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NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2023

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BY
MICHELLE
FIELDS

From the Publisher

Senior Perspectives Receives 10 National Awards in Excellence



The North American Mature Publishers Association (NAMPA) held its 2023 national convention in September. NAMPA is the nonprofit, international association for newspaper and magazine publishers of local/regional senior and boomer publications. Having been a member since 2015, we were excited to see the other members, share leading-edge strategies and marketing tactics, and have the opportunity to exchange ideas with other top publishing leaders in the mature market.

On the second day of the conference, the Annual NAMPA Awards in Excellence winners are announced. The 2023 NAMPA entries are independently reviewed and judged by the prestigious University of Missouri School of Journalism, widely considered one of the top journalism schools in the country. Awards were given in a wide variety of categories, including general excellence, writing/editing, design, content, concept, photography, and website excellence. The talented writers and contributors of Senior Perspectives newspaper were awarded 10 awards this year.



Congratulations to this year's winners:



1st Place: How-to Feature - Cindy Hogg for "Granny Camp 101"



2nd Place: Best Use of Photography/Covers - Glenn Rutgers (Cardinal cover and Tulips cover)



and Dana Fields (Patriotic Tonka Truck/Nature cover)



3rd Place: Briefs and Shorts - Joel Dulyea for "What Sir" and "\$20 to Take a Child"



3rd Place: Personal Profile – Louise Matz for "An Interesting Transition to Retirement"



3rd Place: Travel Column - Jackie Lindrup for "What We Love... Ireland" and "Natchez Trace"



3rd Place: Briefs and Shorts (Editorial) – Michelle Fields for "Trick-or-Treat" and "My Dog Tigo"

2nd Place: Best Use of Color (Design)

2nd Place: Letter from Editor-NAMPA Awards

2nd Place: Self Promo-Award, Advertisement

2nd Place: Table of Contents

The writers, staff and contributors of Senior Perspectives newspaper will get together in November to receive their awards. Look for more information and photos in the Jan/Feb. 2024 edition of Senior Perspectives. You can view current and past editions by scanning this QR code.



Michelle Fields has been with Senior Resources of West Michigan since June of 2009. She became the Editor of Senior Perspectives newspaper in 2012 and the Publisher in 2015. Since 2015, Fields and her team at Senior Perspectives have won 87 National Awards for their work. Michelle is also serving her second term with NAMPA Board of Directors. She enjoys spending time with her family, fishing, camping, gardening, and kayaking with her husband Mike and dog Tigo.



Pam Curtis, CEO

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ONE ENTRY PER PERSON

Sept/Oct
Winners Are:

Kristi Slenk of Holland, Theresa Maycroft of Coopersville
Ruben Pineda of Montague

In the last issue, the jack-o-lantern was hidden in the top right image on page 37 / *Am A Gardener* article.

Peripheral Neuropathy Breakthrough!

"My feet feel like they're on fire."

"Each step feels like I'm walking through wet paint."

"I live in constant fear that I'll fall."

"I can't sleep, my hands and feet tingle all night."

What do all of these people have in common? They suffer from **peripheral neuropathy**. It's estimated that more than 20 million people in the United States have peripheral neuropathy. Unfortunately, this figure may be significantly higher as the disease is often misdiagnosed because of its wide array of symptoms.

Corinne Conry, LAc, MSOM of Acupuncture Center of Grand Rapids (ACGR), shares this belief. "I've been treating neuropathy, and all its various forms, for over a decade, and so often my patients come to me because of the symptoms, not because of a diagnosis. They saw one of my talks, or read the testimonial of another patient and say to themselves 'hey, I feel the same thing'."

Mary of Grand Haven testified to this. "I remember my husband driving me to my consultation and I saw a woman running just outside our neighborhood. I was so envious - I just kept thinking 'I would give anything to just walk again'. My primary care doctor told me my troubles with pain and balance were just symptoms of old age and gave me a prescription. I was so depressed."

Fortunately Mary would eventually see Corinne Conry, LAc, MSOM at one of her talks, speaking about similar symptoms, and how she offers a real solution at Acupuncture Center of Grand Rapids. "I just knew I had to see her. She was my last hope."

"Almost all of our patients come to see us with a story similar to Mary's. They've been everywhere else. They've been told there's no hope. They've been told 'it's just part of getting older'," shares Peter, a patient care technician, at ACGR. "It just breaks my heart, but I know how much we can help people like Mary, so I'm always happy when they walk through our door."

Those diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy often face a very grim reality; Western medicine declares that there is no solution while most alternative therapies carry large price tags and offer a little to no resolve.

Which is why Corinne Conry, LAc, MSOM and the staff at Acupuncture Center of Grand Rapids pride themselves on being 'the last resort with the best results'.

Peripheral neuropathy is a result of damage to the nerves, and this damage is commonly caused by lack of blood flow in the hands and feet. A lack of blood flow results in a lack of nutrients; the nerves then begin to degenerate and die which causes pain ranging from discomfort to debilitating. Because neuropathy is a degenerative condition, once those nerves begin to deteriorate, they will continue to do so until they are completely expired, leaving those suffering with crippling balance issues. "In this case, the absence of pain is not necessarily a good thing," shares Corinne. "This usually indicates that your nerves are hanging on by a fragile thread."

So how is Corinne able to reverse the effects of this degenerative disease? "Acupuncture has been used to increase blood flow for thousands of years which helps to get the necessary nutrients to the affected nerves. But the real magic happens when I integrate ATP Resonance BioTherapy™. This tech was originally developed by NASA to expedite recovery and healing."

"I just can't say enough about ACGR," shared Mary through her tears of joy. My husband and I moved here three years ago and he walks to the lake almost every day. I always stay home because of the pain and discomfort. Yesterday, I went with him! And next week we're starting dancing lessons. I am truly living life these days."

"According to Mary's test results, she had seen a 74% improvement in pain and functionality, which is on par with the majority of our patients," shares Peter. "But more important than those test results is the joy she's expressed being here and hearing about all of the amazing things she's able to do because she feels great!"

By seamlessly blending the ancient science of acupuncture with modern medical solutions, Corinne Conry, LAc, MSOM has achieved a 90% success rate in reversing the effects of neuropathy.

She starts each patient with an initial consultation during which a sensory exam is performed. "This not only aids in making a proper diagnosis but it helps to define just how much nerve damage has occurred," says Corinne. "This is important because if a patient has suffered more than 95% damage, there is a little that I can do to help them. I'm familiar with the medical miracle, but I know my limits as a practitioner and the limits of my medicine."

When it comes to treating peripheral neuropathy, regardless of its origin, early detection greatly improves your chances of a full recovery.

If you or someone you love are suffering with chronic pain that presents as burning, tingling, or 'pins and needles', or you've recently been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy, it's important to know that there are options. There is hope.

Call **(616)-369-2121** to schedule an initial consultation, or visit **acugr.com** to read more incredible success stories.



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HATCH -
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Social Security Q & A

Question:

I worked for many years before I became disabled, but I didn't have enough recent work to receive Social Security Disability (SSDI) payments I receive for SSI. Will I ever receive Social Security payments?

Answer:

It depends. If you have at least 40 quarters of coverage, you can be eligible for Social Security retirement payments beginning at age 62. Additionally, if you are performing some work while you are on SSI, you may become currently insured for disability payments in the future. There are other ways you could become eligible for Social Security benefits, including benefits through a spouse or a divorced spouse. For more information, call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) or contact your local Social Security office.

Question:

What is the difference between Social Security disability and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability?

Answer:

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is based on prior earnings. SSDI is financed through the taxes you pay into the Social Security program. To be eligible for a SSDI benefit, the worker must earn sufficient credits based on taxable work to be "insured" for Social Security purposes. SSDI benefits are payable to eligible blind or disabled workers, the widow(er)s of a disabled worker, or adults disabled since childhood.

SSI disability payments are made based on financial need to adults or children who are disabled or blind, have limited income and resources, meet the living arrangement requirements, and are otherwise eligible. SSI is a program financed through general revenues. For more information, visit www.ssa.gov.

Question:

What is a Social Security "credit?"

Answer:

*During your working years, earnings covered by Social Security are posted to your record. You earn Social Security credits based on those earnings. The amount of earnings needed for one credit rises as average earnings levels rise. To learn how much you need to earn for a credit, visit www.ssa.gov/planners/credits.html. You can earn up to a maximum of four credits a year. Most people will need a minimum of 40 credits (or 10 years of work) to be eligible for retirement benefits. Learn more by reading the online publication *How You Earn Credits* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/10072.html.*

Question:

Although I stopped working a few years ago, I had additional seasonal earnings after my retirement. Will my monthly Social Security retirement benefit increase?

Answer:

*Each year, we review the records for all working Social Security recipients to see if additional earnings may increase their monthly benefit amounts. If an increase is due, we calculate a new benefit amount and pay the increase retroactive to January following the year of earnings. You can learn more about how work affects your benefits by reading our publication, *How Work Affects Your Benefits*, at www.ssa.gov/pubs.*

Question:

I have two minor children at home and I plan to retire this fall. Will my children be eligible for monthly Social Security benefits after I retire?

