

# Outlook <sup>Complimentary</sup> *by the Bay*

For the Bay Boomer and Beyond...

Fall 2009

## The Perfect Brew for You

All About Coffee

## Hiking the Trails

in Historic Harper's Ferry

## Tours, Travels and Treasures

How to Explore the Jewels of the Chesapeake Bay

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For the Bay Boomer and Beyond...

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## BAY VIEW - Words From the Desk



**Tecla Emerson  
Murphy**  
Publisher and  
Editor-in-Chief



This summer, in an attempt to follow Kater's strategy of less clutter and more space, or as she referred to it, "Tolerations" (Winter 09), I made up my mind to take on the task of sifting through two generations of collected family paperwork. It was taking up a huge amount of space in my office. July and August stretched out before me with a minimum of commitments. My boating enthusiast husband had sailed off for a two-month adventure, crossing one more thing off his *bucket list*. I took that as a sign — there could be no further excuses. There were five cases of paperwork to be disbursed. It was the perfect time to make some decisions on what to do with it all. And other than a couple of side trips to join the captain for a few days of adventure in New England waters, there would be no excuse for not completing this task.

It was a daunting but enlightening and informative undertaking. Many interesting family factoids were discovered, some comfortable and some not so comfortable. One interesting discovery was of how my industrious German grandmother, affectionately known as Oma, had to leave her home in Dresden with all due haste. She left behind much of her life including most of her worldly possessions. In the months that followed she had to make a choice to rebuild or to remain as just one more of Germany's walking wounded, which at her age would have been understandable. Her decision was to rebuild her life. It was not what many of us who face obstacles and misfortunes would have chosen to do. She, along with my grandfather, relocated to Stuttgart. It was 1945 and their home had been decimated by the Brits. The Iron Curtain was closing tightly around the eastern zone, preventing any thoughts of their ever returning home. For 10 years they lived a meager but industrious existence, with Opa picking up the pieces of his professional career. Their meager years of careful frugality culminated when at the ripe old age of 64, Oma designed, supervised the construction of and then managed a six-room hotel in the Bavarian Alps, locally known as a Hütte. There, they were able to rebuild a comfortable lifestyle that brought them to the enviable old age of 90-something. They retained all of their faculties until the end, remaining physically active and continuing with life's daily challenges. It had been a rich and rewarding life filled with dramatic ups and downs that most of us can only imagine. My recollection from the few times we were together is of someone who moved forward and lived for today with an astute eye on tomorrow. If nightmares and regrets were part of Oma's life, she chose not to share it. Having gone through the trauma of two world wars, the loss of two military-age sons as well as her home and most of her friends, she maintained an upbeat, busy, focused life and worked hard to make life better both for herself and those around her.

Oma's having completely shifted gears, falls into Kathryn's "pursuing your passion," (page 36). Although it may have been more of a necessity than a passion, it was nevertheless far removed from her familiar sphere of comfort and was unusual for a woman in the 1950s. It is quite a legacy to live up to. Today, it is more of the norm for us oldies who retire from one career and enter into something far removed from our original vocation. And, it's been my observation that those of us on this track are finding it to be perhaps the best, most challenging, fun and fulfilling phase of our lives. There's something very satisfying about choosing our own path and doing something for no better reason than this is what gives us a feeling of great joy.

And as for those five boxes of paperwork? The summer flew by and three of the five boxes remain. It's been slow-going. With half the paperwork in German, it has been more of a challenge than expected. The captain has returned from his grand sailing adventure and life again becomes busy and overscheduled. Maybe it will slow down again later this fall and I can tackle the rest of the clutter. But just taking these few steps has, as Kater promises on page 15, been very satisfying in freeing up space —and in this case not only the physical aspect of space, but some of the clutter of the past.

*Tecla Murphy*

# Active Lifestyles *Fall* 2009



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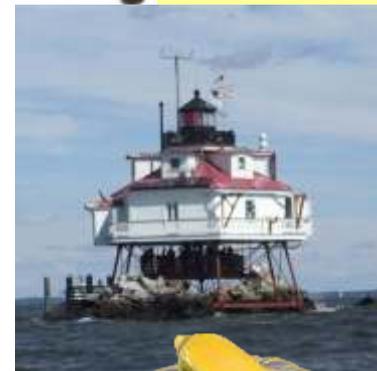
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**On the Cover:** Joan and Dick Clinch arrived in Annapolis nine years ago after Dick retired from Asea Brown Boveri, an engineering firm based in Switzerland. Joan retired from an active career as a clinical social worker. When not enjoying their children and grandchildren and traveling to remote parts of the world, they can be found hiking on any of the trails in the Bay area.

# Letters to the Editor:

Please address your letters to: [editor@OutLookbytheBay.com](mailto:editor@OutLookbytheBay.com)



### Cartop Boaters

It was a pleasure exchanging information with writer Phil Ferrara for his summer article regarding canoe and kayak launching experiences and fishing activities throughout Anne Arundel County. Our waterways provide a major source of recreation and education.

Thank you for promoting our department's "Cartop Boat Launch Site Guide" in your informative and entertaining summer article. The guide successfully champions County Executive John R. Leopold's commitment to help cartop boaters discover and enjoy waterway access points and passageways using our county park system. Free copies of the guide mapping 16 cartop boat launches and 15 park authorized fishing spots can be obtained from the county Web site or local libraries. Paddle and enjoy the fun!

As always, I enjoyed this issue of *OutLook by the Bay* and look forward to the next.

~ Frank Marzucco,  
director of recreation and parks

### Needing Girlfriends

Loved your "girlfriend" editorial. If there's one thing I've learned by now and a message that I pass along to my daughters, we need our girlfriends!

~ Peggy M., Evergreen, CO



### Keep Them Coming

I have enjoyed reading every issue of *Outlook*, especially Kathryn Marchi's articles. I also am about your age and a grandmother of eight grandsons. I am also a teacher but not retired yet. Take care and keep the articles coming.

~ Mary Ellen G., Severna Park

### A Kindle Fan

Read the article on the "Kindle" in your last issue. I let my kids know that's what I wanted for my summer travels even though I wasn't sure if this old dog could learn new tricks. Received one for my birthday and I quickly mastered it and love it, reading both *The Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal* on it each morning. I've also downloaded three books, which took only a couple of minutes.

Thanks for a publication that focuses on the "savvy senior."

~ Dick M., Annapolis



### Word Shortcuts

I was looking at the shortcuts for Microsoft Word that your magazine listed. Living in Mexico, I have some other shortcuts that are useful if you need to write something in Spanish.

Many of the Spanish words contain accent marks over certain vowels. This can be easily accomplished by pressing and holding the <CONTROL> and <asterisk> keys, then release them and hit the vowel key. To place the tilde (~) over an "n", press and hold the <CONTROL> and <ALT> keys while hitting the tilde key. Release everything and then hit the "n" key and it will produce an "n" with a tilde over it.

Regards,

~ Rick B., Mulegé, BCS, Mexico

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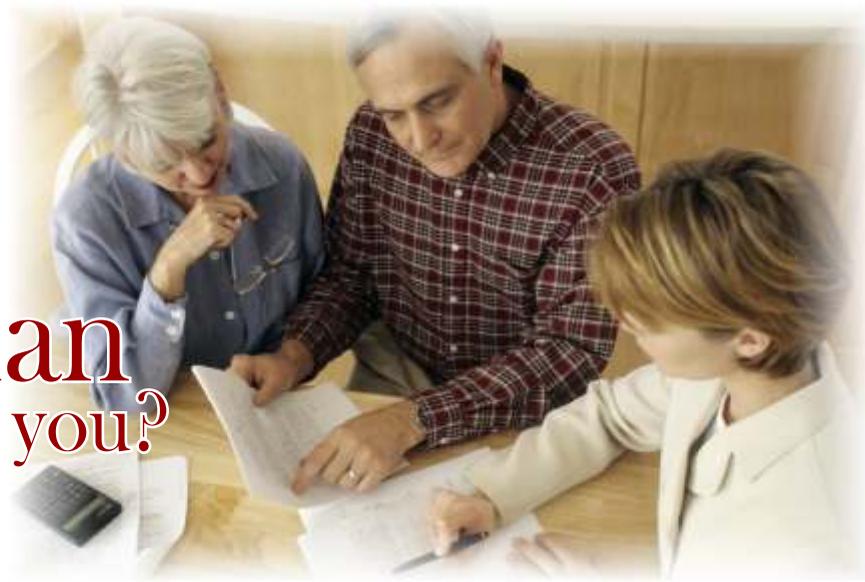
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FALLO9

# What's in the Stimulus Plan for you?



By Brion Harris

The federal government's \$787 billion stimulus plan, signed into law in February 2009, contains a number of potential benefits for individuals, families and business owners. But with some 575 pages of tax provisions, there's much to sort through. One way to make sense of it all is to identify which benefits are of greatest interest to individuals and families and business owners. Some of the changes:

**For households:**

- **Home buyer's credit.** Many refer to this \$8,000 tax credit, offered to buyers purchasing a house this year, as a first-time home buyer's credit, but that's a misnomer. The credit is for anyone who hasn't owned a home within three years of the closing date of the new property. And unlike the 2008 credit, these don't need to be repaid. As long as the buyer lives in the home for three years, the credit remains just that — an \$8,000 reduction of the price.

- **Credits for home improvements.** Several potential tax credits reward your efforts in this area. From now through 2016, you can receive a 30 percent tax credit on the cost of major energy-efficiency improvements such as installing solar panels, geothermal heat pumps, solar water heaters, fuel cells and small wind systems. What's more, there's no upper limit on claims, unlike previous credit programs. Adding to this program, homeowners can also gain a 30 percent tax credit — up to \$1,500 — for installing energy-efficient windows or similar items that incur savings.

- **New car sales tax deduction.** If you buy a new car this year, plan on deducting your state and local sales taxes on it from your federal tax bill. Buyers in high-tax states benefit most from this clause, since they can now deduct both state income taxes and new car levies on their federal returns. However, some conditions exist: The

deduction applies only to the first \$49,500 of the purchase price and is not offered to buyers with an adjusted gross income exceeding \$125,000 (\$250,000 for joint filers).

- **Tax credit for college students.** Parents of college students enjoy a maximum tax credit of \$2,500 through 2010. This applies to 100 percent of the first \$2,000 of expenses, and 25 percent of the second \$2,000 of expenses. On this one, the income phase-out is even lower — just \$80,000 adjusted gross income for individuals and \$160,000 for couples. For those with no reported tax liabilities (such as a student filing not as a dependent), the credit is 40 percent of \$2,500. The maximum benefit available to these qualifying taxpayers is \$1,000. Separately, the tax-free withdrawals from 529 college fund accounts can now fund technology equipment, like a laptop computer and Internet access, in addition to tuition and books. Investing in a 529 plan outside of your domiciled state may deny you the opportunity to take advantage of favorable state tax treatment or incentives.

- **Required minimum distribution holiday.** The government has suspended the required minimum distribution requirement for retirement plans in 2009. Thus, taxpayers who are 70 and ½ years or older can leave funds in their accounts to grow without penalty until 2010.

**For small-business owners:**

- **Higher capital expense deductions.** If you were planning to make capital expenditures for your business, this is the year for it. Businesses investing up to \$800,000 in certain so-called "Section 179" property — purchases such as office equipment, computers, off-the-shelf software, signs and livestock — may be able to write off up to \$250,000. This is an extension of the increase that kicked into

effect last year and doubled the previous ceiling. Some property doesn't qualify, such as land, buildings and swimming pools. Neither does parking lot paving.

- **Faster depreciation.** Businesses may also be able to take an additional special depreciation allowance for some purchases, deducting 50 percent of the cost of the property (assuming this property was put into use for the business). The remaining 50 percent then depreciates over the property's life. Types of property that may qualify include off-the-shelf software, qualified leasehold improvement property and tangible property with a recovery period of 20 years or less, such as cell phones and office furniture. One caveat — the property must have been new when you put it into service, which must begin after Dec. 31, 2007.

While not all the benefits in the stimulus plan will apply to you, it's best to work with a financial planner and accountant to ensure that you are getting all the tax breaks to which you're entitled.

**Talk to your financial planner about:**

- Reviewing your tax liabilities on a periodic basis throughout the year and making any needed adjustments to your financial plan
- Funding home improvements that take full advantage of the energy-efficient tax credits
- Creating new depreciation schedules for assets purchased for your business

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*This information should not be construed as legal or tax advice. You may want to consult a tax adviser regarding this information as it relates to your personal circumstances.*

# Biking for Fun and Exercise

By Kathryn Marchi



Who doesn't love autumn? The heat may still be around in September and early October, but the humidity is greatly diminished and the evenings are definitely cooler. Swimming may be over for those with outdoor pools but lots of people still walk, run and play tennis to maintain their physical fitness. However, another good way to accomplish that is to ride a bike. Not only can you stay in shape, but you can also take in the lovely fall colors and enjoy some great weather!

Bikes today are so much lighter and more aerodynamic than ones we had in our childhood. I recall my Lady Schwinn with thick tires, no gears, a front basket and a skirt cover over the back wheel! (Did I actually wear a skirt when I rode?) It was a very heavy bike and I spent most of my time standing up and pumping to get some speed going. It did coast downhill really well, though!

That brings us to bikes of today: There are numerous models available, many with extra features for specialized bike riding. Since most of us are not going to join Lance Armstrong in a race, let's concentrate on bikes for recreational riders. This means people who simply enjoy bike riding around the neighborhood or on the various bike paths that are popular today. It could include those who join bike clubs and do long-distance trips or "off road" biking. Bikes may vary for these purposes, but the safety features and equipment are much the same.

We'll begin with the types of bicycles that are available for semi-serious riders. For starters, it has been suggested that beginners should start with any bicycle that fits them and is in good repair and then look around for a more suitable one when cycling becomes a more serious hobby. Since bikes come in all price ranges, \$50 to \$1,000-plus, this might be the best course to take. And, as in all pursuits, you can spend as much or as little as you want on a safe and comfortable bike. Of course, the many accessories are there for the taking and can add more expense to the total package.

## *The choices:*

- **Road bike.** light, strong frames, thin tires for less friction and an easier but faster ride on paved roads, gears and hand brakes.
- **Utility bike.** rear internal hub brake, chain-case and mudguards, kickstand for parking, upswept handlebars for a comfortable grip and easier steering at low speeds.
- **Mountain bike.** sturdier, heavier frame, knobby tires, shock absorbers for maneuvering through rocks and mud, gears and hand brakes.
- **Hybrid or comfort bike.** a combination of road, utility and mountain bikes, which features a more "relaxed" upright positioning that is easier on the neck and lower back, flat handlebars with integral twist gears and somewhat wider tires that ride better over the variety of surfaces you may encounter. This type of bike is recommended for the semi-serious biker.

Looking in a bike shop or catalogue, you can see all sorts of equipment for cyclists, but for now, we'll just deal with the basics that should keep you safe and comfortable as you ride.

## *The basics:*

- **Helmet:** Don't leave home on your bike without one! Head injuries are common. Should you take a spill off your bike, your helmet could make the difference in the extent of injury. Make certain your helmet fits securely.
- **Portable Pump:** Yes, you might have a slow leak or flat tire when you're out and about. You need to be able to get back home safely and not necessarily on foot, walking your bike. You may want to take a spare inner tube and a small bike repair kit along if you travel any distance. A foot pump is also good to have at home.
- **Water Bottle:** Special "cages" can be purchased with a water bottle that fits right in and attaches to your bike. You'll need hydration as you ride.
- **Lights:** If you plan to ride your bike at night, this is a must.
- **Foam-padded-seat:** This is optional, but many casual cyclists find this type of seat much more comfortable.
- **Shoes:** There are specific biking shoes for professionals, but all you need at this point is a pair of sturdy shoes with rigid soles. Tennis shoes are perfectly suited for cycling. Some bikes have cage pedals that are really good for keeping your feet "set" while pedaling. You'll have to get used to slipping your feet in and out of them easily.
- **Clothing:** Depending upon the weather, your clothing should keep you comfortable. In the summer, thin and flexible clothes are a must for keeping you cool and dry. In colder temperatures, layers work best since you can remove outer layers if necessary. Avoid loose-fitting pants, shirts or jackets that may catch the wind or an errant branch and other protruding objects along your path. And do wear bright colors so you are as visible as possible at all times.





**"Riding a bicycle can be fun ... it's easy on the joints, increases muscle strength and circulation, helps with weight loss or maintenance and relieves stress."**

• **Gloves:** Cycling gloves are padded and not only absorb shock from handles but also can also offer protection to your palms in case of a fall off your bike.

Now that you and the bike are well-equipped, the next very important item is safety on the road:

- On a public road, bikers have to follow the same "rules of the road" as motorists.
- Cyclists must always be on the alert.
- At intersections, hand signals must be given before turns.
- Always avoid riding too close to parked cars. Many a cyclist has been knocked to the ground by an opening car door.

When riding on a bike trail or path, the following rules must be observed:

- Always keep right.
- Always pass on the left and give a warning, "on your left!"
- Observe a speed limit of 15 mph.
- Cyclists should always yield to all other trail users.
- Respect the rights and privacy of adjacent property owners.

These are your basic rules, but it might behoove you to look for a course in bike safety. Your local bicycle shop or a cycling club such as The Baltimore Bicycle Club offer such courses.

After reading this article, take your old clunker bike out for a ride. If you decide to take cycling seriously, it's time to visit your local bike shop and tell the salesperson what type of biking you want to do. You will be shown what's available to suit your frame.

You'll find that there is a correlation between the bike seat height and your height as well as your arm length to the handlebars, so adjustments might have to be made for you. The salesperson will also provide instructions on how to use the hand brakes and gears so that you can take a test ride before signing on the dotted line. Of course, the shop is happy to provide you with every available accessory. Do your homework so you'll know exactly what you need.

Riding a bicycle can be fun. If you start out slowly with casual rides around your neighborhood with a few friends, you may work up to joining an organized biking club for longer jaunts on the many bike paths and trails that are available. Besides the fresh air and camaraderie, regular cycling is one of the best exercises for your body. It's easy on the joints, increases muscle strength and circulation, helps with weight loss or maintenance and relieves stress. 

**Web sites:**

[www.bikewashington.org](http://www.bikewashington.org)

Link to Cross Island trail on Kent Island and Balto/Annapolis trail in Severna Park.

[www.baltobikeclub.org](http://www.baltobikeclub.org)

Links to bike safety, group rides, special events, and calendar of events.

[www.dnr.state.md.us](http://www.dnr.state.md.us)

Search biking or bike trails.

[www.seniorcycling.com](http://www.seniorcycling.com)

*Kathryn Marchi lives in Symphony Village with her husband Dennis. She is just beginning to get back on her bike for pleasure and a bit of good exercise after hip replacement surgery. She can be reached at [marchi-wre@mrisc.com](mailto:marchi-wre@mrisc.com)*



**Oct. 3:  
Mid-Atlantic  
Small Craft Festival  
to be held at the  
Maritime Museum**



One of the most popular gatherings of small and unique watercraft in the U.S. – the 27th Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival -- takes place at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum on Saturday, Oct. 3.

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., more than 200 unique small craft will be on display, including kayaks, canoes, paddle boats, rowing shells, sailing skiffs, prams and the unusual "one-of-a-kinds."

Proud boat owners – many who hail from ports up and down the East Coast—will offer boat building demonstrations as well as sailing, paddling and a rowing competition. The museum's boat yard staff and instructors from the Chesapeake Wooden Boat Builders School, will also be on hand to offer maritime demonstrations.

Children of all ages will have plenty of activities like cardboard boat building and races, model boat building and sailing and kite-making workshops.

Boats will frequently be in use, not simply sitting on display. There are participants who started attending the festival as toddlers and now bring their own families to participate.

Admission to the Small Craft Festival is \$13 for adults, \$10 for seniors and \$5 for children ages 6 to 17. Museum members and children five and under are admitted free. For more information or to receive registration materials to participate in this year's Small Craft Festival, please contact CBMM at 410-745-2916, or visit the Web site at [www.cbmm.org](http://www.cbmm.org) 



## Weigh Less, Live More

By Ellen Kittredge

The fifth and final installment in a series of articles on finding the right foods to naturally rev up your metabolism and see lasting weight loss.

