

April 2022

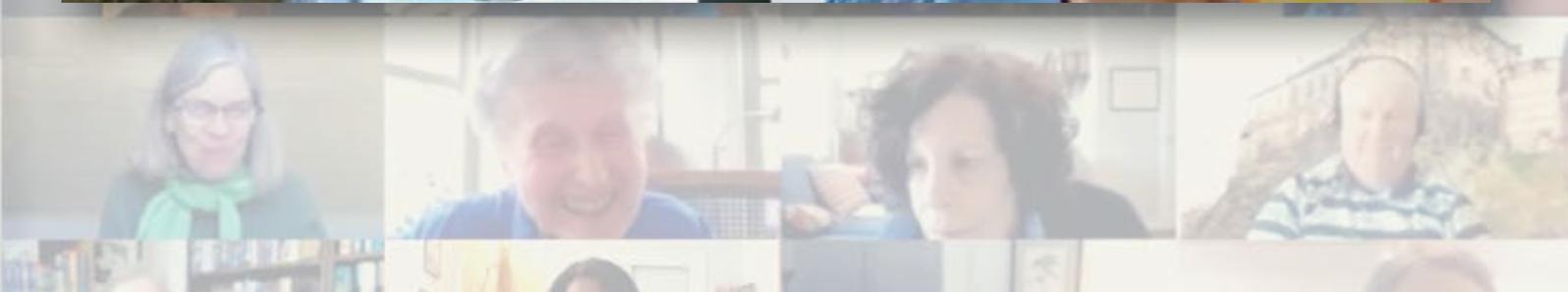
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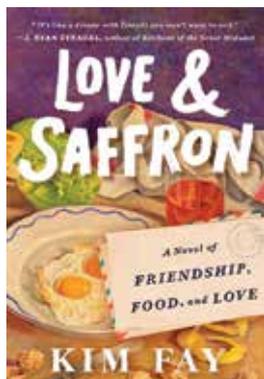
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April 2022 • Vol. 31, No. 4
Founded 1992 as *Senior Scene News*
ISSN Library of Congress
#1551-4366

A monthly publication from:
TBT Multimedia, LLC
P.O. Box 19510
Shreveport, LA 71149
(318) 636-5510
www.TheBestOfTimesNews.com

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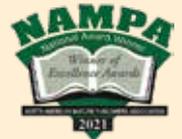
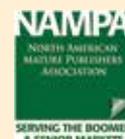
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Like millions of older Americans, I struggle with mobility. For years, I watched my quality of life slip away, as I was forced to stay home while friends and family took part in activities I'd once enjoyed. I thought I'd made some progress when I got a mobility scooter, but then I realized how hard it was to transport. Taking it apart and putting it back together was like doing a jigsaw puzzle. Once I had it disassembled, I had to try to put all of the pieces in the trunk of a car, go to wherever I was going, and repeat the process in reverse. Travel scooters were easier to transport, but they were uncomfortable and scary to drive, I always felt like I was ready to tip over. Then I found the So Lite™ Scooter. Now there's nothing that can hold me back.

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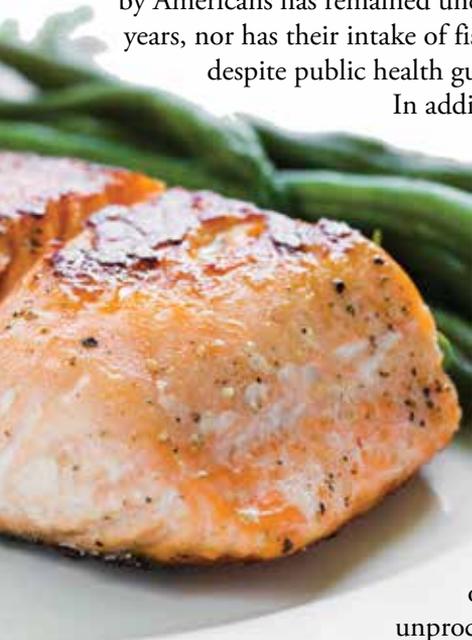
Stat!

Medical News & Info

Americans Eat Too Much Processed Meat and Too Little Fish

A new study in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* found that the amount of processed meat consumed by Americans has remained unchanged in the past 18 years, nor has their intake of fish/shellfish increased, despite public health guidelines to the contrary.

In addition, one quarter of US adults are still eating more unprocessed red meat than the recommended level, and less than 15% meet the guidelines for fish/shellfish consumption. On a positive note, Americans are eating less beef and more chicken than they did 18 years ago, and in fact, for the first time, consumption of poultry exceeds that of unprocessed red meat.



Giving Social Support to Others May Boost Your Health

When it comes to your health, being willing to give social support to your spouse, friends and family may be just as important as receiving assistance, a new study suggests. While researchers have long thought that receiving social support from others is a key to health, results from studies have shown mixed results. So researchers from The Ohio State University decided to see if giving support may also play an important role in health. They found that on one important measure of health – chronic inflammation – indicators of positive social relationships were associated with lower inflammation only among people who said they were available to provide social support to family and friends. In other words, having friends to lean on may not help your health unless you also say that you're available to help them when they need it.



Caregivers of People with Dementia Are Losing Sleep

Caregivers of people with dementia lose between 2.5 to 3.5 hours of sleep weekly due to difficulty falling asleep and staying asleep - a negative for themselves and potentially for those who receive their care, Baylor University researchers say. Losing 3.5 hours of sleep per week does not seem much, but caregivers often experience accumulation of sleep loss over years. Losing 3.5 hours of sleep weekly on top of all the stress, grief and sadness can have a really strong impact on caregivers' cognition and mental and physical health. But the good news is that simple, low-cost interventions can improve caregivers' sleep and functioning. Notably better sleep was observed in caregivers after such simple behaviors as getting more morning sunlight, establishing a regular and relaxing bedtime routine and taking part in moderate physical exercise.



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Enjoy the Pleasures of A River Cruise

By Victor Block



American Cruise Lines American Constellation (Alaska)

One evening a few years ago I was savoring a four-course gourmet dinner accompanied by wines that had been produced nearby.

More recently, I heard two lectures by experts about various issues, some controversial, in several Eastern European countries.

The settings for these experiences could have been a five-star hotel or resort. Instead, they took place on small ships plying rivers and canals.

Some ocean-going ships have been canceling sailings and dealing with an outbreak of coronavirus among passengers and crew. But there are welcome alternatives for frustrated mariners to enjoy a different way to play sailor and enhance their water-borne travel.

Inland waterways may lack some appeals for those who prefer the open sea, but they more than make them up in other attributes. These include panoramic views of magnificent scenery, opportunities to explore the history and cultures of countries through which boats pass, and on-board activities that often relate to those places.

While usually referred to as river cruises, they can traverse bays, lakes, fiords and canals. That delicious dinner which I enjoyed was served aboard a French Country Waterways barge moving leisurely on canals that run through some of France's most picturesque areas.

Their vessels give new meaning to the word "barge." They offer the gracious ambience of a fine country inn, in an atmosphere of informal elegance. Meals often feature fresh ingredients purchased on land, including breakfast bread and croissants still bakery warm. (For more information visit fcwl.com.)

The philosophy of Grand Circle Cruise Line is summed in its "Learning and Discovery" motto. That often means delving into topics like the refugee situation in the four Eastern European countries through which I was traveling by river boat.

There's also time for fun and games, what I call "down home" entertainment that contrasts with the large, flashy reviews common on massive ocean-going vessels. Our crew members competed in a hilarious karaoke contest, and presented a badly butchered performance of the Swan Lake ballet. That prompted the boat's captain to plead with passengers, in jest, "Remember, what happens on the ship stays on the ship."