Answer:

*Monthly Social Security payments may be made to your children if one of the following applies:
They are unmarried and under age 18.*

Age 18 or 19 and still in high school.

Age 18 or older, became disabled before age 22, and continue to be disabled.

*Children who may qualify include a biological child, adopted child, or dependent stepchild. (In some cases, your grandchild also could be eligible for benefits on your record if you are supporting them.) For more information, see our online publication, *Benefits For Children*, at www.ssa.gov/pubs.*

Question:

I got an email that says it's from Social Security, but I'm not so sure. They want me to reply with my Social Security number, date of birth, and mother's maiden name for "verification." Did it really come from Social Security?

Answer:

No. Social Security will not send you an email asking you to share your personal information, such as your Social Security number, date of birth, or other private information. Beware of such scams — they're after your information so they can use it for their own benefit. When in doubt, or if you have any questions about correspondence you receive from Social Security, contact your local Social Security office or call us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) to see whether we really need any information from you.

Question:

Can I get a new Social Security number if someone has stolen my identity?

Answer:

*We do not routinely assign a new number to someone whose identity has been stolen. Only as a last resort should you consider requesting a new Social Security number. Changing your number may adversely affect your ability to interact with Federal and State agencies, employers, and others. This is because your financial, medical, employment and other records will be under your former Social Security number. We cannot guarantee that a new number will solve your problem. To learn more about your Social Security card and number, read our online publication *Your Social Security Number and Card* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/10002.html.*

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BY
LISA
TYLER

ID Bracelets can help connect older adults with help returning home

People with dementia sometimes wander, which is scary for both the person with dementia and those who love and support that person. A personal identification bracelet may help alleviate some of those concerns.

Senior Resources, in partnership with the SafeSeniors collaborative, is promoting the Miles for Memories Personal ID program, which offers support for those with dementia and their caregivers. A special bracelet (or nugget or watch) allows for storage of emergency and medical information so it can be accessed by emergency personnel if someone is found wandering.

The specially designed bracelet contains a QR code, 800 number, and ID on the back side. When scanning the QR code or calling the 800 number, the person's emergency contact number and information will be provided so the contact person(s) can locate them.

The process is fairly simple. Information is provided by family members or caregivers through a phone app or online; they can decide how much information to provide. Options include a comfortable, waterproof bracelet, a nugget to be worn on a shoelace or smart watch, a Mile Tile, or a GPS watch. Fit the bracelet to the person's wrist (the dominant side is recommended so it's harder for the person to remove). If the person wanders and is found by someone familiar with the bracelet, they can scan the QR code or call the 800 number (providing the ID and PIN) on the back of the bracelet. There is also a Plus Program that gives emergency responders access to important medical information.



These could make great holiday gifts for loved ones who may wander! Most devices are under \$50. Visit <https://safeseniors.info/resources/milesformemories/> to learn more or order. Senior Resources has scholarships available for the bracelets for those who cannot pay the full amount.

For more information on other caregiving resources, visit <https://seniorresourceswmi.org/caregivers/> or email caregivers@seniorresourceswmi.org.

Lisa Tyler is the communications director for Senior Resources. She and her husband Aaron are the proud parents of Hannah, a graduate of Hope College, and Nicholas, a graduate of MSU. Lisa is also an alumnus of MSU, loves scrapbooking and travel, and being involved in her community. She is secretary of the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District Board of Education, past chair of the Kids' Food Basket Muskegon advisory committee, vice president for the board of CALL 2-1-1, and a member of the Muskegon Rotary Club and Greater Muskegon Service League.



BY
JOEL
DULYEA

Veterans Day 2023

Raquel Welch died in February 2023 this year. She is remembered for her beauty and for her appearance in films. She is also remembered by a multitude of veterans who attended one of Bob Hope's Christmas shows in Vietnam.

The day after Welch died, I posted on Facebook a memory of singing with the Soldiers' Chorus for Hope's 90th birthday in May of 2003. I stood first in line at the bottom of a narrow aluminum stairway that led up to the stage where we would sing "Thanks for the Memories." While we waited for the cue to go, I edged up on the first step, then the second, eager and ready. On the third step I was oblivious to two important considerations. First, the current act on stage had to make a quick costume change; and second, I stood in the way. On her hurried descent from the stage, Raquel Welch found her path blocked. She stood eye to eye with a tongue-tied soldier who stared into her eyes until he melted away.

Dennis and Kathleen Cobler attend the same church we do. On Facebook, I received a response from Kathleen saying, "Dennis has a story to tell you. You have to talk with him." So, he and I talked.

In December of 1967, Bob Hope's annual Christmas show traveled to eleven sites in Vietnam. Security dictated that each destination where they performed was kept secret.



Captain Dennis Cobler was a soldier and optometrist serving with the 12th Evacuation Hospital stationed in Cu Chi, Vietnam. The weather in December was hot and humid with temperatures in the mid 80s when the rumors turned true. Bob Hope was on the ground at the Cu Chi base camp. Junior officers of the 12th Evac Hospital assembled to receive their assignments for the unusual day. There was a small number of women who either performed in the Christmas show or staffed it. Each officer would draw the name of the woman he would escort. Captain Cobler drew Raquel Welch.

There was always the possibility of hostilities. No one, including Hope, would know when and where they would perform until the troupe had landed.



After the show, Hope, trailing celebrities with their escorts (Raquel with CPT Cobler) visited the wounded. He endeared himself to double amputees in intensive care when he self-introduced, "Hi! My name is Bob Hope. No, please don't get up!" Dennis said, "All our hospitals units were metal Quonset buildings so they held the heat very well. The immediate post-op and intensive care was air conditioned by a small unit, but the room was still very hot, stuffy and had a lingering smell of the wounded."

Captain Cobler saw that Raquel was turning green. He moved her outside to fresher air. Bob stayed to talk with the wounded. Dennis said, "Bob eventually came out and went to see the other patients, leaving us alone until he was ready to leave." Dennis remembers he talked with Raquel until Bob returned. There was nothing memorable about the conversation. However, there remains the memory of an unspoken thought he addressed to Raquel. "You are probably the most beautiful woman I will ever meet, and that includes my wife that I have not yet met!"

Thanks for the memory, Dennis. Thanks for your service.

Joel Dulyea is a National Award-Winning writer and United States Army retiree who loves to sing with his wife Merijo, spend time with his daughter and son-in-law, and dote on his granddaughter.



BY
CATHAY
THIBDAUE

Chicken A La King

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons butter	1 small container fresh sliced mushrooms, washed (optional)
1 cup green, red, yellow bell pepper, julienne cut	2 cups cooked chicken breasts, shredded or cubed
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour	1/3 cup sour cream
2 cloves garlic, minced	1/2 cup Cream Sherry or Dry Sherry
1 cup chicken broth	Salt and Pepper to taste
1 cup milk	
1/2 teaspoon salt	
1/2 teaspoon thyme	

Directions: Melt butter in skillet on low heat. Add pepper strips and sauté until tender, about 8-10 minutes.

Remove peppers with a slotted spoon and set aside. Add flour and garlic to butter in skillet and stir until all lumps are gone.

Slowly stir in chicken broth and milk. Stir and cook until mixture is thickened to a thin gravy consistency.

Stir in salt, thyme, and mushrooms. Add chicken breast and cook until heated throughout. Stir in sour cream and Sherry. Salt and Pepper to taste.

You can serve mixture over toast, rice, noodles or biscuit.

Cathay Thibdaue is the Network Manager at Senior Resources of West Michigan. She has been with Senior Resources for 24 years. Cathay has been contributing recipes to Senior Perspectives since 2004. She enjoys fishing with her husband, Wayne, and boating. Cathay also enjoys gardening and cooking.



BY
BRANDI
WALDMAN

Sweet Potato Casserole

Ingredients:

40 oz. can of Sweet Potatoes/Yams	Topping:
1 cup white sugar	1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup milk	3/4 cup flour
3/4-1 stick butter	3/4 cup chopped pecans
1 Tbsp. vanilla	1 stick butter, melted

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Pour sweet potatoes and their liquid into saucepan and heat until simmering. Drain well and mash. Add white sugar, milk, 3/4-1 stick butter and vanilla; mix well. Pour into 9x9" pan. In a bowl, mix together brown sugar, flour, pecans and 1 stick melted butter; crumble over top of sweet potatoes. Bake for 18-25 minutes until bubbly and topping is crunchy.

Brandi is the Staff Educator, HIPAA Privacy Officer and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator at Senior Resources of West Michigan.



BY
KIM
JARCHOW

Vegan Pumpkin Banana Bread

Ingredients:

3 large ripe bananas	½ teaspoon baking soda
¼ cup pumpkin puree	1 teaspoon Pumpkin Pie spice
¼ cup Maple syrup	½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons Extra Virgin olive oil	½ cup brown sugar
1½ teaspoons Vanilla extract	½ teaspoon salt
1 cup oat flour (can substitute with all-purpose flour but flavor will not be as good)	½ cup walnuts (or chocolate chips, or pecans) for garnishing top.

