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MARCH | APRIL 2021

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Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan's mission is to provide older persons and persons with a disability an array of services designed to promote independence and dignity in their homes and their communities.

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JAN/FEB WINNER: DICK RILEY OF ROCKFORD
The Snowman was found in stories on page 14 and also on page 22.

Letter from the Editor

Getting Creative During Lockdown 2020



BY
MICHELLE
FIELDS

"I think I would like to express my creativity," is something I thought would never cross my mind. I have some talented friends who do beautiful scrapbooking, crocheting, and knitting, but that wasn't of any interest to me. I wanted to find something different. Something that challenged my brain, but was also modest enough to accommodate my ADD. (I get bored fast.) I suppose the craft boom was inevitable with much of the country on lockdown amid the COVID-19 pandemic, so thought it might be as good of time as ever to try something new. After searching the Google, DIY Channel and HGTV websites, I decided to try

my hand at basic quilting, rock painting and gardening. Here's my story.

Creativity #1: The Quilts

Several years back, I bought a basic Singer sewing machine from Meijer that was on clearance due to not having instructions or the manufacturer's box. I brought it home, set it up on my dining room table and then realized I didn't even know how to thread the machine. So, I pulled out my cellphone, opened my YouTube app and taught myself how to sew.

My first projects were going to be home-made quilts for my daughters-in-law Tricia and Dana. It was fun to pick out fabric prints to match their personalities. After five months of sewing, four broken needles, filling up the swear jar, and multiple band-aids, I was able to give these quilts as Christmas gifts to my girls.



Michelle with daughters-in-law Tricia (left) and Dana (right)

Creativity #2: The Rocks

Next on my list was rock painting. While visiting my sister Marsha in Tennessee, I noticed some beautiful, flat, smooth rocks in her front yard. As I was flying home with only a carry-on, Marsha was gracious enough to ship me some. From there, I ordered a set of acrylic paint pens and started painting. Rock painting isn't my favorite craft to do, but it has been enjoyable and an excellent technique to blow off some steam. I find a glass of white wine will also help increase creativity.



Creativity #3: The Garden

My husband Mike and I have had some ideas for our backyard, but never got around to acting on them. During 2020, we definitely saw our opportunity. We started with the back patio. Adding bistro lights, flower boxes and bird feeders really gave our yard a



Backyard Heaven

warm and welcoming atmosphere. And who would think watching hummingbirds could be so entertaining? I would suggest a red wine for hummingbird watching.

I've always wanted morning glories and have been envious of people who could grow them. After years of morning glory growing failure, we decided to start them as seeds indoors to see if this made a difference. It did. Once they were tall enough, we transplanted them outside and they were soon flourishing and looking sturdy. Until the deer found them. Wasn't eating my entire Hosta garden in the front yard enough? No! They had to venture into my back yard and devour almost every leaf from every plant. I almost cried thinking that another year of failure was going to loom over my morning glory garden. But Mike was not going to give up that easily, and built a 6' tall chicken wire fence around them. Thanks to his persistence and dedication, they survived and produced hundreds of the most beautiful dark pink flowers I've ever seen.



My Morning Glories

Our next job to tackle was our Concord grapes. For our anniversary gift to each other many years back, we purchased several Concord grape plants. For years we have combatted birds, deer and Japanese beetles, but decided this was the year we were going to have a good, no, GREAT crop of grapes. We started the summer by hanging Japanese beetle traps, weekly misting of Dawn dish soap and water to detract the deer, and placed a lightweight net overhead to keep the birds from eating the grapes. It all paid off in the long run, as we were blessed with a load of Concord grapes.



Concord Grapes from the garden

All in all, 2020 was a pretty creative year. Hoping 2021 will be the same.

Michelle Fields is the Editor & Publisher of Senior Perspectives newspapers and has been part of the Senior Resources team since 2009. She enjoys fishing and camping with her husband Mike and GSP pup Tigo.



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BY
KENDRICK
HEINLEIN

Staying Connected

If you told me at this time last year that most of my meetings would be via Zoom and that day-to-day work activities, service delivery and other functions would be accomplished virtually, I would not have believed you. The coronavirus pandemic taught companies, and clients of those companies, that the ability to adapt is necessary to insure clients are getting the services they need while still prioritizing their safety.

When you watch the news or read articles, you likely hear a lot about how you need to stay connected and remain active during the pandemic. This is obviously true as both can help your overall wellbeing, but the goal of being connected and active while being safe is a lot easier said than done. The good news? There are many existing resources available to help you achieve these goals, most of which have adapted to ensure your safety. The first step to finding the right fit for you is making a list of what you want to accomplish. This will help narrow your search of the available resources. After you have listed what you want to do, identify any possible barriers that could hinder you along the way.

For instance, if you want to socialize with your friends and family via phone, computer or tablet, but are not comfortable with the technology needed to do so, focus on locating services that can assist you with technology. Below are some resources to help you learn how to use technology.

- The Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan's (AAAWM) Making IT Easier Classes can be found at <https://www.aaawm.org/tech>. These classes are designed to help you learn how to use certain aspects of technology including FaceTime, ordering grocery delivery via Shipt, using mindfulness apps, and more.
- MDHHS started a program called GetSetUp which can be found at <https://www.getsetup.io/michigan>. This program offers 150 small group classes and social hours for older adults.

If are looking to stay active, a lot of classes that were previously held in-person are now offered virtually. The Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan's Healthy Aging programs can be done from your home. To find out more about these classes, you can call AAAMW at 616-456-5664 or visit the Healthy Aging website at



<https://www.aaawm.org/HA>. Please reach out to the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan if you have any questions about aging services that are available for you to access.

Kendrick Heinlein is a graduate of Grand Valley State University and has his MBA from the University of Michigan. He joined AAAMW in 2016 and started working on the LGBT Initiative in January 2017. When he is not looking up new transportation options for older adults, he enjoys exploring new nature trails with his wife, son, and dog.

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The Blessings of Caregiving – One Woman's Story



BY
KENDRA
SCHUMAKER

When thinking about my own experience, it came to me that my journey as a caregiver came in waves. I did not realize it all at once. Looking back, I realize that my caregiving story began at a very young age. I am my mother's only child, and my father passed

away the day after my first birthday. Prior to his passing, he had been in the hospital for about six months fighting for his life. During his six-month hospitalization, my mother's father also died unexpectedly from a massive heart attack. The night of her father's funeral, my mother was called back to Grand Rapids because my father had taken a turn for the worse. They did not expect him to live through the night. That was mid-September, and my father did live until the end of November. They were rough months. I am blessed that I do not remember any of that. I can't imagine being my mother and having to cope with all of that stress, grief, loss, my grandmother's experiencing the same thing, and to add to the load, the grief experienced by her daughter.

I was raised at a time when there were not a lot of single mothers. The divorce rate did not seem as high then as it is today, at least from my perspective. Almost all of my

friends lived in two-parent households. To support us, my mother worked, and I had babysitters. At a relatively young age I convinced my mother to let me get on and off the school bus independently. Thankfully, I did not have a lot of big mishaps, and I proved myself to be responsible.

