

August 2009

InsideCircle



**There's No
Place like Home**
Smart Remodeling

**Green your
Housecleaning**

**A Happy,
Healthy Heart**

Bone Tests
Not just
for women



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A Good Egg

Egg lovers, tap into a few new facts about this often mocked food.

For years, eggs have gotten a bad rap among the medical and dietetic communities because they are high in cholesterol. A large egg contains about 213 milligrams of cholesterol, found mostly in the yolk. According to The Mayo Clinic, healthy people are recommended to limit their dietary cholesterol intake to 300 milligrams daily. Individuals with cardiovascular disease, diabetes or high LDL (bad cholesterol) should limit daily cholesterol intake to under 200 milligrams. So, an egg really can have an impact on your daily diet, depending on your health.

However, there is a sunny side: that same egg contains only 5 grams of fat – including 1.5 grams of saturated fat, 6 grams of protein, 9 essential amino acids and just 70 calories. Here's what else is packed beneath that shell:



- Choline, an essential nutrient for brain function and healthy cell membranes.
- Lutein, a nutrient which can protect your eyes against macular degeneration and cataract development.
- Folate, which the body converts into energy.
- Iron and zinc.
- Vitamins B, D, A and E, which help with healthy skin, cell growth and night vision. The mineral selenium is a powerful antioxidant. The egg's high sulphur content is thought to stimulate hair and nail growth.

Saturated fat and cholesterol in the diet can impact the level of cholesterol in your blood, which is why the egg, rich in cholesterol, receives such attention. However, various studies have questioned the impact of dietary cholesterol on the body's cholesterol levels. A widely reported study

in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in recent years concluded that eggs alone do not have a significant impact on high cholesterol.

The American Heart Association has revised its stance on eggs slightly, deeming an egg a day to be an acceptable part of a healthy diet (as opposed to prior guidance limiting egg consumption to three or four a week), as long as dietary cholesterol from other sources is limited. However, it's important to remember to include foods that are prepared using eggs, such as breads or other baked goods, in your daily count.

Eggs are often incorporated in high-protein diets because of their capability to satisfy hunger and promote weight loss. Here are a few ways to healthily incorporate eggs into your diet:

- Use egg whites – which contain no cholesterol – in your favorite recipes. You can also use a combination of eggs, egg whites and cholesterol-free egg substitutes (made from egg whites) in recipes that call for more than one egg. Two egg whites or 1/4 cup of egg substitute can take the place of a single egg in breads, casseroles, quiches and other recipes.

• Poached, scrambled or hard-boiled eggs are healthier than fried eggs. If you must fry, use non-stick cooking spray or canola oil instead of butter.

• Watch what's on the side. Often, it's not the egg that's the culprit for cholesterol-raising, but the bacon, sausage and cheese which are rich in saturated fat. Try turkey bacon with that omelet, and fill it with healthy vegetables such as spinach, tomatoes, colorful peppers and low-fat cheeses.

Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

According to the Bible, the chicken came first: "And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.'" Genesis 1:10-20

White shelled eggs are produced by hens with white feathers and ear lobes. Brown shelled eggs are produced by hens with red feathers and red ear lobes.

An average hen lays 300 to 325 eggs a year. A hen starts laying eggs at 19 weeks of age.

A mother hen turns over her egg about 50 times per day (so the yolk won't stick to the sides of the shell).

Green Your House Cleaning

Create a healthy home and save money

As you're clearing cobwebs and dust bunnies and opening windows to let in fresh air, think about ways to tackle your house cleaning in a green, environmentally friendly way. Earth-friendly approaches to your cleaning routine are not only good for the environment, but also good for your health.

Freshen the indoors naturally. Newer houses are better insulated and more energy efficient than ever, but they don't allow for as much air flow between the indoors and outdoors as older homes do. The average home also includes a great deal of air pollutants: computer equipment, building materials and even some furniture. The resulting chemicals and irritants may contribute to allergies, sinus trouble, headaches, breathing trouble and other health problems.

Studies have shown that indoor air quality is two to five times worse than outdoor air pollution. In fact, indoor air pollution is one of the top five risks to environmental health, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Top that with the statistic that the average person spends anywhere from 65 to 90 percent of their time indoors!

Bring the outdoors in with potted house plants and cut flowers. The greenery not only adds cheer, but also filters the air inside your home, making it cleaner. Plants absorb pollutants from the air and give off oxygen as part of the natural photosynthesis process. One study found that houseplants can remove up to 87 percent of pollutants in the air of an average home.

A single plant can clean an estimated 100 square feet of air, according to doityourself.com.

Know your dust busters. Be sure that your vacuum cleaner has a HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter. This thickly woven filter can trap fine air particles - up to 99.97 percent of airborne particles 0.3 microns and larger. HEPA filters are now available on the commercial market.

Maintenance is important, too: this means checking, cleaning or replacing furnace and air filters at least every two months. HEPA filters are also available for your home's heating and air system. If you have a wood-burning fireplace, be sure to have the chimney and flue cleaned before retiring it for the warmer months.

Choose pure over artificial fragrance. Nothing smells as good as a sparkling clean home. If you choose to add fragrance, natural herbs or essential oils offer a variety of scents and don't contain the toxins that are present in many artificial sources. Air fresheners have dangerous chemicals which are toxic to the skin, respiratory and cardiovascular systems, poisonous if ingested, and considered to be carcinogens. Plug-in air fresheners have many of the same ingredients. Scented candles may not be a healthy option, either. Most are artificially fragranced, and some contain lead core wicks, which, when burned, can create unsafe lead concentrations.

To safely scent your home, boil a pot of water and steep fresh herbs or spices such as rosemary, cinnamon and clove - or place fragrant plants such as lavender, lily, tulip or lilac near an open window. For simple odor control, baking soda is a great deodorizer. Sprinkle baking soda on the carpet before vacuuming or



place an open box in areas where odors tend to gather: the refrigerator, bathrooms and areas frequented by pets.

What worked for grandma still works today. For healthy, earth-friendly cleaning, get back to basics. Many commercial household cleaning products contain numerous chemical agents that can irritate your eyes, skin and your respiratory system, especially if used in certain combinations. Be sure to read the labels on your favorite cleaning products – especially the warnings about products that should not be used together – and follow directions for their use.

Avoid using aerosol sprays, which can pollute the air with toxic solvents. While commercial products may be convenient, these products also leave deposits on the surfaces in your home and fill the air with potentially harmful ingredients.

Converting to green products may seem intimidating, but it's not as hard as you may think. Many major cleaning product manufacturers now offer a natural line of household cleaners. You can also make your own. Stock up on the following basics, which can be used alone or combined to make natural, safe and effective cleaning products: baking soda, washing soda (sodium carbonate), castile soap, hydrogen peroxide, lemon juice, white distilled vinegar, liquid soap, Borax, cream of tartar, club soda, and baby oil or tea tree oil.