Directions: Preheat oven to 350°F.

Use a bread loaf pan and grease or line with parchment paper.

In a large mixing bowl, mash the bananas with a fork or hand mixer into a smooth mixture. It's OK to have some banana chunks still left in the mixture.

Add the pumpkin, maple syrup, oil, and vanilla extract. Mix well.

Using a separate bowl mix the flour and baking soda with the spices and dry ingredients.

Stir the dry mixture into the wet and mix well with utensil or hand mixer.

Pour the batter into a bread loaf pan. Sprinkle walnuts on top. Bake for 50-60 minutes, checking for firmness with a toothpick that comes out clean.

Let cool on a cooling rack and serve.

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Kim Jarchow is a Plant Based Nutritionist as well as a Licensed Health Insurance Agent with HealthMarkets. Her passion is plant-based education. She helps others learn how healthy whole foods can be used as nutrition therapy (food as medicine). Kim created My Rooted Nutrition with the hopes of intentionally sharing just how simple and nutritious eating a whole food plant rich diet can be. She also presents at cancer retreats on nutrition as well as hosting community cooking classes for learning plant-based cooking.

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BY
CYNTHIA
HOGG

My 'Grand' Perspectives Clara-Fying Priorities

"Only a child sees things with perfect clarity, because it hasn't developed the filters which prevent us from seeing all the things we don't expect to see." Douglas Adams

At first, this might seem a perplexing observation. Surely children don't see things with perfect clarity. They are often ignorant about the world and confused about how things actually work. I think of my granddaughter, Margaret, who informed her mother that bunnies are such good helpers. "What do you mean?" asked her mother. "Well, they gather all the carrots and take them to the store where we can buy them." Certainly she was not seeing the world with perfect clarity!

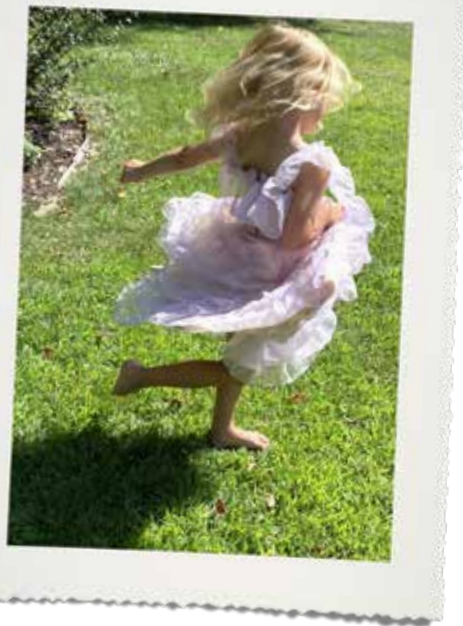
But I suspect Adams may be thinking more about clarity in terms of priorities, and what is most important in life.

A sense of wonder, seemingly something children are born with, is a marvelous thing. Neil Armstrong said, "Mystery creates wonder and wonder is the basis of our wanting to understand." Albert Einstein voiced a similar thought: "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand in rapt awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed."

The world is a mysterious place to children. That's why they ask so many questions, and wonder, and can't be hurried. Mindfulness is all the rage now but children naturally live in the moment, and these moments, especially in very young children, are full of beauty and wonder, mystery and magic.

The playwright Tom Stoddard has said, "If you carry your childhood with you, you never become older." Sounds so simple and inviting but how does one do that practically? My childhood often seems so very far away, dim and distant, its memories and insights lost beneath the weight of adult cares and responsibilities.

It is my six-year-old granddaughter, Clara, who so often clarifies my priorities with her child-like wisdom. Once, when called for dinner, she looked at us in surprise. "I can't come in to dinner right now. I have to draw in the dirt with this stick. I have to look up at the blue sky. I have to twirl in the sunshine."



Under the circumstances, how could we make this child come in for something as mundane as dinner? We couldn't.

Another time her father was lugging a load of laundry upstairs and she ran up and asked if she could follow him. "Well, Clara," he said, "I'm not doing anything fun." She looked at him, her eyes wide. "But Papa, I'm fun!" She was right. Any boring task just needed a dose of Clara added and it would become fun. Silly Papa.

One of my favorite Clara memories happened when my husband and I brought her along for an overnight visit in another city. (Clara loves staying in hotels.) There was a bit of a line at the front desk so while my husband waited to check us in, I told Clara we could sit in the big overstuffed chair in the corner of the lobby. We had just settled ourselves into the chair, all cozy, when she looked up at me and said, "Or we could dance." I thought, "Why not?" Not caring what others might think, we held hands and waltzed around the lobby until it was time to go down to our room. I will never forget the joy on her face.

Clara's surprising wisdom has been apparent from early on. Once I was babysitting when she had a messy diaper – accompanied by a bad diaper rash. I apologized in advance for what I knew was going to hurt. As I got to work, however, I heard a brave little laugh. At first I thought she was crying but as we went on, I could tell she was definitely laughing (albeit somewhat shakily.) I didn't ask her about it but when her parents got home, they confirmed that she had been doing that for a while. "She told us it doesn't hurt as much if she laughs instead of crying."

Wait, what? This child is only three years old and she's already figured that out? I think this bodes well for her future.

And just yesterday, I found her sitting on a hill and looking down at the road below. "What are you doing, Clara?" "Oh, I love to look at the cars that go by and wonder about all the people in them."

This holiday season, I am grateful for my little pixie of a granddaughter, who teaches me to slow down, wonder, and live mindfully in each beautiful moment.

Cynthia Hogg is a National Award-winning freelance writer who lives in Grand Rapids. She also tries to spend as much time as possible at her vacation home in Ludington, as she is a volunteer lighthouse keeper there and loves to stroll the beaches looking for rocks and sea glass. She treasures spending time with her 10 grandchildren and traveling, especially in combination. She is the creator of the blog www.skipgentravelguru.com and can be reached at cindacord@gmail.com.





BY
CHRISTINE
WISTROM

One of the things I like most about Michigan is that the people here are so caring and there are so many opportunities to get help when you need it. My sister moved back to this area after spending 40 years in the Minneapolis area and she was shocked by how many different services we have available to us as we age. That means help is close by when you need it.

Working with Disability Network Lakeshore allows me to see firsthand how quickly people can become overwhelmed when things start going wrong. We get a little older and find that things we once did with ease are beyond our ability to do at all now. Or we can do them, but it takes much, much longer to accomplish than it used to. The nice thing is that in Michigan we can ask for help and get it! There are a multitude of services to help people with disabilities and their families and friends. Employment services, peer support, information and referral, independent living skills training, accessibility information, transition services, and special programs for youths. And those are just from our organization! There are many, many more agencies and organizations available to help you navigate whatever rough waters you're going through.

When cleaning the house becomes too much, you can get a chore worker to come in once every week or two to help. Health issues causing you problems? Have an assessment by an organization like Senior Resources and they'll not only help you identify what it is you need, but they'll set you up with the service and then monitor that you're getting the help you need. We are truly blessed in this way!

Are you isolated and want company? There are Senior Centers where you can go for healthy meals, conversation, exercise, games and crafts and more. Are you having problems making ends meet and can't afford groceries? There are organizations ready to help. There are food pantries, counseling services, free health services, and so much more! Michigan is one state that takes care of its own!

Michigan is truly a wonderland of opportunities for those of us who live here. If you find yourself facing difficulties, call and talk it over with us or any of the other service providers in the area. Almost all of them provide information and referral and will make sure you're connected with the services you need. We're looking forward to hearing from you! Call Disability Network Lakeshore at 616-396-5326.

Chris has a degree in Gerontology and many years working as a Long-Term Care Ombudsman. As an Independent Living Specialist at Disability Network Lakeshore, she specializes in assistive technology, emergency preparedness planning, and service dog training.

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KEITH'S WORLD

BY
KEITH
SIPE

Old Army Buddies of the 1436th Engineers



Old Army Buddies, indeed, that's what we are. During the last few years, many of us veterans from the 1436th Engineer Company have been getting together for breakfast on Saturday mornings. This is a great time to get together with fellow soldiers who served their country for many years, when we are able to catch up on what we are doing today and to remember all those wonderful memories of the past. The Army National Guard is what we are. We are soldiers from the past as well as soldiers of the present.

Many of us not only served in the Army National Guard but have come from active duty in other branches. Like me. I served four years active duty with the U.S. Air Force. Others served in the Marines, Navy and Army, all wanting to continue to serve their country. I enjoyed my time in the Air Force and I wanted to continue serving in it. However, the nearest Air Force facility was in Battle Creek, and that was too far of a drive. A good friend of mine mentioned joining the Army National Guard, and so that is what I did. I served four years full time in the U.S. Air Force, from August 1968 to August 1972. Then I served 17 more years in the Army National Guard, September 1977 to the end of 1994, giving me a total of 21 years.

