small had stud-

ied for some time with the famous pianist and pedagogue Leon Fleischer. Due to a neurological condition, Fleischer lost the ability to play with his right hand for more than 30 years. (He later regained it.)

During those years, Fleischer became known for his performances of left-hand repertoire. Small said his experience studying with Fleischer gave him hope during his own recovery and drove him to keep working to regain the use of his left hand.

But Small also said, “I had no interest in becoming known as a right-hand pianist!”

## Many helped him through it

Small describes his wife Betsy as a god-send (as well as multi-talented musician and artist). He says he couldn't have gotten through this without her. The two met at Carnegie in an elective harmony class. As Small says with a smile, “I guess we struck a chord.”

He also credits Rachel, one of his two grown daughters, with helping him — during the difficult days in the rehab hospital — locate and speak with other pianists who had suffered strokes.

Getting to know others “who had been through this” inspired him. Some fully recovered, and others did not. But even the latter didn't give up or drop their careers.

Learning about the “creative ways people can find to continue doing what they love” inspired Small, he said, and gave him strength to carry on.

While others in his situation might have benefited from psychological counseling, Small didn't feel the need for it. “I kept my focus and reminded myself how to get through this...slow, with patience, keep working.”

## Returning to the stage

While he has always loved playing music for its own sake, Small says “playing the piano is a performance art. It doesn't exist

in its fullest sense without a live audience.”

During the pandemic he has found performing over Zoom to be “very weird.” Though he can read the audience's comments in the chat box afterward, it's strange not hearing any reaction as you play.

So, this summer, Small scheduled several live performances around the D.C. metro area, highlighting some of the right-hand works he transcribed or composed.

In July, he began adding in some two-hand music that he has been able to re-master.

Small feels the challenges he has gone through (and continues to face) have made him appreciate time in general and his dedicated work ethic even more than before.

In addition, his efforts to transcribe two-handed pieces to right-handed versions gave him a much better understanding and insight into the works.

Furthermore, he believes his dogged efforts to regain use of his left hand “is probably going to make my left hand better than it was before.”

One of the ways he plans to prove this to himself is by setting the goal of learning and performing the massive, nearly hour-long “Diabelli Variations” sometime in the coming year. The work by Beethoven consists of 33 variations on a waltz by Anton Diabelli, and performing the monumental work has been a lifelong wish for Small.

He knows he still has some way to go to perform at his previous level. But at the same time, he is eager to get back to public appearances.

While part of him is saying to himself, “To hell with being a cripple,” he prefers to label his comeback concerts a “Celebration of Healing.” He wants his audiences to know where he's coming from and what he's endured.

Indeed, knowing how far he's come is as inspiring as the music he performs.

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# Health Studies

## INFORMATION ON AREA CLINICAL TRIALS

# Study of potential Alzheimer's treatment

By Margaret Foster

Alzheimer's disease starts with mild memory loss. What if there was a pill to prevent the disease from getting worse?

Studies of an investigational drug are underway to see if it may be effective in slowing the progression of Alzheimer's disease in people who carry two copies of a certain gene (APOE/4) that increases the risk of developing it and other dementias.

While one in four people carries one copy of the gene, only 2 to 3% of the population carries two, and hence are at greatest risk.

Results in a small, ongoing phase II trial of the drug in early Alzheimer's patients with two copies of the gene showed "significant improvement" on memory tests after six months, according to Alzheon, a Massachusetts-based company developing it and a number of potential drugs for Alzheimer's.

Phase three clinical trials of the drug,

named ALZ-801, are getting underway. These constitute the final step before the FDA reviews the drug for possible approval. The company's nationwide study is called ApolloE4.

### Volunteers being sought

In our area, 20 people can participate in the study via Re:Cognition Health — a clinic in Fairfax, Virginia.

Anyone age 50 to 80 with a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment (memory loss) is eligible to volunteer. Free genetic testing and testing for Alzheimer's will be done, and participants will be reimbursed for their time.

Participating is also an opportunity to help future Alzheimer's patients, pointed out Monica Bland, operations manager at Re:Cognition Health. "They would be contributing to science and helping people in the future," Bland said.

The 18-month, randomized, double-blind study requires nine in-person visits to Re:Cognition Health. Participants will also undergo three MRIs or CT scans (their choice).

Half of participants will receive the study drug, and the other half will receive a placebo. Each will take one pill in the morning and one in the evening.

The drug has already been proven safe in phase 1 trials. It has been well tolerated in studies so far when taken twice a day with food. Alzheon is hopeful the treat-

ment will eventually save millions from suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Currently there are no approved drugs that stop or prevent the clinical decline typical of Alzheimer's disease.

"Our end goal is to help patients [by providing] other options for Alzheimer's disease medications, because there is not much out there," Bland said. "The FDA-approved drugs aren't doing much."

For more information or to volunteer to participate in the ApolloE4 study, call (703) 520-1000.

**To subscribe, see page 45.**

## Paid Volunteers Needed to participate in hearing research

**You will be compensated for your time!**

**Who?** Persons 18 - 30 years old with normal hearing  
Persons 65 - 85 years old with either normal or mildly impaired hearing  
American English must be your first language.

**Where?** University of Maryland, College Park, MD

**What does the research involve?** You may be asked to listen to sentences, tones, or noise bursts. You will then be asked to react to a particular sound or sentence. This will take approximately 18 to 25 hours, scheduled over multiple weeks.

Or you may be asked to complete tasks that involve passively measuring brain activity. This will take approximately 2.5 to 4.5 hours.

For further details, contact Ms. Carol Gorham  
hearing@umd.edu, 301-405-4236



## VOICE LIFELINE AND BROADBAND LIFELINE

### Did you know?

You may qualify for assistance in paying your home phone or Fios Internet bill. Discounts for basic telephone or Broadband Lifeline service are available to eligible District of Columbia low-income residents.

### Verizon Washington, DC Inc. offers the following Lifeline Plans as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier:

**Economy II Service\***: \$3.00 per month for unlimited local calling. Value-added services are not included (e.g., Call Waiting, Caller ID). No connection charges apply. Also, customers will not be charged for the federal subscriber line charge. Economy II customers who are 65 years of age or older can have this service at a further reduced rate of \$1.00 per month. Customers will receive a one-time discount on the cost of installing phone service and toll blocking is available at no charge.

**Broadband Lifeline**: Verizon Washington, DC Inc. also offers a monthly Lifeline discount to qualified customers who subscribe to Fios Internet service. Eligible customers will receive a \$9.25 monthly discount.

\* Full terms and rates for these services, including terms of eligibility, are as set forth in federal regulations and in Verizon's tariffs on file with the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia. All rates, terms and conditions included in this notice are subject to change and are current at the time of printing.

### Eligibility:

District residents who have been certified as eligible may apply for the Economy II program or Broadband Lifeline service for customers who subscribe to Fios Internet. Households in which one or more individuals are receiving benefits from one of the following public assistance programs or have an annual income that is 135% or below the Federal Poverty Guideline may be eligible.

- ✓ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP)
- ✓ Medicaid
- ✓ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- ✓ Veteran's Pension Benefit
- ✓ Veteran's Survivors Pension Benefit
- ✓ Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)

### Restrictions:

- ✓ No other working telephone service at the same location
- ✓ No additional phone lines
- ✓ No Foreign Exchange or Foreign Zone service
- ✓ No bundles or packages
- ✓ No outstanding unpaid final bills
- ✓ Bill name must match eligible participant
- ✓ No separate Lifeline discount on cellular or wireless phone service
- ✓ Business lines are not eligible
- ✓ Phone number must match eligible participant
- ✓ Must be a current Verizon customer or establish new service with Verizon

An Application for Verizon Voice Lifeline or Broadband Lifeline service can be obtained by contacting Verizon at [www.verizon.com/lifeline](http://www.verizon.com/lifeline) or by phone at 1 800 VERIZON.

To find out more information, you may also call the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), which administers Voice Lifeline and Broadband Lifeline for the FCC, by calling (800) 234-9473 or by accessing its website at [www.LifelineSupport.org](http://www.LifelineSupport.org).

Economy II and Broadband Lifeline are Lifeline supported services. Voice Lifeline and Broadband Lifeline are government assistance programs. Only eligible consumers may enroll. You may qualify for Voice Lifeline or Broadband Lifeline service if you can show proof that you participate in certain government assistance programs or your annual income (gross and from all sources) is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guideline. If you qualify based on income, you will be required to provide income verification. Proof of participation in a government assistance program requires your current or prior year's statement of benefits from a qualifying state or federal program; a notice letter or other official document indicating your participation in such a program; and/or another program participation document (for example, benefit card). Proof of income requires your prior year's state or federal tax return; current income statement from an employer or paycheck stub; a statement of Social Security, Veterans Administration, retirement, pension, or Unemployment or Workmen's Compensation benefits; a federal notice letter of participation in General Assistance; a divorce decree; a child support award; and/or another official document containing income information. At least three months of data is necessary when showing proof of income. In addition, the Lifeline program is limited to one discount per household, consisting of either wireline, wireless or broadband (internet) service. You are required to certify and agree that no other member of the household is receiving Voice Lifeline or Broadband Lifeline service from Verizon or another communications provider. Voice Lifeline and Broadband Lifeline services are non-transferable benefits. Voice Lifeline customers may not subscribe to certain other services, including other local telephone service. Consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain the Lifeline benefit can be punished by fine or imprisonment, or can be barred from the program.

# Grapes pair well with fish and vegetables

By Family Features

Grapes are a popular and convenient fruit that can also be an ally in wellness, offering an abundance of health benefits that can help you get (and stay) on the right track.

They can go with you on hikes and bike rides or to the gym as a healthy and hydrating source of energy. With no need to peel, cut, core or slice, grapes are perfectly portable when you're on the go.

Heart-healthy grapes also deliver beneficial antioxidants and other polyphenols and are a good source of vitamin K, which supports bone and heart health.

Grapes and seafood are a classic combination. This recipe for roasted salmon with grapes and pistachios offers antioxidants and other polyphenols from grapes along with healthy omega-3 fats from fish.

Grapes also may help support healthy skin even when exposed to UV light. In a study conducted by the University of Alabama, subjects consuming 2¼ cups of grapes every day for two weeks showed increased resistance to sunburn and reduced markers of UV damage in skin cells.

Whatever your path to health, eating well and encouraging healthy habits can be deliciously easy with the benefits of grapes. Find more health benefits and good-for-you recipe ideas at [GrapesFrom-California.com](http://GrapesFrom-California.com).

## Roasted Salmon and Grapes with Pistachios Over Fresh Greens

*Prep time: 15 minutes*

*Cook time: 7-8 minutes*

*Servings: 4*

*Ingredients:*

4 wild sockeye or coho salmon fillets (about 5 ounces each)

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

salt, to taste

freshly ground black pepper, to taste

¼ cup dry white wine

1 cup green California grapes

¼ cup shelled, unsalted pistachios, coarsely chopped

2 tablespoons finely chopped Italian parsley

5 ounces baby spinach

¼ red onion, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon white wine vinegar

*Directions:*

Heat oven to 400° F. Lightly oil shallow, 9-by-13-inch baking dish.

Pat fish dry and place skin side down in pan. Brush fillets lightly with 1 tablespoon olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper, to taste. Pour wine in pan, scatter grapes around and sprinkle pistachios and parsley on fish.

Roast salmon 7 minutes for medium-rare; 8 minutes for medium.

In large bowl, toss spinach and onion with remaining oil and vinegar. Season with salt and pepper to taste; toss again and divide among four plates.

Place fish on top of greens. Spoon roasted grapes around fish.

Nutritional information per serving: 360 calories; 31 g. protein; 12 g. carbohydrates; 19 g. fat (48% calories from fat); 3 g. saturated fat (8% calories from saturated fat); 65 mg. cholesterol; 105 mg. sodium; 2 g. fiber.