Then came along something unexpected... hearing loss. My mother started losing her hearing in her early 30s. By the time I was around 13, she was almost totally deaf. She was fortunate in that her employer (Meijer general offices) accommodated her disability and she was able to keep her job. Life at home needed to change to accommodate her hearing loss. As a youngster, I was responsible for answering the telephone, assisting with making doctor appointments, and even going along when negotiating to buy a car. It was what we had to do at the time.

When I think back on my childhood, I realize that my caregiving experience started as small waves. Balance problems also came as part of my mother's hearing loss. Some falls happened, then multiple surgeries, and recoveries that did not go so well. It is a long story that started out as many caregiving stories do -- with concern, bad news, hope, more concern, more bad news, some progress, settling into acceptance -- then finally settling into a new reality.

As my mother's hearing got progressively worse from the Meniere's Disease, she also

experienced multiple physical problems due to advanced arthritis and scoliosis of the spine. She became unable to complete many of the household chores such as mowing the lawn and painting the house that she had done independently. With the Meniere's Disease came multiple falls, more pain, more discomfort, and instability with walking.

My life progressed to college, dating, graduation, and then marriage. My husband was the one who actually suggested that my mother move in with us as a way to make her life a little easier until she retired and could move up north. She moved in with us fifteen years ago, on our daughter Jenna's first birthday. The falls, pain, difficulty moving, etc., continued. Has this been a walk in the park? NO WAY! My husband and I now have five children ages 18-7. As an only child...guess why I wanted to have lots of children? I knew going into adulthood that parents need more than one caregiver, particularly more than one DEVOTED caregiver. Often this is an adult child, spouse, or adult sibling.

OK, so where in all of this does the blessing part come in? As I look back at where I have been, I can see the blessings have been there all along...I just did not recognize them. I believe that it takes acceptance of the responsibilities of being a caregiver, which leads to faith that you can do this, which will lead to an overall peace.

So why would anyone be a family caregiver? Rosalyn Carter is quoted as saying, "There are only four kinds of people in this world: those who have been caregivers, those who currently are caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers." Isn't this true? My children don't remember grandma not living

with us. One time my then third grade son came home on the first day of school and said, "Mom, we had to introduce ourselves today in class, and I am the only one in my class whose Grandma lives with them. Can you even believe that?" Honestly, I was surprised to hear it because I do believe, and believed back then, that family caregiving is on the rise. When my youngest son was 1 1/2 to 2 years old, he would crawl up on the seat of Grandma's four wheeled walker. She would push him to the changing table and he would stand on the seat of the walker and climb onto the changing table, then lie on his back so Grandma could change him.

So, who taught him that? I can tell you that in our household no one did. He instinctively knew at a young age that he needed to work with Grandma's abilities, not against them.

Each caregiver, each family, each individual has their own strengths that they can bring to the caregiver's table. We don't need to be perfect. We just need to be present and do our best. Our loves ones deserve this, and as time goes on we will reap the benefit of future generations seeing how we are handling caregiver responsibilities.

Kendra Schumaker has 27 years' experience working in the field of aging. As former caregivers, she and her husband, Brian, realized the need for an additional resource for Home and Community Based Care. As a result of this, SarahCare Adult Day Center opened in 2008 to families of West Michigan. Kendra is a Certified Dementia Practitioner, facilitates several support groups locally, and is the Ambassador to West Michigan for the Alzheimer's Association. Kendra's passion is not only Home and Community Based Care Services, but specifically Caring for the Caregiver!



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Your Sheriff's office wants to remind citizens to be attentive to possible scams involving inheritances, lottery winnings, Publisher's Clearing House, or other prizes that they did not previously enter to win. Suspects will solicit funds from victims by claiming that they need to pay taxes or fees to obtain the proceeds of the winnings, inheritance, etc. The supposed winnings are never received by the victim.

Your Sheriff's office also encourages citizens to be aware of potential scams on romance/dating sites. Suspects pose as potential romantic partners and ask for money for travel expenses or fictitious emergency situations. The money is often sent to a third party and is not recoverable.

Your Sheriff's office reminds citizens to verify information prior to providing personal information to anyone over the phone or internet and to be cognizant of their social media and online activity.

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Words With Friends



BY
LOUISE
MATZ

To my way of thinking, this game should be called “Scrabble with benefits.” Time is not a factor – no stress there. You may take a minute, an hour, or several days to make your move! And,

no more looking up words or challenging a word. You know if it’s an acceptable word (and the point value) before you hit the “play” selection. In fact, besides the point value of your word, the game will tell you if there is a higher point value word available. Do I have your attention? I thought so.

Anytime, and especially during social distancing times, this game is a lifesaver. You can exercise your brain, have fun, and visit with friends at the same time. In addition, if you play the game on your smart phone, you can play anytime and anyplace.

Did I mention the game is free? You can download the app on your phone for free. Search for Words With Friends 2. You could also go through Facebook and play on your computer or iPad. I recommend the smart phone.

Currently, I have 24 games going simultaneously, three or four with each opponent. Most players return play within 24 hours. You can select your opponents or have them selected for you. Personally, I prefer playing the game with people I know.

During social distancing, this game rates highest for me among the on-line games I’ve tried. But there are so many out there that I recommend you find one that suits you. If you have a smart TV, you have a big selection of games. As far as I know, none of them allow you to play with a live person. They do, how-

ever, challenge you, exercise your brain, and allow you to enjoy the thrill of winning. My favorites here are: TextTwist (a challenging word game), Solitaire,

the National MahJongg League rule card. The card can be ordered via www.nationalmahjonggleague.org.

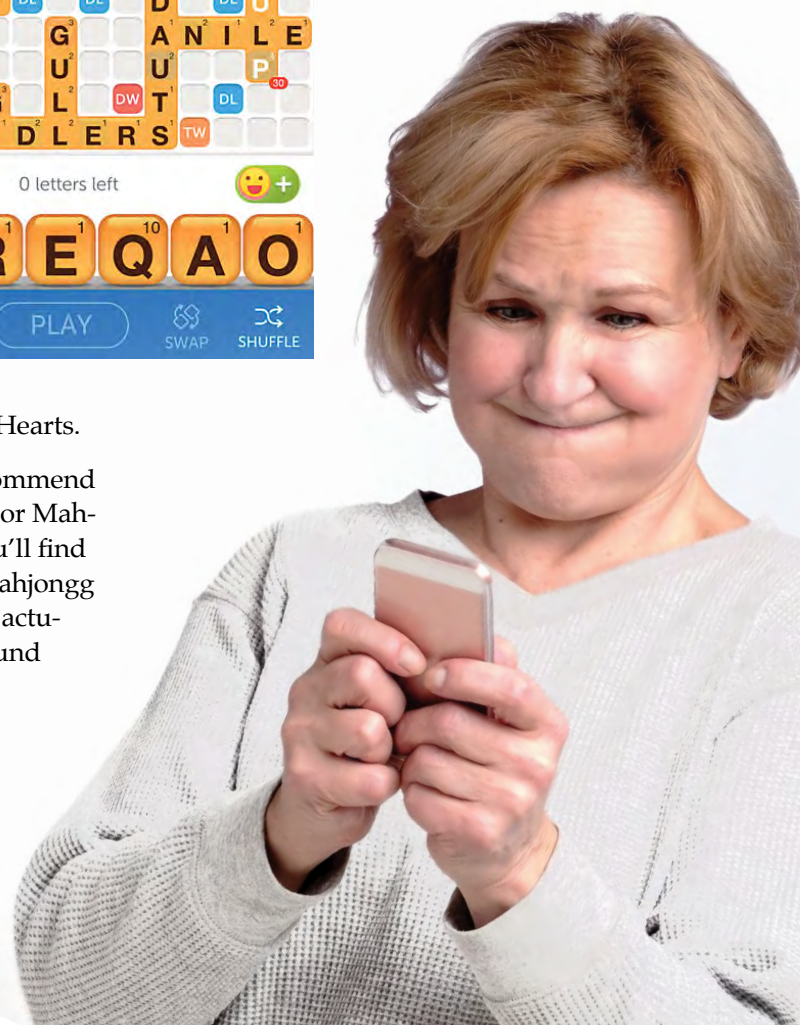


Note to readers: I’d welcome hearing from you about the on-line games you play. Please email comments to louisematz@yahoo.com

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

World Poker Tour, Blackjack, Chess, and Hearts.