Grand Circle's offerings include sailings along the Seine River through France, a four-country Romantic Blue Danube jaunt and a Grand European Cruise which covers eight countries over 29 days. (gct.com)

Avalon Waterways explores some of the same European ter-



Grand Circle Cruise ship on the Seine

ritory, offering off-boat land excursions ranging from classes in French cooking and Dutch painting to meeting an Austrian count in his castle.

Its Storyteller Series brings along well-known authors who discuss their books. The Suite Ships, which sail in Europe and Southeast Asia, feature floor-to-ceiling windows that provide spectacular views of the passing scenery. (avalonwaterways.com)

The scenery is different for passengers aboard a Fred Olsen boat exploring the fjords of Norway. They offer a wonderland of towering mountains, deep valleys and mighty waterfalls interspersed with charming villages. Norway's Arctic north is an area of remote islands and unspoiled wilderness which at times is blanketed by the awe-inspiring Northern Lights. (fredolsencruises.com)

On the other side of the planet, Lindblad Cruises takes passengers along rivers that pass through Cambodia and Vietnam. They see palaces, temples and floating villages. Other Lindblad boats follow the Nile and Amazon Rivers. (lindblad-cruises.com)

Of course, it's not necessary to leave the United States in order to enjoy the pleasures of vessels that ply non-ocean waters. This year, American Cruise Lines has 15 small ships and riverboats operating in 31 states.

Nine itineraries follow the Mississippi, Ohio and Cumberland Rivers between New Orleans and Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota. Along the way, passengers visit Civil War battlefields, enjoy the beat of traditional American music in Memphis and Nashville, and relive the stories of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn where Mark Twain created them in Hannibal, Missouri. (americancruiselines.com)

From gourmet meals to the sounds of music, palaces to floating villages small ship cruises offer a surprisingly diverse choice of places to explore, cultures to experience and other attractions to enjoy. At this time, they may provide a welcome alternative for those who wish to set foot on a boat deck other than that of a mega-size ocean-going vessel.

Because of their lower passenger capacity and Coronavirus safety procedures, small ships generally are less likely to face the challenges impacting some ocean vessels. Even so, check in advance to make sure the trip you'd like to take is a go.



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Snapshot SLEUTH

Do you recognize any of the people or recall anything about the events in these photographs?

The Best of Times has partnered with Northwest Louisiana Archives at LSU to identify individuals and events in their collections. If you can help, please email Tina at editor.calligas@gmail.com or Laura at laura.mcmore@lsus.edu.



All of these photos are from the Lawrence Lea collection.

- Left - Shreveport-Bossier Vocational Technical Center (VOTECH) nursing program staff at the time of graduation for 173 new nurses, February 1973.
- Below left - Group of nurses capped at Shreveport-Bossier VOTECH, August 1973.
- Below - Man with painting, March 1974.





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Cyberstalking: New Technology Brings New Problems

Cellphones and computers have changed the world. I remember when you used to have to call someone from the telephone in the house. Answering machines came along and you could tell the person to just leave a message. Later, we got caller identification and could tell who was calling. Now, for all those persons who grew up reading *Dick Tracy*, we can talk to a person on the watch we are wearing. How far we have come with technology! But with new technology comes new problems.

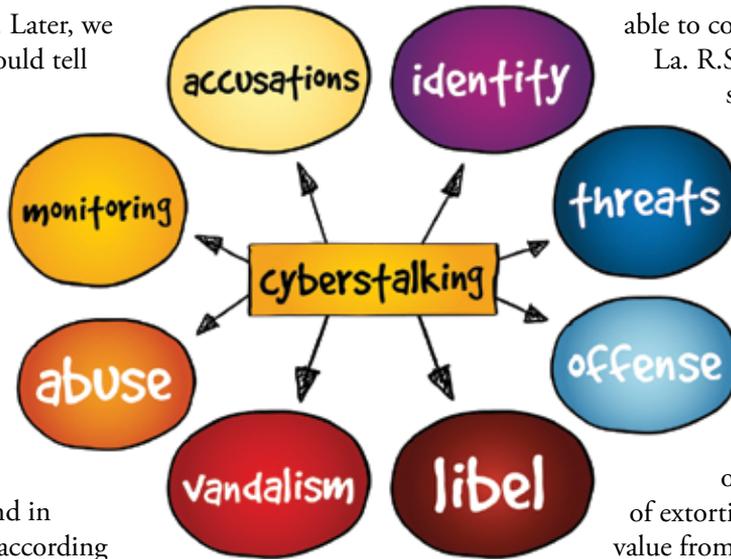
One of the crimes that I have seen being a problem in the past few years is Cyberstalking. Cyberstalking is found in La. R.S. 40.3. Cyberstalking, according to the statute, covers any "electronic mail" which means "the transmission of information or communication by the use of the Internet, a computer, a facsimile machine, a pager, a cellular telephone, a video recorder, or

other electronic means sent to a person identified by a unique address or address number and received by that person". The definition for this statute leaves open for any device that may be invented in the future intended to be able to communicate with persons.

La. R.S. 40.3(B) states that cyberstalking is action of any person to accomplish any of the following:

- (1) Use in electronic mail or electronic communication of any words or language threatening to inflict bodily harm to any person or to such person's child, sibling, spouse, or dependent, or physical injury to the property of any person, or for the purposes of extorting money or other things of value from any person.

- (2) Electronically mail or electronically communicate to another repeatedly, whether or not conversation ensues, for the purpose of threatening, terrifying, or harassing any person.



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(3) Electronically mail or electronically communicate to another and to knowingly make any false statement concerning death, injury, illness, disfigurement, indecent conduct, or criminal conduct of the person electronically mailed or of any member of the person's family or household with the intent to threaten, terrify, or harass.

(4) Knowingly permit an electronic communication device under the person's control to be used for the taking of an action in Paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of this Subsection.

If a person is convicted of Cyberstalking, the penalty can range from fines and court costs and/or up to a year in jail for a first offense to a period of time in jail from two to five years and/or fines and court costs up to \$5000. This statute carries some fairly hefty penalties and can cause the person convicted of this charge to have a felony on their record.

Most people think that numbers are untraceable. Technology has now

evolved where all numbers can be traced. Cellphones now make a record of every number and these numbers can be accessed by law enforcement officers. People that commit Cyberstalking usually think they can buy a disposable phone and not be traced. Technology is moving forward in such a manner that if the case is serious enough, the phone can be traced to the user.

As technology moves forward, our legislature will pass more laws that deal with technology. Just as we used to see Dick Tracy in the comics and think that technology would be impossible, technology evolves and we will have to adapt to keep up with the changes. It will be interesting to see what laws will be passed in the future to deal with



technology and crimes committed by its use.

Judge Jeff Cox is judge of the Louisiana Circuit Court of Appeal for the Second Circuit.

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The 500 Pound Man Who Needed an Ambulance

They were warned. The 911 dispatcher had been very clear: the patient weighed 500 pounds.

The fire department got there first and found the patient lying on a mattress on the floor. The ambulance arrived a few minutes later. The EMTs examined the patient and decided that he needed to go to the hospital, but the patient couldn't get himself up off the mattress. The EMTs and the firemen unsuccessfully tried to help. So one of the EMTs went out to the ambulance and got the spine board, which is a kind of stretcher. Five of the firemen and ambulance crew then stood on the mattress and got the spine board under the patient.

Then they started to lift. The spine board started to flex and one of the paramedics lost his grip and one of the firemen "was required to bear more weight to hold the spine board steady, thereby injuring his right shoulder."

You can probably guess what the injured fireman did next: he sued. But you probably won't be able to guess who he sued. No, not the fat guy. Wouldn't that have been outrageous! The fireman sued the ambulance company.

