



fiftyplus advocate

Venice

Explore the history and charm
of this ancient city

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PHOTO/ VALERY PECHINSKY | DREAMSTIME.COM

Grand Canal Palazzo Salviati(Dorsoduro) Barbarigo

By Victor Block

In the fifth century AD, Attila the Hun and other invaders descended upon the north-eastern area of what today is Italy. A number of people who were living in the region fled to a group of nearby islands for safety and, over time, established small villages. The towns they founded eventually joined together and that was the birth of Venice.

From that humble beginning grew one of the wealthiest, most refined cities in the then-

known world. Those who travel to Venice today see it much as it has looked over centuries.

The city's physical layout, occupying nearly 120 small islands, is its most famous attraction. Those dots of land are separated by about 150 canals that are crossed by more than 400 bridges.

The largest and most famous waterway, the Grand Canal, serves as the main "street" of Venice. It's lined by splendid palaces and brightly colored mansions that were built by

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Stoneham woman
keeps hand in puppetry
for five decades

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Safer driving benefits all

By MIKE FESTA, STATE DIRECTOR
AARP MASSACHUSETTS

While many vacationing travelers hit the roads during the summer season, the month of September signals the beginning of heavily increased traffic, especially during rush hours. Drivers are heading back to work, which means sharing the road with more vehicles, motorcycles, bicycles and pedestrians. And, now that school is back in session, expect to see more school buses and pedestrians on the local roads.



Mike Festa

This is also a great time to recharge your driving skills. For more than 30 years, AARP

has helped to keep millions of drivers safe, educated and confident while on the road with the AARP Smart Driver course, the nation's largest classroom and online driver safety course. Based on the latest driver safety research and insights, the course is designed especially for drivers age 50 and older. In fact, 97 percent of course participants say they've changed at least one driving behavior as a result of taking our course.

By taking the AARP Smart Driver Course, you'll learn the current rules of the road, defensive driving techniques and how to operate your vehicle more safely in today's increasingly challenging driving environment. You'll learn how to manage common age-related changes in vision, hearing and reaction time. You'll hear about the safest ways to reduce driver distractions, deal with aggressive

drivers, learn techniques for handling left turns, right-of-way and navigating around rotaries, how to minimize blind spots, and proper use of the new technology found in newer cars.

In addition to learning safety strategies that can reduce the likelihood of a crash, you will learn how aging, medications, alcohol, and other health-related issues affect driving ability, and how to adjust driving accordingly to allow for these changes. The course also helps participants determine when it may not be best to drive (e.g., late at night, inclement weather, etc.) and how to plan for a time when driving is no longer an option.

AARP Driver Safety offers classroom and online courses. The classroom course costs \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members. The online course costs \$19.95 for members and \$24.95 for non-members. Al-

though the program is geared toward drivers 50 and older, licensed drivers of all ages are welcome to participate. There are no official tests to pass in order to graduate from the program. To learn more about upcoming classes in Massachusetts, visit www.aarp.org/drive.

If you are looking for a rewarding volunteer opportunity, consider becoming the volunteer state coordinator for the Massachusetts AARP Driver Safety program. This volunteer position is a highly visible role which requires strong leadership, communication and relationship-building skills. The state coordinator provides direction to AARP Driver Safety volunteers and works with them to enhance the overall program.

AARP Massachusetts is also looking for volunteer instructors for the four-hour

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Massachusetts

Safer driving benefits all

AARP
Continued from page 2

Smart Driver course. Volunteers help organize and teach classroom courses at local community centers, libraries, hospitals and senior centers. By volunteering, you'll join 4,000 other volunteers nationwide who contribute to the safety and well-being of their neighbors and community. If you

have access to a computer, enjoy meeting people and are ready to make a difference in your community, fill out an interest form at www.aarp.org/volunteernow. Volunteers are reimbursed for approved out-of-pocket expenses related to program activities.

Additionally, consider hosting a Smart Driver classroom course at your facility. Participa-

tion as a host brings community members to your location and offers a meaningful opportunity to make a difference in the lives of older adults. If you can provide a free room that holds up to 30 participants, and have a DVD player and television, you can be a Smart Driver course host.

For more information or to register for classes, visit

www.aarpdriversafety.org or call 888-AARP-NOW (888-227-7669). Contact AARP Massachusetts at 866-448-3621 or email at ma@aarp.org. You may also visit www.aarp.org/ma.

Mike Festa is the state director for AARP Massachusetts. Archives of articles from previous issues can be read at www.fiftyplusadvocate.com.

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pursue your passion

Stoneham woman keeps hand in puppetry for five decades

By ED KARVOSKI JR.
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

STONEHAM — New York City native and now Stoneham resident Maggie Whalen has spent most of her life entertaining children and adults as a hand puppeteer. Now, she's expanding her audience with a shadow puppet show specifically geared for older adults.

While living in NYC, a teenage Whalen became inspired in 1967 when she watched a PBS-televized presentation of puppeteers.

"I happened to see some fabulous puppeteers, The Little Players, who performed for only adults in their Upper West Side apartment for a subscription audience," she explained. "I started



Maggie Whalen with Goldilocks puppet

PHOTOSUBMITTED

making puppets that same day." Soon afterward, she performed with her handmade puppets at a 4-year-old child's party.

"That was my first performance with an audience," she noted.

In 1971, she created and directed Poor People's Puppets with performances by two to four puppeteers. Their home base was a storefront theater on St. Mark's Place in Manhattan's East Village. She named the theater Balloon-Face Maggie's, recollecting a childhood nickname that her grandfather called her. Whalen enjoyed interacting with everyone involved with the puppet troupe.

"It was fun playing off of each other and other puppets,"

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Seniors learn the risks and impacts of opioid crisis

By JEAN BARILLA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

MARLBOROUGH - Middlesex District Attorney Marian T. Ryan gave an informative and enlightening presentation on the risks of opioids at the Marlborough Council on Aging at the Senior Center, July 11. Also at the meeting were State Representative Danielle Gregoire (D-Marlborough), Mayor Arthur Vigeant and Chief of Police David Giorgi, who spoke about the importance of educating ourselves on this important topic. Trish Pope, executive director of the Council on Aging, welcomed speakers and seniors to the event.

Seniors were served lunch, and received "File of Life" refrigerator magnets and personal wallet cards. These cards list medications, medical conditions, health insurance and other information helpful in a medical emergency. Call District Attorney Ryan's office at 781-897-8300 for information on how to obtain the cards.



Marlborough Council on Aging direction Trish Pope (l) and Middlesex District Attorney Marian T. Ryan

PHOTO:JEAN BARILLA

Opioids are medications prescribed for pain and include oxycodone (Oxycontin, Percocet), hydrocodone (Vicodin), Fentan-

yl and methadone. Street drugs such as heroin and cocaine are also opioids. They can be dangerous or deadly: even when taken as prescribed they can have serious side effects, such as depress-

ing breathing and death. Mixing them with other medications and alcohol can increase the death rate. Death rates from opioids have more than tripled in the U.S. since 1999. In Massachusetts state troopers responded to 800 fatal overdoses – 10 of them in Marlborough; 60,000 people were brought to emergency rooms with overdoses. Many were women of childbearing age, some pregnant, who went on to give birth to addicted infants.