When it's time for a filling yet nutritional dinner, Warm-Spiced Chickpeas and Couscous with Grapes and Arugula makes for an ideal vegetarian meal. Plus, this easy-to-make dish includes 8 grams of fiber to help support colon health.

## Warm-Spiced Chickpeas and Couscous with Grapes and Arugula

*Prep time: 10 minutes*

*Cook time: 20 minutes*

*Servings: 4*

*Ingredients:*

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 small onion, chopped

1½ teaspoons ground cumin

½ teaspoon kosher salt, plus additional, to taste, divided

Dash of ground allspice

1 cup Israeli pearl couscous

¾ teaspoon ground turmeric

1½ cups water

1 can (15 ounces) no-salt-added chickpeas, drained

1 cup red California grapes, halved

2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro or parsley

freshly ground black pepper, to taste

4 cups lightly packed baby arugula

lemon wedges

*Directions:*

Heat oil in large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, cumin, ½ teaspoon salt and allspice. Cook, stirring, until onion is softened, about 3 minutes.

Add couscous and stir 1 minute to toast lightly. Add turmeric and water; bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer until couscous is tender, about 15 minutes.

Stir chickpeas, grapes and cilantro into couscous then season with salt and pepper, to taste. Transfer couscous-grape mixture to large bowl, add arugula and toss well.

Serve warm or at room temperature with lemon wedges.

Nutritional information per serving: 370 calories; 12 g. protein; 61 g. carbohydrates; 9 g. fat (17% calories from fat); 1 g. saturated fat (2% calories from saturated fat); 0 mg. cholesterol; 160 mg. sodium; 8 g. fiber.

*This article was sponsored by the California Table Grape Commission.*

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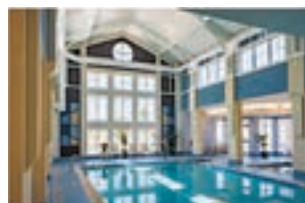
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# Alternatives to that gross kitchen sponge

You won't like hearing this, but your kitchen sponge has more bacteria than a laboratory petri dish.

If you're worried about catching food poisoning from undercooked meat, the odds are far higher if you clean your dishes with a dirty sponge. About 5% of raw chicken sold in supermarkets may be contaminated with Salmonella, according to the latest data.

Compare that with a microbial paradise like a sponge that could house 54 billion bacteria in every cubic centimeter (the size of a sugar cube).

A dirty kitchen sponge can lead to a variety of conditions that are hard to diagnose. That's because the clinical presentation of diarrhea, fever and fatigue is going to look like a lot of things. Certainly, "sponge-related illness" is never going to come up! It's almost always chalked up to "food poisoning."

Here are some of the germs living on your sponge:



**DEAR PHARMACIST**  
By Suzy Cohen

**Campylobacter.** This could cause diarrhea. People typically get an infection of this from undercooked (or raw) chicken, unpasteurized milk, or contaminated lettuce or vegetables. Those who become ill from this can expect loose stools, abdominal pain, fever and feeling queasy.

**Enterobacter cloacae.** Germophobes beware: This guy lives in your gut as part of your normal intestinal flora! It's not considered dangerous unless you become immunocompromised.

It's also a common nosocomial infection — the kind you get while you're in the hospital. Then it will rise up and attack your skin, respiratory tract, internal organs and blood. It can cause endocarditis and pneumonia.

**E. coli.** People who become infected with E. coli have the usual stomach complaints that look like food poisoning. To be clear, E. coli can be transmitted from raw or under-

cooked ground beef, raw milk, some cheese or contaminated vegetables.

Most cases include a mild fever, painful stomach cramping, diarrhea (often tinged with blood), nausea and vomiting. It may cause life-threatening symptoms, so always visit a doctor if you become short of breath, weak or develop a nosebleed or decreased urination.

Other organisms that a sponge can harbor include *Klebsiella*, *Staphylococcus* and *Moraxella osloensis*. That last one is the same bug responsible for the malodor of wet laundry.

## Reasonable alternatives

There are many other options if you are grossed out about using your sponge.

1. Use a scrub brush with bristles. You can put those in a dishwasher. The advantage is that they do not have nooks and crannies like a sponge, so they harbor fewer organisms.

2. Use a dishwasher, but be aware that the soaps all have a bunch of chemicals!

3. Microwave a wet sponge every week to keep it clean.

If you'd like to read a more comprehensive, detailed version of this article, visit [suzycohen.com](http://suzycohen.com).

*This information is opinion only. It is not intended to treat, cure or diagnose your condition. Consult with your doctor before using any new drug or supplement.*

*Suzy Cohen is a registered pharmacist and author of The 24-Hour Pharmacist and Real Solutions from Head to Toe.*

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**8 LOCATIONS IN THE WASHINGTON D.C. AREA**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: white;">📍</span> 6530 Democracy Blvd. Bethesda, MD 20817</li> <li><span style="color: white;">📍</span> 10714 Potomac Tennis Ln. Potomac, MD 20854</li> <li><span style="color: white;">📍</span> 11901 Georgia Ave. Wheaton, MD 20902</li> <li><span style="color: white;">📍</span> 550 S Carlin Springs Rd. Arlington, VA 22204</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: white;">📍</span> 8700 Jones Mill Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815</li> <li><span style="color: white;">📍</span> 2501 Musgrove Rd. Silver Spring, MD 20904</li> <li><span style="color: white;">📍</span> 1510 Collingwood Road Alexandria, VA 22308</li> <li><span style="color: white;">📍</span> 12475 Lee Jackson Mem. Hwy. Fairfax, VA 22033</li> </ul>
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# Open for ~~Fun!~~ ~~Business~~

## Stay Active in August

August often comes with sweltering hot days and extreme humidity. As the thermostat rises, so do the threats for heat-related injuries.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention cautions that people 65 years and older are more prone to heat-related dangers. It is important to consider the risks and take safety measures on hot weather-alert days. Montgomery County Recreation's (MCR) Senior Centers are safe places to go to get out of the heat on days when temperatures are dangerously high.

Modifying plans can be an effective way to stay safe while continuing to participate in fitness activities.

### Walk Indoors

Did you know Maryland designated walking as the state exercise on Oct. 1, 2008? It is the first state in the nation to name a state exercise.

Walking regularly has many health benefits. A brisk walk can help you lead a happier, healthy life. Maintaining bone and muscle mass goes a long way in helping people stay independent. Bone mass loss can lead to bones that break faster and easier.

When the temperatures are so hot it isn't safe to walk outside, there are options to keep up a walking routine. Indoor walking is available at senior centers and the following MCR community recreation centers. Call the center ahead to ensure nothing is scheduled when you would like to walk.



### Clara Barton Recreation Center

7425 MacArthur Blvd,  
Cabin John  
240-777-4910

### Bauer Drive Recreation Center

14625 Bauer Dr,  
Rockville  
240-777-6922

### Gwendolyn E. Coffield Recreation Center

2450 Lyttonsville Rd,  
Silver Spring  
240-777-4900

### Damascus Recreation Center

25520 Oak Dr,  
Damascus  
240-777-6930

### East County Recreation Center

3310 Gateshead Manor,  
Silver Spring  
240-777-8090

### Germantown Recreation Center

18905 Kingsview Dr,  
Germantown  
240-777-8095

### Jane E. Lawton Recreation Center

4301 Willow Ln,  
Chevy Chase  
240-777-6855

### Long Branch Recreation Center

8700 Piney Branch Rd,  
Silver Spring  
240-777-6965

### Longwood Recreation Center

19300 Georgia Ave,  
Brookeville  
240-777-6920  
240-777-8090

### Marilyn J. Praisner Recreation Center

14906 Old Columbia Pk,  
Burtonsville  
240-777-4970

### Mid-County Recreation Center

2004 Queensguard Rd,  
Silver Spring  
240-777-6820

### Nancy H. Dacek North Potomac Recreation Center

13850 Travilah Road,  
Rockville  
240-773-4800

### Plum Gar Recreation Center

19561 Scenery Drive,  
Germantown  
240-777-4919

### Ross Boddy Recreation Center

18529 Brooke Road,  
Sandy Spring  
240-777-8050

### Potomac Recreation Center

11315 Falls Rd,  
Potomac  
240-777-6960

### Bette Carol Thompson Scotland Recreation Center

7700 Scotland Drive,  
Potomac  
240-777-8075

### Upper County Recreation Center

8211 Emory Grove Rd,  
Gaithersburg  
240-777-8077

### White Oak Recreation Center

1700 April Lane,  
Silver Spring  
240-777-6940

### Wisconsin Place Community Recreation Center

5311 Friendship Blvd,  
Chevy Chase  
240-777-8088

### Wheaton Community Recreation Center

11701 Georgia Ave.,  
Wheaton  
240-773-4825

## Fall Registration for Seniors Trips and Programs Opens Monday, Aug. 15

Registration for fall activities opens at 6:30 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 15. Enjoy hundreds of programs including fitness, dance, arts, special events and more offered at one of the seven County senior centers.

**SOAR** is Montgomery County Recreation's "Senior Outdoor Adventures in Recreation" travel program. The trips are designed for active older adults. This fall, SOAR trips offer a look at the historic estates of Port Deposit and Mt. Vernon; an opportunity to try your luck at a casino; and a railroad excursion through the breath-taking fall foliage in Pennsylvania's countryside.

**Daytrippers** offer intergenerational trips to a variety of destinations. These excursions are

planned for grandparents to travel with their grandchildren.

Designed to be interesting, fun, and adventurous, the daytrips provide a travel experience without the burden of worrying about driving, parking or ticket lines. Travel takes place on a deluxe motorcoach that departs and returns to Olney Manor Recreational Park, located at 16605 Georgia Ave. in Olney.

Daytrippers will enjoy festive dancing and jousting at the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire; games, food and fine arts at the Berkely Springs Apple Butter Festival; and the warmth and humor of It's a Wonderful life at the dinner theater.

For more information, go to [mocreco.com](http://mocreco.com).

## Tech Connect Offer Free Technical Support

The popular Tech Connect program provides seniors with technical support and assistance to connect and thrive in a digital world. Young people knowledgeable with technology are available to assist adults 55 years and older to navigate their devices in the digital world. Call any senior center to find out the schedule of when the Tech Connect representative will be available.

Montgomery County Recreation has seven full-service senior centers:

### Long Branch Senior Center

8700 Piney Branch, Silver Spring  
240-777-6975

### Margaret Schweinhaut Senior Center

1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring  
240-777-8085

### North Potomac Senior Center

13850 Travilah Road, Rockville  
240-773-4805

### Wheaton Senior Center

11701 Georgia Ave., Wheaton  
240-773-4830

### White Oak Senior Center

1700 April Lane, Silver Spring  
240-777-6944

### Damascus Senior Center

9701 Main St., Damascus  
240-777-6995

### Holiday Park Senior Center

3950 Ferrara Drive, Silver Spring  
240-777-4999

## Swimming Pools Can Be Your Gym

What about changing exercise to "aqua-cise"? Many of the same fitness activities done at the gym can be adapted to the water.

One of MCR's seven outdoor pools or four indoor pools can help you stay cool while working out.

Water resistance provides a challenging work out and minimizes the impact that comes from work-



ing out on hard surfaces. Working out in the water puts less pressure on joints and can be less painful for people who have arthritis.

## Volunteer to Help Build Bones!

The Bone Builders program seeks caring, physically active adults who have an interest in leading a group exercise class in a community center setting. Consider the perfect volunteer job for people wanting to help others — and themselves — maintain and/or increase bone mass.

Bone Builders classes meet two days per week, one-hour each day. Volunteers teach both days of the week. Since everyone needs time off occasionally, there is flexibility built into the position. Each class has two primary co-leaders as well as secondary co-leaders also trained and ready to lead if a primary leader is absent.

