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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

It's time to celebrate America's biggest patriotic holiday. But where to go and what to do? Check out our Independence Day calendar for your weekend-long guide to festivities.

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Static in the darkness

The unusual radio competition to prove who's the great communicator after the power goes out

TIM FREED
The Voice

Stan Wood has strained his ears for more than five hours over the constant hiss of radio static. The sun is down and time just got scarce.

It's all pitch darkness in Winter Springs' Central Winds Park – the only source of light nearby comes from an iPhone Wood holds over a yellow legal pad filled with lines of letters and numbers that hold meaning yet don't spell words, hastily written in ballpoint pen.

Beside him Dennis Veselka keeps watch over a map of the Earth's seven continents on a dimly lit laptop screen. As an inch-wide circle travels across the southeast United States in real time, a brief window of opportunity opens – less than 15 minutes. "We're not gonna make it," Wood said as a group of five locals watch in silence behind him. "It's nothing but garbage and noise."

The Japanese satellite flying directly overhead across Earth's atmosphere could relay an urgent message to anywhere in America. Wood frantically spins the dial and taps out a call sign on his Morse code key, trying to make contact with somebody. Anybody. There's no power or cell phone service and disaster had just struck: a crisis that's severed almost all communication. It's a blackout that's plunged the entire nation into darkness.

But as Wood finally hears the dots and dashes of a radio operator from Texas in response, all



Jeff Keating and Seminole County radio operators competed in a 24-hour disaster simulation competition June 28-29.

tension melts away and he lets out an elated fist pump in the darkness.

He scribbles down the call sign "W5MSQ." That's 100 points for first contact using a satellite.

Radio operators from the Lake Monroe Amateur Radio Society put their skills to the test at Central Winds Park this past weekend as they took part in the annual American Radio Relay League Field Day – a nationwide competition between ham radio operators to simulate a disaster scenario without power.

It all starts at 2 p.m. on Saturday when the "disaster" strikes, the power grid goes down and the invisible clock starts. Radio operators have the next 24 hours to make as many contacts with other Hams as possible, using radio rigs, satellite relay and old fashioned Morse code to rack up points across the airwaves.

Out of hundreds of teams across the country in their class (4A, based on their four transmitters), LMARS tends to place in

the top five year to year.

But besides providing some friendly competition, the contest gives radio operators the chance to practice their hobby for when the real emergency comes.

"If a hurricane ever came and took down the electricity, I'd still have my radio that only relies on the atmosphere," Ham radio operator Andrew Graves said.

Ham operators set up towering antennas reaching 40 feet tall and fire up their radios in mobile trailers stationed around the park.

Children and families throw Frisbees and dribble soccer balls nearby as the disaster scenario unfolds.

That Saturday afternoon Wood chases another satellite from the back of his Toyota C-Max Hybrid, parked in the open grass at the center of the park. Reams of pencil-thick cords run from the car's charger outlet to his radio set up on the floor of the back hatch. Wood listens closely while Ham radio operator Rich-

ard Fischer turns a homemade antenna rig toward the northeast.

A do-it-yourselfer, Wood used a PVC pipe bolted to a \$5 telescope stand to keep the pronged antenna raised.

The new target: a satellite launched in 1974 named AO-7 that went dark for nearly three decades after the batteries died. For all that time, it had been a hunk of junk floating in space. But on June 21, 2002 the battery connection finally snapped, its solar panel wings fired up, and "Oscar Seven" said hello again.

Word spread across the Internet that the satellite had re-awakened and it's been an orbital source of points ever since.

"A guy in England said 'What's that?'" said Wood, who's been a Ham for more than five decades. "He hadn't heard it in 20 years."

Ham radio operator Kevin Cannon mans his own radio inside a tent made from aluminum foil-like material to reflect the

■ Please see RADIO on page 4

A state-sponsored vacation

Local teen heads to South Asia to learn language and diplomacy

ALLISON OLCSVAY
The Voice

While other high school students are whiling away the summer days at the beach or theme parks, Nina Kumar, a 17-year-old rising senior at Hagerty High School will be in India immersing herself in the country's culture and language.

Kumar is participating in the National Security Language Initiative for Youth sponsored by

the U.S. Department of State in cooperation with the American Councils for International Education. The initiative's goal is to promote cultural understanding and increase the number of young Americans who speak languages that the U.S. considers critical for future diplomacy.

For Kumar, it's an opportunity to further enhance her understanding of the Indian culture she comes from while looking back at her own American culture through another's eyes.

"This will be a real eye-opening experience for me," she said. "I have been to India before, but

■ Please see DIPLOMACY on page 2



Nina Kumar is heading to India to learn Hindi as part of a diplomatic program.

USPS 00-093
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THIS WEEK

THIS WEEK IN WORLD HISTORY — JULY 4, 1776 — In Philadelphia, the Continental Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence, which proclaims the independence of a new United States of America from Great Britain. The declaration came 442 days after the first shots of the American Revolution.

DIPLOMACY | Thousands of students have studied in the Middle East and beyond in this summer program

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE
only to visit briefly. Now I will live and learn there and hopefully develop a more global perspective."

While in India, Kumar will stay with a host family and attend language school five days a week in the morning. In the afternoons, she will participate in cultural experiences that will test her new language skills.

For the first time in her life she will be away from family, friends and everything familiar while she experiences a culture thousands of miles away in India's seventh

largest city, Pune.

"I'm barely conversational in Hindi now," said Kumar. "I'm really nervous about how well I'll keep up and whether I'll be able to learn quickly enough to feel comfortable. It will be a real challenge for me."

While some aspects of her experience will feel familiar — Kumar's host mother is a professional Bharatanatyam dancer, the same type of traditional dance Kumar has been studying for 12 years — many experiences will be completely new, such as attending school with a guru, instead of

a teacher.

"I am looking forward to learning new things, but also learning in a new way," she said. "I understand that the way things are taught in India is very different from here at home, so I am excited to explore that as well."

The intensive language and culture training is a perfect match for Kumar who is interested in studying international law and activism.

"Someday I may pursue a career in diplomacy and I think this will be extremely useful to my future," said Kumar.

Interested in bridging the gap between her family's cultural heritage and her American culture, Kumar started Let's Move, Let's Dance, based on Michelle Obama's Let's Move program to promote fitness through traditional Indian dance. She recently received a grant to purchase costumes for her program through the Seminole Cultural Arts Council.

Kumar also spends time volunteering in a variety of ways, including visiting the elderly in nursing homes. She also recently raised nearly \$5,000 for Operation Smile.

Upon completion of her seven weeks in India, Kumar and will



PHOTO COURTESY OF SXC.HU

Nina Kumar will learn more about the culture of a land America finds to be crucial to diplomacy.

join more than 3,000 other American youth who have participated in the program since its launch in 2006.