Most people who take opioids for severe or chronic pain – such as cancer survivors, do so safely under their doctor's supervision. Because opioids can be addictive, some people become tolerant of the drug and start taking higher and higher doses or taking it more often – they feel "high" or euphoric. They become hooked on them because opioids also reduce anxiety. Things get out of hand and they turn

Opioid page 7

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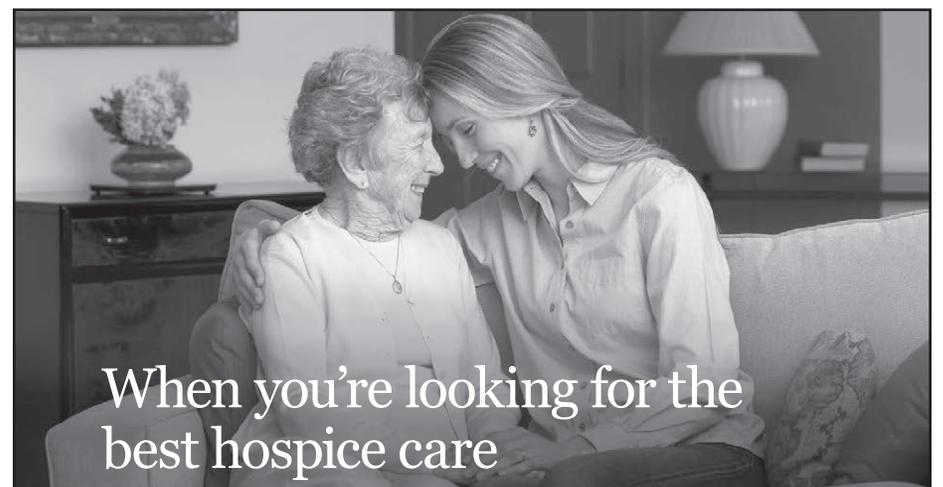
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Seniors learn the risks and impacts of opioid crisis

Opioid
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to street drugs like heroin when they can't get a prescription refill, or they find creative ways to get more pills. This includes borrowing pills from a friend or family member, or finding ways to get them from grandparents or other seniors. The addiction can be so strong that the whole day can be devoted to getting more of the drug.

Ways to get more opioids that escalate to more dangerous behavior:

- "Borrowing" a pill or two from a friend or family member, replacing it with aspirin;
- "Doctor shopping" to obtain more prescription medications – going to different doctors, often in another state;
- Going to an open house and stealing from the medicine cabinet;
- Selling grandpa's snow blower or lawn mower to get drug money;
- Stealing pet pain medications;
- Theft and prostitution to afford the cost of street drugs (usually heroin); and
- Theft by pharmacy employees who keep two or three pills from each prescription.

There are 34,000 grandparents in Massachusetts raising grandchildren, a 20-percent increase since 2005 – in four out of five times this is due to heroin use by the parent(s). What can

you do to ensure that you don't become a statistic?

Ways to safeguard medication from theft

When you get a prescription filled, know what the pill looks like – in the pharmacy, online or in a library the Physician's Desk Reference (PDR) will show the pill's color, size, and identifying letters or numbers on it. You can also ask the pharmacist. Count the number of pills when you get home and notify the pharmacy if the count is incorrect. Don't keep medications where they are easy to reach, put them away. If you have to remember to take them, set an alarm.

How to identify signs of drug addiction in a loved one or others with access to your home

Know the signs of addiction in family members or anyone often in your home: a change in eating habits, constant scratching, always wearing long sleeves, pills missing (finding out you are short of pills before the next prescription). Also teaspoons missing (used to heat drugs) and aluminum foil (used to wrap drug powders) missing are signs of a drug user. Don't keep medications where house cleaners and workers can easily get them.

How to properly dispose unused or expired medication

If you don't finish an opioid medication, discard it – but not down the drain, toilet or in the

garbage. The Marlborough Police Department has a prescription collection box or will pick it up if you can't bring it in. Call 508-485-

1212, ext. 36966. Even non-opioid medications like heart medicine or "water pills" can cause harm to children, pets or the environment.

Support Services for Grandparents:

- IHR Family Engagement Project
617-661-3991 or healthrecovery.org
- Learn to Cope, 508-738-5148 or learn2cope.org
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- Hawthorne Hill - Rutland
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- Sherwood Village - Natick
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Local foundation helps with testing and treatment of Lyme disease

SUBMITTED BY MICHELE MILLER
CENTRAL MASS LYME
FOUNDATION INC.

REGION - Lyme disease is one of the most misunderstood and controversial diseases across our country. Getting properly diagnosed and treatment options are extremely difficult. I quickly found this out after losing my Mom, Jeanne to complications from untreated late-stage Lyme disease. Mom was full of life until she developed a rash on her upper back while spending the winter in Florida in early 2011. The non-blistering rash was quickly diagnosed as shingles and she was prescribed a steroid. Her health would never be the same after that.

If you had asked me a few years back what Lyme disease was, I would have thought that after a tick bite you would get a bulls-eye rash and your doctor

would prescribe a dose of antibiotics. All would then be OK, as so many think. But I soon found out it wasn't.

In May 2011, Mom came back from Florida and had trouble with her speech. My brother and I feared that she had a mild stroke, so an MRI was performed, and then reviewed by a chief neurologist. A month later, Mom received what she described as a death sentence: she was told she had ALS, otherwise known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Her quality of life with this diagnosis would diminish rather quickly. Mom questioned the diagnosis and heard that a local holistic physician, who fortunately was Lyme literate, could possibly help. Her first appointment with this doctor reviewed her medical records and he ordered both the Elisa and Western Blot tests to determine what my Mom had been battling. These

tests would be sent to a Lyme specific laboratory in Palo Alto, Calif. This lab has the highest accuracy for testing. Our next appointment four weeks later, he would diagnosis her with late stage Lyme disease and also having several co-infections, such as Babesia and Bartonella. Aggressive antibiotic treatment was prescribed but we were not aware at that time that this treatment could either kill her or save her. The next one-and-a-half years I would have to watch my Mom lose her capacity to talk, walk or swallow. Months later, unable to eat, she needed a feeding tube that would cause her to succumb to complications from aspiration pneumonia. Seeing her in this debilitating state has not easily been erased from memory. I was angry that the medical system had failed her and recognized that I needed to seek a grief counselor for witnessing the pain my Mother had endured.

er had endured.

I knew many others were suffering in silence and my husband, Ken and I founded the 501c3 organization, The Central Mass Lyme Foundation in 2014, a year after my mom's passing. We help others get properly tested and treated through a Lyme literate physician. We have monthly meetings in Worcester and bring guest speakers to our group who can help.