Why them? The fireman told the Judge in this real-life Louisiana case that all of this had happened in south Louisiana,

home of some of the most overweight people in the world. It shouldn't have been a surprise that an ambulance crew would regularly need to lift morbidly obese patients. And that's why the ambulance should have been equipped with a special type of spine board that has been specifically designed for the obese. It's called a ManSAC; it's wider than a regular spine board and has more handles so that it "equally distributes the weight to all the different points so that you could use it with

multiple people so that no one individual is specifically trying to lift the patient in an awkward way." But the ambulance company didn't own a single one.

On the other hand, the ambulance company told the Judge that the injured fireman had volunteered to help the ambulance crew move the patient and he had voiced no complaints "about

the method of lifting the patient from the mattress." Furthermore, argued the ambulance company, being a fireman is a dangerous job that involves lots of heavy lifting. When you take the job, you take the risk that you could get hurt.

In the end, the jury found that both the ambulance company and the fireman were equally to blame.

Meanwhile, in a north Louisiana case, the police were called out to a motel because of a Peeping Tom. Two officers arrived



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at the hotel and found a man crouched down looking into a window with his pants open. The officers tried to arrest the man, but he fought back and broke one of the policeman's fingers. The injured police officer later sued the Peeping Tom for his injury. The Peeping Tom, much like the ambulance company, told the Judge that the policeman shouldn't be able to sue because being in law enforcement is a dangerous job. When you take the job, you take the risk that you could get hurt. The Judge agreed that anyone hired as a police officer should "expect to arrest criminals as part of his duties and could expect a criminal to resist arrest." But the Judge also pointed out that people have "a duty to submit peaceably to a lawful arrest." The Judge ruled in favor of the police officer and ordered the Peeping Tom to pay him \$3,500.

Both of these cases involved a legal concept called the "professional rescuer's doctrine," which says that in most cases, if you have a legitimate emergency, and you call out the police or fire department, and one of the responders gets injured, they will not be able to sue you. The law makes it very difficult, but not impossible, for a professional rescuer to sue anyone if the rescuer is "injured while performing his professional duties."



Lee Aronson is an attorney in Shreveport, Louisiana, with Gilsoul & Associates, LLC. His practice areas include estate planning and elder law.



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Pecans: Louisiana's Tasty Treasure

April is national pecan month! Did you know that Louisiana has consistently ranked among the top five pecan-producing states in the nation? This popular nut is not only a tasty treasure for our state, but it's also nutritious and versatile.

Pecans are packed with helpful nutrients. In fact, they are one of the most nutritious from the tree nut family. Pecans are a good source of protein and monounsaturated fats, which are heart-healthy fats. Eating foods rich in monounsaturated fat can help lower the "bad" cholesterol levels in your blood, called LDL cholesterol - but only if you are also limiting saturated fats in your diet too. In addition to protein and monounsaturated fat, pecans are rich in vitamin E, which helps promote healthy vision, blood, and skin. Vitamin E is also important for the brain and the reproductive system. A one ounce serving of pecans provides 10% of the recom-

mended daily value for fiber, which promotes digestive health and can help with maintaining healthy blood cholesterol and blood sugar levels in the body. Most adults don't get enough fiber in their diets, so it's important to find ways to incorporate fiber into our meals and snacks when we can. Pecans also contain several other vitamins and minerals, including calcium, iron, potassium, vitamin A, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin E, vitamin C, vitamin B6, folate, phosphorus, magnesium, zinc, copper, and manganese. In addition to the basic nutrients pecans provide, they also have phytochemicals including lutein, ellagic acid, beta-carotene, and zeaxanthin. These phytochemicals work as antioxidants in the body, which protect our cells from free radical damage that can cause cancer.

The length of time that pecans will last in your kitchen depends on how you store them (and if pecan-lovers



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live in your house!). Whole, unshelled pecans can be stored at room temperature in a cool, dry location for anywhere from 6-12 months. Shelled pecans can be stay fresh at room temperature for about 2 months. Shelled pecans are best stored in the refrigerator or freezer. Refrigerated shelled pecans can last for 9 months, and frozen shelled pecans can keep their flavor and texture for up to two years.

While pecans are rich in many nutrients, it's important to note that they are high in calories, so be sure to practice portion control when enjoying these heart-healthy treats. The recommended serving for pecans is one ounce, which averages to be a little less than a ¼ cup measurement or about 19 pecan halves (depending on the size of the pecans).

Many of us enjoy snacking on plain pecans, but they can also be used in a variety of other ways in our meals and snacks. Pecans can be added to savory dishes for a rich flavor burst, or they can be used in sweet dishes. Amplify any fresh salad by sprinkling some pecans on top, or add chopped pecans to a rice dish for some added protein and crunch. Pecans can even be finely chopped and used as breadcrumbs for coating chicken or fish. They also make for a great addition in chicken salad, pesto sauces, or on top of a baked sweet potato. For breakfast, add chopped pecans to oatmeal, cold cereal, waffles, pancakes, yogurt, muffins, or breads.

The pecan is the only tree nut that is native to the United States and remains very popular in our nation. In fact, 80% of the world's pecans are grown in the United States. This southern favorite makes for a nutritious addition to our plates. What is your favorite way to enjoy pecans?

Abigail McAlister is a Registered Dietician and nutrition agent with LSU AgCenter for Caddo and Bossier Parishes. Her focus is adult nutrition education and promotion. Contact her at amcalister@lsu.edu.



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Karma, We Hardly Know Ye

We have all heard it; “karma’s a bl!” Why do we demean karma so? Perhaps if we got to know her a little better, we could “warm up to her,” maybe even come to appreciate what she can teach us!

Most of us are familiar with what is referred to as “**The Great Law of Karma**,” “As you sow, so shall you reap.” We know that we have control over our own choices, decisions, and actions, but not so much over the consequences. The Great Law is the big one, however there are more laws of Karma, and some of the others can really be helpful too.

The Law of Creation states “we attract what we are, not necessarily what we want.” Understanding this will remind us to be aware of our surroundings and take account of who we are hanging around. “Birds of a feather flock together.” This law encourages me to tune into and be aware of the energy swirling around me; energy matters big time. By realizing and knowing this, we can perhaps better manage our interaction with some of the toxicity around us. It has been said that it is hard to soar with the eagles when you have a lot of turkeys gobbling around you.

The Law of Humility reminds us “what we resist persists.” The energy of something I do not want cannot be changed by dishing out more of the same. If I find myself in the dark,



adding more darkness will be of no help; only light can dispel darkness. In the dark I am probably going to keep bumping around and into others stumbling around the dark too. Understanding this law leads to my asking “how can I bring more light into situations that I seek to change?”

My new favorite though is **The Law of Mirrors**. This law reminds me not to take things personally when I think someone is insulting me. Instead, I need to really listen to their words and realize that they are not talking about me, but instead are telling me about themselves! They are literally

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revealing to me how they see the world, and they are telling me about negative qualities that they possess. When I understand this law, I am FREE! I can release the need to defend and stop using precious energy to tell them why they shouldn't think the ways they do. I can, instead accept that their thoughts belong solely to them. Yes, they are offering their thoughts to me, it's mirroring their insides, and I get to *decide* whether I accept it as my thought too.

Perhaps a shift is in order from "Karma is a b" to "Karma is a great teacher", here to help me grow and navigate life!