NSLI-Y offers seven language programs in which students can select to study: Arabic, Mandarin, Hindi, Korean, Persian (Tajiki), Russian or Turkish.

Interested students need not have any previous language experience, only a strong interest to learn another language and culture while immersed in it.

The program is open to high school students aged 15 to 18 who maintain a grade point average of

2.5 or better.

Just as Kumar plans to do, many of the NSLI-Y alumni have gone on to further develop and use their new language skills in their careers or personal lives. For some the program opened new doors to unexpected career paths, for others the program further solidified their plans to serve an increasingly global community.

"We understand that we are going as ambassadors of sorts, but more importantly we are hoping to bring back a new understanding," Kumar said. "That will help us to be better global citizens."

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Upcoming Events

July 7th - OBN Girls Night Out
5:30pm - 8:00pm, 158 Tuskawilla Rd. Ste. 138
The ladies of OBN are skipping their monthly luncheon in July to have a fun "Girls Night Out" at South + York in Winter Springs. Join them for food, drinks, dancing, karaoke, and networking!

July 10th - Monthly Luncheon - Oviedo Mall Update
11:30am - 1:00pm, 1700 Oviedo Mall Blvd. Oviedo, FL 32765
Join us for our monthly luncheon, on Thursday July 10th. This month we will have Brian Olivi give an update on all the exciting changes happening at the Oviedo Mall. Lunch will be provided by Publix, and is sponsored by Oviedo Roofing Enterprises!

July 10th - Grand Opening of The Winey Wench
5:30 - 7:30pm, The Winey Wench in the Oviedo Mall
Join us at the Grand Opening of the Winey Wench in the Oviedo Mall. We will celebrate with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony followed by great networking, food, drinks, their infamous wine slushies, and door prizes!

July 23rd - Bagels & Business - "I-4 Ultimate Project"
8:00 - 9:30am, 1700 Oviedo Mall Blvd. Oviedo, FL 32765
Join us at our morning series for an update from the project manager on the Ultimate I-4 project that will begin later this year. This event is FREE to attend and open to the public. Breakfast provided by Costco!

Connect with local businesses!

For more info and to register for events go to: www.OviedoWinterSprings.org

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Calendar

JULY 4

Join the city of Oviedo at the Oviedo Mall this 4th of July from 5 to 10 p.m. for the annual **Independence Day Celebration**. Be a part of the 1,000-person American Human Flag Project and enjoy live entertainment from BeatleBeat and The Big Band Theory. Other highlights include inflatable games, carnival games, food trucks, craft vendors, and of course a wonderful fireworks display. The first 1,000 to show up for the Human Flag Project will be given a red, white or blue shirt. Participants will be coordinated into the proper formation and official photos will be taken. Registration is at 5:30 p.m. near Chamberlin's. For more information, call 407-971-5575 or 407-971-5568.

Winter Springs celebrates the 4th of July at Central Winds Park with a **firework show choreographed to music**. The event takes place from 5 to 9:10 p.m. when the fireworks show begins. Activities include live music, a talent show, games, bounces houses and other activities. The national anthem and presentation of colors will take place at 9:03 p.m. with the fireworks beginning immediately afterwards. For more information, contact the city at 407-327-1000.

The annual Geneva **4th of July Parade and Festival** starts at 9:30 a.m. along Main Street. Awards will be presented during the Festival at the Rural Heritage Center following the parade. Show off

your decorated and themed float, bike and commercial entry to the 2014 theme "God, Country, Community." Prizes are available for registered participants. Float entries should arrive at the First Baptist Church of Geneva no later than 9:30 a.m. Use the Main Street entrance. Judging begins at 9:45 a.m. in the parking lot, so be ready. For more information and how to register, call Jessie Harrelson at 407-416-5239 or Dorothy Hardee at 407-497-1869. Late youth award entries will be accepted until 9:30 a.m. on July 4.

Take part in a **traditional cakewalk at Geneva's** annual Fourth of July Parade and Festival at 8 a.m. in the Rural Heritage Center in Geneva. Purchase your \$1 ticket to participate, step inside the Rural Heritage Center and stand on one of the numbered squares that form a large circle at the front of the room. The music begins to play and everyone walks around the circle until the music stops. Each person stands on the number closest to him or her and a number is drawn. The number is announced and the person standing on that number just **won a cake!** The Geneva Village Homemakers currently consists of more than 70 members, many of which bake cakes for this annual tradition. Different flavors, decorations and styles of cakes abound at this event.

JULY 9

The Seminole County Library will host a **Prehistoric Weaponry Lecture** from 6 to

7 p.m. on Wednesday, July 9, at their west branch, located at 245 N. Hunt Club Blvd. in Longwood. Join Public Archaeologist Kevin Gidusko and explore the biotechnology of early native Floridians and the Timucuan Indians at this free event. For more information, call 407-665-1670.

ONGOING

The **Summer Eco Camp Season** at the Yarrowood Nature Center in the Geneva Wilderness Area runs now through Aug. 1. Children ages 7 to 12 can learn more about the environment by joining five-day classes that run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The classes include "Animals Everywhere," "Surviving in Nature" and "Creepy Crawlers." For a list of classes, a registration form and more information, visit seminolecountyfl.gov/parksrec/naturallands

The **Artistic Hand Gallery and Studio** is offering a wide variety of **creative outlets** for your children this summer in painting and drawing, mixed media and clay. No matter the level of experience, the studio's qualified teachers will cultivate every child's artistic needs. Summer I classes run through the week of July 14 and Summer II classes are held the week of July 28 through the week of Sept. 14. Classes for teens and adults are also available. Visit artistichandgalleryandstudio.com for more information or call Del at 407-415-6882.

The **Winter Springs Farmers Market** is

from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday on State Road 434 and Tuskawilla Road in the Winter Springs Town Center. Visit WinterSpringsFarmersMarket.com for more information.

On the fourth Friday of each month, multiple venues in Sanford's downtown historic district host the **Sanford Art Walk**, showcasing local talent along with opportunities to meet visiting artists. The event is on July 25 this month, is free and runs from 6 to 9 p.m. Visit sanfordartwalk.com for more information.

Want to **learn a new card game**? The Seminole County Public Library is offering free basic bridge instruction at the West Branch Library in Longwood and the Northwest Branch in Lake Mary, with classes meeting weekly for eight total sessions. West Branch Library classes are every Tuesday until July 29 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Northwest Branch Library classes are every Thursday until July 31 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. For more information, call the West Branch at 407-665-1670 or the Northwest Branch at 407-665-1640. Registration is required.