Besides killing odors, did you know that baking soda can also remove stains? Or that salt makes a good abrasive cleaner for countertops or sinks? Instead of that lemon-scented wood cleaner, try olive oil and lemon juice to make a good wood polish. For wood floors that sparkle, polish them with club soda. Remove tarnish on silver by cutting a lemon and rubbing the utensils – or, for tough jobs, sprinkle baking

soda on the lemon, then rub. Brighten laundry by adding some strained lemon juice during the rinse cycle. Or, make your own all-purpose cleaner from borax, washing soda, vinegar and liquid soap.

By making your own cleaning products, you also cut back on your use of commercial packaging and plastics, thereby reducing your impact on the environment. Best of all, these items are budget-friendly and easy to find in your local grocery store. Happy scouring!

A Primer for Your Pantry

The following items can be used on their own or in a recipe for a good, homemade cleaning product.

- Baking soda: a mild, multi-purpose powder good for deodorizing, stain removal and general household cleaning.
- Borax: a water softener and sanitizer; sold as a powder or crystalline salt in most grocery stores; also deodorizes and freshens laundry.
- Castile soap: a mild, vegetable oil-based soap, good for general cleaning.
- Cream of tartar: removes stains from sinks and bathtubs, and spots from aluminum cookware.
- Hydrogen peroxide: A mild alternative to chlorine bleach that removes stains and kills germs.
- Lemon juice: cleans glass, lightens stains and cuts grease; removes tarnish from brass, copper, bronze and aluminum.
- Washing soda: a stronger version of baking soda, suitable for use as a water softener in the laundry; also cuts stubborn grease on grills and ovens.
- White vinegar: kills germs, deodorizes, removes mineral deposits and some carpet stains, and cleans chrome, cookware and countertops. Though vinegar has a pungent odor when wet, it leaves no scent after it is dry.

Power Plants

Add a bit of green to your décor and a boost to your home's atmosphere. These power plants are easy to care for – no green thumb required.

- Peace lily
- Bamboo or reed palm
- Chinese evergreen
- Spider plants
- Golden pothos
- Ficus
- Gerbera daisy
- English ivy
- Dracaena
- Mums
- Weeping fig
- Elephant ear
- Philodendron

Sources: treehugger.com, cleanairgardening.com



Find home cleaning recipes at the following Web sites:

- Greenerchoices.org
- Seventhgeneration.com
- eartheasy.com/live_nontoxic_solutions.htm
- treehuggingfamily.com/25-safe-non-toxic-homemade-cleaning-supplies/
- womenandenvironment.org/campaignsandprograms/SafeCleaning/recipes

Adventures on the Cape

Cape Cod is known for great seafood, beautiful beaches, history and culture – and the many luminaries who vacation there or call the area home. This coastal Massachusetts hamlet is an area rich with American heritage, as one of the first settlements in the United States. With over 500 miles of coastline, Cape Cod is also a longstanding haven for tourism.

Last October, 90 Senior Circle members from the Union County Hospital Chapter in Anna, Ill., and the Heartland Regional Chapter in Marion, Ill., embarked on a nine-day motorcoach tour of Cape Cod and the Plymouth Rock area. For many members, the trip was their first time on the East Coast. Heartland's Senior Advisor Mary Nash Swink shares highlights of the group's East Coast adventure.



Cape Cod is often referred to as Kennedy country, and although we weren't able to get close to the famous Kennedy family compound, we did have an informative visit to the JFK Museum in Hyannis. Perhaps the most famous attractions in the area are Martha's Vineyard, Provincetown and Hyannis. The area is rich in history with quaint small communities set against gorgeous landscapes.



UCH members Shirley Powles and Kay Rothschild enjoy a stroll on the beach in Chatham.

Cape Cod's small-town character and charm comes from the 15 towns that make up the area.



Replica of the Mayflower in Plymouth Rock

During our trip, members participated in guided tours of Chatham, Hyannis, Sandwich, Martha's Vineyard, Provincetown, and Falmouth. Each tour offered spectacular local culture and arts, great food and shopping. Memorable highlights included the Chatham



UCH members Jim and Karen Boyd, Janice Johnson and Glenda Goldsmith aboard the ferry to Martha's Vineyard.

Lighthouse, the Eastham Windmill and the Cape Cod Potato Chip factory. At the cranberry bogs, we learned how cranberries grow on vines in the water.

Just 7 miles off the Massachusetts coastline sits Martha's Vineyard. The short ferry ride to the island proved challenging for those members who did not have their sea legs, but the coastline provided spectacular views and photo opportunities. Some of the best whale watching can be experienced off the coast of Cape Cod at Stellwagen Bank.



HRMC members Charles and Robert Blankenship just "horsing" around.

Seafood is a major commodity in the Cape Cod area, from shellfish to lobster, and seafood restaurants were abundant. Our group partook of a New England-style lobster dinner one evening, complete with live Irish music.

Our trip also included visits to some significant historic sites nearby, including Plymouth Rock in Plymouth, Mass. For those who may be wondering, Plymouth Rock is just that – a rock. While in Plymouth, we boarded the Mayflower II, a full-scale reproduction of the ship that crossed the Atlantic in 1620.



Windmill in Cape Cod.

A visit to the Botanical Gardens in nearby Buffalo, New York and Niagara Falls made our trip complete. Despite the rain, the view at Niagara Falls was magnificent! The name "Niagara Falls" comes from the Native American word meaning "the neck" or "a split in the flat land." The American Falls is slightly higher than the Canadian Falls and only half as wide.

All of the touring members enjoyed connecting with our American heritage in the region where our country was born.

There's No Place Like Home

Smart remodeling in an unstable market can pay off in enhanced value, longevity of your home

Given recent national trends in real estate, more and more homeowners are choosing to invest in their current home rather than attempting to find something with the amenities they're yearning for.

Regardless of market conditions, it's always a good idea to consider ways to enhance the value of your home – whether you plan to sell in the future or enjoy the additions yourself. When considering a home remodeling project, do your homework. Whether you plan to stay or sell, certain additions are always a good investment and will maximize the value of your home, while others may not add as much to your home's worth in the long run.

While resale value is a consideration, you should consider ways to maximize your enjoyment of the home while you are living

there. Carefully planned enhancements can achieve both.

Consider the potential value of a home renovation in terms of what it will add to your family's comfort, convenience or use of a particular living area. What areas do you spend most of your time in? Could you benefit from additional space or amenities? A larger, newer kitchen or bonus room? A larger den or outdoor deck/patio? Think about traffic flow, whether there are children or grandchildren to consider, and how frequently you entertain.

Recent Credit

Home improvement tax credits were extended or raised in the recent federal bailout bill. This includes tax credits for new windows, doors, insulation and roofing. Visit energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr_tax_credits.

For a nominal fee, check contractor references for licensing, insurance and any legal actions at contractor.smartbusinessreports.com.