Potential volunteers are encouraged to e-mail [alison.boyton@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:alison.boyton@montgomerycountymd.gov) or call 240-773-8278.

## The CDC Tips for Staying Cool and Hydrated

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible. If your home doesn't have air conditioning, consider heading to a friend's home, a local library or a shopping mall.
- Do not rely on a fan as your main cooling source when it's really hot outside.
- Drink more water than usual and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Don't use the stove or oven to cook — it will make you and your house hotter.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- If your doctor limits the amount of fluids you drink or has you on water pills, ask them how much you should drink during hot weather.
- Take cool showers or baths to cool down.
- Do not engage in very strenuous activities, and get plenty of rest.
- Check on a friend or neighbor and have someone do the same for you.

## Take a Mini-Trip to Montgomery County Agricultural Fair's Senior Day

If you have visions of racing pigs, funnel cakes, cow exhibits and car demolitions, you must be thinking about the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair! This year the fair's Senior Day will take place on Tuesday, Aug. 16. Admission is free for adults 62 years and older. Admission

is \$15 for anyone younger than 62 years.

Nancy H. Dacek North Potomac Senior Center will provide a trip to the County Fair. Registration is available by visiting [www.activemontgomery.org](http://www.activemontgomery.org) and using Activity Code: R07035-507.

# Living Boldly

News and notes brought to you by the  
DC Department of Aging and Community Living

Volume 2 Issue 8 A Newsletter for DC Seniors August 2022



## INTERIM DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Jessica Smith, Interim Director  
DC Department of Aging and  
Community Living

Dear Seniors,

It's been an incredible time to be at the forefront of the great things happening at DACL! Since DC "reopened," we've been able to connect with all of you in ways that we couldn't imagine during the public health emergency. Over the last few months, we've brought back some of your favorite events like the Ms. Senior DC Pageant and the Mayor's Annual Senior Symposium — both of which were sorely missed these past two years. At our senior wellness centers and community dining sites, many of you have joined us for group trips to places like the Dutch Market, Arena Stage and the Kennedy Center. And, while you're there, you've continued to connect with one another, which we know is such a vital part of our health and wellbeing. All of these things are what makes summertime with DACL so great.

What's also been great this summer is having the opportunity to learn from you all. You may recall us launching an initiative back in January called the Future of Aging Project. Since we've launched, we have spoken to over 300 seniors. We've asked you for your insights, feelings and experiences, and how you want to redesign systems and programs. We have learned so many valuable things from you and how you want to engage with us and other District agencies. Over the past three months, we've heard the same sentiment — you want to be respected for your experience, wisdom and knowledge. Older adults want to be treated as individuals who have strong minds and have agency over how they choose to age, and we plan to continue to do just that.

We've also learned that while DC has some of the best senior services, we need to do a better job at advertising them and making sure older adults in every corner of the city know about our programs. We've heard over and over that transportation is one of your biggest concerns, and that support with getting around is critical to you aging in your homes and communities.

Over the next few months, we'll take what we've heard and turn it into actionable ideas to improve how we serve you. Together, we'll continue to create systems and a customer service experience we can all be proud of. To learn more about how you can get involved with Future of Aging, please call 202-715-7534 or email us at [futureofaging@dc.gov](mailto:futureofaging@dc.gov).

As always, if you need general assistance, you can call our Information and Referral Assistance line at 202-724-5626.

Enjoy the rest of your summer,  
Jessica

## Congratulations to Bernice Fonteneau Senior Wellness Center – 2022 Pride Makeover Winners



In honor of PRIDE month, DACL sponsored the Pride Makeover Contest. All of our senior wellness centers worked with their participants to decorate the entrance, parking lot, or other exterior and public-facing area to make them warm, inclusive and fabulous destinations. While all of our centers worked very hard to make their spaces as welcoming and as inclusive as possible, the LGBTQ Advisory Committee selected **Bernice Fonteneau Senior Wellness Center** as the 2022 Pride Makeover Contest Winner! Congratulations again BFSWC!

## Living Boldly

News and notes brought to you by the  
DC Department of Aging and Community Living

Living Boldly is published by the Information Office of the DC Department of Aging and Community Living for DC senior residents. Advertising contained in the *Beacon* is not endorsed by the DC Department of Aging and Community Living or by the publisher.

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# Join us at the RFK Open Air Farmers & Flea Market

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The Market participates in the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

# Monkeypox: What You Need to Know

## GET VACCINATED FOR MONKEYPOX IN DC!

### You can if you are:

A District of Columbia resident 18 years of age or older

**AND**

Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men and have had multiple or anonymous sexual partners in the last 14 days;

**OR**

Transgender women and nonbinary persons assigned male at birth who have sex with men;

**OR**

Sex workers (of any sex);

**OR**

Staff (of any sex) at establishments where sexual activity occurs (e.g., bathhouses, saunas, sex clubs)

**Proof of residency required prior to vaccination. Includes:**

- Identification card with DC address
- Utility bill or other mail with your name and a DC address
- A current DC lease or mortgage with your name on it

DC HEALTH  
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Residents can learn more and pre-register for a vaccination appointment at [preventmonkeypox.dc.gov](http://preventmonkeypox.dc.gov).

# Mayor Bowser Announces Launch of 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

[tinyurl.com/988Lifeline](http://tinyurl.com/988Lifeline)

On July 16, Mayor joined jurisdictions nationwide in launching the three-digit 988 suicide prevention or crisis services lifeline. Anyone experiencing a mental health, substance use or suicidal crisis can dial 9-8-8 to be connected to locally-operated crisis centers. This three-digit number, launching nationwide, makes it easier for people in crisis to access lifesaving support.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

### Join DACL and our Senior Service Network's Upcoming In-Person and Virtual Events!

Join us for a variety of in-person and virtual activities and events at [daclevents.splashthat.com](http://daclevents.splashthat.com).

Questions? Email [dac1.communications@dc.gov](mailto:dac1.communications@dc.gov)



#LiveBoldly

DACL LIVE BOLDLY  
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

# Celebrating DC Centenarians!

Mayor Bowser and the Department of Aging and Community Living are seeking District residents, age 100 years or older, to celebrate.



Call (202) 374-9573 or email [dac1.communications@dc.gov](mailto:dac1.communications@dc.gov) if you know a DC resident who has celebrated, or will celebrate their 100th birthday by July 31, 2022.

Please send the name, date of birth, contact information, and a bio for each individual that you are registering. Registration ends August 1, 2022.

DACL LIVE BOLDLY  
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

# Law & Money



From Netflix to Amazon, monthly subscription fees can add up. See how to save on page 32.

## A new investment strategy to consider

By Adam Grealish

Recently, direct indexing, a lesser-known investment approach, has started outpacing both ETFs and mutual funds in investor adoption. Direct indexing offers unique benefits that can't be replicated in a traditional ETF or mutual fund structure, particularly around personalization and tax management.

Given its benefits, direct indexing is expected to continue to outpace ETF and mutual fund growth over the coming years, according to a recent Cerulli report. Here's what you need to know about this growing investment method:

### What is direct indexing?

Direct indexing is an investment strategy where an investor holds individual stocks that make up an index in their own account directly, instead of using a mutual fund or ETF to track the underlying index.

Similar to an index fund, the goal is to track the performance of a target benchmark index. However, when an investor

holds the individual securities directly in their account, it allows for more personalization and the potential for greater tax benefits.

Direct indexing has been the core of many high-net-worth clients' strategies for decades. It's no surprise, given its unique benefits, particularly around taxes.

Offered mostly through financial advisers, investment minimums for direct indexing are often \$250,000 or more. However, no-commission trading and fractional shares have made the strategy more broadly accessible, with minimums at or below \$5,000 in some cases.

### Harvest losses; boost returns

With hundreds of individual stocks held in a direct indexing portfolio, there are extensive opportunities for tax loss harvesting — the practice of selling a security at a loss to offset capital gains.

Even in up markets, individual stocks can have bouts of poor performance. Direct indexing portfolios can take full ad-

vantage, harvesting losses in underperforming stocks even as the market as a whole is up. This can mean 1% or more in additional after-tax returns, according to recent research from Vanguard.

A separate study looked at historical returns over the last century and found that direct indexing added 1.08% annually in after-tax returns.

From 1995 to 2018, the most recent period studied, an investor using a direct indexing strategy to track the S&P 500 would have seen their \$100,000 initial investment grow to about \$630,000 after accounting for taxes. That's \$101,000 more than they otherwise would have had.

The flexibility of direct indexing also allows for portfolios to be built around existing holdings. This becomes particularly important when a portfolio has embedded gains in concentrated positions. In such a case, an investor can diversify around existing positions while managing any potential tax impact from liquidating positions.

### Easier to reflect your values

By holding securities in their own accounts, investors are free to customize portfolios as they see fit. Such customization is not possible in a fund, as each investor has exposure to the same set of underlying securities as every other shareholder.

Direct indexing portfolios can tilt toward ESG factors, or exclude securities that do not align with an investor's values. Because this can be done at the individual account level, investors don't need to compromise on their values when building their portfolio.

Additionally, holding individual stocks allows shareholders to participate directly in proxy voting, another source of control for investors.

Personalization affords another important benefit: better behavior. It's often easier to not overreact in a down market and stick to a savings plan when your investments reflect your values.

Too much personalization, however, can

See **DIRECT INDEXING**, page 31

## What to do if you win the lottery jackpot

By Elaine Silvestrini

It's definitely not likely you'll hit big in the lottery. But if you win, you could be happy for years to come — no matter what the naysayers tell you.

Here are some things to remember *before* you buy a ticket:

### Your chances of winning big are itty bitty

You're more likely to get elected to Congress than to strike it rich in the lottery. According to Powerball, the odds of winning any prize are about one in 25, but the chances of winning the big money jackpot are less than one in 292 million.

With Mega Millions, the odds are even worse: less than one in 302 million for the jackpot. Still, the allure of a multimillion-dollar jackpot tempts. Who hasn't fantasized about how they'd spend the money?

### Lottery scams abound

Sadly, you're way more likely to lose to a lottery scammer than you are to win a jackpot. According to FBI statistics, more than 8,500 victims lost a total of more than \$61

million to scams involving lotteries, sweepstakes and inheritances in 2020.

In these scams, victims are typically contacted about winning lotteries or sweepstakes they never entered. Scammers say that to collect your prize or increase your chances of winning, you must pay fees, taxes or even customs charges or provide personal financial information.

"If you pay," the Federal Trade Commission warns, "you'll lose your money and find out there is no prize."

### Everyone finds out who won the lottery (usually)

Information about big lottery winners is frequently made public in many states, so your chances of joining the anonymous rich are even lower than winning.

Adding fame to fortune might not sound so bad, but public awareness of your luck could make you a target of scammers or people looking for handouts. You might be amazed by how many "cousins" you suddenly have.

Some good news for jackpot winners is that new laws are being passed in some

states to provide some privacy. According to Powerball, Maryland, Virginia and 14 other states offer winners a measure of anonymity.

Some of these states limit the protections to people who have won more than a certain amount. (For example, winners in Arizona must have won at least \$100,000 to have their identities protected, while winners in West Virginia must have won at least \$1 million.)

### Winning the lottery isn't always a nightmare

You've probably heard plenty of stories about people who won big in the lottery and died penniless. And to be sure, this has happened. Some people's unbelievable good luck was canceled out by subsequent, really *bad* luck.

Plus, as we mentioned, scammers are ubiquitous and taxes have to be paid.

But a study by the National Bureau of Economic Research suggests that overall, people who win big money are likely to hold onto their wealth for years, and to be both happier and more financially secure

over the long run.