The Casselberry **Farmers Market and Green Bazaar** runs every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. next to the Casselberry Police Department, located at 4195 S. U.S. Highway 17-92. For more information, contact Casselberrymarket@gmail.com

Notes

Mad Science earns Member of the Week

The Oviedo-Winter Springs Regional Chamber of Commerce recently announced Mad Science of North East Central Florida as their Member of the Week. Mad Science delivers hands-on science experiences for children, encouraging them to learn and have fun. The worldwide franchise brings science education to millions of children each year.

Secret Lake Park gets a makeover

More than 30 volunteers from Verizon Wireless, Hands on Orlando and the city of Casselberry came together last Thursday at Secret Lake Park in Casselberry to spruce up the park. The team built new benches, painted buildings, planted flowers, sanded and sealed existing benches, and cleaned hydrilla from the lake.

INTERESTS

THIS WEEK IN HUMAN HISTORY —JULY 11, 1960 — The novelty song "Alley Oop" tops the Billboard pop chart. Alley Oop was the name of a time-traveling caveman in a comic strip of the same name created in 1932 by cartoonist V.T. Hamlin.

RADIO | When the power goes out, Ham radio operators – whose numbers are dwindling – save the day

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

sun. Cannon always knew to be prepared as a lifelong Boy Scout and current Scout Master, but it was the day he narrowly avoided catastrophe that brought him to learning amateur radio.

A 1998 medical mission trip he took to the remote mountains of the Dominican Republic left Cannon with no knowledge of Hurricane Georges heading their way.

It wasn't until moments before he and his team took one of the last commercial flights from Santo Domingo Airport that they learned of the storm that was about to kill more than 200 people and leave more than 100,000 homeless.

"I realized that when you're in a disaster or in a remote area, it's a good thing to be able to communicate quickly," Cannon said.

Those sorts of epiphanies in-

spired a generation of hams from the 1950s through the '80s. But that's where the trend stopped. Computerized communication technology, ever sensitive to storms, passed the trusty ham radios by.

Out of the 313 million Americans who will pick up a cell phone or laptop computer in their lives, only 750,000 of them are licensed radio operators, according to the ARRL. Another study done by ARWatch shows that the average Ham radio operator is 50 years old.

Cannon's focus during Field Day wasn't just on the points, it was on passing amateur radio on to the next generation. Sean, Cannon's 14-year-old son, earned his general amateur radio license just a week before field day, eager to join his father in the competition.

"I think there's a lot of potential for younger people to be involved in amateur radio," Sean said. "If we don't get more people involved, we're going to completely lose this hobby."

"We need the computer generation and the Xbox generation to get off their butts, stop playing 'Halo: Reach,' 'Watch Dogs' and 'Titanfall' and start doing something meaningful with their life."

Cannon and Ham Jeff Keating oversaw 11 boy scouts earning radio merit badges during Field Day, giving them the boys the chance to talk on the air for the

Two hours in, Dave Hillebrandt furrows his brows, his mouth slightly open as he cocks his head toward the speaker to hear more clearly. Everyone in the small trailer is silent as he strains to hear the next code.

"N5BB... 3A, North Texas," his voice is lucid as he articulates the call sign to the logger next to him, who quickly types it into a spreadsheet. Dave rubs his eyes and the bridge of his nose from underneath jet-black wraparound Oakley sunglasses.

His position never changes: one hand active on the Morse code transmitter and the other hand, adorned with a braille-dotted wedding band, fixed on the radio.

He made about 160 contacts by the end of his shift. No vision necessary.

Hillebrandt quit college after two years of studying radio and television and formed a rock band with friends called The Functions.

"You can't pass up on experi-



DAVE HILLEBRANDT

ences," he said.

The guitarist and singer's passion for music has taken him as far as Amsterdam, fundraising for a Moroccan orphanage.

While most performers sock away tips earned from gigs, Dave sometimes donates his tips to non-profits such as the American Cancer Society. He lost his father and mother-in-law to cancer.

Dave attributes his patient nature and avid listening skills to his lack of sight.

"I could meet someone on the street and I don't necessarily know that they're rich, poor, small, homeless or not. A lot of things I'm not distracted by."

— By Nada Hassanein - The Voice



MIKE WELCH

Long black ants crawled across his arms, but Mike Welch sat in his green folding chair ignoring them in the swampy heat. With his soft, wrinkled hands tied together on his lap and a D-STAR radio in front of him, he closely monitored the weather on his laptop. It could turn at any minute, he said, his blue eyes squinting at the icons of white lightning bolts flashing over Brooksville.

Welch, with a soft gentle voice, has charmed everyone that's come by the information tent in the past 10 hours.

"Talked to someone in Iceland the other day," Welch recalls. Since 1957, the radio operator of 18 years has taken on different roles in life — from airman and photographer to husband and grandfather — before loading fuel into rockets at Cape Canaveral.

Welch's radio lets him tell fellow Hams if nearby thunderstorms will pour into the campsite, impacting signals between them and places like China. The radio had certainly

helped Welch out in the middle of the night a few years ago when the power went out. Claps of thunder had rocked him out of bed. Making his way across Lake County in his truck he found himself facing the back of a woman kneeling down in the middle of debris. She was looking at the frame of her mutilated trailer. The tornado had swept up her husband.

"They never found him," Welch said. "Blew him away and killed him. I was so sad. I'll never forget that."

On his computer screen, he looks at the area covering Central Winds Park. The white and blue lightning bolts never do pay a visit.

— By Ailin Lebellot - The Voice



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ATHLETICS

THIS WEEK IN SPORTS HISTORY — JULY 6, 1933 — Major League Baseball's first All-Star Game is played at Comiskey Park in Chicago, designed to bolster the sport during the darkest years of the Great Depression. Fans who could still afford tickets migrated from the more expensive box seats to the bleachers, which cost 50 cents.

Rats grab third straight win

ISAAC BABCOCK
The Voice

The Sanford River Rats have put together one of the longest winning streaks of the Florida Collegiate Summer League season, and now the Winter Park

Diamond Dawgs are struggling to keep up.

The Rats entered last week already on top of the FCSL, but after edging the College Park Freedom in three straight games they started this week at 14-7 on the season

and 7-3 in their last 10 games.

Those three straight losses must have added up to frustration for the Freedom, who lost all three by only a combined 21-16 spread.

The frustration peaked on June 29, when the Freedom took a 3-2

lead into the bottom of the ninth inning before watching it go away on a wild throw that turned a Demetrius Sims stolen base into the tying run. After two scoreless innings, a towering fly ball to center field let the Rats' Einar Muniz score from third in the bottom of the 12th to end it all.

That loss would be the fourth straight for the Freedom.

Meanwhile the Winter Park Diamond Dawgs were avenging a 5-3 loss to the DeLand Suns with two straight wins. Both of those, back-to-back on June 29, started and ended as blowouts.

In the first, Daniel Sweet blasted a double to lead off the game. Two batters later Tagg Duce smashed his 10th double of the season. Devin Raftery struck out nine and gave up just two hits in

five innings for the 6-2 win.