The bottom line

Projects that offer the best return on your investment, according to RealEstate.com, are kitchen renovations, bathroom remodeling projects, installing new vinyl or hardiplank siding and replacing wood windows. Those offering the least payback are a home office or a sunroom.

The industry primer on renovations is *Remodeling* magazine's annual Cost v. Value report, which looks at the average cost of popular renovations and upgrades in 60 cities across the country and the return for the dollar on each. A 2006 report said the cost of renovations has steadily increased nationwide, but the value added has fallen back to 2002 levels. It's rare that a remodeling project entirely pays for itself – but many do offer a return of 75 to 80 percent on the dollar at resale.

Top value-adding projects

According to *Remodeling's* 2008 report:

- Basement remodel, 72.9%
- Attic bedroom, 73.8%
- Bathroom remodel, 74.6%
- Deck addition, 73.7% - 81.8%, depending on materials used
- Kitchen remodel 76% - 79%, depending on the extent of the update
- Window replacement 77.7% for wood window frames

You can access the most recent report at remodeling.hw.net/2008/costvsvalue/national.aspx.

When remodeling, key terms to keep in mind are spacious, airy, accessible and timeless. Giving in to the latest trends will date your home. Try to choose color palettes that will provide a neutral backdrop, and then express personal flair with furniture, artwork and accessories. Neutral paints and simple finishes will also allow potential buyers to “see” themselves in the home, should you decide to sell later. Some areas to consider:

What's cooking?

The kitchen is increasingly replacing the den as the nucleus for family time and entertaining. Counter space for easy food preparation and entertaining, central islands, and upgraded countertops are musts. Upgraded appliances, such as stainless steel finishes, are very popular, as are faux wood paneled appliances.

Rub a dub dub ... but not in the tub

Today's busy lifestyles don't leave much time for baths, so large Jacuzzi tubs with jets look luxurious but aren't

very practical. Families with small children prefer smaller tubs, and on-the-go adults usually take showers. For tips about what sells, visit a few newer homes on the market and see what homebuilders are installing. You're more likely to see a regular-size tub and a larger spa-style shower, with glass doors, jets and a bench seat.

Your zip matters

The appeal of some renovations depends on your zip code. Pools are popular in hotter climates, but generally signal additional cost and upkeep to a prospective buyer – and a potential safety hazard to a family.

Start small

According to a recent report on CNNMoney.com, minor upgrades will recoup more of your investment than a major overhaul, for example; upgrading your bathroom will give back about 75 percent of your investment, but adding an entirely new bathroom will recover only 64 percent of your original outlay.

Painting is a quick and inexpensive refresher

In lean times, homeowners are watching their wallets. Painting provides a fresh new look and is one of the least expensive ways to update a room. Many vendors offer pre-packaged sample sizes so you can try out a color before committing. Paint a large area and look at it during different times of the day. The finish also makes a difference: flat paint hides wall imperfections and touch-ups blend more easily with flat paint than with semi-gloss or satin. A paint-store professional can answer questions and help you make choices regarding color and finishes.

If you want to experiment with color, try adding architectural features to a room with paint – or try a new color. According to homerenovationguide.com, hot color trends for 2009 are dark purplish (think eggplant) or beet reds, pea green, warm vanilla, tan and pale pink.

Growing Old Together

Homeowners at all stages in life should consider additions and renovations that will maximize the value and usefulness of their property. A trend of particular interest is “aging in place” – meaning remaining in one's home regardless of age or ability. According to the National Association of Home Builders, the trend is so widespread that the NAHB has developed a formal educational and certification program to prepare industry professionals to serve this niche market.

The NAHB reports that 60 percent of remodelers are engaged in such projects for existing homeowners,

and 75 percent of home remodelers have seen an increase in demand for this type of work. In fact, NAHB ranks the aging population as the second-most prevalent trend affecting the remodeling industry over the next five years. NAHB's Aging in Place program (nahb.org/aginginplace) suggests the following updates to extend the life of your home:

- A master bedroom and bath on the first floor
- A low or no-threshold doorway to avoid trips, with a covered front entrance
- Lever-style interior door handles instead of doorknobs
- Bright lighting in all areas, particularly stairways
- Non-slip flooring in the main entryway
- An open floor plan, especially in the kitchen/dining area
- Handrails at all steps

Other design elements include strategic placement of lighting to reduce glare and shadows, building closets at the same location on two floors of the home for possible future use as an elevator shaft, using contrasting colors to help with depth perception, i.e., a kitchen counter that is a darker color than the floor, and staining the edge of stairs a darker color than the rest of the step.

Finally, look on the bright side of the current downward trend. Consumer spending on home improvements is off by 12 percent, according to a CNNMoney.com December 2008 report from Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies – but this means that those who do choose to invest in their home can negotiate better prices and gain access to higher quality contractors than during times of higher demand for homebuilding services. Even if you don't have the funds for a major remodel right now, industry experts say, one of the best investments in your home is good old-fashioned preventive maintenance.

Increased Numbers

Aging Baby Boomers are more active and independent than the generations that have preceded them – thus, the interest and number of individuals modifying their homes for lifetime residency is also rising.



Depression after a heart attack is more than just a case of the blues – and it can affect a patient's rate of recovery, reducing quality of life. According to research, depressed patients are less likely to comply with their doctor's orders for recovery and rehabilitation, such as regularly taking their medications, adopting new diet and exercise plans, or participating in rehabilitation programs. This not only makes the recovery process longer and more difficult, but also makes the patient more likely to have continued or recurring heart problems.

For some, these feelings will pass as their recovery advances. For other patients, these symptoms will deepen into clinical depression. Recent research suggests that depression among heart patients is a widespread and serious issue.

The findings have prompted new recommendations by the American Heart Association regarding formal, regular screening of heart patients for depression. The recommendations have also been endorsed by the American Psychiatric Association. According to the AHA, depression is about three times more common in heart attack survivors and people who are hospitalized with heart problems than the general population.

Patients recovering from a heart attack typically experience a rollercoaster of emotions: anger, fear, anxiety, and frustration. Though eager to return to the activities they enjoy, many patients worry about the possibility of suffering another heart attack. Their weakened physical state and lack of energy is frustrating – and every symptom is anxiously analyzed as a possible warning of another heart attack.

a
happy
heart
is a
healthy
heart



AHA recommends
depression screening
for heart attack patients

The recommended screening should involve all medical professionals who are participating in a patient's treatment: cardiologists, nurses and primary care doctors. The AHA suggests the following two questions to help screen patients for depression: In the past two weeks, have you had little interest or pleasure in doing things? Have you felt down, depressed or hopeless?

If the patient's answer is 'yes' to one or both questions, the AHA recommends a questionnaire to determine the extent and severity of the patient's depression. Treatment may require a referral to a psychotherapist, or may be as simple as antidepressants or exercise. Support groups for recovering heart patients are available in many communities, as well, and success stories among former heart patients are numerous.