On Saturday, Sept. 23, at the Worcester Technical High School, 1 Skyline Drive, in Worcester, we are having our third conference on Lyme disease. We bring in top professionals from all around the country to help educate the general public. For more information about our foundation or our upcoming conference, visit www.CentralMassLyme.org or www.CentralMassLymeConference.com

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Stoneham woman keeps hand in puppetry for five decades

Puppeteer

Continued from page 4

she said. “I’ve never worked from a script or played a recording instead of using my voice in a puppet show. When you’re improvising with somebody it can be really fun because you don’t know what they or the audience is going to say. I always include some audience interaction – that keeps it fresh for me.”

Whalen moved to Massachusetts in the mid-1970s. During the summer of 1974, she interacted on a larger scale with the Bread and Puppet Theater, a politically radical puppet troupe in Glover, Vt., founded by Peter Schumann. There, she created costumes, and operated giant puppets and masks as part of its annual Domestic Resurrection Circus.

“Peter Schumann’s shows are overtly political; my politics come through in more subtle ways,” she said. “For example, I have

two female tailors in ‘The Emperor’s New Clothes’ and Amelia is the little pig who builds the brick house in my ‘Three Little Pigs’ show.”

In 1976, Whalen began doing business as Magpie Puppets, for which she continues to create and perform puppet shows for all ages at various venues. From 1989 through 2007, she taught puppetry periodically at Club Med in the Bahamas, Dominican Republic and Guadeloupe. Additionally, she has taught puppet-making workshops and built custom-made puppets for individuals, theaters and filmmakers.

One of her custom-made puppets appears in a documentary about Brother Theodore, a German-born American comedian, who passed away at age 94 in 2001. The documentary, titled “To My Great Chagrin: The Unbelievable Story of Brother Theodore” by filmmaker

Jeff Sumerel, premiered in 2008 at the Museum of Modern Art in NYC. Whalen was invited and attended the premiere. Joining her puppet in the film are a number of notable performers including Woody Allen. Dick Cavett, Henry Gibson and Penn & Teller.

Early in her career, Whalen supplemented puppetry projects with part-time legal secretarial work. In 1993, she earned a bachelor’s degree in therapeutic applications of the creative arts at UMass Amherst University Without Walls. In 1996, she received a master’s degree in occupational therapy at Tufts University, Department of Occupational Therapy, in Medford.

Having worked as an occupational therapist (OT) at Veterans Administration and rehabilitation facilities, Whalen said, “I always wanted to work with that population again, but didn’t want to do it as an OT. I also want-

ed to try my hand at creating a shadow puppet show.”

In the past two years, Whalen has been presenting “Shadow, Songs and Stories” at assisted living facilities.

“It’s a market that’s pretty much untapped,” she said. “Most people I perform for have never seen a shadow puppet show and have never seen a puppet show for adults. Also, it’s nice to have a calm audience for a change.”

Whalen is also looking forward to increasing her performances at venues such as senior centers.

“Reasons I like puppetry are because I like to sew, paint, draw, act and sculpt with clay – puppetry lets me do all that,” she said. “I do wish I had a roadie and a driver, but all the rest is great.”

For more information, visit magpiepuppets.com and on Facebook at [facebook.com/magpiepuppets](https://www.facebook.com/magpiepuppets).

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Sheriff plays host to over 1,000 seniors at annual picnic

SHREWSBURY – Each year, the office of Worcester County Sheriff Lewis Evangelidis hosts a picnic for senior citizens at the SAC Park in Shrewsbury. The event, which features a meal of cookout favorites, games, entertainment and raffles, is always a popular draw for local senior. And this year’s event, held on a hot and humid Aug. 19, was no different. In fact, with over 1,100 guests attending, it was the biggest picnic yet, according to the sheriff’s office.

On his Facebook page, Evangelidis praised the 250 volunteers, including the entire Nichols College football team, who helped to make the event once again a huge success.

“This tremendous community event would not be possible without the Worcester County Reserve Deputy Sheriff’s Association as well as many generous donations from local businesses and elected officials,” he added. “Proud to be part of the biggest and best senior picnic ever!”

For more photos and a video from the event, visit www.fiftyplusadvocate.com.



(l to r) Nicholas Anderson, Pat Porter, Zack Fashaw, Malikai Holan and Alex Swaby help out at the senior picnic. All are members of the Nichols College football team.



PHOTOS/JERRY CALLAGHAN, CALLAGHAN PHOTOGRAPHY



Right: Sheriff Lewis G. Evangelidis and Worcester Mayor Joe Petty

Left: Seniors enjoy the picnic hosted by Worcester County Sheriff Lewis Evangelidis.

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Venice: Explore the history and charm of this ancient city

Venice

Continued from front page

aristocratic families between the 12th and 17th centuries. They contrast with the more modest homes which overlook the maze of narrow, twisting side canals.

One focus of visitors is what Venice does not have: cars or trucks. It does have boats -- lots of them and of various kinds. What elsewhere would be buses, taxis, fire trucks, ambulances, police cars and every other kind of vehicle that make a city function, in Venice is a boat.

At the same time, Venice is a perfect walking city. It's flat, and there are no vehicles with which to contend. Instead, the challenge is finding your way in the complicated network of pedes-

trian streets, and visitors often find themselves temporarily lost.

That's fine, because some of the best discoveries are made by people searching for a specific site. You might wander into a city square with an outdoor cafe and stop for a snack. You're likely to see a street artist drawing on the sidewalk, and musicians playing for tips. You may enter a church which contains precious paintings and other works of art.

The other mode of transportation is boats, and here there's a choice. The famous gondolas are the classic Venetian boat, having originated there centuries ago. Because gondola rides are relatively expensive, they're used mostly by visitors seeking the experience and for weddings and



An ancient building in Venice.

PHOTO/RON LIMA | DREAMSTIME.COM



Ancient houses along the canal.

PHOTO/ RON LIMA | DREAMSTIME.COM

other special occasions.

Those who wish to experience a less costly gondola ride may take a traghetto (ferry). They're convenient for people who wish to cross the Grand Canal between the four bridges

which span it.

Boat buses called a vaporetto follow a prescribed route, and are the mode of transportation for many Venetians.

Two islands reachable by Venice page 14

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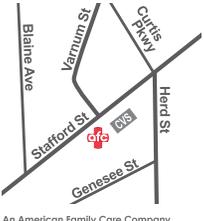
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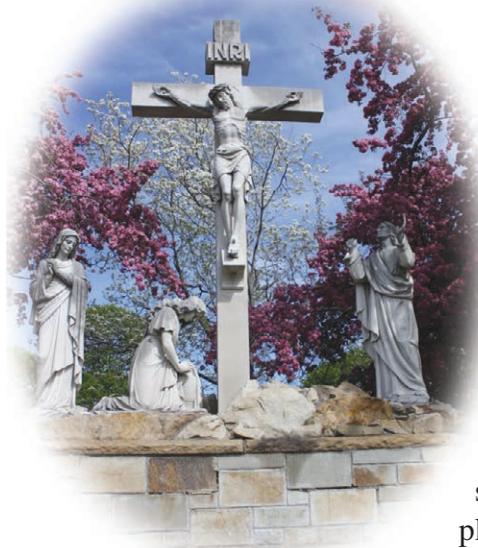


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Venice: Explore the history and charm of this ancient city

Venice
Continued from page 12

boat rank high on the list of attractions that many visitors wish to see. Murano has been a famous center for making decorative glass since the 12th century. Several furnace buildings where glass is fashioned into all manner of items are open to the public, and it's fascinating to watch skilled artisans at work, then see the finished products in the gift shops.