In the first four articles in this series, we learned that the most exciting information on the medical weight-loss scene does not involve the standard concepts of calorie counting, finding that perfect exercise routine or balancing your intake of protein, fat and carbohydrates. Instead, we have examined the science behind the messages that specific molecules in our food send to our genes to either turn on or turn off the mechanisms that control weight loss. Dr. Mark Hyman, a medical doctor and the author of *Ultrametabolism: The Simple Plan for Automatic Weight Loss*, has brought us this groundbreaking research.

Achieving lasting and real weight loss is not an easy endeavor. Frequently there are all too many roadblocks in the way to moving forward with your goals. Despite all the calorie counting and exercising, you may still be unable to achieve the results you'd like, and may end up feeling discouraged and assume you must lack motivation. It's time you gave up on the self-criticism and open up to the idea that there may be real physiological reasons that you have difficulty losing weight. It may be that some of the foods in your diet are sending the wrong signals to your genes, keeping your weight

on. So, rather than starving yourself one more time or trying the latest fad diet, you simply need to learn which foods are the correct foods for your body, and then make those a regular part of your daily diet.

### The Metabolic Engine

In past issues we've covered the important concepts of how chemical imbalances, oxidative stress, inflammation, hormonal imbalances, detoxification and generalized stress all contribute to weight gain, or the inability to lose weight. My suggestions in each of these areas have mainly been dietary, encouraging you to investigate healthier foods that could start to send the correct signals to your genes and bring about weight loss.

In this final installment, we're going to discuss the important concept of our "metabolic engine" and explain why addressing the things that help and hinder our metabolic engine can play such an important role in weight loss. To understand how our metabolic engine works, you need to understand a key player we all have on our side on the path toward weight loss: mitochondria. Mitochondria are tiny powerhouses within our cells that burn oxygen to produce energy. When we breathe more oxygen, we burn more energy, i.e., calories. Thus there is a direct correlation between oxygen intake and weight loss. The amount of oxygen you are able to breathe per minute is directly tied to the number of calories you can burn per minute.

If your mitochondria are suffering, you will not be able to burn calories and lose weight as easily as you might hope. What causes mitochondria to suffer? The main cause is probably free radical damage. To help to correct for free radical damage, it's important to eat food high in antioxidants, because free radicals cause oxidative damage, and antioxidants can correct for this. Raw fruits and vegetables are the best source for antioxidants, and thus should be a large part of the diet of anyone who is serious about weight loss.

Other damaging factors include too many calories, chronic infection, inflammation, mercury and imbalances with the thyroid hormone. Unfortunately there are a lot of causes. The good news is that there is a fairly simple way to address and correct most of these problems. In addition to making the good dietary changes outlined in past articles, the best thing we can do to increase the ability of our mitochondria to do their very important work for us is to exercise.

Exercise not only positively influences your mitochondria, allowing them to consume more oxygen and burn more calories, it also increases the number of mitochondria. When you work out, your mitochondria work out. They get better and better at consuming oxygen. So the key to helping out metabolic engine work optimally is to move.

You don't necessarily need to adopt a rigorous exercise routine to be successful with "working out" your mitochondria. Just getting up from your desk and walking to the water cooler, or walking down the hall to discuss something with a colleague, rather than sending them an e-mail, will contribute to weight loss. Fidgeters, those who get up and move around a lot, lose more weight. It is important that you find an activity that you love, something that makes moving your body enjoyable. Otherwise, you will likely stop exercising once you lose the initial motivation. So, whatever type of movement works for you, find it and start doing it. Your body will thank you!

### Exercise Suggestions

Once you read through these, think for a minute about what might work for you. When you put down this article, start by making that phone call to a friend or sharing your ideas with your loved ones. Reaffirm your commitment to boosting the metabolic potential of those tiny little powerhouses, the mitochondria we have in every cell. They only need a little more oxygen to do their work of calorie-burning that much more effectively, making you happier, healthier and lighter.

How to get your body moving:

1. Swim daily in your community pool.
2. Schedule morning walks with your spouse or a good friend.
3. Find a co-worker who is committed to weight loss, and exercise together during your lunch break.
4. Take your child or grandchild to their soccer or Little League game and walk a few laps around the field, while you watch them play.
5. Work out on your home exercise equipment or at the gym while watching your favorite show or reading a great book.
6. Join a local hiking group.

Remember to keep your chosen form of movement fun, and you will be more successful in the long run. 

*Ellen is a nutrition and health counselor practicing in Annapolis and Bethesda who helps her clients experience real and lasting weight loss, eliminate cravings, gain more energy and improve overall health and well-being. She can be reached at [ellen@ellenkittredge.com](mailto:ellen@ellenkittredge.com) or 202-577-1940, or log onto [www.ellenkittredge.com](http://www.ellenkittredge.com)*

# Driving for the Silver at Hospice Cup 2009

By Vern Penner

There isn't a sailor alive, young or old, who doesn't revel in maximizing a boat's performance. The yardstick is usually SOG (speed over ground) and the pleasure from optimal performance is greatly magnified when passing a slower boat. These things can get deadly serious as anyone knows who has ever witnessed the Annapolis Wednesday Night Racing Series or participated in one of the annual racing events like the Solomon's Island Screw-pile Regatta or Annapolis Labor Day Race Week. We're not talking cruising here, we're talking hard-core competition. Amateurs participate at their peril and casual observers are awed by displays of prowess and professionalism coupled with costly state-of-the-art boats, sails and accessories.

However, some sailboat races are designed to level the playing field a bit and deliberately encourage less experienced sailors using family sailboats that are neither kept on lifts above the water nor waxed before each race. Not surprisingly, several such races combine charity fundraising with the competition. So what if you fall behind and don't get the silver tray? At least you've done something philanthropic.

That's my motivation to participate this year in Hospice Cup XXVIII on Sept. 26, with my sailboat Graciella. The Hospice Cup is one of America's oldest charity races having originated in Annapolis in the early 1980s.

Since then it has evolved into the largest annual charity regatta in the US with races taking place nationwide which have raised more than \$7 million all to benefit hospice care. Annapolis alone raised \$350,000 in Hospice 2008, according to the August SpinSheet.

I also feel motivated because of the two yacht clubs to which I belong, the Chesapeake Bay Sabre Association and the Back Creek Yacht Club. Both are virtual organizations and have no permanent club house. They charge minimal membership fees, organize frequent events and are composed of great folks who have fun and love the water. CBSA will put a half dozen Sabres in the race, all of which are newer and bigger than Graciella. BCYC has already at least one Hospice Cup entry with an all-woman crew. What better scenario for Graciella

to strut her stuff!

Graciella is one of the oldest of its type on the Chesapeake Bay. The 28' boat design went into production in 1972 and was immediately labeled "the sailboat to fall in love with sailing on." The Sabre 28 and its designer Roger Hewson are in the US Sailing Hall of Fame. Almost 600 were produced over a 20-year period and my hull number 30 dates from 1973. That's almost as old as dirt in boat terms.

I like to consider Graciella a spritely performer whether driving for the silver on a few occasions or doing its normal thing by cruising on the Bay. Registration for the Hospice Cup is easy thanks to the cooperation between Hospice Cup, Inc., and the Shearwater Sailing Club/Storm Trysail Club. Everything you need to know is on the Web at [info@hospicecup.org](mailto:info@hospicecup.org) or [www.shearwatersc.net/races](http://www.shearwatersc.net/races)

Moreover, for the hard-core racing in separate categories, the Hospice Cup is sanctioned by the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Racing Association (CBYRA), which counts the results in its season-long High Point competition.

I'm not in the High Point league, but to ensure that Graciella is up to speed in the Hospice Cup, I look to the second most important ingredient in sailboat racing: a good crew to provide the right tactical advice, winch handling and railmeat. Hank is a retired senior executive service Department of Agriculture employee, born and raised on a yacht yard in

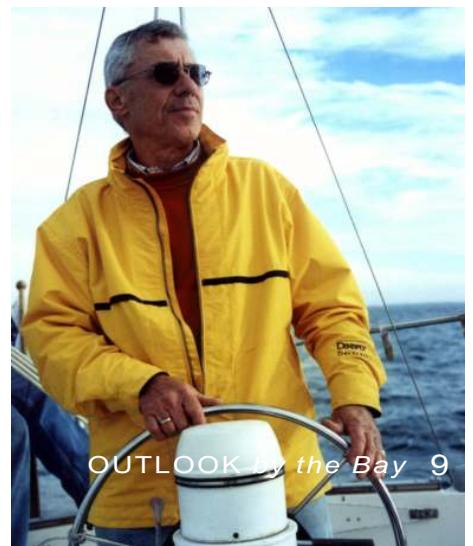


Maine, with an adventurous outdoor life style. He took to sailboat racing early and I love him to use Graciella because he always leaves the lines so neatly flaked. Tom is a retired DC fireman with numerous boat deliveries on his resume, an oft-raced catamaran at his pier on the South River and an upbeat attitude helpful in any tight situation.

But no sailing crew is complete without a woman at the helm to add looks, charm and civility, especially in a race. Previously we have benefitted from the presence of an Italian coffee maker sales manager, a German exchange student and a Marine Corps marathoner. In Hospice Cup 2009, we will have the good veteran services of Hank's wife who will add style and unfailing good humor to the day's competition.

A final word about this year's honorary chairman of the Hospice Cup, Erwin Abrams. He joins a long list of super luminaries such as former Gov. William Donald Schaefer, William F. Buckley, Jr., Walter Cronkite and Gary Jobson. Erwin is a fellow member of the Parole Rotary Club of Annapolis and long-time president of Hospice of the Chesapeake. He epitomizes what the Hospice Cup is all about and in his honor, the Rotary Club burgee will be flying from Graciella's spreader. That will be easy for everyone to notice at the finish line when you come see the fun on Sept. 26. 

*Vern Penner is a retired US ambassador and career Foreign Service officer, who after seven tours in Europe, two in Asia and one in Africa, settled in Annapolis. He and his tennis-playing, nonsailing wife, couldn't be happier with the choice.*



# In Search of a Kinder and Gentler Community

By Victoria Duncan



## The Riddle

How does a bumper sticker promote better personal health and more peaceful communities?

While traveling through Howard County, I spotted a bumper sticker on the car in front of me: "Choose Civility." Giving it little thought, I followed another car sporting the same slogan -- and then yet another. Edging closer to get a better look at the green and white bumper sticker, the phrase "in Howard County" printed in a smaller font below "Choose Civility" jumped out and piqued my curiosity.

## The Answer

Just a Google away, I learned that the bumper stickers, or more accurately bumper magnets, adorn more than 60,000 vehicles and are only a smidgen of the ongoing, county-wide initiative led by the Howard County Library. Launched in 2007 following a presentation by Johns Hopkins professor and author, P.M. Forni, PhD, at a Howard County Library staff development day, the campaign has grown exponentially.

The grass-roots effort is based on Forni's book, *Choosing Civility: The Twenty-Five Rules of Considerate Conduct*. The book's message, which is to promote the qualities of respect, empathy, consideration and tolerance, resonated with Howard County librarians and the initiative took off from there. Fifteen of Forni's principles became the bedrock of a program designed to support and encourage civil behavior in the business, community and personal lives of county residents.

More than 100 businesses, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions and citizens have partnered to promote the message that civility lies at the center of the health and well-being of a community and its citizens. Much more than a bumper slogan, a range of activities, events and educational initiatives offer county residents an enriching mix of opportunities to learn and experience these core values. Ranging from book discussion groups to an official Civility Week, the program is multidimensional and ambitious.

Civility Week, beginning this Oct. 5, will be capped by a Civility Symposium on Oct. 8, featuring motivational speakers, interactive workshops and even awards for those institutions and individuals who have

made notable achievements in at least five of the core principles adopted by the initiative. For more information on these programs, check out the Web site at <http://www.choosecivility.org>

## The Background

Is the program meeting its own lofty goals? Well, it is certainly garnering attention and appears to have struck a chord. *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Smithsonian Magazine* and *The Washington Post* are among the publications that have devoted space about this burgeoning initiative. Internationally, the *London Sunday Times* cited Howard County as "America's capital of considerate conduct." And in addition, the effort is spreading to communities in other states such as Ohio, Florida, Minnesota and Montgomery County here in Maryland. According to Dr. Forni, the behaviors and attitudes that comprise civility are as ancient as human society and their role as facilitators of social harmony is more important than we realize. In fact, *incivility* exacts a high price. For example, research suggests that billions of dollars are forfeited in accidents attributed to road rage and, in the working world, rudeness results in diminished work productivity that translates into reduced profits. The cost to personal health arising from stress and discord is well-documented. Furthermore, many crimes originate with an exchange of rudeness that spirals out of control into violence.

Seemingly common sense practices such as paying attention, speaking kindly and respecting the opinion of others are becoming less common. Instead, thoughtfulness and good manners can give way to abrasive aggressiveness and a

coarsening of the fabric of our interpersonal relationships, including casual encounters with a clerk or a delivery person, as well as those more intimate and meaningful contacts with our friends and family. And this is where it gets very personal. As Forni notes, life is what our relationships make it. When our relationships are good, our life is good. Conversely, when our relationships are bad, we're unhappy. Moreover, we're also unhealthy due to the stress of those unpleasant interactions. It may sound simplistic but the truth is that in order to be happy, we must live well with others. Civility fosters that ability through our attitudes, our communications and our behaviors. Civility makes us good citizens, neighbors and family members when we treat others, our communities and our planet with respect and consideration.

## Our Community

Driving home the other day, I stopped at a traffic light on Forest Drive. When the light turned green, the elderly man in the car in front of me seemed distracted and hesitated a nanosecond longer than necessary before driving forward. An irate driver laid on his horn and made an obscene gesture as he cut into the passing lane and zoomed by. Just one incident? Yes, but kindness and rudeness live side by side in our own community and most of us are both contributors and victims at times. Incivility breeds more incivility when we don't pay attention to what we could be about.

Maybe, Anne Arundel County could take some lessons from our neighbors to the northwest and join the movement. The qualities that fall under the umbrella of civility are those that enhance the lives of all who live in a community. How we treat each other matters greatly--and that should be no riddle to anyone.

### Principles of Civility as Chosen by "Choose Civility" of Howard County

1. Pay attention
2. Listen
3. Speak kindly
4. Assume the best
5. Respect others' opinions
6. Respect other people's time and space
7. Be inclusive
8. Acknowledge others
9. Accept and give praise
10. Apologize earnestly
11. Assert yourself
12. Take responsibility
13. Accept and give constructive criticism
14. Refrain from idle complaints
15. Be a considerate guest

*So you blew it in the past — why not move on and concentrate on today?*

# The Future is Now, Are You Ready?

By Mary P. Felter

“**T**he best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.” That well-known saying is adapted from a line in “To a Mouse” written by poet Robert Burns. Yet, planning for the future, even one that is clouded with questionable financial times, is still the right way to go.

The Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities will help you get your life in order with a series of workshops entitled “The Future is Now! Are You Ready?” that will focus on legal, financial and future expectations. The free series will be held Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. October through March 2010 at the Arnold Senior Activity Center, 44 Church Road, Arnold.

## Legal planning

**Oct. 7:** Dr. Rebecca Elon, will speak on “The Issue of Competency from the Medical Perspective.” Capacity is a clinical determination that addresses the integrity of mental functions. Competency is a legal determination that addresses restricting a person’s right to make decisions or act because of incapacity. This workshop will cover the issue of whether a person can be held accountable for the consequences of his or her decisions and actions.

**Oct. 14:** Attorney Robert Bohan will discuss “The Estate Planning Process.” For many individuals, especially those with smaller estates, the most important document is not the will but rather a durable power of attorney. At this workshop, you will learn about wills, trusts, probate and estate administration.

**Oct. 21:** Attorney Jacqueline Byrd will present the workshop called “Making Sense of Living Wills and Other Advanced Directives.” The types of advance directives under Maryland law and points to consider when completing a living will and appointing a health care agent will be explored. Surrogate decision-making in the absence of an advanced directive will also be discussed.

## Financial planning

**Jan. 13:** “Financing Long-Term Care Through Maryland Medical Assistance” will present a general overview of the rules and regulations of the Maryland Medical Assistance Program regarding long-term care in a nursing home. The workshop will include an explanation of eligibility standards and the application process. The speaker again is attorney Robert Bohan.

**Jan. 20:** Amy Rubino, the department’s senior health insurance assistance program director, and a representative from the Maryland Insurance Administration will discuss “Long-Term Care Insurance.” You will learn the basics of how long-term care policies are packaged and sold. You’ll also get guidelines to help make an informed decision about medical underwriting, benefit packages, premium costs, benefit triggers and other consumer buying tips.

**Jan. 27:** Robert Ready of Jacob Dean Mortgage Inc. will discuss “The New Faces of Reverse Mortgages.” Reverse mortgages are often at the heart of questions about financial planning. You will receive information on the latest rules governing this program that allows seniors to cash in on the equity in their homes. The pros and cons will be discussed.

## Expected – and unexpected

**March 10:** Mary Fridley, registered nurse and founder of Gero-Resources LLC, calls her workshop “Now What? Preparing for Your Older Loved One’s Hospital Discharge.” If your loved one were discharged from the hospital tomorrow morning, how prepared are you? Do you have the skills and knowledge to provide the necessary care?

You will learn important questions to ask, how to access resources and services and how to be fully prepared for your loved one’s arrival home.

**March 17:** Registered nurse Marjorie Cotterman will speak on “When Your Loved One Can No Longer Live Independently.” Are you concerned about a loved one who lives alone? Wondering what you can do? Get help in determining when your family member can no longer live independently. Discover how you can help them in the decision-making and the transition process.

**March 24:** Anne Arundel County Register of Wills Lauren M. Parker will present “After the Loss of Your Loved One.” Losing loved ones is always stressful, whether it is the result of a lingering illness or an accident. Yet there are still many things that you will need to take care of after their deaths. The workshop will help you identify who needs to be notified and what documentation you will need to have on hand to help simplify this process.

To register for the series, call 410-222-4464, ext. 3094, or register online at <http://www.aacounty.org/Aging> If you are interested in sponsoring the workshop series, contact Sandy Berkeley at 410-222-4257, ext. 221.

Mary P. Felter is the public information officer for the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities. She can be reached at [mfelter@aacounty.org](mailto:mfelter@aacounty.org)

**OysterFest**  
Saturday, November 7, 2009  
10am-5pm, rain or shine

- Live Music
- Great Food
- Family Activities
- Skipjack and Buyboat Rides
- Oyster Aquaculture & Restoration Demos
- Oyster Tonging
- Cooking Demos

Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum  
213 N. Talbot Street  
St. Michaels, Maryland  
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# Your LEGAL TEAM

Ronald H. Jarashow, Esq., Robert R. Smith, Esq. and Gilda O. Karpouzian, Esq., are practicing lawyers in Maryland with over 30 years of experience. Their answers below are based on assumptions that Maryland law applies. Mr. Jarashow and Mr. Smith can be contacted at 410-268-5600 or [info@fjbslaw.com](mailto:info@fjbslaw.com) and Ms. Karpouzian can be contacted at 410-280-8864.

## Dear Legal Team:

*We're thinking of putting everything we have into a trust for our four grown children, and if I understand this correctly, we will be able to continue to enjoy what we have until our demise at which point our children will receive what's left. My question is, if we get sued (my husband owns his own small business), can they go after the trust?*

~ Trust Creator/Asset Protector

## Dear Trust Creator/Asset Protector:

Your question asks about two separate and related concepts concerning the creation of a trust and using those trust assets during your lifetime and the desire to protect the trust assets from possible business debts. You are on the right track, but the issues are more complex.

Trusts basically come in two types, revocable and irrevocable. Both accomplish the goal of permitting you to use the assets during your lifetime for your personal benefit. After your death, the beneficiaries of the trust (your children or whoever you designate in the trust documents) will receive what is left in the way you describe the distribution in the trust documents. Both forms of trust avoid probate (court proceedings to deal with your estate), assuming that you have placed all your assets into the trust.