In the second game Duce blasted yet another double and gave his team a margin that would never narrow, ending 4-1. Devin Pelliien gave up just a run on four hits in five innings work to grab the win.

The Dawgs and Rats played a pair of games each during press time. They're on the road during the Fourth of July. At 1 p.m. July 6 the Rats host the Winter Garden Squeeze at Sanford Memorial Stadium. At the same time the Dawgs host the Leesburg Lightning at home.

The annual FCSL All-Star Game starts at 6 p.m. July 8 at Sanford Memorial Stadium with a Home Run Derby, followed by the game at 7 p.m.



ARCHIVE PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE VOICE

Strong pitching by the Winter Park Diamond Dawgs hasn't been enough to keep up with hot Sanford bats so far.

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Josh Garrick Culture for your calendar

Now through July 8 – ‘Columbinus’ (the play) recalls Columbine H.S. Massacre

“Columbinus,” a play based on the 1999 massacre at Columbine High School in Colorado, is a mix of fact and fiction dealing with the angst of adolescent culture. Exploring the events surrounding the shootings, actual discussions with parents, survivors, community leaders and police reports come together to reveal the dark recesses of American adolescence. Directed by Wade Hair, this play is for mature audiences and will be presented from July 3 to 8 at The Breakthrough Theatre in Winter Park. For reservations, call 407-920-4034 or visit breakthroughtheatre.com

July 4 – Orlando’s Fireworks at the Fountain

Fireworks at the Fountain is the largest and longest running 4th of July fireworks display in Central Florida. Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer invites all Central Florida residents and visitors to attend the Fireworks on July 4 at Lake Eola Park in downtown Orlando. New this year, guests may enjoy a performance by the Orlando Philharmonic before and accompanying the spectacu-

lar 20-minute fireworks finale. Entertainment begins at 4 p.m. throughout the park; the Philharmonic begins performing at 8:30 p.m.; and the Fireworks begin at 9:10 p.m. Visit cityoforlando.net/fireworks

July 7 and 21 – The Orlando Philharmonic Sounds of Summer Concert Series

With each concert featuring a different theme of instruments, composers and musicians, this season’s Sounds of Summer Concert Series will be performed at the Orchestra’s new home at Plaza Live at 425 N. Bumby Ave in Orlando.

July concerts include:

- July 7 – Prevailing Winds! – Chamber ensembles drawn from the wind and string sections of the Orchestra perform the Beethoven Trio, op. 38, the Poulenc Sextet and more.
- July 21 – There’s Nothing Like A Dame! – In an evening of music composed by women and performed by women, Joni Hanze Bjella, Olga Ferroni, Karen Peters and Maureen May perform piano music by Jennifer Higdon, Fanny Mendelssohn, Amy Beach and Cecile Chaminade, along with the songs of Barbra Streisand and Carole King. Visit OrlandoPhil.org or call 407-770-0071.

July 8 – moe

In a career that’s entered its third decade and produced 17 albums, moe enjoys the double whammy of critical acclaim and an international fan base. Progressive rockers Al Schnier, Chuck Garvey, Rob Derhak, Jim Loughlin and Vinnie Amico continue to tour the globe, headline music festivals, and/or share the stage with performance legends. Known for the continuing vitality of their music, it’s their live, on-stage showmanship that seals the deal. Join them at Plaza Live on July 8 at 8 p.m. Visit plazaliveorlando.com

July 10 to 28 – ‘Ladies of Eola Heights’ – a Wanzie Comedy

Director Ken Howard has taken on this “re-envisioning” of Michael Wanzie’s wildly successful comedy with a cast of Central Florida’s favorite actresses including Peg O’Keef, Beth Marshall, Blue Star and “Miss Sammy” Singhaus. “There is more than steel to these Magnolias” in this story of sisters who come together after years of being apart, while the comic references to a community within walking distance of the theater should make for some very funny art-imitating-life moments. In performance from July 10 to 28 at The Abbey, visit abbeyorlando.com for tickets.



And looking ahead ...

Through Aug. 31 – The Allure of Ancient Rome

Showcasing prints, drawings, and an illustrated book from the Cornell Museum’s permanent collection, the Cornell’s new exhibit highlights the significance of Roman antiquities in Europe and the role played by printed images in sharing knowledge about those antiquities. This exhibit coincides with the loan of a Roman sarcophagus to the Cornell with the print-works dating from 1540 to 1750. Admission is free. Call 407-646-2526 or visit Rollins.edu/cfam



TASTE OF THE NATION

Aug. 9 – Taste of the Nation – Orlando

On Aug. 9 at 6:45 p.m., Taste of the Nation brings together the area’s top chefs who donate their time, talent and passion to

end childhood hunger in Central Florida. Along with extraordinary food, guests sample select wines while enjoying auctions and entertainment. Please know that every dollar raised fights hunger and homelessness in Central Florida. Tickets are \$150. Visit tasteofthenation.org/orlando and/or facebook.com/Orlando-Taste. We can all buy a ticket and help.



Aug. 23 – Give Kids the World’s first-ever MacDown Competition

Another “foodie” event of a very different sort is the first-ever MacDown (mac & cheese) Competition created to benefit Give Kids the World – the 70-acre resort for children with life-threatening illnesses. The competition is open to everyone — from professional chefs to home cooks — on Aug. 23 at the Orange County Convention Center. There will be lots of fun prizes, but the best prize is knowing your efforts will help a tragically sick child achieve a dream. For more information, visit otownmacdown.org

Josh Garrick is a writer, photographer, educator, and fine art curator. He is a member of the Curatorial Council for the Museum of Florida Art. Garrick can be reached at joshgarrick9@gmail.com or 407-522-3906.

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July 10 - 13

Save 50 - 75% at participating retailers

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Procuring our independence in our backyard

As American colonialists sought independence from British rule, individuals today seek independence from controlling interests — whether government, financial or personal. But colonial Americans also sought cooperation with the same geopolitical players; respecting borders, trading economically and enjoying similar histories. Everything we do in life is in the pursuit of happiness or avoidance of unhappiness. Being free to seek our happiness relies on a degree of independence. Growing a garden and procuring more of our needs are major steps toward independence and happiness.



Tom Carey
From my garden to yours



PHOTO BY TOM CAREY — THE VOICE

Want to be more food independent? You'd be surprised how much variety of food can be grown in Florida.

the focused schedule. Florida gardeners, spoiled by the simplicity of always having something green ready for the plucking and a refrigerator nearby, have forgotten many required skills of food preservation. I recently helped with dispatching of a flock of meat chickens, grown in a suburban backyard, which will provision the family for most of the year.