The nearby island of Burano makes two claims to fame. It has a long history as a fishing village, and the lovely lace which is made and sold there evolved long ago from weaving fish nets. The other attraction is the houses, many of which are painted in a rainbow of dazzling colors.

The most popular destination in Venice is Piazza San Marco (San Marco Square), an immense plaza surrounded by magnificent buildings that of-



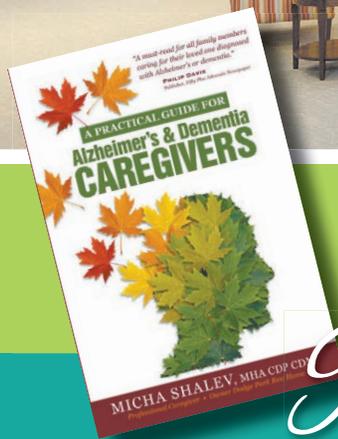
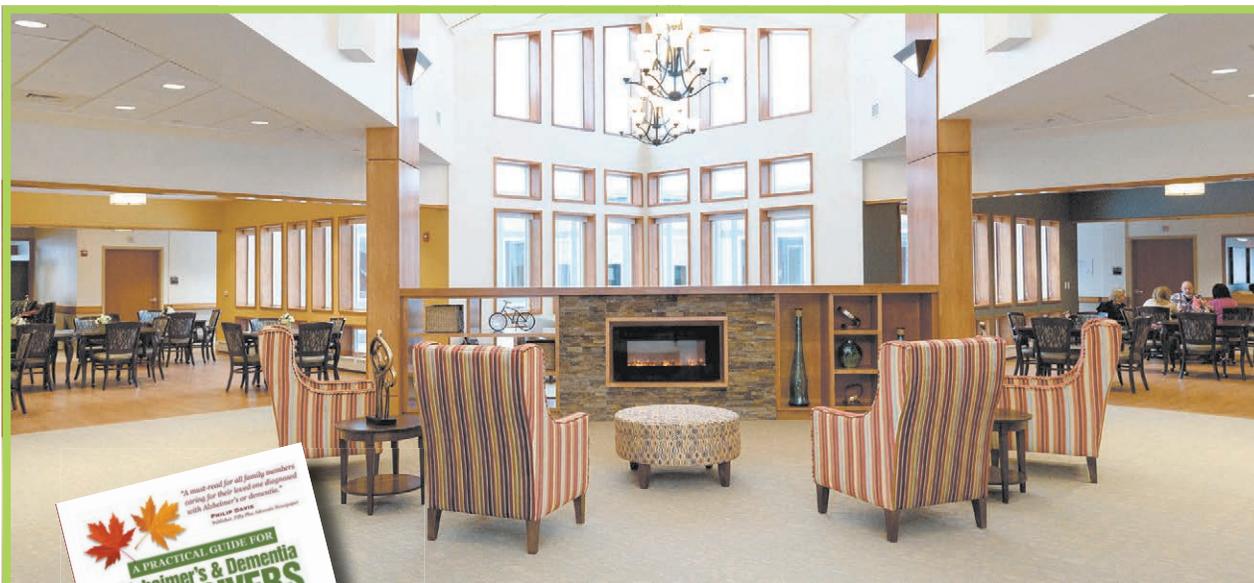
An old street in Venice.

PHOTO/MARIAPHOTOGRAPHY10 | DREAMSTIME.COM

ten is jammed with tourists and always with pigeons. Work on the San Marco Church began in 1063 and it was expanded

and decorated over centuries. Whenever people visit Venice, they'll find one of the most magnificent cities in the world,

and one that offers an enticing choice of things to see and do. For information about Venice, log onto en.turismovenezia.it.



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'Our Bodies, Ourselves' co-author carries on mission

BY JANE KELLER GORDON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

REGION - Joan Ditzion, now 74, had no idea that joining Bread and Roses, an early woman's movement group, would change her life. An art educator at the time, she became one of 12 co-authors of the ground breaking book, "Our Bodies, Ourselves," which is now celebrating its 45th anniversary.

"Our Bodies, Ourselves" was a go-to source for a generation of woman who were empowered by knowing more about themselves. First published in 1973, it was an instant bestseller, which the co-authors never anticipated.

"I think that it changed people's conversations about reproduction, sexuality and woman's health," Ditzion said.

A New York Time's writer called "Our Bodies, Ourselves" a "feminist classic." In 2012, the Library of Congress included it in a



Joan Ditzion

list of "Books That Shaped America," along with "Silent Spring," "Beloved," and "To Kill a Mockingbird."

Ditzion worked on all of the

next nine editions of the book, which has been translated into 30 languages. The most recent edition was published in 2011. She also was a part of "Our Bodies, Menopause" and "Ourselves and Our Children."

After growing up in a progressive family in New York, Ditzion graduated from City College, and then headed to the University of California, Berkeley to pursue a master's degree in art education. About her time in Berkeley, Ditzion said, "I was arrested during the free speech movement."

She already had strong feelings about women's rights and social justice when she moved to Cambridge in 1969 with her physician husband.

That year, Ditzion and her

Bread and Roses colleagues organized a women's conference at Emmanuel College.

Ditzion said, "We needed to understand what women's lives were about, and not from a male perspective."

The "Doctor's Group" was formed by 20 women from the conference. Together, they wrote "Women and Their Bodies," an evidence-based, carefully researched 193-page pamphlet covering woman's health issues, sexuality and psychology. The pamphlet included stories from many women who attended the conference.

Printed on newsprint and stapled, the pamphlet was circulated in 1970.

By 1971, still a pamphlet, it was renamed "Our Bodies, Ourselves," and published by the New England Free Press.

That year, the group incorporated as the Boston Women's
Our Bodies page 17



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Singer-guitarist hopes lifelong long love of music continues with new ventures

By BONNIE ADAMS
MANAGING EDITOR

Dennis Caussade's life has been one filled with academics, service, and family. He is currently employed in the human service field and is very committed to his job. But music has also always been a passion and now at age 50, he is hoping to take that hobby to another level. And much to his delight, others are taking notice of his talent as well.

Caussade grew up in Maryland in a family where medicine was very important. His parents, who are from Puerto Rico originally, both pursued careers in that discipline. His father, Jose, was a physician who practiced in Maryland. His mother, Ana, was a nurse who earned a master's degree and eventually became



Dennis Caussade

the Director of Patient Care at a Veterans Administration Hospital in Maryland.

"She was 30 when she came to the States and didn't speak any English," Caussade said.

"She is a very strong lady."

Like many young people, music was an integral part of his life growing up.

"When I was around 8 or 9, I just loved the Beatles," he said. "They were such a big influence on me."

The ballad, "Michelle," even inspired him to write his own tune, "Nancy".

"The lyrics I wrote weren't exactly appropriate for me to be singing at that time," he laughed. "Let's just say I really didn't understand what I was singing!"