For play on your computer or iPad, I recommend Texas Holdem Poker, Cribbage, Solitaire, or Mahjongg. When searching for mahjongg, you’ll find many games offered that are similar to mahjongg (matching tiles), but none where you can actually play the true game of mahjongg. I found two of these games. They both offer a free option but charge a fee for unlimited games. Also, you have the option to play with real people or robots. I prefer playing with robots as it makes for faster play. Mahjongg websites are: www.myjongg.net and www.realmahjongg.com. To play the game on either website you need to have





BY
PAULA
DETWILLER

Be Kind to Your Mind

Do you find yourself feeling anxious, sad, or hopeless because of the COVID-19 pandemic?

If so, you are not alone. In a poll taken at the end of June, nearly half of U.S. adults reported their mental health had been negatively impacted. Emotional distress can be especially acute in older adults who live alone or are socially isolated. Older adults in a variety of settings may be less able to visit with loved ones, and loneliness and social isolation can contribute to depression. Add in the fact that more people over 60 die from coronavirus than any other age group, and it is understandable that older adults may be struggling to keep fear, worry and grief at bay.

In fact, behavioral health experts say our emotional reactions to the COVID-19 pandemic parallel the feelings we experience when our lives are upended by other types of disasters, such as wildfires, earthquakes, and floods. These reactions include:

- Having problems falling or staying asleep
- Experiencing more conflicts or tension with family members or other people
- Crying easily or becoming tearful for no apparent reason
- Having trouble concentrating or remembering things
- Experiencing an increase or decrease in your normal appetite
- Loss of interest in everyday activities
- Having a sense of despair, hopelessness, or emptiness about the future
- Drinking more alcoholic beverages

If you recognize any of these reactions in yourself, talking to someone about it may help to improve your outlook and well-being. That's why a team of behavioral health professionals at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), with the help of federal grant dollars, created the "Stay Well" counseling line—a phone number you can call any time of the day or night to talk to a trained crisis counselor about your COVID-19-related distress.

To reach the Stay Well counseling line, **dial 888-535-6136 and listen for the prompt to press "8."** Counseling is free and confidential. It is available seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

"Stay Well counselors help people understand their feelings and reactions during a disaster like the COVID-19 pandemic," said psychiatrist Dr. Debra Pinals, MDHHS medical director for behavioral health. "They are taught to listen, not judge, and help callers develop coping strategies, review their options and connect with agencies that may help them. All of this can reduce callers' stress and improve their ability to endure the realities they face."

The Stay Well counseling line is being promoted statewide with a media campaign called "Be Kind to Your Mind." That message is meant as a gentle reminder that there should be no shame or stigma associated with getting emotional support if the ongoing pandemic is getting you down.

For brochures, videos, and links to other resources for coping with COVID-19-related stress, visit www.Michigan.gov/StayWell.

Paula is a Writer/Editor and the Behavioral Health (BHDDA) Liaison to MDHHS Communications Office.



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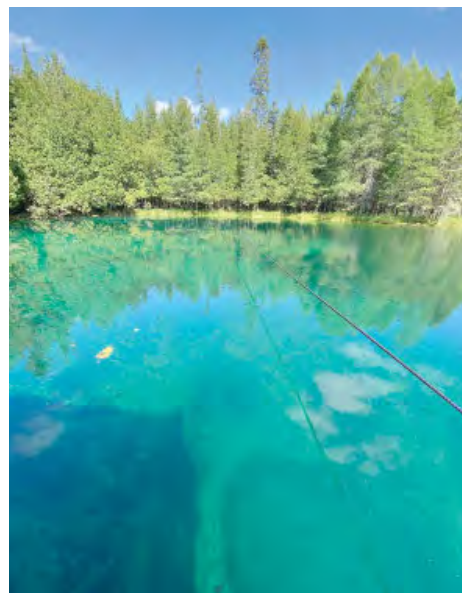
BY
CINDY
HOGG

There are many wonderful things about living in Michigan, but near the top of the list must certainly be this: Michigan is the only US state bordering four of the five beautiful Great Lakes, collectively a national treasure.

Anyone who has followed my articles knows that I love to travel – especially with my grandchildren. The past year has made that rather hard to pull off. To celebrate my oldest granddaughter's twelfth birthday, she and I were supposed to take an epic trip to Prince Edward Island, Canada, last August. COVID effectively torpedoed that, so I posed the question to her, "Water we going to do to redeem our plans?" (Hiding a clue to the answer within the question.)

I have always wanted to hit all five of the Great Lakes within one summer and decided that with careful planning, she and I could do it not just within one summer, but within one trip. The CDC was saying that outdoors was the safest place to be, so we packed our masks, hand sanitizer, lots of our own food, and headed out. Although we did stay in a few hotels/airbnbs, they were pretty deserted and staff were scrupulous in their attention to cleanliness, so we felt safe. We didn't dine in anywhere, relying instead on the food we packed and some drive-thru pick-ups.

We started out from Grand Rapids by heading north to Mackinac Island (or "Mask-inac" Island as we nicknamed it.) Honestly, the ferry on the way to the island was the only place where we met a lot of other people, but everyone had masks on and the ferry is open air so once again, we felt safe. I hadn't been to Mackinac Island in 18 years and Sophia had never been. The first thing we did was rent bikes for half a day – still the



best way to see the island. The 8.5-mile paved trail around the perimeter of the island afforded us many lovely views of Lake Huron before heading inland to visit the Grand Hotel and sample sundaes and fudge! We had a full, picture-perfect day.

Next, we crossed the Mighty Mac to the U. P. and headed for the south shore of wild and wonderful Lake Superior. Here we explored Miner's Castle, Miner's Falls, and Miner's Beach. Heading west toward Wisconsin, we threw in Kitchiti-iki – "Big Spring" – with its breathtaking, surreal beauty. That night we stayed in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, where Sophia's father (our oldest son) was born. We drove by the hospital where

he entered the world and took in other sights, including lovely Lake Winnebago, before boarding the *S. S. Badger* for our trip across Lake Michigan. What a fun experience that was – another thing to check off our bucket lists.

In Ludington, we took a brief break from our travels and spent a day just relaxing at our RV and watching the *Anne of Green Gables* movie and old *I Love Lucy* reruns – before adding a quick trip to Buttersville Beach along Lake Michigan to marvel at its marbled red, black, and tan sand.