The United States economy is unabash-

edly proud of its consumer roots, though in the long run the consumer-producer equation esteem points always fall to the producer. The whole concept of debt-driven recreational shopping and spending is not sustainable. A huge first step for anyone paying homage to our spending independence would be to improve our efficacy in preparing our own food. Start by cutting back on how many days each

month you eat out, bring home-prepared meals, microwave something frozen, or rely on the expertise of others to prepare your food. Track and relish your progress toward acquiring the most value from your kitchen and home-cooked meals (and save restaurant visits for special celebrations).

Other areas in which you can take a big step toward independence would be education, transportation, home improvement, entertainment, and health management. Learning to ride and maintain a bicycle opens whole new worlds merely previewed through a windshield. Do you know how electricity and water are delivered to meet your numerous needs? Local live music is a welcoming scene and might even encourage you to take music lessons put off for a lifetime.

Everyone is different, and we have a responsibility to be our unique best. Keeping our bodies healthy by learning and living in an independent mindset not only will keep you happy, but keep those around you happy too.

WHO IS CAREY

Tom Carey is the owner of Sundew Gardens, a you-pick gardening business in Oviedo. Visit the Sundew Gardens Facebook page and email him at sundewgardens@gmail.com

Appreciate the moments away from the screen

LEANDRA PRESTON-SIDLER
UCF Forum columnist

I admit it. I'm addicted.

Social media, my phone, television, all things Internet — I would not want to live without them.

I turn 40 next month and I've had the luxury of: growing up without the Internet, reading physical books in the library that I found using a card catalog, remembering the first time I saw a man in the mall using a (giant) cell phone — and was fascinated — and could never conceive how the video chat I first witnessed on "The Jetsons" was possible.

I loved "The Jetsons," by the way, and still think about the show when I see technology that never seemed imaginable. I now view my love for "The Jetsons" as a love for the possibilities their world represented, and I am still waiting for that machine that cooked food made to order, though today's microwave comes pretty close.

I am also equally into nature and the simple things in life such as sitting on the back porch looking at the sky and feeling the wind, walking on the beach, listening to music — and now, staring at my baby girl while she sleeps.

Looking at my daughter prompted me to write this column, as I realized one day when she was nursing that my reading the news on the phone was distracting her. She stopped eating and stared at my phone. I put it down and focused on her, but a minute or two later I found myself on my phone checking my Facebook.

She stopped eating and looked toward my phone again. "It's the light," I thought, and put it down. I had to actively focus on not picking it up again and recognized that I have an undeniable compulsion to look at my phone, to check my email, and perhaps most impulsively, to check my Facebook, even when I am doing something else that requires my mental focus, like writing.

But my baby changes every day and

she requires my focus more than anything. So why would I spend these precious moments looking at my phone?

I like to think I'm a master multitasker but it has been proven that we actually do every individual thing worse when we multitask, even when we think we do better or "as good." For example, when I transitioned from breastfeeding to using a bottle, I soon realized I wasn't paying attention to her as much because the ease of using a bottle allowed more access to reading on my phone. I feel guilty admitting this, but acknowledging one's problem is an important part of recovery, right? And I want to recover.

Sitting outside one night after she went to bed, just me and the stars, I had a chance to think. I had unintentionally left my phone upstairs and, too lazy to retrieve it on a night too beautiful to resist, I thought about things. I should vow not to look at my phone or watch television while I feed her, and make that our time — these beautiful private moments that are so fleeting, I will regret not giving them my full attention one day. I know I will.

I think about it in the middle of the night when she wakes up and I feed her in the dim light and silence, because I don't want to create distraction or stimulation. I just watch her, so sweet and innocent, relatively unaffected by the media that will pollute her life every second of her existence before she knows it. Images that tell her how to look, television shows that hold her attention more than I will, the Internet I will ground her from using one day, and the cell phone that I will pry out of her little hands during dinner.

I know it is coming. I know this is her world and I am introducing her to it far too young. She already loves television though I strictly limit it and try to be conscientious of what she watches. I researched the impact of television on infant minds, but as a busy working mom with a husband who works just as much, you do

what you've got to do.

Even if she doesn't get her "Yo Gabba Gabba" television time, she pays far too much attention when I am watching television. She is also captivated by the computer. Whether it's the light or color or a window into her future life, it simultaneously worries and amuses me. "Look at her look at the screen! She is so smart!"

As someone who researches digital media and identity, I overthink this, but recognize it warrants my thinking. How is her brain development affected by her exposure to media so young? Is it impairing or preparing her for a life immersed in it? Is her brain wired differently from the start because of some evolutionary advancement (or devolvement) based on

our mediated culture? And do I need to seek help for my own preoccupation with media or am I just a savvy product of my own cultural moment?

Media is a crucial part of my life beyond the entertainment realm.

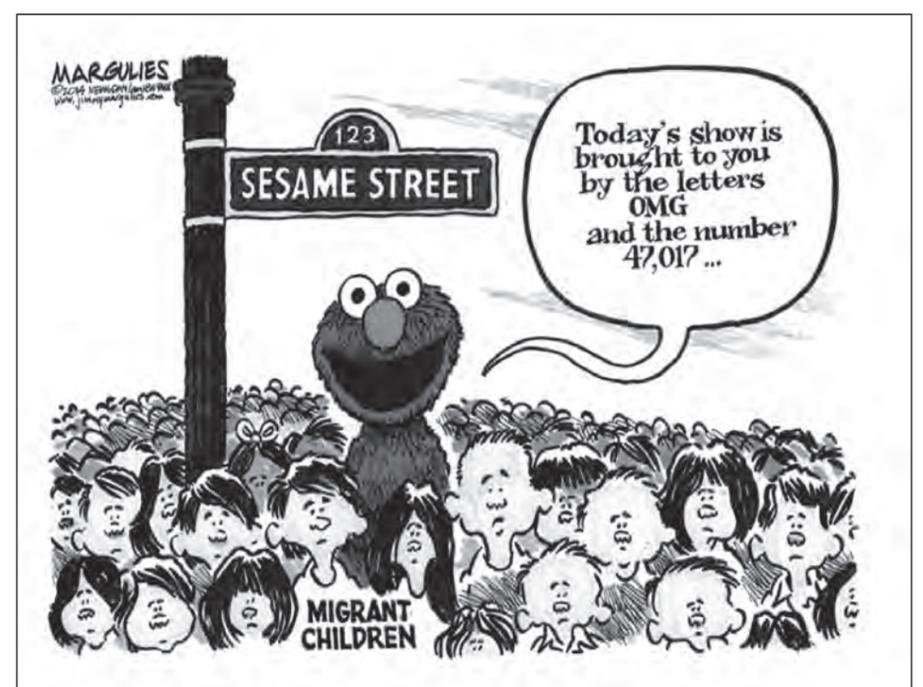
I don't just teach, I teach online. I am not just writing a dissertation, I am doing so in a program devoted to the convergence of texts and technologies where my research focuses on social media. So I am seriously immersed in digital media.

