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Senior Beacon

IF YOU ARE 50 OR OLDER YOU SHOULD READ IT!!

AUGUST, 2009 Vol. 28: No. 1 Established Aug., 1982 325 Consecutive Months!

Seniors Lose Property Tax Exemption In Budget Cuts

by Eileen Doherty

Denver, CO. In 2000, Colorado voters approved giving senior citizens a break on their property taxes on the first \$200,000 of assessed value. This same exemption was extended to disabled veterans in 2007. However, the constitutional amendment allows the Colorado legislature to raise or lower the property tax exemption at any time.

The legislature has used this authority to raise or lower twice – once in 2003 and again in 2009 - each time eliminating the exemption because of revenue shortfalls and state budgetary needs.

After the 2003 action and when the state had more money in 2007, funding was restored based on the property taxes paid in 2006.

The senior property tax exemption program is available to all senior citizens, regardless of income, to receive a reduction of property taxes on their primary residence. Elimination of the program this year allows the state to save \$91 million. Originally, the governor proposed a three year cut in the program; however, legislators were successful at limiting the cut to one year. Current budget projec-

tions suggest that most likely the cut will be extended.

The tax exemption was especially beneficial to low income seniors. Originally the bill was designed to help those seniors on a limited income who were unable to pay their property taxes. However, through the efforts of several senior groups, the exemption was expanded to include all seniors over the age of 65 who have lived in their own homes for more than 10 years. This policy increased the overall cost to the state.

The program is fairly simple. If a senior citizen's home is assessed at \$125,000 and the property tax assessment is \$950, the annual taxes are reduced to \$475. This represents a savings of 50% or \$475 for a homeowner.

Similarly, if a house is valued at \$300,000, the 50% reduction applies to the first \$200,000 of value, with the homeowner paying 100% on the last \$100,000. As in the example above, if the property tax was \$3000, the home owner would get a 50% reduction on the first \$200,000 or pay \$1000 and would pay 100% of tax on the last \$100,000 of value. Thus the total tax bill would be \$2000 rather than

the original assessment of \$3000.

Many seniors received their property tax assessments earlier this year. Due to the state budget shortfall, seniors are now facing significant increases in their property taxes, many of them experiencing a 100% increase.

For many seniors, this increase has caused them to look for new ways to pay the tax bill when it comes due in February 2010. Low income seniors can qualify for the Property Tax/Rent/Heat Credit. To qualify for the credit, an individual must be a Colorado resident, be over the 65 and have less than \$1000/month of income (\$1309/month for couples).

Based on the amount of property tax (or rent) that was paid in 2008, the individual can receive up to \$760 in a credit. Individuals can apply for the 2007 rebate until December 31, 2009 and for the 2008 rebate until December 31, 2010. In January 2010, individuals will be able to apply for the 2009 rebate. Applications are mailed to the Colorado Department of Revenue.

Seniors who are current on their property taxes may also apply for the

Property Tax Deferral program. Through the Deferral program, the state will pay the property taxes and file a lien on the property. The lien, which is interest bearing, can stay on the property as long as needed, but will accrue interest.

To help with these increased costs in property taxes, seniors may also want to apply for utility assistance through LEAP starting November 1, 2009. Individuals whose monthly income is less than \$1670 (couples \$2240/month) can apply for help with heating costs to the local county department of human services.

For assistance with applications for rebates, the deferral program, or LEAP, seniors can call 303-333-3482.

Eileen Doherty, M.S. is the Executive Director of Senior Answers and Services and the Colorado Gerontological Society. She has more than 35 years of experience in gerontology in administration, research, training and education, and clinical practice. She can be reached at 303-333-3482 or at doherty001@att.net.



Healthcare Expansion To Bring Higher Costs To Seniors

by Shannon Benton - TSCL

Alexandria, VA (July 6, 2009) Two out of three seniors would face higher out-of-pocket Medicare costs under a proposal under consideration for expanding healthcare to 46 million un-

insured Americans, says The Senior Citizens League (TSCL), one of the nation's largest nonpartisan seniors groups. As a way to cut federal spending on Medicare, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) recently recommended that Congress

impose new co-pays and deductibles on Medicare beneficiaries while simultaneously placing new restrictions on what Medicare supplements can cover.

"Medicare beneficiaries already spend a big portion of their incomes- as much as one-third of their Social Security checks - on out-of-pocket health care costs," states Daniel O'Connell, Chairman of TSCL. "Adding substantial new cost-sharing requirements would make Medicare services unaffordable for more seniors, especially once people reach their 70's and 80's," O'Connell says.

Many healthcare policy experts say Medicare supplements like Medigap policies are too generous, because their "first dollar coverage" of Medicare's deductibles and coinsurance insulates people from the cost of services. Deductibles, coinsurance, and co-payments are intended to make beneficiaries aware of the costs associated with the use of healthcare services, and to discourage people from using services unless necessary. By requiring Medicare beneficiaries to pay deductibles and co-insurance, the CBO says people would be more cost-sensitive about scheduling appointments with doctors, elective hospital procedures, and expensive imaging services.

"But seniors purchase Medicare supplements precisely because they cover Medicare's substantial uncovered costs - costs that many seniors find hard enough to afford as it is," says O'Connell. According to a new survey conducted by TSCL earlier this year, 41 percent of seniors responding said that due to the economy they "occasionally" cut back on visits to the doctor and hospital outpatient services in the past year, and another

21 percent said they "frequently" did so. Adding new deductibles and co-payments and prohibiting Medigap plans from covering those costs are likely to make many Medicare beneficiaries forego necessary health care," says O'Connell.

TSCL strongly opposes adding new beneficiary cost-sharing requirements and restricting Medigap coverage. "Congress can find substantial Medicare savings by clamping down on waste, fraud and abuse in the program. Medicare fraud and abuse cost taxpayers an estimated \$60 billion a year," says O'Connell. TSCL supports The Seniors and Taxpayers Obligation Protection or "STOP" Act, S.975, introduced by U.S. Senators Mel Martinez (FL) and John Cornyn (TX). "By preventing fraud, Congress can work toward keeping Medicare out-of-pocket costs lower and more affordable for all," O'Connell says. To learn more, visit TSCL on the web at www.SeniorsLeague.org.

With over one million supporters, The Senior Citizens League is one of the nation's largest nonpartisan seniors groups. Located just outside Washington, D.C., its mission is to promote and assist members and supporters, to educate and alert senior citizens about their rights and freedoms as U.S. Citizens, and to protect and defend the benefits senior citizens have earned and paid for. The Senior Citizens League is a proud affiliate of The Retired Enlisted Association. Please visit www.SeniorsLeague.org or call 1-800-333-8725 for more information.

Distributed by The Senior Exchange, Inc. Serving The Mature American With Timely, Low-Cost, Self-Help Information

National Cataract Month

by Dr. Paul D. Rastrelli, MD

Paul D. Rastrelli, M.D., ophthalmologist and surgeon with Rocky Mountain Eye Center, will be hosting a FREE "Cataract Seminar" on Tuesday, August 25, 2009 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Pueblo North location (27 Montebello Road - just off of Jerry Murphy Road). This free seminar is open to the public and Dr. Rastrelli encourages anyone interested in learning more about cataracts to attend. Hors d'oeuvres and refreshments will be provided.

August is "Cataract Awareness Month." A cataract is a clouding of the lens in the eye that affects vision. Most cataracts are related to aging. Cataracts are very common in older people. According to the National Eye Institute, by age 80, more than half of all Americans either have a cataract or have had cataract surgery. Many people have cataracts in both eyes. In these cases, surgery is generally performed on one eye first with the second procedure to follow in a few weeks.

According to the National Eye Institute, cataract removal is one of the most common operations performed in the United States. It is also one of the safest and most effective types of surgery. A quick survey of most medical office waiting rooms would find several patients having difficulty in coping with bright lights while driving or performing other daily tasks. Here in southeastern Colorado, the surgeons at Rocky Mountain Eye Center and Rocky Mountain Laser and Surgery Center perform over 3000 eye procedures annually.

Cataract surgery is a safe and common surgical procedure. Prior to the procedure, the patient is given a local anesthetic. This means that the patient will remain awake during the procedure, but the eye will feel numb during the surgery. The use of local anesthesia lowers the risks and recovery time compared to the use of regional anesthesia. An anesthesiologist will administer I.V. medications to ease anxiety. Cataract surgeries are conducted on an outpatient basis - no overnight stay is required. In fact, soon after resting, patients are able to go home and having something light to eat or drink.

In 1999, the doctors at Rocky Mountain Eye Center decided to build the Rocky Mountain Laser and Surgery Center. The Rocky Mountain Laser & Surgery Center today is well-equipped with the newest technologies to remove cataracts and also has the latest in laser technology. Rocky Mountain Eye Center's



SEE "RASTRELLI" PAGE 19.

I'm Still Above Ground

by James R. Grasso, Chief Cook & Bottle Washer



Wow! Beginning Our 28th Year

Another year is in the bank and *Senior Beacon* now starts its 28th. This month marks the 325th consecutive month we have brought *Senior Beacon* to the Senior Community. We have always tried to get as much information into the publication as possible. Lately we have added Napsnet to our list of contributors. Napsnet usually does articles on and about certain companies and their products. This doesn't mean we are endorsing said products or companies. We are just giving you ammunition to make informed decisions about your lives. Always be a wise consumer!

We are currently on a campaign to increase our availability. Our goal is to increase our distribution sites to 120 places That's about a 20% increase.

Our biggest change is the name of our op-ed page. It's still *Just One Guy's Opinion* but we thought this would be a bit more humorous and in keeping with these troubling times, especially for the Senior Community. Go to our website at www.seniorbeacon.info to see just how much we have expanded our reach.

Cañon City Hosts Senior Fair

It is time for the 8th Annual Senior Fair. The fair is proudly sponsored by Seniors Inc. Home Care, St. Thomas More Hospital/Progressive Care Center, and Parkview Medical Center.

The fair will be held at Evangelical Free Church, 3000 East Main from 9:00-Noon on September 5, 2009.

Seniors Inc. would like to thank the community including the many sponsors and exhibitors for making the Annual Senior Fair a big event. This fair is free to the community. This year's fair will feature fifty five organizations and businesses providing information supporting a healthy lifestyle for older adults.

The Fair will showcase Senior Housing, Medical Resources, Senior Service vendors and Health Screenings include bone density, blood pressure, vision and hearing. Door Prizes will be given along with Handouts and Goodie Bags plus the



2009 Resource Guide.

New this year will be: Parkview sponsoring "Lunch with the Podiatrist" from Noon-1:00 and a KRLN/Star Country radio remote during the fair.

Some of our co-sponsors for this years fair: are Arkansas Valley Surgery Center, Cañon Lodge Care Center, Ears 2 U Hearing Aid Services, Master Printers, Orchard, Springs Dental, Skyline Vision, *Senior Beacon* and SRDA Lifeline.

Seniors Inc.Home Care, St. Thomas More Hospital/Progressive Care Center and Parkview Medical Center along with all of our co-sponsors and exhibitors are looking forward to visiting with our guests.

And You Think I'm Biased?

from the internet and a reputable source... true or not, it hits home.
DON RICKLES ROASTS THE DEMOCRATS

Hello, dummies! Oh my God, look at you. Anyone else hurt in the accident? Seriously, **Senator Reid** has a face of a Saint - A Saint Bernard. Now I know why they call you the arithmetic man. You add partisanship, subtract pleasure, divide attention, and multiply ignorance. Reid is so physically unimposing, he makes Pee Wee Herman look like Mr. T. And Reid's so dumb, he makes Speaker Pelosi look like an intellectual. Nevada is soooo screwed!

Speaking of the Speaker... Nancy Pelosi, hubba, hubba! Hey baby, you must've been something before electricity. Seriously, the Speaker may look like an idiot and talk like an idiot but don't let that fool you. She really is an idiot. Madame Speaker... want to make twelve bucks the hard way? Pelosi says she's not partisan, but her constituents call her Madame Pelossilini.

Charlie Rangel... still alive and still robbing the taxpayers blind. What does that make, six decades of theft? Rangel's the only man with a rent-controlled mansion. He's the guy who writes our tax laws but forgot to pay taxes on \$75 grand in rental income! So why isn't he the Treasury Secretary? Rangel runs more scams than a Nigerian banker.

Barney Frank - he's a better actor than Fred Flintstone. Consider... he and Dodd caused the whole financial meltdown and they're not only not serving time with Bubba and Rodney, they're still heading up the financial system! Let's all admit it.... Barney Frank slobbers more than a sheepdog on novocaine. How did this guy get elected? Oh, that's right.... he's from Massachusetts. That's the state that elects Mr. Charisma, **John Kerry** -- man of the people!

You know, if **Senator Dodd** were any more crooked, you could open wine bottles with him. Here's a news flash, Dodd: when your local newspaper calls you a "lying weasel," it may be time to retire. Dodd's involved in more shady deals than the Clintons. Even Rangel looks up to him!

Press Secretary Robert Gibbs, I really respect you... especially given your upbringing. All you've overcome... I heard your birth certificate is an apology from the condom factory. I don't know what makes you so dumb, but it really works for you. Personally, I don't think you are a fool, but what's my opinion compared to that of thousands of others? Gibbs does his best expositional work in the bathroom every morning.

As for **President Obama**, what can I say? They say President Obama's arrogant and aloof, but I don't agree. Now it's true when you enter the room, you have to

SEE "OP-ED" PAGE 9.

CHUCK

Honest, Open, No Nonsense

Chuck Green and his wife Susan came to Pueblo West eight years ago. They have fallen in love with the place, except for the apathy in its local government.

A small number of voters -- only about 550 among 17,000 registered voters -- has commandeered the district's Metro Board.

It's time that changed!



If you like details in politics, this campaign is just for you. Visit the website www.chuckfortheboard.com and you will find a reservoir of detail about Chuck and his campaign: Why is he running? What is his background? How does he stand on the issues? Why is he running against incumbent Bill Vickers?

Others offer slogans – this is a new kind of politics

Election Day is
August 18.
Early voting is
now under way.
Be informed and
VOTE!

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT ELECTION FOR PUEBLO WEST. It will determine whether government in our town continues along the current divisive, angry way, or whether a new era of cooperation and small-town friendliness is restored. Voters have a clear choice. The current board is dominated by negative attitudes and a vindictive tone. There is a veil of secrecy that prevails, despite hollow rhetoric about open government. All the incumbents have to say is "Vote No." Chuck is among the challengers who have more to say – much more. They are willing to tackle the hard issues and take tough stands. They are committed to serve the entire community, not just the interests of a few.

To learn more about Chuck's refreshing attitude, take a closer look:

www.chuckfortheboard.com

Heal the wounds – make Pueblo West proud again

Here's A History Lesson On Our Nation's Beginnings

Whatever happened to the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence?

Five signers were captured by the British as traitors, and tortured before

they died.

Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned.

Two lost their sons serving in

the Revolutionary Army; another had two sons captured.

Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War. They signed and they

pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

What kind of men were they?

• Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists.

• Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners; men of means, well educated, but they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts, and died in rags.

Thomas McKeam was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward.

Vandals or soldiers looted the properties of **Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge, and Middleton**.

At the battle of Yorktown, **Thomas Nelson, Jr.**, noted that the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt.

Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months.

John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than a year he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children vanished.

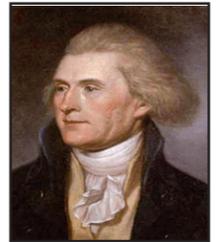
As we go forward with our new administration including Congress, take a few minutes to remember how our country began and where we are being asked to go.

Remember: Freedom is never free and our freedom makes us great!

Here's A Quote To Remember Thomas Jefferson

3rd. President, Democrat

Term of Office: January 20, 1777 to January 20, 1781



"A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have."

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APATHY

IS NO LONGER AN OPTION

When only 3% of the registered voters elect board members, well-organized, small special interest groups win and the community at large loses! There are more than 16,000 registered voters in Pueblo West; the top candidate in the last election received less than 500 votes.

Pueblo West faces too many important challenges to allow a majority of the board members to represent such a small base. The result is arrogance, vindictive behavior, and a vehemently divided community.

VOTE

AUGUST 18TH

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news of the weird

COMPILED BY CHUCK SHEPHERD
FOR SENIOR BEACON



LEAD STORY

Apparently believing that religious competition in the Middle East is not exciting enough already, the television station Kanal T in Istanbul, Turkey, is preparing a reality game show for September release in which 10 certified atheists try to resist conversion by a priest, a rabbi, a Muslim imam and a Buddhist monk. The exact rules have not been disclosed, but the "winning" convert will receive an expense-paid trip to the holy land of the most persuasive religion (the Vatican, Jerusalem, Mecca or Tibet). According to a July Reuters report, Turkey's Islamic Religious Affairs Directorate, not surprisingly, had vowed never to co-operate.

Bright Ideas

-- By early July, Jonathan Baltiesz and his wife and kids were desperate to find their 10-year-old black Labrador mix, Simon, who had run away. They had one more plan, however. The family members urinated into containers and sprinkled the contents at various locales around their town (Bristol, England), laid out so that Simon could follow a trail home. (Results were unavailable at press time.)

-- The British charter airline Thomas Cook announced at the gate in the resort island of Mallorca in June that, regardless of seat assignments on a departing flight, passengers should sit toward the rear of the aircraft in order to balance the load (since it was already front-heavy with cargo and therefore harder on the pilot). Not surprisingly, 71 apprehensive passengers refused to board. (Also, some incoming passengers on that same aircraft, which experienced a similar balance problem, had dramatically dropped to their knees in the terminal, kissing the ground, calling the flight their worst ever.)

The Continuing Crisis

The New Age movement might

be growing too inclusive, according to a July report in the St. Paul Pioneer Press (published in a city where the concept of "New Age" is already highly nuanced). "(P)agans feel jilted," wrote the reporter. "Chiropractors want out (of consideration)," "channelers wonder if they belong," and "organic farmers don't want to be near pet psychics." Said one St. Paul merchant, "I have customers who completely believe in fairies and will laugh at you if you believe in Bigfoot." But, said one New Age magazine editor, the movement should "encompass anything on a spiritual path -- Bigfoot, Jesus, Buddha. Even worshipping a frog is sort of OK."

-- Some parents of students at the Al-Islah Muslim girls' school in Blackburn, England, discovered that a staff secretary, Shifa Patel, 28, had a Facebook page, featuring innocuous photos of herself but dressed in other than her full-body robe and headscarf, which are her everyday school attire. The photos also reveal that she has close-cropped hair. One assumption led to another, and soon Patel was accused of being a man who dresses as a woman in order to mingle with females. Patel went to the trouble of getting a doctor's certificate of her gender, but the parents refused to accept it, and in June, Patel (and the school's headmistress) resigned in despair.

-- A young copperhead snake trespassed into a building near Poolesville, Md., in June and delivered several venomous nips to the hand of Sam Pettengill. Often snakes do not survive such encounters because the victim's first impulse is to kill the attacker. Fortunately for this snake, it had wandered into a Buddhist temple, and Pettengill had an obligation, according to a Washington Post report. Before he set out for the hospital for treatment (which turned out to be four antivenin cycles), Pettengill took the snake in his throbbing, increasingly pain-wracked hand, circled a prayer room three

times to bless it, and released it back into the woods.