If a family member or friend is recovering from a heart attack, here are some simple tips you can do to help your loved one cope and recover.

- Encourage the patient to get moving, from getting out of bed and showering and dressing, to beginning a short walk, every day. This will help with fatigue and shortness of breath.

- Take a CPR class to learn to recognize any signs of heart distress.

- Listen. Your friend or loved one will have fears, frustration and anger. These are normal emotions following a heart attack. Expressing these feelings is healthy.

- Encourage the patient to get back into their normal routine as soon as possible, from dressing first thing in the morning to resuming hobbies and social activities.

- Suggest keeping a journal. Writing about feelings is therapeutic.

- Remain positive and upbeat – but don't create unrealistic expectations for the patient. Instead of saying, "You'll be running again in no time," you could say, "If we keep exercising together every day, it will get a lot easier."

- Give the patient time to recover. They may experience changes in mental function, which are usually temporary.

- Help your loved one relax: limit caffeine late in the day; play relaxing music; limit daytime naps to ensure a good night's rest; and help them to find a comfortable sleeping position at night.

- Recognize that it's not up to you. You can encourage good habits, but ultimately, the patient will have to decide they want to do it.

- Be patient. Your loved one has been through an ordeal, and recovery will take some time.

Sources: Caring.com, AmericanHeart.org

Knock, Knock. Who's There? A joke a day may keep the doctor away.



Stress is a part of most people's lives. There are many ways to deal with stress, some good – such as hitting the gym and adopting healthy eating habits – others, not so good, such as holding everything in or overeating.

How about a fast, effective, no-cost, fat-free way to beat stress? Laugh it off! Medical science has deemed humor an excellent coping method – and many psychologists also recognize the therapeutic benefits of laughter. A good laugh is even good for the heart.

A team of Maryland medical researchers have found that people with heart disease were 40 percent less likely to laugh in humorous situations than those with healthy hearts. “The old saying that laughter is the best medicine definitely appears to be true when it comes to protecting your heart,” said Michael Miller, director of the Center of Preventive Cardiology at the University of Maryland Medical Center.

Humor is clinically proven to be beneficial to combating stress. Experts say a good laugh relaxes

tense muscles, speeds more oxygen into your system and lowers your blood pressure. Here's what else good humor can impact:

Hormones

Laughter reduces the level of stress hormones such as cortisol, epinephrine (adrenaline), dopamine and growth hormone. It also increases the level of health-enhancing hormones like neurotransmitters and endorphins. Laughter increases the number of antibody-producing cells and enhances the effectiveness of T cells, adding up to a stronger immune system.

Internal Workout

A belly laugh relieves muscular tension, improves breathing and regulates the heartbeat.

Diversion

Laughter is a positive way to take the focus away from negative emotions like anger, guilt and stress.

For a good laugh, visit these sites

humormatters.com/jokeof.htm • ahajokes.com • comedycentral.com • cleanjoke.com

Perspective

Studies show that our response to stressful events can be altered depending on whether we view something as a threat or a challenge. Humor can yield a lighthearted perspective, making a stressful situation less intimidating and giving us a sense of control over our environment.

Social benefits

Laughter is contagious and can connect us with others.

Using humor in stressful situations has even touched the business community. Mark H. McCormick, the premier sports business manager and author of "What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School," wrote, "Laughter is the most potent, constructive force for diffusing business tension. If you can point out what is humorous or absurd about a situation or confrontation, you will be guaranteed the upper hand." Important meetings can be stressful for some. Loosening up with a couple of chuckles beforehand sharpens your concentration and prepares you to approach a challenge/project with a positive mindset.

Try a bit of humor to diffuse anxiety and frustration. Here are a few tips to help neutralize the next stress-filled situation you may encounter:

Take a humor break

Keep a book of jokes or cartoons handy. Ten minutes before a meeting or potentially stressful situation, read some funny stories; a chuckle will relax you.

**"If you can laugh at it,
you can survive it."**

Bill Cosby

Laugh at yourself

When you make fun of yourself, it can take the sting out of what other people say. In the book, "Treating Type A Behavior and Your Heart," Dr. Meyer Friedman points out that being able to laugh at yourself is healthy. "The person most effectively protecting himself against the continued progress of coronary artery disease is the person willing to see himself and his affairs as ludicrously unimportant in the planetary scheme of things."

Create a humor file

Each of us has our own sense of humor. Find things that make you laugh and keep them on tap: a file of favorite cartoon clips, joke books, comedy records, DVDs – anything that brings a smile.

Fake it until you make it

Just as studies show the positive effects of smiling occur whether the smile is forced or real, faked laughter also provides the benefits. The artificial cheerfulness may eventually lead to real smiles and laughter.

A Quick Pick-Me-Up

Keep your humor file in your work desk or car so when you're in a gloom-and-doom mood, you'll have it at your fingertips. Also, don't forget to bookmark humorous Web sites.

MEMBER NEWS

- During last fall's annual Member-to-Member Campaign, more than 500 new members joined Senior Circle thanks to current members. To those of you who recruited new members, thank you for your support and belief in Senior Circle. The recruiters who won a prize were randomly drawn from all new member applications received.

\$100 winner - Sally Graham • Carolinas Chapter • Florence, SC

\$50 winners - Ann DeYoung • Flowers Chapter • Dothan, AL and
Marvin McCann • Dyersburg Chapter • Dyersburg, TN

- Last fall, we ran a promotion to drive members to seniorcircle.com – the Senior Circle Web site. We want you all to be knowledgeable of the resources that are available on that site – such as health resources, information on Collette Vacations and national benefits. Among all who participated in the survey, the winner of the random drawing for a trip for two was Karen Rocque, South Baldwin Chapter, Foley, AL.



Oh my ACHING Feet!

Each foot contains 26 bones, 33 joints, 107 ligaments and 19 muscles

The ancient Greek philosopher Socrates once claimed, “When our feet hurt, we hurt all over.” When it comes to cars, the standard recommendation is to replace the tires every 30,000 miles. If only our feet were so lucky! The American Podiatric Medical Association says the average person takes 8,000 to 10,000 steps a day – that’s about 115,000 miles in a lifetime. We need to take good care of the pair we have.

Foot care is more than a matter of cosmetic appearance or freedom from pain. Your feet mirror your overall health. Arthritis, diabetes, nerve and circulatory disorders, as well as other ailments, can show their initial symptoms in the feet. It’s important be on your toes and pay attention to foot ailments, because they can be the first sign of more serious medical problems.

Pain is a common symptom of many foot conditions. Pain medications – or even surgery – may offer a solution, depending on the source of the pain. But for everyday wear and tear, there are some straightforward approaches that can ease minor pain and soreness.

Ice or Heat?

In general, if your foot is inflamed, i.e., it feels warm to the touch or swollen, apply ice. Don’t apply warmth to an inflamed area because this will only increase the blood flow and make the inflammation worse. If your feet are simply

tired, try soaking your feet in a warm bath to soothe them. Pharmacies sell gel packs that you can either freeze or heat in the microwave, then apply to your feet – a quick, cost-effective and comforting solution.