### Lottery winners need financial professionals

If you do beat the crazy odds and hit it big, take your time cashing in your ticket until you're ready. Lotteries give you a few months, and it's not a bad idea to use at least some of that time to prepare.

Take a picture of your ticket stub, put it somewhere safe and start assembling your financial dream team. No, your cousin's brother's tax guy won't suffice.

If you've won serious money, start out right by lining up an array of experts in handling large sums of money. Consider hiring an investment adviser, estate-planning lawyer, certified public accountant and a certified financial planner or private banker. You might even consult an insurance expert.

### Lump sum or annuity?

Large jackpot prizes usually offer a choice between collecting your winnings

See **LOTTERY**, page 33

# A savings circle can help you reach goal

By Hal M. Bundrick

A breezy January morning made the mid-30 temperatures feel even chillier. But it was an important day for a young man pushing 30 himself. He was about to face his entire family to ask for a loan to seed his new business idea.

He had contributed to the family's savings circle, but he was asking for a withdrawal this time.

## What is a savings circle?

A savings circle is a group of family members or friends who regularly contribute to a collective fund. Members gain access to a share of the proceeds on a rotating basis or as needs arise.

A savings circle can also be called a

money pool. Or flip the benefit, and it's known as a lending circle. The practice carries many names worldwide and among American immigrant communities, including "tanda," "sou-sou" or "tontine."

It can be an informal gathering with regular monthly contributions and one disbursement or one individual's request for funding approved by the group. Some savings circles predetermine automatic withdrawals for each member in a particular order.

## One that rocked the world

Berry Gordy was 29 that cold Detroit day in 1959 when he faced the family's pointed questions regarding a \$1,000 loan from the Ber-Berry Co-op — named after his parents, Bertha and Berry. After a

lengthy discussion, the group voted to give him \$800.

And with that seed money, Motown Records was born.

David Ellis, a digital media curator at the Motown Museum in Detroit, said Gordy's parents created the savings effort to help seed family business ideas. Each family member, including spouses, contributed \$10 monthly to the fund.

"The funniest part is the interest that Berry Gordy had to pay. They were family, but they were still very professional people," Ellis added.

Unlike many traditional family and friends savings circles, Gordy had to repay the loan and would be charged 6% interest if he didn't pay off the note within one year.

Fortunately, repayment wasn't a problem. Motown Records became a music institution, and Gordy sold the label for \$61 million in 1988. A 50% share of the Motown song catalog garnered an additional \$132 million for Gordy in 1997.

## A chance encounter

Right out of grad school, Fonta Gilliam was working as a U.S. foreign service officer in South Korea, "stamping visas at the consulate," she said.

"This lady walks up to my window, wanting to immigrate to the United States to start a business. She was going to start a dry cleaner, if I remember correctly."

See **SAVINGS CIRCLE**, page 33

## Direct indexing

From page 30

cause direct index performance to deviate — positively or negatively — from the target index. Every investor has their own tolerance for risk and performance, and investors should be aware that there is a tradeoff between customization and tracking the benchmark index.

## Is it right for you?

One of the main advantages of direct indexing is that it can generate additional capital losses. Capital losses are most useful when an investor has capital gains to offset from other investments. For investors with little or no outside capital gains, the tax benefits afforded are more limited.

Additionally, direct indexing has more moving parts than a portfolio that uses funds. Holding individual securities and trading them for tax loss harvesting means more transactions to account for at tax time.

Direct indexing strategies are growing faster than other investment vehicles. And for good reason, as the strategy offers benefits that are difficult or impossible to replicate using a fund. Recent innovations, like fractional share trading, have lowered the barrier to entry for direct indexing portfolios.

A once rarified investment strategy is now poised for broader adoption, and with it, the potential to generate better outcomes for many investors.

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# It pays to review your subscription costs

By Elliot Raphaelson

Because of inflation, many Americans

are looking for ways to reduce their regular expenditures. Unfortunately, many in-

dividuals are paying for subscriptions they no longer need — and, in some cases, they're paying too much for those they do need.

Many, myself included, initially subscribe to a publication or to a streaming or cable TV service because it is offered free or at a discount for a limited time. Then the regular subscription rate kicks in and you're stuck paying a high rate for a product that might not be worth it.

I have been guilty of this myself. Only when I review my credit card bill do I realize I have failed to cancel the subscription when I planned to.

My advice is simple: When you start a discounted subscription, make an entry on your calendar of the date you want to cancel a subscription.

cancel a subscription at any time, but there are unexpected caveats. For example, recently I tried to cancel a subscription that was automatically extended. Although I was told I could cancel at any time, I learned I would be charged for a complete month because I failed to cancel before the new non-discounted rate ended.

A pet peeve of mine is that, when a subscription ends, you automatically are renewed at a rate that is often much higher than the rate a new subscriber would be charged. In that situation, you should contact the publisher and ask for the new-customer rate. In this situation, I have always been able to renew at the rate advertised for new subscribers.

A study conducted by C+R Research that analyzed recurring monthly charges for a cross section of individuals found that, although first estimates of monthly costs were \$86, actual costs were \$219 per month because they had not monitored their costs. The difference added up to approximately \$1,600 a year.

Seventy-four percent of the study group indicated that they had forgotten about many monthly recurring subscription charges. Forty-two percent realized that many of the recurring costs were for services they were no longer using. Thirty percent of the subscriptions that were forgotten were for internet services; 22% for TV/movie streaming; 16% for Amazon Prime.

Auto-pay is convenient, but if you find that many of your monthly recurring payments are unnecessary, you should limit auto-pay to services you know you want continued on a long-term basis.

## Tracking services can help

One way to monitor your costs is through the use of a tracking service. The most popular tracking services found in the C+R study were Mint (30%), TrueBill (10%) and Chase (9%).

Mint is a popular tracking service that is available at no cost using an app. Contact support@livemint.com to establish an account.

Mint is easily established, and you can use it to track spending, create budgets and obtain an overview of all your finances. You can link all your financial accounts, set up notification and alerts, and obtain free credit scores.

You can't use Mint as a joint account, but multiple family members can establish separate accounts. The service is free to subscribers because Mint receives its income from advertisers on the site.

Bottom line: If you establish good controls — either on your own or through tracking services — you can likely save hundreds or even thousands of dollars a year by limiting or optimizing your subscriptions.

Elliot Raphaelson welcomes your questions and comments at [raphelliot@gmail.com](mailto:raphelliot@gmail.com).

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## SUMMER BOOKINGS!

There is still time left in August for estate planning discussions.

I'd be happy to hear from you! Please give me a call if you need any of the following, or document reviews or updates:

Wills and Trusts, Medical Directives, Powers of Attorney, Estate Administration, Family Agreements



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## Lottery

From page 30

as a lump sum (minus taxes) or receiving disbursements over 20 years or more (30 years for Mega Millions.)

There are pluses and minuses to each. A lump sum, if properly invested, will grow in value. If you're a smart money person, the jackpot could grow a lot.

An annuity, on the other hand, can protect you against any problems you might have with self-control. Even if you blow through all the money you receive one year, you'll get another payment the following year.

Unless you sell your future payments at a discount or get a loan against them

(don't do that), the funds will keep rolling in as long as the annuity continues.

### Give, but be a smart giver

It's tempting to hand out wads of cash, but that kind of charity can wreak havoc on relationships and your bank account. At the same time, hoarding your big win like Scrooge McDuck might also not be good in the long run.

Setting up a trust or family foundation can simplify the giving process. Your advisers can help you set up donations of tax-smart assets.

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## Savings circle

From page 31

The woman, a street vendor, had six figures of cash in a savings account.

"I remember thinking, 'OK, this is fraud,'" Gilliam said. But the woman related how she had participated for years in a savings circle with friends in her neighborhood, "and it was finally her turn" to make a withdrawal.

"I learned how a lot of people around the world are using informal saving and lending traditions — sou-sous, tandas — as a way to build wealth outside of the banking system," she said.

Gilliam discovered that the social savings circles in these underbanked and underserved communities often have a low default rate. The social factor is key.

"People are more likely to keep strong financial habits when their peers keep them accountable," she said.

### How to start your own

If you are looking to start your own savings circle, enlist trusted friends and family — emphasis on "trusted." In 2020, the Federal Trade Commission issued a consumer alert about pyramid schemes tied

to sou-sous.

Your group will need to determine the amount and frequency of deposits and the order of individual withdrawals. For example, if 12 members put in \$100 per month and distributions occur monthly on a rotating basis for one year, who gets the first \$1,200?

It's an important consideration, because early withdrawals are essentially zero-interest loans, while later distributions are effectively interest-free savings plans.

A few savings circle apps have been developed in recent years, such as Esusu Savings and MyMAF, which manages lending circles set up through Mission Asset Fund.

Later this month, Gilliam and a team of fintech developers in Washington, D.C., are set to release a savings circle and social banking mobile app called Wellthi. While group savings goals will be shared, funds in Wellthi will be tied to individual digital wallets, linked to a payment card and never commingled.

And it all began with that chance encounter when the Korean woman was looking to start a business in America.

"It really kind of changed my life, to be honest. And I had almost denied that woman a visa," Gilliam said.

—AP/NerdWallet

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## BEACON BITS

Aug. 26

### SOCIAL SECURITY AND RETIREMENT

Are you planning for retirement or helping someone prepare for theirs? Bring your questions to this virtual lecture and learn how changes in Social Security and retirement policy may affect you. The program is on Fri., Aug. 26 from 4 to 5 p.m. To register (required) or for more information, visit [librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/9357294](http://librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/9357294) or call your local Fairfax library branch.

Aug. 10

### MEDICARE INFORMATION

Want to learn more about Medicare? The Montgomery County State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) will provide a cost-free overview of Medicare benefits, eligibility, enrollment, costs and coverage, as well as info on Medicare savings programs, Medicare fraud, protection and local services. The session will take place Wed., Aug. 10 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Maggie Nightingale Library, 19633 Fisher Ave., Poolesville, MD. For more information, visit [mcpl.libnet.info/events](http://mcpl.libnet.info/events) or call (240) 773-9550.

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(Interactive and Online)

#2: October 31 & November 2, 4, 7, 9

**2023 Sessions:** #3: January 17, 18, 20, 23, 25

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#5: April 17, 19, 21, 24, 26

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# Leisure & Travel



Hike from inn to inn in Vermont. See story on page 36.

## We're high on Rocky Mountain grandeur

By Don Mankin

The first time I drove to California from the East Coast, trying to escape a run of bad luck in love, life and career in my mid-20s, the Rocky Mountains loomed from the prairie, welcoming me to a new life.

This past June, I had the opportunity to immerse myself once again in the grandeur of the Rocky Mountains on a road trip with my wife, Katherine. We looped from Denver through Boulder, Grand Lake and Winter Park before ending a week later back at the airport.

### Options for outdoor exertion

Boulder, Colorado, at 5,300 feet, gave us an opportunity to adjust gradually to the altitudes of the Rockies. Boulder has a small-town feel with big-city amenities, especially its excellent restaurants, many of them clustered in the downtown area on or near the Pearl Street Mall, the spine of the food and entertainment district.

But what Boulder is really about, aside from a major university and an exploding tech sector, is fitness and outdoor recreation. The town offers a wide range of sweat-inducing, muscle-burning, lung-busting outdoor activities. In our day and a half in Boulder I had the opportunity to indulge in a couple of these activities.

Most notable was a downhill mountain bike ride on the Switzerland Trail. The trail is probably a piece of cake for experienced mountain bikers, but for novices like me, it took considerable effort and concentration to avoid rocks and keep upright.

Terror helped me focus on the task at hand. Once I got the hang of it, though, it was exhilarating, especially when the guide told me that I was the oldest person he had ever guided on the trail. (I turned 80 this year.) I'm sure the scenery was stunning, but to be honest I rarely took my eyes off the trail.