After the Air Force, I still had an interest in continuing serving in the military. The 1436th Engineers were in downtown Muskegon on Morris. The National Guard had a "try one year" program, where you could join for one year to see if you liked it. Joining the Army National Guards in Muskegon worked better for my family life and my schedule. Plus, there were other activities I was involved with. Joining the guards gave me the opportunity to make new friends...new lifelong friends. They turned out to be very special friends who are still in my life today.

One great thing about my job in the guards is that I was able to see everyone in the company each drill weekend. Being able to get to know everyone by name, always making new friends, made serving in the Army National Guards like an extension of my family. It didn't matter if you were Army, Marines, Navy or Air Force, we all came together for our country. Dedicated citizens and



soldiers wanting to continue serving in the military.

Serving my country is one of the better things I have done, and I am sure that many of my


comrades would say the same!

We all made wonderful lifelong friends we would have missed if we all hadn't joined the Army National Guard. These fellow soldiers are local friends, with the same mindset: "to serve our community and country".

In August of 2023, around 40 of us got together at Ruby Creek, where one of our friends lives, for a cookout with beef, pork, corn on the cob and many other dishes. We were together for an afternoon of reconnecting and sharing many stories from the past and, I'm sure, making new ones in the present.

We move a little slower now, for we all are "senior citizens." Some of us are lucky to move at all! But our minds are all in tip-top condition and ready to share the great times we had at a moment's notice. I'm sure this cookout will be an annual event of coming together again to share this great friendship we all have. These are wonderful people, soldiers, serving their state and country. Whether enlisted or commissioned, we are here to serve!


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



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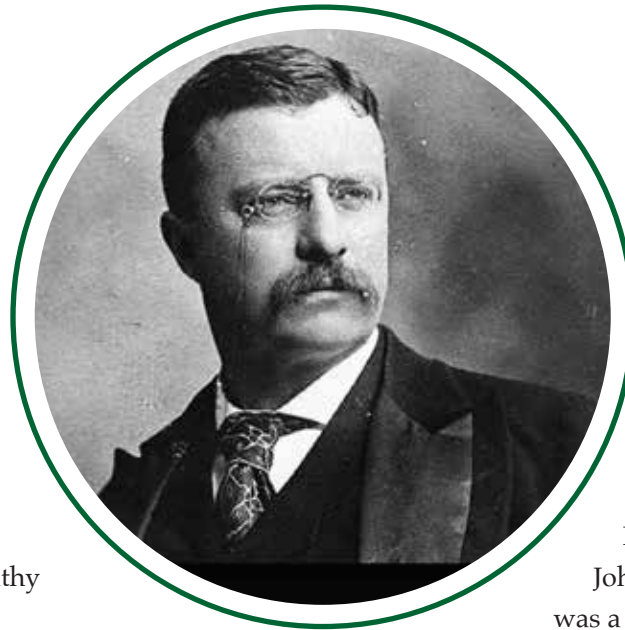
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BY
DICK
HOFFSTEDT

The Other



Roosevelt

When most people hear the name Roosevelt they think of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, but there was an earlier Roosevelt by the name of Theodore. He was at first a Republican and later headed up the Bull Moose Party. He was born in New York City in 1858 into a wealthy family.

During the Spanish-American war he was a lieutenant-colonel of the Rough Rider Regiment who charged up San Juan Hill in Cuba.

With the assassination of President McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, not quite 43, became the youngest president in our nation's history. He brought new vigor to the White House and led the American public toward progressive reforms and a strong foreign policy.

As president, "Teddy" Roosevelt held the ideal that the government should be the great arbiter of the conflicting economic forces in the U.S., especially between capital and labor, guaranteeing fairness. He emerged as a "trust buster" by forcing the dissolution of a great railroad combination in the Pacific Northwest.

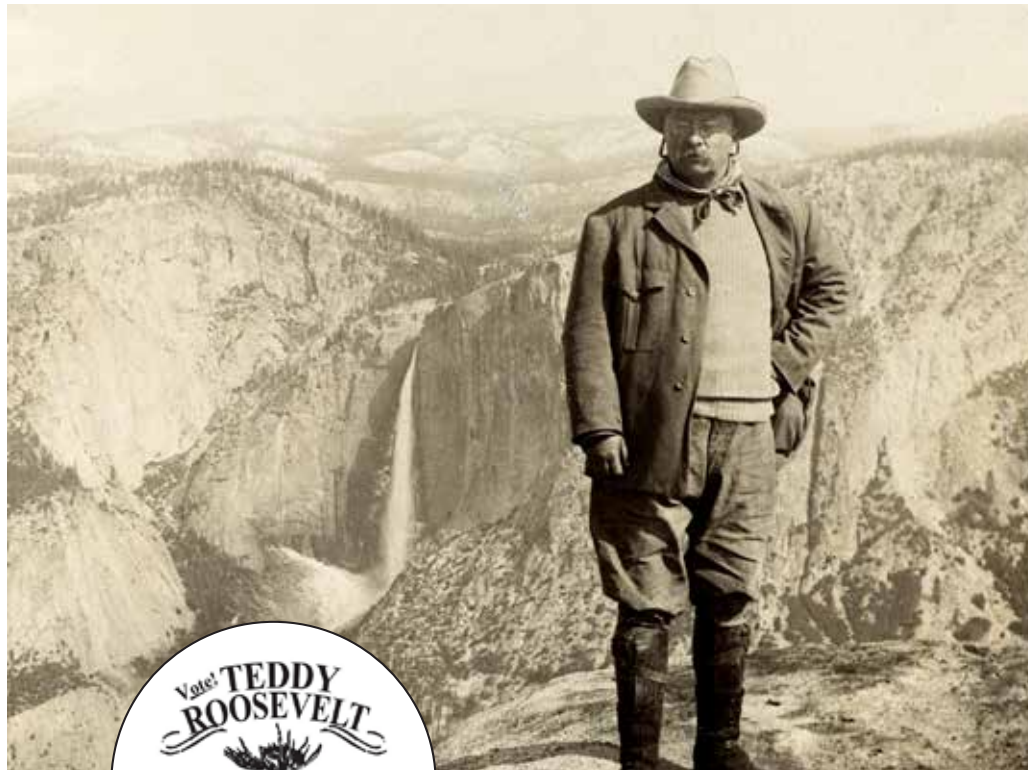
Some of Roosevelt's most effective achievements as president were in conservation. He added enormously to the national forests of the west, which were for public use.

After a four-year break after his presidency, Republican progressives met in 1912 in Chicago's Orchestra Hall to form a new national progressive party called the Bull Moose Party. It was a dissident political faction that nominated

Teddy Roosevelt as its candidate. It opposed the entrenched conservatism of the regular Republican Party, which was controlled by President William Howard Taft. Roosevelt's running mate was Hiram W. Johns, who was a reform governor from California. He was a U.S. Senator for 28 years and a progressive Republican.

Even though Roosevelt and Taft both lost to Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, the Progressive Party continued to function under new leadership of Robert La Follette of Wisconsin and Eugene Debs, a Socialist.

While campaigning in Milwaukee in 1912, Roosevelt was shot in the chest by a fanatic but recovered. He continued fighting for social issues until his death in 1919 at the age of 60.



Even though Theodore Roosevelt was a Progressive Republican and FDR a progressive Democrat, they were 5th cousins and followed similar paths to obtain social justice for most of the nation. FDR's wife, Eleanor, was Theodore's niece. Maybe there was something in their DNA that found them on the same path for social justice.

Today, in 1923, over 100 years ago since Theodore Roosevelt's time, the struggle for social justice still goes on.

Richard Hoffstedt was born to Swedish immigrants in 1934 and raised in Chicago. He is a U.S. Army veteran. He has been married

to Shirley for 68 years. Richard has six children, five grandchildren and five great grandchildren. He is an engineer by profession. His interests are music, reading, travel, riding his adult tricycle, Mark Twain, and John Steinbeck. Richard is a National Award-winning writer.

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Game Page
Answers
on
Page 39



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

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By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



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E ₁	Y ₄	S ₁	H ₄	P ₃	Z ₁₀	R ₁	Double Word Score RACK 3
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E ₁	U ₁	L ₁	S ₁	C ₃	B ₃	L ₁	RACK 4
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PAR SCORE 265-275
BEST SCORE 353
FIVE RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

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

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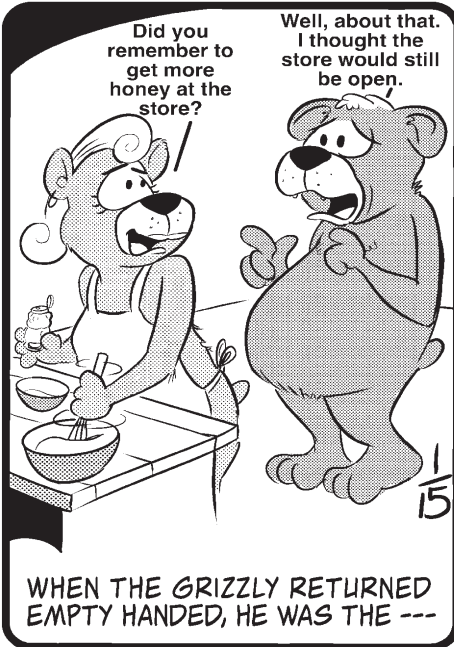
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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

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Dots and boxes is a simple game with a simple goal: whoever “owns” the most boxes at the end of the game wins. You and your opponent take turns drawing horizontal or vertical lines to connect the boxes. When someone draws a line that completes a box, you write your initial inside to win the box.