So far, we had checked off three of the Great Lakes: Huron, Superior and Michigan. While it's true that Michigan also borders Lake Erie (the smallest access to a Great Lake) we decided to include Lake Erie on our trip to return Sophia to her home in Pennsylvania. After all, we still had to hit Lake Ontario. On our way to Lake Ontario, it was just a short detour to Niagara Falls – so we threw that in as well!

What is it about water? Whether a serene lake or a mighty waterfall, a bubbling brook or crashing waves, there is just something about being in the presence of water that is refreshing, renewing, and invigorating. For us, our trip was the perfect prescription for our pandemic-pummeled original plans.

But you don't need a pandemic or even a desire to hit all five Great Lakes. Within our state borders there is more than enough natural beauty to keep you active, healthy, and happy – especially if you love the water. Spring is right around the corner and is beckoning to us. So, which of our four beautiful Great Lakes will you visit first?

Cynthia Hogg, LBSW, is the Care Counselor for the Alzheimer's Association's Dementia Support Program. She is a freelance writer whose passion is travel, especially with her grandchildren. She is the founder of the blog skipgentravelguru.com.

How Can You Support Those with Dementia?

Become a Dementia Friend!



BY
EMILY
ARMSTRONG

In the United States alone, over 5 million people live with some form of dementia. Most of us likely regularly come into contact with someone in our community who has dementia. For those with dementia, cognitive decline makes it difficult

to interact with others and the world around them. They may struggle to make a decision, forget where they are head-

ing, or not understand the question a person is asking. Navigating daily life can be overwhelming for these individuals and they could feel they are slowly being cut off from the world. So, what can you do to help? Become a Dementia Friend. Dementia Friends Michigan (DFMI) is a program designed to help you understand how to better communicate and support those with dementia. This is especially important during COVID-19, as many with dementia have had the daily routines that they rely on disrupted and could be feeling isolated and confused. At its heart, Dementia Friends is a social

action movement. The program recognizes that the way in which we view dementia as a society needs to be altered and focuses on changing the way we think, act, and talk about dementia. DFMI works to educate "Dementia Friends" on how best to communicate and interact with people living with dementia. In many cases, small action steps can make a big difference in helping someone with dementia navigate through their day. This knowledge will help make communities more accessible and inclusive as a whole. In turn, Dementia Friends support not only the individual with dementia, but their caregiver as well.

The wonderful thing about Dementia Friends is that anyone can become one!

Friends trainer in your own community.

The impact of COVID-19 on those with dementia is apparent. The routines that they have come to expect in their days have been halted. Though we've all had to adapt to the pandemic, understanding why can be harder for those with dementia. If you have someone in your life with dementia, you could be feeling overwhelmed at how to best support them. Having the communication tools gained from a Dementia Friends session can be a huge help. Additionally, at the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan, we are offering virtual caregiver support groups and Family Caregiver University classes. Our partners are able to help with the delivery of essential items and other



Whether you are a caregiver, a neighbor, grandchild, etc., all you need is the desire to help others. Dementia Friends sessions are currently being held virtually via the Zoom platform, with a session lasting about an hour and a half. In this class, you will learn how to recognize signs of dementia, how to effectively interact with people living with dementia, and how you can make your community a friendlier place through your daily work and interactions. If you want to take this involvement one step further, you can become a Dementia Champion as well, which is where you become a Dementia

tasks. Support is available for you and your loved one.

You can learn more about becoming a Dementia Friend at www.aaawm.org/dfmi or call (616) 456-5664 to get information on the number of resources that are available to you.

Emily Armstrong is the Public Relations and Communications Specialist at AAAM. She enjoys exploring Michigan with her husband and their labradoodle, Moose. On the weekends you can usually find her cheering on the Spartans, camping, practicing photography, or reading.

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BY
STACI
GERKEN

AAAWM Eats

Cornbread Croutons

Making cornbread croutons is an easy way to repurpose leftover cornbread, and they make a great addition to soups and salads. The cornbread should be cut into 1-inch cubes and left on the counter for one day to harden before baking. Depending on how much cornbread is left over, the proportions of oil and spices can be adjusted up or down.

2 ½ cups cubed cornbread
2-3 tbsp olive oil
¼ tsp garlic powder
¼ tsp black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Add olive oil, garlic powder, and black pepper to the cubes and stir to mix. This step can be done in a bowl, or, to save on dishes, in the glass pan or the baking sheet the croutons will be baked on.
3. Bake for 12-15 minutes, stirring once half way through. They should look golden brown when done.
4. Enjoy!

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



BY
CATHAY
THIBDAUE

Cathay's Cooking Corner



Tuna Melt

Prepared by Cathay Thibdaue
Recipe by Chef John

1 (6.5 ounce) jar oil-packed tuna, drained
1 tablespoon minced green onion
2 tablespoons finely diced celery
2 teaspoons capers, drained
1 teaspoon Asian chili paste (such as Sambal Oelek), or substitute with Sriracha
2 tablespoons mayonnaise,
or more to taste
1/3 cup fresh mozzarella cheese
salt and ground black pepper to taste
2 tablespoons softened butter, divided
2 thick slices French bread
¼ cup shredded sharp white Cheddar
cheese, divided
1 pinch cayenne pepper, or to taste

Place tuna into a mixing bowl and lightly break apart with a fork. Add green onion, celery, capers, chili paste, and mayonnaise. Pinch off small pieces of the mozzarella cheese into the tuna salad and stir to mix. Season with salt and black pepper; refrigerate tuna salad until needed.

Heat oven broiler or toaster oven. Line

a baking sheet with aluminum foil. Spread butter generously on both sides of French bread slices. Broil buttered bread until golden brown on top, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip bread slices and broil other side until toasted, 2 to 3 more minutes. Remove from oven and turn bread slices over on the baking sheet so the darkest sides are on the bottom.

Gently spread tuna salad onto bread slices using two forks. Press the salad onto the bread and spread tuna all the way to the edges of the bread. Spread shredded sharp Cheddar over each sandwich. Dust tops with cayenne pepper. Place sandwiches under broiler and cook until cheese is melted and bubbling, 5 to 6 minutes.

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

Family Fun in Grand Rapids

Frederik Meijer Gardens Announce Latest Events and Exhibits



Fred & Dorothy Fichter Butterflies Are Blooming

March 1 – April 30, 2021

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park

1000 East Beltline Ave NE

Grand Rapids, MI 49525

MeijerGardens.org

The annual Fred & Dorothy Fichter Butterflies Are Blooming exhibition at Meijer Gardens is the largest temporary tropical butterfly exhibition in the nation. Tropical butterflies from around the world fly freely in the Lena Meijer Tropical Conservatory every March and April.

Throughout the exhibition, there is special educational programming and the Lena Meijer Children's Garden offers butterfly-themed activities.

Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park is proud to welcome the 26th year of the Fred & Dorothy Fichter Butterflies Are Blooming. This year, over 60 species of butterflies from Asia, Africa, and Central & South America, will take flight in the warm, lush environment of the Lena Meijer Tropical Conservatory.