-- World's Toughest Job: Farah Ahmed Omar was appointed recently as chief of Somalia's navy, which ordinarily would be on the front lines against the throng of pirates operating off the country's coast. Omar's job is difficult, though, because the Somalian navy has not a single boat nor a single sailor, and Omar himself has not been to sea in 23 years. However, he told a reporter he was optimistic that the piracy could be stopped.

Fine Points of the Law

-- An 18-year-old, severely mentally challenged, Paris, Texas, man was sentenced in February to 100 years in prison for a single act of what might amount to the childhood sex game of "doctor" with a 6-year-old neighbor. The man has an IQ of 47, and no coercion or violence was involved, but the jury was not given the option to send the man to a care facility in lieu of prison. In fact, his original lawyer failed even to argue his client's incompetency as a defense because, he said, he thought the man obviously would get probation. In a final touch, Lamar County judge Eric Clifford, able to punish the man on just one count with four other counts running concurrently, instead chose to stack the five counts to total 100 years, and in April, after listening to a parade of witnesses beg him to reconsider the sentence, he refused.

People With Issues

(1) Todd Hall, 36, was sentenced to a year in prison after his conviction in Bentonville, Ark., in June for habitually biting the toes of his son, which Hall said he did up to age 6 as routine discipline. (He had earlier been on probation for the disciplinary biting of his 10-month-old daughter.) (2) In June in Muncie, Ind., in his second such conviction in seven months, Robert Stahl, 64, was found guilty of resolving disputes with men in their 50s by reaching into their mouths and yanking out their dentures.

Least Competent Criminals

(1) A Polynesian man in his 20s was being sought as the robber of the Black Diamond Equipment store in Salt Lake City in June. He made off with some gear from the ski and climbing accessory store, but had originally demanded jewelry, as he apparently thought he was knocking off a "diamond" store. (2) Motorist Zackary Johnson was arrested in Athens, Ga., in June after pulling over a passing police car to inquire whether he had any warrants outstanding against him.

No, answered the officer after a computer check, but he noted that Johnson's driver's license is under suspension, and he was arrested.

A News of the Weird Classic (2000)

Rarely has a city experienced a "better" year of weird news than Akron, Ohio, in 2000. A father was indicted for constantly roughing up his gifted teenage daughters to encourage even higher achievement (including threatening to kill one for misspelling "cappelletti" in the National Spelling Bee). A man was found living with his father's corpse for 11 years, discovered only when his mother died, and he failed to bury her, also. A 69-year-old man sued a woman for tricking him into marrying her when he had intended to marry her mother. A woman defended a charge of sexually molesting her 7-year-old son, by claiming that the family dog had raped him. A 10-year-old boy, trying to avoid leaf-raking chores by hiding underneath them, was hospitalized when his mother accidentally drove over the leaves. A high school coach got caught cheating when he sneaked in to run the second leg of his school's 4x100 relay at a track meet.

Unconventional Medicine

British construction worker Martin Jones, 42, who lost one eye and was blinded in the other in a 1997 explosion, regained his sight this year as a result of surgery in which part of his tooth was implanted in the eye. Dr. Christopher Liu of the Sussex Eye Clinic used a piece of tooth because a "living" "anchor" was necessary to hold a patch of Jones' skin underneath his eyelid, to generate blood supply while a new lens formed. When the lens was healthy enough, Dr. Liu made a hole in the cornea for light to pass, and Jones feasted his eye on his wife, whom he had married four years ago, sight unseen.

Can't Possibly Be True

-- Until Mayor Sharon McShurley changed the protocol this year, fire stations in Muncie, Ind., had been delivering reports to department headquarters downtown by dropping them off in fire engines. McShurley ordered the department to learn how to send reports by e-mail.

-- In June, the New York Police Department spent \$99,000 on a typewriter repair contract, which will take on increasing importance since last year NYPD bought thousands of new typewriters, manual and electric, costing the city almost \$1 million. The NYPD still is not even close to computerizing some of

SEE "WEIRD" PAGE 21.



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For A Healthier You



Robb & Hager Give Us Some Bits & Pieces

by Vicki Robb - RetireSafe

**Answer to Health Care Crisis Can Save Lives, Money
New White Paper Reveals Power of Statins in Fighting Cardiovascular Disease**

Washington, DC (June 29, 2009)

The adverse health and financial impact of cardiovascular disease - the number one killer of men and women in America - can be significantly reduced through the well-monitored use of statins according to a major white paper release today by the non-profit Senior Center for Health and Security (SCHS).

The white paper, *Saving America's Seniors with Statins: Solving a Health Care Crisis*, explores the ramifications of heart disease and stroke in America, and the critical role that cholesterol-lowering drugs called statins can play in addressing it. Along with physician supervised diet and exercise programs, the correct statin for each individual patient can sig-

nificantly lower the risk of heart disease, help prevent heart attack and stroke, and reduce health care expenditures.

"Meeting your cholesterol goal is a top priority for good heart health," said SCHS Policy Director Al Cors. "There are many different statin options available and it's important to talk with your doctor to determine which statin is the right statin to help you reach that goal."

Studies demonstrate that the six most widely used statins can save lives and lower health care costs, but the white paper notes that statins are not identical to each other prompting SCHS to urge patients, insurers and health care professionals to consider the different pharmacological properties of different statins in concert with differing patient risk factors including age, sex, race, heredity and other unique case considerations.

The SCHS paper noted the results of numerous clinical studies of different statins in crafting the report. A November 2008

study showed that men and women using one particular statin suffered half as many strokes, heart attacks and deaths from cardiovascular causes as those taking a placebo. A different study on a different statin that same month demonstrated an important correlation between improved kidney function and use of that statin. A third study showed that men who took a third variety of statin for five years experienced fewer deaths and heart attacks 10 years later even though most had stopped taking the drug.

Statin use can also result in lower health care costs, according to the white paper. For 2009, the cost of treating stroke and heart disease in the U.S., combined with lost industrial productivity due to disability and death, is estimated at \$475 billion. These costs are expected to increase as the population ages and SCHS notes that statin use can play a significant role in better controlling these rising costs.

Cors stressed the need for comprehensive



communication between patients, doctors and insurance providers, calling it critical to determining the best statin regimen for cardiovascular health. "Costs for brand name medicines and insurance formularies are always changing and the only way to know is through good communications," said Cors. "Many patients don't know they have affordable access to the most effective medications," said Cors. The full report is available online at http://www.seniorsforcures.org/6-22-09_statsins.html

1900 Campus Commons Drive, Suite 100, Reston, VA 20191 PH: 703-766-6360 www.SeniorsForCures.org

NEW GOUT DRUG APPROVED

by Angela Hager-Arthritis Assn

According to a recent article published in the May/June issue of *Arthritis Today*, the food and drug administration (FDA) has approved the gout-busting drug febuxostat (Uloric), which like allopurinol (Zyloprim), the current gold-standard medication for this condition, works by reducing levels of uric acid in the body. When uric acid builds up, it can turn into needle-like crystals that deposit in the joints, causing intense pain.

Gout is a disease characterized by elevated levels of uric acid in the bloodstream. In this condition, crystals of monosodium urate (MSU) or uric acid are deposited on the particular cartilage of joints, tendons and surrounding tissues. Gout causes sudden, severe attacks of pain and tenderness, redness, warmth, and swelling in some joints. Gout usually affects one joint at a time and is often found in the big toe.

While Zyloprim helps to reduce uric acid levels, side effects include potentially fatal reactions so it is wise to limit the amount that most patients can tolerate.

Uloric is also less taxing on the kidneys than Zyloprim, making it safer for patients with kidney problems. Uloric is the first drug in 40 years specifically approved for gout.

Hollister Wins Award

by Angela Hager

The Arthritis Foundation has selected local Denver pediatric rheumatologist Dr. Roger Hollister with the Earl Brewer Award for Physician Leadership. This award is presented to a physician who has fostered a reputation for excellence in his or her field; developed an approach or strategy in research and service in pediatric rheumatology that is considered a model approach or system by his or her peers; can be replicated by other professionals and that has had an impact on his or her local care system; and has been involved with patient care and been an advocate with children with rheumatic diseases.

Contact Angela at Arthritis Foundation-Rocky Mountain Chapter
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Fashion: Looooking Gooood!

Lychee Fruit Helps Safeguard Skin From Sun

(NAPSI)-You probably know to cover up with sunscreen before you head outdoors, but when it comes to protecting yourself from the sun, it may be what's on the inside that counts. Research now shows that taking a certain antioxidant supplement derived from the Asian lychee fruit could limit the sun's damaging UVB rays.



When UVB rays hit your skin, two things happen: The skin becomes inflamed--red, swollen, painful and hot--and free radicals are produced. Together, these two reactions cause damage to the skin cells, which can hasten skin aging and trigger the development of skin cancer.

A new study published in the Journal of Functional Foods found that a lychee supplement called Oligonol prevents UVB damage to the skin by suppressing inflammation and revving up the body's natural antioxidant defenses.

The supplement provided protection from both sun-induced skin aging and skin cancer.

The Power of the Lychee

For centuries, the lychee has been known for its health- and beauty-promoting qualities, mainly because it is rich in polyphenols--the superstar antioxidants that make green tea, chocolate and berries so good for you. In fact, it was recently confirmed that the lychee fruit contains more polyphenols than any other edible plant except for the strawberry. But because of their large size, these polyphenols are normally difficult to absorb. However, Japanese researchers solved this problem by employing a proprietary technology to drastically reduce the size and improve the absorption of lychee polyphenols. The result is Oligonol.

Protection Year-Round

A previous study in female subjects aged 26 to 60 found that after taking the supplement for 12 weeks, women experienced a gradual reduction in freckles, a decrease in wrinkles and an improvement in skin texture. Experts say these findings make a compelling argument for taking the supplement year-round--in the summer to prevent

skin damage and throughout the year for younger-looking skin.

For more information, visit www.oligonol.info.

Finding A Suit For Your Body Shape

(NAPSI)-Bathing suit shopping does not have to put you in a bad mood. There is a way to find a suit that flatters--and it all comes down to fit.

The best place to start is at the very beginning--with body shape. If your hips are wider than your bust, a shape known as triangle, then go for swim separates in lighter colors or patterned tops to emphasize your upper body and darker bottoms to minimize hips.

For inverted triangle shapes, meaning your shoulders are wider than your hips, a skirtini will balance your silhouette. If you have an hourglass shape, meaning the hips and shoulders are balanced and the waist is defined, consider yourself lucky because any classic bathing suit shape will flatter your figure.

For rectangles, your shoulders and hips are of equal proportions, so go for styles with detailing around the waist, like stripes or a sash to accentuate

the waistline. And lastly, if your waist is larger than your shoulders and hips, referred to as a circle, seek out one-piece suits with Empirewaistlines or shirring and power mesh for extra tummy control.

If you fall into the plus-size range (16 to 34), as over 30 percent of American women do, bathing suits that fit and flatter are even harder to come by. For plus-size swimwear that accentuates the positive, you can check out the selection at Catherines and catherines.com. Because the company offers plus sizes exclusively, it knows how to flatter fuller figures.

So, now that you know what shape you are--and which swimsuits to wear based on your shape--make a splash and suit yourself with a great new look.

Once you figure out your body shape, it can be easier to find a swimsuit that both fits and flatters your dimensions.



What If George W. Bush Did These Things?

Ed. Note: We found this on the Internet and wondered why these things aren't being trumpeted as they probably would have if GWB did them. There certainly seems to be a media bias as you read what BHO has done and said and compare any of it to what GWB was forced to endure. We ask those who voted for BHO and also members of the media to answer these questions within themselves. You can comment about this or anything else on our Blog at www.seniorbeacon.info, klik Blog With Us and away you go! You can also e-mail us at srbeacon@gmail.com

Wnat If:

- George W. Bush had made a joke at the expense of the Special Olympics, would you have approved?
- George W. Bush had given Gordon Brown a set of inexpensive and incorrectly formatted DVDs, when Gordon Brown had given him a thoughtful and historically significant gift, would you have approved?
- George W. Bush had given the Queen of England an iPod containing videos of his speeches, would you have thought this embarrassingly narcissistic and tacky?
- George W. Bush had bowed to the King of Saudi Arabia, would you have approved?
- George W. Bush had visited Austria and made reference to the non-existent "Austrian language," would you have brushed it off as a minor slip?
- George W. Bush had filled his cabinet and circle of advisers with people who cannot seem to keep current on their income taxes, would you have approved?
- George W. Bush had been so Spanish illiterate as to refer to "Cinco de Cuatro" in front of the Mexican ambassador when it was the fourth of May (Cuatro

de Mayo), and continued to flub it when he tried again, would you have winced in embarrassment?

- George W. Bush had mis-spelled the word advice would you have hammered him for it for years like Dan Quayle and potatoe as "proof" of what a dunce he is?
- George W. Bush had burned 9,000 gallons of jet fuel to go plant a single tree on "Earth Day," would you have concluded he's a hypocrite?
- George W. Bush's administration had okayed Air Force One flying low over millions of people followed by a jet fighter in downtown Manhattan causing widespread panic, would you have wondered whether they actually "get" what happened on 9-11?
- George W. Bush had been the first President to need a teleprompter installed to be able to get through a press conference, would you have laughed and said this is more proof of how inept he is on his own and is really controlled by smarter men behind the scenes?
- George W. Bush had failed to send relief aid to flood victims throughout the Midwest with more people killed or made homeless than in New Orleans, would you want it made into a major ongoing political issue with claims of racism and incompetence?
- George W. Bush had ordered the firing of the CEO of a major corporation, even though he had no constitutional authority to do so, would you have approved?
- George W. Bush had proposed to double the national debt, which had taken more than two centuries to accumulate, in one year, would you have approved?
- George W. Bush had then proposed to double the debt again within 10 years, would you have approved?
- George W. Bush had reduced your retirement plan's holdings of GM stock by 90% and given the unions a majority stake in GM, would you have approved?
- George W. Bush had spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to take Laura Bush to a play in NYC, would you have approved?

So what is it about Obama that makes him so brilliant and impressive? Can't think of anything? Don't worry. He's done all this in 6 months -- so you'll have three years and six months to come up with an answer.

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Social Security & You

by Melinda Minor, District Manager - Pueblo



Commissioner Astrue Thanks the Vice President for His Call to Exempt DDS Employees from Furloughs and Hiring Restrictions

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, expressed his appreciation that Vice President Joseph R. Biden also has urged Governor Edward G. Rendell, Chairman of the National Governor's Association, to exempt federally-funded state Disability Determination Service (DDS) employees from any furloughs, hiring restrictions, and other budget cuts. Earlier this year, Commissioner Astrue wrote his own letter to Gov. Rendell expressing his grave concerns that including DDSs in state-wide reductions saves no money and, in fact, hurts the most vulnerable residents.

"I thank the Vice President for helping us make the case to Governors across the country," Commissioner Astrue said. "Social Security funds 100 percent of DDS employees' salaries as well as overhead -- that's about \$2 billion nationwide this year. These funds cannot be used by the states for any other purpose, so states do not save money by cutting employees in DDSs -- they only slow getting benefits to the disabled, which runs counter to what the President and the Congress were trying to do with the \$500 million in the Recovery Act dedicated to accelerating disability decisions. Nevertheless, many governors are imposing across-the-board hiring freezes or furloughs that also affect DDS employees. For the good of the country, this has to end."

MEDICARE

Question:

My mom has Medicare prescription drug coverage. Can she get extra help with the associated costs?

Answer:

She may be able to, depending on her income and resources. In 2009, she must have an annual income below \$16,245 (or \$21,855 if she is married

and living with her husband). If her annual income is higher, she still may be able to get some help if she supports other family members who live with her, has earnings from work, or lives in Alaska or Hawaii.

To get the extra help with Medicare prescription drug plan costs, her total resources also need to be limited to \$12,510 (or \$25,010 if she is married and living with her husband). To learn more, visit www.socialsecurity.gov/prescriptionhelp.

Social Security to Open New Tele-service Center in Jackson, Tennessee Center Will Help Agency Handle Calls from Boomer Wave

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, today announced that the agency plans to open a new teleservice center (TSC) in Jackson, Tennessee, which will be the first new call center opened by Social Security in more than a decade. The Jackson TSC will employ about 175 people once it is fully operational.

"Social Security is facing an unprecedented wave of people needing our services as baby boomers retire," Commissioner Astrue said. "Response times have been improving significantly, and the new Jackson TSC will help us provide even more timely service to the 60 million Americans who call our toll-free number each year."

Social Security currently has 35 TSCs operating in locations all across the country. All TSCs take calls from throughout the U.S. and provide service via Social Security's national toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778). Live service is available from 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Automated service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

More than two-thirds of the calls to Social Security's 800 number come from the Eastern and Central time zones. Jackson was chosen as the site for a new TSC because of the additional

capacity needed in these time zones to handle calls. In addition, with four colleges and universities in Jackson and several others within a short commute, the Jackson area will provide Social Security with a highly-skilled and well-educated workforce.

"Social Security consistently ranks as one of the top federal agencies to work for," noted Commissioner Astrue. "With President Obama having called a new generation of Americans to public service, I am confident that Social Security will become the employer of choice in Jackson."

Social Security will be working closely with the General Services Administration to facilitate the process for opening the new TSC. The process provides for open competition and normally takes 18 to 24 months to complete.

Social Security Continues to Rank as One of the "Best Places to Work in the Federal Government"

The Social Security Administration once again ranks as one of the "Best Places to Work in the Federal Government," according to The Partnership for Public Service and American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation. In achieving its ranking, the agency scored exceptionally high in the areas of teamwork, skills-to-mission match, and effective leadership.

"I am proud that Social Security has maintained its standing as one of the top federal agencies to work for," said Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security. "Social Security is a can-do agency because of our hard-working and talented employees. This survey demonstrates how satisfied our employees are with their careers at SSA."

The "Best Places to Work" rankings are based on the results of the Office of Personnel Management's Federal Human Capital Survey, a government-wide assessment of federal employees' job satisfaction and perceptions of their agency's human capital efforts. The survey identified teamwork and skills-to-mission match as the biggest drivers of overall employee engagement.

Social Security's winning formula is based on:

- continuing to promote, enhance, and utilize development programs at all levels;
- developing a new performance management and communication approach;

• strategically recruiting a diverse and productive applicant pool; and linking human capital management programs to the agency's mission.

"Social Security has just started hiring more than 10,000 new employees over an eighteen month period," said Commissioner Astrue. "I certainly hope that those interested in public service will consider joining our talented and diverse workforce."

To learn more about the report, please go to www.bestplacetowork.org.

Social Security employee Tim Evans also was a finalist for the 2009 Citizen Service Medal for his role in analyzing public feedback and making improvements to Social Security's highly-rated Retirement Estimator. For more information about this honor, please go to www.ourpublicservice.org and look for the link to 2009 Service to America Medals Finalists Announced. Commissioner Astrue said, "President Obama has pledged to make it 'cool' again to work for the federal government. Please check out the cool work of Tim and his team at www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator."