While I was clenching and sweating, Katherine tried "goat yoga" at Growing Gardens, a nonprofit that runs programs in sustainable urban agriculture. After an hour of exercising with free-range goats, she reported, "They are sort of like dogs, but they don't show any affection."

### Wildlife and kayaks at Grand Lake

After two nights in Boulder, we drove through Rocky Mountain National Park via the Trail Ridge Road. This nationally designated "All American Road" is spectacular as it climbs through thick forest to alpine tundra above tree line to an elevation of over 12,000 feet before it heads downward on the other side of the pass, the highest of the



It's easy to find peace and quiet in Rocky Mountain National Park, just 90 minutes north of Boulder. It's also easy to find great restaurants in Boulder's entertainment district.

three mountain passes in the park.

The first thing we noticed as we approached the town of Grand Lake was the huge burn scar left over from the East Troublesome Fire, which burned almost 190,000 acres in October 2020. Fortunately, the fire stopped just short of this quaint village on the shores of the largest natural lake in Colorado.

The second thing we noticed was the large moose by the side of the road, the first wildlife sighting of our trip. He ignored us as he munched on weeds, brush and other roadside delicacies while we gawked and took photos from the safety of our car.

In Grand Lake we continued the active pace set in Boulder, including two easy, close-by hikes (the Coyote Valley Trail and the hike to Adams Falls) and a two-hour kayak that started on Grand Lake and continued through a narrow channel into the adjoining Shadow Lake.

While Grand Lake is ringed with grand homes, Shadow Lake feels wilder. There are some structures on the lake, plus a road running between the two Lakes. But the further we paddled, the more untamed it felt.

We also took a slow boat tour around Grand Lake and ate dinner one night at the historic Grand Lake Lodge, which offers rustic but upscale cabins, fine dining, and

spectacular views of Grand and Shadow Lakes from its location several hundred feet above the lakes.

While we were eating, a bear toured the grounds — to the delight of the guests and my wife, who leaped to their feet and ran to the windows to squeal and take pictures. True to form, I instead opted to continue eating my meal before it got cold.

### Winter Park wonders

On our way to Winter Park, our final destination, we took a short side trip to the best hike of the trip, a four-mile loop around Monarch Lake. The lake, a deep blue gem, is surrounded by thick forest and snow-capped peaks and nothing else.

Except for the other hikers on the trail, plus some fishermen, families and paddlers, it felt like a true wilderness experience. The trail is rated as easy, but the rocks and stream crossings made it a bit more challenging for my 80-year-old body.

We only spent a day in Winter Park, just enough time for a hike along the Fraser River Trail, which runs through town and parallels the main highway. It's easily accessible, groomed and mostly flat with some gentle rises.



The author, who recently celebrated his 80th birthday, took a guided mountain bike ride down the rocky Switzerland Trail outside Boulder.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DON MANKIN

# Inn-to-inn hiking gains a foothold in U.S.

By Sandi Barrett

While the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail are popular hiking trips for the seasoned trekker, many travelers prefer a soft, cozy bed and a home-cooked meal at the end of a long day of walking.

Multi-day walking trips offering these comforts are popping up across the country. Popular throughout Europe, curated backcountry tours are a kinder, gentler way to explore and still enjoy a good night's sleep. As Americans are rediscovering the great outdoors, these inn-to-inn hikes are rising in popularity.

I recently completed a four-day, 44-mile inn-to-inn hike through Vermont's beautiful Green Mountains. Joining me on the journey were two friends: a 70-year-old retired professor and a 60-year-old software engineer. I landed right between them in age and ability.

Our hike began with glorious sunshine and a dirt road adventure. Every day, we walked about 10 miles on backcountry roads through evergreen forests and charming small towns.

Every night, we stayed in a new inn, whose staff transferred my bags, fed us hearty meals, and provided soft beds to rest our weary bones.

Daily directions to the next inn were a comical scavenger hunt. I searched for red barns, cornerstones and other unusual markings: "Walk 50 feet; you will see a brownish metal gate with colored ribbons. This gate may be locked, but you may pass around it."

## Four historic inns

Our loop began with a great night's rest in Chester. Each day we traipsed to towns reminiscent of a Hallmark Movie set: Proctorsville, Ludlow, Weston. Our journey

completed back in Chester, where my Jeep was parked, awaiting our return.

Our accommodations were as unique and charming as Vermont inns tend to be. While the decor differed from classic country style to ornate Victorian opulence, every inn had comfy beds, delicious meals and charming innkeepers. Julie-Lynn Wood, proprietor of the Golden Stage Inn, served us warm berry muffins and ginger scones.

"I love the day-to-day running of the inn, the rhythm of innkeeping, and having my family around," she told us one morning. "I love our guests. We have many that return again and again."

Our adventure on the Vermont Inn to Inn Walking Tour was challenging and self-satisfying. We enjoyed our time at each inn and tackled each day's hike with vigor — and some minor aches and pains.

## Tour companies can help

Personally, I am all in for an adventurous trip. However, I can pass on overnighting in a hammock or storing my food in a bear canister. When someone else can lug my suitcase, it is a wonderful "have your cake and eat it too" moment.

Besides, planning a multi-day hiking trip can have lots of moving parts, as accommodations and meals shift every day. A professional tour provider can save you time, effort and headaches. That way, you can simply enjoy putting one foot in front of the other and happily explore the unfamiliar landscapes.

Popular multi-day tour companies like Backroads offer expeditions from easygoing to hard core. They plan everything from accommodations and meals to hiking routes and local sightseeing.

From Yosemite to Acadia and the glaciers to the Blue Ridge Mountains, walking tours span the globe, which can make choosing your next foot-friendly exploration difficult.

Perhaps the oldest trail in Europe is the Camino de Santiago, a tangle of trail networks that weave across the Iberian Peninsula through France, Spain and Portugal.

A variety of hotels dot the pilgrimage path, ranging from inexpensive *albergues* (hostels) to comfortable hotels. If you book a trip with a tour company, they will do all the planning for you and will transport your luggage.

See **INN HIKING**, page 39



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# Factory tours abound and are great fun

By Ed Perkins

A factory tour is perhaps the most underrated sort of attraction in the U.S.

When I first started writing about factory tours, I highlighted them as the “best free attractions you could find,” but liability and staffing issues have forced many to start charging.

Still, the chance to see exactly how some favorite item is made can be fascinating. And, fortunately, you can find an interesting tour just about anywhere you visit in the U.S.

Time was, several good books covered factory tours in detail, but those days are gone. Instead, a former book publisher maintains a reasonably current online database at [factorytoursusa.com](http://factorytoursusa.com). You can search either by state or by category.

Among the more than 50 defined categories, food and drink makers dominate the list of 553 individual tours. Breweries, candy makers, and food growers and processors contribute 162 tours — about a third of the total. No other categories include more than 20 tours, but quite a few list 10 or more.

Even among the more limited categories, however, you’ll find something for just about everyone in your travel group.

## Tours to whet your appetite

Among the tours you might find most interesting:

**Automobile factories**, including BMW in Spartanburg, South Carolina; Corvette in Bowling Green, Kentucky; Ford Rouge Factory (where the F-150 truck is assembled), Dearborn, Michigan; Hyundai, Montgomery, Alabama; and Subaru, Lafayette, Indiana. Several others in the current list are temporarily closed or suspended.

**Candy makers**, with giant Hershey’s operation more of a theme park than factory tour, but lots of small local outfits around the country offer authentic tours.

**Coffee roasters**, mostly in Hawaii but a few elsewhere, including Roasterie in Kansas City.

**Cheesemakers**, of which the biggest apparently is Tillamook in Tillamook, Oregon, but there are lots of others around the country.

**Distilleries** are somewhat centered in Kentucky or Tennessee with Dickel, Jack Daniel, Maker’s Mark and Wild Turkey, but others are scattered around the country.

**Musical Instrument makers** include Gibson in Memphis and Moog in Asheville, North Carolina.

**Sports equipment** tours include Louisville Slugger in Louisville.

**Transportation** tours include Union Pacific’s Bailey Yard visitor center in North Platte, Nebraska.

Other diverse tours range from America Whistle Company, Columbus, Ohio; Annie Oakley Perfumery, Ligonier, Indiana; and Columbus Washboard Company in Logan, Ohio, through Hoegh Pet Casket Compa-

ny in Michigan; KitchenAid in Greenville, Ohio; and Levi Strauss in San Francisco, to SC Johnson in Racine, Wisconsin, and Ulu Knives in Anchorage.

## Temporary suspensions

Unfortunately, some perennially popular tours are currently suspended, including my top choice of Boeing along with Fender Guitars, Harley Davidson, several General Motors plants, Pendleton woolens, Reuger organs, and Steinway pianos. Presumably, most suspensions are only temporary, so keep checking.

Geographically, the list includes at least

See **FACTORY TOURS**, page 39

## Colorado

From page 35

From the trail you can see snow-capped mountains in the distance, and the bubbling water masks the traffic sounds from the road a couple of hundred yards away. Along the trail are benches, picnic tables and interpretive signs describing the birds, flowers and other flora and fauna you can observe along the way.

Before heading back to the airport on our final day, we visited Headwaters Rivers Journey, an excellent museum that makes it clear that Colorado is not just about

mountains, but water too.

Rivers, lakes and reservoirs support the plants, flush the toilets, and slake the thirst of most of the American Southwest and California — another reason to appreciate the beauty of the Rocky Mountains and the life-giving waters that flow from its peaks.

*Don and Katherine were hosted on this trip by Visit Boulder, The Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Grand County Colorado Tourism Board.*

*For more photos, suggestions for places to eat and stay, and things to do, check out Don’s blog at [adventuretransformations.com/word-press/rocky-mountain-high](http://adventuretransformations.com/word-press/rocky-mountain-high).*

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# 3 travel lessons I wish I'd learned sooner

By Liz Weston

Almost every trip I take teaches me something about myself, the world, and what not to do next time. Here are three hard-won travel lessons that may help you learn from my mistakes:

## Cobbling together flights isn't worth the savings

Whenever possible, I book nonstop flights. Nonstops may cost a bit more, but they avoid the inconvenience of layovers and the stress of possibly missing a connection.

Sometimes, of course, nonstop flights aren't available or affordable. What you don't want to do, I learned through bitter experience, is try to save money by booking flight legs with different, unaffiliated airlines — especially if you're dealing with luggage or customs.

In 2017, my husband, daughter and I

flew to London and then Barcelona, Spain. That part went fine; it was coming back that became a nightmare.

The Barcelona-to-London flight was delayed. When we landed at Heathrow Airport in London, we learned we had to pick up our luggage at baggage claim, go through customs, check our bags at another airline's ticket counter in a different terminal, get through security and sprint to the gate to make our connection — all in about an hour.

Somehow, incredibly, we made our flight home, but my heart didn't stop pounding until we were well over the Atlantic Ocean.

Now I make sure to book through a single airline and its partners. Our luggage is checked through to our final destination, and flight delays become the airline's problem to fix.

## Ensure that you're insured

For years I blithely traipsed around the world, not thinking about what might happen if I got sick or injured far from home.

Then my father suffered a stroke while visiting his sister in Florida. The medical evacuation flight to get him back to his home in Washington state, with the required attendant and other necessary medical care, would have cost over \$100,000.

Sadly, he never recovered enough to make such a flight. But I realized how vulnerable I'd been, especially traveling in places with poor medical care.

Now I make sure that whenever we're away from home, we have travel insurance that includes medical evacuation. If we're traveling outside the U.S., I ensure we have health insurance coverage as well.

These days, travelers also have to worry

about COVID-19. Although the U.S. has dropped its requirement that incoming travelers produce a negative COVID-19 test, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises against traveling if you have symptoms or test positive.