Cooking for One

BY
HAYDEN
DOBB

For many widows, one of the hardest parts about grieving is mealtime. The link between food and mourning is indisputable. In many cultures and traditions, a community brings dishes to those mourning in the weeks or months after a death. For a spouse, however, who is accustomed to sharing each meal with their partner, their grieving can continue for long after, renewed constantly by the routine of shopping, cooking, and eating. Grocery shopping and preparing meals alone can be painful and overwhelming, and often leads to widows skipping meals or eating in expensive or unhealthy ways.

There are helpful ways, however, of overcoming these challenges. It's important to remember to be patient with the learning process of grocery shopping and cooking for one. One of the crucial steps to take in cooking for one is to plan for the next grocery trip by deciding when you want to go and what you plan to buy. If your recipes contain meat, don't be afraid to ask for smaller portions at the meat counter. Consider what type of foods you like most, and don't be afraid to experiment with new recipes.

While cooking for one it is important to keep portions down so as not to waste extra food, it is also one of the easiest ways to improve your physical health. Cooking for one allows the person preparing the food to have greater control over the ingredients in the meals, enabling that person to cut down on additives and calories that are often found in takeout or fast food. Improving diet with simple, healthy home-cooked meals can also help lower risks for serious illness, sharpen the mind, boost energy, and improve managing depression, stress, and anxiety.

Hayden Dobb was born and raised in North Muskegon. She is a recent graduate from Grand Valley State University, who received her Bachelor of Science degree in Writing and English. She is currently the Communications Specialist at Harbor Hospice and Harbor Palliative Care. For more information visit www.HarborHospiceMI.org.

Cooking for One recipe: **Vegetable Stir Fry**

(This versatile recipe can be used as a vegetable side dish, or add protein to make it a main dish.)

Ingredients:

- **Butter/Margarine** – enough to coat the pan when melted.
- **Zucchini** – sliced into about ¼ inch rounds, as much or as little as you like.
- **Mushrooms** – fresh is best; sliced thin, as much or as little as you like
- **Onion** – freshly diced into small pieces; if you don't have fresh onion, use onion powder.
- **Tomatoes** – fresh is best; peeled to remove the skin. You can dip it into boiling water to make removing the skin easier. Run under cold water to handle without burning your fingers. You may also use canned, peeled tomatoes.
- **Salt, pepper, garlic powder** (can use peeled garlic if you like) and Accent. Season to your personal taste.

Instructions:

Melt the butter/margarine in a large sauté pan or a wok. Sauté the vegetables (except for the tomatoes) until soft. Add the tomatoes and heat through. May get "juicy" depending upon the tomatoes you use.

If you want this to be a main dish, add Rotisserie Chicken or leftover meat. You can also add cooked bowtie noodles or other pasta, with or without the chicken. Cook the pasta separately and add it to the mix after the tomatoes.

This recipe can be stored in the refrigerator and reheated as leftovers.

I have thought about adding fresh asparagus to the next batch just to see if it will work!

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Volunteer – Judy Koppenol

As a Foster Grandparent, Judy likes to think she and others in the Foster Grandparent program bring a special dose of wisdom to the classroom, to which the children are intuitively drawn.

“As grandparents, we portray a certain degree of respect, and so receive it from the kids.” In her role as a Senior Companion, Judy enjoys offering assistance and friendship to older folks in her community who need help with anything from shopping to transportation. “Some of them are just lonely for companionship,” she says. “Or they might need help with simple household tasks. So, we do them together. We might cook together, anything you might do as friends.”

Regarding both programs for which she’s worked, Judy feels it’s a blessing to be able to serve. “It just gives you such a rewarding feeling to know you’re helping those who need a helping hand.”

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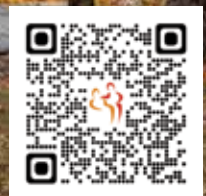
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BY
CLIF
MARTIN

The Leg Lamp

I asked Santa to bring me a leg lamp like the one in the *A Christmas Story* film. Son Mike put on his Santa hat and delivered the goods. Oh boy, a lamp in the form of a shapely female leg. The movie that first appeared in 1983 has become a holiday tradition. Later versions have been produced but we most love the one written and narrated by Jean Shepherd. It was originally one of Shepherd's late night radio monologues about growing up in Hammond, Indiana. It was also in his book, *In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash*.

The scene with young Ralphie's old man opening the box marked "fragile" with a prize he had won is precious. The old man was sure it must be Italian because it said "fra-gee-lay."

There was a big celebration of the film's 25th anniversary. But Hammond, Indiana, got short changed. Most of the outdoor scenes were filmed in Cleveland and some indoor scenes were shot in Canada. The radio that Ralphie listened to so he could decode Orphan Annie's secret messages was a 1940 Canadian Westinghouse model.

Shepherd, now remembered as "Shep," still has a huge following on the internet, with dedicated fans sharing the old radio shows that were recorded. Jerry Seinfeld said he learned comedy from Jean Shepherd.

Clif says he is feeling poetic and he will have something to say about it in his column for January/February. Stay tuned for that.



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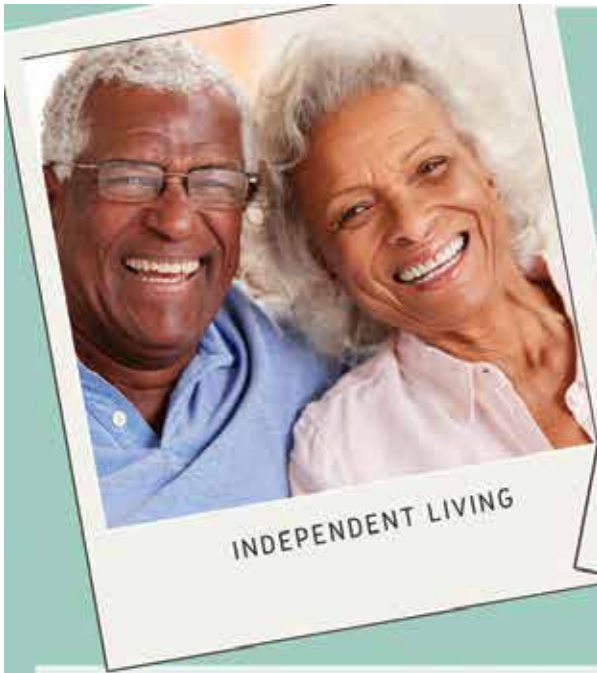
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BY
JERRY
MATTSON

PLATE CONNECTIONS

My wife and I were walking through the cars on display at the Wings of Mercy Car Show at the Muskegon airport in June.

She pointed to a Corvair. “I learned how to drive in a car like that, and it was a stick shift.”

As we walked nearer, I spotted a license plate on the rear bumper from 1964, the same year as the car. It was YA1402. I also saw a round “turbocharged” emblem on the rear deck. This was a top-of-the-line Monza model.

“I think I have a YA plate on the shop wall at home,” I said to Sue. “That one could be from the U.P.”

Walking by the car, I saw the show registration form on the dash. The owner was Roger Wiitanen. I figured that was a Finnish name.

“Is this yours?” I asked a man standing near the front of the car.

“Yes,” he said.

Sue told him her dad taught her to drive in the same style Corvair in California.

“I hear that a lot,” he said. “Many people learned to drive in one of these.”

“Do you know where your license plate is from?” I asked.

He said, “I have no idea.”

“I think I have one like it in my shop. Could it have come from the U.P.?”

“My parents used to live in Calumet, but I don’t really know.”

“Your last name seemed like it could be from the Copper Country.”

He said his parents moved to Muskegon before he was born.

Later, in my shop I saw plate YA1731. The two plates were 329 numbers apart.

Determining what county issued the plates was a bit of a challenge. Page 166 of a license plate collector book listed the Michigan plates as having the same first letters from 1957–1964. This was not true. Another well-known on-line site for car information had a detailed chart, also with mistakes.

With information printed on two different paper license plate sleeves (flat paper bags the plates came in) from 1957 and 1965 and a listing Roger found on Wikipedia, I found the YA plates 1962–1964 were issued in Schoolcraft County, where I grew up. For two guys in Muskegon to have 60-year-old-plates from the same county in the U.P. seemed remarkable.

Why would someone still have an old paper sleeve? It’s just another piece of auto memorabilia, but these were sometimes used as a way to meet girls. A guy I know kept a sleeve in the glove box. When he and his buddies spotted some girls riding around, they checked out the plate and then might ask, “Hey, are you girls from Cadillac?”