To learn more about careers with the Social Security Administration, please go to www.socialsecurity.gov/careers.

Social Security's Most Popular Baby Names List

Emma overtakes Emily after a 12-year reign; Elvis slips

In 2008, American parents voted for change in naming their children. After a 12-year reign as the most popular baby name, Emily has slipped to third on the list. Emma is now the nation's most popular name for girls.

The most popular boy's name, Jacob, remained the same for the 10th year in a row.

Please click on the Most Popular Baby Names link at Social Security's website -- www.socialsecurity.gov -- to see all the top baby names for 2008. Drum roll please...the Top 10 boys and girls names for 2008 are:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Top 10 Names for 2008 Rank | Male name | Female name |
| 1 | Jacob | Emma |
| 2 | Michael | Isabella |
| 3 | Ethan | Emily |
| 4 | Joshua | Madison |
| 5 | Daniel | Ava |
| 6 | Alexander | Olivia |
| 7 | Anthony | Sophia |
| 8 | William | Abigail |
| 9 | Christopher | Elizabeth |
| 10 | Matthew | Chloe |

WON'T YOU HELP THE MEALS-ON-WHEELS PROGRAM?

The Meals on Wheels program is in need of volunteer drivers. Mileage is reimbursed and interested persons must fill out an application and provide a copy of their drivers' license and car insurance. After they have passed a background check and go through a short training, they may begin driving. Contact us at 404-0922.

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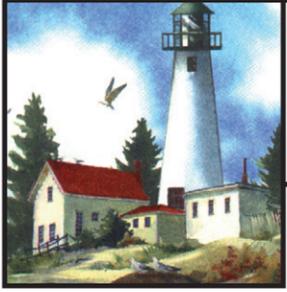
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“Light For The Journey”

By Jan McLaughlin - Director of Prayer Warriors For Prisoners



“DON'T KEEP THE CAPTAIN WAITING!”

AUGUST, 2009

“I think next Thursday will work fine, Mom. We'll need about three hours.” Over the phone, Kasey sounded pumped with excitement, his words laced with mystery. He promised since December to drive to Cañon City to give me my Christmas present. My mind raced with ideas of what this mysterious gift might be. Whatever it was, he was doing a good job of keeping the secret.

On Tuesday, he called again. “I'll be there Thursday at ten. Be ready. Wear something a little warm, like a sweatshirt or light jacket and something on your head. Oh, and wear shoes that won't hurt if they get wet, like tennis shoes.”



Bubbling with excitement when I hung up the phone, I nearly shouted, “RICK! He's

going to take me sailing!” Kasey is an avid sailing enthusiast with two sailboats and I've wanted to sail with him since he'd begun. (Well..., not at first! He had some pretty hair-raising stories, such as when the marine patrol rescued him after the rudder sank into the lake and rough waves filled the boat.) But it seemed he was really getting the hang of the sport and his stories sound intriguing and fun.

I love adventure and excitedly prepared for my day of sailing with my youngest son. Since Pueblo Reservoir was the nearest lake, I assumed we would sail there. I should know by now never to assume anything with Kasey. He pulled into the driveway Thursday at ten AM, just as promised, but there with no boat in tow. Meeting him at the door, I asked, “Where's the boat?”

“Oh, Captain is meeting us.” Still that air of mystery and I had no idea who “Captain” was, perhaps one

of his sailing buddies. I didn't care, I was glad to see Kasey and excited about this adventure with him. We chatted a bit then he said, “We better go. Captain doesn't like to be kept waiting.” I grabbed the bag of snacks I had prepared and we headed toward Pueblo.

On the road Kasey said, “Mom, be sure to call him Captain. He likes to be called Captain. And Mom, whatever you do, don't act afraid because if you do, he will do things to scare you even more.”

“I am not going to be afraid, Kasey. This is exciting. I wanted to go sailing with you for a long time.”

To my surprise, Kasey turned north on Phantom Canyon road. “There's no lake up here, Kasey.” I protested.

Wide eyed and innocent looking, he asked, “There isn't? I was sure there was a lake up here.”

“Not that I know of.”

He drove several miles up the canyon and finally said, “Are you positive there isn't a lake up here. What happened to that lake that used to be here?”

“Are you thinking of Brush Hollow Reservoir?”

“Yeah! That's it! Where is it?”

“By Penrose.”

He swung a U-turn and headed back to the highway and turned toward Penrose, then off the highway into the airport and came to a stop in the parking lot of the Sky Dive Colorado hanger.

I squealed, “OH, I'm going SKYDIVING!” He had me completely buffaloed. No way would have I guessed this. Having wanted to jump for several years, I was ecstatic. This was a major item on my “must do before I die list.” (Now you are thinking, as my publisher, Jim, thought, “This woman is insane!”)

Kasey paid for my diving tandem with Neil Porter who gave me preliminary instructions. Everything made sense. I was not at all frightened or nervous. Neil said, “You will be strapped to me and we will slide to the door together. Then we will swing our legs around and jump. Your body will scream, I can't believe you are making me jump out of this plane.” Grabbing the door frame with both hands to demonstrate, he continued, “Even though you may want to, it's not a good idea to get a death grip



right here because one of two things will happen. Either you will rip a hunk out of the airplane, or your arm will be left dangling after we jump.”

Kasey also purchased a video of my jump so Neil had a video camera with a fish eye lens strapped to his wrist. Showing it to me, he said, “Be sure to smile for the camera because it will help keep your cheeks from flapping and you will look a lot better in the video. If you don't smile though, it's ok. Everyone's cheeks flap at 80 miles per hour.”

Neil strapped my harness securely on me and then his own. We walked to the plane where the pilot, a young woman named Tracy, waited with the engine warming. We arranged ourselves, sitting flat on the cabin floor, facing the back of the plane. The plane rolled down the runway and lifted smoothly. It took the single-engine plane some time to climb but we soon reached a thousand, then three thousand, then six thousand feet. The scenery was beautiful. Pikes Peak and the Sangre de Cristo mountains were white and magnificent. Snow like that is rare for late June and I was elated to have the privilege of seeing the incredible and thrilling view from that height.

What a gift! I had no moment of fear or nervousness. I chuckled thinking of Kasey's words as I had earlier signed the legal form in the hanger which promised that if I died neither me or my family would sue the company. “Mom, I just want to tell you something. If you break a leg or die or something, I'm really sorry!” I laughed and said, “Ok, I forgive you. Now, that's all taken care of!”

The little plane reached nine thousand feet and Neil handed me a helmet which I pulled on and tightened my goggles. As the door opened, wind gushed into the cabin sounding almost explosive and Neil began to slide both of us backward toward the door. We swung our feet out the door and in a heartbeat were soaring in the air, and for a moment, upside down looking at the belly of the plane. This was fantastic! Soon we turned, flying through the air. Neil was filming my ‘thumbs up... I did it,’ signal along with the mountains in the distance and the ground and buildings beneath us growing closer. The air gushing in my face almost took my breath away, but not nearly like the joy of free falling through the sky. I was grateful for the goggles so I wouldn't miss anything. This was amazing and wonderfully exhilarating.

Neil pulled the rip cord and

the chute opened, jerking us sharply then slowing our decent. Except for our talking, there was silence as we gently drifted through the air. Sailing! WOW! What a dream come true. I watched buildings growing closer and the pickup vehicle at the little circle where we were to land. How I envy birds, soaring whenever they chose. How wonderful.

Neil brought us to the ground gently, making a bull's eye landing in the circle. Suddenly, I was on the ground. Kasey was with the pickup crew taking pictures. Neil unfastened the harnesses freeing us from the parachute. “Congratulations, Jan! Would you do this again?”

“Absolutely! Is it two jumps for the price of one today?” We laughed but they were amazed that I didn't have adrenalin shakes. They said most people are trembling and their legs are shaking so badly when they first get down they can hardly walk.

I am very grateful for Kasey's thoughtful and unusual gift of the wonderful adventure. He knew I had wanted for years to skydive. This gift was more unique than the chain saw he had given me for Christmas about ten years ago. We are both adventurers at heart. I celebrate my 66th birthday this month and eagerly anticipate what God has in store for me through the next year.



I have no idea what, or if, a spiritual lesson is in this story, but I had to share it with you. One thing I would encourage is; If you have something on your “must do before I die list,” don't put it off. If you want to learn to play the piano, climb a mountain, travel to Alaska, write a book, skydive or sail, don't put it off. JUST DO IT! First, be certain you have confidence in your salvation and your place in heaven is secured. THEN, if you go sailing, jump out of an airplane or any such wonderful adventure, you will know if the boat goes down or the chute doesn't open you will arrive safely in the arms of Jesus. What a way to go! And don't forget to call Him Captain.

“Now we look forward with confidence to our heavenly bodies, realizing that every moment we spend in these earthly bodies is time spent away from our eternal home in heaven with Jesus. We know these things are true by believing, not by seeing. And we are not afraid but are quite content to die, for then we will be at home with the Lord. 2 Cor 5:6-8” TLB If you haven't made a decision for Christ yet, JUST DO IT. Remember, the Captain doesn't like to be kept waiting!

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Jan McLaughlin is Director of Prayer For Prisoners International and can be reached at 719-275-6971 or by e-mail, prayerforprisoners@msn.com.

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Op-Ed: "I'm Still Above Ground"

from page 2.

kiss his ring. I don't mind, but he has it in his back pocket. His mind is open to new ideas -- so open that ideas simply pass through it. Obama lies so much, I was actually surprised to find out his first name really was Barack. Just don't ask about his middle name!

But Obama was able to set a record... he actually lied more in 60 days than Bill Clinton. As far as his administration -- what with the tax cheat and lobbyists (and czars) -- well, in the words of Patches O'Houlihan, "It's like watching a bunch of retards trying to fall in love with a door knob out there."

With all due respect

Tackling Another Month

So BHO is now going to give us health care and a couple of places that he might get the money to pay for this breathtaking power grab for government and unprecedented loss of personal freedom for us are Medicare and Medicaid. Let's see, last I saw we have the best medical care in the world. Other than going to Mexico or another exotic place for cancer "miracle" cures, who among us leaves the country for health care? So if it's not broke, don't fix it. But if BHO has his way and we end up standing in lines for medical care and are denied treatment because we aren't worth saving in some bureaucrat's opinion and according to some set guidelines that he/she follows we can say that Ba-rack Ba-roke it!"

And while on the subject of healthcare, it is my understanding that both the Senate and the House voted against having to sign on to the new healthcare legislation. So there they go again, making rules for the commoner that never apply to them. Where Are Those Cries For Term Limits!?! Well, if it's not good enough for them, then it's not good enough for any of us. Call our worthless Senators and Representatives and tell them that we are not going to let some bureaucrat make our health decisions according to some predetermined set of guidelines. And HOW DARE THEY make the rules that we are coerced to follow under IRS penalty and they are exempted! What is this, a banana republic? What are these "leaders" doing? Next election throw anybody who even thought of voting for this bill and that mindless Cap & Trade bill along with the Union Fast Track bill out of office. These people disgust me.

Hillary Clinton, who is now Secretary of State, has been traveling around the world telling anyone who will listen how America has been a detriment to humanity and especially its environment. While in India, she spoke to our allies in this burgeoning democratically-based society. In paraphrasing she asked the government of India and its people to curb their appetite for carbon-based energy because of the global warming and harm it will do to mother earth. After she apologized for the U.S. part in global warming she said we would help the government of India build and maintain nuclear facilities and the like. The government of India told her in no uncertain terms that they would not conform to her requests stating the obvious that if it was good enough for the U.S. then it was good enough for India. India is emerging as a world power and it needs its economy to grow with good jobs for its people. Much of India's population is poor and they don't want to stay that way. The media made a big deal about India's shunning of Mrs. Clinton's entreaty but they, as usual missed the point.

This is the second time Mrs. Clinton has spoken to the wonders of nuclear power for the peoples of emerging nations and a great way to curb their fossil-fuel appetite. Yet, when it comes to America making an all-out effort to move to the

cleanest energy source on earth (nuclear power) we are stopped at every attempt. The hysterical roadblocks thrown in the way of the U.S. building nuclear plants is pure hypocrisy. Either you want clean alternative energy or you don't. Are you following me? How frustrating to know that common sense is so hard to find!

Pay Attention To Healthcare Bill

Finishing up on the healthcare theme I'd like to make sure everyone who reads this whether in Asia, London or Blende, CO that you all keep keenly aware of what Congress is trying to do with our healthcare. Here are a couple examples from government-run healthcare projects: In Hawaii all but one seat in their Congress is controlled by Democrats. A bill passed to have government take care of healthcare for young children and their families. They voted one vote short of unanimously (the lone Republican voted against it) to start this program and within seven months they shut it down. It wasn't feasible when they voted for it in theory and in practice it was a dismal failure. Another example of what to expect from government-run healthcare is the current Veterans Administration system. The very people who defend us and keep us safe from the crazies that want us dead get to have their own healthcare. If you know anyone who has worked through the VA's healthcare system you know of the frustrations they have. I know of one anecdotal example of a vet that needed an emergency MRI and didn't get it for six months! The VA healthcare system's problems are well documented and have not improved measurably in my lifetime.

Please also remember that the government dictates to our caregivers what they will pay for certain medical procedures under Medicare/Medicaid even if the money doesn't cover the expense. That money is made up through private insurance. So in many ways, because of government interference in terms of payments for services, premium costs go up to cover the difference. Monopolies of any kind run by any one lead to many problems for all except they who run them. Beware!

Godspeed!

Where Are They Now?

by Marshall Jay Kaplan

GALE STORM

One of the most popular female television stars of the 1950's continues to be popular at television conventions or as an interview subject. Actress Gale Storm beat her battle with alcohol and today radiates an even bigger smile than she did as My Little Margie.

Gale Storm was born in Bloomington, Texas on April 5, 1921. At the age of eighteen she won an RKO talent search and won a movie contract. For the next twelve years, she found herself under contract with three studios and appeared in 34 films, until she finally hit it big. Not in films, but on television.

In 1952, My Little Margie aired. The comedy show was an instant success and lasted for three seasons. In 1955, riding on the tail of her previous show's success, Gale started a recording career. Her hits included I Hear You Knocking and Dark Moon. The latter was a top Billboard hit for twenty-three weeks.

Gale's television career continued with another hit — Oh Susanna (a.k.a. The Gale Storm Show). The show lasted from 1956 until 1959. Gale had definitely become a 1950's television sensation.

Although it seemed that all was going well, Gale decided to retire from television, due to its hectic schedule. She stayed at home and started to drink. For almost twenty years, Gale continued to drink until her liver was so enlarged that she looked pregnant. "At that time, I was probably drinking a quart of vodka every



day, hiding a bottle in every room in the house." After three failed hospital stays, Gale finally beat her battle with the bottle through a combination of both a unique therapy program and her strength in God.

Today, a clean and sober Gale is as happy as ever. The radiant grandmother keeps in touch with all of her fans and feels truly blessed. "I find it very gratifying to meet all the wonderful people who enjoy my work." Are there any regrets about her past? "Looking back, I wouldn't have changed my life one bit. I still would have been an alcoholic, if that meant finding God as a source of everything in my life." Well, Gale, you may have been blessed by God, but we are truly blessed that your radiant smile has returned.



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Ten Warning Signs On Elders Eating Habits

by Robin Mosey, Gerontologist, C.S.A.; from the Home Instead Senior Care office in Pueblo

So how do you know if your senior's diet fits the bill? These 10 warning signs are red flags that may signal a potential problem:

Loss of appetite. If your senior has always been a hearty eater but no longer eats as he or she used to, it's time to find out why. Underlying illness could be the root cause.

Little to no interest in eating out. If your loved one has always loved eating out at a favorite restaurant but no longer shows interest, dig deeper to determine the problem.

Depression. Change in appetite

is a classic sign of depression. Be sure to follow up with a physician if you suspect depression may be a problem.

Sudden weight fluctuation. A weight change – losing or gaining 10 pounds in six months – is another sign that something could be amiss.

Expired or spoiled food. Check the refrigerator for expired or spoiled food. Seniors could be "saving" food until it's no longer safe. Make sure that all food is labeled, with the date, in large letters and numbers.

Skin tone. Observe your senior's skin tone. If your loved one is eating properly, the skin should look healthy and well-hydrated.

Lethargy. If your older adult has

regularly been active and enjoyed taking walks, but suddenly becomes lethargic, encourage a visit to the doctor. Poor nutrition could be to blame.

Cognitive problems. Seniors who live alone might forget to eat. Dementia and cognitive problems can lead to nutritional deficiencies. Quick intervention is vital.

More than three medications. Medication can influence both appetite and weight. Check with your senior's doctor to find out if medications could be the culprit.

A recent illness. Illness or a hospital stay could make a senior stop eating. Keep tabs on your loved one's recovery, making sure reliable help at home is avail-

able.
1,2. The Boomer Project (www.boomerproject.com) completed online interviews with 1,279 U.S. adult caregivers, ages 35-62, with a parent, stepparent or older relative for whom they or someone in their household provides care. Questions regarding nutritional risk factors and stress adapted from Abbott Laboratories' "Determine Your Nutritional Health" checklist. Used with the permission of Abbott Laboratories, copyright 2008. Robin Mosey, CSA -Gerontologist Franchise Owner - Home Instead Senior Care - 503 N Main Street STE#700 Pueblo, CO 81003 (719)545-0293 www.homeinstead.com/530 hisc530.digbro.com

Charlene Dengler: Super Sizing Isn't Super

It's all over the news media. America is trying to cope with an obesity epidemic like one we've never seen. This isn't really news, since the facts have been unfolding over the last decade. What really shocks and disappoints me is that instead of finding proactive measures that work, the situation is getting worse. The statement that sends chills through me is that for the first time since the Civil War, the younger generation may not outlive their parents. Heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, and cancer are expected to occur in twenty and thirty year old individuals. What were once thought to be diseases of old age are now becoming commonplace in much younger people. Yes, Colorado is the leanest state at 18.9% being obese, but come on! I know we can and must do better!

Does greed and decadence know no bounds? Weight loss is a 40 billion dollar per year industry and growing. However, the portion sizes at restaurants, from fast food to fine dining, is a clear indicator that we Americans want our cake and intend to eat it too! The older, wiser generation has their struggles, but it is the upcoming generations that I am most concerned about. With adequate, competent health care a major focus of

the current political administration, what will happen when a system already in crisis is bombarded in a way like never before with explosive health challenges?

I want to reference several tried and true tips for not only losing weight, but maintaining weight, as well. Many find that they keep losing the same 30-50 pounds over and over. While discouraging to contend with, it is an extremely self-defeating pattern. The yo-yo effect created by this behavior slows metabolism and makes it even harder to lose weight the next time around. So here are some suggestions which I hope will be taken to heart. Fight the tendency toward a slower metabolism, by building lean muscle through weight resistance exercises. Fancy equipment is not necessary; in fact, just using regular dumbbells with proper instruction is better than equipment that creates unnatural movements in the body. Proper form using dumbbells mimics the normal moves the body makes through activities of daily living thereby strengthening in a balanced manner.