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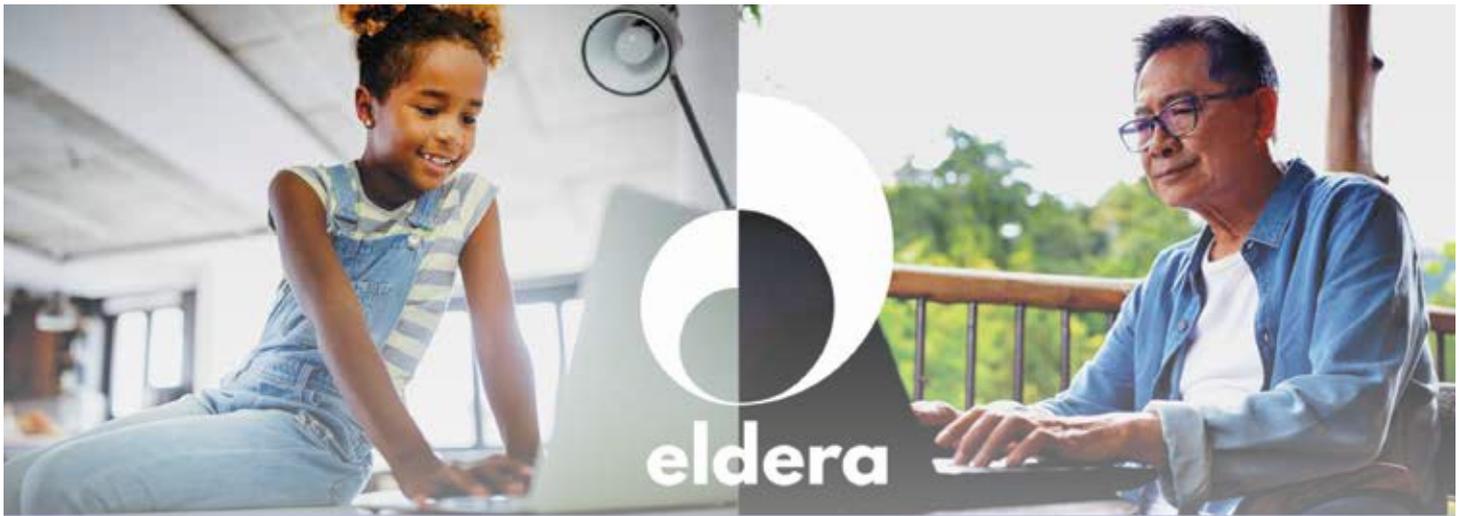


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Eldera: Connecting Generations Around the World

by Sarah (Sally) Hamer

The Covid-19 virus crisis has affected most of the world in some way or another but, probably the two most vulnerable age groups have been seniors and children, many of whom often were more isolated than others. According to Linda P. Fried, the Dean of Columbia University School of Public Health and an Eldera Advisory Board Member, isolation, especially in those age groups, can cause great loneliness. So, Dana Griffin and Jules Olleon decided to do something about it, and connect the two generations through an amazing program called Eldera.

“I was raised by my grandparents, and have always been connected with older adults who guided and mentored me,” said Dana in a recent phone call. “So, I was very aware of how children need to have that influence in their lives.” In fact, she and Jules believe that “the wisdom of our elders -- with decades of experience, knowledge, love, loss and common sense -- is the most valuable resource we can share with the younger generation to help them imagine a better future for all.”

Eldera is a free program where seniors (at least 60 years young) volunteer to mentor or tutor or just plain share their experiences with children from five to eighteen years old. Both the parents/children and older adults sign up for the program and share information about themselves, as well as their preferred way to engage. For instance, some seniors may be comfortable with telling a story or having a conversation. Others may choose to help with math or reading, although guiding or mentoring is the norm. In fact, tutoring experience is not a requirement and, often, is only a by-product of a conversation where a child may ask a question about homework.

Eldera’s website states that a volunteer should “know that however you engage, the time your mentee spends with you -- a caring, attentive, adult outside of their family -- is going to help him or her develop important soft skills like how to

empathize, engage, and have conversations. It will also help the child develop resilience, among many other things.”

Both older adults and parents sign up individually on the platform and an Eldera-developed algorithm pairs mentors and mentees, with the goal of creating a strong, long-term bond that is fun and beneficial for both. Neither parents nor older adults choose who they meet, but the beauty is that almost 90% of the pairings result in a match. One mentor even describes Eldera as a “virtual village.” She mentors a six-year-old girl who has taught her ballet



and shares the books she writes. They read together, play games, and have just gotten to know and care about each other. “Along the way, I’ve become friends with her mom, who has her hands full and is so grateful to have another caring adult in her daughter’s life.”

The benefits to both sides of the equation are enormous. Not only is a child receiving the gift of a friendly face and voice, maybe from across the world, the senior creates a connection that brings the joy and enthusiasm of a child into their life. Rob, an Eldera mentor, says that, “What inspires me the most is that during the time with my mentee, I become more childlike. I appreciate Eldera for transporting me back to some place exciting and new and warm and memorable and familiar, all at the same time.”

A good internet connection and the ability to access a Zoom-type platform is all of the technical expertise needed. Eldera asks the senior volunteer to join an orientation and training call, where they are shown exactly what to do. Safety is also very important. The older adult is vetted and all conversations are recorded. The parent is requested to sit with the child during the first call, then remain nearby for all subsequent calls, in case they need to help the child in some way. Although there is no hard limit on the length, most calls are under an hour long, and most mentors spend between thirty and ninety minutes per week. Also, although 90% of the mentors sign up for a standing, once-a-week appointment with one child, Eldera can easily allow for other situations if a mentor chooses to work with different children instead. And, the timing is up to the parents and mentor. If once a week isn’t convenient for either side, it can be arranged as the pairing chooses.

Older adults come from all over the US, and Eldera has

members in all 50 states. Parents sign kids up from all over the world, with 26 countries and counting, and long-term connections are being made every day.

Another benefit, this one just for seniors, is the amazing connections developing between the older adults. For instance, evolving from the needs and desires of the mentors themselves, there’s a meeting every two weeks of the Elder Council – a group of Eldera mentors who meet regularly to talk, brainstorm, and create new ways to engage children. An entire library has been created by the mentors with items as basic as how to share a Zoom screen, to games to play with the children. Some communities have face2face meetings, while others meet online. Either way, it’s a great resource, not just to help children, but to allow older adults who may be confined at home during this pandemic to reach out and help each other.

How to become a mentor? The website is www.eldera.ai. Sign up is really easy – in fact, I’ve done it myself! I’m taking the training this week and should be connected to a mentee soon after. I can’t wait!

After all, ultimately, all it takes to be an Eldera mentor is kindness, generosity and curiosity. If that describes you, Eldera may be the right place for you to connect to someone who needs you to be a guiding light in their world.

Sarah (Sally) Hamer, B.S., MLA, is a multi-award-winning author who teaches creative fiction at LSU in Shreveport. She is fascinated by how people tick and loves to explore the world around her.



SHREVEPORT *Then & Now*

Photos blended and used with permission by **Mike and Mark Mangham** of **Twin Blends Photography**. For more blended photos showcasing Shreveport/Bossier City's historical photos, please visit www.facebook.com/twinblendsphotography.



The terra-cotta winged wheels above the entrance at the old Wray-Dickinson building at 308 Market Street symbolized the entry into a new era. Built in 1911 to house Wray-Dickinson Motor Car Company, one of the nations first Ford dealerships. The company sold Packards, Hudsons, and Fords. Today it is home to Origin Bank. (Vintage portion of photos courtesy Winston Conway Link)



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5 Steps to Find the Right Doctor



FAMILY FEATURES

Whether you're rarely sick or have multiple conditions that require frequent visits to the doctor, having a trusted and skilled health care provider is an important step in protecting your health.

A health care provider helps you maintain good health by recommending preventive services like screenings and vaccines. He or she can treat many problems directly and refer you to a specialist for more help with specific issues, as necessary.

Any number of reasons can result in needing to find a new doctor, such as moving to a new community, changes to your insurance, your old doctor retiring or needing a specialist, for example.