Over-the-Counter Pharmaceutical Treatment

- **Analgesics.** This class of medications encompasses pain relievers, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol). Be aware that doctors caution people who drink alcohol regularly against using acetaminophen because alcohol can combine with this drug to cause liver damage.

- **Topical analgesics.** Topical pain medications in lotion, cream or gel form can be spread on the skin and penetrate to relieve some forms of mild foot pain.

- **Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).** NSAIDs are available both with and without a prescription. Popular over-the-counter NSAIDs include aspirin (Bayer, Bufferin and others), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin and others) and naproxen (Aleve). Be aware that NSAIDs have a variety of side effects, so it is important to discuss your personal health risks with your doctor when considering their use.

If these over-the-counter options don’t solve your foot pain problems, consult your physician for a proper examination and further treatment options.

7-Step Foot Massage

Here are steps to making them feel better!

- 1 Fill a large tub with warm water; add Epsom salts and eucalyptus oil.
- 2 After soaking for 5 to 10 minutes, dry the feet.
- 3 Gently massage each foot – top and bottom – using massaging lotion or cream.
- 4 Follow with deeper strokes. Place both hands around the feet with your fingers on bottom and thumbs on top. Using long strokes, move your thumbs between the tendons smoothly and firmly from the ankle toward the toes.
- 5 Massage the soles of the feet. With your thumbs, use circular motions that cover the bottom of the foot. Start from the base of the toes and move toward the heel. Keep the pressure steady and even.
- 6 Work on each toe with gentle, circular motions, stretching a bit while you rub. Gently bend and rotate each toe.
- 7 Twist the foot by rotating both hands around it in an up and down motion. Each hand should move in opposite directions.

Caution: do not massage a foot that is inflamed or that you think might be injured.

Could You Recognize a Stroke?

Know the Warning Signs

Knowing how to recognize the five major signs of a stroke is vital to ensure that the victim receives immediate medical attention:

- 1 Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- 2 Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- 3 Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- 4 Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- 5 Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

Additional symptoms of stroke include dizziness or loss of balance and a severe, sudden headache. It's also important to realize that not all strokes will exhibit all symptoms. The presence of even one of these symptoms may point to a stroke, but also may indicate totally unrelated conditions.

Take Action!

If you notice one or more of the warning signs, don't wait to get medical attention. The quicker you get medical help, the greater likelihood of preventing prolonged damage. If symptoms are recognized within three hours of the onset of a stroke, the victim might be eligible for clot-busting medication. Early treatment of a stroke is essential to reducing brain damage and associated mortality.

FAST!

If you suspect a friend or loved one is having a stroke, think fast. FAST is an acronym for recognizing and responding to the symptoms of stroke. A FAST exam should be performed after 9-1-1 is called. The goal of FAST is to check for common symptoms, so a person can report possible indicators of stroke to medical workers as quickly as possible.

Face: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

Arms: Checking for arm weakness, ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

Speech: Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred? Can the patient repeat the sentence correctly?

Time: Time to act! Get the affected person to a hospital right away to receive the most effective treatment.

Risk Factors

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Cigarette smoking
- Family history of stroke
- Heart disease
- Alcohol abuse

The third leading cause of death

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the U.S., and also a major cause of disability and loss of independence and quality of life.

Each year about 500,000 people in the United States suffer a first stroke, and almost 200,000 people have a recurrent stroke. Up to 40 percent of strokes are fatal – but prompt treatment can significantly reduce the risk of death and permanent disability from a stroke.



Sources: The U.S. National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, American Stroke Association, Stroke Awareness Foundation

Clearing The Air

Gas and bloating may affect more than the people around you

“Oops. Excuse me. Sorry. Who did that? Did someone step on a duck?” We often try to ‘pass’ gas off as being funny, but in reality, it’s embarrassing and often uncomfortable. Everybody does it, but no one talks about it. It’s probably the most seldom-discussed body function.

Intestinal gas is made up of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, hydrogen and methane. It’s only normal that as

this gas builds up, it has to have a place to go. Passing gas is the body’s natural way of relieving intestinal pressure during the digestion process. Expelled gas either goes up – resulting in a burp or a belch – or down, and we all know what happens next. And it occurs more often as we age. Flatulence has a variety of causes: stress, diet, exercise habits and health conditions. You can reduce that gassy feeling by changing your diet, altering your eating habits, or, if all else fails, taking an antacid or other over-the-counter remedy.

And, while it’s bound to produce a nervous giggle or smile, gas is no laughing matter. Harvard University’s Brigham & Women’s Hospital found that 10 to 20 percent of adults have digestive complaints of belching or flatulence.

You are what you eat

Excess gas is produced through the process of swallowing too much air as you eat or drink, or through the natural digestive process as your large intestine begins to process food. Certain foods are more likely to produce gas than others. Carbohydrates – beans, fruits and vegetables, dairy products and soft drinks – are prime culprits. But the same foods don’t produce the same result in everyone.

Well-known offenders include:

- Carbonated drinks and alcoholic beverages, including beer.

- Fruit drinks
- Sweets and other sugary foods
- Starches: bread, pasta, potatoes, corn and rice
- Vegetables such as broccoli, celery, cabbage and Brussels sprouts
- Foods with a high sulfur content, like eggs and meat
- Long-term use of some medications, such as cold medicine

Many factors affect the digestion process and the subsequent development of gas, including the kind of food and the degree of muscle action of the emptying stomach and small intestine. Foods are digested in the following order: first carbohydrates, then proteins, and finally, fats.

Ever overindulged and afterward remarked, “I feel fat?” It’s not your imagination. Fatty foods are often the cause for gas and bloating, because fat affects the stomach’s ability to empty efficiently and can actually increase that feeling of fullness.

Fiber is good for you, right? Yes, but in this case, it’s possible to have too much of a good thing. Fiber helps with digestion, but too much fiber produces gas, according to The Mayo Clinic. Try cutting back temporarily on fiber, or take a gas reliever with foods that cause gas. It’s important not to completely omit those foods that cause gas, since fiber intake supports colon health and regulates bowel operation.

It’s helpful to keep a food diary to track which items in your diet

cause trouble, and try to avoid those foods in the future. If you don't want to give up the foods you love, try limiting these foods or trying one of the following remedies.

Banish the Bloat

Sometimes it's not only what you eat, but the way you eat that causes gas. It's possible to swallow too much air while eating or drinking. Eating too quickly can cause gas. Other causes are chewing gum or eating hard candy, stress or poorly fitted dentures. Try the following methods to decrease your likelihood of developing gas:

- Don't smoke.
- Don't drink liquids through a straw.
- Avoid tight-fitting clothing.
- Eat fewer fatty foods, and temporarily cut back on high-fiber foods.
- Exercise more. A walk after a meal can help.
- Take an antacid or over-the-counter remedy.
- Try a natural remedy, such as peppermint or chamomile tea.