A revocable trust, however, does not provide any asset protection where an irrevocable trust does protect your assets from creditors. There are various tax implications for each of the types of trusts that we are not addressing in this article. As the names of the trust imply, a revocable trust could be revoked by you if you desire to change the way you want the assets used during your lifetime or distributed after death. An irrevocable trust, however, is established and not changeable by you once it is set up and you transfer your assets into the ownership of the trust. An important point in planning a trust is

deciding what assets you will actually place into the ownership of the trust. We have seen cases in which individuals do the estate planning and sign the trust documents, but then fail to transfer to the trust all or even the significant assets, thereby defeating the overall estate plan and purpose of the trust. You should work with an estate planner or estate attorney to carry out the plan and transfer the assets that accomplish your intent.

The second part of your question suggests that part of your motivation for establishing a trust is because of potential liability arising from your husband's business. An irrevocable trust does take your property out of your personal ownership and transfer it to the trust, so the assets are protected from both of your creditors – not only your husband's business creditors. Even without an irrevocable trust, however, your assets may be protected from your husband's business debts. Depending upon the laws of the state in which you live, assets owned by a husband and wife jointly as tenants by the entireties (right of survivorship) are often protected from a personal debt that arises for one spouse or the other. In addition, the structure of your spouse's business may give him personal protection from debts of the business. This is the classic reason for setting up either a corporation or a limited liability company or some other form of a business that protects the owners from liabilities of the business. The normal rule is that an employee, stockholder, director or officer of a corporation or a limited liability company does not have personal liability for the debts of the company. There are exceptions to this under state law. Therefore, if a primary motivation for your question is a concern about liability arising from your husband's business, you may not need an irrevocable trust to accomplish the goal of protecting your personal assets. An experienced business lawyer can explain to you the circumstances under which an individual involved in the business may become responsible for the debts of the company.

## Dear Legal Team:

*My mother has run up a huge amount of debt, and although she seems to be of sound mind, physically she is declining. My concern is that I'm her sole beneficiary. Will I also inherit what she owes? I'm baffled as to how she's been able to accumulate so much debt and I know that her estate won't even come close to covering it. Needless to say I'm very concerned.*

~ Estate-Daughter

## Dear Estate-Daughter:

Creditors who are owed money when someone dies become creditors of the deceased person's estate. There is a procedure and time limit for those creditors to file those claims in the estate proceedings. These debts get paid from the estate, if there are assets in the estate. The debts or claims do not become the personal responsibility of the beneficiaries or heirs of the estate.

In any estate, before any funds are used to pay creditors, there are certain expenses that will be deducted from your mother's estate, such as funeral expenses, taxes, probate fees, bond costs, advertising costs, etc. These are just some of the expenses that may be present in every estate. Once customary expenses are deducted from the gross estate, then the claims are considered for payment before assets are distributed to you as sole beneficiary.

Whether a creditor is paid in full depends on the amount of the estate assets (net estate available for distribution). If the estate assets are not enough to cover all of her debts, then each creditor receives an equal percentage of the debt owed along with all other creditors. If the estate has no funds (or no estate is opened because your mother has no assets), then the creditors may not receive any payment.

While your mother is still living, you should be aware of whether you agree to be responsible to pay your mother's debts. If you sign documents agreeing to be personally responsible for her debts, then your agreement to pay will continue after your mother's death. This type of situation may arise, for example, if you or your mother try to get services or buy something and the provider refuses to do so unless you also personally sign to be responsible for the debt.

We are providing information about the law. Legal information, however, is not the same as legal advice about your specific circumstances. We try to be accurate and useful. We strongly recommend that you consult a lawyer to find out what is appropriate in your particular situation. We are not giving specific legal advice to you. These answers do not create an attorney-client relationship.

*Your future is dependent on the choices you make today.*

# Remembrance of Things Proust

By Maureen Smith

**W**hen I was in college, one of my English professors told the class that reading Marcel Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* would be life-changing.

His comment stuck in my mind and when I graduated, I requested this two-volume tome as a graduation gift. Though I always meant to read it, for many years it stayed impressively on my book shelves.

There were times when I picked it up with good intentions, but discovered that it is next to impossible to read Proust when you have small children, or when you have gone back into the work force, or when just about anything is going on in your life.

If you are not familiar with this work, it consists of more than 2,265 pages of very small print. One thought can ramble on for pages. He has inspired many an author who was drawn to his stream-of-consciousness style of writing. One of his famous (or often referenced) passages is his reflection and memory of a madeleine cake. Even a chapter in a recent book, *I Feel Bad About My Neck* by Norah Ephron, refers to those famous madeleines. In the movie *Little Miss Sunshine*,

the suicidal brother was a Proustian scholar. When the teenager of the family told his uncle that he wished he could just skip high school, he was informed that Proust felt the only real growth we experience is through suffering, and if you skip high school, you would be missing out on some of the finest suffering to be had.

The word Proustian (pronounced prus'tean) is an adjective in the dictionary, defined as: "of, having to do with, or suggestive of the novelist Marcel Proust or his works. As in '...I found myself remembering every detail with an almost Proustian clarity.'"

Marcel Proust was born in Paris on July 10, 1871. An asthma attack at age nine turned him into an invalid. His wealthy parents doted on him and enabled him to enjoy the privileges of this chosen lifestyle without concerns for a livelihood. Despite his eccentricities, he was considered quite charming. His writing has been compared to Shakespeare and Stendhal.

Proust adored his grandmother and often spent his summers with her at the Grand Hotel in Cabourg, France. I once stayed at this hotel in the room opposite the Proust Suite -- might I say a small highlight of my life -- and I even had a chance to visit the suite when it was unoccupied. A proud moment was having my picture taken next to his bronze bust on the hotel's desk.

My friends wonder at my spending time

with this book when even libraries are taking it off the shelves. "Are you enjoying it?" they'd ask. Although Proust was not an active participant in life, he was a keen observer of humanity. He felt that it is only in our recollection of events that we experience the true meaning of an experience. It is fascinating to me to read expressions from that time that are still being used in the 21st century or about character traits that are alive and well in people I know today.

Reading Proust has turned into a priority on my *bucket list*. Others have aspirations to climb mountains, run a marathon or achieve other ambitious feats, but each summer I am determined to plow through 500 more pages of Proust. One of my book friends in Florida has encouraged me to give it up. She even promised to throw the book in my coffin if my goal is not achieved. What would we do without friends?

I'm anxious to see how my life will be changed after having read it. By "life-changing," perhaps my professor just meant I would be a lot older!

*Maureen did finish reading Proust on Friday, Aug. 7, 2009 at 10:52am. She is now moving on to the next item on her bucket list - maybe a tattoo? She can be reached at [RSmith0636@comcast.net](mailto:RSmith0636@comcast.net)*

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**IT'S POSSIBLE.**



# Managing Caregiver Stress

By Caryn Sagal



Caregivers for individuals with dementia may become so overwhelmed, that they neglect their own physical, mental and emotional well-being. If they're not good to themselves, ultimately they can't be good to those they are helping. Below are 10 ways to be a healthier caregiver.

## 1. Understand what's going on as early as possible

Alzheimer's symptoms may appear gradually. Although it can be easy to explain away changing or unusual behavior when a loved one seems physically healthy, you should consult a doctor when you see changes in memory, mood or behavior. Don't delay because some symptoms are treatable.

## 2. Know what community resources are available

Your local Alzheimer's Association office can help you find care resources in your community. Adult day programs, in-home assistance and meal delivery are just some of the services that can help.

## 3. Become an educated caregiver

As the disease progresses, new caregiving skills may be necessary. The Alzheimer's Association offers programs to help you better understand and cope with the behaviors and personality changes that often accompany Alzheimer's.

## 4. Get help

Trying to do everything by yourself will leave you exhausted. Seek the support of family, friends and community resources. The Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline, online message boards and local support groups are good sources of comfort and reassurance. If stress becomes overwhelming, seek professional help.

## 5. Take care of yourself

Eat right, exercise and get plenty of rest.

## 6. Manage your level of stress

Stress can cause physical problems (blurred vision, stomach irritation, high blood pressure) and changes in behavior (irritability, lack of concentration, change in appetite). Find ways to relax and talk to your doctor.

## 7. Accept changes as they occur

People with Alzheimer's change and so do their needs. They may require care beyond what you can provide on your own. Becoming aware of community resources – from home care services to residential care – should make the transition easier.

## 8. Make legal and financial plans

Consult a professional to discuss legal and financial issues including advance directives, wills, estate planning, housing issues and long-term care planning. Involve the person with Alzheimer's and family members whenever possible.

## 9. Give yourself credit, not guilt

Know that the care you provide does make a difference and you are doing the best you can. Don't feel guilty because you can't do more. You can't promise how care will be delivered, but you can ensure that the person with Alzheimer's is well cared for and safe.

## 10. Visit your doctor regularly

Take time to get regular checkups, and hear what your body is telling you. Ignoring symptoms can cause your own physical and mental health to decline.

*The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's research, care and support. Its mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Its vision is a world without Alzheimer's.*



# Where to Go for AD Info

By Mick Rood

Fortunately for caregivers, there are excellent Web sites that explore all the ramifications of Alzheimer's. Here are some sites to check out.

[www.nia.nih.gov/Alzheimers](http://www.nia.nih.gov/Alzheimers) gets you to the Alzheimer's Disease Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center, part of the National Institute of Aging. At ADEAR, look for its basic fact sheet about the disease and easy-to-click-on facets of AD. The site explains how to volunteer for clinical trials held to pursue Alzheimer's treatments.

[www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) is the informative Web site of the Alzheimer's Association. Especially interesting are the "Know the 10 Signs" section and a "Preparing for Your Doctor's Visit" form you can pull down.

[MayoClinic.com](http://MayoClinic.com) is probably the best all-around medical site. Google this and click on "A." Go down the "A" list and click on Alzheimer's. There you will find an excellent overview of the disease and all of its ramifications.

[helpguide.org](http://helpguide.org) is a relatively new site started by a Santa Monica, Calif., couple who lost their daughter to suicide. They are focused on a variety of mental health conditions including AD and staffed by medical professionals to provide unbiased advice. Googling this site gets you plenty of information by clicking on Alzheimer's down the left column of the first page. An excellent feature there is on six strategies to prevent or delay AD.

For local information, call the Alzheimer's Association Greater Maryland Chapter at 800-272-3900.

Also locally, go to <http://www.alzresearch.org/index.cfm> to get information from the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center at Johns Hopkins University. The center's site reports on basic research, clinical trials and other aspects of Alzheimer's Disease.



## Save the Dates for Memory Walk

The Alzheimer's Association will hold its annual Memory Walk® events to raise awareness and collect funds to fight Alzheimer's disease. Rain or shine, this year's local walks will occur at:

**Salisbury**  
Saturday, Oct. 10  
Registration 9 a.m.  
City Center Building

**Anne Arundel**  
Saturday, Oct. 17  
Registration 8 a.m.  
Severn School – Severna Park

Immediately preceding and following each walk, light refreshments, music and entertainment for the whole family will be available. Teams will have their photos taken, and walkers who raise at least \$100 will receive a Memory Walk T-shirt.

Walkers also can decorate a paper Forget-Me-Not flower with the name or picture of a loved one and "plant" the flower in the "Garden of Memories." Additionally, rub-off tattoos and bracelets will be available for purchase.

Memory Walk participants can register as individuals or teams. Most events are two- to three-mile walks, while some include a one-mile alternative. For information, to register or make a donation, contact the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900 or visit [www.alz.org/maryland](http://www.alz.org/maryland)

# Creating More Space in Life

By Kater Leatherman

In these changing times, it seems as though having enough *space* is fast becoming a rare commodity. We just don't seem to have enough of it. When life feels like a juggling act of obligations, to-do lists and pressure to keep up, one has to wonder what is happening.

One of the biggest robbers of *space* is the onslaught of technology. What is supposed to save time actually compels us to cram more in. Another culprit is filling the *space* in our minds with stuff like projections, expectations, fear and negative thinking.

To illustrate the benefit of having *space*, take a print ad. Have you ever noticed that the ones with the most white space are also the most effective? The same goes for the rare television commercial that uses no sound. Why? Because less is more. And, how about our home? Letting go of clutter energetically opens up valuable *space* and makes us feel lighter.

So, whenever and wherever you can, *space* is worth the time it takes to carve out because it increases efficiency, reduces stress significantly and allows us to enjoy life more.

Here are eight ways to create more *space*:

1. Set priorities to create more time. Do what's most important to you. Let go of guilt because you're not doing enough. Drop self-imposed obligations and remember that not all will get done.
2. Center your attention on the here and now. Focusing on the past or leaning into the future crowds precious mental, emotional and spiritual space.
3. Maintain a clutter-free home environment. Let go of anything that is high maintenance, comes with painful memories, or is useless, outdated or broken.
4. Heal your past by dealing with trigger reactions as they come up in the present time. Living with unresolved emotions will eventually manifest in some form of disease in the body.
5. Saying no to others is saying yes to yourself. Tackle tolerations, i.e., people, places and situations that siphon your energy.
6. Meditate to practice expanding the spaces between your thoughts. This connects you to yourself and will help curb mental chatter.
7. Create physical space in your body through stretching which releases stress, tension and tightness.
8. To encourage spontaneity, leave some white space on your calendar.



Kater Leatherman teaches yoga and is a home stager, professional organizer and space solutions expert. Her book, "MOVING ON: One Woman's Quest to Create SPACE for Change," is available for purchase at [www.katerleatherman.com](http://www.katerleatherman.com)

## OutLook's Bits & Bytes

Continuing to water flowers and veggies could keep them producing well into October. For fall gardening hints, log on to [www.hgtv.com/topics/fall-gardening/index.html](http://www.hgtv.com/topics/fall-gardening/index.html)

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*It's all about being OK with whatever is.*

# Better Photos — No Cost

By Larry Cohan

**M**ost of us would like to believe that simply buying a new, expensive DSLR camera will instantly make our photos noticeably better. Instead, it often makes the outcome worse due to the confusion caused by the increased complexity of the new camera. To paraphrase a National Rifle Association slogan, “*Cameras don't shoot photographs, people do.*”

The real keys to better photography lie in two areas:

- What you do immediately before squeezing the shutter button (composition).
- What you do immediately after squeezing the button (post-processing).

Stay tuned, this will be the subject of a future article.

Neither of these has to involve any further cost.

## Composition

**The Manual.** Who likes to read a manual? Very few of us, including the pros. Let me suggest a trick I use. Take the manual along with you when you go to doctor's waiting rooms or to airports. Use that waiting time to learn your camera.

**One purpose, on purpose.** Think for just a few seconds about the purpose of the photo you're about to take. Compose in your mind before you compose in the viewfinder.

Is the purpose to prove to your friends that you really made it to Bangkok? You could take the typical “proof we were there” shot in front of the airport with its name in a prominent position. But haven't other people's “proof” shots turned you off? Don't bore your friends with photos that would bore you if they weren't your own. Instead, think about what first caught your eye after you landed, such as the exotic Southeast Asian garden. Perhaps this would make a more compelling picture.

On the other hand, if the purpose of the photo is to show how lovely Jane looked in her muu-muu at the luau on Oahu, then take the best possible close-up photo of Jane. You don't need the fire-baton twirler beside her. Take a separate snapshot of the dancer if you want to remember her lovely grass skirt.

**No one photo has to tell the entire story.** Like a sentence, every photograph needs a subject: a person, a group, place or thing. Without a subject, a photograph, like a sentence, is incomplete. For example, a shot of your lovely lawn is not a good photo. However, your cute puppy rolling in that grass could be an excellent picture. If you're shooting the sunrise over Bar Harbor, Maine, don't try to include your half-asleep spouse. Let the boats in the fog be the subject of this shot. Then take a separate shot later of your spouse enjoying a steaming cup of coffee on a park bench in the harbor. Your group of photos, like many sentences together, should tell your story.



**Fill the Frame.** In most photos, the background only provides a context for the subject and it can be distracting from your subject. As a rule, you should try to (almost) fill the frame with the subject. You can do that either by moving closer to the subject, or using the telephoto zoom feature insofar as possible.

**Avoid Distractions.** Trees and telephone poles “growing” from people's heads are common distractions. Also, strong bright areas attract the viewers' eyes away from the subject. Just moving your camera a few feet will make a huge difference in eliminating such eye-catchers.

**Avoid Symmetry.** Symmetry is boring. Having your composition off balance gives it a creative “tension” that makes the picture look much more interesting. Here are some examples of good composition:

- Do not center the subject. Instead, use the photographer's “rule of thirds.” This is done by visualizing a tic-tac-toe game (#) on your LCD display and putting the subject on one of the four intersections – with the subject facing inward whenever possible.
- In landscapes, do not vertically center the horizon. Have one-third sky and two-thirds ground, or vice versa.

**Shoot, shoot, shoot.** Talk is cheap and so are pictures in the digital world. Take at least four shots of each scene. You'll be glad you did.

Change something with each shot. For instance: Zoom in and shoot horizontally, then switch to vertical and shoot, then zoom out and shoot vertically, then shoot horizontally while zoomed out. Ask people to change their expressions a little in each shot, e.g., “Now just give me a slight grin.” Multiple shots maximize your probability of getting all eyes wide open and the auto-focus working correctly. You should also slightly change your camera position for most duplicate shots.

For example, let's go back to Jane in the muu-muu for a typical scenario of multiple shots. Find a location with a nondistracting background, e.g., the beach in front of your hotel an hour before sunset. Shoot a three-fourths-length shot of Jane standing at a 45° angle to the camera, facing the camera, holding an orchid in her hands. Then shoot a photo of her seated in the sand with a lei around her neck, looking up at the camera positioned a foot above her eyes. Bring the camera down and shoot another shot at her eye level.

If you're shooting your grandson Johnnie's soccer game, wait until Johnnie is running towards you and there are other players in the frame for context. Johnnie's image should be at least one half of the height of the frame. Shoot as many shots as possible in order to try to get a few good ones. If your camera has a “continuous” mode (multiple frames per second), use it for these action scenes.

**“Candid Camera” Is Only for the Pros.** When shooting a party, don't try to be a photojournalist or Allen Funt shooting surreptitiously. Ask people to pose for a second, then ask them for a few variations as well. The pros always ask, even if by using non-verbal eye contact or hand gestures.



“Squeeze together for me for a second, please.” “Now let’s do one without sunglasses – thanks.” “One more for good measure, please.” And like restaurant waiters, you’ll need to interrupt a few conversations in order to ask guests to pose for you. But believe me, they would rather be interrupted than to have their photo taken with their eyes half-open and a martini glass in their mouth.

**Indoor Shots.** Most “point and shoot” cameras only have the small built-in flash that is quite close to the lens. These flash shots frequently are washed out or ghostly, showing harsh shadows and red eyes. If your camera does not have a “hot shoe” to accept an external tilting flash that can be bounced off the ceiling, then I suggest that you go into your settings (the icon is often a ) and turning off the flash while shooting indoors.

Modern digital cameras can often do quite well with just the natural indoor lighting. Use the table of contents of your manual to quickly find information on controlling your flash.

**The Photographer’s Magic Hours.** The two hours after sunrise and the two hours before sunset are the best for outdoor photographs. The colors are warmer, the shadows are longer, and the angle of the light on faces is better because it eliminates “raccoon eyes.” If you must take people photos in the middle of the day, set the camera to use forced flash (if you are less than eight feet away) to fill in the harsh shadows. The camera will use only a minimal amount of the flash and preserve the outdoors look of the photo.

**Say again?** Yes, I recommend turning off the flash indoors and turning the flash on, outdoors. I realize that’s counterintuitive.

**Use the Scenes Settings.** See if your camera has preset “scene” settings for portraits, landscapes, action, beach, snow, etc. They’re worth the 10 seconds of extra work because they fine-tune the camera settings for that type of photo.

**Delete, Delete, Delete.** Finally, let’s talk about the photographer’s most valuable tool: the delete key. Earlier I exhorted you to shoot, shoot, shoot. Now I’m asking you to delete all but the best of your shots after you’ve uploaded them to your computer. Wait until then because the small LCD screen on the back of your camera is not a good viewer for making such decisions.