Nevertheless, he continued to enjoy music, learning and then playing guitar throughout his teens.

Caussade took a different path other than medicine, choosing to get his bachelor's and then master's degree in social work.

While in college, although he continued to play guitar and sing at different events, academics was his priority.

"I did well but struggled a little bit. So I really made it a priority to focus on [academics]," he said.

Music served as a way to help him deal with that pressure.

"It's always been a way for me to channel my stress and anxiety," he said. "Instead of drugs or alcohol, I played my guitar."

At one point, Caussade actually seriously considered becoming an ordained Catholic priest, going as far as having discussions with the then Cardinal of Baltimore. After much introspection, he decided not to pursue that path, and instead took a job working in the field of human services.

In 1997, he met his wife Louise and the two married in 1999. In 2004, their daughter Claire was born.

Both are very supportive of his passion for performing, he said.

"I've played at different events like fundraisers and open mics," he said. "I've also been invited to perform at festivals in New Bedford and Newport, RI."

In September, he will play one of his biggest gigs yet when he performs several sets at the Big E in Springfield.

Caussade said his style is reminiscent of James Taylor and his favorite Beatle, Paul McCartney. He performs covers of popular songs as well as his own material.

"They are mostly ballads based on feelings and emotions from my own life," he said.

But as talented as others may feel he is, it is actually Claire, he said, who is the true musician in the family.

"We have played together a few times and she is more talented than me, for sure," he said.

As humble as he is, Caussade is nonetheless excited and inspired when complimented on his music.

"People say they think I am good and that they like my music," he said. "So I am just excited to see where it all leads next!"

He is currently recording a CD at True Music Studios in Greenville, R.I. and enjoys playing his Furch acoustic guitar which he recently purchased.

To hear Caussade's music visit his Facebook page and YouTube Channel.

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'Our Bodies, Ourselves' co-author carries on mission

Our Bodies

Continued from page 15

Health Book Collective (BWH-BC). They signed a deal with Simon and Schuster to publish a book.

"The proceeds would support the collective. We had editorial control, and we were happy to have worked in a clause to get a Spanish translation, and a discount for clinic copies," Ditzion said.

When the first edition was published, Ditzion recalled showing it to her grandfather who was at the Hebrew Home for the Aged in Riverdale, New York. "He opened the book and said, 'Hymie, come on over here and look,'" she chuckled.

The BWHBC went on to update nine editions of "Our Bodies, Ourselves," and expand its reach into books on menopause, pregnancy and birth, children, teens,

"I think that there is a mobilization of new issues, and I think it's important for women of all ages to work together to defend the gains we've made."

Joan Ditzion

and growing older. The work of the collective continues, now globally, through an active website and social media.

Ditzion was the first in the Boston Woman's Health Collective to become a mother after the book was published. Some already had children.

"I felt like choosing to be a mother was an important choice in the context of reproductive choice for all," she said. "I stayed

home and did book work at that time."

She had her first of two sons in 1974. She finds humor in being the mother of sons, and grandmother of three grandsons.

"My daughters-in-law are wonderful," she added.

Ditzion is still enjoying a long career as clinical social worker, with a focus on geriatrics. She earned her MSW at Simmons in 1983.

Much of her work now focuses on ageism. She is passionate about our changing view of lifespan, and hopes to see ageing with a sense of power, purpose and affirmation.

She said, "We are pioneers in a way. We are in a living lab, with no expert knowledge about what this is about."

Commenting on today's politics, she said, "The younger generations of women are now seeing the misogyny and sexism that contributed to the women's movement in the 1960s. I think that there is a mobilization of new issues, and I think it's important for women of all ages to work together to defend the gains we've made."

"We are standing on the shoulders of women who came before us."

Ditzion herself is still standing tall.

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Caregiving tips

Common myths of aging

By MICHA SHALEV
MHA CDP CDCM

By the year 2030, approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population (71 million people) will be over the age of 65 years (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Merck Company Foundation, 2007).



Caregiving Tips

with the expert knowledge necessary for caring for older adults. The purpose of this article is to discuss few common myths about aging (I am sure there are a lot more, but

Despite this current trend in aging, relatively few healthcare professionals are prepared

I will try and focus on the most important ones)

Like any form of bias, ageism has led many of us to make false assumptions about seniors. As mentioned, society holds several myths about the elderly. Many of these myths may be easily disputed based on data from the U.S. Census and other studies.

•Myth: Most older adults do not have enough money and end up becoming destitute.

Fact: As of 2009, only 8.9 percent of Americans 65 years of age and older live in poverty, which is lower than the overall poverty rate in the United States (14.3 percent). This population is also more likely to have health insurance coverage than the general population. In 2009, only 1.9 percent of adults 65 years of age and older had no health insurance coverage, compared to 16.7 percent of all adults in the United States.

•Myth: Most older adults live alone and are isolated.

Fact: According to a survey conducted in 2009, nine out of 10 individuals 65 years of age and older stated they talked to family and friends on a daily basis. In terms of living arrangements, the percentage of those 65 years and older living alone has slightly decreased, from 28.8 percent in 1990 to 27.4 percent in 2008. An estimated 66.2 percent of those 65 years of age and older resided in a household with others. The statistics are also significantly different when the age cohorts are broken down further. An estimated 76.1 percent of Americans 65 to 74 years of age, and 60.3 percent of those 75 to 84 years of age reside in a household with others. This may be due in part to an increase in multigenerational households. In 2008, an estimated 16 percent of the U.S. population lived in a household comprised of two adult generations or a grandparent or at least one other generation, compared to 12 percent in 1980. This multigenerational household trend has particularly affected those 65 years and older. Several factors have contributed to this trend, including the poor economy, an increase in immigrants, and adults getting married later.

•Myth: Many older Americans end up living in nursing homes.

Fact: In 2006, only about 4.4 percent of adults 65 years of age and older lived in nursing homes. Of those who reside in nursing homes, they tend to be the oldest-old (85 years of age and older); three-quarters of nursing home residents are the oldest-old and women.

•Myth: Most older adults engage in very minimal productive activity.

Fact: U.S. Census data shows

37.8 percent of individuals 65 years of age and older worked full-time in the past 12 months (41.8 percent of men and 32.7 percent of women in this age group). The elderly are more engaged in self-employed activities than younger persons. In 2003, 14.3 percent of those 65 years of age and older were self-employed, compared to 6.8 percent of those 25 to 54 years of age.

•Myth: Life satisfaction is low among the elderly.

Fact: Field examined data from the Berkeley Older Generation Study and found that many elders are quite satisfied with their life. More than one-third (36 percent) of persons older than 59 years of age and 15 percent of those older than 79 years of age stated they were currently experiencing the best time in their lives. A 2009 survey found that 60 percent of individuals 65 years of age and older stated they were very happy. Most of the factors that predict happiness for the young, such as good health and financial stability, also apply to the elderly.

•Myth: Old people feel old.

Fact: According to a 2009 telephone survey, only 21 percent of individuals 65 to 74 years of age stated they felt old, and only 35 percent of those 75 years of age and older reported feeling old.