The 19th century was an era of discovery. This year's theme will highlight horticulture displays, butterflies, moths and caterpillars in and under glass. Offering a look into the history of how Dr. Nathaniel Ward pursued a discovery of keeping plants in miniature green houses, which he named fern houses, and which are now known as Wardian cases or terrariums. Learn more about the Wardian case and terrariums from miniature to five stories tall.

More information can be found online at www.meijergardens.org



The Graying Globetrotter

Hooray for Hollywood!



BY
JAY
NEWMARCH

As the days start to turn colder and shorter, what's better than a trip to La La Land. Well, at least before COVID. My trip, not long before lockdown, included a couple of days in Hollywood. Our hotel was right off Hollywood Boulevard, offering both easy access to many sites as well as a great view of the Hollywood hills. The giant Hollywood sign and Griffith Observatory were prominently visible right outside our hotel window. Not a bad backdrop for our visit.

Soon after arriving, we found ourselves walking down Hollywood Boulevard, stopping to taking in the names of the stars placed in the pavement – John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe, Fred Astaire and Judy Garland to name a few. It was great fun to pick out the stars as we walked past sites such as the Pantages Theatre, Roosevelt Hotel and the Capitol Records Building. And, in between you're able to see a funky mix of eateries and shops, too.

On the way back, we cut over to Sunset Boulevard and passed some other landmarks like Hollywood High School, Amoeba Music and the Hollywood Palladium. Later, by car, we headed further down Sunset Boulevard and visited Roxy Music and Whisky A Go Go. If you're really ready for a hike, you could take those in by foot, but they were a considerable distance from our hotel. If you staying in that area of Los Angeles, make sure to visit the Hollywood Farmer's Market, too. Great people-watching and a number of places to eat that allow you to sit and people watch while you eat.

A short drive to Beverly Hills was also on our agenda. We took some time gawking at the cars and people. It was fun to stroll past the iconic Beverly Hills Hotel, too. We tried to get up the nerve to walk in, but the staff at the door looked foreboding. We were quite sure we wouldn't look like we belonged. Instead, we visited the park across the street and watched the lucky ducks who call Beverly Hills their home. We continued on to a bus stop, took a seat and made our reservations for the next day's Warner Bros. studio tour. The bus stop shelter looked like a small cottage and was as big as some studio apartments. Even the bus shelters in Beverly Hills are a cut above!

A studio tour – pick your favorite – offers a great behind the scenes view of the movie-making industry. It's fun to find yourself in the middle of a jungle scene one minute and then turn a corner and you're standing in the middle of Wisteria

Lane, home to those desperate housewives. Further along on the tour, we were able to watch crew members transform a street scene in front of our eyes. From large rolling carts they were picking new signage, light fixtures, hardware and streetscape items to create a whole new look.

A tour through the shops and storage provided glimpses of sets in construction and items familiar to any movie enthusiast. I caught site of items used in *Men in Black*, *Bladerunner*, *Inception* and the ever famous "naughty" leg lamp from *A Christmas Story*.

We had a chance to have our photos taken on the set of *The Big Bang Theory* and walk through Central



Perk from the series *Friends*. It's a few hours that you won't regret. Great nostalgia and lots to look at.

After the studio tour, we were off to the La Brea Tar Pits. The tar pits were the final resting place for dinosaurs and other animals that made the unfortunate choice to wade in long ago. A great method of preservation, many prehistoric bones have and continue to be excavated at the site.

From the moment I heard about them when I was a child, I had always wanted to visit. I wasn't sure if it would live up to my expectations, but I must say it is a great museum. The size is quite manageable, too. Do take a walking tour. Even though it was a very hot, sunny day, we took the guided tour and had no regrets. You'll see previously excavated sites as well as those that are still being explored. It's amazing to see.

Having the hankering for good old-fashioned Mexican food, we had lunch at El Coyote Cafe. A

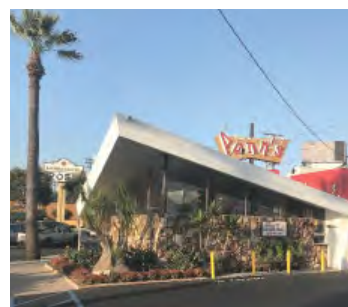
Los Angeles staple from the '30s, it is infamous as the site of Sharon Tate's last meal before her deadly encounter with the Manson Family in her Hollywood Hills home.

Speaking of the Hollywood Hills, brave the traffic and winding narrow roads as they snake up through the hillside. We made a drive through Laurel Canyon, famous as a music enclave for many of the music greats of the '60s and

'70s music scene like Cass Elliot, Joni Mitchell, Carole King, Jackson Browne and Linda Ronstadt, to name a few. And, from there, a trip up Mulholland Drive provides an incredible view of Hollywood and Los Angeles. You'll also find Griffith Observatory and Griffith Park up in the hills. We drove up there, but didn't stay. I'd suggest you arrive early and plan on spending some time if you decide to visit. The parking was a nightmare. It seemed as if everyone wanted to be up there.

There are so many great, kitschy spots to find in and around the Hollywood area. Portions of it seem like a time capsule from the '30s and '40s, while standing right next to some gleaming modern building. We only had a couple of days, but they were filled with great sights and tastes. I definitely want to go back and continue my exploring once we have COVID-19 behind us.

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



Question: Can I refuse to give my Social Security number to a private business?

Answer: Yes, you can refuse to disclose your Social Security number, and you should be careful about giving out your number. But, be aware, the person requesting your number can refuse services if you don't give it. Businesses, banks, schools, private agencies, etc., are free to request someone's number and use it for any purpose that doesn't violate a federal or state law. To learn more about your Social Security number, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber.

Question: How are my retirement benefits calculated?

Answer: Your Social Security benefits are based on earnings averaged over your lifetime. Your actual earnings are first adjusted or "indexed" to account for changes in average wages since the year the earnings were received. Then we calculate your average monthly indexed earnings during the 35 years in which you earned the most. We apply a formula to these earnings and arrive at your basic benefit. This is the amount you would receive at your full retirement age. You may be able to estimate your benefit by using our Retirement Estimator, which offers estimates based on your Social Security earnings.



BY
VONDA
VANTIL

You can find the Retirement Estimator at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator.

Question: I noticed that my date of birth in Social Security's records is wrong. How do I get that corrected?

Answer: To change the date of birth shown on our records, take the following steps:

Complete an Application For A Social Security Card (Form SS-5);

- Show us documents proving:


- U.S. citizenship (if you have not previously established your citizenship with us);
- Age; and
- Identity; then
- Mail your completed application and documents to your local Social Security office.

Note that all documents must be either originals or copies certified by the issuing agency. We cannot accept photocopies or notarized copies of documents. For details on the documents, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/ss5doc.

Question: I prefer reading by audio book. Does Social Security have audio publications?