Eating filling foods that are high in fiber satiates quicker and longer and also prevents colon cancers by decreasing the transit time of food through the

digestive tract. When adding fiber to the diet do so gradually and only if there are not digestive issues; if there are concerns, check with a health care professional for the best way to get fiber through food intake. Consuming foods high in water content, such as fruits and vegetables, also fills up and provides lots of cancer fighting antioxidants. Planning to resist temptation and choosing your treats wisely can prevent one from sabotaging the overall plan and then giving up due to discouragement. It is best to not even bring whatever you are trying to avoid in to the house if possible. Also, buying just one piece of cake or one slice of pizza can keep you from going overboard.

Counting calories and keeping a journal may seem burdensome, but it works! It is a proven method to help either lose weight or maintain weight loss. With so many tools available both in hard copy and online, the process is less cumbersome than it used to be. Also, portion size awareness is extremely important. The "deck of cards" size of protein or the palm size chunk of meat works well to make portion control easier. Using smaller plates or filling half the plate with steamed vegetables, then splitting the remaining half of the plate between

protein and whole grain works equally as well.

Here's one I learned from a client. When eating in a restaurant, ask for a take home box to be brought with the meal. Then place the portion you will take home in the box at the beginning of the meal. Most of us can eat less and be perfectly satisfied if we tune in to our appetat, or the center in our brain that signals we are full. Besides, eating fewer calories is one strong recommendation for increasing longevity. The reason for this suggestion is that it is less taxing to our bodies as a whole to not have to process so many calories, and thus we won't wear our bodies out as quickly. This study has been going on for 25 plus years, but I have no definitive statistics.

Lastly, getting on the scale everyday can keep you vigilant about how you are weighing in and can keep you focused on reality. The CDC reports that people who weigh daily are twice as successful at keeping weight off as those who don't weigh as often. While actively trying to lose weight, daily accountability is optional depending on one's personal psyche. If it is discouraging to weigh daily, then go for the once a week weigh in, but keep track on a chart to visualize the progress. Given our country's current obesity epidemic, and future predictions with regard to the upcoming health crisis, there's good reason to think about downsizing rather than supersizing—if not for ourselves, but those who will follow.

Charlene Dengler, a former registered nurse, has also been a model, nutrition consultant, fitness instructor and educational consultant. She is currently a nutrition consultant and personal trainer whose main focus is a natural approach to health and wellness. She can be reached at (719) 250-0683 or IOHealth@live.com

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Traveling: There's Nothing Like A Holiday!

Old Montana Mining Town: Bust To Bustle

by Jay Clark

VIRGINIA CITY, Mont. -- "People say we're old-fashioned. We hope so."

That's what folks here tell visitors, because it's the preserved ambience of yesteryear that draws them to this southwestern Montana town (not to be confused with the town of the same name in the state of Nevada).

Virginia City was the focus of a gold rush in the 1860s, became the epitome of an Old West boom town and served for a spell as the territorial capital of Montana. Rowdy miners caroused on its wooden sidewalks and frequented saloons to meet women whose conjugal affections could be bought for a bit of gold dust. Outlaws preyed on banks and trains here, and many got away with it. Those who didn't got an escorted trip to the summit of Boot Hill, where they got a wonderful view of the town before a noose was wrapped around their necks.

The outlaws and bawdy women are long gone, but today you can stride on the same wooden-style sidewalks as they did in the 1860s. You can shop in weather-worn clapboard buildings that were new when the West was still wild. You can walk

atop Boot Hill among the gravestones of five outlaws who were hanged there. You can even take a horse-and-stagecoach ride on streets as dusty as they were 140 years ago, or try your hand at panning gold in Alder Gulch, where the precious metal was discovered in 1863.

Visiting here is like going back in time, except for such modern conveniences as automobiles, electricity and -- perhaps most incongruously -- a gasoline-powered ice cream churn putt-putting away outside one shop.

Adding to yesteryear's ambience here are two live shows presented every summer.

The Virginia City Players, celebrating its 60th year, stages such melodramas in the Opera House as "Sweeney Todd," "Rustle Your Bustle" and "Aggie, the Mail-Order Bride." Twice a week a special program features the Cremona music machine that was played for silent movies. One of only two left in the world, the Cremona makes music on 70 instruments.

Another live show, the Brewery Follies, puts on vaudeville-type entertainment in what was one of the first breweries in the West.

New in Virginia City this summer is the Gypsy Arcade, where visitors can play old-time music and movie machines (now costing a dime or a quarter) as well as a fortune-telling machine similar to the one that transformed Tom Hanks from a boy into an adult in the hit movie "Big."

More music machines of yesteryear are on view in Nevada City, a preserved Gold Rush town just 1 1/2 miles away. In the Music Hall there is perhaps the world's largest collection of such instruments, among them the 90-key Gavioli military band organ from France, 27 feet wide, 12 feet high and 4 feet deep.

Also a major attraction in Nevada City is the Open Air Museum, which exhibits 100 buildings dating from 1863 to 1900, transported here from elsewhere in the region. Among them are an old jail and a two-story outhouse -- don't worry, they're for show, not use. Best time to visit is during summer's Living History weekends, when about 70 interpreters are on hand playing 19th-century roles.

A good way to get from Virginia City to Nevada City is via the Alder Gulch Short Line Railroad, which makes 20-minute runs between the two towns dai-

ly through Sept. 7. Between them, the two towns boast the largest collection of Old West artifacts outside of the Smithsonian.

Only 150 people make Virginia City their home today, a far cry from the 10,000 who frolicked here in the town's Gold Rush heyday. But summer draws about 50,000 visitors. Some come on side trips from Yellowstone National Park, whose western border is less than two hours away. Surprisingly, says Paul Reichert of the Virginia City Heritage Commission, many are foreigners.

Which only goes to prove, as thriving Virginia City can testify, that the Old West may be gone, but it's not forgotten.

Information: Montana Heritage Commission, 800-829-2969, www.virginiacitymt.com.



Visitors can take a stagecoach tour of Virginia City, Mont., and its 19th-century buildings. photo: Montana Heritage Commission

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Atlantic? A Bargain.... But Iffy!

by David Molyneux

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC: A BARGAIN -- WITH IFFY WEATHER

Crossing the Atlantic Ocean is one of the best vacation deals at sea, as cruise lines reposition their ships between summers in Europe and winters in the Caribbean. Prices are lower than on regularly scheduled voyages. But it's not a trip for everyone.

"Be prepared for all sorts of weather and sea conditions," says Martin Ford, a passenger services director for Princess Cruises. And bring a thick book or go to the ship's library, he says, for those long days at sea -- as many as six between Europe and the United States.

More than a dozen cruise ships will sail west while repositioning from Europe this fall -- and that list does not include Cunard's Queen Mary 2, which regularly crosses

SEE "CROSSING" PAGE 15.



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White Cane Helps Vets Take Steps Forward

(NAPSI)-If you see someone walking down the street with a white cane, you may wonder what significance the color holds. For many, the white cane symbolizes an important step forward toward independence.

The use of a white cane originated with artist James Biggs of Bristol, England. After an accident took his sight, Biggs readjusted his environment. Feeling threatened by the increasing amount of traffic near his home, he painted his walking stick white to make himself more visible to motorists.

His idea caught on in France and the U.S. In 1930, the Lions Club introduced the use of a white cane with a red

band as a way to help the blind become more independently mobile. The white cane was quickly accepted as a way to identify the unique needs of the legally blind as they moved about on streets, on buses and trains and in restaurants, department stores and theaters.

One thing that many Americans may not know is that the concept of white cane safety is actually remembered and celebrated annually. A joint resolution in October 1964 proclaimed an annual White Cane Safety Day.

The Blinded Veterans Association (BVA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the welfare of blinded veterans and their families since

1945, is one of several organizations nationwide that view White Cane Day as an opportunity to educate the American public about important issues surrounding blindness, especially safety and mobility issues relating to recognition of and respect for the white cane.

Every day in the U.S., thousands of Americans with limited or no vision stand at busy intersections preparing to cross city streets and avenues filled with speeding motor vehicles, curb steps, uneven pavements and other physical obstacles. Among them are veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam and more-recent conflicts in the Middle East.

The white cane offers motorists

and passing pedestrians a symbol to help them know to exercise extra caution and perhaps offer assistance.

Chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1958, BVA links veterans with the services they've earned. Membership is open to all legally blind veterans who have served in the U.S. military. Membership is not required for veterans to receive assistance, which is always free. For more information, call BVA at (800) 669-7079 or visit the association's Web site at www.bva.org.



Cellular Plans Designed For Older Americans

(NAPSI)-There are an estimated 250 million cell phone subscribers in the United States. And while people ages 50 to 65 are just as likely as younger people to have cell phones, only 68 percent of those age 65 and older have them.

As the nation's largest member organization dedicated to helping people 50 and over improve the quality of their lives, AARP is using the power of its nearly 40 million members to help make basic cell phone plans more accessible.

By and large, older Americans are looking for flexible, competitively priced calling plans. These plans are offered by Consumer Cellular, the exclusive wireless provider to AARP members.

The relationship between the two organizations was established after

AARP challenged the telecom industry to develop cell phone plans that eliminate early-termination fees, long-term contracts and mandatory binding arbitration. Consumer Cellular was selected as the AARP member benefit provider because it met AARP's rigorous service and policy standards.

"As the cost of daily living rises, AARP members are paying greater attention to how they spend their money," said AARP's Adam Sohn. "Consumer Cellular appreciates the basic service needs of our members and understands that they consider obstacles, like early-termination fees, when purchasing a wireless plan."

Benefits of Consumer Cellular's service include:

- No early-termination fees, no long-term contracts and no mandatory binding arbitration in customer contracts;



• Free basic phone with purchase of a calling plan; add a second phone for just \$10 and share monthly minutes;

• Phones from leading manufacturers, such as Motorola and Nokia, including basic, flip and camera phones;

• Transfer existing cell number;

• Hearing aid-compatible phones;

• Top-ranked customer support based in the U.S.;

• Risk-free satisfaction guarantee within the first 30 days or 30 minutes, whichever comes first.

"Many mature adults don't want

to deal with the high monthly fees and long-term contracts associated with traditional mobile plans. With Consumer Cellular, AARP members and consumers across the country can enjoy wireless service with confidence through simple, low-cost phones and plans, without having to sign an intimidating contract," says John Marick, Consumer Cellular CEO.

To learn more about the new plans or to sign up for affordable cellular service and have a free phone shipped directly to you, visit www.ConsumerCellular.com or call (888) 437-9221. AARP members also qualify for additional benefits and discounts.

How To Reduce Fine Lines

(NAPSI)-The latest technology in skin care products can do more than improve the overall appearance of your skin--some ingredients may actually help prevent the formation of fine lines and wrinkles.

New moisturizing creams can help diminish fine lines immediately while

improving skin's appearance and moisture level over time. For example, new Tri-Aktiline Total Face Instant Wrinkle Reducing Moisturizer from GoodSkin Labs, available at Kohl's department stores, has

been shown in clinical trials to help immediately reduce the appearance of dry skin and fine lines.

Immediately, key ingredient Kombuchka PH Extract, derived from sweet black tea, plumps wrinkles while Gatuline Expression works to relax the appearance of fine lines. Another ingredient, Argireline, helps prompt skin into its rebuild mode, boosting natural collagen production for long-term, visible fine line and wrinkle reduction.

Finally, Phytomatrix 100, derived from the soybean, rebuilds natural collagen and helps counteract the visible effects of premature biological and UV-induced aging for smoother, firmer skin. The moisturizer spreads easily over the whole face for a more refreshed, moisturized and younger look.



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Take A Vacation In Your Own Backyard

by Marty Ross

Make your own garden a destination, and you won't have to pack a suitcase to enjoy a little vacation.

Getting away from it all in the backyard won't strain your budget. "All you need is a sheltering tree, a beckoning bench -- just some shade and a place to flop," says Margie Grace of Grace Design Associates in Santa Barbara, Calif. Grace's own garden has a couple of getaways: a patio just big enough for two people and a larger spot that can accommodate eight. But one of her favorite garden escapes is the vegetable garden along the edge of her driveway.

"I find that I'm lingering a few minutes on my way from the car to the house, and I am decompressing the whole time," Grace says. She checks her tomatoes, helps the bean tendrils get a grip on

their trellis and nibbles on snow peas. "I come through the front door relaxed," she says.

Joseph Marek, a landscape architect in Santa Monica, Calif., turned his garage into a design studio and then tucked a few chairs from a flea market, plumped up with colorful pillows, under the canopy of a spreading tree, surrounded by lush plants. He uses this outdoor room, halfway between home and work in his own backyard, both to entertain clients and to relax with friends.

"The basics are there: leaves, trees, furniture and comfort," Marek says. "These things are right for every garden. It doesn't matter if you're in Chicago or Florida or Seattle, they all apply."

Marek loves playful colors and employs them with confidence. There are touches of lime green, sparkling Mediterranean blue, and dramatic, sizzling red in his clients' gardens and his own. He chooses flower pots with bright glazes and favors plants with flashy foliage variegation or striking hues.

If possible, add water, Marek and Grace both say. A splashing fountain cools the air in the space, and it helps you forget about traffic noise. Bubbling fountains are marvelously soothing. Water also draws light from the sky down into the garden and reflects it in sparkling and constantly changing patterns. You don't have to dig a big hole or hire an engineer to install your water feature -- a simple birdbath in a plant saucer or a tabletop fountain from a garden shop will do the trick.

Interesting textures contribute to the feeling of pleasant intimacy you're trying to create in a private garden space. The foliage of plants in beds or hedges is endlessly various and restful to the eye; feathery bamboo or wispy willows create romantic curtains that flutter in a breeze; evergreens make a cool, reassuring wall of greenery. The craftsmanship of stonework on a patio or in a garden wall will contrast handsomely with your plantings.

Taking things you love outdoors with you will make your garden escape even more comfortable and homelike.

Mirrors have a magical effect outdoors, and lamps keep a cozy party going. Second-hand furniture will look as good as new refreshed with a coat of paint,

When you look around your garden to plan your own private place outdoors, indulge yourself, Grace suggests. "It starts with a great big fantasy," she says, but you decide what you really want. "What does it take for you to get away -- is it reading, or doing something manual? Make a list, or look at magazines and tear out things you like."

For clients who wanted a place to nap in their garden, Grace designed a graceful, generously proportioned curving stone bench and had cushions made to fit. In another garden, she arranged boulders excavated from the site as informal garden seating: On a hot day, the rocks in the shade feel cool and inviting, and when the temperature is nippy, stones in the sun absorb the heat and make a warm seat. For a party, just add a few throw pillows.

You will be tempted to take your cell phone out to your secret spot, or to test your wi-fi connection under the trees, but it might be a better idea to leave the technology behind. "I recommend unplugged," Grace says. Marek echoes the sentiment: "Don't take your Blackberry outside if you're trying to relax," he says. Instead, grab a pillow in one hand and a cold drink in the other. You're on vacation.

SOURCES

Here are some tips and ideas for your backyard vacation spot from Margie Grace of Grace Design Associates (www.gracedesignassociates.com) and Joseph Marek of Joseph Marek Landscape Architecture (www.josephmarek.com):

-- The path to your hideout should ideally be a little journey, so

you feel like you're getting away. Stepping-stones will almost force you to slow down; stairs up or down to a new level signal a transition -- the last step makes you feel that you have arrived.

-- Create shelter. Even a low wall or hedge is enough to provide a sense of enclosure.

-- Give some thought to the mood you're after. Choose colors you know you love. Fragrant flowers around an enclosed place will do wonders for the ambience.

-- Lighting is important, but don't overdo it. Candlelight may be enough, but lamps might encourage you to sit outdoors and relax with the papers. On moonlit or starry nights, remember to turn off the lights and let the universe shine in on you.

-- Place a bird feeder nearby: Watching the birds gives you a great reason to sit still and relax.

-- Comfortable furniture is essential. You won't linger if a chair is flimsy or a bench catches your back in the wrong place.



The perfect garden escape is a quiet shelter that invites you to linger and relax, says garden designer Margie Grace, who designed this garden in California. "You don't even have to go there," she says. "When you think about a vacation that's coming up, you're not gone yet but you're already in a good mood." photo: Holly Lepere

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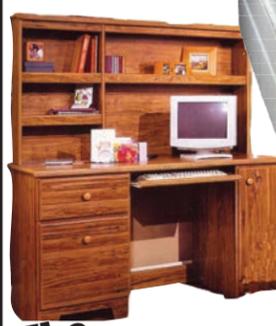

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Beware When Buying Jackson Memorabilia

Don't Get the Slip When Buying Memorabilia of "The Gloved One"

Immediately following the announcement of Michael Jackson's death, individuals began selling memorabilia online. Not surprisingly, the quantity of goods offered on eBay increased dramatically the morning after Jackson's death.

Your Better Business Bureau is advising that the value of most memorabilia and commemorative items is sentimental. The currently inflated prices will drop over time. Already, memorabilia and commemorative items, including t-shirts, special edition newspapers and magazines, autographs, gloves, posters, newspapers and more, are being mass produced and sold to fans. Because the

value of collectibles is largely dependent on their rarity, these mass-produced items are unlikely to appreciate in value.

For those looking to purchase items to help remember the King of Pop, your BBB has the following suggestions:

Get educated

Collectors should research the value of all before they make a purchase.

Confirm authenticity

Confirming the authenticity of memorabilia is not easy. Autographs can be verified by a third party, but for other items, the collector should ask the seller questions such as how the seller came to own it. If the seller can't answer simple questions, the collector should walk away.

Make purchases with a credit card

The fine folks at Thornton Wheelchairs Plus Are Proud To Sponsor the *Senior Safety* Page for all the loyal readers of *Senior Beacon*. Enjoy this month's page. As their ad says below, Rick Roth and his staff have everything you need for your healthful durable goods and more. Give them a call or stop by their establishment!

Purchase items with a credit card. If the seller's merchandise turns out to be fraudulent, the consumer can dispute the charge with the credit card company and may be eligible for reimbursement.

Purchase items from a reputable seller

When shopping online stores, collectors should look for the BBB seal on Web sites and click on the seal to confirm the company's legitimacy. If there isn't a BBB seal on the site, shoppers can check out the potential seller at www.bbb.org.

Also when purchasing items

from an individual on eBay, research the seller's track record by reading buyer reviews. When shopping on Craigslist, go local and never wire money as payment.

Don't be fooled by empty advertising claims

Just because the seller claims that an item is of limited edition, it doesn't mean there weren't millions made. If the item is being widely advertised, chances are, it's too common to actually gain much value over the years.

Go to www.bbb.org for more advice on shopping safely.

A New Twist On An Old Scam

A New Twist On An Old Scam Is No Bargain

(NAPSI)-Finding a way to protect yourself from the latest version of an old scam doesn't have to be a mystery.

Postal Inspectors describe the scam: You may receive a letter--accompanied by a fat check--inviting you to earn extra money as a mystery shopper.

The letter and check will appear to come from a legitimate U.S. company. The listed phone numbers, however, originate in Canada.

The letter instructs you to deposit the check into your checking account, withdraw an equal amount from

your account and wire it to the address on the letter. You are encouraged to keep a small amount to cover wiring fees and merchandise.