Never show anyone your below-average shots. Don’t keep your out-of-focus shots, your finger-in-the-lens shots, your repetitious shots and your closed-eyes shots. We all take them, but good photographers don’t show them. Leave them on the cutting room floor. Nobody, including you, wants to see them.



In addition, I strongly recommend never showing any friend, or even an enemy, more than 30 photos at a time. Remember how you felt when Aunt Rose handed you 128 prints while she hovered over you? “Leave ‘em wanting,” as the old adage goes. 

*Larry Cohan is a part-time instructor at the Chesapeake Sailing School (<http://www.sailingclasses.com>) in Annapolis. He is a retired senior government executive and military think tank executive. He enjoys being reached at [crabtrap38-obtb@yahoo.com](mailto:crabtrap38-obtb@yahoo.com)*



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# Hiking the Trails in Historic Harper's Ferry

*By Penelope Folsom*

**"Harper's Ferry offers many good hikes but the best, as many experienced hikers will agree, is the Maryland Heights Trail..."**

For an interesting fall hike that promises one of the best photo opportunities in the area, try Maryland Heights. Located in Harper's Ferry, a bit under two hours from Annapolis, the area offers more than enough to fill a couple of days. Not only is the hiking good, but it's also an historically significant locale. John Brown met his demise in Harper's Ferry as you'll recall. Although history has maligned his contribution in spearheading an end to slavery, he was one of the original abolitionists and the museum on Shenandoah Street recounts his life. There's also the revelation of the *secret six* that was not covered in my high school class. It has to do with those elusive New Englanders who were financing much of what went on with John Brown, but you'll have to get with a park ranger to get the whole story on that less than well-known piece of history. And not only is the town drenched in the history of the beginning of the Civil War, but it has an interesting past of weather phenomena. Floods wiped out entire factories and repeatedly threatened much of the town. Don't miss the high water marks on the side of the building in the lower town.

Shenandoah Street is set up to depict the way it was in the 1800s, with a boarding house, dry goods store, jewelry shop, confectionery and other shops that were typical of a 19th century town. There are also shops and small local eateries and a well-stocked bookstore carrying a wide choice of titles on the beginnings of the Civil War.

The Historic Hilltop House, once a grand hotel, is located on one of the high points of the town overlooking the Potomac. It is currently closed for renovations, but the very short drive or walk up to the hotel is worth the effort. The view is nothing less than spectacular and a place to consider on a future visit. (Its reopening is scheduled for 2011.)

Harper's Ferry offers many good hikes but the best, as many experienced hikers will agree, is the Maryland Heights Trail, which offers a spectacular view from the overlook. It's a strenuous hike of more than three miles and not the best one if you're accompanied by children. The overlook presents some danger if kids aren't watched closely. However, don't forget your camera because it's a panoramic view of three states and the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers as well as a bird's eye view of Harper's Ferry. If you choose to you can follow the trail from the overlook for another couple of miles to the top of Maryland Heights where the Union army held off the Confederates. Some of the ramparts are still there. Interestingly, Harper's Ferry changed hands eight times between 1861 and 1865 as the north and the south battled it out. If this hike isn't challenging enough there's also Loudon Heights, which is another serious hike with seven plus miles offering even more picturesque spots.



*We're running out of tomorrows ...*

Harper's Ferry is in hill country and just about anywhere that you go you're going to be walking up hills and down. (It seemed to me that there were more ups than downs.) The Appalachian Trail also goes right through the town and it's well worth the short walk on this trail to get to Jefferson Rock. If you choose to hike up to this overlook and have a map you can then branch off the AT trail and descend to the Shenandoah for a quiet walk along the river's edge. This meandering but level trail weaves through what had once been a prosperous factory area, known as Virginius. The area was flooded repeatedly and now only foundations remain. If it's warm enough, there's the opportunity to wade in the river, although the park service frowns on it because the current can at times be very dangerous.

Other than the three spectacular hikes of varying lengths and elevations, there's also the Chesapeake & Ohio Trail that offers a level, hard-packed path that stretches for 184 miles. The trail winds along the Potomac and is ideal for either hiking or biking for whatever distance you choose. If you are heading north, it's a mere 15 miles to Antietam Battlefield, a carefully restored area that is more than worth the effort with a visitor center and extensive walking trails and historical stops throughout.

Harper's Ferry also has a national park with an easy three-mile hiking trail that describes different Civil War sites along the way that were significant. Mostly level, there are a couple of overlooks for photo ops.

This is an interesting and rustic area that has kept much of the charm intact of years gone by. It's worth the trip if for no more than a Sunday stroll along the river, but my choice has always been to spend at least two nights to be able to see and do it all. There couldn't be a better time than the fall for the spectacular display of the autumn colors.



Harper's Ferry Map

[www.nps.gov/archive/hafe/maps/pdf/guide-ruins.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/archive/hafe/maps/pdf/guide-ruins.pdf)

Maryland Heights Trail

[www.nps.gov/hafe/maps/maryland.htm](http://www.nps.gov/hafe/maps/maryland.htm)

Chesapeake and Ohio trail

[www.nps.gov/choh](http://www.nps.gov/choh)

Virginius Island

[www.nps.gov/archive/hafe/maps/virginius.htm](http://www.nps.gov/archive/hafe/maps/virginius.htm)

National Park Service Map

[www.nps.gov/hafe](http://www.nps.gov/hafe)

# Ask the Undertaker

By Ryan Helfenbein



Several weeks ago while having dinner at my mother-in-law's, my wife and her mother began talking about the recent deaths of Farrah Fawcett and Ed McMahon. They were discussing how deaths always seem to happen in three's. As they were discussing this, we couldn't help but hear the television news broadcast that Michael Jackson had just died. What a coincidence! Over the next several days and weeks even more celebrity deaths occurred, Billy Mays, Steve McNair, Walter Cronkite and even "Gidget," the Taco Bell Chihuahua. Out of all the recent losses Hollywood experienced, the one that I feel we can learn the most from is that of Michael Jackson. From the loss of Michael Jackson a few areas became very apparent to me in the context of my business: they are the importance of planning ahead, the role of the funeral professionals and how to create a true "celebration of life."

During the days after Jackson's death, one couldn't help but notice how his family had to suffer from the lack of planning. As a matter of fact I am not even sure if they have agreed on a final place of rest to this day! His family seemed to be unsure as to who was to care for his remains, who would take charge of his arrangements and how services should be handled for his family and fans. This doesn't even begin to touch on the decisions that were necessary to pull off, what I would call one of the most remarkable celebrations of life services one could ever imagine. *Advance funeral planning*, offered by those in the funeral industry, provides the relief of knowing that all decisions are taken care of, services are in order to the greatest detail and the surviving relatives know exactly how everything is to be carried out well in advance. Not that it seems to be a problem with Jackson, but even the financial burden could have been completely eliminated in advance. I would imagine Mr. Jackson had the same feeling that many of us do: I need to make my funeral plans in advance, but I'll do it another day. Perhaps we should all take note of this experience and take care of our plans today.

On the positive side, the celebration of life that occurred for Michael Jackson was a perfect example of the importance of a funeral professional. Throughout history we

have seen many people in and out of the spotlight with some having very incredible end-of-life ceremonies -- kings and queens, Hollywood stars and even presidents. One of the most ostentatious funeral processions that our country has ever seen was that of President Abraham Lincoln. Each state that his procession went through had decorative hearses, amazing flower arrangements and uniformed staff from local funeral homes. Unlike the memorial tributes and capabilities available today, this was all that was obtainable by the industry at that time. My point is that Michael Jackson's ceremony could not have been done without the help of a licensed funeral professional. The funeral industry is there to help families heal. Providing a deceased family member the proper end-of-life ceremony is what the funeral industry should strive to offer all its families, and at the services for Michael Jackson, this was very apparent.

The last item that I feel we can all learn from is what a proper celebration of life should look like. Jackson had one of the most incredible celebrations of life ever held. With that being said, there is no reason that we cannot give our loved ones the same. OK, so maybe not at the Staples Center in Los Angeles or with songs sung by Jennifer Hudson among others. But the videos, a presentation of memorial photos, favorite songs playing and closest friends sharing memories about the deceased can be done for anyone today. We need to take the services that were done for Michael Jackson and make note that we can give our closest family members the same tribute that his family provided him. After all, millions of people across this planet took time to sit in front of their televisions to pay tribute to the man and the vast majority of them had never met him. Why wouldn't we give that same attention to the people who are closest to us and with whom we truly have a relationship?

Ryan, a licensed funeral director and certified planning counselor, can be reached at [Ryan@fhnFuneralHome.com](mailto:Ryan@fhnFuneralHome.com) or 410-758-3987.



# The Perfect Brew for You: All About Coffee

By Peggy Kiefer

Is there anything more attention-getting in the morning than the aroma of freshly ground coffee brewing in the kitchen? Many Americans, who seem to enjoy coffee more than any other beverage, feel they can't start the day without their cup of "Joe." But I wonder how many of these avid coffee drinkers think of the long history of coffee and the many steps it takes to get this tantalizing drink into their cups.

Legend has it that we can thank a herder named Kaldi and his goats for our morning wake-me-up. The story goes that a lonely goat herder in the province of Kaffa in Abyssinia (now known as Ethiopia) was looking for his wandering goats. It had been a long day and he was tired and wanted to get the goats back home and have supper with his wife. In the distance he heard the goats bleating and scampering about. When he followed the sounds he saw them happily munching on some unknown small reddish berries. They were more energetic than he had ever seen them, and he decided to try these strange berries himself.

When the herder tasted the red berries he found them not very flavorful, but tender and juicy. Inside the red shell were two small green seeds. They were tough, but he crushed them with his strong teeth. After a few seeds, he was feeling energetic and wanted to frolic with the goats.

Kaldi loaded his pouch with the berries and took them home after forcing the goats away from their new treats. His wife agreed with his enthusiasm about this wonderful discovery. He took the berries to a nearby monastery and as the legend goes, the monks became more energetic and diligent after enjoying the red fruit with green seeds. From the monks it is believed the demand for kaffa spread into the Old World. So we can thank some adventuresome goats, an appreciative herder and some monks for introducing us to what we now know as coffee.

## The Love Affair Begins

Books have been written about the spread of coffee's popularity. From its beginnings in the Arabian Peninsula, mainly around the city of Mocha, (note the name), Yemen, where it moved to the Old World, Europe and eventually the Americas. We could go on, but suffice it to say that from the 1400s through the 1800s, the love of coffee became firmly implanted as the drink of choice of millions.

How did coffee become established in the New World? It is reported that some seedlings came from Louis XIV's "mother tree." But it is also widely believed that 90 percent of the coffee trees in the Americas came from a single plant stolen in 1723 by a French naval officer.

In its early days, the common name for coffee was mocha, or Kaffa, from the place where the beans originated. Mocha is now, of course, associated with the combination of chocolate and coffee. We also sometimes call a cup of coffee a cup of "Joe." This comes from a man named Joe Daniels, who was secretary of the Navy from 1913 to 1921. He outlawed alcohol on ships when he took office and ordered that coffee, not grog (rum and water), be the beverage on all U.S. Navy ships. The coffee was called a "cup of Joe" by the sailors and the name stuck.

When visiting an organic coffee plantation in Panama recently, I was surprised to learn that there are many steps from the planting of the coffee seed to the dark, aromatic drink in the cup.

Step one is when the coffee seeds are planted on giant plantations, smaller estates, or even on the smallest of properties. They are then pre-germinated indoors in nurseries. Six months to a year passes before the seedlings can be transplanted into the fields. The coffee plants need lots of rain to flourish. The ripe red berries are then picked and pulped, so that only the seeds are left behind. The fresh seeds are either planted right away or can be dried to be planted at a later date. Once planted, they are carefully irrigated, fertilized and protected from diseases and pests. Banana or rubber trees are often planted nearby to protect the seedlings from the sun.



**A fascinating book for the "coffee aficionado" is one written about the incredible affect of Starbucks on the American (and now the world) coffee obsession. For an eye-opener on one of the largest corporations in the world, read *Starbucked-a Double Tall Tale of Caffeine, Commerce and Culture* by Taylor Clark (Little, Brown and Company, 2007).**

Coffee seedlings are planted at sea level up to 7,000 feet. It can take a year before coffee berries are fully ripe and ready to be picked. And it can be very frustrating for growers that coffee berries may ripen on the same tree at different times. On most farms the coffee berries are picked by hand. The picker needs to check the plant three or four times in a season. On very large coffee plantations a harvesting machine is used. The machine however, picks all the berries, which means some of them are not ripe and are discarded.

After picking, the beans have to be extracted from the berries. Since they are encased in five different layers, it is a time-consuming process. The sorting, cleaning and roasting processes come next. An optional step is to decaffeinate some of the beans.

“So, this is all well and good,” you think, but how do I choose the right coffee for me?” This is a tough question due to many types of beans and taste preferences. Most coffee beans are grown in countries in South and Central America, Africa and the Middle East, although some excellent coffee comes from New Guinea, Vietnam and Hawaii.

So how about your taste preference? Do you prefer a mild, medium, mellow, fruity, smooth, bold or flavored roast, or perhaps a combination of two or more of those? Most coffee drinkers want to avoid a stale, bitter, thin, coarse or acidic flavor. Your final choice of coffee will most likely be determined by many tastings of different roasts, blends and types of beans.

Once you have chosen the perfect coffee for you, getting a coffee grinder and maker is the next important decision. Who knew there were so many different choices of how to grind and brew coffee? There are the manual and electric drip pot, the old-fashioned percolator, the coffee maker plus grinder, coffeemaker plus thermal carafe, the plunger pot, vacuum pot and espresso machine. Whew, so many choices.

Once you have chosen the coffee maker, how about the correct grind? From a very fine grind in an espresso machine, to a coarse grind for a percolator, this again will take experimentation. Grinding your own beans will produce fresher coffee, but it is often simpler to buy it already ground or have it ground for you.

If you keep some simple points in mind, the chances of enjoying your perfect cup of “Joe” will be improved.

- Buy the freshest, highest quality beans of the blend you have selected.
- Just before brewing, grind the beans to the correct consistency for your chosen coffee maker.

- Use filtered, or good fresh, cold water. Don't use softened or distilled water.
- Use the right amount of coffee to your taste. Usually that would be about two level tablespoons of ground coffee for every six ounces of water, but you can adjust as you experiment with the strength and flavor.
- Use a clean coffee maker. Cleaning it regularly by running a cycle with white vinegar and then flushing it out twice with fresh cold water helps ensure a clean pot and fresh coffee.
- Brew only as much coffee as you need. Reheated or old coffee goes bitter. The best coffee will be consumed right after brewing.
- If you do want to save brewed coffee, pour it into a pre-warmed thermal carafe to keep it hot without the reheating of a traditional coffee maker.
- When pouring the flavorful brew into your cup, hold the

carafe or pot a few inches up from the cup. This will aerate the coffee to distribute the flavor and oils.

After all this, hopefully you will enjoy the perfect cup of your favorite beverage. If this sounds like too much trouble, head for your favorite local coffee shop! ☺

*Peggy is a free lance writer who lives in Annapolis and San Diego and is an admitted "coffee snob." She can be contacted at [zinkiefer@aol.com](mailto:zinkiefer@aol.com)*



**“In its early days, the common name for coffee was mocha, or Kaffa, from the place where the beans originated.”**



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# Around the World on a Pumpkin

By Leslie Younes



**P**umpkins are believed to have originated in North America, the earliest found in the form of seeds from related plants in Mexico dating back between 7000 and 5500 B.C. The name pumpkin originated from the Greek word *pepon*, which was changed by the French to *pompon* and then again by the English into *pumpkin*. Native Americans used this fruit (anything that has seeds inside is classed as a fruit) for food and also dried strips of it to weave into rugs and clothing. Along came the Pilgrims and we know the rest.

Pumpkin is surprisingly low in calories, although very satisfying, which is an unusual combination. It is very useful for people trying to reduce their weight in a healthy manner. For example, one cup of boiled, drained pumpkin yields only 49 calories and is loaded with all the good stuff like protein, fiber and those energy-loaded carbohydrates. With 37 mg of calcium and iron in just one cup, there's also 22 mg of magnesium and a whopping 564 mg of potassium -- compare that to 467 mg in a large banana. There is zinc, which balances blood sugar levels and supports the immune system, plus selenium, vitamin C and vitamin A, which guards the immune system and also is vital in extending the health of our eyesight. It also contains vitamin E, which is good for the skin and is also an antioxidant and anti-aging agent, niacin, which helps to reduce cholesterol, and folate, which is food for the brain. The seeds of the pumpkin have a much higher concentration of zinc than the pulp. The Latin word for pumpkin seeds is *pepitas*. These can be bought plain or salted in most stores next to the peanuts and can be used in most green salads, or moles in Mexican cuisine. Last, but not least, pumpkin or any orange or reddish vegetable, is packed with beta carotene, a carrier of vitamin A.

## Let's begin the journey from the Americas with Pumpkin Soup with Gruyere

- 1, 5-6 lb pumpkin, to yield about 8 cups cubed flesh, without skin or seeds
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
- 6 cups vegetable stock
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 1/2 cups light cream
- 2 Tbs. grated orange zest (use a microplane, foolproof)
- 2 Tbs. fresh orange juice
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 3/4 lb. Gruyere or Swiss cheese, shredded
- salt and ground white pepper to taste
- 2 Tbs. finely chopped fresh chives for garnish



In a large saucepan, melt the butter, add the onion and sauté until it begins to turn golden, then add the stock, chopped pumpkin and bay leaf. Bring to a boil and simmer, covered until tender for about 30 minutes. Discard the bay leaf. Puree the soup, then stir in the cream, orange zest, orange and lemon juices, nutmeg and ginger. Reserve a handful of the cheese for garnish and sprinkle the rest into the soup. Stir over low heat until cheese melts and blends. Season to taste with salt and pepper, then garnish with the remaining cheese and chives and serve warm.

**This recipe serves 10. It can be frozen.**

## Next, down South to Mexico where you will savor Roasted Pumpkin Oaxaca style

For this, a small pumpkin is preferable. You can buy grey- or green-skinned, as opposed to the usual orange. The grey or green ones have deep orange flesh, therefore yielding more beta carotene and vitamin A.

- 2-3 lb pumpkin
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 2 tsp. hot chili sauce
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. ground allspice
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- chopped fresh cilantro to garnish
- a classic fresh tomato salsa and *crème fraiche* to serve
- warm tortillas



Preheat oven to 425. Cut the pumpkin into large pieces, as you would with a honeydew melon, leaving the skin on. Scoop out and discard the seeds and the fiber. Put the pumpkin in a roasting pan. Combine the salt and the spices. Sprinkle the mixture on the pumpkin. Mix the melted butter and the chili sauce and drizzle evenly on the pumpkin pieces. Roast for about 30 minutes or until the flesh becomes very soft when pressed gently and the pumpkin is golden. Serve warm with tomato salsa and *crème fraiche*. This combination is very nice in warm tortillas with fresh cilantro.

**This recipe serves six.**

## Let's head east to Europe where they enjoy Whole Wheat Pumpkin Bread on the afternoon tea table in England and the Yule Tide table in Scandinavia and Germany.

- 2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour, plus extra for dusting
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2/3 cup unsalted butter at room temperature.
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2/3 cup water
- 1 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts



Pre-heat oven at 350, grease two loaf pans and dust with flour. Stir together the flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon, cloves nutmeg and salt. Set aside and in another bowl, beat together the butter and sugar until blended. Beat in the pumpkin, eggs and water until completely mixed. Add the combined dry ingredients and stir just until blended. Stir in the raisins and walnuts. Pour the batter into the two prepared pans and spread evenly. Bake about one hour or until a thin wooden skewer inserted into the center of the loaves comes out clean. Allow to cool in the pans for 10 minutes before turning them out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Over in Italy, the Risotto is a favorite staple. Here's a great recipe using pumpkin, butternut squash or any variety of dark orange-fleshed squash. Also the blossoms of the squash are wonderful in this risotto if you grow them yourself because they need to be perfectly fresh.