These days, if we look at plates at all, it’s trying to figure out the meaning of a personalized one.

Something else to watch for are new, black and white digital plates, legal in California, Arizona and Michigan. Ten other states are in the adoption process. The Reviver company in California has developed these battery or hard-wired plates. Connected to a phone, there are



many features available on these, including having the word STOLEN appear on the plate above the numbers if someone steals your car. They also have a monthly fee around \$25 at this time.

Someday all plates may be digital, and would never end up on a garage wall with a dead battery and a blank screen.

The metal license plate will join other familiar items lost to technology. BYEPL8S

Jerry has written about license plates before, but he is not a collector. Still, he does have 50 of them on the shop wall, the oldest from 1931.



Energy Vampires: Unplugging for a More Sustainable Future

BY
JEREMIAS
GAYTAN

WHAT ARE ENERGY VAMPIRES?

Energy vampires are electronic devices and appliances that use power from electrical outlets when turned off or on standby, according to Duke Energy. Some examples include chargers (laptops, phones, etc.), televisions, gaming consoles, microwaves and computers. While many of these devices have a standby or sleep mode designed for user convenience, this convenience comes with an environmental cost.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL COST

The energy use that energy vampires consume may seem minor but, according to the U.S. Department of Energy, energy vampires can account for around \$100-200 in yearly electricity costs in an average household. And the cumulative impact is substantial. This wasted electricity leads to higher bills and contributes to strain on the power grid. And the electricity used by energy vampires is often generated by fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas. These sources release greenhouse gases which degrade air quality. The action of simply unplugging unused devices and appliances can reduce environmental cost and offer benefits we do not often think about.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF UNPLUGGING ENERGY VAMPIRES?

REDUCING ENERGY USE

The most significant benefit of unplugging energy vampires is the reduction of energy use. By disconnecting electronic devices and appliances

from the power source, we can cut down unnecessary energy waste.

LOWERING ELECTRICITY BILLS

Unplugging energy vampires has a direct impact on household budgets. As electricity use decreases, so do the costs. Over time, these savings can add up and make a difference in monthly expenses. By taking control of energy use and disconnecting energy vampires, you can gain greater financial stability.

EXTENDING LIFESPAN OF DEVICES

Did you know that energy vampires eat away at the life expectancy of our electronic devices? Even in standby or sleep mode, continuous power supply can stress the device, leading to wear and tear. Unplugging these devices when not in use helps extend their lifespan, reducing the need for replacement and reducing energy use.

HELPING PROTECT MICHIGAN'S NATURAL RESOURCES

Unplugging energy vampires significantly contributes to preserving our natural resources for us and for future generations. By reducing overall energy demand, we aid in decreasing fossil fuel use for electricity generation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

CREATING MINDFUL CONSUMPTION HABITS

While unplugging energy vampires has many benefits, it also encourages a shift in behavior. As we become more aware of our energy use patterns, we are more likely to adopt other sustainable habits, such as using energy efficient appliances, opting for renewable energy sources, and embracing eco-friendly lifestyles.

CONCLUSION

Energy vampires may go unnoticed, but their cumulative impact on our environment is substantial. Unplugging these energy hungry

devices when not in use allows consumers to take control of their energy use, leading to reduced electricity bills, extended device lifespan, and a significant contribution to preserving our natural resources.

As we move toward a more sustainable future, every action counts, and unplugging energy vampires represents a simple yet powerful step in the right direction. By following mindful consumption habits and embracing sustainable practices, we can create a positive effect that benefits not only ourselves but also our environment. Let us all unplug from the energy vampire grid and pave the way for a greener, cleaner, and brighter future.

RESOLUTION

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Jeremias Gaytan has a journalism and technical communication degree from Ferris State University. He was born in Holland, MI, and raised in Shelby, MI. He works as a marketing coordinator for SEEL, LLC (Solutions for Energy Efficient Logistics). He has a passion for promoting energy efficiency throughout the great state of Michigan. Jeremias also enjoys working out, concerts, and spending time with friends and family.



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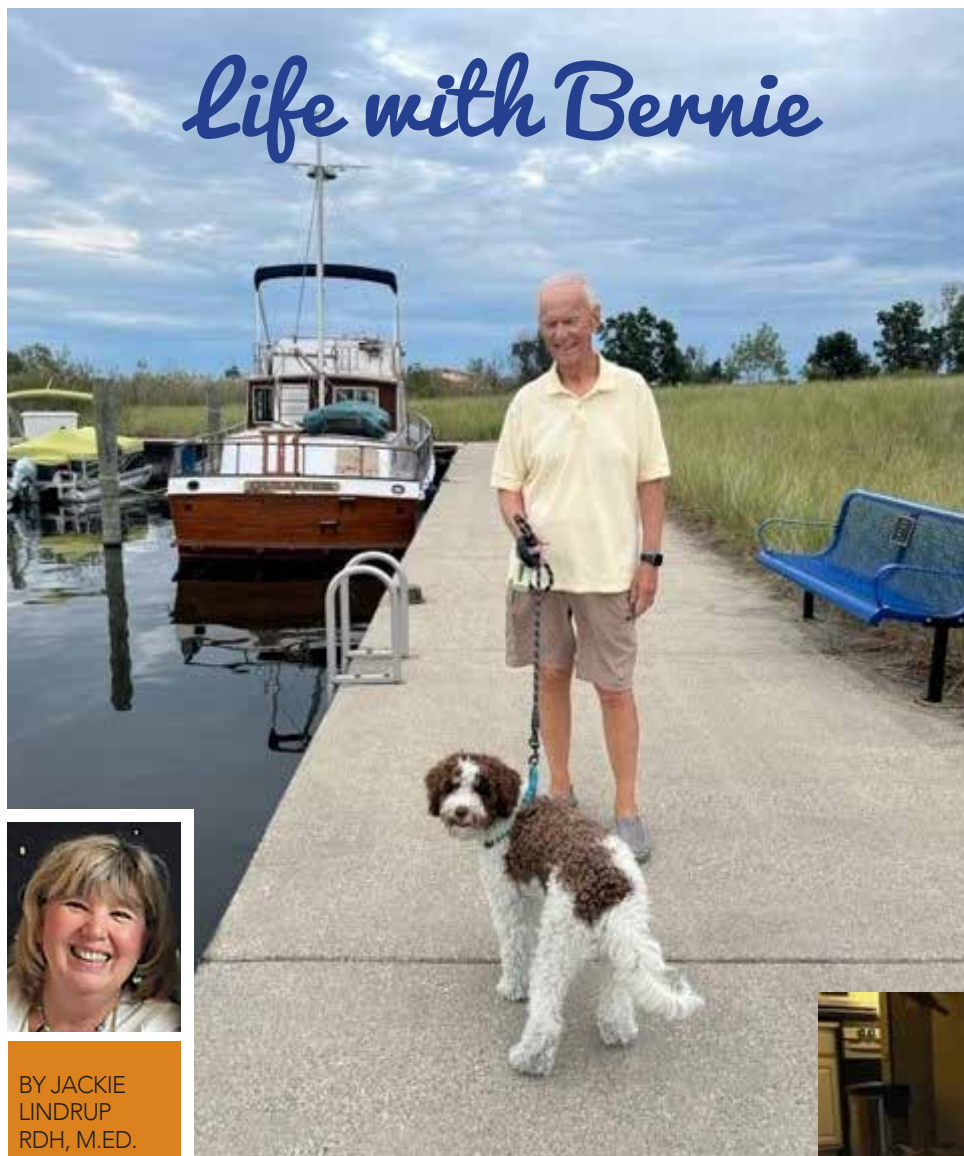
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Life with Bernie



BY JACKIE
LINDRUP
RDH, M.ED.

When Tom and I decided on the spur of the moment to get a dog, we were used to living alone. So you can think of this as a bit of coaching for those of you who are considering getting a dog. Tom and I had both raised dogs before, so we weren't beginners. Here are some of the things we have relearned or were new to us in our first six months of having Bernie our Bernedoodle, who is now 10 months old.

1. Having a dog is expensive. You will need a line item in your budget for dog expenditures. We first estimated it would cost \$100 a month after purchasing Bernie and having him neutered a few months later. After reviewing the costs of vet exams, shots, heartworm meds, flea and tick meds, dog food, toys, grooming and pet sitting, we are changing that to \$150.

2. Don't forget you have a dog when someone asks you to go away for the weekend. You need to find a good dog sitter who either comes to your home or who takes care of your pet in their home. We found this runs between \$30-40 per day.