That could mean a week or two of unexpected hotel and meal costs, so I make sure our travel insurance covers COVID-related expenses and that the "travel delay" portion has a high limit — such as \$250 per person per day.

Other things can go wrong on a trip: flight delays and cancellations, lost baggage, accidents in rental cars. I charge all of our travel on credit cards that provide coverage for such minor disasters.

I particularly like the kind of rental car coverage that's primary, meaning that your auto insurer never needs to know you caused an accident or damaged the rental car. Many cards offer secondary coverage, which typically means your insurer has to be notified and the card pays only what your insurance doesn't, according to the Insurance Information Institute.

This is a lesson I didn't have to learn the hard way: The one time a rental car agency tried to bill me for a door ding, I notified my credit card company. I have no idea if the claim was paid or dropped; I just know that I didn't have to deal with it after that.

## Beware third-party booking sites

Many credit cards offer general travel rewards that you can transfer to the issuer's airline and hotel partners.

But some credit card companies also offer their own travel portals. These function a lot like online travel agencies such as Expedia and Orbitz, allowing you to search among various travel providers and then book using your points.

I don't typically use online travel agencies, because I think I get better customer service by booking directly. But earlier this year I decided to give the travel portal option a whirl — and lived to regret it.

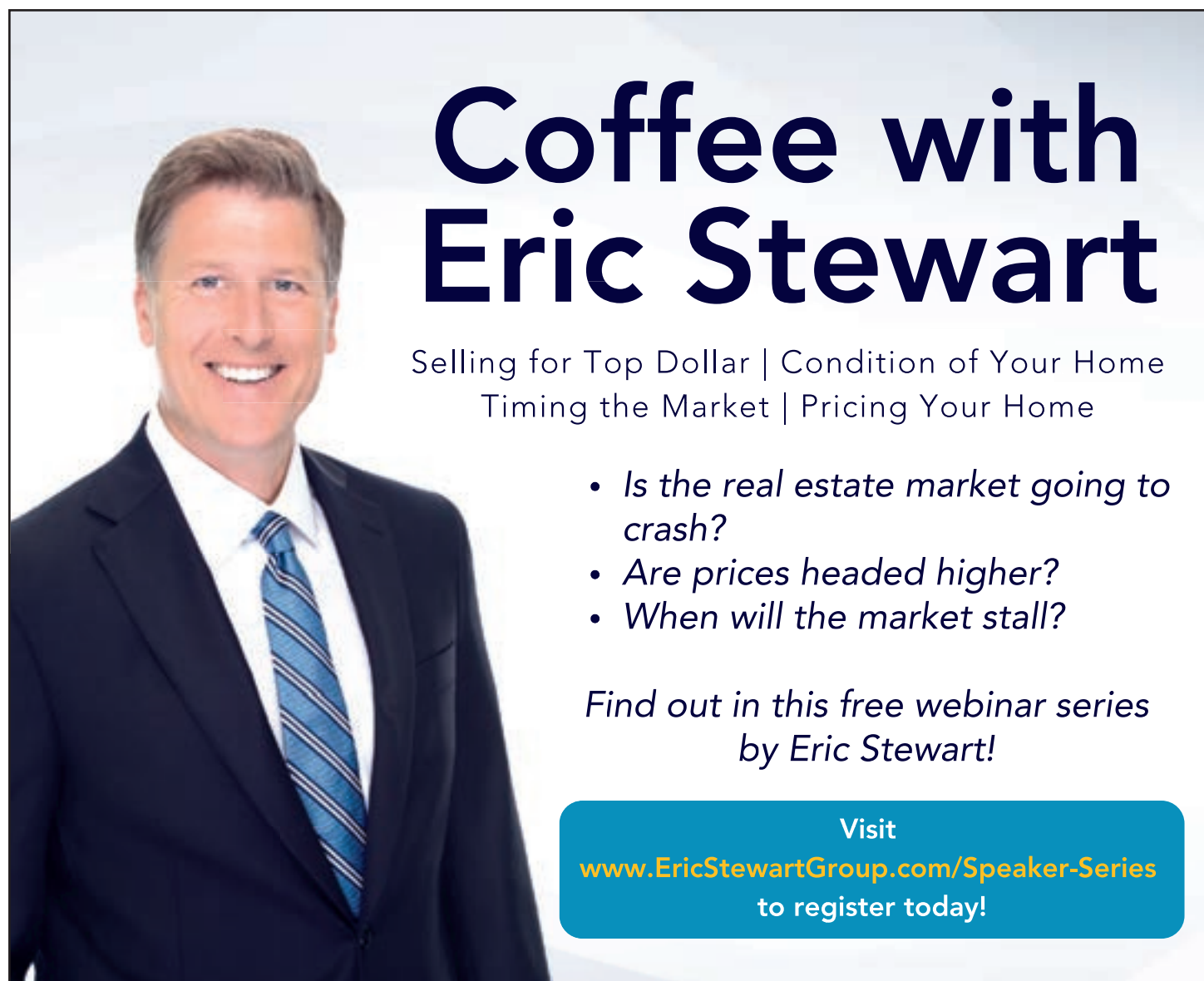
The flight I booked from Los Angeles to Vienna with my credit card points had a stopover in Istanbul. A few weeks after booking, I got an email that the leg from Istanbul to Vienna was canceled.

I logged on to the airline's site, expecting to be offered options to rebook the canceled leg. Instead, I got a message that my itinerary could not be modified.

When I called the airline, a customer service agent told me I needed to call the credit card company. When I called the credit card company, I was told I needed to talk to the airline.

I tried emailing to get the issue resolved, with the same result. Finally, in desperation, I reached out on Twitter. It took a few more rounds of finger-pointing, but eventually I was able to cancel the booking, get my points back — and swear off ever using a travel portal again.

—AP/NerdWallet



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## Inn hiking

From page 36

### Reasons to hike on vacation

Immersion into Mother Nature's green wilderness is wonderful for the soul. The rhythm of footfall after footfall affords you time to think. There is no phone grabbing your attention; it is all you — moving through time, testing your limits.

When cell service returned on our hike

and my phone began to chime, I chose to shut it down and keep walking, staying in the moment.

Exploring a road less traveled that offers peace and quiet while rhythmically working your muscles brings a satisfying self-awareness and appreciation of the earth we love.

### If you go

The closest airport is Rutland Southern

Vermont Regional Airport, which connects to Logan International Airport in Boston. Flights from DCA to Rutland start at \$359 on Jet Blue.

To explore the Green Mountains on foot, I recommend the Vermont Inn to Inn Walking Tour, (833) 466-2466.

For the Camino de Santiago, book a tour like "Walking the Camino de Santiago" from Explore. The closest airport is Madrid-Barajas Adolfo Suárez Airport.

Round-trip flights from here to Madrid start at \$526 on Delta Airlines in September.

Backroads offers a variety of tours to explore the U.S. and abroad. Visit [backroads.com](http://backroads.com).

*Sandi Barrett is a freelance writer exploring the Americas and Europe and seeking out interesting adventures and oddities, exceptional local cuisine, and fun libations. You can follow her travels on Instagram @Travel\_With\_Sandi.*

## Factory tours

From page 37

two tours in every state, although the pickings are slim in a few. Oddly, the alphabetical state index omits Louisiana with its popular McIlhenny Tabasco tour in Avery Island, but you can access Louisiana tours by clicking on the map.

Overseas, the website [inspirock.com](http://inspirock.com) lists separate "best 15 factory tours" for France, Germany and the UK. All three lists seem to focus on automotive plants. I haven't verified those listings but some look promising.

### Plan well ahead

A majority of the top tours require advance planning, with reservations sometimes required weeks or months in advance, available online at most.

Many are open only at limited hours and

some less than daily. Most now charge admissions. Most impose some minimum age and physical ability limitations for visitors, and several prohibit clothing likely to cause problems or impede movement.

All in all, I don't see any factory tours that meet the Michelin three-star standard of "worth a special journey." But several meet the two-star "worth a detour" test.

The online lists are not exhaustive. If you don't see something that interests you, Google "factory tours at (company or location)."

My suggestion is that if you're at all interested, check out whatever is available in any destination area you plan to visit. And check early enough to make reservations and schedule your tour.

Email Ed Perkins at [eperkins@mind.net](mailto:eperkins@mind.net) or see his travel website at [www.rail-guru.com](http://www.rail-guru.com).

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## BEACON BITS

Aug. 17

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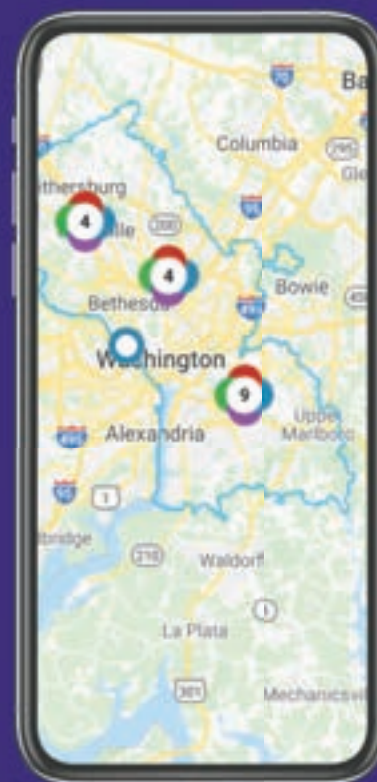
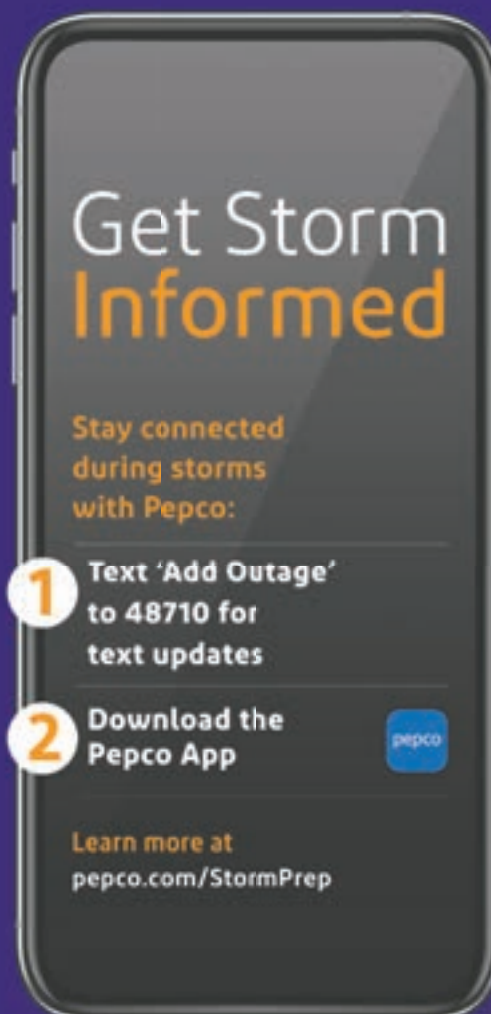
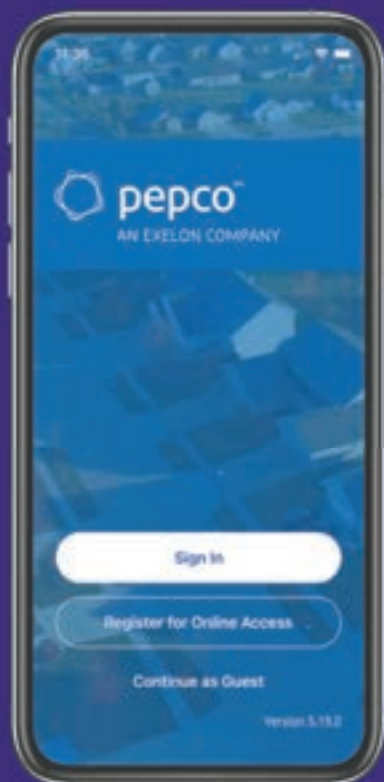
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# Arts & Style



Bob Levey recalls a dear, if flashy, older aunt on page 41.