### Risotto with Squash, Oyster Mushrooms and Parmesan

- 1 1/2 lb seeded, sliced orange squash or pumpkin
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter or mixture of butter and olive oil
- 2 cups oyster mushrooms, sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped shallots
- 2 large cloves garlic
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh basil
- 1/2 tsp. dried summer savory
- 1 cup Arborio rice (the type is critical to Risotto making)
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 3 cups hot chicken stock (better than boullion)
- 1/3 cup grated parmesan
- 1/4 cup chopped chives
- salt and white pepper

In a 375 oven, bake squash for 40 to 45 minutes, until tender but not mushy. Cut away the skin. Dice into 1/2" pieces. Reserve 1 1/4 cups for risotto and keep it warm. Heat one tablespoon of butter and/or oil, add mushrooms and sauté for about five minutes, until slightly browned. Remove from pan. Add remaining three tablespoons of butter and/or oil, then shallots, garlic, herbs and rice and sauté for three to five minutes until rice is translucent. Add wine and continue to simmer until wine is absorbed, then add 1/2 cup chicken stock and cook until liquid is absorbed, stirring constantly. Continue with this procedure in small amounts and stir until the liquid is absorbed into the rice each time before adding more liquid. In the last five minutes, add the cheese along with the reserved squash and mushrooms and stir thoroughly. (You can add the fresh squash flowers at this point.) When the rice is al dente, remove from the heat and stir in chives. Season to taste, and serve warm. This recipe serves six as an appetizer.

You are now so close to the Mediterranean that you can get to the Middle East and Asia in no time. Here there are myriad uses of this versatile fruit. A very tasty and easy staple comes from Afghanistan. It's a recipe I have tweaked over the years and have used many times for family meals with great success.



### Boolawnee Fried Pastries Makes about 30 and it can be halved

1 package ready-made flaky pastry from the frozen section of any supermarket. Roll this out thinly on a floured surface and cut out circles in order to make little pastries by folding one side over a filling to form a half moon. The size of these is entirely up to you for appetizer or main course.

#### For the filling you will need:

- 2 leeks, white part chopped finely
- salt
- pinch of hot red pepper
- a little butter/oil mixture
- 1 cup steamed pumpkin, cut into small dice
- 4 oz. ground lamb or beef
- 2 tsp. dried mint
- 1 cup Greek yogurt
- Oil for frying.

#### To prepare the filling:

Sauté the lamb or beef in a little oil/butter mixture until it has lost its pink color. Do not brown or allow it to become dry. To this, add the finely chopped leeks and sauté until they are translucent and limp, about two minutes. Season with salt and a little red pepper. Remove from heat and stir in the steamed pumpkin and test for seasoning. Depending on the size of the pastry you have decided to make, place sufficient filling on one half of the round and fold over to make a half moon. Make sure that the seal is tight by using a little egg to glue the edges together. The remaining egg can be used as a glaze on top. The pastries can be either deep fried or baked in the oven at 375 until fluffy and golden. Serve hot with Greek yogurt and a generous sprinkle of dried mint.

This brings us to Australia, a land whose people have taken from a variety of cultures and ethnic diversities and made their very own cuisine from it. Here is an interesting and tasty recipe with lamb which is their main meat source. It is written in 'Australian' to give it some color.

### Rosemary Lamb Shanks with Dates, Pumpkin and Orange Serves four guys or 8 Sheilas

- season 1 1/2 lb mutton chunks or lamb shanks with salt and black pepper
- 2 Tbs. sunflower or olive oil, for brushing
- 2 large onions, cut into 4 thick discs and peeled
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. coriander
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 4 strips orange peel
- 10 semi-dried dates
- 3 sprigs rosemary
- 1 tsp. caster sugar (normal white sugar)
- 2 cups lamb or beef stock
- good pinch saffron (optional)
- 3 bakers (Idaho potatoes)
- 1 medium Kabocha or Crown Prince, peeled and cubed (small grey or green pumpkin, the Kabocha can be bought easily and is a delicious and deeply colored squash)



Pre-heat oven to 350. Place the seasoned lamb in a casserole and sauté gently in oil until brown on all sides. Remove and then place the onion slices across the bottom of the pot, then pop the meat back on top. If you are using shanks, make sure the bone projects up. Sprinkle the spices over everything and tuck the pieces of orange peel, the dates and the rosemary sprigs around the meat then dust with the sugar. Pour in enough stock to just cover the onion layer. Sprinkle the saffron in to the pockets of juice. Cover the pot and bring to a bubble on the hob and then place in the oven and leave to simmer for about 2 1/2 hrs. Meanwhile, slice the bakers into fine round discs. Prepare the squash in cubes. When the meat is cooked, place the squash around the shanks and circle with overlapping potato discs. Brush the bakers with oil and sprinkle with salt and a good grind of pepper, then bake for another 45 minutes to one hour until the potato is cooked and crisp. This is a great casserole and the meat and its glorious juices can be mopped up with bread.

*Squash can be found in small quantities at Trader Joe's and Whole Foods pre-cubed in bags in the fresh produce department and if you don't have time to peel and seed the real thing and fancy something sweet, there is always the recipe for pie on the back of the can.*



## Runners, Walkers Sought for Rotary Event

The Rotary and Rotaract clubs of Annapolis are seeking participants in the first "Moving Around the World" 5K Run and Walk to be held **Sunday, Oct. 25.**

Advance registration is \$25 for the event, which will benefit international projects the clubs support. It will cost you \$30 on the day of the event, which will start at 8:30 a.m. at Severn School in Severna Park. Race packet pickup and registration will take place from 7 to 8 a.m.

Other rules include:

- No wheels, headsets, pets or baby joggers due to insurance regulations.
- Registration fees will not be refunded.
- Children 12 and under are free.
- Event goes rain or shine.

The course, which is mostly flat, runs from the school south along the B&A Canal and back.

Beneficiaries of the proceeds include a water project in Ecuador and a community service program in the Philippines.

The pre-registration form and information is available on the Web site at [www.annapolisrotaract.org/movingaroundtheworldrun.html](http://www.annapolisrotaract.org/movingaroundtheworldrun.html) Make checks payable to the Rotary Club of Annapolis and send with the registration form to Tara Dulaney at 40 West St., Annapolis, MD 21401. The registration deadline is Oct. 17. For questions, e-mail [movingaroundtheworldrun@gmail.com](mailto:movingaroundtheworldrun@gmail.com)

Carl S. Schneider and Edward J. Shumaker are co-chairing the event.



## Free Phones from Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT)

Maryland Department of Information Technology/Maryland Relay

Maybe, just maybe, you'll read this and recognize someone you know. You may have just hung up the phone after talking to your mom or dad. Did you repeat yourself? Did she or he say, 'What?' every time you finished a sentence? Do you wonder how much of your conversation was actually understood? Think long enough and you'll recognize someone who has a hearing loss.

For many people with hearing loss, using the telephone is a struggle each and every time it rings. For them, mistaking words or misunderstanding conversations can make it seem like a hassle to use the phone at all. Fortunately, solutions are available through new technology to make life easier for those who are deaf or hard of hearing, or who struggle to use a standard phone due to a disability.

Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT), together with Maryland Relay, has been providing free assistive phones in Maryland for more than 10 years. Amplified and captioned telephones, ring signalers, large-button, hands-free and text telephones are just some examples of what is available at no cost to qualified Maryland residents. The MAT program serves those who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or who have a cognitive, mobility, or speech disability. It is the goal of the MAT program to enable people who struggle to use a standard phone due to a disability of any kind to independently use a phone so they can stay connected to their world, their family and friends.

The MAT program provides free telephone assessments. Because everyone's ability is different, a variety of specialized telephones are available to satisfy an individual's communication needs. Six centers in Maryland have phones for trial purposes where MAT customers (or anyone interested in buying their own equipment) may visit and learn what works best for them. As an added plus, when a customer receives a phone from the MAT program, they may also receive free training and installation.

To be considered for the MAT program, applicants must:

- Be a Maryland resident;
  - Be at least 5 years old;
  - Be a recipient of SSI (Supplemental Security Income), SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance), TDAP (Temporary Disability Assistance Program), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), VA (Veterans), SSA (Social Security) benefits or pharmacy, medical, housing assistance, or be able to prove a financial hardship;
  - Be certified as having one of the following disabilities: mobility, blind, low vision, cognitive, deaf-blind, speech, deaf or hard of hearing and have difficulty using a standard telephone;
  - Have telephone service in the home or apply for phone service.
- This could be the answer for making life just a bit easier for you or for someone you know. For an application and more information about the MAT program, please contact:

Maryland Accessible Telecommunications/ Maryland Relay

301 W. Preston Street, Suite 1008A, Baltimore, MD 21201

Phone: 800-552-7724 (V/TTY/VP)

e-mail: [moreinfo@mdrelay.org](mailto:moreinfo@mdrelay.org) Web site: [www.mdrelay.org](http://www.mdrelay.org)

(Download a MAT application under the 'Free Equipment' link.)



*You made it through the first half — What's your plan for the next half?*

# An Absolutely Great Way to Lose Weight, Gain Muscle and Feel Great

By Melissa Conroy

For the aspiring dieter, there are literally hundreds of diets out there and many of them are frankly wacky: the cabbage soup diet, the drinking man's diet, the master cleanse diet, the grape jelly and the parsnips diet. OK, I made that last one up, but beyond the land of crazy fads, there are also doctor-approved diets that have made their rounds through the media. A decade ago, low fat was all the rage. A few years ago, carbs suddenly became taboo as the Atkins diet reigned.

However, as nearly everyone who follows some sort of diet realizes eventually, most diets simply don't work long-term. The rising rates of obesity in the U.S. certainly testify to this truth.

Luckily, there are some diet plans that *are* effective long-term and offer sensible, livable plans to help people lose weight, get fit and stay that way. One of the best diet books on the market today is *The Abs Diet*. Written by David Zinczenko, editor-in-chief of *Men's Health*, this information-packed book is an excellent guide for people who are ready to finally discover their abs and improve their health.

*The Abs Diet* plan covers two areas: diet and exercise. For both topics, Zinczenko has an abundance of information to offer, delving into topics such as diabetes, high cholesterol and high-fructose corn syrup. The focus of the book is not merely on whittling your waist down but also reducing your chances of back injury, cancer, heart attack and a variety of other conditions.

One of the best aspects of the abs diet is that it doesn't deprive you of food. In fact, the diet calls for you to eat six times a day and cautions you against becoming too hungry or going too long without food. The abs diet is centered on what Zinczenko calls the "power foods" which he explains in a nifty acronym.

Almonds and nuts  
Beans and legumes  
Spinach and other green vegetables

Dairy products (low in fat)  
Intant unsweetened oatmeal  
Eggs  
Turkey and lean meat

Peanut butter  
Olive oil  
Whole-grain bread and cereal  
Extra-protein whey powder  
(for shakes and smoothies)  
Raspberries and other berries

These power foods have been chosen for their abilities to fight cancer, strengthen bones, build muscle, lower blood pressure, encourage weight loss, strengthen the immune system and fight heart disease. While many diet books can make you feel guilty about eating anything at all, *The Abs Diet* unabashedly celebrates food, pointing out how the power foods and many others are like bullets against all sorts of illnesses and diseases.

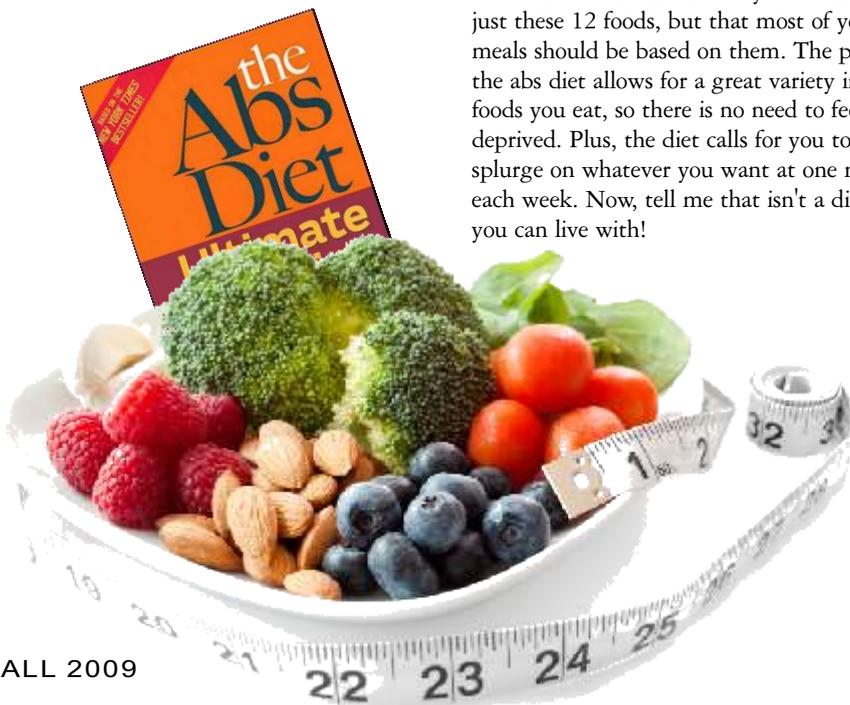
This doesn't mean that you are limited to just these 12 foods, but that most of your meals should be based on them. The point is, the abs diet allows for a great variety in the foods you eat, so there is no need to feel deprived. Plus, the diet calls for you to splurge on whatever you want at one meal each week. Now, tell me that isn't a diet plan you can live with!

The second focus of the book is on exercise, specifically strength-building. The book actually doesn't put much focus on cardiovascular exercise, good news for those of you who hate sweating it out on a stair-stepper. There are two weekly sessions of light cardiovascular exercise built into the exercise component, but they are labeled as optional. Instead, the focus is on strength training and for many good reasons. For one, muscles consume a tremendous amount of fuel: Someone with developed muscle tone will burn more calories day-to-day than someone without much muscle mass. For another, well-developed muscles (especially the abs themselves) help prevent injuries such as back strain. When it comes to losing weight, getting fit and looking fabulous, a pair of dumbbells are simply going to do the job better than a treadmill. To help you gain that crucial muscle mass, *The Abs Diet* outlines a detailed, clearly-explained weight lifting program and provides pictures of all the exercises so that even a beginning weight lifter can follow the plan with ease.

Although *The Abs Diet* is one of the absolute best books on exercise, nutrition and weight loss available, it contains a few minor drawbacks. For one, the original 2004 edition is geared more toward men, although women can follow the book just as well as men. (Note: *The Abs Diet for Women* came out in 2007). The weight lifting plan outlined in the book is rather lengthy: each session has 11-14 different exercises and the book calls for you to complete the entire circuit twice, which can easily take an hour to accomplish and may be too much for novice weight lifters. A simple solution to this is to do only one circuit until you build up enough endurance. Finally, some of the power foods can be a little pricey: a measly six-ounce container of raspberries can cost as much as a pound of good-quality apples. However, the abs diet is certainly one of the cheaper diet plans on the market, considerably less expensive than buying all the pounds of meat you will need to follow a low-carb diet. Plus, when you consider that a pack of blueberries may keep you from contracting gigantic cancer-related medical bills, a few extra dollars on your grocery budget doesn't look that expensive.

Visible ab muscles, increased energy and a lower risk of cancer and heart disease: All this can be yours if you eat the right foods and follow the right exercise routine. Lucky for us, David Zinczenko has explained just how to do this. If this is the year that you've made a resolution to get into better shape and live a healthier lifestyle, *The Abs Diet* is one of the best guides you can find.

*Melissa gets her exercise by practicing Japanese swordfighting, lifting weights and chasing her basset hound, Erasmus. She can be reached at roninwriting@yahoo.com*



# Managing Those Creaky Joints

By Louise Whiteside

“I woke up this morning, and my hands were so stiff, I could hardly move them!”  
“I’ve given up trying to tie my own shoes!”  
“I must be getting old!”

How often have you – or someone you know well – bemoaned an aching body part? If the above comments sound familiar, be assured you’re not alone. In fact, nearly all of us have, or will have at some point in our lives, some degree of arthritis.

At issue here is osteoarthritis, also known as degenerative joint disease, which is the most common, and least severe, type of arthritis.

The best way to understand arthritis is to picture a gristle-like material, known as cartilage similar to the tissue that shapes our ears and noses, which acts as a shock absorber between our joints. When there’s plenty of cartilage present, our joints move smoothly. But, when our bodies get a little older (say, around age 50), the cartilage begins to wear thin. Worn cartilage eventually causes bone to grind against bone, producing a less elastic and less flexible joint surface.

## Some common symptoms of osteoarthritis include:

- swelling in one or more joints
- joint stiffness
- pain or tenderness in a joint
- loss of function, or loss of range of motion
- warmth or redness in or around a joint

## When to Call Your Doctor:

Report any of the symptoms to your doctor if you have not already been diagnosed, since the symptoms could indicate a more serious condition.

## Managing Pain

Here are some ways you can reduce or eliminate pain without drugs:

- Driving gloves may give your hands support, not only for driving, but also for daily activities, such as carrying packages. A pair of gloves worn at night can keep swelling down.
- Apply heat or cold: Heating pads or hot packs for heat; an ice pack or bag of frozen vegetables for cold. Take a hot bath or shower to give relief from joint pain.
- Oil aching joints: Eat cold water fish, such as salmon. Take 2,000 mg of an Omega-3 supplement (fish oil, in capsule or liquid form) two to three times daily. Do check with your doctor first if you’re taking a blood-thinning drug. Rub some oil of wintergreen or eucalyptus oil on aching joints.
- Take a supplement with glucosamine and chondroitin to reduce pain and slow cartilage loss. Be patient, it may take a month or more to see results.
- Take a half-teaspoon of powdered ginger once a day to increase blood circulation to the joints.
- Take 500 mg of Vitamin C per day because its antioxidants can help prevent bone breakdown.
- Put your feet up while sitting.
- Include gentle exercise in your day to relieve pain and stiffness, e.g., walking, warm-water swimming or aerobics, gentle stretching, yoga or tai chi.

**“...nearly all of us have, or will have at some point in our lives, some degree of arthritis.”**

## Making Your Life Easier

- Use labor-saving devices, such as microwaves, slow cookers, electric can openers, mechanical jar openers, robotic vacuum cleaners, remote control TVs, cordless phones, large keypad telephones, answering machines, Internet services, etc.
- Keep frequently-used items readily available, e.g., kitchen utensils near the stove, towels and washcloths near the sink, etc.
- Delegate responsibilities to other family members, e.g., errands, laundry, meal preparation, etc.
- Use online services, telephone and mail order when possible.

## About Medications

Use prescription and over-the-counter medications only under the supervision of a health care professional, and only when the above pain management techniques fail to provide relief. Discuss possible side effects with your doctor or pharmacist.

There are four major categories of arthritis medications:

1. Anti-inflammatory drugs, used to reduce inflammation and pain.
2. Corticosteroid hormone anti-inflammatory medication.
3. Strongly anti-inflammatory disease-modifying drugs.
4. Drugs that are analgesic only, directed at relieving pain.

Finally, the very best advice I’ve ever received for living with arthritis or any other debilitating disease: Keep busy and involved in activities you love and enjoy; surround yourself with caring and loving friends and family members; keep a positive attitude; keep your sense of humor; stay connected to your spiritual source and listen to good music. 

## Resources:

Reader's Digest: *1801 Home Remedies: Trustworthy Treatments for Everyday Health Problems* Pleasantville, NY: Reader's Digest Association, Inc. (2004)

Eustice, Carol. *The Everything Health Guide to Arthritis* Avon, MA: Adams Media (2007)

Lorig, Kate and James F. Fries. *The Arthritis Helpbook :A Tested Self-Management Program for Coping with Arthritis and Fibromyalgia* (Fifth Ed.) Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books (2000)

Schwartz, Shelley Peterman. *Arthritis: 300 Tips for Making Life Easier* New York: Demos Medical Publishing (2009)



# Lights...Action... Chesapeake Film Festival!

By Debbi Dodson

The second annual Chesapeake Film Festival is coming to Easton Sept. 18-20. Big screens will host a dazzling lineup of straight documentaries, inspiring stories, mesmeric filmmaking and a visual trip around the world. The 2009 selected films might make one think a passport is required as stories take audiences through Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, Africa and the United States, each encountering an intricate web of human experiences that change people, places and our world.