Answer: Yes, we do. You can find them at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs. Some of the publications available include *What You Can Do Online*, *How Social Security Can Help You When a Family Member Dies*, *Apply Online for Social Security Benefits*, and *Your Social Security Card and Number*. You can listen now at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

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




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E ₁	O ₁	S ₁	G ₂	D ₂	S ₁	D ₂	RACK 1
A ₁	A ₁	E ₁	I ₁	S ₁	N ₁	M ₃	2nd Letter Double RACK 2
E ₁	O ₁	O ₁	K ₅	L ₁	T ₁	B ₃	RACK 3
A ₁	E ₁	O ₁	L ₁	G ₂	W ₄	F ₄	RACK 4
A ₁	A ₁	D ₂	K ₅	R ₁	W ₄	W ₄	Double Word Score RACK 5

PAR SCORE 260-270
BEST SCORE 291

FIVE RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE[®] Players Dictionary, 5th Edition. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

For more information on tournaments and clubs, email NASPA - North American SCRABBLE Players Association info@scrabbleplayers.org. Visit our website - www.scrabbleplayers.org. For puzzle inquiries contact scrgrams@gmail.com

09-06

JUMBLE

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

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

ZORRA	
TIHAF	
COREKT	
ROMMEY	



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

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

JUMBLE

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

GATRN	
NHORO	
TISNIS	
DORNET	

SCRABBLE[®] G R A M S

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A ₁	O ₁	O ₁	G ₂	T ₁	F ₄	B ₃	RACK 1
A ₁	A ₁	Y ₄	R ₁	H ₄	S ₁	T ₁	RACK 2
A ₁	A ₁	E ₁	R ₁	G ₂	M ₃	D ₂	3rd Letter Double RACK 3
O ₁	O ₁	P ₃	T ₁	S ₁	H ₄	T ₁	1st Letter Triple RACK 4
A ₁	O ₁	T ₁	M ₃	S ₁	L ₁	F ₄	RACK 5

PAR SCORE 265-275
BEST SCORE 326

FIVE RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE[®] Players Dictionary, 5th Edition. **SOLUTION TOMORROW**

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08-23

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SENIOR PERSPECTIVES GAME PAGE

Answers on Page 23

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By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

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

BOGGLE POINT SCALE	YOUR BOGGLE RATING
3 letters = 1 point	151+ = Champ
4 letters = 2 points	101-150 = Expert
5 letters = 3 points	61-100 = Pro
6 letters = 4 points	31-60 = Gamer
7 letters = 6 points	21-30 = Rookie
8 letters = 10 points	11-20 = Amateur
9+ letters = 15 points	0-10 = Try again

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 Find AT LEAST NINE EVEN NUMBERS in the grid of letters.

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MARCH | APRIL 2021

17

SENIOR PERSPECTIVES - KENT COUNTY



Family Caregiver University
helping caregivers one class at a time

About: Family Caregiver University (FCU) provides practical education and support to caregivers in West Michigan, one class at a time. With the current coronavirus crisis, we realize this support is now more important than ever so classes are being offered virtually.

Classes are currently being held virtually:
From 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. via Zoom

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Kent County Senior Millage

Early Memories



BY
DICK
HOFFSTEDT

The first seven and a half years of my life were spent on the south side of Chicago. Not too many years, yet filled with vivid memories.

My earliest remembrance is of a small apartment right next to the Illinois Central Railroad that ran between Chicago and New Orleans. Engineers waved to me, and I waved back. There was steam and soot and the sound of a forlorn whistle that told me my train was coming.

Two apartments later, my parents and I moved to the 8200 block of south Laflin Street, where my sister was born. A half a block away was Cook School where I started kindergarten in September of 1939.

We lived on the second floor and did not have a refrigerator, only an icebox. The iceman would only deliver a large block of ice if my mom put a sign in the window. On hot summer days, he would shave off slivers of ice for all the neighborhood kids.

Our apartment was heated by steam generated by a coal-fired furnace in the basement. Coal was delivered every two to three weeks and was dumped onto a chute through a window into the basement coal bin. We had a stoker that fed the coal into the furnace automatically. Steam was pumped into radiators that hugged the walls in various rooms. On top of each radiator was a pan of water that provided humidity in the winter.

My first movie experience was in 1940 when my dad walked me over to a theater that was showing *Pinocchio*. I still enjoy "When You Wish Upon a Star" with little Jiminy Cricket telling Pinocchio to let his conscience be his guide.

There was plenty of outdoor fun close by. A 23-acre piece of land called Foster Park was only a block and a half south of our apartment. It provided a gymnasium for indoor sports, playing fields and a large swimming pool. Halloween was special with a huge bonfire and a witch burning. I spent many happy hours there. It was part of the Chicago Park District which was founded in 1934, the year I was born.

My dad was a strong union man in the 1930s. He took me to union meetings. He also took me to where he worked at a forging company. Cinder floors, machines running off leather belts, the smell of hot steel and oil and extreme noise. It was also where he lost his right index finger.

Mom bought all her meat at a local butcher shop. A mysterious place for a five-year-old. Carcasses hanging from hooks and lots of sawdust on the floor to absorb the dripping blood. This was my first encounter with strange odors, but there was more to come.

Just a little north and west of us was a place called the "Stock Yards." It was a square mile of slaughter houses. Summer was bad. On a hot, humid day with a breeze coming out of the northwest, the stench was almost unbearable. It was better to play in the coal bin.

When I was seven or so, my dad moved us to the north side for a better job. Therein lies another story. I'll never forget my early years on the "South Side of Chicago."

Richard Hoffstedt was born to Swedish immigrants in 1934 and raised in Chicago. He is a U.S. Army veteran. He has been married to Shirley for 65 years. Richard has six children, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Richard is an engineer by profession. His interests are music, reading, travel, riding his adult tricycle, Mark Twain and John Steinbeck.



BY
DAVE
KAMPFSCHULTE

Every Day With Morrie

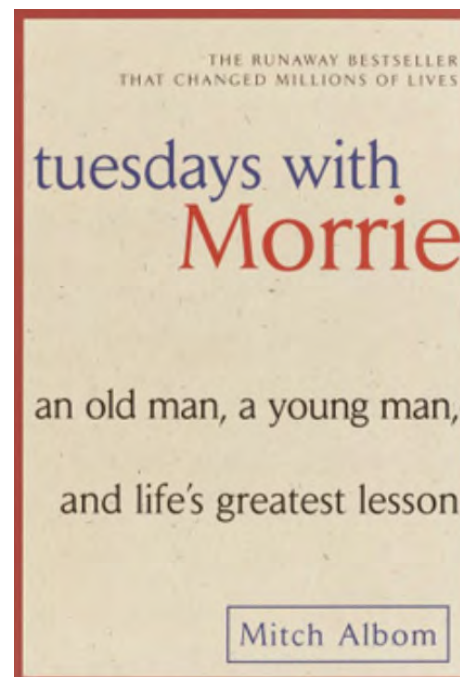
The book *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom, was on the best seller list for five years. Curriculums have been developed around it and quotes from the book are readily found on the internet. The movie, starring Jack Lemmon in his last role, won an Emmy for Best Prime Time Movie. When I ask my audiences who has read the book, over half the audience raise their hands, which is very unusual for any book. What is it about this book that has captured our attention in such all-encompassing, riveting way? It is not a unique book on end of life. There are countless books out there on the subject.

I think it is a combination of things. First, it is a true story with a very lovable character who played several roles in his relationship with Mitch: teacher, mentor, role model, and someone who lived life and met the hideous disease of ALS on his own terms. Chances are we had such a person in our own past who played such a role. We may not remember all the things they said, but we remember the feeling we felt when we were around them. They got us thinking to ourselves, "This is how I want to conduct my life.

He did it and because of that maybe I can do it, too."