Finding a health care provider requires research and careful consideration. These suggestions from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) can help you be more efficient and thorough as you look for a doctor who is right for you.

Ask for Recommendations

Talk to friends, family members, neighbors and coworkers about whether they have a provider they like. An endorsement from someone you know may give you greater confidence

you will have a similar positive experience. If you're looking for a new provider because of a move or retirement, you can ask your current doctor for a recommendation. If you need to make a change with your primary care doctor but see specialists or other medical professionals you like and trust, you can also request referrals from them.

Check with Your Insurance Company

If you have health insurance, you may need to choose from a list of doctors in your plan's network. Some insurance plans may let you choose a doctor outside your network if you pay more of the cost.

To find a doctor who takes your insurance, call your insurance company and ask for a list of doctors near you who are in-network or use the insurance company's website to search for a doctor. It's also a good idea to call the doctor's office and ask for confirmation they take your plan. You should have your insurance, Medicare or Medicaid card handy in case the office needs your plan details.

Narrow Your Options

In addition to checking on insurance coverage, you can gather some information that helps narrow your options. Some of the providers you consider may not be viable options

for simple reasons, like their practice isn't currently taking new patients or they don't have office hours matching your schedule. You can also consider questions such as hospital affiliations and whether other providers can help if you need emergency care and your doctor isn't available.

Take a Deeper Look

Online research can tell you a great deal about potential doctors, from biographical information and credentials to ratings by former patients.

When searching for a new provider, another important area to consider is financial relationships. One resource patients can consider is Open Payments, a national disclosure program within CMS that provides visibility into financial relationships between drug and medical device companies and physicians, and teaching hospitals. The government requires

pharmaceutical companies, device manufacturers and group purchasing organizations to report funds they give health care providers in the form of meals, entertainment, travel, gifts, consulting fees, research payments and more, promoting transparency and helping uncover potential conflicts of interest.

It's important to know most health care providers receive payments. Just because financial ties are reported does not mean anyone has done anything wrong. However, patients can use the information to talk with their provider about why they recommend certain medications or treatments, including asking about generic options, which are equally as effective as name brands but typically less expensive. It's also an opportunity to start a discussion with a provider about areas of professional interest and expertise based on research or consulting.

Listen to Your Gut

If you're undecided, request an introductory appointment with a provider you're considering. The way you feel when you interact with the doctor and staff can tell you a lot about whether the office is the right fit. Look for a clinic where you are treated with respect and the doctor, as well others on the medical team, listen to your opinions and concerns. You should feel comfortable asking questions, and the doctor needs to be able to explain things in ways you understand.

Find more resources for your health care needs at [cms.gov](https://www.cms.gov).

Preparing for a First Visit

An initial appointment with a new provider can be intimidating. You're meeting someone for the first time and likely have several topics to discuss. Help keep your nerves under control and get your questions answered with these steps:

Introduce yourself. When you see the doctor and office staff, introduce yourself and let them know by what name you prefer to be called.

Ask how the office runs. Learn what days are busiest and what times are best to call. Ask what to do if there is an emergency or if you need a doctor when the office is closed.

Share your medical history. Tell the doctor about any illnesses, operations, medical conditions and other doctors you see. You may want to ask the doctor to send you a copy of the medical history form before your visit so you can fill it out at home, where you have the time and information you need to complete it.

Make a list and prioritize your concerns. If you have more than a few items to discuss, put them in order and ask about the most important ones first.

Take information with you to the doctor. Some doctors suggest you put all your medications in a bag and bring them with you. Others recommend bringing a written list. You should also have your insurance cards, names and phone numbers of other doctors you see and your medical records if the doctor doesn't already have them.

Consider bringing a family member or friend. Your companion can remind you what you planned to discuss with the doctor if you forget. He or she can also take notes for you and help you remember what the doctor said.

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Review of "Love & Saffron" by Kim Fay

Love & Saffron by Kim Fay is an epistolary novel of letters exchanged between two women from different generations - who have never met in person - in the 1960s. It begins when Miss Joan Bergstrom, age 27 from L.A., pens a letter to her favorite magazine columnist, Imogen Fortier, 59, who lives on Camano Island outside of Seattle.

In her letter she expresses admiration for the details of shore life that Imogen documents in her column inside the pages of Pacific Northwest magazine each month and encloses saffron and a recipe. Imogen replies to Joan and their long-distance friendship is kindled. Over the course of their letters, which extend over years, they explore the culinary pursuits of other cultures and unique ingredients - Joan from the markets and restaurants of L.A., and Imogen from the wealth of seafood offered up from her nearby ocean and local university exchange students.

As their relationship builds, the two reveal details of their personal lives. Imogen confides her struggle with her husband's war-induced PTSD, and Joan her growing relationship with a Hispanic man. Together they share their dismay at the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy's assassination and the racial divide that keeps Joan from being with the man she loves.

I felt like I was friends with Imogen and Joan while I read this book. There is something so enjoyable about a novel

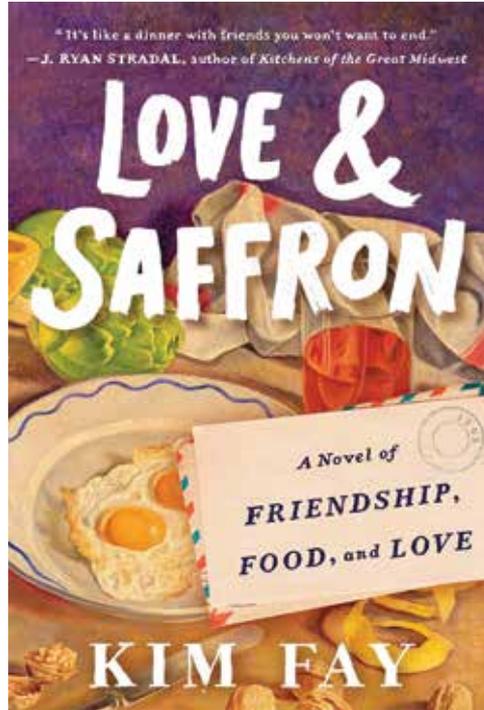
written in letters - that stream-of-consciousness and off the cuff style - that invites the reader in to be part of the characters' worlds. And the way these two women embrace one another despite their age gap, physical distance and never having even met in person, is heartwarming. Together they embrace a variety of circumstances that were controversial

in the 1960s, namely forming relationships with people of different races, children outside of marriage, and PTSD.

Perhaps my favorite part of *Love & Saffron* though, was Imogen documenting how her husband, Francis, finds healing from post-war PTSD through cooking and ingredients. In her novel, Fay gives us heartbreak (I may have gasped and cried as I devoured its pages), but ultimately, she writes in her book so that it perfectly lives up to its subtitle of "Friendship, Food and Love". *Love & Saffron* is easy to consume in one sitting, and, if you're anything like me, you may just give it a hug when you're done reading it.

Rating: ★★★★★

Jessica Rinaudo is a Shreveport-native who works as a writer and editor in Cincinnati, OH. She has a passion for books and regularly reads, reviews and photographs them on her instagram account, [instagram.com/readbelieveandlove](https://www.instagram.com/readbelieveandlove).



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Joe Cornet, left, and Don Murray on the set of "Promise" (photo provided by Joe Cornet)

Western Script Enticed Don Murray Back to the Big Screen

Joe Cornet never initially considered now 92-year-old Don Murray for a role in his 2021 western film "Promise."

"I wanted an iconic actor for one of the roles and approached two other veteran western stars, but for one reason or another neither worked out," said Cornet, from Los Angeles, who wrote, directed, and co-produced the almost 2-hour-long western drama.

Already acquainted with Murray's son, Cornet explained his dilemma to the younger Murray who proposed a simple solution: "Why don't you get dad?"