The problem is the check will prove to be worthless and you'll be left holding the bag for the amount you wired.

Postal Inspectors advise that the safest way to handle this offer is to not respond. Report incidents to postalinspectors.uspis.gov or call (877) 876-2455.

You're likely to find that a letter inviting you to become a mystery shopper is no bargain.

The Circus World Museum

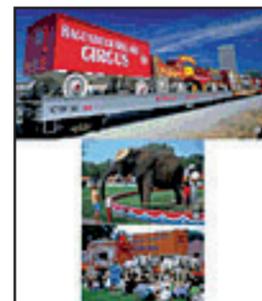
(NAPSI)-"The Greatest Show on Earth," as celebrated every day at the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wis., marks its 50th year in 2009. Baraboo is the original home of the Ringling Brothers Circus, which was founded in 1884.

Circus World is a museum and entertainment complex built on the original Ringling Brothers Circus winter quarters. Visitors can browse circus history through artwork and artifacts not found anywhere else in the world; interact with real elephants; and even take part in KidsWorld Circus, a program that allows young people to get in on the act and to pretend to be animals, magicians and ringmasters on the center stage.

And no circus museum would be complete without Big Top performances, of which the Circus World Museum has plenty. Visitors can experience the heyday of the circus through clown makeup shows, animal performances, magic displays and the Classic American Circus: a spectacle of dazzling displays and death-defying feats.

As part of its 50th anniversary celebration, the Circus World Museum once again staged the Great Circus Parade in a triumphant return to Milwaukee after a six-year hiatus. The massive event re-created circus parades from the early 1900s. The Great Circus Parade tradition dates back to 1963, when it enjoyed its inaugural season and began a 10-year run in Milwaukee. The event spent the next 25 years alternating between Baraboo, Chicago and Milwaukee.

For free Wisconsin travel information and travel-planning guides, visit travel-wisconsin.com or call the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's toll-free number (800) 432-TRIP (8747).







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TAC Forensics Acquires Hard Drive Duplicator

by **Dave Pettinari**

TAC Forensic's latest addition to its arsenal of state-of-the-art devices to provide better service to customers is Logicube's Forensic Dossier.

The Dossier is the fastest digital forensic data capture device on the market today, allowing investigators to capture and authenticate at speeds approaching 6 gigabytes per minute. Computer forensic examiners can capture data from one or two suspect drives to one or two evidence drives. This sophisticated solution provides built-in support for capture from a RAID drive pair (0, 1, JBOD) and can capture data from a variety of flash media devices with a built-in media reader.

The versatile Dossier features

built-in support for SATA and IDE drives, with optional support for SCSI and SAS drives scheduled to be available in late spring of this year. The Dossier also provides built-in USB and firewire connectivity and features support for most solid state drives and supports microSATA and eSATA drives with optional cables.

What this means is a TAC Forensics computer forensic examiner can quickly and efficiently acquire all kinds of hard drives and other media, getting in and out at the scene in record time. This will not only save the customer money, but will ensure virtually all kinds of computers and media can be acquired, and assignments completed.

"Developed to meet the com-

plex challenges of digital forensic investigators, the Dossier is the cornerstone of a future-focused platform of tools that will allow us to serve our customers much better," said Dave Pettinari, president of TAC Forensics. "We strive to be on the cutting edge of advanced digital forensics technology."

The Dossier also includes a drive-spanning feature (scheduled to be available in spring 2009) that allows users to capture from one large suspect drive to two smaller evidence drives. Other features include DD image files, keyword search, audit trail reporting, and an internal flash memory to store keyword lists, software updates and reports and a touch screen display for easy navigation.

For more information on this newly acquired equipment, you can visit Logicube's website at http://www.logicubeforensics.com/products/hd_duplication/dossier.asp or

<http://www.logicubeforensics.com>.
Dave Pettinari, 719.485.0008 | F: 719.485.0008 | E: davepet@socolo.net | http://www.tacforensics.com TAC Forensics and Investigations, 8998 Grand Avenue, Beulah, CO 81023 - 719.334.0433 My blog site; more good information: <http://tacforensics.blogspot.com/> LINKEDin profile: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/davepettinari>



David Pettinari

CROSSING

from page 11.

from spring to fall between New York City and Southampton, England. Most QM2 cruises are six days.

Never before have so many ships offered trans-Atlantic itineraries. Cruise lines include Carnival, Royal Caribbean, Norwegian, Holland America, Celebrity, Princess, MSC, Crystal, Costa, Windstar, Silversea, Royal Clipper and Seabourn.

And every cruise line has a deal. For inside cabins, nearly all of the advertised rates on travel agent and cruise line Web sites for October and November crossings were less than \$100 per person per day (for two people sharing a cabin; taxes and fees additional) -- and sometimes way under that. Royal Caribbean, for instance, in late June was offering a 14-night repositioning cruise this fall for \$749 inside, \$899 outside (per person).

Bargains aren't restricted to the cheaper cabins. Celebrity was advertising an outside cabin, with veranda, on a 13-night Rome to Fort Lauderdale, Fla., cruise Nov. 30 on the Celebrity Solstice for \$1,399 -- or \$2,798 total for a couple.

The great Atlantic repositioning of ships is a result of recent increases in the number of cruise ships plying the waters around Europe.

Summer voyages throughout the Mediterranean and into Northern Europe have become increasingly popular among Americans as well as Europeans, who find the prices of accommodations and food less expensive on ships than similar vacation choices on land in Europe.

But only a few ships stay the winter in the Mediterranean, when vacationers seeking sunshine prefer the Caribbean. So, come October and November, a fleet of ships

heads west. (In the spring, of course, this all reverses, with repositioning cruises from the Caribbean to Europe.)

Most cruise lines add port calls at the beginning and/or end of their repositioning cruises to make the trip more than just a traditional ocean crossing.

Ships leaving from Northern Europe may stop in Belfast, the Shetland Islands, Reykjavik or even Greenland. Sailings from Southern Europe may start out with calls at Gibraltar, Casablanca, the Azores or Canary Islands -- then end up in the Caribbean with stops at islands like Barbados and Dominica. A few cruises even swing far enough south to include stops in Senegal (on one side of the Atlantic) and Brazil (on the other).

Still, trans-Atlantic cruises seldom are full (that's why they're so cheap) since most cruise passengers prefer more vacation days in ports -- shopping and the like -- instead of at sea.

And if you prefer stripping down to minimal cloth and slathering on the sunscreen for a day of tanning, Atlantic crossings -- with their iffy weather -- probably are not for you. But if you like endless hours in the wind and sea air, sometimes snuggled beneath a blanket, a repositioning cruise may satisfy you.

"It's a different crowd," says Princess Cruises' Ford. "Salt air is what brings them to the ship on a repositioning cruise. (It's) an older crowd, mostly retired -- people who prefer days at sea to exploring ports. It's an opportunity to enjoy the ship and what it offers for entertainment. We also have more variety on the menus."

Looking at a map, you might think that ships crossing the Atlantic plot a straight line between Europe and the United States. Some do, but not because a straight line is the shortest distance.

Since the Earth isn't flat, the shortest distance between two points, such as the Azores and Fort Lauderdale, follows the curve of the globe (the "great circle" route). That course, in the Northern Hemisphere, would take a ship on a more northerly route. In fall and spring, more northerly means colder.

So, repositioning cruise ships tend to go 40 to 50 miles out of their way to the south, taking a straight (fixed-compass) path between Europe and Florida. Navigators know this course as a rhumb line.

Most cruise lines have a trans-Atlantic page on their Web sites. For best rates, consult a travel agent who specializes in cruises or surf the Internet under "transatlantic cruise."

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AUGUST 6: Sloppy Joe/Bun, Baked Beans, Cucumber/Onions, Orange Sherbet.

AUGUST 7: Chicken Cacciatore, Linguini Italian, Mixed Veggies, Wheat Bread/Marg., Spiced Fruit Mold.

AUGUST 10: Beef Tips/Noodles, Pickled Beets, Broccoli, Wheat Bread/Marg., Blush Pear Dessert.

AUGUST 11: Burrito w/Green Chili, Spanish Rice, Basil Green Beans, Wheat Bread/Marg., Strawberries & Pineapple.

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AUGUST 20: Honey Mustard Chicken, Stewed Tomatoes, Basil Green Beans, Wheat Bread/Marg., Cherry Crisp.

AUGUST 21: Beef Stroganoff Over Noodles, Capri Mixed Veggies, Wheat Bread/Marg., Apple.

AUGUST 24: Breaded Fish w/ Lemon Juice, Scalloped Potatoes, Peas, Wheat Bread/Marg., Plums.

AUGUST 25: Roast Beef w/Gravy, Rice Pilaf, Zucchini/Tomatoes, Wheat Bread/Marg., Chocolate Pudding.

AUGUST 26: Turkey Rice Casserole, Green Beans, Corn, Wheat Bread/Marg., Strawberries & Pineapple.

AUGUST 27: Sloppy Joe/Bun, Broccoli Cranberry Orange Mold, Apricots.

AUGUST 28: Stuffed Bell Peppers, Peas, Wheat Bread/Marg., Peach Cobbler.

AUGUST 31: Beef Tomato Mac, Honey Glazed Carrots, Wheat Bread/Marg., Tropical Fruit Salad.

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Finances: Create And Keep Wealth

Are These "The" Near-Perfect Investment?

by Ron Phillips

A Near-Perfect Investment?

Of course there is no absolutely ideal investment. There are investments that are too risky, don't pay any income, don't keep up with inflation, are not liquid or are too volatile.

But what if, at the right time in the market, you could find a near-perfect asset? One that currently has an annual income roughly double the yield of 30-year treasury bonds, has risk that is less than half the S&P 500 index, is liquid and outpaces inflation, is federally tax-exempt and Warren Buffett just endorsed by buying gobs of?

You may have already guessed what this unique investment is. It's a bond type I have been writing about in my newsletter and talking to clients about for well over a year. It is municipal bonds.

Municipal bonds are local gov-

ernment bonds that are obligations of a city or some project in that city. For example, there are E-470 toll-road bonds. Those bonds pay interest from the revenue raised from the tolls. Or you could have a "general obligation" bond for Colorado that goes to some kind of general expense. These "G.O." bonds are backed fully by those respective states' revenues and ability to pay.

CURRENTLY OUTPACING INFLATION

With "munis" you can get a little bit of capital appreciation (or depreciation) but the main return is from the income. Currently the income from many "muni funds" is significantly higher than the average 3-5% rate of inflation. Just the other day a client of mine went into one of these funds and is receiving an eight percent annual yield.

Municipal bonds also have about

half of the risk of the stock market. They are backed by local governments which usually have debt limitations. They are also, unlike stocks, obligated to pay interest to the investors. This all adds up to less volatility and more safety.

TAX-EXEMPT INCOME

With tax-deferred investing you eventually pay taxes. Tax-exempt income goes one step better. You could receive a monthly check from your municipal bond fund and not pay any federal taxes at all. If the bonds are located in your home state you also avoid state taxes. [Please check with your tax expert for further details regarding your personal tax situation].

Let's compare tax-exempt muni income to the after-tax return of the stock market. Say an investor is in the 25% tax bracket and they get a taxable return of 10.5% for the year (the historic stock return average). After taxes they would

pocket 7.87 percent. Remember that some quality municipal bond funds are yielding a little over 8% annually.

STILL UNDER-VALUED AND HIGH-YIELDING

Municipal bonds are still a good value when compared to similar Treasury bonds. In a normal interest-rate environment a 30-year T-bond should yield higher than a 30-year muni bond. Currently the opposite is true and could make now a good time to investigate these "near-perfect" investments.

Ron Phillips is an Independent Financial Advisor and a Pueblo, Colorado native. He and his wife are currently raising their two sons in Pueblo. Order a free copy of his book Investing To Win by calling (719) 545-6442 or emailing to RonPhillips@RPAdvisor.com.

Be a Geek – Seniors Are Welcome In Cyberspace

by Lois Clark - ENT Bank

Technology is advancing rapidly. Most people in the 65 and younger age group deal with new technologies on a daily basis – at work, at the gym, even the grocery store. But, for those of us that did not grow up with an iPhone in our pocket, technology can be quite intimidating. Although challenging at first, what seniors don't realize is how much technology can make their day-to-day tasks easier and even improve their quality of life.

Increasing numbers of seniors are tackling the likes of the internet. Not only does it allow the 65+ set the ability to stay in touch with friends and family, it challenges the mind and body through memory retention and hand control.

Financial institutions are the lat-

est industry on the scene working to woo seniors with online communications and money management. Online bill pay is a convenient service offered by an increasing number of financial institutions that can save you time and money.

Online bill pay eliminates the need to write checks, seal envelopes or purchase stamps, adding up to a savings of approximately \$60 a year in stamps and \$10-\$30 a year in checks. Bills can be paid online and payment schedules can be set up in advance or through recurring payments. Payments can be scheduled for a variety of bills including credit cards, student loans, local and wireless phones, utilities, cable TV, insurance, car loans and mortgage.

If you are traveling or unable to

pick up your mail for a period of time, bill pay makes it simple - you are in control and you tell your financial institution what to pay and when.

You are also able to review your account history, make one-time and recurring transfers, view pending transactions, view and print check images, verify and check pending payments, receive bills on line (e-bills), change and cancel payments at your convenience as well as transferring funds. Signing up is simple and can be done at a branch of your local financial institution or their respective website.

Technology has brought many positive changes to our lives. But, it also makes us more vulnerable to the threat of identity theft. You can make it more difficult for anyone to steal your personal

and financial information by remembering these online identity protection tips:

Use PINs that contain numeric characters and would not be personal information that's readily known. Change your PIN periodically. Never disclose your PIN to another person.

Online bill pay is fast and reliable. A number of financial institutions are offering free classes to seniors to get them more comfortable with the tool. Ask your credit union or bank today.

Submitted by Lois Carlock, Education Manager, Ent Federal Credit Union. Contact her at (719) 550-6095 or learlock@Ent.com.

Understanding Reverse Mortgages

(NAPSI)-A little forethought can go a long way toward helping you save money and perhaps your home. As reverse mortgages become more popular, homeowners should avoid taking on too much risk, overburdening themselves with debt and falling for misleading marketing, say experts at the U.S. Office of the Comptroller for the Currency (OCC).

"Reverse mortgages can provide real benefits, but they have some of the

same characteristics as the riskiest types of mortgages," Comptroller of the Currency John Dugan said. "That means consumers and regulators have to be on alert to emerging risks so these loans are made in a way that is prudent for both homeowners and lenders."

Reverse mortgages provide income or credit to homeowners by letting them tap their home equity. The Federal Housing Administration insures 90 percent of

reverse mortgages, known as Home Equity Conversion Mortgages, or HECMs. These mortgages don't require repayment until the homeowner dies, permanently moves or fails to maintain the property or pay property tax. Remaining equity belongs to the borrower or the borrower's heirs. While these loans make sense in some cases, consumers should clearly understand their responsibilities and risks.

A few associated risks include:

- Deceptive and misleading marketing. The complexity of these products and incentives for some brokers can put the emphasis on making the loan rather than ensuring it's appropriate for the borrower.

- Conditioning availability on other financial products. Because reverse mortgages often involve large lump sum payments, borrowers can be vulnerable to coercive sales of expensive annuities or

long-term care insurance.

- High fees. Borrowers may also overlook substantial fees.

- Failing to pay taxes and insurance and failing to maintain the property can result in foreclosure, so it's important to be sure these responsibilities are covered.

Among national banks, the OCC uses its authority to reduce such risks, but more work with other regulators is necessary to set and apply standards for all reverse mortgages.

You can learn more about national banks at HelpWithMyBank.gov. To talk with a specialist from the OCC Customer Assistance Group, in English or Spanish, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. CST, call (800) 613-6743.

A reverse mortgage can help you get money from your house but check the offer carefully before signing on.

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Senior Community Update



MESA TOWER DANCES

Mesa Towers at 260 Lamar Avenue in Pueblo will sponsor a dance every Sunday from 7-9pm. Leo Samora and Kenny Martinez will be the featured entertainers. It's a great way to get some exercise and socialize and have fun. The cost is \$2.00 at the door. The dance is open to the public. There will be door prizes and refreshments. **Donations are welcome. Call Eva at 778-6011 for more information.**

LOU GEHRIG'S DISEASE SUPPORT GROUP

Support group for Lou Gehrig's Disease (ALS). Second Thursday each month, 6-7 PM. Thatcher Bldg. 503 N. Main, Suite 103, Pueblo, CO. Call Peggie at 719-584-3068 for all the info.

OWLS MEETING

The Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors meet the second Tuesday of each month for bowling at Bowlero-Midtown Shopping Center at 2 p.m.. For information: 545-2803

O.W.L.S. Variety in Dining (Breakfast, Brunch, Dinner) meet 3rd Wed. each month. Contact M.& L.Rich at 647 0415 for more info.

RIDE TO CHURCH?

Looking for a ride to church? Call Wesley United Methodist Church at 561-8746 and we can make arrangements to transport you to worship and fellowship."

REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Upper Arkansas Area Agency on Aging is seeking individuals to join our Regional Advisory Committee (RAC). The Area Agency on Aging provides a wide variety of programs and services to seniors in Lake, Chaffee, Custer and Fremont counties. The Older American and Older Coloradans Acts, local dollars and contributions provide funding for the agency. RAC members assist the agency in setting funding priorities and identifying needs in local communities throughout the region. Those interested in applying for membership should contact the Area Agency on Aging at 719- 539- 3341 or toll free at 877- 610- 3341.

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

"The Southeastern Colorado Genealogy Society holds regular meetings on the second Saturday of the month beginning at 2:00pm in the Meeting Room B", Robert Hoag Rawlings Library, 100 Abriendo Ave., Pueblo. There is a continuing Refresher/Beginners class starting at 1:00PM. Call 546-1973 for details." Guests welcome and there is no charge.

WHAT A GREAT TIME TO VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are needed:
 ---Drivers to deliver Meals on Wheels to homebound seniors
 ---Volunteers to help in the many areas of St. Mary Corwin Medical Center especially in the Resale Shop.
 ---The Cancer Resource Center needs volunteers to work with cancer patients giving out information and helping individuals pick out wigs and hats.
 ---The assist the Day Care Teacher at a north side charter school.
 ---To help with a Senior Vision Support Group, sending out monthly notices, calling and making room and travel arrangements.
 ---Tutors and volunteers in the schools are always needed.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities or want more information call Gloria Valdez, SRDA, 545-8900. Also get information on the these three web sites: srda.org (look under programs-RSVP), pueblovolunteers.org, 211help.net.

SRDA AUGUST CALENDAR

SRDA at 545-8900 has activities for seniors every weekday of the month. From quilting to bridge and from computer classes to movies with popcorn and exercise classes, SRDA tries to offer something for everyone in terms of activities throughout the month.

LIVING WITH OSTEOARTHRITIS?

Osteoarthritis does not only strike the knees, hips and hands. In an estimated one million Americans, it also affects the small, vulnerable joints of the neck, and can cause sudden attacks of severe pain that may radiate into the head

and arms. But what can patients themselves do about this form of arthritis? How can they ease the pain, deal with the limitations it causes, and support their doctor's treatment? With the help of some of the world's leading spine specialists, the American Arthritis Society has compiled twelve practical tips for self-care that are effective and easy to follow. Please visit the Society's website at: www.americanarthritis.org.