The truth about aging aging is inevitable, but poor health is not. Regular exercise, nutritious foods, and a lucky roll of the genetic dice can help you age with grace and good health. Incorporating certain herbs and spices into your daily routine, like turmeric, can also help override genetic tendencies and enhance your overall well-being throughout life.

What do you do to feel young? Send me an email to the address below and share your experiences.

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Micha Shalev MHA CDP CDCM CADDCT is the owner of The Oasis at Dodge Park, Dodge Park Rest Home and The Adult Day Club at Dodge Park located at 101 and 102 Randolph Road in Worcester. He is a graduate of the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners program, and well-known speaker covering Alzheimer's and dementia training topics. He can be reached at 508-853-8180 or m.shalev@dodgepark.com or view more information online at www.dodgepark.com

money matters

Know the true cost of a reverse mortgage

By ALAIN VALLES, CRMP
PRESIDENT,
DIRECT FINANCE CORP.

You've heard the word reverse mortgage and likely know that for those who qualify they can receive a lump sum of cash, a monthly stream of cash, a line of credit that grows



Reverse Mortgage

over time, or any combination of the three. All without ever being required to make a monthly payment for the rest of their lives as long as the real estate taxes and insurance are paid and other guidelines met.

But, the perception persists that reverse mortgages are expensive. With improvements

When used properly, a reverse mortgage may be the solution to living an independent fulfilling life. But lack of understanding has led to many misconceptions...

to the program, the cost of many reverse mortgages has dropped by over 30 percent. And in some cases, there are no closing costs. But "cost" should be viewed in terms of your goal to be financially independent, stay in your home, and have peace of mind about your financial future. Below are the most important "cost" issues to consider.

Cost compared to a traditional mortgage
Obtaining a conventional

loan is not always less expensive. If you currently have a large mortgage balance the cost of a reverse mortgage can often be substantially reduced. If you have no mortgage than the reverse mortgage will likely be more expensive than a traditional refinancing. The good news is the upfront out-of-pocket costs are very similar. Another advantage of a reverse mortgage are the more lenient qualification guidelines. There are even options for those with lack of in-

come or poor credit histories.

Cost to move

Many people don't factor in the cost of moving. A real estate agent commission of 6 percent, needed home improvements, paying a moving company, getting rid of personal belongings, and the emotional cost of downsizing is very expensive. Selling a \$300,000 house can cost over \$30,000. And where will you live? Can you afford to pay rent? Even moving in with relatives is seldom free. A reverse mortgage gives you the option to afford to stay in your own home and remain financially independent.

Cost of indecision

To me, this is the biggest challenge for seniors contemplating a reverse mortgage. Making a decision by indecision leaves the outcome to fate. Putting off talking to a reverse

Reverse mortgage page 20

SUPER CROSSWORD PUZZLE

"Chow Time"

(answers on page 20)

- ACROSS**
- 1 Last letter, to Brits
 - 4 Peeve
 - 8 Family car
 - 13 Scenic views, as of sea or land
 - 19 Schooner fill
 - 20 State boldly
 - 21 Put forth, as energy
 - 22 Nook
 - 23 All-points bulletin, e.g.
 - 26 Little laugh
 - 27 Bits
 - 28 Pulitzer Prize category
 - 29 "Great" title film role for Robert Duvall
 - 30 Politico Kefauver
 - 31 Pellets of precipitation
 - 32 Raising false alarms
 - 35 Low grade
 - 36 Barnyard feed
 - 37 CEO's "C"
 - 38 Broadway honors
 - 39 Candid
 - 41 Mer liquid
 - 43 San — (California county or city)
 - 45 Distinctive barnyard sound
 - 50 Stephen of "Angie"
 - 51 Cat's gripper
 - 55 28-Across set to music
 - 56 Actress Maryam or Olivia
 - 57 Makes whole
 - 59 Facts and figures
 - 60 Snail as food
 - 62 — Bator, Mongolia
 - 64 Dangler on a grad's cap
 - 66 201, to Ovid
 - 67 Storm flash
 - 71 Antique
 - 72 Soapsuds
 - 74 Brain flash
 - 75 "The Creation" by Haydn, e.g.
 - 77 Spots in la Seine
 - 78 Boogie, e.g.
 - 81 Warty animal
 - 83 Rear- — (car crash)
 - 84 Irsksome sort
 - 85 Adam's madam
 - 86 Decorative cloth laid atop a bureau
 - 89 Wide-ranging
 - 91 Lyrical verse
 - 92 Per-unit cost
 - 93 Big foil maker
 - 97 See 89-Down
 - 99 Sneaking
 - 100 Needlefish
 - 103 A team often punts on it
 - 105 Really slow
 - 107 Berry of "X-Men" films
 - 109 Emu and ostrich
 - 110 Hopping mad
 - 112 Indemnified
 - 113 Sneaker part
 - 114 Richard Belzer's "Homicide: Life on the Street" role
 - 117 Lined the roof of
 - 118 15% taker
 - 119 1492 ship
 - 120 AFL partner
 - 121 Actor James of "Gunsmoke"
 - 122 Sapheads
 - 123 Not hidden
 - 124 What the ends of 23-, 32-, 45-, 67-, 86-, 103- and 114-Across are
 - 124 synonyms of
- DOWN**
- 1 Gave an electric jolt
 - 2 "The River" actress
 - 3 Backspace
 - 4 Spiked clubs
 - 5 Currier's art partner
 - 6 Grazed, e.g.
 - 7 TGIF's "F"
 - 8 Neighbor of a petal
 - 9 Quiz's cousin
 - 10 Cut off, e.g.
 - 11 Bow shape
 - 12 Indefinitely large
 - 13 The enemy below?
 - 14 Hold firmly
 - 15 Second play section
 - 16 Magical drink
 - 17 Fair way to divvy things
 - 18 Small letter flourishes
 - 24 Drink cubes
 - 25 Lanka lead-in
 - 29 Strained
 - 31 Shamefaced
 - 33 Top of a cup
 - 34 Pine (for)
 - 36 "You there!"
 - 37 — -de-sac
 - 39 Gumbo soup vegetable
 - 40 Big name in eye care
 - 41 Die away
 - 42 Was plentiful
 - 44 Neighbor of Boyle Hts., California
 - 45 Bicycle pedal add-on
 - 46 Affluent
 - 47 Lists orally
 - 48 Cussword
 - 49 Arose (from)
 - 51 They made vinyl passe
 - 52 Former Dodgers manager Tommy
 - 53 Artist's workplace
 - 54 Staller's Muppet sidekick
 - 58 Leeds loc.
 - 61 Building beam
 - 63 Big fish story
 - 65 Verify
 - 68 Habitual idiosyncrasy
 - 69 Snake types
 - 70 Tidy
 - 73 33rd U.S. prez
 - 76 In time past
 - 79 Eschews "Groovy!"
 - 80 "Sugar suffix
 - 82 Turn bad
 - 88 Sunshine bit
 - 89 With 97-Across, has a huge fight
 - 90 — Jones Industrials
 - 93 Benin locale
 - 94 Auto shop courtesy
 - 95 Interrupts rudely
 - 96 Blue Jay rival
 - 98 As one
 - 99 Flying flocks
 - 100 Look quickly
 - 101 Keys of song
 - 102 Fiery
 - 104 Is mindful of
 - 105 Alliances
 - 106 Homer hitter Mel
 - 107 Macho type
 - 108 "The Simpsons" storekeeper
 - 111 City with lots of slots
 - 112 Painter Magritte
 - 114 Pops
 - 115 Self-esteem
 - 116 "C'est la —!"