Like with Mitch, ideals for many of us started off strong but tended to dim their light with pressures and the everyday calling of supporting ourselves. Mitch got a wakeup call and a second chance when he reconnected with Morrie years later. That possibility exists for all of us, but it requires the steps of awareness of our beliefs about ourselves, reflection, and taking action. We all can identify with Mitch. I used to ask my classes who they identified the most with. They overwhelmingly said they identified with Mitch, but wanted to be like Morrie.

Morrie also faced head-on the subject we all avoid thinking or talking about at all costs in this youth paced culture – death. He did it very bluntly, like when talking to Mitch about his grave, where he planned on being dead. He asked Mitch if he would come and visit him. Mitch responded that it wouldn't be the same with him being dead. Morrie replied, "You talk. I'll listen." His humor, even when facing imminent death, is a big part of the impact of this book.



Morrie also addressed our intense grief over losing a loved one with my favorite all-time quotes, "Death ends a life, not a relationship." I have recalled that quote so many times in my life and how true it is. In my presentations I tell stories about loved ones who have died to illustrate a

point. They are never far from my conscious. These stories also remind me of the impact they had on my life, and how I continue to pass it on.

Morrie was a teacher and he had one last class he wanted to teach the world. Through Mitch and his book, he keeps right on teaching long after he is gone, which was part of his plan. Even though Morrie, the main character in the story, dies, the book is not about dying. It is about living. It is about taking action and being the creator of your life according to your well-thought-out moral compass. It is about dealing with issues and emotions that come up rather than burying them, about not having regrets, about forgiving others and ourselves (maybe the hardest one on the list). It is about realizing we do have a major impact on people around us.

As we get older, it is easy to think that our life does not have a purpose and we'll ease into glide mode, descending to our eventual death. That flight pattern needs to be altered. All of us have the opportunity to impact others – like Morrie did with his attitude, his words, and his actions – every day of our lives. That realization has helped me and I hope you too live Every Day with Morrie!

Dave Kampfschulte has been a hospice volunteer for 32 years with Spectrum Health Hospice and Harbor Hospice. He is the founder and Director of Amazing Circle Workshops and is the author of I'm Dying to Talk with You: 25 years of end of life conversations. He can be reached at dave@amazingcircles.net

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When Is the Best Time to Start Thinking About a Future Move?



BY
LAURA
KELSO

I hear this question often. With many Americans reaching retirement age, the decision of whether to remain in the family home is one of significant debate. The answer is complicated and can only be found by asking more questions.

More than 75% of Americans over 50 desire to stay in their current home.¹ The reality, however, is that a much larger number of adults end up moving at some point. Planning NOW for a future move that may never happen is a wise choice. Here is why.

The Reality Gap

I like to think of this as more of an “optimist gap” than a “reality gap.” My children understand this implicitly. Each time I tell them, “I’ll be done working in five minutes,” or “This project is going to be a piece of cake,” I am not purposely trying to lie to them. When I say it, I honestly believe it to be the truth.

Every. Single. Time. I think it is the same for many older adults. The homes they live in have served them well for decades. They rocked babies there, doled out advice to growing children, and hosted numerous holidays. It is the essence of comfort. The question then becomes, “Is Aging in Place a realistic option for ME?”

Questions to Ask

1. Do I still *really* love living in my home, or just the idea of it? Do I have children, neighbors, or friends close by who could assist in the case of an emergency?
2. How does my spouse feel? Often one spouse is ready to move and the other is not.
3. Is the layout of my home conducive to aging in place? Necessities such as a full bath and laundry on the main level and the ability to accommodate a walker or wheelchair are imperative to safe living.
4. If my home does not currently have those things, is it possible to renovate? If so, are the changes economically feasible?
5. Am I caring for my home the same way I have in the past? Are there expensive repairs such as a new roof or furnace that I have been putting off? What could happen if I continue to procrastinate?



6. Am I keeping up with routine maintenance? Do I enjoy fixing things and keeping up my garden, or has it become a burden? If so, can I hire someone?
7. How do my kids feel? While this is not the MOST important question to ask, it is a legitimate one. If I had to move or passed unexpectedly, am I leaving others with a mess?

What to Do Now

1. **Learn your options.** Smaller home, a condo, senior community? Current city or somewhere new?
2. **Know your numbers.** Qualified realtors, senior housing advisors, and financial advisors can help you evaluate your financial plan.
3. **Know lead times.** Houses take time to prep and sell. Some communities have long waiting lists. Be realistic and plan accordingly.
4. **Make a tentative plan.** A real estate plan is like insurance. You may never need to use it, but not having one can be devastating.
5. **Organize your paperwork.** Wills, trusts, surveys, loan numbers, and insurance details are often needed and may require an update before closing.
6. **Understand real estate.** Markets fluctuate every 7-10 years and have now been strong for over five years. If delaying a move puts you at risk to enter a market where your home might take months or years to sell (remember 2008?), does that affect your plan today?

These questions and ideas just scratch the surface. They are a great place to start discussions with your spouse or friends or to contemplate quietly. If the coronavirus pandemic has taught us anything, it is that life can change in an instant. Developing a plan for an uncertain future can lessen stress and help you enjoy today.

1. AARP article, Oct 2018

Laura Kelso is an Associate Broker with NextHome Champions Real Estate, specializing in downsizing. She created the Grand Rapids Savvy Senior Learning Series (currently on hold) to educate and empower older adults and their families on topics associated with safe living options. For more info, visit GRSAvvySeniors.com or contact Laura at 616-724-7200 or LauraKelso@gmail.com



My Social Security, it's not just for retirees



BY
VONDA
VANTIL

You don't have to be retired or even close to retirement to benefit from a personal my Social Security account. Calling Social Security is rarely necessary once you have one. You can do much of your business with us online.

With your personal my Social Security account, you can:

- Request a replacement Social Security card (in most states and the District of Columbia).
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- Check the status of your Social Security application when you do decide to apply.
- Review your work history.

If you already receive benefits, you can also:

- Request a replacement Social Security card (in most states and the District of Columbia).
- Get a benefit verification or proof of income letter.
- Set up or change your direct deposit.
- Change your address.
- Request a replacement Medicare card.
- Get a Social Security 1099 form (SSA-1099).
- Opt out of receiving certain notices by mail and receive them in the secure Message Center.

Please help us spread the word. Let your family and friends know that they can create a my Social Security account today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

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



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(held at 10 am via Zoom)

Friday, March 19, 2021
Friday, April 16, 2021

Join Online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82726510501>

Questions? (616) 222-7015 | LaceyC@aaawm.org
Or visit www.aaawm.org/afsi

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- Turn understanding into practical action

Sessions are currently taking place virtually, hosted by the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan. Call or visit the website for upcoming dates!

Learn More at www.aaawm.org/dfmi

(616) 222-7036



Keith's World Freedom at 16



BY
KEITH
SIPE

After my grandfather passed away, my dad had the chance to purchase his car. It was a 1957 Oldsmobile Super 88, green over white. It was the family's second car for the most part. But once I was 16 that Oldsmobile came in handy. Might even say it was my first car.

In my younger years it seemed everyone just couldn't wait for their driver's license. I always thought that if my parents were farmers, maybe I would have been able to drive earlier than 16. You see, in farming communities kids were driving tractors and trucks all over the farm and learned at a very early age.