But my daughter doesn't have to be.

Not yet anyway — not if I can help it.

Leandra Preston-Sidler is an instructor in the University of Central Florida's Women's Studies. She can be reached at Leandra.Preston-Sidler@ucf.edu

EDITORIAL CARTOON



Dancing through the fog of dementia

Step by step, dementia patients better their brains and bodies with ballroom dance lessons

BRITTNI LARSON
Central Florida Senior

Joan Ray has been a dancer since she was a child. She'd watch the afternoon dance shows on TV, spend three afternoons a week after school dancing the jitterbug, and whatever else the kids were excited about at the time. When she got older, she'd hop up with her girlfriends and do a little line dancing if the mood was right. Her husband Roy has always been a bit of a wallflower.

"Most of the time it was Joan getting up and dancing with the girls while I sat over and had a beer, or two, and cheered her on," he said.

But Joan, 70, hasn't been dancing in a while. The Winter Springs couple's life has changed drastically in the last five years, when Joan was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2009. It was gradual at first, Joan putting things in places she normally wouldn't and then not being able to find them. But it's gotten a lot harder lately. Joan sometimes wanders the house at night and she can't drive anymore. Roy has to do all the cooking and housework.

"It's been a transition from not a big problem at first to



significant problems as time went on, to now being able to deal with those problems knowing they're there and they're not going to go away and it's not her, it's the disease that's causing the problem," Roy said.

Their lifestyle has changed considerably, but they still try to do normal couple things. They go out to eat, invite friends over and travel with a motor home group. When Roy saw that the Alzheimer's Association was offering ballroom dance classes this

summer, he saw another opportunity for he and his wife to connect with each other, find potential friends who understand what they're going through, and have some fun.

The classes, which are free

and being held by the Alzheimer Association and the USA Dance Orlando chapter, run every Saturday through July 26 from 2 to 3 p.m. at the Crosby Center YMCA in Winter Park.

In 2013 a team of researchers from Nottingham University in the United Kingdom released a study that shows staying active — with your brain and body — could be effective in staving off Alzheimer's disease. Ballroom dancing activates both.

"While there is not a

100 percent proven method for slowing progression or prevention with the disease; we find that keeping yourself stimulated, keeping your mind active and keeping your body active are really the best ways to help slow progression of the disease and help prevent the decline," said Danny Anez, associate director of programs for the Alzheimer's Association Central and North Florida Chapter.

"So ballroom dancing it has the unique ability to both work out your brain and stimulate your brain in new and novel ways as well as physically working yourself out and working on things like balance, which is a huge issue when it comes to senior populations."

And since there is no cure or real treatment for dementia, an activity like ballroom dancing is worth looking into considering how many Americans the disease impacts. More than 5 million Ameri-

cans are living with dementia and every 67 seconds another person develops Alzheimer's, according to statistics collected by the Alzheimer's Association. Experts estimate that by the year 2050, 16 million people will have the disease.

The symptoms of dementia are incredibly disrupting to daily life for the individual. There's memory loss and decreased problem solving and reasoning skills. Sufferers experience confusion with time or place, changes in personality and have trouble joining or following a conversation.

That can make a person affected by dementia withdraw from their normal social activities. They stop going to church or having dinner with friends. Anez hopes that the ballroom dance program can keep those people engaged in their community instead.

"It keeps people living with a purpose in life," he said.

John Davis, president of the Orlando chapter of USA Dance, hopes those who come to the dance program create a stronger bond with their caregiver, have fun and allow them to reminisce about happier times.

"Some of the things that

■ Please see **DANCING** on page 3



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"You can't help but make new friends here!"

After an eclectic career that ran the gamut from agriculture to advertising to entertainment, Bob Pittman chose The Mayflower as his retirement destination. "Life is simpler here," he says. "I no longer have to worry about looking after a house, but I'm still surrounded by the possessions that are meaningful to me. My apartment feels like 'me'... because it is!"

A theater aficionado who traveled the world and hobnobbed with diplomats and celebrities, Bob has embraced all aspects of The Mayflower — including the community's exclusive lifelong-learning partnership with Rollins College. "I love the exchange and conversations with students," he says. "And I've also enjoyed getting to know the other residents. You can't help but make new friends here!"

**What's your plan for the future?
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THE MAYFLOWER

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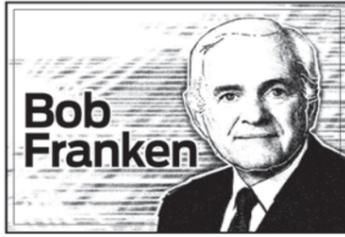


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Mastering well-mannered hatefulness

Growing up in the South, I always marveled at how adept everyone was at well-mannered hatefulness. If someone made a stupid comment, the response would never be, "What an idiot you are!" Instead it was, "Well, ain't that nice?" or "Why, bless your heart." When it came to social-grace duplicity, we were the champions.

Or so I thought. That was before I came to Washington. It takes a little



getting used to, but for the most part, you must accept that people mean the opposite of what they say. If most say "Nice to see you," they are actually looking over your shoulder at someone more im-

portant. The really good ones somehow manage to make eye contact with you while looking past you at the same instant. It's pretty amazing.

And anyone who has watched the Senate is well aware that the members refer to their most despised enemies as "My friend." That extends far beyond the Capitol. If anyone calls you his or her "friend," watch your back.

There's nothing new about this, and it's not unique to

D.C. We all have our moments of not meaning what we say. The normal greeting is "How are you doing?" The automatic answer is "Fine, thank you." But let's face it: We usually couldn't care less, and we certainly don't want to hear when someone is not fine. The last thing we want is "Actually terrible. My wife has left me for a younger man, my business is bankrupt, and the bank just foreclosed on my house."

What do you say? If you grew up in the South, perhaps you'd respond with "bless your heart," in which case you'd mean, "I'm sorry, did you say something?" Or you'd escape as fast as you could.

"Thank you for asking," is another one, a deflecting response to the insincere "How you doing?" greeting. "Thank you for asking" translates to, "None of your business."

And then there's flattery. The more someone sings your praises to your face, the more he changes his tune behind your back. Perhaps Michael Kinsley is correct, though, with his observation that insincere flattery is really sincere, because the person lavishing compliments thinks

you're worthwhile enough to insincerely flatter.

Again, it's Washington. Here it's barely noticed that the same Republicans who were demanding that the administration bring back Taliban hostage Bowe Bergdahl at any cost now are raising Cain about the very fact that a deal was made for his return.

It's galling how shamelessly these guys flip-flop, and what's really infuriating is how President Barack Obama even lets them bother him. He really should figure out that it's always "damned if you do, and damned if you don't" for him. Deception is accepted as the norm here, and they never have to eat their words.