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viewpoint

Clean repeal, skinny repeal. It all came to nothing

By AL NORMAN

How often do we get to see elected officials voting on Nothing?

That's what it came to in Congress the other day. The U.S. Senate could not muster the votes to even discuss "repealing and replacing" the Affordable Care Act. But they exerted more pressure on their members, and finally managed to vote 51-50

to begin to debate some version of repealing the Affordable Care Act. They came up with a replacement bill that would have allowed insurance companies to offer cheap, "stripped down" policies that did not meet federal standards. But that bill lost by a vote of 43 to 57. With



Push Back

conservatives and moderates balking at the "replacement" bill, the leadership turned to a new option: repeal Obamacare. No replacement, just what they called a "clean repeal."

On July 19, the Congressional Budget Office issued a 19-page "score" of H.R. 1628, the Obamacare Repeal Reconciliation Act of 2017, which would repeal the Affordable Care Act, known as "Obamacare," and replace it - with Nothing.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, if the Clean Repeal bill passed:

- the number of people who would have no health insurance would increase by 17 million in 2018, rising to 27 million by 2020, and 32 million by 2036;
- the average premium for an individual health care plan in the non-group market would rise by 25 percent in 2018, increasing to 50 percent in 2020, and doubling by 2026;
- half of the nation's popula-

tion would live in areas having no insurance companies participating in the non-group insurance market by 2020, rising to 75 percent of the nation's population by 2026; and

- repeal of the Medicaid-expanded eligibility under the Affordable Care Act would cut Medicaid spending by \$842 million between 2017 and 2026.

On July 26, the Senate tried to pass a Repeal and Replace bill, which failed. Then they filed the Clean Repeal bill - but it failed on a 45 to 55 vote. Just a handful of senators stood in the way of 32,000,000 Americans losing their health care. According to polling, the Repeal Obamacare bill had a favorability rating somewhere around 15 percent.

Lawmakers then pivoted from "Clean Repeal" to "Skinny Repeal," which would take away the Affordable Care Act mandate that everyone purchase health insurance, but would keep the mandate that all employers offer insurance to their workers. Republican leaders apparently concluded that the only bill which could pass the Senate was this "Skinny Repeal."

All this political maneuvering demonstrates one thing: the Majority Party in Congress cannot agree on one healthcare bill. They may have control over the House, the Senate and the White House - but they do not

have enough control to unify. So divided they fall.

During Senate debate, Minority Leader Chuck Shumer (D-NY) urged his colleagues not to destroy the Affordable Care Act: "We can work together to improve health care in this country. Turn back now before it's too late and millions and millions and millions of Americans are hurt so badly in ways from which they will never, ever recover."

The debate will continue, but after months of debate, the American public got just what Congress passed: Nothing.

Al Norman is the executive director of Mass Home Care. He can be reached at info@masshomecare.org or 978-502-3794. Archives of articles from previous issues can be read at www.fiftyplusadvocate.com.

Know the true cost of a reverse mortgage

Reverse mortgage
Continued from page 19

mortgage professional because everything is "fine" today only to be faced with an unfortunate life event and then wishing you had access to cash is so painful. There is nothing more demoralizing than hearing, "I should have gotten a reverse mortgage when I had the chance!" Regret can be haunting when it can be avoided.

Cost of Misinformation

Our loved ones and trusted advisors have our best interests at heart. But when it comes to

reverse mortgages, more often than not, the advice being given is based on what they overheard - not the facts. Not everyone should get a reverse mortgage. But everyone should get reliable third-party facts in order to make your own informed decision. A great start is to receive your free National Council on Aging 36-page book called "Use Your Home to Stay at Home." And, with no obligation, I'll also be happy to share various scenarios for your situation. Just give me a call or email to receive your free copy today. dfcreverse-mortgage.com.

Alain Valles, CRMP and president of Direct Finance Corp., was the first designated Certified Reverse Mortgage Professional in New England and is the leading licensed loan officer in Massachusetts. He can be reached at 781-724-6221 or by email at av@dfcmortgage.com. Archives of articles from previous issues can be read at www.fiftyplusadvocate.com.

Answers to Super Crossword

(puzzle on page 19)

ZED	MIFF	SEDAN	SCAPES
ALE	AVER	EXERT	ALCOVE
POLICE	DISPATCH	TITTER	
PIECES	DRAMA	SANTINI	
ESTES	HAIL	CRYING	WOLF
DEE	HAY	CHIEF	TONYS
	OPEN	EAU	MATEO
TURKEY	GOBBLE	REA	CLAW
OPERA	DABO	MENDS	DATA
ESCARGOT	ULAN	TASSEL	
CCI	LIGHTNING	BOLT	OLD
LATHER	IDEA	ORATORIO	
ILES	DANCE	TOAD	ENDER
PEST	EVE	DRESSERS	SCARF
	BROAD	ODE	RATE
ALCOA	ITOUT	SLY	GAR
FOURTH	DOWN	POKY	HALLE
RATITES	IRATE	REPAID	
INSOLE	DETECTIVE	MUNCH	
CEILED	AGENT	NINA	CIO
ARNESS	DODOS	SEEN	EAT

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Walking a mile in their shoes

By MARIANNE DELOREY, PH.D.

“As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives.”



Housing Options

I have been working in affordable housing for over 25 years. I know about aging and disabilities. I also know about reasonable accommodations and modifications. I know that not all limitations are obvious to others and I know that many disabilities cannot be seen.

Despite everything I know, every once in a while I get stumped by a reasonable accommodation request. How do I meet that request? Do I really have to? What other ways can we meet that request? What questions can I ask? How do I ask those questions without infringing on the tenant's privacy?

There are very few one-size-fits-all solutions out there. And the best solutions, especially to unique situations, involve discussion between the landlord and the tenant.

“I am always grateful for the opportunity to learn from people who help me understand the world. I am most grateful to those who help me relearn the most important lessons in life.”

Today's story is about a tenant who needed a parking spot closer to the building. In elder housing, the vast majority of our residents need close parking, so this alone does not a story make. What makes this interesting is that this tenant is also an avid walker. Her neighbors started asking questions about how she can go walking one day and ask for handicapped parking the next day. Good question, I thought. I will ask.

Exactly how I asked was a challenge. She had certainly provided the appropriate information. Given what was documented, there was no question she needed the parking spot. I needed to ask gracefully and respectfully, but I also thought I needed to ask. And I did. And here is where I learned. Again. After 25 years in the industry.

You can have a disability and have good days. You can be perfectly well and have bad days. When you have a disability and you are well, you learn to embrace those days and enjoy the things you always enjoyed. You can exercise and be social and smile and laugh and even go for a walk. Having a good day does not mean that the bad days are

gested logical explanations for owing an extravagant item - they bought the phone before they became poor, they bought an older model phone, it was a gift, or (gasp) they saved their money.