AARP SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES FOR AUGUST 2009

Pueblo Information Center AARP PHONE: (719) 543-8876, 1117 Prairie Avenue. HOURS: Mon-Sat 10-3pm Pueblo, Colorado 81005

Safe Driving Classes, Benefits Check-up, exercising, Tai-Chi, eating right, Census Bureau testing, Model T care group, Convergys recruiting, classic cars, Food Share America, Better Breathers, preparing taxes, quilters group, medicare and financial planning assistance and more available this month.

AMBASSADORS NEEDED

SRDA, 211, American Red Cross, Neighborhood Watch and the City County Health Department/Medical Reserve Corp are combining forces and developing a core group of dedicated volunteers called EP Ambassadors. Individuals who are interested in helping the community in a variety of activities concerning emergency preparedness are needed now. Volunteers will be involved in a variety of activities from demonstrating how to make a disaster kit, to mailings, giving presentations and many more activities. This will also be a fun group with other interesting perks. Call Gloria Valdez, 545-8900 for info.

TOASTMASTERS

What: Pueblo Toastmasters #179 Public Speaking Class

Where: 310 East Abriendo Ave. Next to the Dept. of Revenue/Driver's License Office (in the Conference Room on the 2nd floor of the Security Service Federal Credit Union's building)

When: 2nd & 4th Monday of every month

STEP-UP PROGRAM

McHarg Park Community Center, 409 Second Street Avondale, CO. Monday, August 10th; 9:00 – 11:30 am.

Vail Hotel, 217 S. Grand, Tuesday, August 11th; 9:00 – 10:30pm.

Hyde Park Community Center, 2136 W. 16th St., Tuesday, August 11th; 1:00 – 2:30pm.

Joseph Edwards Senior Center (SRDA), 230 S. Union. Wednesday, August 12th; 9:45 – 12:00 pm.

Mineral Palace Towers, 1414 N. Santa Fe. Thursday, August 13th; 9 – 11:30 am

Memorial Recreation Center, 230 E. George Dr, Pueblo West. Thursday, August 13th; 8:15 – 10:30 am.

Park Hill Christian Church Hall, 1404 E. 7th St. Monday, August 17th; 10:00 – 12:00 pm.

Minnequa Park Apartments, 1400 E. Orman Ave. Tuesday, August 18th; 9:00 – 11:30 am.

Mesa Towers, 260 Lamar. Wednesday, August 19th; 9:00 – 11:30 am.

Ogden Apartments, 2140 Ogden. Thursday, August 20th; 9:00 – 10:30 am

Fulton Heights, 1331 Santa Rosa. Thursday, August 20th; 1:00 – 2:30 pm

Get Moving with Pueblo StepUp Community Exercise Programs: Please call Emily Johnson @557-3887 for questions about any of Pueblo StepUp's Health & Fitness Programs.

SRDA ZOO TRIP

230 N. UNION AVE. - 710-545-8900 www.srda.org

COME WITH US TO SEE THE NEW AND IMPROVED CITY ZOO: TUESDAY - September 22, 2009 - 9:00 TO 11:30 A.M. ONLY \$5 PER PERSON YOU'LL BE AMAZED AT THE CHANGES!! COME SEE FOR YOURSELF!!

TAKING RESERVATIONS NOW

PUEBLO COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVES AUGUST 2009

"11th and Court" Community Blood Drive - Friday, Aug. 7 from noon to 5 p.m. Donations inside Bonfils' mobile bus parked at the District 60 Admin. Office, 315 W. 11th St., Pueblo.

For more information or to schedule an appointment please contact Bonfils' Appointment Center at (800) 365-0006, ext. 2 or visit www.bonfils.org <<http://www.bonfils.org>>

Parkview Medical Center Community Blood Drive - Monday, Aug. 10 from 7:30 to 10:20 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Donations inside Bonfils' mobile bus located in front of the hospital at 400 W. 16th St., Pueblo.

For more information or to schedule an appointment please contact Tiffany Herrera at (719) 584-4526.

St. Mary-Corwin Medical Center Community Blood Drive - Monday, Aug. 17 from 7:30 to 2 p.m. Donations inside Bonfils' mobile bus located at 1008 Minnequa Ave., Pueblo.

For more information or to schedule an appointment please contact Bonfils' Appointment Center at (800) 365-0006 ext. 2 or visit www.bonfils.org <<http://www.bonfils.org>>



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- ACP state of the art equipment includes electrical stimulation, ultrasound, short-wave diathermy, omnicycle equipment & paraffin treatments
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- Swallowing problems like dysphagia are treated by our certified speech language pathologist using the revolutionary VitalStim technology

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SENIOR CLASSIFIEDS

SENIOR LADY AVAILABLE to care for you at home. Meals, errands, appointments. Experienced and happy to help. Call 719-406-6718. #0909

STRICTLY MOBILE: Lawnmower/small engine repair done on-site! Certified, reliable, clean and friendly technician. Tune-ups, service and/or repairs on many brands of outdoor power equipment. Excellent references. Very reasonable. 719-994-7986. #0909

SHELBY'S MOBILE HAIR STUDIO. Perms - \$40: includes haircut and style. Will come to your home. Seniors & shut-ins only. For appointment call Sally at 719-565-7134. #1009

FOR SALE: Timeshare at Stormy Point Village, Branson, MO. List price is \$17,900, sell for \$11,400. Two bedroom (can sleep 6). Call 719-583-2042. braveday@socolo.net #0809

IF YOU NEED A PART-TIME CNA in your home. Call Diane, 544-2710. Experienced, reliable, references. #0909

EXPERIENCED PCP (PERSONAL CARE PROVIDER). References, Days. Local calls at 289-1120. Ask for Carol. #0809

CAREGIVER, Part time. Private Care. Have experience: Recommendation letters. Fix meals, Dr. appts., shopping. Southside. Feel free to call, 564-2157. #0709

HANDYMAN SERVICES: Painting,

home repairs, tile, etc. **FREE ESTIMATES!** (719) 214-0563. #0709

FOR SALE: Mobility Power Chair! It Can Be Pushed. Like new! At cost it was \$3,000. Asking much less. Call 543-0217. #0709

NO TIME...? USE MINE!! Can't drive? Can't get out? I run errands. Call Virginia, 719-561-1384 or 719-214-6007. #0609

HOSPITAL BED, electric with mattress. \$400.00. 719-406-5400. #0609

FOR SALE: 1971 Mobile Home. 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, 4 sheds. Nice yard. 543-5607. #0609

HOME CARE: very reasonable rate. Honest, dependable. CNA Certified. 719-251-8539 or 719-251-6178. #0609

"SCOOP-IT" CANINE CLEANUP SERVICE. You'll never have to scoop poop again. Dependable, honest, weekly, bi-weekly or monthly service. Senior Discount! Call J.R. 250-4419. #0609

PERMANENTS -\$30.00: Complete! Open Wed. - Sat. Curl Corner. 2318 Thatcher - Pueblo. Call Annie at 544-9160. #0609

BUSYBEE 4U! On-Demand Personal Assistant can assist you with errands, writing letters, scheduling appointments, meal delivery, shopping, etc. References, licensed and insured for you protection! Call Judy (719) 252-4296. www.busybee4U.com #0409

SENIOR CLASSIFIED AD REQUEST

This classified ad section of the Senior Beacon carries advertising of all sorts. The cost is \$7.00 for the first 25 words or less and \$.25 for each word over 25. TO PLACE AN AD here's all you need to do: Write your ad in the space provided below.

Please print clearly. Deadline is the 20th of the month.

Phone: _____ Your Name: _____

Mail ad & Check (send no cash) to:

Senior Beacon P.O. Box 7215 Pueblo West, CO 81007.

POOP SCOOP: \$8.00 a week, ANY SIZE YARD! We're the best and most affordable in town. Call Julie, 543-3614. #0609

SEMI-RETIRED man will build that garage for you at a reasonable price. Also remodeling an all types concrete work and foundation repair. 719-240-2046 anytime. #0609

ALTERATIONS BY ABE & ROBYN CAMHL. Wedding gowns and formal wear. All types of clothing. Men and women. Forty years experience. Se Habla Espanol. 719-595-1231 or 719-250-9354. #1109

LOOKING FOR AN AVON REP? Call me today! Hailey Hollins, 719-547-3808 or www.youravon.com/hollins. Join AVON today for just \$10! #0110

FOR SALE: Craftmatic double bed - like new - \$1500. Miscellaneous health care items - handgrips for tub & toilet, toilet, walker, heated pad for double bed, etc. 719-546-9944. #0409.

WANTED: CERTAIN 45rpm records and LP albums from the 1950s and 1960s. 566-7975. #1009

Here's The New Word On Diaries

(NAPSI)-Keeping a diary could provide some unexpected perks.

Researchers now say writing in a diary or journal offers a range of benefits, from helping people lose weight to organizing their finances and from providing insight into daily problems to busting stress. One study at the University of Texas even says regular journaling strengthens immune cells, helping to fight off illness.

Some feel diaries may soon become even more important as hard economic times force people to look inward for rewards, rather than relying on external payoffs. Such was the case for best-selling author and artist Philipp Keel,

who says his new book, "Keel's Simple Diary," was his personal response to having "too much information and not enough meaning," and needing to remember what made him smile.

But despite what its title implies, keeping a diary that's "simple" doesn't mean the answers are always easy. Instead, the book tickles readers' minds and asks that they look at things in a different way--or at things they never looked at before.

For instance, one section challenges people to describe their ideal selves by checking off a word from a list including "meteor," "matchbox," "springtime" and "kosher" or to describe

their day as either "colorful," "bleached out" or "black and white."

With his book, Keel answers some of his own questions about life and engages the reader in what he feels is our ultimate quest: to gain insight into who we are and why we do what we do.

Other sections invite the reader to make choices among images and symbols that stimulate further reflection, along with fill-in-the-blank sentences such as "A secret passion you are dying to share with those who deserve it" and playful and inspiring suggestions for dealing with life's ups and downs.

Say, for instance, you're dealing with a broken heart--certainly not an uncommon topic for a diary. The book offers eight simple solutions: "1. Cry like a river. 2. Think of the good stuff. 3. Breathe. 4.

Kindly proceed to the end of the tunnel. 5. Sigh. 6. Wear sunglasses. 7. Set boundaries. 8. Send flowers."

"Our lives are so complicated, at the end of the day we always have more to do, but time for less," says Keel. "Everyone can use a break to remember what's truly important in a day, a year, a moment."

For more information, visit www.simplifiediary.com.

"Everyone can use a break to remember what's truly important in a day, a year, a moment."



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- ★ Our nursing home is physically connected to Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center - a community hospital
- ★ An all-inclusive, affordable pricing policy that eliminates additional charges

Please Come by Or Call!

We would like to share our lovely facility with you.

- ★ VA Benefits for those who qualify
- ★ Colorado residency NOT required
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Spanish Peaks Regional Health Center

Call today for an INFORMATION PACKET

1-800-645-8387

DONATE TO PUEBLO'S "NEVER ALONE FOUNDATION."

Looking for a great charity to support?

Inflammatory Bowel Disease (Crohn's & Colitis and others) is a particularly nasty disease that robs the afflicted of quality of life.

It hits every age group hard and with no mercy.

Please send donations to: "Never Alone Foundation" c/o Beacon Publishing, P.O. Box 7215 Pueblo West, CO 81007-0215.

Your donation will allow us to help southern Colorado patients and their families cope with these dread diseases.

Senior Beacon Is FREE On The Internet



GO TO www.seniorbeacon.info click on "beacon online" click on the month you'd like to read and read it! Give it a few minutes to come up on the computer. What could be easier?

Senior Beacon is also available at approximately 100 locations throughout Pueblo & Fremont Counties also at no charge! AND

If you'd like Senior Beacon delivered by mail each and every month (\$19.95 for 15 mos.) just contact us at 719-647-1300 or check out how to subscribe by looking on the website: <http://www.seniorbeacon.info>

Coulter: "Memories Of Last Hispanic GOP Nominee"

by Ann Coulter

Every time a Democrat senator has talked during the Senate hearings on Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor this week, I felt lousy about my country. Not for the usual reasons when a Democrat talks, but because Democrats revel in telling us what a racist country this is.

Interestingly, the Democrats' examples of ethnic prejudice did not include Clarence Thomas, whose nomination hearings began with the Democrats saying, "You may now uncuff the defendant."

Their examples did not include Miguel Estrada, the brilliant Harvard-educated lawyer who was blocked from an appellate court judgeship by Senate Democrats expressly on the grounds that he is a Hispanic -- as stated in Democratic staff memos that became public.

No, they had to go back to Roger Taney -- confirmed in 1836 -- who was allegedly attacked for being a Catholic (and who authored the Dred Scott decision), and Louis Brandeis -- confirmed in 1916 -- allegedly a victim of anti-Semitism.

Indeed, Sen. Patrick Leahy lied about Estrada's nomination, blaming it on Republicans: "He was not given a hearing when the Republicans were in charge. He was given a hearing when the Democrats were in charge."

The Republicans were "in charge" for precisely 14 days between Estrada's nomination on May 9, 2001, and May 24, 2001, when Sen. Jim Jeffords switched parties, giving Democrats control of the Senate. The Democrats then refused to hold a hearing on Estrada's nomination for approximately 480 days, shortly before the 2002 election.

Even after Republicans won back a narrow majority in 2003, Estrada was

blocked "by an extraordinary filibuster mounted by Senate Democrats" -- as The New York Times put it.

Memos from the Democratic staff of the Judiciary Committee were later unearthed, revealing that they considered Estrada "especially dangerous" -- as stated in a memo by a Sen. Dick Durbin staffer -- because "he is Latino and the White House seems to be grooming him for a Supreme Court appointment."

Sandy Berger wasn't available to steal back the memos, so Durbin ordered Capitol Police to seize the documents from Senate computer servers and lock them in a police vault.

Led by Sens. Leahy and Chuck Schumer, Democrats ferociously opposed Estrada, who would have been the first Hispanic to sit on the influential U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. They were so determined to keep him off the Supreme Court that Leahy and Schumer introduced legislation at one point to construct a fence around Estrada's house.

In frustration, Estrada finally withdrew his name on Sept. 5, 2003.

At the time, liberal historian David Garrow predicted that if the Democrats blocked Estrada, they would be "handing Bush a campaign issue to use in the Hispanic community."

Alas, today Democrats can't really place Estrada -- James Carville confuses him with that other Hispanic, Alberto Gonzales. On MSNBC they laugh about his obscurity, asking if he was the cop on "CHiPs." They also can't recall the name "Anita Hill." Nor can anyone remember African-American Janice Rogers Brown or what the Democrats did to her.

Only the indignities suffered by

Justices Taney and Brandeis still burn in liberal hearts!

So when Republicans treat Sotomayor with respect and Sen. Lindsey Graham says his "hope" is that "if we ever get a conservative president and they nominate someone who has an equal passion on the other side, that we will not forget this moment," I think it's a lovely speech.

It might even persuade me if I were born yesterday.

But Democrats treat judicial nominations like war -- while Republicans keep being gracious, hoping Democrats will learn by example.

Sen. Teddy Kennedy accused Reagan nominee Robert Bork of trying to murder women, segregate blacks, institute a police state and censor speech -- everything short of driving a woman into a lake! -- within an hour of Reagan's announcing Bork's nomination.

To defend "the right to privacy," liberals investigated Bork's video rentals. (Alfred Hitchcock, the Marx Brothers' movies and "Ruthless People" -- the last one supposedly a primer for dealing with the Democrats.)

Liberals unleashed scorned woman Anita Hill against Clarence Thomas in the 11th hour of his hearings to accuse him of sexual harassment -- charges that were believed by no one who knew both Thomas and Hill, or by the vast majority of Americans watching the hearings.

But when the tables were turned

NeighborWorks® of Pueblo Celebrates Completion Of Their First Solar Powered House in Bessemer

Pueblo Colorado, July 22, 2009 – NeighborWorks® of Pueblo is inviting dignitaries to a ribbon cutting ceremony and open house being held at the Stone Soup House II located at 1215 E. Orman Avenue on Thursday, July 30, 2009, at 10 a.m.

The Stone Soup House II project began in February, 2009, with Lou Spera of Spera Homes, Inc. overseeing and coordinating the complete renovation of a house donated by the City of Pueblo. The renovations were completed with an eye towards green build and utilized solar energy to keep the house affordable. One by one local contractors, supply companies, construction companies, and individuals began donating materials for the endeavor.

The proceeds from the sale of the house will support NeighborWorks® of Pueblo's programs and projects such as the Affordable Housing Program, Foreclosure Prevention Program, the Street of Dreams Model Block, and Operation Paintbrush.

The real-life story is much like the old-time fable of the Stone Soup.

As the story goes, one individual arrives in a village with nothing more than an empty pot. He adds stones to the empty pot with water, and soon the villagers each donate ingredients until finally a delicious soup is made and shared.

The open house will give NeighborWorks® of Pueblo an opportunity to thank all of the businesses and individuals who contributed to the project as well as welcome the new homeowner, a single mother, to the neighborhood.

Sleep Better, Stress Less

(NAPSI)-Here's eye-opening news: Recently published research from Oklahoma State University suggests that improving quality of sleep not only reduces stress, but also helps us manage everyday stress.

"When you're stressed and tired, every aspect of your life is affected," says lifestyle expert and spokesperson for the Better Sleep Council, Lissa Coffey. "Controlling stress and getting a good night's rest start with evaluating your lifestyle."

Dr. Douglas MacKay, N.D., vice president, scientific and regulatory affairs, Council for Responsible Nutrition, agrees: "Eating a healthy diet, taking vitamins and other supplements, exercising regularly and getting adequate amounts of sleep are all part of a healthy lifestyle."

Here are more tips to help you sleep better and stress less:

1. Eat a well-balanced diet.
2. Take your vitamins, including a daily multivitamin. Ask your doctor about other supplements, like valerian, for healthy sleep.
3. Evaluate your mattress--consider replacing it if it's five to seven years old or older.

Learn more about sleep at www.lifesupplemented.org and at www.bettersleep.org.

Herbals and other dietary supplements can be safe and effective ways to help achieve quality sleep.



Rastrelli

from page 1.

current Board President (practicing ophthalmologist since 1981), Donald A. Schlomer, M.D., says, "We wanted our patients to have access to the best technology and a top-notch facility where they could feel comfortable and easily get in and out." The patient can resume most day-to-day activities quickly, with the exception of heavy lifting. Rocky Mountain Laser & Surgery Center's Clinical Director, Lora Ure, R.N., comments, "We specialize in eye procedures exclusively, and we hope our expertise makes your day go better when you come to see us."

For more information or to schedule your next appointment at Rocky Mountain Eye Center or at Rocky Mountain Laser & Surgery Center, please call 800-934-3937 or visit www.rockymountaineyecenter.com. Dr. Rastrelli schedules regular appointments with patients at the Pueblo North, Pueblo South, Trinidad and Raton, NM offices.