"So, I sent Don the script but wasn't really expecting to hear from him – I just didn't think he would do it," explained Cornet. "However, he called the following day to say he loved the story, calling it a classic, and asked when the shooting started!"

Murray's previous big-screen appearances had been a pair of 2001 films two decades earlier, but he required little convincing to dude-up in cowboy gear for Cornet's film which depicts a desperate search for lost gold and lost love, both linked to the Civil War.

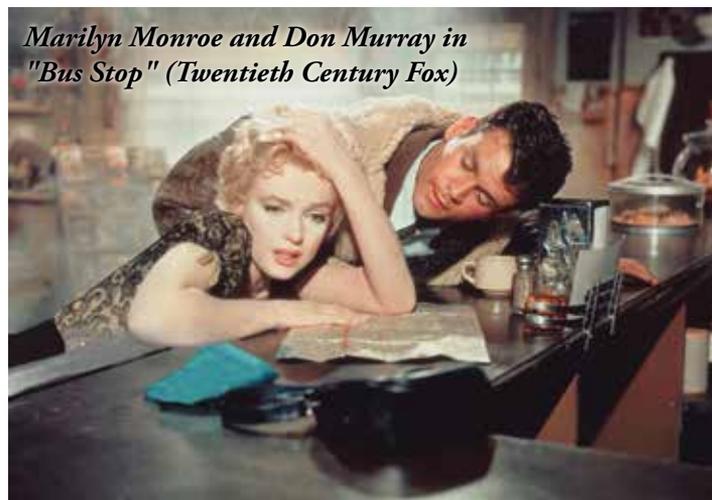
"It has elements of the classic western but it's also not cliché-bound," said Murray from his home in Santa Barbara. "It was just a great concept, very imaginative with good writing."

Murray, on set for a week to shoot his scenes at a Southern

Californian ranch, "was a gem" according to Cornet. "He has three large, important scenes, two with me. He added a lot of quirks and nuances to create an interesting character." Currently available on Amazon Prime, "Promise" was entered in Tucson's Wild Bunch Film Festival last October, receiving 11 awards including Best Picture.

Don Murray is no stranger to award ceremonies, having been nominated for a Best Supporting Actor Oscar for his first film role in 1956's "Bus Stop," co-starring Marilyn Monroe.

"It was a total surprise, I couldn't believe it," said Murray of his reaction when learning that the film's director, Josh Logan,



Marilyn Monroe and Don Murray in "Bus Stop" (Twentieth Century Fox)

insisted the producers cast him as a rambunctious cowboy alongside the notoriously difficult Monroe.

"I was aware of her reputation, but didn't let that bother me," recalled Murray. "I didn't pay any attention to what people thought of her. I was just involved with the work and working with her which was a great experience. She was very supportive of me and we got along well, no problems ever."

Murray also remembers Logan going to great lengths to put Monroe at ease. "He was always very supportive and made her feel comfortable," he said. "He was very positive and didn't criticize what she was doing."

After "Bus Stop," Murray went on to work in numerous TV shows and appeared in some 40 films, often tackling challenging roles that portrayed compelling characters. He appeared in several westerns and believes the genre, though far less common today, can still attract audiences.

"There's always the classic theme of the western but there's also room for creative changes in the screenplay, giving a better sense of western reality," he says. "(Joe) actually took advantage of that and created a classic piece all its own and I was very proud to be part of it."



Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery, in Alabama, and has written features, columns, and interviews for numerous magazines and newspapers. See www.tinseltowntalks.com.



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How To Choose a Vet

For the past two decades, World Veterinary Day has fallen on the last Saturday in April and is a day to honor the men and women who treat those precious non-human household members. But what if you don't have a family veterinarian? How should you choose one?

Obviously, a vet should demonstrate an exhaustive knowledge of animal medicine. A vet must also display compassion and immediately put you and your pet at ease with a caring and gentle kennel-side manner. A vet who greets potential clients with a stun gun strapped to his or her belt will fail to build a bond of confidence with a pet owner.

When first visiting a new vet, casually scan the premises for modern diagnostic facilities. The clinic should be equipped with an X-ray machine and ultrasound, and have the capability to perform EKGs, endoscopy, and other important procedures. It may be disconcerting if the shelves are stocked mostly with rolls of duct tape and all the medical equipment is labeled "As Seen on TV."

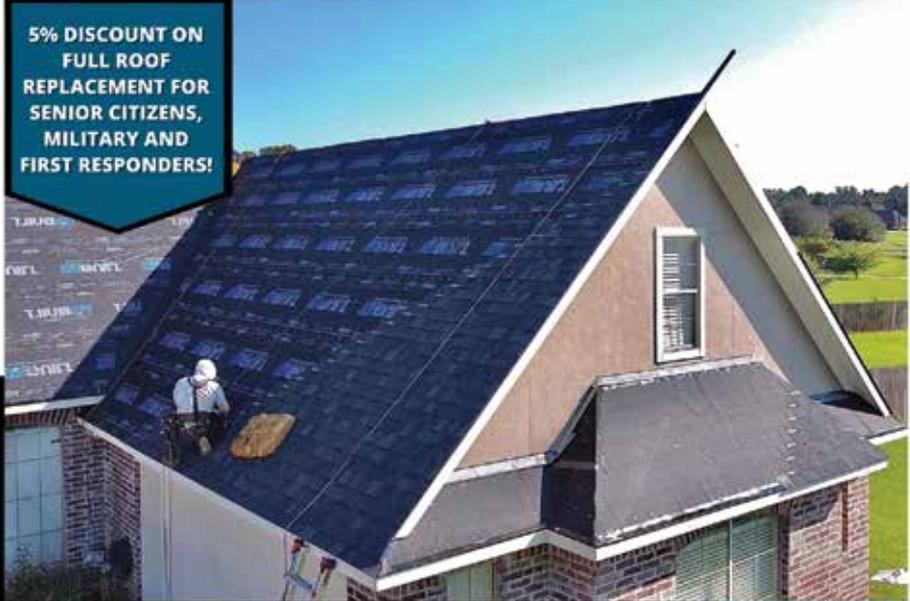
A vet must also be familiar with the new medications available to treat common animal ailments. If the vet recommends the latest de-worming tablet because "it

worked on the neighbor's kid," you might be suspicious of his or her ability to conduct valid clinical trials.

Closely monitor the vet during the initial examination of your pet to determine whether the vet



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employs traditional or unconventional veterinary procedures. You may not feel comfortable with a vet who applies WD-40 to your aging collie with hip joint problems or who uses a dowsing rod to locate your hamster's bladder. Also, avoid vets who attempt to dislodge a cat's hairball by using the Heimlich maneuver.

While older vets may boast many years of experience, remember that faculties such as eyesight and memory can diminish with age. For example, if the vet sits on your Chihuahua or loses the thermometer whilst taking its temperature, your confidence level will plummet. The same could be said for an overcautious vet. Avoid any animal practitioner who approaches your grumpy Siamese cat while decked out in full hockey gear, including the mask and stick.

Finally, while vets with a sense of humor may calm an anxious pet owner, they should practice clinical comedy judiciously. Not everyone will be amused if a vet tells YOU to "Sit and Stay" or giggles uncontrollably for ten minutes after suggesting "lab tests will be needed on your Labrador."

Armed with these guidelines, selecting a veterinarian should be a walk in the park.

Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery, Ala., and has written features, columns, and interviews for many magazines and newspapers. See www.getnickt.org



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Made with Love

Set the table for romance with a delicious date night at home

FAMILY FEATURES

You don't have to be an accomplished chef to plan a delicious, romantic date night, but you can take inspiration from simple, quality Italian dishes to celebrate the link between food and love. Once you select your main course, prepare a simple salad of greens with a drizzle of Italian vinaigrette or Caesar dressing. Warm a loaf of bakery-fresh Italian or focaccia bread and serve with olive oil for dipping. Cap off the meal with a classic Italian dessert from your local bakery, like tiramisu, cannoli or a creamy panna cotta topped with fresh fruit. Find more romantic dishes at Bertolli.com.