3. You need to walk the dog every day. Besides being great exercise for us, this has been a great way to meet new friends! In my neighborhood every other person owns a dog, and have given us tips, extra dog gear, and offered play dates and walks. My across-the-street neighbor Darla has taken Bernie and me under her wing. Her dog Harold is a 90 lb. Golden Doodle, and Harold has taught Bernie many things. I had never socialized my other dogs by playing with another dog, so this was slightly terrifying to me initially. But Darla invited Bernie and me over to her house and we let the dogs wrestle and play. Every once in awhile she would correct Harold to not be so rough with the puppy, but mostly Harold taught Bernie what he would put up with and what he would not. We found a doggie day care in Lakeside where Bernie can go play with other dogs while the groomers work. He got a good report with "no incidents," and it's fun to know there's someplace we can take him for a morning or all day to play at a reasonable price (\$9.00 - \$18.00).

4. Miscellaneous fun things - Bernie needs to eat twice a day. He rests in his crate when we leave. He enjoys being where Tom and I are and will often position himself so he can keep an eye on both of us if we are in different rooms. Initially, we kept him upstairs in the kitchen with us using



a baby gate to block off the stairs to downstairs. Now he naturally stays upstairs, and we don't need the gate. We are still working on keeping him calm when we have company because he likes being in the middle of things. We are training him to lie down, shake, and stay. "Stay" is impossible so far. Hopefully as he gets older and we work harder on training him we can accomplish that. He sleeps in his crate in the living room with a black sheet over it when we go to bed, and he waits for us to wake up in the morning to let him out. Since I am the last one to get up, Bernie waits outside the bedroom door and when I open it, greets me with his ever-wagging tail and performs a really good Downward Facing Dog stretch like he is bowing down to greet me! It's a hilarious and fun way to start every day!



5. Bernie has had no accidents for several months and has come up with a really creative way of reminding us it's time to go outside. He stares at us intently and when he has our attention he walks backwards! When he does this we know it's time to clip on the leash and get outside! Bernie is trying to learn to stop at one loud BARK (which is supposedly meant to alert us to possible danger) and not get carried away barking his head off at every dog and person that walks by! As Tom is constantly reminding us, "We don't want a barky dog!!!"



Bernie has a very sweet habit of putting his head on your leg and looking up at you with his big brown eyes full of love and adoration. It's a very special moment and makes all the training and cost worthwhile!

Jackie Lindrup is a retired Registered Dental Hygienist, a transplant from E. Grand Rapids via New Orleans where all three of her children and their children were born and now live. She enjoys traveling the US and internationally with her husband Tom and they are planning a road trip with Bernie the Bernedoodle this winter! They are enjoying their new life as dog parents.

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BY
LOUISE
MATZ

Christmas Memories

Preface: I am a member of a family of six girls and loving and caring parents. My father worked outside the home and my mother worked inside the home, maybe harder and longer. There was not an abundance of money, but we had the essentials. Following are my Christmas memories at different ages. I'm third oldest of the six girls.

Age 4: Santa brought me a miniature washing machine for my doll clothes. I was allowed to plug it in all by myself!

Age 5: My oldest sister told me she saw Santa flying by out the window on Christmas Eve and I just missed him. I was so disappointed, but apparently he stopped at our house anyway.

Age 8: We had bubble lights on our tree. My sisters and I would sit around the tree, sing Christmas carols and guess which light would be the first to bubble.

Age 10: The family would all go to Midnight Mass. My dad was the choir director. The choir was a loft at the back of the church. We could sit up there but were sworn to good behavior. On Christmas we would behave, but Dad knew there were other times when we did not. Afterwards, we would go to the house of my Aunt Sophie and enjoy fabulous food and gifts, finally coming back home at 3:00-4:00 a.m. on Christmas Day.

Age 12: My mother wore a \$100 bill corsage all day Christmas Day, a gift from my dad. I wondered what she would buy herself with all that money! The next day she took me shopping and bought me a new winter coat. Her unselfishness astonished me. I had a lot to learn about parenthood.

Early on, the Christmas Eve gathering included a talent show. That tradition continues through the years. Anyone or a group, young or old, can present a talent. Talents can be simple or complicated. It can be a song, a joke or a game or funny story. When my father was alive, we could depend on him to play his violin. We have countless memories of some outstanding presentations.

Age 36: My husband Tom began playing Santa at the Christmas Eve gathering for our guests and our three young children. He was a big hit! The following year his brother was home from the service. When Santa arrived, his brother laughed so hard the tears were flowing. Tom was so meticulous about his costume, always worried that our kids might discover him.

I could go on and on, but my time is up. It's your time now. Take a few minutes to reflect. What Christmas memories are the first to pop up? Does it surprise you? Upon further reflection, do your favorites change? Does your reflection bring smiles and put you in that warm holiday mood?

Louise is a national award-winning writer. She has been writing for Senior Perspectives for over 15 years. She enjoys family time, reading, traveling, biking and golf. Pickleball and mahjonn have been added to the list since retirement. She and her husband enjoy bow hunting for deer in the Upper Peninsula, hunting turkeys, and fishing in the Florida Keys.





BY
HILLARY
HATCH -
PUBLIC
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BY
JANET
HASSELBRING

The Face of God

A Christmas wish granted. After fifty years apart, my parents will witness the homecoming of their son. They won't be there in person, but definitely, in spirit.

Fifty-seven years ago, in 1966, my brother, at nineteen, entered the military. After basic training, he was deployed to Viet Nam, where he served missions in Reconnaissance and Special Forces. My parents couldn't have known when they bade him farewell that the relationship with their youngest son would forever be altered by the horrors of war, "Where the brutal killing of innocents on both sides cannot be explained – soldiers dealt with the pain of their feelings, forced into extreme situations that have no obvious solutions and devastating lasting consequences." (from *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien, 1990)

My brother survived the jungles of Viet Nam, and another peacetime enlistment, but, after leaving the military, he broke off communication with his family.

Every Christmas, as my mother addressed her holiday cards, decorated the tree, wrapped presents, baked cookies, and gathered with her family around the table on Christmas Day, she and my father hoped and prayed they would hear from their son.

"God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains; it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." (C.S. Lewis)

In the memoir, *In the Garden: An Ordinary Woman; an Extraordinary Life*, I describe my mother's suffering, and how love for her son and a deep abiding faith and trust in God transformed her from an ordinary humble child of God into an

extraordinary Christ-like woman who embodied the Love that came down at Christmas. I saw God in the face of my mother.

At first, my parents believed if their son could be located, he would come home; however, it was not to be.

"How does a mother accept the unacceptable? How does she accept being separated from a beloved son, carried in her womb, and nursed at her breast? How many bottles would it take to hold the tears she sheds?" *

Broken and helpless, my parents threw themselves upon the mercies of their Lord. They never forsook their Jesus. In times of despair and darkness, they prayed for understanding and acceptance:

Ellen addresses her Christmas cards, setting aside a special one to put in her son's Christmas package.

'Ellen.' A shouting in her ear.

'My Lord.'

'Dearest Ellen.'

Sobbing, 'Lord, my son, alas, my son.'

'I know.'

'Please, Lord, if it is Your will, bring my son home! Her voice trails off in a wail of grief.

It is quiet for a time.

'It is written: ...this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'

'Your son? she murmurs, bewildered. "What do You mean, my Lord?'

A sudden revelation, like a lightning flash, breaks through her pain. 'Your beloved Son – Jesus, your Son sent at Christmas to die for me. Then, You know, Lord, how I feel?' Pain gushing forth. Sheer panic. 'But, but, I love him so! I cannot live without him!'

His voice calm, reassuring. 'Cling to that love, Ellen. Trust me. Remember, I love him too.'

A mere whisper. 'I will try. Help me, Lord.'

'I will never leave nor forsake you, dear one. Now, be strong in your faith. Finish your task.' He was gone."*

"To live is to suffer," is one of Buddha's Noble Truths. God never promises our journey will be

smooth and free of pain; however, He promises to walk with us in the pain. Scripture teaches that affliction is a necessary step in our complete development as a child of God. Great lives bear out this truth.

God says, "If you suffer, I'll give you grace to go forward." (Billy Graham)

Over time, my parents came to respect their son's decision. They prayed for his well-being; for peace after the trauma of war; for spiritual growth. They learned to love without needing to be loved in return - the Love that came down at Christmas.

"O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love." (St. Francis of Assisi)

Postscript: This summer, my brother contacted our family, and this fall, he's coming home to the farm where he grew up.

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psalm 30:5)

Christmas 2023. Joy to the World

Janet Hasselbring. **Note from Janet:** "Ellen's conversations with her Lord, during the defining moments of her life, are sprinkled throughout the memoir to show that prayer changes things – its power transforms despair into hope and suffering into spiritual growth."

*All starred quotes are from *In the Garden*.

Janet lives in west MI with her husband, Don, and Welsh terrier, Snack. Jan drags herself off the tennis and pickleball courts occasionally to write. Her writings include Tales from Pelican Cove, a series of books featuring wild/shorebirds from FL and beyond, Country Dairy, which describes life on her family farm, in west MI, in the 1930's, when her parents lived and worked on the land, and Tweets, A Twitter Feed of Short Stories and Articles. She is a multiple NAMPA winner. Her piano gets lonely because she chooses to whack fuzzy yellow balls and dink pickleballs instead of tickling its ivories.



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eligibility requirements.