Are You Suffering With Cataracts?



- Do you suffer from poor night vision?
- Does vision loss prevent you from participating in the activities you enjoy?
- Do you regularly have cloudy or blurry vision?
- Do you experience problems with light-such as headlights that seem very bright at night, glare from lamps or very bright sunlight, or a halo around lights?
- Do problems with your eyesight limit your independence?
- Do you ever experience double or multiple vision?

If you answered "yes" to one or more of the previous questions, it is possible that you have a cataract in one or both eyes. For more information or to schedule your next appointment at Rocky Mountain Eye Center or at Rocky Mountain Laser & Surgery Center, please call 800-934-3937 or visit www.rockymountaineyecenter.com

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See our article on front page of
this Senior Beacon edition.

One in every 154 families faces a possible foreclosure in Pueblo,

Don't Be One of Them!

If you think you might have to file for a foreclosure, find out what your options are. Call NeighborWorks® of Pueblo for free foreclosure mitigation counseling.

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A Colorado non-profit serving Pueblo for over 30 years



Combination Therapy Helps Alzheimer's Patients

Long-Term Study Finds Combination Therapy Helps Patients With Alzheimer's Disease

(NAPSI)-Patients with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers have received encouraging news. Over the long term, treatment with Alzheimer's disease drugs can significantly slow the progression of the disease symptoms, according to a study published in the journal Alzheimer Disease & Associated Disorders and supported by the National Institute on Aging (NIA). The study showed that a combination of two different drugs, including memantine (Namenda®) plus a cholinesterase inhibitor, is more effective than monotherapy in slowing cognitive decline and helping patients maintain their ability to perform daily activities. Findings from this study are consistent with the established benefits of combination therapy with memantine (Namenda) and donepezil (Aricept®) on cognition and function in patients with moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease as demonstrated in a clinical trial.

Alireza Atri, M.D., Ph.D., a cognitive neurologist at Massachusetts General Hospital, Bedford VA Medical Center, and Harvard Medical School and lead study author, answers questions about this exciting information.

Q. What is Alzheimer's disease?

A. Alzheimer's disease is a progressive and degenerative brain disorder that causes problems with memory, thinking, behavior and carrying out daily func-

tions. These issues ultimately become severe enough to affect work, lifelong hobbies and social life. Although there is no cure for the disease, medications can help. Consistent treatment with available therapies-especially combination therapy-can help alleviate Alzheimer's disease symptoms and slow the rate at which the symptoms advance.

Q. How many people are affected by Alzheimer's disease?

A. Over 5 million people 65 and older are affected by Alzheimer's and that figure is increasing. Plus, let's not forget caregivers. Each individual afflicted with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia can have from one to four people with caregiving responsibilities, who often do so at a huge personal and emotional cost.

Q. How was the study conducted?

A. Patients with Alzheimer's received one of three treatment options:

- Combination therapy with a cholinesterase-inhibitor medication [donepezil (Aricept), galantamine (Razadyne®) or rivastigmine (Exelon®)] plus memantine (Namenda);
- Cholinesterase inhibitor alone;
- No treatment.

Every six months, researchers assessed patients' cognitive abilities and daily activity performance.

Q. What is combination therapy?

A. Two types of medications are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for Alzheimer's treatment:

- Cholinesterase inhibitors act

by reducing the breakdown of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine and are often started in mild to moderate stages of the disease. There are currently three medications in this category-donepezil (Aricept), galantamine (Razadyne) and rivastigmine (Exelon).

• Memantine (Namenda), available for treatment of moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease, is the only approved medication that alters the action of another neurotransmitter, glutamate.

A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial demonstrated that treating patients with moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease with combination therapy of memantine (Namenda) and donepezil (Aricept) yielded important benefits on:

- Functional independence (ability to perform daily activities);
- Behavioral improvements (improved mood);
- Slowing cognitive decline (improved memory, language).

Q. What should health care providers take away from this study?

A: Health care providers should help patients understand that the benefits of these drugs may be long term and may not be apparent in the first months of treatment. Even if a patient's symptoms get worse, it doesn't mean the drug isn't working, since decline would likely be even greater without treatment. Until we have a cure for Alzheimer's disease, it's important to treat patients using all cur-

rently available options.

Q. What can I do if I suspect a loved one has Alzheimer's disease?

A. See a doctor right away so your loved one can receive an evaluation and proper diagnosis. Timely diagnosis allows care and treatment to begin as soon as possible to slow the progression of symptoms, maximize function, and best safeguard well-being and quality of life.

For more information, talk to your doctor and visit AlzheimersCombocare.com.



Namenda® (memantine HCl) is indicated for the treatment of moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease. Namenda is contraindicated in patients with known hypersensitivity to memantine HCl or any excipients used in the formulation. The most common adverse events reported with Namenda vs placebo (≥ 5% and higher than placebo) were dizziness, confusion, headache and constipation. In patients with severe renal impairment, the dosage should be reduced. Please see full prescribing information for Namenda.

Perspective: Things I Have Learned In My Lifetime

by Rev. James L. Snyder

In celebrating my recent birthday, I found myself caught up in a case of nostalgia. I never imagined I would really get this old. Not that I am old, mind you, but I have reached the point in life I never thought I would when I was younger. Had I known I would get this old, I would have saved some of the energy I wasted during my teenage years.

How was I to know that as you got older your supply of energy began diminishing?

When I was younger, I could not sit still for long and no matter where I went, I ran. It was impossible for me just to walk. Often my mother chided me by saying, "Slow down, young man." But I never could. I have finally come to the point where I am in harmony with my mother's desire. The only problem is, I'm not a young man anymore.

Today, I can sit in my easy chair for hours and not even move. I keep a little mirror on the stand next to my chair so my wife can periodically check to see if I'm still breathing. Often, the only indication of life is the occasional snoring.

One thing I have learned, in growing older is that my eyes are not quite what they used to be. For example, the mailbox used to be rather close to the front door of our house. Now, I can barely see it from the front door and it takes over an hour to reach it by walking. To be truthful, halfway to the mailbox I have to pause and catch

my breath.

And, when I look at my checkbook, I can barely see to the end of the month. When I was young, I used to hear the saying, "A penny saved is a penny earned." Now, my eyes are so bad, I cannot see anything to buy for a penny.

Not only are my eyes going, but my hearing is not quite what it used to be when I was young. This is not as bad as it might seem. There is a good side to diminished hearing. When I'm in a crowd with a lot of people talking, I can sit back, smile, nod my head occasionally and not have to be bored with what everybody is saying.

Experience has taught me that people are not really interested in hearing what I have to say. Rather, they want me listening to what they have to say. Usually, people have a lot to say and all they require are two ears. It does not have to be ears that hear, just ears that appear.

Most things heard in such circumstances are not worth hearing. Perhaps that is the genius of our ears. In aging, they develop a little bit of wisdom and after a while, they just give up, not hearing anything really worth hearing. I cannot remember the last time I heard something under such circumstances worth hearing the first time, let alone remembering.

This brings me to my memory. The best thing about memory is, you can remember things the way you want to remember them. After all, it's your memory and it should be up to you to remember what you want. My memory has a way of bringing out the positive to the absolute exclusion of the negative. And who wants to dwell on the negative?

Whoever said you cannot live in the past is probably not old enough to have any past worth remembering. And the marvelous thing about remembering things in the past is that you can remember them as you like. It is your version of the past. Some people write journals, I like to trust my memory.

As my memory has aged, it has become better, just like a fine wine. In fact, my memory is so good; I can distinctly remember things that never happened. And the details I remember are simply astounding. Each time I recount a memory I remember new details.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has quite a different take on all of this. She remembers everything that actually happened. She has a photographic memory whereas I have, according to her, a problematic memory. At her discretion she can marshal all of the facts of the incident in the order in which it happened. Usually her memory throws my memory in a different light

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CARE - COMPASSION - COMFORT

Weird News

from page 4.

its daily-use forms, such as property and evidence reports.

-- Hundreds of Los Angeles' down-and-out live not just underneath local freeways but inside their concrete structures, according to a June Los Angeles Times report. The largest "home" is a double-gymnasium-sized cavern under the Interstate 10 freeway in the suburb of Baldwin Park. That space is nearly inaccessible, requiring squeezing through a rusty grating, traversing a narrow ledge, and descending a ladder to reach "a vast, vault-like netherworld, strewn with garbage and syringes," with toys and rattles and a cat carcass visible on an upper platform marginally harder for rats to reach. Authorities shy away from the area, out of fear, but every few years, state officials try to seal the entrance (which the homeless quickly unseal as soon as the officials leave).

-- New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg was livid in June when he learned that inmate Tuvia Stern, housed in the city's notorious lockup The Tombs, had arranged a privately catered, 50-guest bar mitzvah for his son inside the facility's gym, officiated by a prominent rabbi and assisted by five jail guards. The caterers were even allowed to bring in knives for food preparation and dining. It was not surprising that it was Stern who pulled it off, because at the time he was awaiting sentencing for running two slick business scams.

Inexplicable

According to the Pentagon, there are only 566 surviving U.S. prisoners of war from the Vietnam era and 21 from the first Gulf War, but the Veterans Administration has been paying POW-labeled disability benefits to 966 and 286 people, respectively, according to an April Associated Press investigation. The AP found that, even though the Pentagon POW list is posted online, the VA does not routinely check it when a veteran applies for POW status. (POW claimants go to the front of the VA disability-application line and receive various other privileges.)

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Family Values

(1) Thomas Stites, 25, was charged with first-degree sexual assault of a child in Manitowoc, Wis., in June, thus becoming the fourth Stites brother to face sex charges recently. (In addition, brother Michael Stites' wife and their son have also been charged with sexual assault.) (2) Mykal Carberry, 13, was arrested in Hyannis, Mass., in March and charged with arranging for the murder of his 16-year-old half-brother, Jordan, so that, according to police, he could take Jordan's place atop the family's prosperous Cape Cod cocaine distribution ring. (The boss's job was open following the boys' father's recent imprisonment.)

More Sci-Fi Movie Ideas

(1) Researchers in Japan and Spain found recently that Argentine ants, normally highly aggressive and territorial, are actually one huge global colony with three expanding centers: a 3,700-mile-long stretch in Europe, a 560-mile strip in California, and a swath of Japan's west coast. Researchers hypothesized the kinship because, when members from those groups were thrown together, they became docile. (2) A June article in the journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases* reported the worldwide reach of incidents of tapeworms that grow inside humans to nearly 40 feet in length. The most serious carrier, according to a Scientific American summary, is salmon sashimi. (Anthony Franz's 2008 lawsuit against a Chicago sushi restaurant, for a 9-foot-long tapeworm, is still pending.)

Least Competent Criminals

Questionable Judgments: (1) Christopher Lister, 21, pleaded guilty to a home burglary in June in Leeds (England) Crown Court. He and two pals had attempted to steal a plasma TV in broad daylight last year, but witnesses easily identified Lister. He is 7 feet tall and lives only a few doors down from the crime scene. (2) Markeith Webb, who was wanted by police for a bank robbery in Easton, Pa., in June, left a string of indignant phone messages at a police station, angry that cops had released his photograph to the media. Just for that, he said, he would make sure they never caught him. He was captured six days later.

Update

News of the Weird reported in 2003 on San Francisco artist Jonathon Keats' project to sell "futures contracts" on his brain cells (provided science discovers how to keep them alive after he

dies), with \$10 buying a million of Keats' radically imaginative neurons. In a new recent project, which critiques today's hyperactive media, Keats has published a story in print that will take almost 1,000 years to read beginning to end. Actually, it is only nine words long (published in the interactive multimedia print magazine *Opium*) and, according to the instructions, the ink will reveal itself, ever so slowly, as it is exposed to air and light, taking about one century per word.

It's Good to Be a British Prisoner (continued)

(1) A British prison research organization revealed in July that, over the last 10 years, the country's notoriously generous inmate furlough program has seen almost 1,000 of its prisoners escape, including 19 convicted murderers. (The government said the rate of "non-return" is less than it used to be.) (2) The East Anglian Daily Times reported in July that its Freedom of Information Act request for the names of recent escapees from the Hollesley Bay prison had only been partially fulfilled by the government. A list of the crimes represented by the 39 escapees was handed over, but not their names, because prison officials said that would violate the escapees' right of privacy.

Cultural Diversity

The nomadic Vadi tribe, in the Indian state of Gujarat, continues to be adept at flouting the country's 18-year-old ban on snake-charming. Historically, the Vadi have taught their children, beginning at age 2, to be at peace with cobras through affection and respect. According to a June dispatch in London's *Daily Telegraph*, male children practice the iconic flute routines, and females provide hands-on care and feeding. The cobras are not de-fanged (which would be disrespectful), but each is fed an herbal solution that supposedly neutralizes the venom and is released back into the wild after a few months' service.

Questionable Judgments

-- A June Government Accountability Office report revealed that people on the U.S.'s suspected-terrorist list tried to buy guns or explosives on at least 1,000 occasions in the last five years and were successful 90 percent of the time. One suspect managed to buy 50 pounds of explosives. Federal law treats the suspected-terrorist list as "no-fly" and "no-visa" but not "no-gun."

-- "Pop" is a 2 1/2-year-old Swedish kid whose "gender" is unknown to everyone, including Pop. "It" will be counseled that people do not have identical apparatus between their legs, but Pop's folks told the newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* in June that they intend to ignore all cultural characteristics of "boys" and "girls" in raising Pop. To the parents, "gender" is a social construct, and Pop will someday decide which roles seem appropriate.

-- The normal way that the U.S. Bureau of Prisons transfers "low-risk" inmates between institutions is to buy them bus tickets and release them unescorted with an arrival deadline. In the last three years, reported the Las Vegas Sun in May,

90,000 inmates were transferred this way, and only about 180 absconded. Though supposedly carefully pre-screened for risk, one man still on the loose is Dwayne Fitzen, a gang-member/biker who was halfway through a 24-year sentence for cocaine-dealing. (Since the traveling inmates are never identified as prisoners, Greyhound is especially alarmed at the policy.)

Latest Religious Messages

-- The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Prayer order in La Crosse, Wis., is now in its 131st consecutive year of around-the-clock prayer, in shifts, at its Adoration Chapel. The Sisters' ritual is based on an 1865 promise by the order's superior that if God graced their ministries with success, they would build a chapel and pray non-stop.

-- Ms. Dyker Neyland is one of the few parents who have successfully challenged a school board's restrictive student dress code for adolescents. Neyland persuaded the board in Irving, Texas, this spring that devout religious modesty (as prescribed in the Bible by 1 Timothy 2:9) should take precedence over the district's no-untucked-shirttails rule, in that the extended shirttail provides additional cover for her 7-year-old daughter's backside.

Smooth Reactions

Crisis Intervention: A certain bridge in Ghangzhou, China, has become popular for suicide (12 attempts in a 45-day period in April and May), and with each incident, traffic is slowed or halted for hours while crews attempt to talk the distraught person down or perform rescues. Mr. "Chen" was on the ledge in May, according to an Agence France-Presse dispatch, but he couldn't make up his mind about jumping. One frustrated motorist, Lai Jiansheng, ended the suspense by walking up to Chen and pushing him off. Chen survived, and Lai was arrested.

Least Competent Criminals

(1) Kendrick Pitts, 20, and his brother Marquise, 19, were arrested in May in the ladies' room of a small office building in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where they were hiding in stalls after being chased by police investigating a stolen truck. Their ruse failed when they tried, using falsetto voices, to persuade the cops that the only people present were women.

Recurring Themes

(1) In June in Xianyang, in China's Shaanxi province, a family hired a service for the equivalent of \$4,400 to dig up a female corpse for their recently deceased son to "marry." It's the latest incidence of trying to overcome a centuries-old curse that forecasts a bad afterlife for men who die unmarried. (2) In shootings in May (in Rodeo de Medio, Argentina) and April (Salvador, Brazil), victims of chest wounds survived when robbers' bullets were partially deflected. According to Agence France-Presse dispatches, the Argentine man was an evangelical pastor who was holding a psalm book to his chest, and the Brazilian woman was protected by a wad of cash stuffed in her bra.

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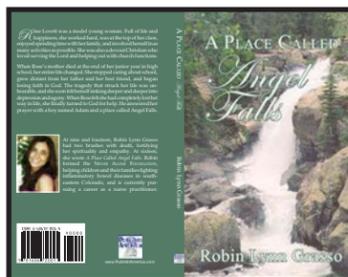
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Advice For Home Cooks That Makes Healthy Eating Easy

by **Elizabeth Pivonka**, President, Produce for Better Health Foundation

(NAPSI)-There's been a renewed interest in cooking at home, and getting a home-cooked meal on the table night after night doesn't have to be a challenge, though even experienced cooks need a little help now and then.

People need easy-to-understand, healthy recipes that are quick to fix and

that their kids will eat. The good news is that cooking at home can save money and brings the family together for dinner. It can also contribute to healthy eating.

Eating fruits and vegetables matters so much in maintaining a healthy weight and may reduce the risk of many diseases. It's easy to add more fruits and vegetables to your diet when you remember that all forms count; fresh,

frozen, canned, dried and 100 percent fruit and vegetable juice.

Keeping a variety of fruits and vegetables on hand makes fixing healthy last-minute meals a breeze. Some of the items I keep on hand include bell peppers, carrots and celery, which can be added to dishes to boost their color, taste and nutrition. Another fun way to boost flavor is to squeeze fresh lime juice over meat or fish on the grill to add flavor without adding salt.

Tuna Pasta Salad with Avocado is a tasty, one-dish meal that can be prepared in minutes, even by a novice cook.

Tuna Pasta Salad With Avocado

(Preparation time: 30-60 minutes)

- 2 cups pasta shells
- ¼ cup bottled fat-free Italian dressing
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes, crushed
- 1 6-oz. can water-packed tuna, drained and flaked



- ¾ cup diced tomato
- ½ ripe avocado, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons black olives, chopped
- 4 green leaf lettuce leaves

In a large saucepan, cook the pasta according to the package directions. Drain, then rinse briefly under cold water. Drain. In a small bowl, combine the Italian dressing, basil, garlic and crushed red pepper. In a large bowl, combine the pasta, tuna, tomato, avocado, red onion and olives. Add the dressing and toss until evenly coated. Line plates with the lettuce leaves and spoon the salad on top.

Serves: 4, ½ cup of vegetables per serving

Nutrition Information per Serving: calories: 295, total fat: 6.4g, saturated fat: 1.1g, % calories from fat: 19%, % calories from saturated fat: 3%, protein: 18g, carbohydrates: 41g, cholesterol: 18mg, dietary fiber: 5g, sodium: 363mg

You will find several healthful, easy-to-prepare recipes online at www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org. There is even an entire section of recipes that can be made in 30 minutes or less. You'll also find a healthy meal-planning guide with advice on making a weekly menu and shopping list.

DID YOU KNOW?

Travelers visiting Dayton, Ohio, can ride in a replica of the airplane flown by the Wright brothers for their historic first flight. The state also features the Neil Armstrong Air & Space Museum and numerous aviation events. Visit www.DiscoverOhio.com.