Italian Sausage, Spinach and Tomato Rigatoni

Water

- ½ box rigatoni pasta
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ cup onions, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup mushrooms, sliced
- 16 ounces sweet Italian sausage
- 1 jar Marinara Sauce
- 2 cups fresh baby spinach
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- Parmesan cheese, for garnish

Bring large stockpot of water to boil. Boil rigatoni pasta until al dente. Drain and set aside.

In saute pan over medium heat, add olive oil. Add onions, garlic and mushrooms. Saute until vegetables start to brown. Add Italian sausage and cook until done, breaking into small pieces. Add sauce and bring to low boil.

Add baby spinach. Cook until spinach is mostly wilted. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Add drained pasta to pan with sausage and sauce. Toss and divide between plates. Garnish with Parmesan cheese.



Creamy Italian Garlic Chicken Pasta

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 large chicken breasts
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup onions, chopped
- ¼ cup sun-dried tomatoes, cut into strips
- 2 tablespoons capers, drained
- 6 fresh basil leaves, sliced
- 1 jar Creamy Rosa Sauce
- ½ cup heavy cream
- water
- ½ box Casarecce or preferred pasta
- parsley, for garnish
- Parmesan cheese, for garnish

In saute pan over medium heat, add olive oil. Season chicken with Italian seasoning and salt and pepper to taste. Sear chicken breasts on both sides until browned. Remove from pan and set aside.

Add garlic and onions to hot pan. Cook until starting to brown. Add sun-dried tomatoes, capers and basil; stir. Add sauce and heavy cream; cook until mixture starts boiling.

Bring large stockpot of water to boil. Boil Casarecce pasta until al dente. Divide pasta between two plates. Place one chicken breast over pasta on each plate and top with additional sauce, parsley and Parmesan cheese.



Red Wine Braised Beef Short Rib Ragu

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 tablespoons olive oil | 4 sprigs fresh rosemary |
| 4 pounds bone-in beef short ribs | 2 sprigs fresh sage leaves, chopped |
| salt, to taste | 8 sprigs fresh thyme |
| ground black pepper, to taste | 2 bay leaves |
| 1 stalk celery, chopped | 1 jar Marinara Sauce |
| 1 large carrot, peeled and finely diced | 2 cups beef bone broth |
| 1 small onion, chopped | water |
| 8 cloves garlic, finely chopped | 24 ounces pappardelle pasta or preferred pasta |
| 4 tablespoons tomato paste | freshly grated Parmesan cheese, for garnish |
| 1 cup red wine | |

Heat oven to 350 F.

In 5-quart Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium heat. Season short ribs with salt and ground black pepper, to taste. Place one layer of short ribs in pot. Set remaining ribs aside.

Cook ribs 3-4 minutes per side until browned. Transfer to plate and set aside. Repeat with remaining short ribs.

Add celery, carrots and onion to pot used to brown ribs. Stir and cook until vegetables are browned, about 15 minutes.

Add garlic and stir 1-2 minutes. Add tomato paste. Cook 2 - 3 minutes.

Carefully pour red wine into pot.

Stir and scrape any browned bits from bottom of pot. Cook 3 - 4 minutes until wine is almost completely absorbed into vegetables.

Add rosemary, sage, thyme and bay leaves to pot. Add sauce, bone broth and browned ribs. Cover pot and place in oven 2½ - 3 hours, or until ribs are fall-apart tender.

Remove pot from oven. Transfer ribs to plate or cutting board. Remove and discard herb stems and bay leaves. Remove bones from ribs then shred meat into bite-sized pieces using two forks or tongs. Return shredded ribs to pot with ragu. Stir to combine. Set aside.

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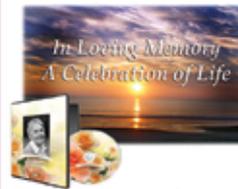


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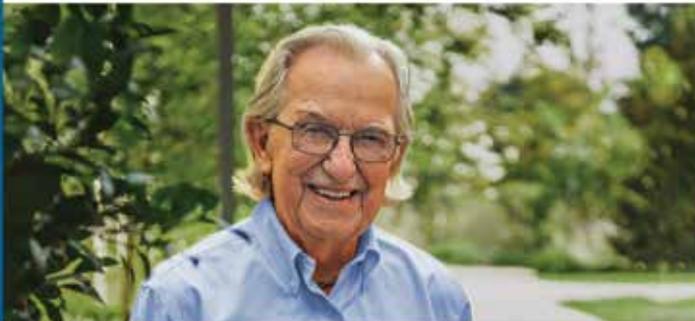
Locate the words in the grid which are running horizontally, vertically, or diagonally - forward or backward.

Board Games

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| Acquire | Guess Who |
| Backgammon | Jeopardy |
| Balderdash | Memory |
| Battleship | Monopoly |
| Boggle | Mouse Trap |
| Bonkers | Operation |
| Candy Land | Password |
| Careers | Pay Day |
| Checkers | Risk |
| Chess | Scrabble |
| Clue | Sorry |
| Cranium | Stratego |
| Dominion | Trouble |
| Game Of Life | |

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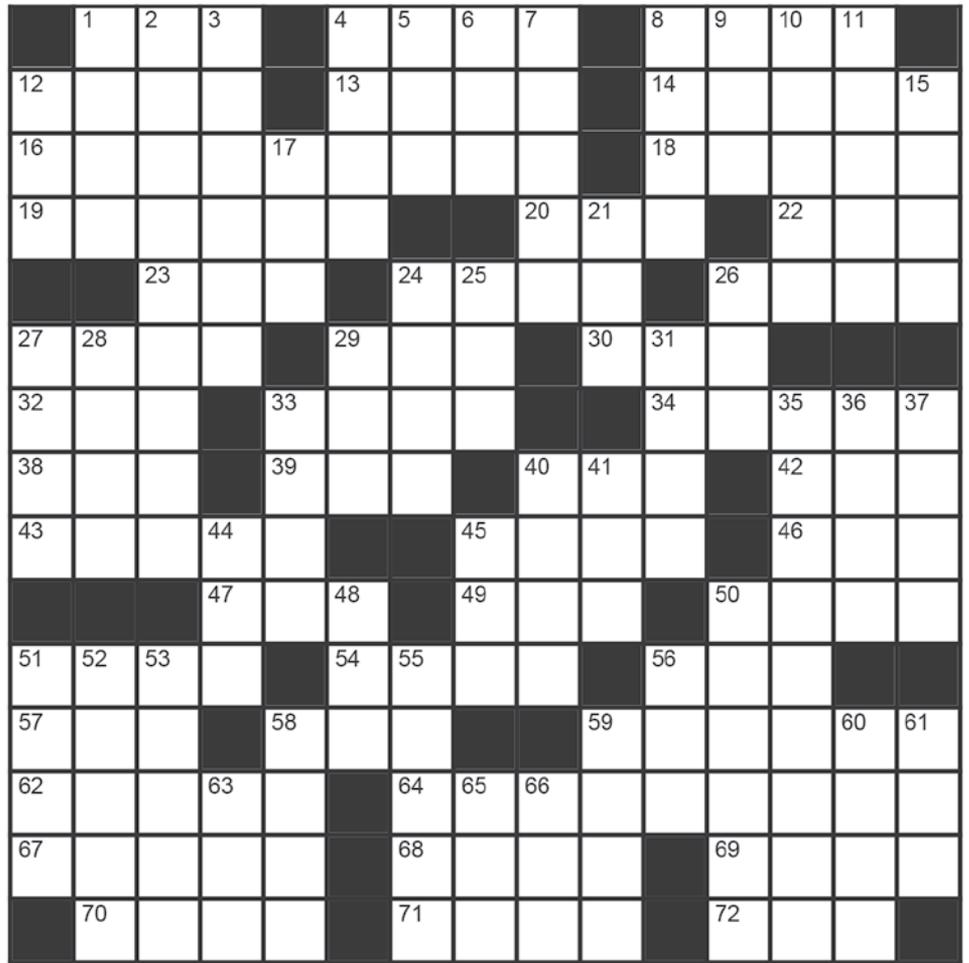
Crossword