Screening venues include the Academy Art Museum, the Historic Avalon Theatre, Talbot County Historical Society's Auditorium, Easton Premier Cinemas, the Oxford Community Center and the St. Michaels Library. The festival enhances its film lineup with panel discussions, Q&A sessions, screen studies and chats at Coffee Cat and opportunities to meet filmmakers.

The Chesapeake Film Festival Program Committee, headed by Chairman Tom McCall, viewed several hundred films and are pleased to announce that their selection includes: Treeless Mountain, The Legacy, Afghan Star, End of the Line, Art & Copy, I Bring What I Love, The Queen and I, Beaches of Agnes, Rough Aunties, Stop-Loss, Kimjongilia, Overbrook Brothers, Herb and Dorothy, and Alexander the Last. A special closing night screening and celebration is scheduled.

"The 2009 Chesapeake Film Festival offers something for everyone. We are thrilled with the incredible sponsor support, our film lineup, panels, filmmakers and celebrations set for Sept. 18-20," says Chesapeake Film Festival director, Marie U'Ren. "Our Web site includes the film schedule, special events and film descriptions." Tickets can be purchased online at [www.chesapeakefilmfestival.com](http://www.chesapeakefilmfestival.com)



The Second Annual  
Chesapeake Film Festival

Coming to Easton  
September 18-20

## OutLook's *Bits & Bytes*

Thinking about a cruise this winter? How about a theme cruise? Do you like ballroom dancing, gourmet cooking, music, bridge or how about politics. Try these sites: [www.themecruisefinder.com](http://www.themecruisefinder.com) or [www.smithsonianjourneys.org](http://www.smithsonianjourneys.org) or [www.foodandwinetrails.com](http://www.foodandwinetrails.com) or go on line and search any of the major cruise lines such as Norwegian Cruise Line at [www.NCL.com](http://www.NCL.com)

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*Isn't it time to break out of being trapped by your past?*

# Yoga Power

By Melissa Conroy

If you are looking to start a workout routine or change the one you have, there are a dizzying array of options available. You can try slide aerobics (put on some plastic booties and slide around on an 8-foot slab of plastic), jazzercise, Taibo, kickboxing, water aerobics, pole dancing exercises (no joking), and the list continues. However, if you are looking for something that is time-honored, effective and doesn't make you look like a fool doing it, yoga is an excellent option. Gentle and safe for all ages, yoga is a great form of exercise that helps you regulate your breathing, increase flexibility and build muscle and strength.

Yoga is a practice that focuses on meditation, breathing and body movement. The practice of yoga was intended to build discipline and strength in both the body and the mind. The word "yoga" incorporates the idea of "uniting," and this is appropriate because yoga helps link the mind and body together. Unlike many forms of exercises, yoga is not a fast-paced routine designed to get your heart rate up. Instead, people usually perform yoga by assuming various poses or forms and holding them while practicing meditation exercises. While you may not break a sweat during yoga, you will nevertheless condition your muscles and increase your flexibility while you are calming your mind and reconnecting with your inner self. Even people who cannot stand or sit unaided can practice yoga through Iyengar yoga, which utilizes chairs, belts and other props to support disabled people so they can perform yoga poses and exercises.

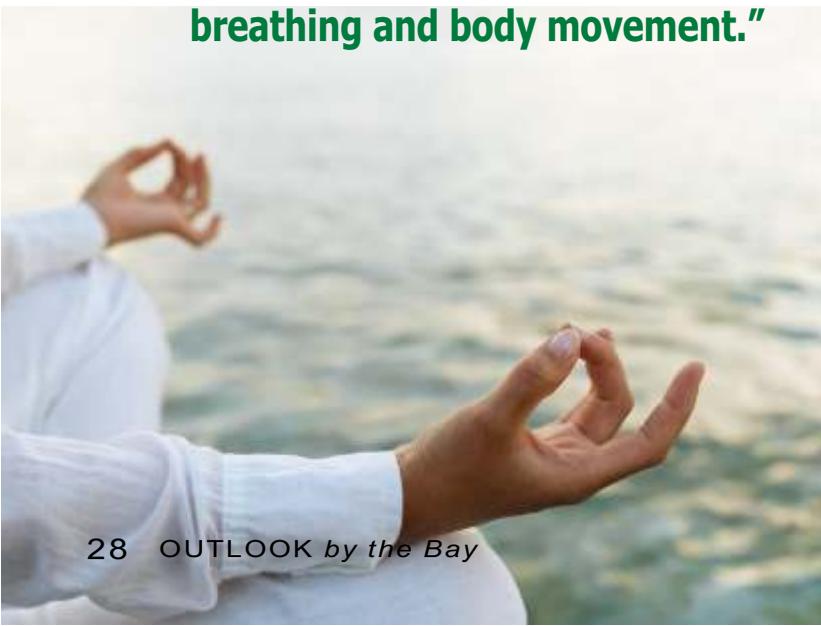
Yoga's history stretches back thousands of years. Archaeological excavations of the Indus Valley civilization (c 3300-1700 BC) have uncovered several images of people in yoga poses. From this civilization, yoga spread and developed, and today yoga is practiced by millions of people around the world. As yoga developed and migrated around the world, it divided into different schools, all of which provided a different version and focus for yoga. Today there are more than 100 different schools of yoga. Hatha yoga is one of the most common types, but there are other well-known yoga practices such as Tantra and Raja.

**"Yoga is a practice that focuses on meditation, breathing and body movement."**



Yoga is not a religion. While it incorporates spiritual elements, it does not embrace a specific creed or belief system. Although many people believe that yoga stemmed from Hinduism, the practice of yoga existed long before Hinduism began. In fact, it is likely that aspects of yoga influenced the development of Hinduism. That said, some schools of yoga have a more heavy emphasis on spiritual elements than others. For example, in Bhatki yoga, practitioners are encouraged to develop their devotion to whatever the individuals feel is God or the higher power. But most of the yoga classes and schools you will find in your area will not have this heavy spiritual focus, and you will likely find that yoga is a helpful complement to your spiritual beliefs, not a detriment.

There are many wonderful physical benefits that await you should you decide to study yoga. It is no secret that as we age, we become less flexible. This is not merely an annoyance: Loss of flexibility can lead to accidents and injuries. Yoga helps us improve flexibility and fight back against stiff joints and muscles. Increased balance and stability is another wonderful benefit yoga offers. If you practice yoga on a regular basis, you can reduce the chances of losing your balance and falling down. Muscles not only relax during yoga, but they strengthen as well. Holding yoga positions builds strong muscles in a gentle, natural way. Finally, yoga teaches you how to breathe correctly. Most of us breathe shallowly and don't concentrate on it. Yoga teaches you to focus on your breathing and increase oxygen flowing into your body.



Aside from physical benefits, yoga also offers psychological benefits. In the hurry-scurry world that we live in today, our brains are constantly abuzz with thoughts, plans, problems and ideas. Yoga is a welcome timeout and a chance to center mentally and physically. Learning how to meditate can be quite difficult, but yoga teaches its practitioners how to calm themselves and learn to concentrate on the moment. Doing so will melt stress away and lift our spirits. A session of yoga is a break from the world and a small oasis of calm in a sea of noise and chaos.

Yoga truly provides a way for you to be all you can be: physically, emotionally and mentally. With yoga classes offered around the country and millions of practitioners around the world, there are ample opportunities for you to join this ancient practice and be on your way to a fitter, calmer and more flexible you. 

*Melissa Conroy lives and writes in Omaha, Nebraska, where she participates in a variety of different activities, including yoga. She can be reached at [roninwriting@yahoo.com](mailto:roninwriting@yahoo.com)*

**“There are many wonderful physical benefits that await you should you decide to study yoga.”**

OutLook's  
*Bits & Bytes*

Looking for a fun way to spend the day with friends or grandkids? Head to one of the local orchards. To locate one near you go to [www.allaboutapples.com/orchard/md.htm](http://www.allaboutapples.com/orchard/md.htm)



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# Tours, Travels and Treasures

## How to Explore the Jewels of the Chesapeake Bay Region

By Phil Ferrara



It is human nature to crave knowledge, companionship, activity and fulfillment. Many of us want to expand our intellectual horizons, experience novel and interesting adventures, make new friends and gain a sense of accomplishment in life. If that describes you, read on.

More than a decade ago two inquiring and energetic Annapolis gentlemen, Brad Foote and Ralph Reeder, conspired to fulfill the needs of their many friends. They noticed that new people in their Chesapeake Bay community wanted to socialize and learn about the area's culture, history and activities. Their vision led to the formation of a monthly tour group that has grown to include more than 50 friends.

Over the last dozen years their tour group has roamed far and wide around the Chesapeake Bay, visiting nearly 200 sites. The venues visited have offered a wide variety of informative and unique day trips. Brad and Ralph say they have emphasized their philosophy of "picking unusual things, the places you wouldn't normally go unless someone set it up for you." Their earliest adventures brought the tour group to the Goddard Space Flight Center, Fort McHenry and the Cryptographic Museum. In subsequent years they have journeyed along all points of the compass to such destinations as the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, the Decoy Museum in Havre de Grace and the John Dickinson Plantation in Dover. Tour group members have stood high up on the platforms of the Elkridge Recycle Facility and observed the mechanisms that divide paper, plastic, glass and metal into separate recycling streams. They've been seated in the balcony of the Strathmore Hall Music Center and learned about sound propagation and

how musicians prepare their instruments for a performance. Brad and Ralph have left no stone unturned in their quest to help us explore the treasures of the Chesapeake Bay region.

Let's discuss how you might initiate a tour group in your hometown.

First, identify the core group of people who would be interested in participating in tours. They might be a group of friends or neighbors in your community. The group could be all men or all women, or it might be a group of couples. From among this group enlist the cooperation of a good friend to partner with you as a co-leader. This will further simplify the task of planning and organizing tours by spreading the workload. Allow this tour group to expand as time passes, with the current members suggesting other interested persons who would like to join. It will probably grow quickly.

The second major step is the selection of sites to be visited. Based on the membership's composition, determine the types of places your "tour group" might appreciate.

- Ideas will come from the tour group's leader initially, plus from word of mouth and the suggestions of members.
- Places of interest can be found by reviewing the "events" section of newspapers or magazines or even by collecting brochures from a local visitor center or AAA travel office.
- Keep a continuing list of new tour ideas for the future whenever they are mentioned to you.
- Consider the impact of weather and seasonal aspects for every destination when you select it.
- The potential list of places to visit is virtually limitless, bounded only by the imagination and energy of the group.

**"Many of us want to expand our intellectual horizons, experience novel and interesting adventures, make new friends and gain a sense of accomplishment in life."**

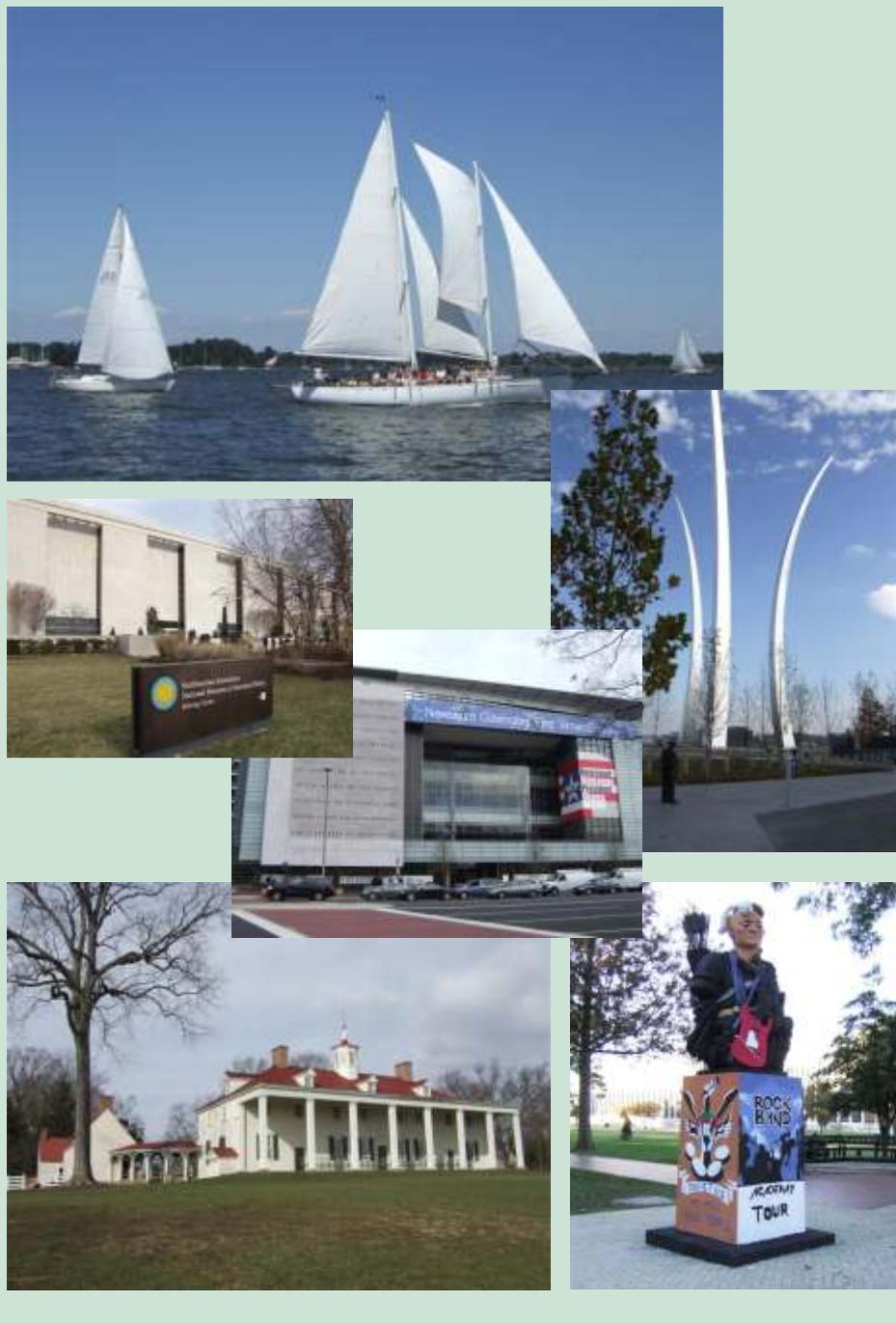


Last, let's discuss the tour group scheduling and meeting organization. An important aspect is to keep it as simple as possible to encourage maximum participation.

- Determine the frequency with which the group wishes to operate the tours. Monthly is a recommended starting interval.
- For ease of communication, use e-mail as the primary means for all announcements and schedules.
- Select a common assembly place in your hometown for all members to gather and consolidate into the minimum number of cars for travel to the tour destination. For simplicity, keep the same assembly point for all future tours. Our group uses a centrally located free parking area just off Route 50.
- Plan tour destinations two or three months in advance. Select a day of the week that works best for the tour site. Your group might prefer to conduct tours on weekdays to cut down on crowds, or it might choose to hold some on weekends.
- When calling a tour destination to make plans, arrange for a tour guide if possible. Also identify local restaurants near the tour site for a group lunch about noon or 1 p.m.
- When making the final e-mail announcement about the planned event to your tour group members, be sure to provide two to three weeks notice and request responses indicating who is attending. Include date, rendezvous time, tour destination, lunch location and estimated return time.
- When the tour is short, it may be of interest to conduct two tours on that same date with a conveniently located second site.
- When possible, use the Metro or public transportation when leading tours into a large city. It reduces costs and travel challenges.

Now that you are familiar with the process of forming a "tour group," call your friends and neighbors and propose the idea of starting one. Invite them to your home for a meeting to plan the details. Share this process with them, and urge them to join you in exploring the treasures of the Chesapeake Bay region.

*The author, Phil Ferrara, is an avid hiker and traveler and can be reached at [pferrara65@comcast.net](mailto:pferrara65@comcast.net) If you would like a list of places visited by the tour group described here, please e-mail him for a copy.*



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# New York City

## A Day in the Big Apple

By Christi Rogers

### OutLook's NEW YORK CITY BUS TRIP – DEC. 2, 2009

Come join us for a fun-filled day in the Big Apple. Our group will depart from Annapolis at 7 a.m. and return at 11 p.m. A full day in the city will be offered to do whatever your heart desires. Take in a show, go shopping, see the sights or all of the above. We have tickets for the Radio City Christmas Spectacular as well as the highly acclaimed Jersey Boys. Bus only tickets are \$60. Show tickets vary in cost and are available for a limited time.

Rates and tickets are nonrefundable. For more information and to register for this exciting day, please contact Christi Rogers, TRAVEL BUG, LLC at 410-798-4116 or [christi@travelbugllc.com](mailto:christi@travelbugllc.com)

Though small in size, Manhattan Island is only 13.5 miles long, it encompasses a diverse and exciting cityscape of distinct neighborhoods with many different cultures. At the center, you will find the sprawling 843-acre oasis known as Central Park with its zoo, ice skating rink, restaurant and much more. Visitors may want to visit such landmarks as Rockefeller Center (home to NBC and the Today Show), the Empire State building, the Chrysler Building, Times Square and Ground Zero. Others prefer shopping the famous 5th Avenue shops, exploring the dozens of museums and taking in their favorite Broadway shows. A great way to get acquainted with the city is to take one of the city tours. New York City offers various options with full and half-day tours, as well as the hop-on-and-off, double-decker bus tours. Most of these tours are narrated and give you great insight on the different sections, neighborhoods and landmark icons that you won't want to miss. Take a taxi down to the Battery Park area and walk over to the Whitehall Terminal and board the Staten Island Ferry, which when I last checked was still free, and cruise past the Statue of Liberty. The trip is approximately 25 minutes each way. The Big Apple, as New York City is referred to, got its name back in the 1920s when horse racing was very popular. Apple referred to the substantial prize that would be rewarded for the race. In the 1930s, jazz musicians began referring to New York City as the premier place or "big apple" in which to perform. New York City is an enchanting and vibrant city with much to offer. It takes three and a half hours via the Amtrak from Baltimore (the BWI rail station is smaller and more convenient to Annapolis), or you can relax and take a luxury motor coach up for the day. Whichever way you choose, don't miss this spectacular city at holiday time.



*Is there something that you want to do? What's holding you back?*

# Staging a Celebratory Funeral at Home



By Kater Leatherman

**H**ome funerals. Now there's a subject few people want to talk about. Yet they are gaining popularity, especially among the baby boomer generation. We're the ones who wrote our wedding vows in the '60s, revived home births in the '70s, popularized homeschooling in the '80s, launched divorce ceremonies in the '90s, and are currently redefining retirement, calling it "protirement." We're also dealing with the passing of our parents and that is hatching thoughts about how we want to exit and be remembered.

We already know that people laid their loved ones out at home before death became professionalized around the turn of the 20th century. While the funeral industry was - and continues to be - a source of help to families, rising costs are a source of concern. Yes, the dawning of home funerals is upon us.

If your loved one is going to be buried and you want to plan an economical do-it-yourself home funeral, head to the Internet and research the subject. You will get information on everything from building the casket to embalming and dressing your dead relative to finding someone to dig the grave. You can also hire a death midwifery that will assist in all aspects of the funeral arrangements, including paperwork, legal matters, getting the burial permit and transporting and taking care of the body. And yes, it is legal in Maryland to keep the deceased at home for a wake.

Cremation, on the other hand, will make things easier. Sometimes, this approach comes with lag time that will give you a chance to grieve first. Honoring one's life in a more personal way can also accelerate the healing process, especially when you share your thoughts, feelings and memories with others.

**"...a celebratory memorial service at home that will inspire others, long be remembered and represent the deceased..."**

Either way, embalming or cremation, here are 10 ways to create a celebratory memorial service at home that will inspire others, long be remembered and represent the deceased and how he or she may have affected you.