A program from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) gives medical professionals tools to screen patients and discuss drug-taking behaviors with them before they lead to serious medical problems. You can learn more about NIDAMED at www.drugabuse.gov.

"Lies, Bribes & Peril: Lessons for the Real Challenges of International Business" (iUniverse) offers practical lessons from Ron Cruse, a successful entrepreneur who has worked in virtually every headline-grabbing hot spot in the world. It is available at Amazon.com and www.liesbribesandperil.com.

"The Three Robbers" (Phaidon Press) by Tomi Ungerer is a new English-language edition of one of the world's most beloved children's picture books. Intended for children ages 4 and up, this enchanting story was recently made into an animated film. To learn more, visit www.phaidon.com/thethreerobbers.

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FLORENCE

100 Railroad St. - Florence Tu-Thur-Fri

- AUG. 4:** PORCUPINE MEATBALLS, Whipped Potatoes/Gravy, California Vegetable Medley, Banana.
- AUG. 6:** CHICKEN CACCIATORE, Whipped Potatoes, Spinach, Plum
- AUG. 7:** KIELBASA, Parsley Buttered New Potatoes, Mixed Vegetables, Squash, Pineapple Mandarin Orange Compote.
- AUG. 11:** ROAST CHICKEN/MUSHROOM SAUCE, Steamed Brown Rice, Cauli/Broccoli Mix, Apple Pear Salad.
- AUG. 13:** HAM/BEANS, Broccoli, Parslied Carrots, Orange Juice, Cornbread.
- AUG. 14:** TATOR TOT CASSEROLE, Tossed Salad, Squash, Fresh Pear.
- AUG. 18:** TURKEY TETRAZINI, Italian Green Beans, Cottage Cheese Peach Salad, Strawberry Applesauce.
- AUG. 20:** CHILI RELLENO CASSE-ROLE, Parslied Carrots, Tossed Veggie Salad or Cauli/Broccoli Mix, Watermelon
- AUG. 21:** BRATWURST/BUN/Sauerkraut/Mustard/Onion, Pickled Beets, Sliced Peaches.
- AUG. 25:** BEEF/SWEET PEPPERS, Brown Rice, Broccoli, Raisin Applesauce.
- AUG. 27:** TUNA NOODLE CASSE-ROLE, Italian Green Beans, PA Tidbits.
- AUG. 28:** CHICKEN SALAD SANDWICH/Whole Wheat Bread, Tomato/Lettuce, Orange juice, Fresh Peach.

SALIDA MENU

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- AUG 4:** HUNGARIAN GOULASH, Cali Veggie Medley, Green Peas, PA Tidbits.
- AUG. 6:** CHICKEN/NOODLES, Green Beans, Baked Acorn Squash, Apricot Pineapple Compote.
- AUG. 7:** ROAST BEEF, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Green Bean Amandine, Apricot Peach Compote, French Bread/marg.
- AUG. 11:** SLOPPY JOE/BUN, Scalloped Potatoes, Peas and Carrots, Apple.
- AUG. 13:** PASTA PRIMAVERA, Spinach Salad with Egg & Italian Dressing, Apple Pear Salad with Almonds, Plum, Garlic Bread.
- AUG. 14:** BAKED HAM WITH RAISIN SAUCE, Candied Sweet Potatoes, Green Bean Amandine, Cranberry Mold.
- AUG. 18:** SPAGHETTI/MEATSAUCE, Tossed Salad, Mixed Fruit, Orange Juice.
- AUG. 20:** BLACK BEAN/TORTILLA CASSEROLE, Steamed Brown Rice, Whipped Sweet Potatoes, Mixed Fruit.
- AUG. 21:** HONEY BBQ CHICKEN, Scalloped Potatoes, Mexicali Corn, Creamy Cole Slaw, Grapes.

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- AUG. 27:** SCALLOPED POTATOES/HAM, Spinach, Mixed Veggies, Apple.
- AUG. 28:** HOT TURKEY SANDWICH, Whipped Potatoes, Asparagus Amandine, Pineapple Mandarin Orange Compote.

GOLDEN AGE CENTER

728 N. Main St.-Canon City M-W-F

- AUG 3:** SPINACH LASAGNA, tossed veggie salad, green beans, tangerine.
- AUG. 5:** ORIENTAL PEPPER, steamed brown rice, broccoli, pineapple tidbits.
- AUG. 7:** SALMON PATTIES/CREAM SAUCE, steamed brown rice, mixed veggies, tangerine, raisin nut cup.
- AUG. 10:** BEEF STEW, whole kernal corn, herbed green beans, diced pears.
- AUG. 12:** CHICKEN FAJITA, tomato/lettuce garnish, cilantro rice, cooked cabbage with red pepper, red grapes.
- AUG. 14:** GAC ANNIVERSARY! CHICKEN FRIED STEAK, whipped potatoes with gravy, California veggie medley, pineapple tidbits.
- AUG. 17:** SWEET/SOUR PORK, steamed brown rice, California veggie medley, diced pears.
- AUG. 19:** SPAGHETTI/MEATSAUCE, tossed salad/lite It., green beans, orange.

- AUG. 21:** BIRTHDAY LUNCH! SMOTHERED CHICKEN, cornbread stuffing, cauliflower/broccoli mix, applesauce waldorf salad.
- AUG. 24:** COMBINATION BURRITO, lettuce/tomato/salsa, green beans, cilantro lime rice, sliced peaches.
- AUG. 26:** TURKEY POT PIE, broccoli, tossed salad, french, apricot/PA compote.
- AUG. 28:** LEMON BAKED FISH, rice pilaf, green beans/mushrooms, fruit salad.
- AUG. 31:** BEEF RICE CASSEROLE, broccoli, sliced yellow squash, PA tidbits.

PENROSE CENTER

1405 Broadway-Penrose (Tues/Thur)

- AUG. 4:** SPAGHETTI/MEATSAUCE, Tossed Salad/Italian Drsg., Green Beans, Orange.
- AUG. 6:** SCALLOPED POTATO/HAM, Chopped Spinach, Hard Boiled Egg, Perfection Salad, Apple.
- AUG. 11:** SALISBURY STEAK, Whipped Potatoes/Gravy, Italian Green Beans, Tropical Fruit.
- AUG. 13:** HOT TURKEY SANDWICH, Whipped Potatoes, Asparagus Amandine, Pineapple Mandarin Orange Compote.
- AUG. 18:** SLOPPY JOE/BUN, Scalloped Potatoes, Broccoli and Carrots, Apple.
- AUG. 20:** COMBINATION BURRITO, Lettuce/Tomato/Salsa, Green Beans,

- Cilantro Lime Rice, Sliced Peaches.
- AUG. 25:** SALMON PATTIES/CREAM SAUCE, Steamed Brown Rice/Parsley, Mixed Vegetables, Tangerine, Raisin Nut Cup.
- AUG. 27:** BBQ PORK RIBS, Corn On The Cob, Seasoned Greens, Potato Salad, Watermelon.

CUSTER SENIOR CTR.

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- AUG 3:** ENCHILADA PIE, Sliced Tomato on Lettuce, Sliced Yellow Squash, Mixed Fruit.
- AUG. 4:** SCALLOPED POTATO/HAM, Chopped Spinach, Hard Boiled Egg, Perfection Salad, Apple.
- AUG. 6:** SWEET/SOUR PORK, Steamed Brown Rice, California Vegetable Medley, Diced Pears.
- AUG. 10:** BEEF STROGANOFF, Orange Spiced Carrots, Ruby Beet Salad, Mixed Fruit.
- AUG. 11:** FISH CREOLE, Cheesy Potatoes, Squash & Onions, Sliced Peaches, Dinner Roll with Margarine.
- AUG. 13:** CHICKEN A LA KING, Whipped Potatoes, Tossed Salad with Lite Dressing, Orange, Apricot Halves.
- AUG. 17:** MEATLOAF/Brown Gravy, Cheesy Potatoes, Seasoned Green Beans, Pineapple Tidbits.
- AUG. 18:** BBQ PORK RIBS, Corn On The Cob, Seasoned Greens, Potato Salad, Watermelon.
- AUG. 20:** TURKEY SALAD ON A BED OF LETTUCE WITH TOMATO, Steamed Brown Rice, California Vegetable Medley, Raisin Applesauce.
- AUG. 24:** CHICKEN FRIED STEAK WITH COUNTRY GRAVY, Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasoned Cauliflower Broccoli Mix, Apple, Drop Biscuit with Margarine.
- AUG. 25:** HONEY BBQ CHICKEN, Oven Brownd Potatoes, Chopped Spinach, Diced Pears.
- AUG. 27:** ROAST BEEF, Mashed Potatoes with Gravy, Green Bean Amandine, Apricot Peach Compote, French Bread with Margarine.
- AUG. 31:** TATOR TOT CASSEROLE, Tossed Salad, Baked Acorn Squash, Fresh Pear.

ALL MEALS SERVED WITH MILK (Coffee or Tea optional). Most meals served with bread and margarine.

Nostalgia: Thanks For The Memories Bob!

ED. NOTE: "Hope" this will put a smile on your face and in your heart.

TRIBUTE TO A MAN (BOB HOPE) WHO DID MAKE A DIFFERENCE: MAY 29, 1903 - JULY 27, 2003



ON TURNING 70

'You still chase women, but only downhill.'

ON TURNING 80

'That's the time of your life when even your birthday suit needs pressing.'

ON TURNING 90

'You know you're getting old when the candles cost more than the cake.'

ON TURNING 100

'I don't feel old. In fact I don't feel anything until noon. Then it's time for my nap.'

ON GIVING UP HIS EARLY CAREER, BOXING

'I ruined my hands in the ring .. the referee kept stepping on them.'

ON NEVER WINNING AN OSCAR

'Welcome to the Academy Awards or, as it's called at my home, 'Passover.'

ON GOLF

'Golf is my profession. Show business is just to pay the green fees.'

ON PRESIDENTS

'I have performed for 12 presidents and entertained only six.'

ON WHY HE CHOSE SHOWBIZ FOR HIS CAREER

'When I was born, the doctor said to my mother, 'Congratulations. You have an eight-pound ham.'

ON RECEIVING THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

'I feel very humble, but I think I have the strength of character to fight it.'

ON HIS FAMILY'S EARLY POVERTY

'Four of us slept in the one bed.'

When it got cold, mother threw on another brother.'

ON HIS SIX BROTHERS

'That's how I learned to dance. Waiting for the bathroom.'

ON HIS EARLY FAILURES

'I would not have had anything to eat if it wasn't for the stuff the audience threw at me.'

ON GOING TO HEAVEN

'I've done benefits for ALL religions. I'd hate to blow the hereafter on a technicality.'

"The Little Mermaid"

(PUEBLO) – Ready, Set, Dive! The Hasan Drama Fest presents their yearly extravaganza, a Missoula performance of "The Little Mermaid". Come to the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center and see what's swimming!

This show is based on a classic tale...and no, we're not talking about the mermaid's – "The Little Mermaid" is a classic story of exotic, underwater adventures that many have come to know and love. Children in kindergarten through grades 12 perform this show on Saturday, August 1, at 2 p.m., in the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center Theater.

This performance is marked by creativity and directed by skilled, professional instructors in dance, drama and music, giving the show a professional feel. Experience what really happens "under the sea!"

Tickets for the performance are only \$6 per person. You don't want to miss this exciting, deep-sea adventure!

For tickets, please call the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center box office at 719-295-2722. For more information, please contact Gary Holder, Education Curator for the Sangre de Cristo Arts Center, at (719) 295-7210, or visit www.sdc-arts.org.

The Sangre de Cristo Arts Center is located at 210 N Santa Fe Avenue, just off of 1-25, exit 98b. Galleries and Buell Children's Museum are open Tuesday-Saturday from 11a.m. to 4p.m. Admission is \$4 for adults, \$3 for children, seniors, students and military. For more information call 719-295-7200 or visit us online at www.scd-arts.org. All proceeds benefit arts education programs.



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New Machine Zaps Mosquitoes

(NAPSI)-Mosquito season is here -and so is the need to protect ourselves from West Nile and other potentially dangerous mosquito-borne diseases.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that the West Nile virus alone resulted in more than 1,300 human cases and 44 fatalities across the United States in 2008. Additionally, the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) is warning of a heightened "potential for mosquito infestations," particularly near foreclosed properties with backyard pools.

While that doesn't mean families can't enjoy the great outdoors, it does point to the need to control and prevent mosquitoes in your yard. But before you break out sprays, citronella products and other sometimes inconvenient or ineffective methods, you might want to try something completely new: the Mosquito 86 Pest Eradication System, which works as a simple attachment for your ordinary handheld yard or leaf blower to turn it into an extraordinarily effective "mosquito-killing machine."

Mosquito 86 disperses a proven mosquito-killing solution formulated as Agent E. The mist kills mosquitoes on contact and also creates a protective barrier for longer-term protection when applied to lawns, trees, bushes and gardens. Agent E is EPA-registered in all 50 states.

It takes about 15 minutes to apply the solution to the average yard and it keeps properties mosquito-free for up to three weeks, depending on rainfall. According to the manufacturer's instructions, homeowners should use it right at dusk, when mosquitoes take flight, for maximum effect.

You can also help control the mosquito population by ridding your yard of stagnant water and keeping your grass mowed.

"Keep your home's gutters clean and cut back long brush and overgrown shrubs, too," says Dean Hill, a landscape designer and host of DIY Network's "Grounds for Improvement." "That way, the mosquitoes have no place to hide."

For more information, visit www.mosquito86.com.



Reeling "No Joking Around - Music & Friendship"

by Film Critic Betty Jo Tucker, Pueblo

NO JOKING AROUND MUSIC AND FRIENDSHIP

In this crazy world of ours, finding a true friend has to be one of life's most treasured gifts. "The Soloist," a film blessed with superb performances by Robert Downey Jr. and Jamie Foxx, presents this theme through contrasting scenes of great beauty and gritty realism. Seamlessly combining topnotch acting, splendid cinematography, elegant music, impressive writing and a humanistic approach, "The Soloist" emerges as the best movie so far this year. Fortunately, it's available on DVD beginning August 4.

Downey Jr. ("Tropic Thunder") simply couldn't be better as Steve Lopez, a frustrated Los Angeles Times columnist, looking for a story. I think the camera loves this actor almost as much as it adores Johnny Depp. Fortunately, "The Soloist" features Downey Jr. in a variety of highly interesting close-ups and moods. Watch those dark eyes change as his character goes from curiosity about Nathaniel Ayers (Foxx), a strange homeless man he meets, to amazement while listening to this Julliard-trained musician play Beethoven on a two-stringed violin. Pay attention to his facial expressions

during scenes showing Steve's determination -- and, yes, downright pushiness -- when trying to help Nathaniel. Note how his body language registers feelings of depression after some of Steve's plans just don't work out. I applaud Downey Jr. at the top of his game here.

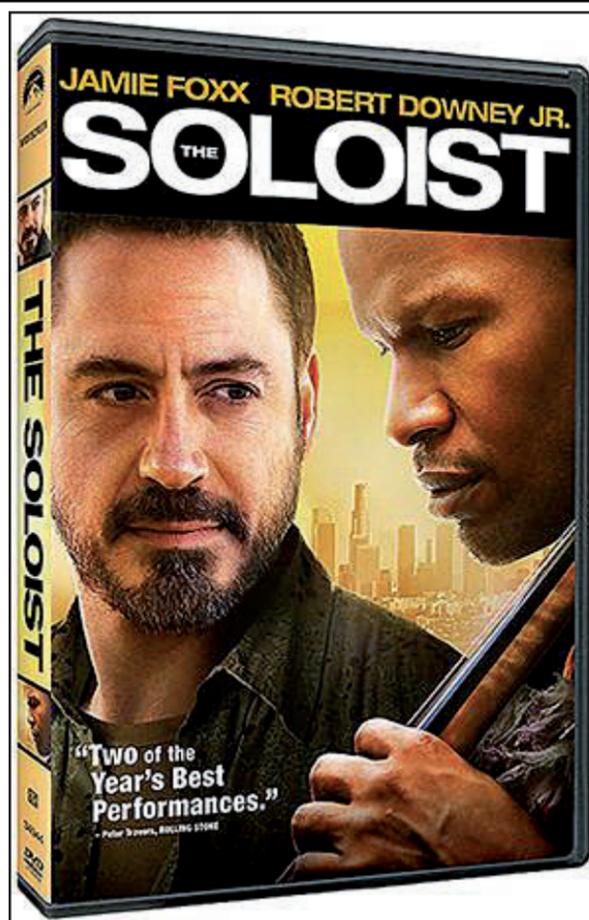
Portraying a musical genius suffering from schizophrenia, Foxx ("Ray") succeeds in projecting Nathaniel's unabated passion for the works of Beethoven. He makes Nathaniel feel believable to us despite his bizarre behavior, which includes rambling, incoherent speeches and outlandish outfits. We even forget Foxx is an actor, especially in such scenes as the one showing his character trying as hard as he can to keep a cello in order to play it outside on the highway. Because of what Foxx and Downey Jr. bring to the table, interactions between Nathaniel and Steve as their friendship grows are nothing short of priceless, no matter how stormy it becomes at times.

Will Steve be able to help Nathaniel? How much should one person interfere in another person's life? Is being a good friend enough? "The Soloist" offers an honest exploration of these questions.

Cinematographer Seamus McGarvey ("World Trade Center") adds considerable class to this special film. "Architecture is frozen music," someone once observed, and never before has that statement hit home to me like it does in one lovely sequence from "The Soloist." While Nathaniel plays the cello, doves fly over L.A. buildings and call attention to the beauty of the notes being played and the physical artistry of the structures.

In contrast, "The Soloist" also dramatizes the plight of our country's homeless population. Disturbing scenes of deplorable living conditions for these forgotten individuals (90,000 homeless people in L.A. alone) shock us into wondering how society could let fellow human beings live in such squalor.

Directed with meticulous care by Joe Wright ("Pride & Prejudice") from Susannah Grant's ("In Her Shoes") intelligent adaptation of Steve Lopez's revealing book, "The Soloist" won't please viewers looking for sickly sweet entertainment. But those seeking a movie of depth -- one that matters -- will probably sing its praises, and hopefully through this year's awards season. (Released by DreamWorks/Paramount Pictures and rated "PG-13" for thematic elements, some drug use and language.)



"The Time Traveler's Wife" looks intriguing because it's about the romantic trap facing a dashing librarian (Eric Bana) who travels through time and an artist (Rachel McAdams) who lives her life in normal time. As always, please remember release dates are subject to change.

Read Betty Jo's movie reviews at ReelTalkReviews.com. Autographed copies of her two books, *CONFESSIONS OF A MOVIE ADDICT* and *SUSAN SARANDON: A TRUE MAVERICK*, are available in Pueblo at Barnes & Noble.

And On The Big Screen ...

I'm looking forward to three theatrical releases this August: "Julie & Julia" (Aug. 7), "District 9" (Aug. 14), and "The Time Traveler's Wife" (also Aug. 14). It should be fun watching Meryl Streep's performance as Julia Child in the first movie, and I'm prepared to be terribly frightened by horrific happenings in "District 9." (I just can't help it -- I love scary movies.) "The Time Traveler's

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