When to See the Doctor

Gas and bloating can also indicate a more serious health problem, so pay attention to your symptoms. If gas and gas pain begin to interfere with your normal daily activities, over-the-counter medicines don't provide relief, or you develop additional symptoms (diarrhea/constipation, nausea/vomiting, weight loss, abdominal/rectal pain, or persistent heartburn), contact your doctor. These symptoms may indicate one of the following conditions: intestinal obstruction, irritable bowel syndrome, lactose intolerance, Celiac disease, gastroesophageal reflux disease, colon cancer, Crohn's disease, various reproductive cancers or a hernia.

Gas symptoms are usually harmless and a natural – albeit embarrassing – part of life. For more information, visit the American Dietetic Association at eatright.org or the National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse at digestive.niddk.nih.gov, or discuss your eating habits and symptoms with your doctor.

Not Me!

According to the National Institutes of Health and the National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse, the average person passes intestinal gas 14 to 23 times a day and produces about 1 to 4 pints of gas.



Gas is good. . .

according to a recent study at Johns Hopkins University. The study, published in the October 2008 issue of the journal "Science," found that hydrogen sulphide – a toxic gas produced by bacteria living in the intestinal system of human beings – can relax the blood vessels and regulate blood flow. This gas is actually responsible for the rotten-egg odor.

Research focused on the effects of the enzyme, known as CSE, in mice over a five-year period. The enzyme was found to produce hydrogen sulfide in the cells lining the walls of blood vessels throughout the body. Researchers concluded that this gas — the same gas responsible for the odor of flatulence – also plays an important role in controlling blood pressure. Findings may lead to new treatments for hypertension, according to study authors.

A major shift in bone care

Bone tests aren't just for women anymore



New guidelines are calling for men over age 70 to get a routine check for bone-thinning osteoporosis. As for women, a new computerized tool uses more than bone-density tests to predict who is at highest risk for breaking a bone in the coming years, adding in such risk factors as whether a parent ever broke a hip.

“You treat the people who have high risk, and you [should] reassure the women at low risk and ask them to come back for a re-check in a few years,” explained Dr. Ethel Siris of Columbia University and president of the National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF), which issued the new guidelines in 2008.

Moreover, the study stresses that osteoporosis can strike anyone as

they age. Yet the biggest double take is the NOF's recommendation that not only women, but also men should have a bone-mineral density X-ray test. The new guidelines suggest that the test, long suggested for women age 65 and older, now be given to all men 70 and older, as well.

Though the greatest risk of osteoporosis is still found among postmenopausal women whose bone-strengthening estrogen has taken a dive, a quarter of hip fractures occur in men – and as men are living longer, the number of men who break a hip is steadily rising.

Another challenge is that more than half of fractures due to bone loss occur in people whose bones are thinning, but aren't quite thin enough to be labeled osteoporosis. This gray area is known as osteopenia. With the population rapidly aging, it is estimated that half of Americans over 50 will be at risk for fractures from too-thin bones by 2020.

The NOF has updated its guidelines for who needs bone-density testing, as well as its methods for calculating the level at which fracture risk becomes high enough to make bone-building drugs a cost-effective solution. In addition to a routine bone check for older men, the guidelines recommend:

- Treat postmenopausal women and men 50 and older who have thinning bones, but not osteoporosis yet, if they have at least a 20 percent risk of any major fracture in the next decade, or at least a 3 percent risk of a hip fracture.

- Check for osteoporosis risk factors in postmenopausal women and men 50 and over, to see who needs a bone test before their senior years.

- A bone test is recommended for anyone who has any type of fracture after age 50, or who has conditions associated with bone loss, such as rheumatoid arthritis.

- Daily vitamin supplements of 1,200 mg of calcium and 800 to 1,000 IU of Vitamin D3 for adults over age 50. Vitamin D3 – also called cholecalciferol – is the form of vitamin D that best supports bone health.

- Regular weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercise.

Additionally, for good bone health, avoid smoking and excessive alcohol. Enjoying the golden years starts with a healthy body. Your healthcare provider can assist you with diet, exercise and lifestyle recommendations to promote bone health as you age.

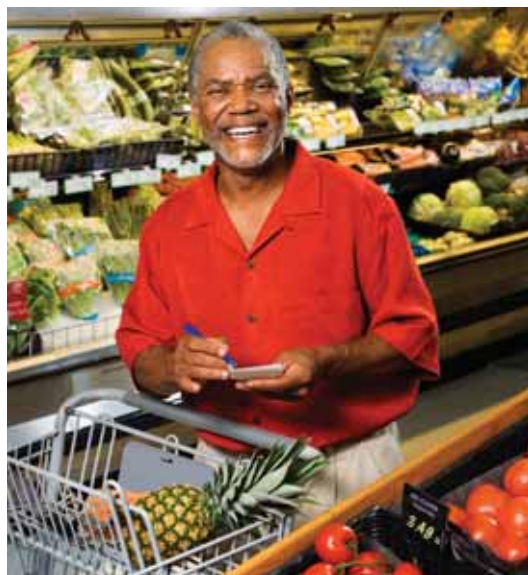
Source: National Osteoporosis Foundation, nof.org

- In the U.S. alone, approximately 10 million people have osteoporosis but 34 million are estimated to have osteopenia.
- Each year broken bones due to low bone mass or osteoporosis cause over 432,000 hospital admissions, almost 2.5 million medical office visits and about 180,000 nursing home admissions.

Here's Looking At You

Focus on good nutrition to help preserve good vision

Next time you reach for a snack, remember that those fresh fruits, whole grains and nuts are good for more than trimming your waistline – they also help keep your eyes in shape.



A good diet can help protect your eyes against eye conditions and vision loss including cataracts, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration (AMD) – as well as promote overall eye health.

Eating antioxidant-packed foods rich in vitamins A, C and E, as well as minerals like zinc, lutein and zeaxanthin contributes to good eye health. Lutein and zeaxanthin are two types of antioxidants known as ‘carotenoids.’ Research has shown that people who eat a diet that includes carotenoids have a lower risk of developing AMD.

Antioxidants in foods help to promote healthy cells and tissues, particularly in the lens and retina. These vitamins and minerals function like sunscreen, protecting the eye. Several research studies have shown that vitamins C and E help to lower the chance of developing cataracts, and vitamin A promotes normal vision and helps with night vision too.

If you're eating healthy, you're probably already eating many foods that contain these nutrients.

For maximum benefits, aim for five to nine servings of fresh fruits and vegetables each day, as well as frequent helpings of these power players from other food groups.