DIABETES



BY
RICK GRICE
PHARM.D

What do you need to know?

We have all heard about diabetes and most likely know someone who is affected by it. So, what is it? There are 2 types of diabetes out there. Type 1 diabetes is when your pancreas produces little to no insulin, leading to increased blood glucose. This is typically diagnosed in adolescence, and people will manage it for the rest of their life. Type 2 diabetes is when either your body is insulin resistant, or you no longer produce enough insulin. This is typically diagnosed as we get older. As seniors, we tend to become more susceptible to developing Type 2 diabetes. so this is where we will focus our attention.

What are the risks or concerns with developing Type 2 diabetes? When left untreated diabetes can lead to heart complications, kidney disease, vision loss, and much more. These are diseases that take time to develop and do not occur overnight. That is why it is important to be proactive with preventing diabetes and taking the correct steps if you are already at risk. Now you are asking, "How do I know if I'm at risk?" Risk factors for diabetes are being overweight, 45 years of age or older, having a direct relative (parent or sibling) who has/had type 2 diabetes, being physically active fewer than three days per week, and having ever had gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy). Also, some ethnicities are at higher risk than others. Now, if you fall into any of these categories it doesn't guarantee that you will develop diabetes, but it may be a good idea to make sure you are doing what you can to stay healthy.

The best way to curb your risk of diabetes is through lifestyle change. I'm sure you have all heard it before from your doctors about diet and exercise. Sorry to say they are not wrong. Diet and exercise are the very best ways to stave off not only diabetes, but other diseases associated with diabetes. Exercising can make a huge impact on your health. The recommended goal for exercise is 150 minutes a week. Understanding that this does not have to be accomplished right away, you can start at what you are comfortable with and work your way up. This can include a walk up and down the hallway of your building, walking to your mailbox and back, whatever you are comfortable with. If you do have limitations, speak with your doctor about what might be an appropriate starting point for you.

Next, having a healthy diet can improve your overall health, but along with exercise it can also improve your mood. Having a healthy diet is key to preventing diabetes, because diabetes occurs when your body can't process sugars properly. Monitoring your sugar intake is important. There are countless options out there for diets and it can be very daunting when trying to decide which one is best for you. The best way to get started is to either remove something simple or add something simple to your diet. For example, maybe eliminate that sweet sugary dessert after dinner and substitute a sweet and healthy fruit. Or experiment with new foods by adding a new vegetable to your menu. It doesn't always have to be extreme, but getting started is the most important aspect of changing to a healthy lifestyle.

Diabetes can be a bit intimidating and complicated but being open and honest with your doctor or pharmacist about your health goals, concerns, and current situation can only improve your care and your health.

This information is not intended to treat, cure, or diagnose your condition. Consult with your doctor or pharmacist before using any new medication or supplement.

Rick Grice is the District Pharmacy Manager with HomeTown Pharmacy. Hometownpharmacy.com

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HOLIDAY MEAL

Thursday, December 14th, 2023

AgeWell Services of West Michigan, along with DTE Energy Foundation, Senior Resources, C.A.L.L 211, and the Muskegon County Senior Millage, invites seniors 60 years and older to a special holiday meal.

Join us at one of our 8 meal site locations throughout Muskegon and Ottawa counties. To find a location nearest you visit agewellservices.org or call 211 via landline or 231-733-1155 (Monday - Friday 9 am - 4 pm).

Reservations are required. Space is limited.
Please call to reserve your seat between November 13th - 30th.








Donations are encouraged to help provide this special meal to more people.





BY
NANCY
ARMITAGE

I recently celebrated a milestone birthday and in preparation for a special dinner with friends I treated myself to a manicure/pedicure. My appointment was with the owner of the salon, a warm and lovely twenty-nine-year-old woman who, prompted by my endless questions, told her amazing story.

We were talking about traveling and I was sharing plans for an upcoming vacation. Lin, the young woman, mused, “I want to travel...I have to wait five years and concentrate on my business here.” I was impressed by her resolve. So often I hear people generalize that young people don’t have the tenacity or patience to work hard toward something, but Lin had a plan and she was going to stick to it.

She told me she was from Burma. When she was four years old her mother divorced their father and went to America alone to “create a better life for her and her older sister.” Although awarded custody, her father really didn’t want much to do with the girls, and his sister, their aunt, raised them.

Some years later her sister left Burma to join the mother and Lin remained until she was thirteen. At thirteen, she was sent to live in Thailand for a year in preparation for a final emigration to America. I am uncertain who she lived with during this year, but her story reminded me of my own grandmother who left Poland at age twelve to emigrate to the United States. She had only a contact’s name in her pocket. I can’t imagine the journey was any less scary in the 21st century for a teenager than in the early 1900s.

By the time Lin finally reached Milwaukee, her mother had started an Asian grocery store that was thriving in a Milwaukee suburb. Lin was enrolled in public high school. She could read and write English, but not being able to speak the language she found herself the brunt of jokes and bullying. One day she came home and complained about the abusive treatment and her mother disciplined her. “I didn’t work this hard for you to complain. Don’t ever complain again.” And Lin never did. In fact, despite this occurrence, she professed her profound love for her mother and vowed to care for her for the rest of her life.



At twenty-six, Lin’s mother gave her the money to open her salon. It is on a prominent crosstown street in Milwaukee with an impeccably decorated interior, six chairs and six manicure tables. She opens daily and on this day there was another employee working. When asked if she had plans for the week-end, Lin said she worked six days a week and on her only day off (Monday) she preferred to spend her time with her designer puppy. A former boyfriend who acted untrustworthily had turned her off to love’s pursuit and she was most content working on her inner self, reading, listening to podcasts and meditating. She emphasized she was working on the “art of detachment,” helpful in not taking anything personally. I then asked her if she thought anything was possible in America and she adamantly agreed. But, she cautioned, one had to work hard. Her sister had found her own path helping other Burmese immigrants with their adjustment into their new country.

I asked Lin if she had ever considered returning to her high school to relay her story to the students. When she timidly replied she would be nervous addressing the student body, I quipped the age-old advice of just imagining everyone in the audience naked and that would assuage her fears. Lin laughed boldly and agreed that this technique would indeed take some of the pressure off. We talked of other things, but later in our conversation Lin brought up this subject again. I briefly encouraged her to talk to the administration, and then my nails were dry. I told Lin how much I admired her and hoped her business would continue to thrive. I also told her I wanted to tell her story because it was so positive in a day and age where there was so much pessimism and negativity. Indeed, it appears the American dream is still alive if you’re willing to look for it and work at it.

Nancy is a full-time artist who lives on White Lake with her partner, Dale and their dog, Dino. A life-long learner, she enjoys working in her art studio, reading, playing music, walking in nature and spending time with close friends and family. She is the Director of SPARK!, a free social program for those living with memory loss and their care partners. She can be reached at nancy.armitage@gmail.com, or [@nancy.armitage](https://www.instagram.com/nancy.armitage)



How to... Enjoy your poinsettia all year long!

Surprise: Poinsettias can flourish long after you've put away your Christmas decorations!

Winter Care:

1. Place in direct sunlight. Poinsettias don't like drafts or high heat, so avoid furnace vents and fireplaces. Water daily.

2. Once foliage starts to fade, place in a cool, sunny spot. Reduce watering to once a week to allow plant to rest and recuperate, says botanist Alan Stevens at Kansas State University

Spring Care:

1. Stimulate new growth in early April by cutting back the stems to five to eight inches from the soil. Water when the soil feels dry.

2. Once new growth appears, set in a bright, cool spot and water daily.

Summer Care:

1. Transfer poinsettia in a large pot in a sunny location or plant directly in your garden.

2. Trim plant into a compact, round shape and feed it an all purpose houseplant fertilizer every two to three weeks.

For Christmas blooms...

Beginning in October, cover the plant with a black plastic bag at night; remove it each morning. Just after Thanksgiving, move the plant to a bright spot and stop covering it at night.



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ANSWERS FOR GAMES ON PAGES 18 & 19

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

SCRABBLE G R A M S SOLUTION

U ₁	N ₁	H ₄	A ₁	S ₁	T ₁	Y ₄	RACK 1 =	<u>63</u>
M ₃	I ₁	D ₂	Y ₄	E ₁	A ₁	R ₁	RACK 2 =	<u>69</u>
Z ₁₀	E ₁	P ₃	H ₄	Y ₄	R ₁	S ₁	RACK 3 =	<u>98</u>
S ₁	U ₁	B ₃	C ₃	E ₁	L ₁	L ₁	RACK 4 =	<u>61</u>
T ₁	W ₄	O ₁	S ₁	O ₁	M ₃	E ₁	RACK 5 =	<u>62</u>
PAR SCORE 265-275							TOTAL	353

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Answers - Boggle Game:
UTAH OHIO IOWA IDAHO
MAINE NEVADA HAWAII

Answers - Jumble:
GABBY STOOD WETTER INFANT
When the grizzly returned empty handed,
he was the – "BEAR" OF BAD NEWS



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