1. Having an officiant present is optional, but you will want to have someone there to keep things organized much like a funeral director. This way you'll be available to your family.

2. When people arrive, instead of a guest book that leaves you with a list of names devoid of feelings and memories, offer an assortment of pens and index cards. Guests can take a moment to write a fond memory about the deceased. After the ceremony, put the cards in a photo album for future generations to read.

3. Create an altar or sacred space that includes the ashes (or casket), along with flowers, candles and photographs.

4. Keep it simple and allow for spontaneity. The eulogy might include anyone who wants to come forward and share what the person meant to them, including a favorite poem, song lyric or quotation. Some may want to share a handwritten letter (very

healing) or the sentiment that they wrote on the index card when they arrived. You can also light a candle and pass it to those who want to speak. Add an ethnic ritual or plan the service around a theme.

5. Set up a table of photographs, memorabilia and favorite possessions for guests to enjoy --anything that represented the person's occupation or hobby. For example, if he or she played a musical instrument, set it out. If there is time, write the significance of each item on an index card. Keep in mind how you think they would want to be remembered. Gathering these things may also help you move through the grieving process.

6. If you have time, put together a silent slide show that will run continuously throughout the celebration.

7. Prepare and serve foods that the deceased enjoyed. Place his or her favorite candy or snack in a bowl.

8. Play music that reflects the tastes of the deceased.

9. Have bookmark's printed up with a picture of the deceased and a quote for guests to take with them.

10. If you want to do a balloon release, use the biodegradable ones made of latex which is a naturally occurring material made from tree sap.

However you choose to do it, it can be done and don't hesitate to call in professional help should it become overwhelming. 

*Kater Leatherman teaches yoga and has recently published a book: "MOVING ON: One Woman's Quest to Create S P A C E for Change. To order, go to [www.katerleatherman.com](http://www.katerleatherman.com) or e-mail her at: [katerleatherman@gmail.com](mailto:katerleatherman@gmail.com)*

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# It Takes More Than a Frog to be Green



By Peggy Markham

A famous frog once said, "It isn't easy being green." I am trying my best to be "green" these days and it requires a whole new vocabulary. I now think of words such as: conserve, recycle, reuse, reduce, organic, natural, sustainable, footprint, ecofriendly, biodegradable, toxic and compostable in ways that translate to personal responsibility. "Green" is not restricted to the color of a friendly frog but instead means choosing to live your life with tender regard toward our planet Earth. Living green touches on every aspect of our lives: the car we drive, the fuel we use for that car, heating our homes, feeding our pets, buying toys for children, clothing, cleaning products, the food we eat, the air we breathe... the list is endless. The green movement is the bandwagon to be on these days and it takes a bit of willingness to embrace these ideas and adjust your lifestyle. All of us have limited resources and time, but we can select areas that work within our limitations and these efforts will help sustain our planet for future generations.

Where to start? Consider these ecofriendly ideas:

## Green Your Home

- Install compact fluorescent lightbulbs. These bulbs use one-fourth the energy of incandescent bulbs and will save you money on your electric bills. Turn off lights when you are not in the room.
- Replace old appliances with new energy-efficient models. The Energy Star appliances use from 10 percent to 50 percent less energy and water. For further information on efficiency ratings go online at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)
- Control your thermostat. Set it at 68 degrees or better yet, look for programmable thermostats that can be set

to adjust to more efficient temperatures when you are away on vacation, at work or asleep.

- Seek help from your local public service electric, gas or fuel company to learn how to weather-proof your home. Try easy adjustments such as insulating your water heater and regulating the temperature, plugging up drafty windows and doorways, caulking leaky air spots, installing window coverings that help keep the house cool in summer and warm in the winter.

- If you are building a new home, seek advice from contractors who are knowledgeable about the latest "green" products. Some states have rebate programs and incentives if you install solar panels and other energy-efficient materials. For products and solar information investigate Web sites such as: [www.greenerbuilding.org](http://www.greenerbuilding.org) or [www.ases.org](http://www.ases.org) or [www.millionsolarroofs.com](http://www.millionsolarroofs.com) and [www.sunhomedesign.wordpress.com](http://www.sunhomedesign.wordpress.com)

- Use bed and bath (sheets, towels, blankets, comforters), upholstery/slipcover fabrics, rugs and carpets made from natural fibers such as cotton, hemp, wool and bamboo instead of synthetic fabrics and fibers that are derived from nonrenewable petrochemicals. Be aware of carpet pads that are made from toxic materials. Even the shower curtain in your bathroom is a culprit if it is made of vinyl, a petroleum-derived synthetic material that some think may cause illnesses and allergies. Replace the curtain with one made from a natural fiber, like cotton. Think of your fabric and fiber choices in terms of: is it washable, is it breathable, is it free of chemicals, was it derived from sustainable resources?

- Conventional paint emits offensive compounds (volatile organic compounds or VOC) that are noxious, especially to people who suffer from allergies. Most manufacturers of quality paint offer an

excellent low-VOC or no-VOC products. These paints have little or no odor, are fast drying and the color selection is vast. A perfect choice for a baby's nursery.

- There are so many simple ways to conserve water. Turn off the tap when you brush your teeth, use less water by taking a shower instead of a bath, install a rain barrel to trap rain water for your plants

and garden. If your toilet was manufactured before 1993 you are wasting gallons of water each year. Consider replacing the old model with a newer ultra-low-flush toilet available in modern home decor colors; some designs are offered with a higher seat configuration that senior citizens favor.

- Call your local sanitation department to learn how and where to dispose of household toxins (pesticides and chemical waste). This includes those old paint cans stacked in your garage or basement as well as used batteries.

## Daily Living

- In the kitchen: Choose renewable, reusable glass dishes for food storage and heating food in the microwave. Plastic products are made from nonrenewable resources. All of us are carrying around a water bottle because hydration is a good thing, but switch to a water bottle made of glass or metal (nonleaching types) and fill with filtered tap water. Toss away in the proper recycle bin those ubiquitous plastic bottles.

- Collect and use an assortment of reusable cloth bags. Good choices are durable canvas bags, string bags or recycled paper bags. When buying fruits and vegetables at the grocery store, purchase a net bag designed to hold all the items together instead of placing each different food product into a separate plastic bag.

- Natural Cleansers like vinegar, baking soda, borax, peroxide, etc., are healthy alternatives to the harsh chemical compounds found in many standard cleaning products. Conventional soaps and detergents for washing dishes and clothes contain phosphates and chlorine that pollute the water supply and are not biodegradable. Look for cleansers that are chlorine and phosphate-free, nontoxic and will biodegrade. Have you ever noticed that when you use some of the standard cleaning products that you often feel like you need to put a mask over your face because the cleaner seems so caustic and irritating to your eyes, nose and lungs? Natural products are far less offensive and safer.

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- Natural soaps made from vegetable oils, herbs, milk, minerals and aromatic bouquets are as effective as those touting their “antibacterial” agents. Some experts say that antibacterial soaps may interfere with our antibodies, reducing resistance to diseases and these products pollute the water supply. To reduce spread of colds and flu, follow your grandmother’s rule of thumb: Wash your hands frequently with a silky, natural soap. Hand sanitizers like the product from Burt’s Bees are also a good choice.

- Opt for chemical-free pest control in the home and in your garden. Seek advice from your local garden nursery for nontoxic products that will do the job but will not put harmful compounds into the soil and water table. Throw that dishpan of used soapy water on flowers and aphids will be washed away. Plant native species that flourish on natural rainfall and are already adapted to your environment. Give up the idea of a perfectly manicured, emerald-green lawn. Instead, plant drought-tolerant grasses and consider xeriscaping (landscaping that reduces the need for supplemental water).

- Shop for healthy products for your pet at a store that offers safe alternatives such as organic foods, treats, chew toys, herbal shampoos and flea controls; hemp collars; and allergy-free bedding. When you walk your dog in the neighborhood carry compostable doggie waste bags and dispose of them in your trash or leaf clippings.

- When your grandbabies come to visit have a supply of environmentally friendly diapers on hand. You can choose disposable diapers that are biodegradable (like Seventh Generation) and won’t clog up the landfills or cloth diapers that can be washed. And if you feel really energetic, cook and puree baby food and offer meals that contain no additives or ingredients that read like something from your high school chemistry class.

- Consider buying organic food when you shop, but be practical if you are on a limited income. The ideal goal is to buy from local farmers, select foods that are seasonal, support local vendors and encourage organic agriculture.

Being “Green” is perhaps easier than the famous frog might lead us to believe. The ecofriendly lifestyle can be as inexpensive or expensive as you choose. Participating in the green movement will have lasting impact, a legacy worth leaving.

For excellent “green lifestyle” ideas, view Web sites:

[www.deliciouslivingmag.com/greenliving](http://www.deliciouslivingmag.com/greenliving)  
and the Green Guide at National Geographic,  
[www.thegreenguide.com](http://www.thegreenguide.com)

## Get Ready for Fall

By Emily Horton Baran

Summertime weather is beginning to calm down – the humidity is decreasing, as is the heat, but the days are just as long and the sun is just as bright. This is the time to truly enjoy being outside, whether you are taking a leisurely bike ride along a trail, hiking around or taking a walk along the water. When I am enjoying these types of days, I select meals that are tailored to helping me stay active. I can also tell you that I snack constantly throughout the day to ensure my metabolism continues to work and that I stay awake.

Breakfast on active days is at 7 or 7:30 in the morning and consists of a cup of yogurt, half a cup of granola and half a cup of fresh berries. This particular breakfast gives a crunch, a smoothness and a sweetness all in one bowl. Yogurt, granola and berries will keep the active person moving until at least 10:30 when a snack is definitely warranted. For snacks, I typically reach for a handful of almonds or peanuts or a Nature’s Valley granola bar. After the busy morning of running errands, hiking or going for a long bike ride, stick to something rich in protein to keep you full longer and to hold you until dinner time. A vegetable and meat sandwich with hummus instead of mayonnaise will be a great choice to hold you over until dinner time.

To conclude the busy day that autumn can bring, try the following dinner: pan-seared salmon seasoned with salt and pepper, couscous mixed with toasted pine nuts and cranberries and green beans.

### Pan-Seared Salmon

Salmon filet  
Salt and pepper  
Oil a pan on medium to high heat. Season the salmon on both sides and place into pan once hot. Flip to sear both sides and cook through.

### Couscous

1 cup of couscous  
1 cup of water  
Salt and pepper  
2 cups dried cranberries  
2 cups pine nuts, toasted  
Bring the water to a boil, pour in couscous. Turn heat off, cover and season with salt and pepper. When ready to serve, mix in cranberries and toasted pine nuts.

### Green Beans

Green beans  
Almonds, optional  
Bring salted water to a boil and add green beans. Have a bowl of ice water next to the stove. After about three minutes, retrieve the green beans and arrest the cooking in an ice bath. When ready to serve, toss in olive oil and toss with toasted almond slices.

This is a good option for dinner as it is light and healthy but still filling. The salmon can be interchanged with chicken or another kind of fish. Same as the salmon, the green beans can be traded for broccoli, asparagus or snow peas. These meals are quick to prepare as well as interchangeable.

To learn more about the culinary world, check out Emily Horton’s blog at [www.chefemilyaculinarystudent.blogspot.com](http://www.chefemilyaculinarystudent.blogspot.com)

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# Pursuing Your Passion

By Kathryn Marchi

Not many of us are willing to make a complete life style change in order to continue a hobby or “passion” after retirement. But this is exactly the path that Charlie and Jackie Berger chose. Their love of Alpine hiking began years ago when they were a young married couple living in Europe. They became hooked on hiking the mountains of Zermatt and Grindelwald in Switzerland but, due to busy careers, their time was limited. Thus, they considered this activity a “hobby,” not a “passion.”

Charlie and Jackie's story is a typical one: They started a family and continued on the career path. Weekend camping with their two young children was the extent of their outdoor activities and hiking was placed on the back burner.

In 1986, the Berger family settled in Severna Park after several moves because of Charlie's human resources job with Northrup Grumman Corp. There, they raised their children, putting down roots in their community and church. Jackie was employed as a social worker in adult protective services for the state of Maryland. Their children joined the Girl and Boy Scout programs and Charlie, in particular, developed an interest in long-distance hiking with the Boy Scouts. He and his son enjoyed hiking portions of the Appalachian Trail. Much later, the entire family hiked Huayna Picchu, near Machu Picchu in Peru! It's safe to say that Charlie and Jackie were becoming hooked on hiking once again.

After their children grew up and started their own lives, Jackie and Charlie began contemplating their retirement. They both knew that hiking was something they wanted to pursue seriously when the time was right. With this in mind, the Bergers began traveling again. They ventured to Aspen, Colorado, for a week's hiking and also hiked the trails in Mt Zion National Park in Utah. On one particularly steep “scree” field in Electric Pass near Aspen, Jackie was heard to yell, “Should we really be here?” Some of the trails and elevations can be quite mind-boggling, but the Bergers loved every minute of it.



On one such trip to the Southwest, Jackie and Charlie found Ouray, Colorado, and its many hiking opportunities and decided within two months to settle there. Jackie retired first in 2004 and moved to Ouray to supervise the construction of a new house. Charlie followed in 2005. They sold their Severna Park home of 18 years and moved lock, stock and barrel to Colorado -- a complete lifestyle change! Their hiking hobby was quickly becoming their passion.

Once settled in Ouray, the Bergers began hiking the nearby mountain ranges. Their favorite was Mt. Sneffles near where they lived. At 14,000 feet, this is quite a trek! They also became active in the Ouray Trail Group, which manages and maintains a network of

90-plus trails in the San Juan Mountains for the National Forest Service. Weather permitting, they grab their various tools -- pulaskies, mecleods, chainsaws -- and hike up the mountains to maintain these trails for other hikers.

By the time they were retired and had the time, Jackie and Charlie began traveling more extensively, always with hiking in mind. They have hiked in Ireland, the Tatra Mountains in Slovakia, South Island in New Zealand with their daughter and son-in-law, Glacier National Park into the chalets of Sperry and Granite Park, and day hikes in the Dolomites. One 10-day trek was the “Haute Route” from Chamonix, France, to Zermatt, Switzerland, where they stayed at small hotels for hikers along the way.



*Spend more time planning your future — isn't that where you'll be spending the rest of your life?*

You can see how hiking became a passion for Jackie and Charlie Berger. In retirement, they have successfully “stepped out of their comfort zone” to pursue their passion for hiking. They not only live where they can hike, they go to great efforts to find other hiking opportunities. They have developed friendships with like-minded folks in the hiking world and have even expanded their interest by joining a summer group known as the “Elite National Ouray Hiking and Jeeping Association.” This group schedules several weekly hikes and jeep trips in the nearby San Juan Mountains where they explore trails and the numerous old mines found there.

It was a huge change in lifestyle from Maryland to Colorado, but Charlie and Jackie Berger made that leap in order to pursue their passion. They have never been happier or more fit and healthy.

It's safe to say that many of us would not choose Alpine hiking, but there are always places to hike on the Appalachian Trail in this area or on trails in New England and New York that are not so strenuous. But if your passion is hiking of any type, check out the Web sites listed in the accompanying sidebar. 



- [www.gorp.away.com](http://www.gorp.away.com)
- [www.hikingwebsite.com](http://www.hikingwebsite.com)
- [www.backpacking.net/beginner.html](http://www.backpacking.net/beginner.html)
- [www.trails.com](http://www.trails.com)
- [www.Colorado.com](http://www.Colorado.com)
- [www.appalachiantrail.com](http://www.appalachiantrail.com)
- [www.hikingupward.com](http://www.hikingupward.com)  
(Virginia and West Virginia)
- [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) (National Park Service)
- [www.ouraytrails.org](http://www.ouraytrails.org)
- [www.14ers.com/](http://www.14ers.com/)
- [www.slowtrav.com/switzerland/hiking/](http://www.slowtrav.com/switzerland/hiking/)



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# Alpha Smart

## The tool for the easily distractible

By Penelope Folsom

If you're a writer or a wannabe writer or just someone who takes lots of notes, here's a gadget that's meant for you. The AlphaSmart is a word processing keyboard -- nothing more. The simplicity of the operation is admirable. In this day and age of complicated electronics, this little device is a dream. You won't need a six-week course on how to get connected or two remote controls to get it started. You won't even need the instruction booklet. Just turn it on and type. It's that simple. This is not a computer or even a computer wannabe -- it's a keyboard that stores information to be downloaded or deleted or whatever you'd like, whenever convenient. Much like the typewriters of old, the keyboard comfortably accommodates two hands. As you may have noticed, today's blackberries and i-phones are impossibly small if one is communicating with anything more than a couple of words. The AlphaSmart has a large keyboard that is comfortable to use and allows space for typing the old-fashioned way, using all 10 fingers. It holds oodles of information, allowing up to eight files to be stored at once, and the newest version will store up to 200 pages of text. There's a screen that holds from two to six lines of type and you get to choose the font and size of the type. Simple editing is also an option. The feature that most impressed me was that it's an LCD screen; this means that it can be used outside. Often I have wanted to be out in my comfortable chaise lounge or off on a boating weekend doing some writing and have found that my laptop screen is nearly invisible in the daylight. The back light on the AlphaSmart changes all of that, clearly showing what's been typed, which brings up another plus feature: Batteries with a nearly endless life span. A rechargeable

battery pack can be purchased, which will last 200 hours or more per charge. But why, when three standard AA batteries can power the Neo for up to 700 hours -- that's a lot of writing.

After typing in your memoir or the minutes of the meeting you've just attended, there's a cord to connect to the computer and everything can be downloaded or it can be connected directly to your printer for a hard copy.

The housing for the AlphaSmart is durable and the company claims that it can be dropped with no damage. A sturdy soft plastic case for easy portability can be purchased and there's even a backpack available to transport it. And it's lightweight too at something under two pounds.

The price can be as high as \$200, depending on which version you choose, but there's more than an adequate selection of used models on eBay starting as low as \$30. For reasons unknown, the AlphaSmart is not

### OutLook's *Bits & Bytes*

With school starting, you may want to check out this disturbing but necessary site [www.familywatchdog.us/Search.asp](http://www.familywatchdog.us/Search.asp). Type in your zip code and a map will pop up with the location of the registered sex offenders in your area.

readily available in the local office supply stores or electronic mega marts or big box stores, but it can be found on line at [www.neo-direct.com](http://www.neo-direct.com)

There are a few different models: the Dana and the Neo are the two latest versions that have a few updates from the older models such as a larger screen and more storage space. You'll want to check out the specifications of the different versions to determine what will work best for you.

One of the big pluses is that there's no checking of e-mail or doing research. This works well for the easily distracted, keeping the focus on writing. With the portability, long-term power, low price and ease of computer hookup this is a must-have for anyone who either writes or is looking for an easy-to-use portable electronic note taker.



## ATTENTION PROBLEM SOLVERS!

Are you one of those individuals that might be retired but not quite ready to totally leave it all behind? Do you like meeting new people, stimulating conversations, researching and resolving problems, and getting paid for it? Interested in preparing tax returns? Check out our website @ [www.all-statestax.com](http://www.all-statestax.com) and send an email to [peg.allstatestax1@verizon.net](mailto:peg.allstatestax1@verizon.net)

*Are you just enjoying the day or are you working to improve it?*



## The Rock Creek Shaman

By Joyce Edelson  
Bay Media, Inc. (2009)

Thirty-five years ago I made an official trip to a Job Corps Center in New Mexico with a large population of Native American trainees. While scanning medical records a notation stood out: "Cause of illness unclear. Recommend trainee be referred to his tribal shaman." This was a tacit admission that science did not have all the answers. In fact, shamans, medicine men, faith healers and mystics existed thousands of years before modern medicine. Furthermore, our universe consists of vibrations on many frequencies. We decipher, i.e., "see" only a fraction of them. Most of the world is invisible to us. We only "see" what we are taught to see.

These are some of the points Joyce Edelson makes. She does this in the guise of Warne-la, a teen-age girl of mixed parentage. The adventure tale is artfully constructed and interesting to read. Readers familiar with Annapolis and Washington, D.C., will find themselves in familiar territory. My only criticism is that the author brings in too many shamanic practices, but this is not fatal.