Vitamin A (beta carotene)

Carrots, sweet potatoes
Squash
Apricots, cantaloupe
Cod liver oil

Vitamin C

Papaya, cantaloupe, grapefruit
Green and red pepper
Kale
Tomato juice
Brussels sprouts
Strawberries, raspberries
Mango
Broccoli, cauliflower

Vitamin E

Almonds, sunflower seeds
Peanuts, peanut butter
Mango
Eggs
Wheat germ

Selenium and zinc

Oysters
Brazil nuts, pumpkin seeds
Yeast
Beef
Chickpeas
Wheat

Lutein and zeaxanthin

Spinach
Turnip & collard greens
Kale, chard
Corn
Green peas, zucchini
Romaine lettuce
Tangerines, honeydew melon

Vision Loss

Approximately 10 million Americans have age-related macular degeneration, the leading cause of vision loss in people age 65 and older, according to the National Institutes of Health – and there is no cure for the disease.

A Walk on the Creative Side



Paintings from Walter's bookmark.

Walter Meller, Senior Circle member at the Abilene Regional Chapter in Abilene, Texas, has been an avid hunter and fisherman for most of his life. But over the past few years, the 77-year-old former outdoorsman has explored his creative, softer side. In fact, his artistic streak has left many of his friends in awe of his talent – which most never knew he had.

Walter's artistic side came to light through a casual encounter at an art class. Several years ago, Wesley Court Retirement Community, where Walter and his wife Beverly reside, offered a four-week watercolor class. "I wasn't doing anything that morning, so I decided to go," he recalled. "I was kind of looking for a hobby before I got too old."

To the surprise of his wife, Walter created a beautiful bookmark from a collection of portraits that he had painted during the year. He reproduced and gave the bookmark to friends and family that Christmas. "Everyone was so happy to receive a remembrance of Walter's artistic creations," said Senior Circle Advisor Linda Rutledge.

Walter enjoyed painting but wanted to explore other artistic mediums. He felt drawn to take pen to paper and write poetry. Despite his claims that he had never previously cared for poetry, his emotions of compassion and patriotism – spurred by 9/11 – flowed onto paper about such topics as the heroism of American firefighters and the awesomeness of God's creation.

Walter hasn't written over the past few months and isn't sure if he's

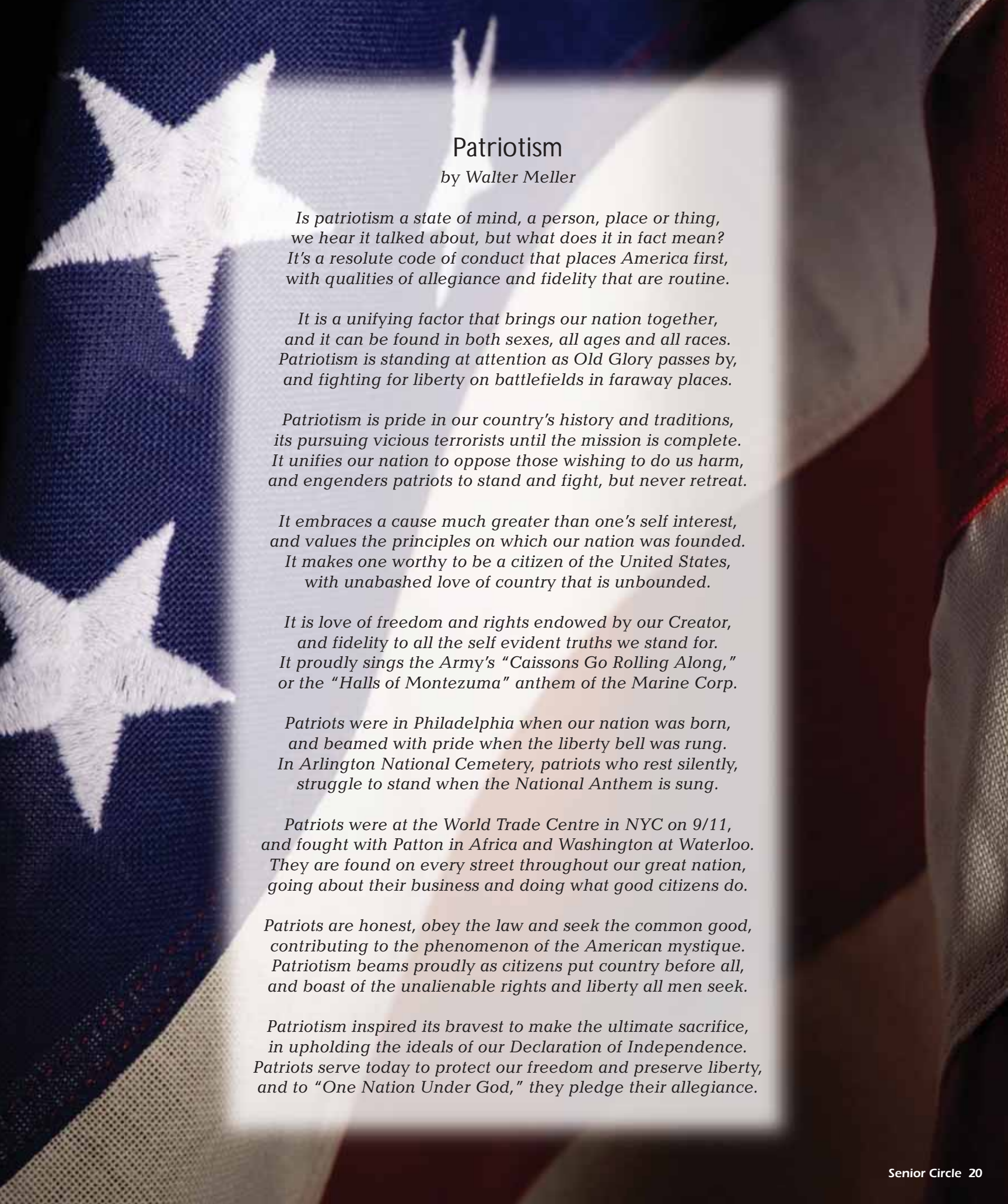
got writer's block – or if he's just subconsciously mulling over the next project that he'll begin. Meanwhile, he and Beverly enjoy traveling – especially cruises – and have just taken up poker, which Walter has found he's also good at.

The couple has a strong commitment to the community. They are active in their church, on several non-profit boards, and Walter has served on the local Crime Stoppers Board for 22 years. Walter is active in not only Senior Circle, but is also a dynamic volunteer at Abilene Regional Medical Center. He helps prepare the volunteer newsletter and even assists with some of the writing for Circle News. "He's my right hand in the office," Linda said.

Walter says he treasures the friendships made with other members. He can be found at just about any Senior Circle event, camera around his neck, snapping candid and documenting the fun times in photographs. Perhaps that's his next hobby! As for painting, Walter says, "One of these days the mood may strike me, and I'll pick up my brushes again."