Hillary Clinton shows she's no slouch at this when she chooses her language. My fakery favorite is the expression "I wish him well," which is code for condemning someone to a miserable life. Bless her heart, in the first of the umpteen TV interviews she did to promote her new book, Hillary told ABC's Diane Sawyer she wished not only Rand Paul well, but also Monica Lewinsky. Ain't that nice?

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Next time don't ignore that AARP invite

At some point in our lives, we will get an invitation to join AARP, the organization for seniors. This likely will coincide with our 50th birthday, a point many of us don't want to acknowledge. The AARP mail is ignored, maybe for a week, maybe for 10 years. But at some point we concede: We are seniors. And we need AARP.

I've been taking a closer look at AARP recently, and have concluded that it's worth

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

joining. Here are a few of the benefits of membership:

Need help with estate planning, starting a business or your taxes? It's there, as close as your computer. Want good information on local political issues that affect seniors in your state. It's there. AARP is in our corner, with one of

the strongest lobby efforts in Washington, D.C.

While AARP is nonprofit, there are two side branches that are for profit. AARP Services provides discounts on many of the things we need, such as travel, legal, entertainment and supplemental health insurance. AARP Foundation provides on-the-job training, education, legal help and much more.

—The AARP Driver Safety program can be taken either

online or in a class setting. The biggest value is that it teaches about the changes that come with age and how those can affect driving.

—The bi-monthly magazine is worth the price of the membership alone (\$16 per year). What I appreciate most is that the articles are straightforward, informative and not condescending. With membership you also can read them online. If you have access to a computer, look around the site at

aarp.com. Check the member-benefits guide, even if you're already a member, or ask for one by phone when you sign up by calling 1-888-687-2277. Be sure you're not missing out on anything — especially your discounts!

Matilda Charles regrets that she cannot personally answer reader questions, but will incorporate them into her column whenever possible. Send email to columnreply2@gmail.com. © 2014 King Features Synd. Inc.

DANCING | Motion improves memories

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

happen when you start with cognitive deterioration is that it does lead to a certain isolation and loneliness, and certainly ballroom dancing with a partner will help them to channel communication on a social level and on a physical level," he said. "This might even bring back memories of them swing dancing in the past, or salsa dancing."

Joan's excited to relive a little bit of her past. She's a great dancer, Roy said, but he's a little nervous.

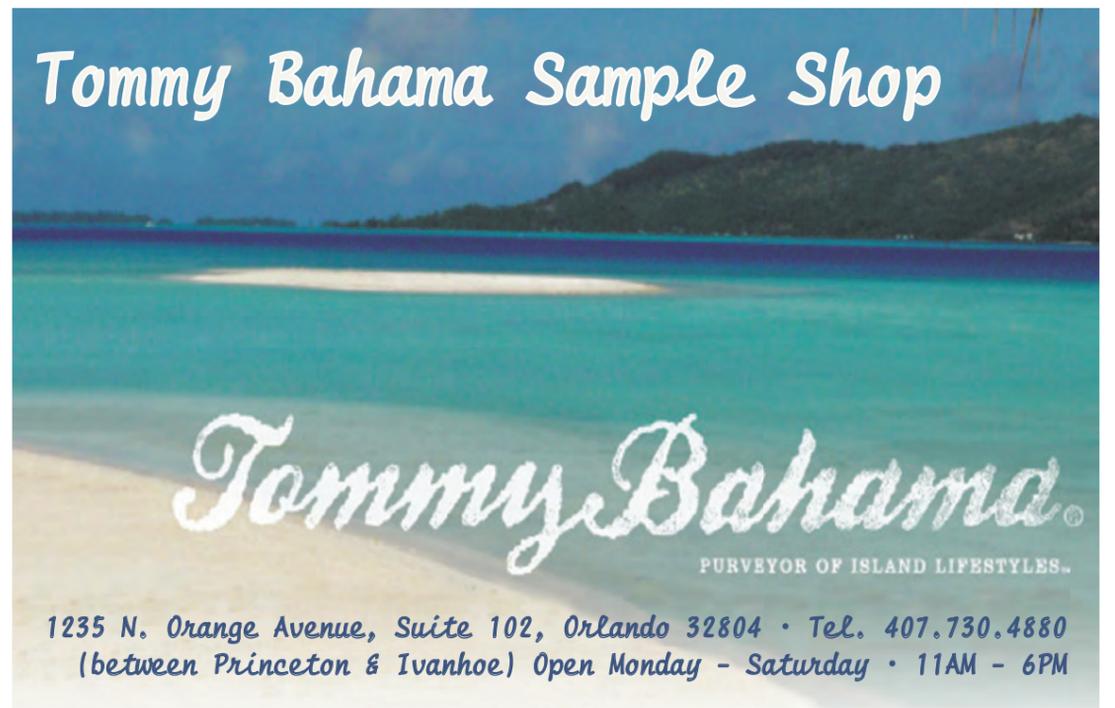
"I'm afraid I'll step all over her feet."

"Oh you will not, you'll do

The Alzheimer Association Central and North Florida Chapter will be holding free ballroom dance classes for those diagnosed with a dementia and their caregivers — there are volunteer partners available, too — every Saturday in July from 2 to 3 p.m. Classes are at the Crosby Center YMCA in Winter Park and RSVP is required, call 1-800-272-3900.

fine," Joan says.

When he leaves the room she makes a motion, showing off how she'll be doing the leading while they're there. She won't let him step on her feet.



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the right decisions about the rest of their lives – it was a very positive experience for all of us.

I would certainly recommend anyone in need of information regarding the future of their elderly loved ones to visit One Senior Place.”

Jerry T. Stansfield, Col. US Army, Retired

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- Savannah Court & Cottage of Oviedo
- Senior Living Guide
- Senior Medical Supplies
- Senior Partner In-Home Care
- Serenades by Sonata
- The Law Offices of Hoyt & Bryan
- Villa Grande on Saxon
- Village on the Green
- VITAS Innovative Hospice Care
- WellCare Health Plans, Inc



July Calendar of Events

We will be closed on Friday, July 4th to recognize the 4th of July Holiday.

EDUCATIONAL

Hurricane Preparedness

Presented by Eric Burris, First Alert Meteorologist WESH 2
Thursday, July 3rd 10:30am-1pm
Hosted by VITAS Innovative Hospice Care
RSVP 407.599.2522

Fall Prevention Program – 8 Week Course

Each Friday: July 18th to September 5th
10am-12pm
By FIT, Must Reserve Seat.
RSVP 407.949.1525

Memory Loss & Aging – Alzheimer's Disease Prevention & Treatment

Wednesday, July 23rd 9:30am-11am
By Compass Research. RSVP 407.218.6220

FUN & EXERCISE

Senior Club

Every Monday 10am-12pm
By Family Physicians Group
July 7th – Bingo
July 14th – Computer Club
July 21st – Movie Day
July 28th – Casino Day

Crafts & Conversation

Tuesday, July 15th 2pm-4pm
By VITAS. Limited seating, must RSVP
407.599.2522

Chair Pilates

Friday, July 18th & 25th 1:30pm-2pm
By VITAS Innovative Hospice Care. RSVP
407.599.2522

HEALTH RELATED

FREE Memory Screenings!