It is clear that Edelson put a lot of effort into this work. She is an Annapolis area resident, so the book should appeal to her "home town" and vicinity. It should also appeal to teenagers and former teenagers looking for a good adventure story. It might be used for high school or college classes doing a unit on the paranormal, psychology, diversity or cultural anthropology. Finally, this book would be a good read to curl up with in front of a crackling fire on a fall evening.

~ Ray Ehrle

## Bears' Guide to Earning Degrees by Distance Learning

By John B. Bear, Ph.D. and Mariah P. Bear, MA  
Ten Speed Press, Berkeley/Toronto (2003)

This well laid out book presents an in-depth study of programs that have been around since they stopped using animal skins in diplomas. It's called distance education and there are still a fair amount of us out there who aren't familiar with it. As a late bloomer, it took me until last year to discover this oversized paperback with its wealth of information. And since discovering this easy-to-navigate tome, I've been pouring through it, trying to decide where I'd like to go to finish my master's. This nontraditional form of education is solidly entrenched in today's system and it certainly has made life easier for many people. Utilizing one of the programs described in this book, my nephew recently finished his master's at Ohio University while holding down a full-time job and keeping his young family intact. With a requirement of just a few short stays on campus he was able to complete his degree. This could not have been done if he had pursued this in the conventional way.

The book is hugely helpful in wading through all the options. Particularly helpful is the breakdown of degrees that can be earned by distance learning with a computer. Programs with short residency -- a few weekends to a few weeks -- were also listed. At this stage of the game, a short residency program is my idea of a minivacation with some intellectual stimulation thrown in. The schools are listed alphabetically, incorporating schools from around the world such as The University of Melbourne in Australia, which offers a master's or PhD program in many different fields of study such as art history. Columbia University in New York offers a master's program in education, which requires two short stays on campus. The University of New England offers an undergraduate and a master's in European studies. And then if you'd like to design your own curriculum, there's Antioch University in Ohio or Vermont College in Montpelier. Each school listed has all the contact information as well as a brief write-up and the level of education offered. The guide also includes a short list of diploma mills -- those to be avoided. Although the latest edition was published in 2003, it's easy to determine what you're looking for in a school and then log on to their Web site to get the most up-to-the-minute information.

This is the perfect source to help you find the program that's right for you to finish up your undergraduate or graduate degree, or even take on a whole new field. For me, the fun part is pursuing whatever interests me. Best of all, I'm no longer working toward what looks good on my resume, but having fun determining what's going to look good in my obituary.

~ Penelope Folsom

## Prime for Life – Functional Fitness for Ageless Living

By Randy Raugh  
Rodale Press, New York, NY, distributed by  
McMillan (2009)

*Prime for Life* starts out with the question, "When was the last time you went out to play?" This gets your attention. The premise of this fitness book is that our bodies are primed to move and when we age, sometimes we don't have the desire to get moving. Randy Raugh, the fitness director of the Canyon Ranch, the well-known wellness and health center in the Santa Catalina mountains of Arizona, works with people of all ages who want to improve their health, and feels that lack of movement is one of their main problems.

Have you ever tried to become completely motionless? It is very difficult to do; our bodies want to move. They even move when we are asleep. Try not moving a muscle for five minutes and you'll see what I mean. Throughout this book are many examples of exercises for all parts of the body. There is a chapter on bones, especially good for post-menopausal women who are concerned about osteoporosis. There are chapters on feet and ankles, knees, hips, backs and shoulders. In every chapter are examples of exercises suitable for helping these problem areas. The illustrations are easy to follow and well described.

There is one chapter that is not often seen in fitness or exercise books: Pain --Letting it Go. Randy Raugh touches on medication, which he feels should not be your first choice of action, our internal painkillers, which are certain opiates in our bodies, listening to your body and boosting your mood. What I found especially interesting was the section on activating your internal healing system and the benefits of laughter in alleviating pain. Watching a funny movie or reading a laugh-filled book would be much more pleasant than popping pills. A few paragraphs are devoted to touch, prayer and meditation.

The book ends with a chapter entitled "Making a Plan You Can Live With---Every Single Day." And the subtitle is "You are one workout away from feeling better." It made me want to get right out and take a long walk, or jump on my exercise bike.

There are many fitness and exercise books on the market, several of which I read and discarded before choosing *Prime for Life*. I liked the positive attitude of the author, the concrete examples, the easy-to-follow illustrations and the "no preaching and making you feel guilty" attitude of some other books.

*Prime for Life* probably won't turn you into an Olympic athlete, but it should get you off the couch and motivated to at least give the idea of "going out to play" a chance.

~ Peggy Kiefer

## Notes from the **JUDGE**



*Al Northrop was admitted to the practice of law in 1975 and is now serving on the Prince George's County Circuit Court.  
He can be reached at [Judge@OutLookbytheBay.com](mailto:Judge@OutLookbytheBay.com)*

# How About a Joint Will?

**W**e've devoted a significant amount of space in this periodical to wills, trusts, and related articles. Still questions come up. One such question posed by an *Outlook by the Bay* reader was this: "Can my wife and I simplify things and maybe even save a few bucks by doing a joint will?" The simple answer is yes. But, alas, things are not always so simple. I usually don't favor joint wills, so let's explore why.

A joint will is best defined as a single testamentary instrument that contains the wills of two or more persons, is executed jointly by them and disposes of property owned jointly, in common or severally by them. A mutual will is one executed pursuant to an agreement between two or more persons to dispose of their property in a particular manner, each in consideration of the other. If the testators name each other as beneficiaries, the wills are reciprocal. Two or more wills may be mutual without being joint. A joint and mutual will must be the will of two or more persons contained in a single document jointly executed by them pursuant to an agreement to dispose of their respective estates to each other or to third parties. The will may be categorized as joint and several when it is initially executed, but it cannot be given effect as such if one party survives. It will be given effect as the survivor's separate will.\*

Maryland follows most states in accepting for probate a will executed by two or more persons all signing as testators. Why not? Such wills, properly drawn, meet the

rather simple statutory requirements for the execution of a will in Maryland. Furthermore, no Maryland statute prohibits them.

What happens when one of the testators dies, and subsequent to his death the surviving testator revokes his will and writes a new one? Here again, the statute provides for the manner in which one can revoke a will in Maryland and, done in accordance with the statute, it can be done at any time. A validly executed subsequent will would, in fact, be his will.

However, a contract upon which the prior will was executed may be enforced and damages recovered.

To demonstrate, a couple, both in their second marriage and both with children from a prior marriage, agree to execute a joint and mutual will, each pledging to provide not only for their own respective biological children but for their stepchildren as well. One spouse dies. The survivor revokes his will and executes a new will which "cuts out" the stepchildren.

Maryland's probate court, the Orphans Court, will admit the new will to probate. However, the original agreement, if proven, will give rise to a contractual claim against the estate by the disinherited stepchildren, a claim which the Orphans Court can and will enforce.

Note, too, that even if the joint or mutual will states that it is "irrevocable," it is revocable.

The above is but one example of what can happen with a joint will. Other examples are easy to imagine. The point is that in an effort to achieve simplicity and cost savings, one may in fact be creating complexity and added expense. For these reasons, I generally recommend against joint, mutual and/or reciprocal wills.

\* *This summarizes a Maryland court decision, Moats v. Schock & Berry, 24 Md. App. 453, 458 (1975).*

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# How the Electric Blanket Saved My Marriage

By Cindy Rott

If you are like most couples, you and your significant other don't agree on the "correct" temperature of the house. During the day my husband and I fiddle with the temperature, depending on who is doing what, but not a big deal. But, whoa, at night we have huge differences.

I absolutely cannot sleep if it's too warm in the bedroom, and my husband claims he can't sleep if it is too cold. For years we would move the thermostat up and down at night, finally sorting out a compromise: Whoever went to bed last could set the temperature, which would result in me getting up in the middle of the night if I wasn't last to bed to readjust things. I just can't sleep in a hot room.

It seemed that neither of us was ever well rested. And then one day, after much discussion, we broke down and bought an electric blanket. We bought the most luxurious one we could find, soft, static-free, lightweight and most importantly, it had dual controls! From the very first night we turned it on, there was a huge improvement in the quality of our sleep. No longer did I suffer through what felt like a night in the tropics. Now we are both getting the best night's rest we've ever had. It's comfy, it's cozy and we each get to choose our own setting. My favorite part on these cold fall nights is to preheat the bed for 15 or 20 minutes before we snuggle in for the night—no more icy cold sheets for us. And then just before I go to sleep, I shut my side off. That's right -- off -- and my husband snoozes comfortably with his side on high. Now, we're both happy. In an attempt to conserve energy we set the thermostat way down to 58 when we turn in at night. Not only is this an energy-saving decision, but studies have shown that keeping the heat turned down will prevent nasal passages from drying out, which could possibly keep one from being so susceptible to colds. The money saved on heating an entire house all night is I'm sure substantial, but saving our marriage and my sanity, while living with a husband from Florida, is what's most important. A night of a restful and rejuvenating sleep is worth the small investment we made in our dual-control marriage saver.



**A night of a restful and rejuvenating sleep is worth the small investment we made in our dual-control marriage saver.**



## OutLook's Bits & Bytes

It's hard to believe, but it's time to start talking cold weather. Our top two favorite stay-warm hints: Wear mittens, not gloves, because those fingers will keep each other warm. Always have a scarf handy. A protected head and warm neck keeps the chill out.

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at the Maryland Seafood Festival**

**Come  
out to  
Sandy Point  
State Park  
and attend the**



**Learn  
about  
Senior Issues  
from experts,  
enjoy great food**

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for more info visit: [www.mdseafoodfestival.com](http://www.mdseafoodfestival.com)**

## Dear Vicki

### For "Expert" Advice

*In the last year or so, I've gone through a tumultuous time of change and loss. I'm now faced with some important decisions about how I'm going to live the rest of my life. It's complicated, but the gist of it is that I can't put off these decisions any longer. However, I'm stuck and undecided. I've sought advice from my friends, my pastor and a psychologist. It's crazy but I've even gone to a psychic! Much of the advice has been conflicting which just confuses me more. How can I decide whose advice is best and how do I know what is right for me?*

Although this is a very general question, let me take a crack at it. First, I am sorry for your loss and know that indecision is a painful place to be. And while seeking professional assistance is often helpful, particularly for complex issues, it, indeed, can be confusing and sometimes even misguided. Practitioners in any field vary greatly in their worldview, education, approach, professionalism and simply in their talent. Beware of swallowing lock, stock and barrel any advice given by anyone. Remember: You are the only expert on yourself and your situation.

When I studied to be a professional counselor, I learned with dismay that the answers to every client's problems were not going to be found in a book or in a class. In fact, as a therapist, I realized that the most important skill to acquire was the ability to help my client discover his or her own truths. You must look within yourself for the answers to what is right for you rather than relying on any expert who, at best, can only guide you.

Sounds like a scary thought, huh? It's not as difficult as you think, so keep reading. You've already done much of the hard work! You've consulted with a variety of "helpers," which I hope have assisted you to clarify the issues. And you've gotten some feedback on, perhaps, aspects of the problems that you had not considered. You've probably come up with several courses of action and have considered the pros and cons of each. These are some of the challenges that professional consultants should assist you in accomplishing. Their job is not to tell you what to do; if they've done that, run!

Reflect upon the advice you've heard. Has it been aimed to help you hear your own voice? If the advice has been respectful, knowledgeable, thought-provoking and on a level that is easily understood, you've been in good hands.

*Victoria Duncan is a licensed professional counselor who works with individuals and couples to address a full spectrum of client issues. She welcomes your questions at [Victoria@OutLookbytheBay.com](mailto:Victoria@OutLookbytheBay.com)*



However, if the guidance has been overbearing, bossy, preachy or superior, watch out. Do you feel like the advice-giver has listened and understood you? Or have you felt discounted, dismissed, or as if the person you are consulting has jumped to conclusions without hearing the whole story? You've received a lot of information. Use these observations as guides for discerning what advice has merit.

You're making progress! Now, another word of caution: In times of turmoil, simplify. And a good rule of thumb is to avoid making major life-altering decisions for about a year after any significant loss. You need that time to stabilize and heal. If that's impossible or you've already allowed this time to pass, give yourself a little more breathing room by eliminating any needless demands and distractions. Solitude and space are necessary for you to go within and hear your own voice.

If you have little privacy at home and can afford it, consider checking yourself into a bed and breakfast where you can rest and focus just upon the decision at hand. Give yourself the luxury of time and space to make the wisest decision possible. Avoid taking along temptations like the latest best-selling murder mystery, but do take along a blank notebook. Not a writer? That's OK. Take it along anyhow. This is for your eyes only and you don't have to worry about grammar or creating a work of literary art.

Free writing is one of the best ways to get in touch with your own inner wisdom and to learn what you truly think about an issue. Try a kind of "morning pages" routine that author Julie Cameron suggests in *The Artist's Way*, a book that is as much about authentic living as it is about creativity. Morning pages are three pages of handwritten stream-of-consciousness thought preferably done every morning shortly after waking. For example, just start writing whatever comes to mind: "Another morning. I'm tired and don't want to get up. I don't know what to do about \_\_\_\_\_. Maybe I could \_\_\_\_\_. Have to go to the grocery store, etc." Keep the pen moving and don't censor yourself. Why three pages? It may take a

couple of pages of complaining and letting go before you zero in on something significant. And while it may seem easier to type these pages, Cameron and other proponents of free writing believe that the physical act of handwriting taps more deeply into our unconscious where wisdom and creative thought are stored.

When you are not writing in your journal, take walks, read something inspirational, pray or listen to music. Record your dreams. They can be quite revealing. Be still, be patient and look inside instead of looking outside of yourself. You've already done that and have all the information you need. Now is the time to connect to your own best counselor and expert -- that would be you! And I bet you'll find your answers - they've been there all along waiting for you.

### Our Un-Anniversary

*Our 25th wedding anniversary is next month. We should be celebrating but, to be truthful, we're going through a rough patch in our marriage. It feels like a lie to celebrate and it will be hard enough to even find a greeting card. I feel like skipping the whole thing. How do couples in trouble handle anniversaries, especially those important ones?*

While I understand your desire for an "un-anniversary," try reframing the idea of a celebration to an acknowledgement of a life lived together. Consider that at the very least, you've invested many years into this marriage. Even though you feel quite negative now, you've gone through a lot of things together--some challenging periods but some good times too. Resist the urge to indulge in black or white thinking. Nobody is all good or bad and neither is a marriage.

To ignore the day that you wed could be a huge mistake at this critical time of raw and vulnerable feelings. Instead of a typical anniversary card, buy a blank card and make a list of five positive memories or five things that you appreciate about your spouse. As far as a gift goes, one of the best marriage counseling interventions that I've used is to give unhappy couples the

# GO GREEN

assignment of buying an inexpensive, but thoughtful gift for each other. It's surprising how walls often break down in the presence of thoughtfulness and consideration.

Initiate a frank talk with your spouse about the upcoming anniversary and your desire to keep it low key but as positive as possible. Decide together how to acknowledge this important milestone. Consider giving yourselves some marriage counseling or the gift of a weekend marriage workshop to ease out some rough spots. Check out the Web site: [www.smartmarriages.com](http://www.smartmarriages.com) for some great suggestions. And hang in there, you've got a lot invested!



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Dave Fisher (© Dave Fisher)

## ACROSS

- Pop ingredient, once
- Press down
- Idyllic places
- Newspaper page
- Hodgepodge
- Corporate symbols
- Stack
- Clappers
- Mosque officials
- Acid rain cause
- Gush
- Romulus or Remus
- Ingenious
- Puts up
- That girl
- They're temporary
- Buffalo's lake
- One's impact on global warming
- Jason's ship
- Church officer
- "Wanna \_\_\_\_\_?"
- Vacation spot
- Puts on cargo
- Empty a boat
- Bohemian dance
- Global warming cause
- Bicker

- Go quickly
- Streets in Strasbourg
- Bergamot and perilla, e.g.
- Like a pocket protector, perhaps
- Fencer's item
- Nice!
- Close race decider
- Slippery ones

## DOWN

- Small woods
- Kind of den
- Yo-Yo Ma's instrument
- Experts
- Bean curd
- Winglike
- Obey
- Put forward
- Magical drink
- Tyrannize
- "Yikes!"
- Seward Peninsula city
- Leaky tire sound
- Conversation starter
- Be behind
- Charged particle
- Bistro
- Small hill
- Nursery item
- Fork feature
- Cobblestone
- Mark for life
- Fabled racer
- Units of work
- \_\_\_ cracker
- Idiot box
- A Kennedy
- Warms up
- Least refined
- Hermano de mi mama
- Evening do
- Ushered
- Jeweler's glass
- Show respect, in a way
- Beasts of burden
- Ship's company
- Shrek, for one
- Hand in Honduras
- Bothers
- Eye affliction
- Checkup sounds

## Solution to "Cow's Word" Summer 09

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



# Poplars to Become More Popular

By Neil Moran

**P**lants never cease to amaze me. And one amazing plant may be growing right in your backyard. Poplar trees, which are included in the populus species, include aspen, poplars and cottonwoods. While perhaps not one of the most sought-after trees for ornamental purposes (although there are several cultivated varieties bred for homeowners), the poplar tree is quickly becoming one of the most important species of trees for cleaning up industrial and wastewater pollution.

In a process called phytoremediation, poplar trees are being used from coast to coast to clean up and restore abandoned mining areas to normal by planting over sites that have been strip-mined. Poplar trees have been used for decades as wood pulp, but are now recognized as water pumping machines. Poplars have an amazing ability to grow deep roots. In fact, they are phreatophytic plants, meaning their roots extend all the way to the water table. Drawing as they do from the “zone of saturation” makes them capable of pumping pollutants out of contaminated areas. A five year-old poplar tree can pump up to 50 gallons of water per day.

While poplars aren't currently being used in any high-profile phytoremediation projects around the Bay area, homeowners could take the lead in using poplars to clean up suspected contaminants in their yards, or even as a preventive measure by installing what is called a riparian buffer. If you suspect contaminants in your soil you could plant poplars as a means to clean up the contamination. And if you're concerned with keeping the Bay clean for present and future use one could very easily establish a riparian buffer. A homeowner can simply

plant poplars near the shore of a waterway, such as the Bay and its tributaries. The roots of the poplars would actually help to prevent contaminants, such as lawn fertilizers and pesticides, from seeping into the waterways. This was actually proven in a study that was undertaken by engineers at the University of Iowa. In the study, nitrates were measured from areas buffered with poplars and those that were not buffered with poplars. The results indicated a marked reduction in nitrates measured in the buffered areas.

In addition to phytoremediation, poplar trees can be grown as biomass for fuel and to make paper. There are advantages of using poplar trees as opposed to other plants for phytoremediation and as biomass. For one thing, poplars are not part of the food chain. They also grow fast, up to five meters per year. They are also easily propagated by cuttings, i.e., by cutting off a five-to-six-inch piece of stem and inserting it in a rooting medium. Poplars will also easily regenerate from stumps of felled trees. Finally, poplar trees are less expensive than other ornamental trees. Because they do grow so fast and aren't in peak demand, they are sold for less than more popular (no pun intended) ornamental trees, such as Japanese Maple.

Many garden catalogs include poplar trees in their offerings. Take a close look at what you're purchasing, because they do come in different varieties, some that have very attractive bark and foliage. Whatever you choose there couldn't be a better time of year for improving your landscape with a tree that can not only beautify your property but will more than earn its keep with its contribution to cleaning up the water and soil in and around the Bay area. 



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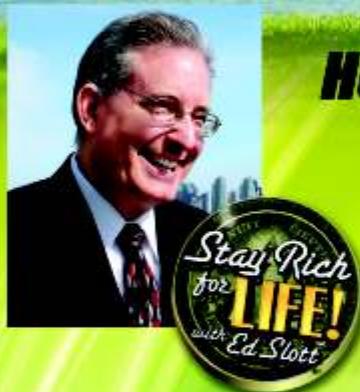
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