Beverly and Walter Meller



Patriotism

by Walter Meller

*Is patriotism a state of mind, a person, place or thing,
we hear it talked about, but what does it in fact mean?
It's a resolute code of conduct that places America first,
with qualities of allegiance and fidelity that are routine.*

*It is a unifying factor that brings our nation together,
and it can be found in both sexes, all ages and all races.
Patriotism is standing at attention as Old Glory passes by,
and fighting for liberty on battlefields in faraway places.*

*Patriotism is pride in our country's history and traditions,
its pursuing vicious terrorists until the mission is complete.
It unifies our nation to oppose those wishing to do us harm,
and engenders patriots to stand and fight, but never retreat.*

*It embraces a cause much greater than one's self interest,
and values the principles on which our nation was founded.
It makes one worthy to be a citizen of the United States,
with unabashed love of country that is unbounded.*

*It is love of freedom and rights endowed by our Creator,
and fidelity to all the self evident truths we stand for.
It proudly sings the Army's "Caissons Go Rolling Along,"
or the "Halls of Montezuma" anthem of the Marine Corp.*

*Patriots were in Philadelphia when our nation was born,
and beamed with pride when the liberty bell was rung.
In Arlington National Cemetery, patriots who rest silently,
struggle to stand when the National Anthem is sung.*

*Patriots were at the World Trade Centre in NYC on 9/11,
and fought with Patton in Africa and Washington at Waterloo.
They are found on every street throughout our great nation,
going about their business and doing what good citizens do.*

*Patriots are honest, obey the law and seek the common good,
contributing to the phenomenon of the American mystique.
Patriotism beams proudly as citizens put country before all,
and boast of the unalienable rights and liberty all men seek.*

*Patriotism inspired its bravest to make the ultimate sacrifice,
in upholding the ideals of our Declaration of Independence.
Patriots serve today to protect our freedom and preserve liberty,
and to "One Nation Under God," they pledge their allegiance.*



ALABAMA

South Baldwin Chapter, Foley

Senior Circle assistant Fran Barr (left) was co-emcee at the Christmas and anniversary dinner. Laura Jenkins (right), administrative assistant, was on hand to share hospital updates.

Gadsden Regional Chapter, Gadsden

The talented Frances Higginbotham, Marie Rich, Gwen Bonner, Glenda Williams and June Godbey decorated the tables for the Christmas luncheon.



ARIZONA

Western Arizona Chapter, Bullhead City



Carmen Otly and Jane Allen led the crowd in cheers at the Diamondbacks last home game against the Colorado Rockies. (The Diamondbacks won!)

FLORIDA

Lake Wales Chapter, Lake Wales

Senior Circle Ambassador Larry Chlebeck and his wife Leslie share a special moment on a cruise on the Grandeur of the Seas.



GEORGIA

Fannin Regional Chapter, Blue Ridge

L-R: Sue Deimen, Joyce Smith, Judy Cosman, Alice Rich and Dorothy Kelly (front) constructed teddy bears using a Ball jar.



ILLINOIS

Red Bud Chapter, Red Bud

Ruby Liefer performs CPR on a mannequin during a recent Lunch and Learn, while instructor Kim Martin looks on.



Union County Hospital Chapter, Anna



Helen Hickam, Mary Belle Morgan, Bernetta Holshouser and Kathy Papa enjoyed a murder mystery dinner at the famous haunted Lemp Mansion in St. Louis, Mo.

MISSOURI

Northeast Missouri Chapter, Kirksville

Martha and Larry Bragg pause for a photo at the Farmer's Market in Asheville, N.C.



NEW MEXICO

Eastern New Mexico Chapter, Roswell

Nick McMillen (bending) and Phelps White assemble one of five Christmas trees to decorate Eastern New Mexico Medical Center.



PENNSYLVANIA

Brandywine Chapter, Coatesville

Ruthie Thomas picked apples on a trip to Mackinac Island, located in the center of the Great Lakes.



Jennersville Chapter, West Grove

Janet Wlodek holds Willow, a Harris hawk that resides at the Falconry Academy at the Greenbrier Resort in White Sulpher Springs, W. Va.



Lock Haven Chapter, Lock Haven

Over 145 comfort pillows were made for the Reach to Recovery program of the American

Cancer Society. L to R: Barbara Ohl, Jan Dessenberger, Roberta Doyle and Peg Martin were on "stuffing" duty.

South Texas Regional Chapter, Jourdanon

Camilla Parker and Beverly Poth enjoy lunch at Tavern on the Green on a recent trip to New York.



TENNESSEE

Dyersburg Chapter, Dyersburg

Janie Pridmore with her grandson at Dyersburg Regional Medical Center's Breakfast with Santa.



Weatherford Chapter, Weatherford

January birthday guests: Curtiss Ryan, Betty Ryan, Judy Isom and Alan Whittaker.



SkyRidge Chapter, Cleveland

Barbara Randolph participated in the screenings at the fourth anniversary Health Fair.

TEXAS

Cleveland Regional Chapter, Cleveland

Bobby Wood, Cliff Dunn, T. W. Garrett and Jim Daniels look very presidential in front of Mount Rushmore near Keystone, S.D.



UTAH

Mountain West Chapter, Tooele

Mel and Carrie Meads dressed as first settlers for Thanksgiving dinner and bingo.



Hill Regional Chapter, Hillsboro

Miss Piggy (Judy Schronk), the Devil (Lois Landrum), the Bearded Lady (Odessa Schronk), and Scarecrow (Fran Sadler) dressed in

their best for the Halloween bingo/costume party.



VIRGINIA

Southampton Chapter, Franklin

John Lewis, Patsy Lewis and Nancy Cornwell play reindeer games at the holiday social.

Navarro Regional Chapter, Corsicana

Vivian Green and Jessie Gonzales are ready for a sleigh ride at the Gaylord Texan Resort near Dallas.



WEST VIRGINIA Plateau Chapter, Oak Hill

Members enjoy lunch at The Summit.





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Senior Circle Chapters are sponsored by the affiliated hospitals of Community Health Systems.

Turn off the TV!

Reading, Games Help Keep Aging Memories Sharp

Doing brain activities, such as reading or playing games, in middle age and later may help delay or prevent memory loss, according to new research.

A recent study of 197 people, ages 70 to 89, with mild cognitive impairment or diagnosed memory loss and 1,124 people in the same age group with no memory problems. All participants were asked about their daily activities within the past year, as well as when they were between 50 and 65 years old.

Those who read books, played games, used computers and did crafts in their later years were 30 to 50 percent less likely to develop memory loss than people who didn't do these kinds of mental activities. In addition, people who watched TV for less than seven hours a day in their

later years were 50 percent less likely to develop memory loss than those who watched TV for more than seven hours a day.

The study also found that people who took part in social activities and read magazines during middle age were 40 percent less likely to develop memory loss than those who didn't do such activities.

“This study is exciting, because it demonstrates that aging does not need to be a passive process,” study author Dr. Yonas Geda, a neuropsychiatrist at The Mayo Clinic. “By simply engaging in cognitive exercise, you can protect against future memory loss.”