I drove every once in a while before I was 16; my parents seemed interested teaching me. I remember sitting on my dad's lap and steering the car. No, not aiming the car. Of course, this was on back roads where there wasn't much traffic. Driving at an early age surely helped when taking drivers training. I was more prepared for the adventures in driving.

When you turned 16 with a driver license in hand, you found this new freedom. You could go anywhere, and I truly enjoyed the freedom.

The 1957 Oldsmobile was a thirsty car to drive; it just loved gasoline. I remember my dad saying that he had to turn the car off while filling, for if he didn't, he could never fill the gasoline tank up. Of course, he was exaggerating--a little anyway. Back in then, gasoline was around 27 cents a gallon. I found that when I went out for a cruise in the Oldsmobile, it was very difficult to pass a gas station. The steering wheel seemed to pull towards the gas station. I had to fight it every time.

Even at 27 cents a gallon, it still was a lot of money for me. At the age of 16, I had this summer job paying 75 cent an hour -- big bucks! At the age of 17, my second job paid a buck an hour. Nine-hour days and...well, you can figure that at a buck an hour it wasn't much. But it was workable and better than nothing, as my dad would always say! Most of the money I earned would go for gasoline and an occasional 15 cent McDonald hamburger and fries, also 15 cents.

Since the Oldsmobile was the second car, it had to be shared. So, my parents, my wonderful parents, let me have a motorcycle. It was a 1964 Honda 150. After a year of riding the Honda 150 there was a need for speed, but I didn't say that, I just upgraded to a Honda 305 Super Hawk. These two motorcycles were very good on the wallet.

In my last year of high school, the time came to let the Oldsmobile go and we bought a 1965 red Volkswagen. The Volkswagen was found at Pete's Used Cars on Getty Street. It cost \$1,200, not a bad deal at all as the Volkswagen was only a couple of years old. It was a great car, and it had a sunroof and the rear side windows opened. I could drive by most gas stations without stopping.

After high school, I joined the Air Force and my first assignment was in Wichita, Kansas, at McConnell AFB. I went a few months without a vehicle for the first time since I was able to drive. At Christmas of 1968 I flew home and drove my 1965 Volkswagen back to base. Once again I had my freedom--well, sort of, as I now belonged to Uncle Sam. Oh, and one more thing.... I filled up the VW in St. Louis and Kansas City for five bucks each stop.

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

Senior Safety & Security

An Update on Scams Targeting Seniors



BY
JOE
STAPEL

In 2018, a Multi-Disciplinary Case Review Team or MDT was assembled to cover Muskegon, Ottawa, and Oceana Counties. This group meets monthly to review active cases of vulnerable adult abuse, neglect, and financial exploration crimes. As I noted in a previous article in Senior Perspectives, members of this team include the prosecutor, law enforcement detectives, caseworkers, legal services, victim advocates, community mental health professionals, and geriatric physicians.

The first year was very successful, but a need was realized for assigned investigators and a dedicated prosecutor to properly investigate these very complicated cases in order to prosecute alleged offenders.

This resulted in a review of 90 cases for Fiscal Year 2019-20. This was an increase of 300% over the first year. Of these 90 cases, 17 of them resulted in charges against 21 individuals. The prosecutor tried an additional 17 cases resulting in 19 additional individuals being found guilty.

In one year, the Team increased the prosecution rate by 306%, with 40 individuals convicted. In addition,

all 107 senior victims received outreach services from the partnering agencies which included: -

1. Education on how to prevent this from happening again
2. Assistance in obtaining guardianships or conservatorships to protect their assets
3. Access to mental health screenings
4. Availability of comprehensive medical examinations for dementia screening and interventions
5. Referrals to Long-Term Care Facilities or In-Home Services
6. Assistance in evicting "parasitic caregivers"
7. Guidance in working with banks to close and reopen new accounts to stop fraud
8. Education on identifying fraudulent international relationships and scams

The prosecutor was able to order \$1,612,616.00 in restitution to five victims. As of September 30, 2020, there were 53 cases open. Currently, the team is working on 78 cases.

SafeSeniors has additional new communication materials available. Check them out at www.SafeSeniors.info. Informational flyers are available and cover topics such as:

1. SafeSeniors: Who they are and what they do

2. Imposter Scams: Romance Scams
3. Impostor Scams: Grandchild or Friend "In Trouble" Scams
4. Impostor Scams: Government Scams or Financial Institution Scams

These flyers cover Red Flags to look for and What to Do in response. If you are experiencing or suspect abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a family member, friend, or neighbor, call state-wide 855-444-3911.

Source - SafeSeniors Collaborative Group of Muskegon, Oceana, and Ottawa Counties

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

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

Answers for Word Search, Crossword Puzzle and Suduko on Pages 16 & 17

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

Boggle Answers:

TWO FOUR EIGHT TEN TWELVE TWENTY THIRTY
FORTY FIFTY

Jumble Answers:

PUZZLE #1:

RAZOR FAITH ROCKET MEMORY
After realizing how much corn he had for sale, the
farmer was grinning — EAR TO EAR

PUZZLE #2:

GRANT HONOR INSIST RODENT
It's easy to add zero plus zero because
there's — NOTHING TO IT

SCRABBLE G, R, A, M, S										SOLUTION
G ₂	O ₁	D ₂	D ₂	E ₁	S ₁	S ₁	RACK 1 =	60		
A ₁	M ₃	N ₁	E ₁	S ₁	I ₁	A ₁	RACK 2 =	62		
B ₃	O ₁	O ₁	K ₅	L ₁	E ₁	T ₁	RACK 3 =	63		
F ₄	L ₁	O ₁	W ₄	A ₁	G ₂	E ₁	RACK 4 =	64		
A ₁	W ₄	K ₅	W ₄	A ₁	R ₁	D ₂	RACK 5 =	86		
PAR SCORE 260-270									TOTAL	335

SCRABBLE G, R, A, M, S										SOLUTION
F ₄	O ₁	O ₁	T ₁	B ₃	A ₁	G ₂	RACK 1 =	63		
A ₁	S ₁	H ₄	T ₁	R ₁	A ₁	Y ₄	RACK 2 =	63		
D ₂	A ₁	M ₃	A ₁	G ₂	E ₁	R ₁	RACK 3 =	64		
H ₄	O ₁	T ₁	S ₁	P ₃	O ₁	T ₁	RACK 4 =	70		
F ₄	L ₁	O ₁	T ₁	S ₁	A ₁	M ₃	RACK 5 =	62		
PAR SCORE 265-275									TOTAL	322



The Source for Seniors



Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM) connects adults to quality services that promote and preserve their dignity, independence and well-being, coordinates support and education for caregivers, and leads advocacy efforts on behalf of older adults.

AAAWM and our Network Partners Help You Stay in Your Home - We Offer

- Care Management
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- Choices for Independence
- Elder Abuse Prevention Education
- Healthy Aging Programs
- Information & Assistance
- Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Medicare/Medicaid Assistance
- Nursing Facility Transition
- Adult Day Services
- Congregate Meals
- Counseling
- Home Delivered Meals
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- Outreach & Assistance
- Respite for Caregivers
- Senior Centers
- Transportation

Contact Us



The Source for Seniors

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Services are funded through Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency and the Kent County Senior Millage.