## Stand-up meets acting at Theater J show

By Mark Dreisonstok

Brad Zimmerman describes himself as being a late bloomer. With “My Son the Waiter: A Jewish Tragedy,” however, he appears to have at last come into his own: His one-man show is now on national tour, and visitors to Theater J at the Edlavitch Jewish Community Center of Washington, D.C., can enjoy his autobiographical performance, which runs through August 21.

In his 81-minute show, Zimmerman describes himself as being the scion of a Jewish family. While initially an apathetic student, in college he discovered an interest in the dramatic arts, leading him to embark on an acting career in New York City.

Success, however, was quite slow to ar-

rive, leading him to spend the following 29 years working as a waiter to make ends meet. Hence the title of the show — although he notes wryly that his mother (a running character in his monologue) once commented that his decades-long position might render “A Jewish Mother’s Tragedy” a better title for the production.

### Audience interaction, too

The show is an interesting hybrid of styles. There are strong elements of stand-up comedy and audience interaction, especially at the beginning of the performance, as well as aspects of storytelling and dramatic, if comedic, spoken-word performance.

Zimmerman’s approach is sometimes

self-deprecating, perhaps slightly reminiscent of Woody Allen, though he incorporates elements of the more piquant style of George Carlin, with whom Zimmerman fondly recalls working. Perhaps Zimmerman has a bit of the latter’s manner when he

says, “I like to use contempt constructively.”

His timing and pauses are perfect, reminding one both of Carlin and also of Joan Rivers, another famous comedian

See **MY SON THE WAITER**, page 43



Stand-up comic Brad Zimmerman stars in an autobiographical one-man show, “My Son the Waiter: A Jewish Tragedy,” running at Theatre J in downtown D.C. through August 21.

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# Thoughts of auntie and her pink Cadillac

I can still hear her upstate New York accent all these years later.

“Robbit,” she said, “I just went and bought it.”

“It” was a car. But not just any car. In her 83rd year, my aunt had gone and purchased a brand-new Cadillac.

She knew every one of its virtues — power steering, power seats, air conditioning — that made Florida tolerable for the hottest half of the year.

But the chief virtue to my aunt, who had lived through the Great Depression, was this: She had finally, showboatingly revealed her membership in the upper reaches of consumer society.

At her condominium near Miami, the parking lot was a study in tail fins — a few Buicks here, a gaggle of Oldsmobiles there. But the dominant brand, in the early 1980s, was the one that Detroit had turned into an immutable status symbol.

If you owned a Caddy, you had made it, pal.

Please, no whining about gas mileage or the environment. Please, don’t point out that an 8-cylinder engine wasn’t needed to go 15 miles an hour to the supermarket.

None of that was the point. To own a Caddy was not to keep up with the Joneses.

It was to surpass them.

Along with a substantial bank balance, my aunt had a substantial sense of humor. She loved to aim it at herself.



**HOW I SEE IT**  
By Bob Levey

She would call me every month, like clockwork, and tell me the same joke. Did I know what the state bird of Florida was? It was a Cadillac, pattering down the street, with its left-turn directional signal blinking endlessly.

Then she would laugh uproariously before reporting — yes, again — that she had been guilty of not cancelling her left-turn signal that morning.

But my aunt — and many in her age group — never joked about owning Cadillacs. They were the gold standard, proof positive that the owner had not only survived the 1930s, but had prospered.

In my aunt’s case, her comfortable late-in-life ride was the result of her choice in husbands. My uncle-by-marriage was a successful businessman, but a major-league tightwad. He reused paper towels. He shopped endlessly for bargain Band-Aids.

His choice of cars? Fords. Boring Fords. Utterly mainstream. Relatively cheap.

But now that he was long dead, my aunt could blow big bucks on a Cadillac. Which

she did. And did again. And did every two years as long as she lived.

Why?

“Because I can, Robbit,” she would say.

Young, idealistic upstart that I was in those days, I would challenge her. “Aunt,” I would say, “if owning a Cadillac makes you different, why does General Motors churn out thousands of them every year, in the same color as yours?”

“Well,” she would say, “at least my neighbors are impressed.”

But now, two generations later, Cadillac is no longer a shining buggy on a hill. It is but one of several luxury brands, and it is losing market share by the week.

Today, Mercedes and Porsche are the head-turners in driveways. Tesla is surging.

BMW’s bolt away from red lights like jackrabbits.

And Caddy? Amazingly, the full-size sedan is now no longer than a mid-size Chevrolet. The trunk, once monstrous, is now cramped and pinched, like a Toyota’s.

Perhaps most surprisingly, Cadillac now offers a hybrid model. Drive a Caddy and save the planet! Wonders never cease.

So, what did all my aunt’s money really buy? I can answer that from experience.

About 45 years ago, a friend called me with a proposition. He had a business acquaintance who was a super-rich executive in a Middle Eastern country. The friend had just bought 10 Cadillac Fleetwoods,

See **BOB LEVEY**, page 43

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# Mystery novels by prolific older authors

This summer, enjoy these mysteries, which run the gamut from suspense to adventure to whimsy.

***The Therapist: A Novel, You're Going to Need to Talk to Someone*, by B. A. Paris, 298 pages, St. Martin's Press hardcover, 2021**

This thriller has all the elements of a classic Hitchcock movie: murder most horrid, a haunted house, forgery, rumor and gossip run amok, amateurs sleuthing down wrong rabbit holes and a main character with deep psychological

scars. (By the way, Alfred Hitchcock was born 123 years ago this month on August 13, 1899.)



**THE BIBLIOPHILE**  
By Dinah Rokach

The action takes place in a small, exclusive gated community in London. The plot is nicely encased by an idyllic milieu and populated by the kind of individuals one might encounter in the tony suburbs.

The therapist, who treated clients in her home office, was killed in her bedroom. Her husband subsequently committed suicide. It is assumed he killed her — but did he?

Alice and Leo move into the

renovated home. Alice is unaware of its backstory. What about Leo?

Alice, who has lived her entire life in a small rural town, finds cosmopolitan London overwhelming. She met Leo by chance encounter. He is reticent about his past, claims to have no family ties, and is secretive about his professional work.

Like most great tales of suspense, the premise builds on commonplace anxieties. Pulling up roots and moving a long distance into a new home can pose a web of challenges. Trying to find friends among a close-knit group of neighbors can be difficult, especially if they seem judgmental or have secrets they don't wish to share.

B. A. Paris is the pen name of Bernadette MacDougal, a married Franco-British mother of five who is in her 60s. This is her fifth novel.

***Dark Sky: A Joe Pickett Novel*, by C. J. Box, 351 pages, G. P. Putnam's Sons paperback, 2021**

Wyoming fish-and-game warden Joe Pickett is attuned to the expansive range where hunters gather every fall to hunt elk. He is a decent man, a devoted husband and father of three daughters.

Battle Mountain is a place of beauty and treacherous conditions. It is a magnet for those who seek to conquer the wild through wiles, skill and technological innovation.

Wyoming's governor assigns Pickett to personally accompany social media billionaire Steve Price and his hunting party. Warden Joe is put off by the airs of the big-city big shot and his entourage of two sycophants.

What starts as a lark when the overindulgent, arrogant and voluble billionaire arrives by private jet becomes a deadly trap. In *Dark Sky*, the hunters become the hunted. Three harrowing days of suspense and death ensue.

The Western Writers of America honored *Dark Sky* with the 2022 Spur Award for best contemporary novel. Author C. J. Box, a native of Wyoming, is in his 60s.

***Of Mutts and Men: A Chet and Bernie Mystery*, by Spencer Quinn, 316 pages, Forge Trade paperback, 2021**

In this mystery, PI Bernie Small and his canine sidekick Chet solve the murder of hydrologist Dr. Wendell Nero, chairman emeritus of the geology department of Valley College.

Then doubts emerge. Another victim is murdered in the same manner as Dr. Nero, while the man they had collared is imprisoned.

Bernie and Chet follow the trail of crime and corruption. It leads them through

See **BIBLIOPHILE**, page 45

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Throughout the ages, there have been many important advances in mobility. Canes, walkers, rollators, and scooters were created to help people with mobility issues get around and retain their independence. Lately, however, there haven't been any new improvements to these existing products or developments in this field. Until now. Recently, an innovative design engineer who's developed one of the world's most popular products created a completely new breakthrough . . . a personal electric vehicle. It's called the **Zinger**, and there is nothing out there quite like it.

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—Kent C., California

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when folded it can be wheeled around like a suitcase and fits easily into a backseat or trunk. Then, there are the steering levers. They enable the **Zinger** to move forward, backward, turn on a dime and even pull right up to a table or desk. With its compact yet powerful motor it can go up to 6 miles an hour and its rechargeable battery can go up to 8 miles on a single charge. With its low center of gravity and inflatable tires it can handle rugged terrain and is virtually tip-proof. Think about it, you can take your **Zinger** almost anywhere, so you don't have to let mobility issues rule your life.

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## My Son the Waiter

From page 40

with whom Zimmerman worked.

Yet Zimmerman notes that he is not so much a comic, but rather an actor who does stand-up comedy. This distinction is demonstrated by his use of the Theater J space as a stage, complete with props, occasional lighting effects, and his bringing in audience members as other “characters” in his performance.

Nonetheless, his constant ad-libs seem more in the arena of stand-up comedy than in the world of rehearsed plays.

### Appeals to broad audience

While reflecting upon his varied career, Zimmerman recounts a gig in a non-Jewish community in which the management

was concerned he would “just tell Jewish jokes,” and that they would be lost on most of the audience.

But a strong point of his show is its appeal to a broad spectrum of the audience. While many of the stories and jokes involve Jewish characters and references and, as such, will have a strong appeal to Jewish audiences, his stories are universal — dealing with topics such as school, health, family, relationships and dating. Zimmerman’s stories of blind dates, and finding excuses to get out of them, are especially amusing.

Zimmerman delivers an unusual and engaging performance. Of course, there is occasional profanity and a few of the jokes are off-color, so this should be kept in mind before bringing children to this event.

There is also the risk that, based on

Zimmerman’s anecdotes and prowess as a stage actor and comedian, young ones may, inspired by his example, run off to pursue an acting or comedy career in New York City, only to find themselves waiting tables for years!

### Book complements performance

After the show, Zimmerman sells a small but interesting book that he penned called *Atta Boy Zimmy*. The book further illuminates his life, and suggests that the stage show only offers a small glimpse of his persona.

The book, for instance, contains a glamorous photo of his mother, Barbara Zimmerman (née Marsh), as an attractive young woman. She herself tried a turn in show business, attending New York University with the goal of becoming an actress.

I also learned from a conversation with Zimmerman that his choice of Rollins College in Florida was due to an athletic scholarship. This is alluded to in his act, but the persona he exudes in the show is more the klutz than sportsman.

In fact, the persona Zimmerman projects in the show and the book might be overly modest, as the real Brad Zimmerman may have had more personal and professional success (such as his opening for Carlin and Rivers) than the show might suggest.

*“My Son the Waiter” runs at EDCJCC’s Goldman Theater, 1529 16<sup>th</sup> St., NW, Washington, D.C., through August 21. Performances are Thursdays and Sundays at 2 and 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays at 2 and 8 p.m. Tickets are \$60 plus a \$5 service fee. Tickets available at MySonTheWaiter.com or via the box office at (202) 777-3210.*

## Bob Levey

From page 41

one for each member of his household.

The cars somehow had to get from Northern Virginia, where they had been sold, to the port of Wilmington, Delaware, where they would be shipped. Was I interested in making 50 bucks by driving a pearl-white beauty two hours up the road?