Poor people should not have to justify how they spend their limited funds, and disabled people should not have to justify how they spend their good days. When you have the energy to enjoy life, we should all feel justified in living.

I am always grateful for the opportunity to learn from people who help me understand the world. I am most grateful to those who help me relearn the most important lessons in life. Deepening the mental path of empathy is truly one of life's greatest goals.

gone. Having a good day does not even mean that there are more good days than bad. All it means is that there was a good day.

Some folks are similarly confused by people of limited means who own nicer things.

Three months ago, Congressman Jason Chaffetz had to walk back accusations that poor people sometimes chose an iPhone over health insurance. Several commenters sug-

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The Warrior Queen, the Harmonizer, the Snark, etc.

By JANICE LINDSAY

Do I contradict myself? / Very well then I contradict myself, / (I am large, I contain multitudes.) From Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself."

Don't we all know that feeling? Aren't we all a bundle of contradictions? Don't we all contain multitudes? Don't we all surprise ourselves by dealing differently, at different times, with situations that seem to be alike? Don't we sometimes make a remark that feels outrageous and wonder, "Where did that come from?"

A woman I know very well has been identifying some of her inner selves, some of those "multitudes."

She has studied "The Vein of Gold," written by creativity guru Julia Cameron, author of the popular "The Artist's Way." In "The

Vein," Cameron describes "secret selves," those "hidden aspects [of our personalities] that we don't reveal in every day life."

Maybe we don't intend to reveal these personalities. But they sometimes peak out anyway.

This woman I know very well suspects that she has at least five very different secret selves.

"No wonder I'm confused," she said.

First, the Warrior Queen. When you're dealing with the Warrior Queen self, just do what she says and the world will be a better place. She knows what's right for everybody. If you're in school, you'd better study. She's checking your grades. If you're sick, take your medicine. She's counting the pills. The Warrior Queen will defend, to the death, your right to do exactly what she tells you to do.

Then there's the Contemplative Seeker. All she wants is to sit in a quiet, peaceful, comfortable place, all by herself, read good books, and think great thoughts. Whatever you do is not her busi-

ness. She will not interfere or even express an opinion, though she will send happy thoughts your way. You can see why she cringes when the Warrior Queen passes by.

Third, the Creative Eccentric. She says, "Let's go create something fabulous! Something new! Something so beautiful that the world will rise up and cheer!" The Contemplative Seeker finds the Creative Eccentric annoying - all that restless, aimless, activity. The Warrior Queen considers her irrelevant.

Then there's The Harmonizer. She feels responsible for making sure that the people around her are happy. Faced with friends who hold conflicting opinions, she'll find a compromise that might not keep everybody happy, but that will at least keep everybody unhappy to an equal degree. The other selves find the Harmonizer useful but boring.

Finally - last but don't risk calling her least - is the Snark. She thinks critical thoughts and expresses them in a sarcastic way.

The other four selves usually admit that she is right. But they're always telling her to shut up. The Warrior Queen doesn't want to have to fix any relationships broken by the Snark's sharp observations. The Contemplative Seeker doesn't like her judgmental language. The Harmonizer fears that the Snark will hurt somebody's feelings. The Creative Eccentric secretly records the Snark's clever remarks to use later, attributing them to somebody else. The Snark is the most secretive of the secret selves.

Sometimes when this woman - whom I know very well - has to make an important decision, she calls a meeting of her secret selves. Of course the Harmonizer facilitates. She's the only who knows how to run a meeting where everyone has an opportunity to express an opinion. The opinions will surely conflict. The Harmonizer will create a compromise that will then be presented to the world. None of the other secret selves will help with it.

Contact jlindsay@tidewater.net



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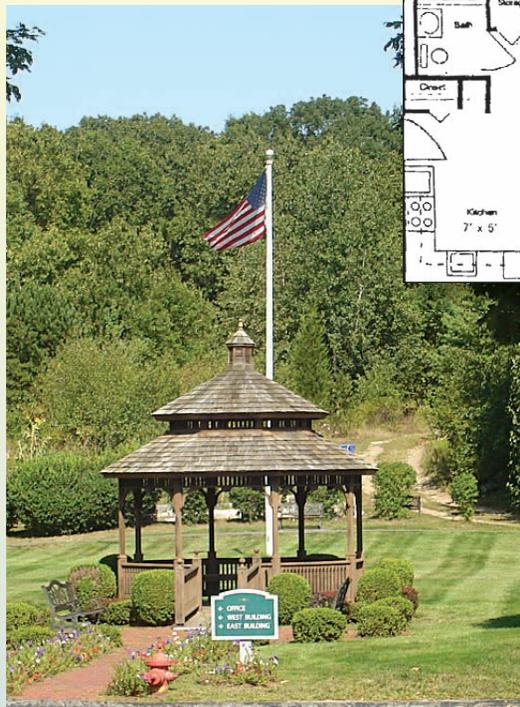
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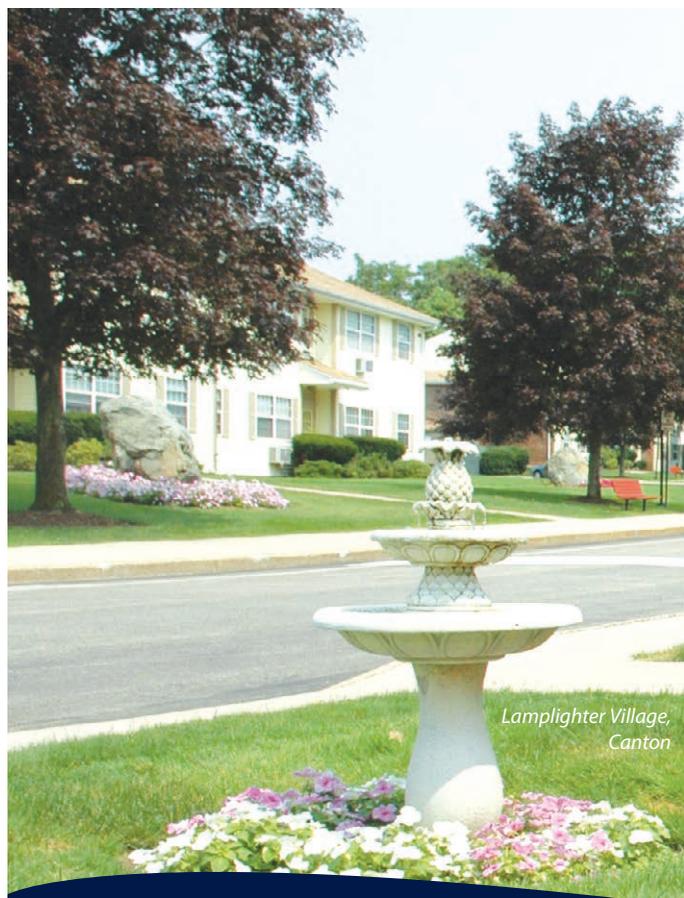
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