Across

- 1 French flower
- 4 Light source
- 8 Teen affliction
- 12 Go ballistic
- 13 Arrow poison
- 14 Union demand
- 16 1987 Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell movie
- 18 High point
- 19 Whalebone
- 20 Fire remnant
- 22 Company V.I.P.
- 23 Extreme suffix
- 24 Big bash
- 26 ___ Station
- 27 Comedian's stock
- 29 Austrian peak
- 30 Rue, in Paris
- 32 Wanted-poster letters
- 33 Surveyor's map
- 34 Kind of gun
- 38 Martini ingredient
- 39 Give a hand
- 40 Tell a whopper
- 42 Greek H
- 43 Jittery
- 45 Cotton fabric
- 46 Bon ___ (witticism)
- 47 Cable network
- 49 Electric guitar hookup
- 50 "___ Like It Hot"
- 51 Baby's bed
- 54 Archipelago part
- 56 Big bird of stories
- 57 Hankering
- 58 Meddle
- 59 Hush-hush
- 62 Aqualung
- 64 Reject as untrue
- 67 City on the Po
- 68 River through Kazakhstan
- 69 Book before Romans
- 70 Plexus
- 71 Fringe benefit
- 72 Leaching product

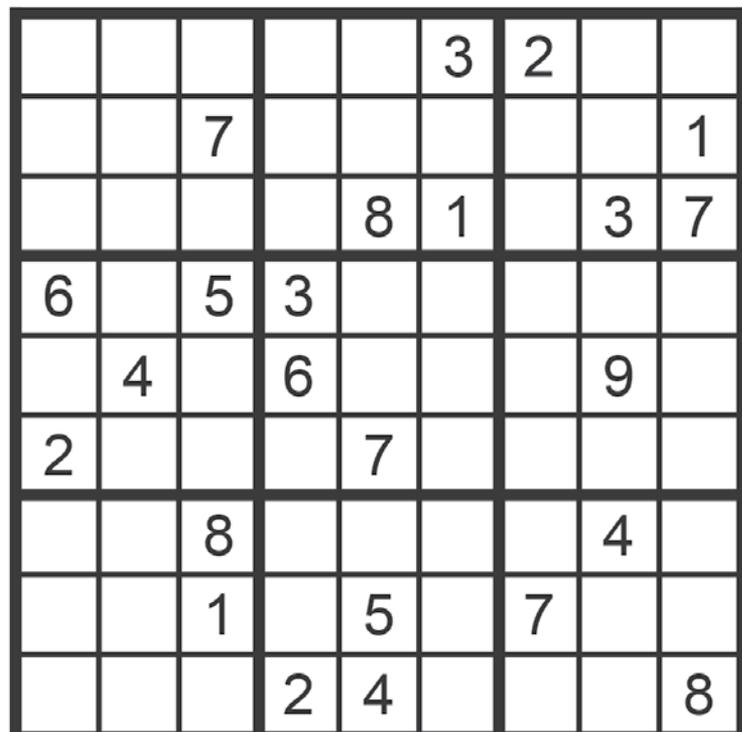
Down

- 1 Basalt source
- 2 Tasteless
- 3 Pressure
- 4 Pride member
- 5 Bibliophile's suffix
- 6 French sea
- 7 Piano part
- 8 Eyebrow shape
- 9 Jam ingredient?
- 10 Sofia Coppola, to Talia Shire
- 11 City near Oberhausen
- 12 Swindle
- 15 Harrow rival
- 17 Wager
- 21 Adage
- 24 Pleased
- 25 Pertinent
- 26 Kyat part
- 27 Pop Singer Lady ___
- 28 Comparable (to)
- 29 1996 Olympic torch lighter
- 31 Field of study
- 33 Compensates
- 35 Majority rule
- 36 Elementary particle
- 37 Size up
- 40 Citrus fruit
- 41 Trickster
- 44 Hero sandwich
- 45 Friend
- 48 Cause of inflation?
- 50 Type of climber
- 51 Skin problem
- 52 Happen again
- 53 Habituate
- 55 Pancake topper
- 56 Scarlet
- 58 Piece of glass
- 59 Brood
- 60 Kitchen extension?
- 61 Your (Fr.)
- 63 Smidgen
- 65 "___ Time transfigured me": Yeats
- 66 Scorecard number



Sudoku

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 1 to 9.





Answers from the Experts



EXPERTS: If you would like to help your community by answering a question here, call 636-5510
READERS: Send your questions to The Best of Times, Box 19510, Shreveport, LA 71149

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I am told once I choose hospice I cannot return to the hospital. If I choose hospice care, am I able to return to the hospital?

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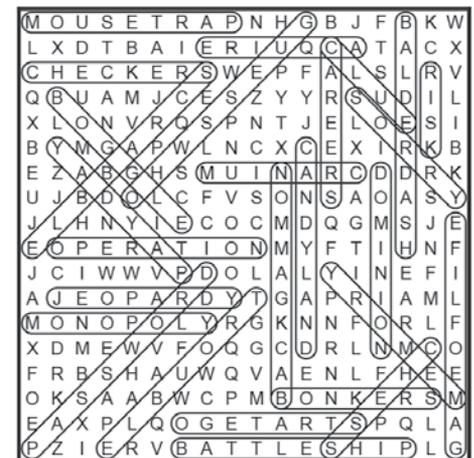
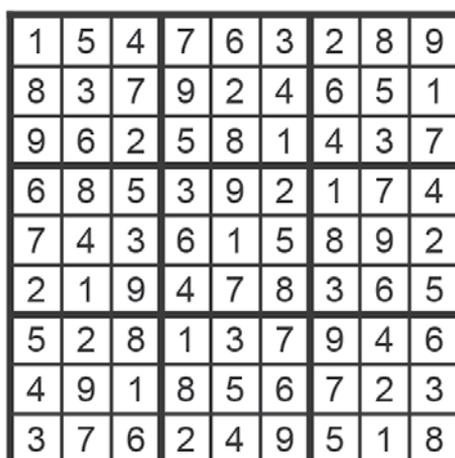


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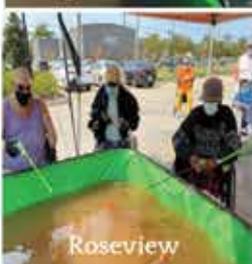
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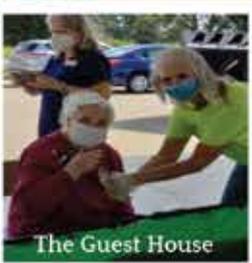
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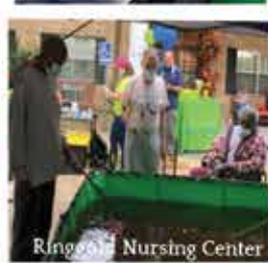
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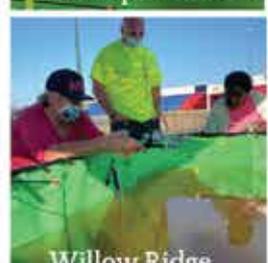
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