I jumped at the chance. I had never driven a Caddy before, and never have since. But the way that baby accelerated effortlessly, the

way it braked silently, the way the radio pulled in stations from as far away as Ohio...well, maybe my aunt was on to something after all.

Oldsmobiles no longer get made. Neither do Pontiacs. General Motors is leading the charge into electric vehicles. One day soon, I expect to read that Cadillac has been mothballed, too.

But until that happens, I will always think of my aunt, behind the wheel of her soft pink Eldorado, holding the wheel at 10 o’clock and 2 o’clock, thumbing her nose at prudence once again.



Offenbach's comic operetta translated into English

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process in reverse. Travel scooters were easier to transport, but they were uncomfortable and scary to drive, I always felt like I was ready to tip over. Then I found the *So Lite™ Scooter*. Now there's nothing that can hold me back.

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# PUZZLE PAGE

## SCRABBLE GRAMS

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									RACK 2	
E	O	O	U	G	N	T				
									RACK 3	
E	O	Y	R	T	P	T				
									RACK 4	
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*Scrabble answers on p. 47.*

## JUMBLE

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

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YAOLR  
 O O O O

UHNBC  
 O O O O

NASOSE  
 O O O O

SLUDOH  
 O O O O

### THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Khurek



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

Print your answer here: O O O O O O O O

*Jumble answers on p. 47.*

# Crossword Puzzle

Find a new crossword every day on our website at [www.TheBeaconNewspapers.com/puzzles](http://www.TheBeaconNewspapers.com/puzzles).

Blotto By

Stephen Sherr

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

**Across**

- Faux pas
- Starts a blind date
- Change a skirt's length
- Distribute a budget
- Come out of denial
- Where the Wild Things* \_\_\_\_
- Grocery store aisle in some jurisdictions
- Unpopular rodent
- Send suggestive messages
- Actor Sharif
- Entourage
- THIS CASE
- Coded message
- Entertain, extravagantly
- Type of fair for the well-dressed
- Paul McCartney or Mick Jagger
- Where a nuthatch hatches
- "The best time to buy a house is always five years \_\_\_\_"
- Common ending for Polish surnames
- Record label that bought Motown in 1988
- Puerto, Chama, or Grande in New Mexico
- First female attorney general, Janet
- Part of *reading* and *'riting* (but not *'rthmatic*)
- Revenue generating part of a mag.
- Leave without paying
- "Nature and books \_\_\_\_ to the eyes that see them" (Emerson)
- Defiles
- Kennedy Center performance
- Top corn-producing state
- Forest unit
- \_\_\_\_ and wisdom
- "D" in Morse Code
- Hospital area with extra RNs
- Put it \_\_\_\_ the line (go for broke)
- Prepare potatoes to become home fries
- TV psychic's power, perhaps
- Let pedestrians go first
- Welcome guests at the door

**Down**

- Shares all the gossip

- On the safe side, at sea
- Pose for a Mr. Universe picture
- Prediction from a cookie
- Prediction from a pilot
- Winner of four Emmy Awards for best drama
- Half of all 20th century British kings
- Leader of Kuwait or Qatar
- Element with the lowest Scrabble score
- "It's a \_\_\_\_ the right direction"
- Opposite of gentle
- Remove with Photoshop
- About 39 inches
- Roadside restriction
- Golf tournament
- Letters in a Neverland monogram
- On a 24-hour cycle
- Hourly rate
- Remove wrinkles
- Make the lighting more romantic
- Collectable, to Jay Leno
- Notable times
- Emotional exhale
- Low digit
- What a canine and feline have in common
- One additional abbreviation
- Kimchi quality
- Alternative fuel, subject of a 1981 executive order
- Late (as a loan payment)
- When Rome was not built
- Words before *later* or *then*
- His most played song is *Let's Dance*
- The *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, for example
- Ease the peddle off the metal
- Portion of Hawaii
- Memorization method
- Sewing case
- It first broadcast *SportsCenter* in 1979
- His autobiography is called *The Greatest: My Own Story*
- Direct current, detective comics, and District of Columbia

**Answers on page 47.**

# Bibliophile

From page 42

mansions and office towers, convenience stores and isolated trailers, dangerous roadways across the border, an obscure vineyard and a posh restaurant.

*Of Mutts and Men* is narrated by Chet. The stream of consciousness of this savvy canine is a delightful combination of reveries: salivating about his favorite foods, ruminating about his skill in identifying smells, and observing the behavioral antics of his fellow dogs — or as he refers to them, the nation.

Chet is not always on mark in his attempts to decipher human behavior, so his hypotheses are humorous, if not always accurate. That's what makes this mystery disarming and endearing.

Spencer Quinn is the pen name of septuagenarian Peter Abrahamson. The *Chet and Bernie* series first appeared in 2009. There are 13 novels in all. Track them down.

# Letters to editor

From page 2

is extremely rare in Montgomery County," said OCP Director Eric Friedman.

Homeowners can search the land records online for free to see if any improper deeds, liens, or documents have been filed without the homeowner's knowledge.

My comment on this report: The county needs to provide immediate notifications to homeowners via email and USPS mail when anyone meddles with home ownership documents on file in the county. The suggestion that homeowners check their home's online records every week or so is ridiculous. "Extremely rare" is unacceptable. "Impossible" is the term that must apply to this situation.

**Richard Kreutzberg**  
Via email

## ONE BIG HAPPY *By Rick Detorie*



### BEACON BITS

**Aug. 12+** **MONTGOMERY COUNTY FAIR**  
The annual Montgomery County Agricultural Fair runs from Fri., Aug. 12 to Sat., Aug. 20. Tickets for adults cost \$15 at the gate and \$13 online, but Tues., Aug. 16 is Senior Day, when people over 62 get in free. The fair is located at 501 Perry Pkwy., Gaithersburg, MD. For details, visit [mcagfair.com/events/senior-day](http://mcagfair.com/events/senior-day) or call (301) 926-3100.

**Aug. 25** **SENIORS GAME DAY**  
Want to play old-time games like jacks, dominoes, marbles, memory games and more? Game day is scheduled for Thur., Aug. 25 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Capitol View Neighborhood Library, 5001 Central Ave. SE, Washington, DC. For questions or more information, visit [dclibrary.libnet.info/events](http://dclibrary.libnet.info/events) or call (202) 645-0755.

**Aug. 26** **SCRABBLE MATCHES**  
Play Round Robin Scrabble at the Davis Branch Library. Meet new people and play games on Fri., Aug. 26 from 1 to 2 p.m. The event is free, no registration required. The library is located at 6400 Democracy Blvd., Bethesda, MD. For more information, visit [mcpl.libnet.info/events](http://mcpl.libnet.info/events) or call (240) 777-0922.

**Aug. 27** **CULTURAL FOOD FESTIVAL**  
The Around the World Cultural Food festival is coming back in 2022 at Oronoco Bay Park, 100 Madison St. Alexandria, VA, on Sat., Aug. 27, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The event is free, and many dishes and beverages will be available for purchase. For more information, visit [bit.ly/2022AroundTheWorldFest](http://bit.ly/2022AroundTheWorldFest).

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**Thanks for reading!**

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**ANSWERS TO SCRABBLE**

**SCRABBLE GRAMS SOLUTION**

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

**ANSWERS TO JUMBLE**

**Jumbles:** ROYAL BUNCH SEASON SHOULD  
**Answer:** The woodwind player went fishing with his buddy and hoped to catch a — BASS SOON

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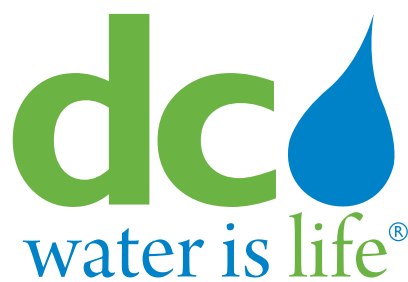
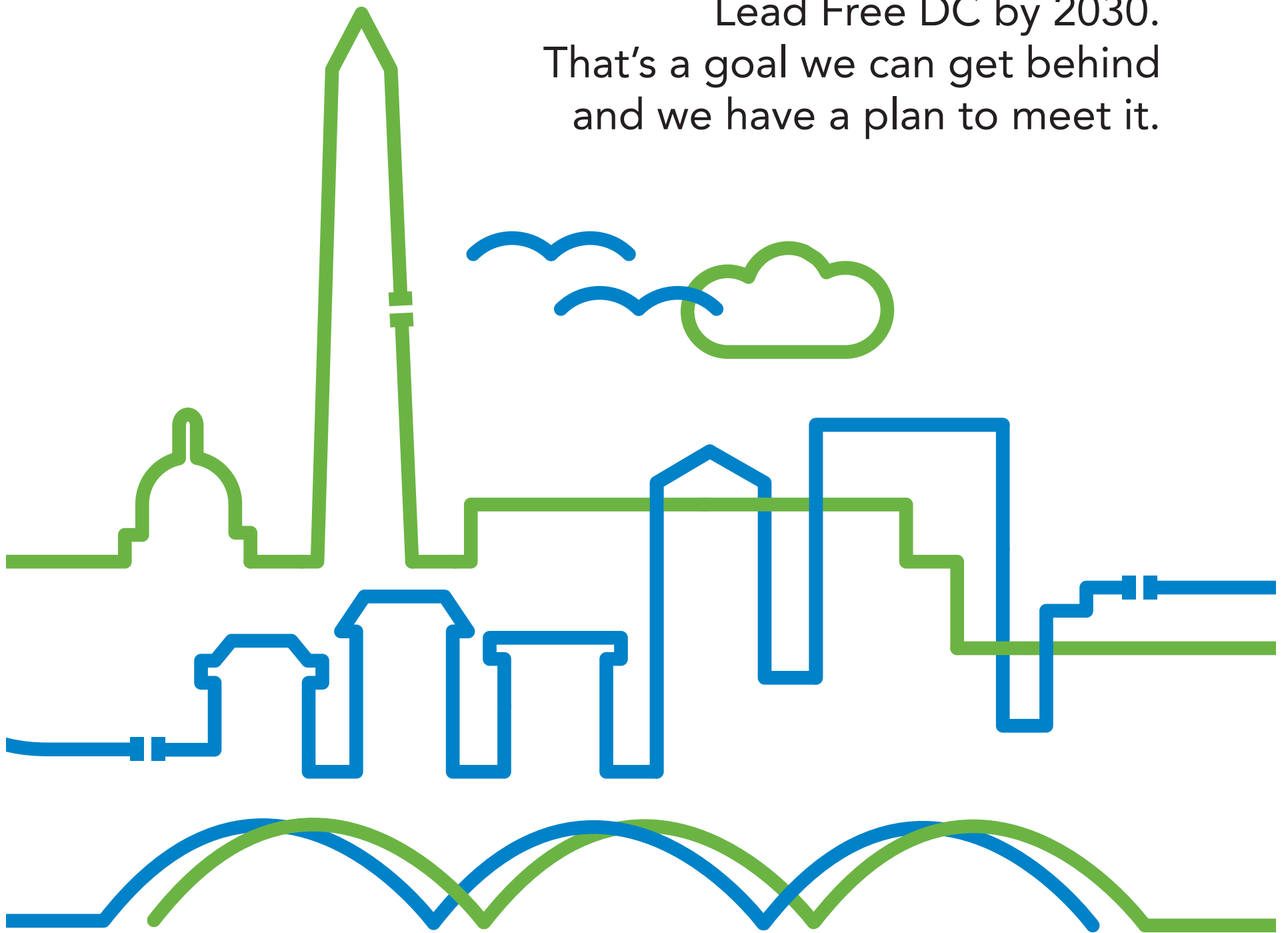
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