Tuesday, July 1st 9am – 4pm
By Compass Research. Appointment Only.
RSVP 407.949.6733

Is It Wax or Is It My Hearing?

Wednesday, July 2nd & July 30th 3pm-4:30pm
By Harmony Hearing. RSVP 407.949.6737

Free Ear Cleaning & Checks!

Wednesday, July 9th 3pm-4:30pm
By Harmony Hearing. RSVP 407.949.6737

Testosterone Growth Hormone

Friday, July 11th 11am-12pm
By More T Clinics. RSVP 407.949.0222

Are Your Hearing Aids in the Drawer?

Wednesday, July 16th 3pm-4:30pm
By Harmony Hearing. RSVP 407.949.6737

Hearing Aids Users Improve Relationships & Self Image!

Wednesday, July 23rd 3pm-4:30pm
By Harmony Hearing. RSVP 407.949.6737

Testosterone Growth Hormone

Thursday, July 31st 3pm-4pm
By More T Clinics. RSVP 407.949.0222

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Monday, July 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th
10am-1pm
By Exit Real Estate Results.
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AARP Medicare Complete

Tuesday, July 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, & 29th
2pm-3pm
By LTC Advisors. RSVP 407.949.6722

Wealth Management-Issues Seniors Face in Retirement

Wednesday, July 9th 10am-11:30am
By Estate & Business Planning Group.
RSVP 407.389.1122

BlueMedicare 2014

Thursday, July 10th 3pm-4pm
By Florida Blue-McBride Insurance Agency.
RSVP 407.949.6735

Moving Made Easy – Tips for Selling Your Home

Tuesday, July 15th 10am-12pm
By EXIT Real Estate Results.
RSVP 407.949.6714

Mistakes to Avoid with Your RMDs (Required Minimum Distributions)

Wednesday, July 16th 10am-11:30am
By Estate & Business Planning Group.
RSVP 407.389.1122

LEGAL & FINANCIAL

Social Security Seminar

Wednesday, July 16th 4pm-5:30pm
By Estate & Business Planning Group. RSVP
407.389.1122

Senior Survival Workshop

Wednesday, July 23rd 2pm-4pm
By Kathleen Flammia, P.A.
RSVP 407.478.7800

Half Time Report

Thursday, July 24th 11am-2pm OR 3pm-6pm
By Estate & Business Planning Group.
RSVP 407.389.1122 or Email:
Reservation@EstateAndBusiness.net

Truth About Medicaid Planning

Tuesday, July 29th 9:30am-12pm
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Not all back pain is equal New drugs may help Parkinson's



DEAR DR. ROACH: I have had lower-back problems almost all my life. Many doctors and therapists have examined it, with almost no success. Recently my attacks have been fewer and milder, even if the bed is not quite right. I can live with it, but a new wrinkle has emerged: If I don't get out of bed as soon as the alarm sounds, I'll have back pain and little mobility all day and partial incapacity. I am 74 years old, 6-feet 4-inches tall and weigh 230 pounds. Do you have any idea what causes this, and if there is any cure? — J.S.B.

ANSWER: There are dozens of causes of back pain. It can be impossible, even with the most advanced diagnostic tests, to make a precise diagnosis of the underlying cause.

In your case, it sounds like you have had one problem for a long time and now something is causing a different

kind of back problem. Back pain that gets worse with bed rest and better with exercise is not likely to be a herniated disc or spinal stenosis — two serious causes of back pain. I am guessing that there is a component of osteoarthritis in your back now, which would be quite common in a 74-year-old man. Osteoarthritis does tend to get worse with rest and better with exercise. I am impressed by how acutely it gets worse, and it's entirely possible that there may be some muscular spasm associated with your back pain.

Even though you are quite tall, 230 pounds is a lot for your spine to support. You have a BMI of 28, which is in the "overweight" range. Losing even five or 10 pounds may help relieve pain on your back. And certainly listen to your body, and get up and be active. Stretching, including yoga and tai chi, can be a very effective treatment.

The arthritis booklet discusses joint pain found in osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. Order a copy by writing: Dr. Roach — No. 301W, Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Enclose a check or money order (no cash) for \$4.75 U.S. with the recipient's printed name and address. Please allow four weeks for delivery.

About 60,000 Americans are diagnosed with Parkinson's disease each year. In 2010, the disease was responsible for the deaths of 182 Florida residents between the ages of 65 and 74, and 1,535 Florida residents over the age of 75, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Parkinson's disease is a progressive disorder of the nervous system that affects your movement. Early signs may be mild and go unnoticed. Symptoms often begin on one side of your body and usually remain worse on that side, even after symptoms begin to affect both sides. Signs and symptoms may include tremor, slowed movement, rigid muscles, impaired posture, speech changes and writing changes.

In the early stages of Parkinson's disease, your face may show little or no expression or your arms may not swing when you walk. Your speech may become soft or slurred. Parkinson's disease symptoms worsen as your condition progresses over time. Although Parkinson's disease can't be cured, medications may improve your symptoms.

One of the most disturbing side effects of standard Parkinson's disease treatments are "freezing" or "off" episodes. These episodes are characterized by acute immobility, can

occur between one and several times daily, and can last from one to several hours cumulatively. These episodes are triggered by L-dopa, a mainline treatment for Parkinson's disease. The episodes begin when the levodopa or enzyme inhibitors enter the bloodstream too slowly, or wear off quickly, or just do not enter the bloodstream sufficiently at all.

A drug called apomorphine is the only drug approved specifically for the treatment of these "freezing" periods. Currently, however, it is only available in the U.S. as an injection. This can result in painful reactions, including irritation and nodules at the injection site. Our company, called Cynapsus Therapeutics Inc., has developed an under-the-tongue thin-film strip system, called APL-130277 that is similar to Listerine Breath Strips. The strip dissolves in about one to two minutes, delivering the drug into the bloodstream in a similar time interval and concentration as an injectable dose. The treatment aims at relieving many Parkinson's disease patients of the requirement for self-injections, along with the injury and stress this entails. Over the next two years, the company plans to conduct human clinical trials and expects

to submit its drug for approval to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 2016.

If you would like to learn more about Parkinson's disease, its symptoms and available treatments, speak with your doctor, or contact the Central Florida chapter of the National Parkinson Foundation at 858-414-0459 or npfcentralflorida.org/about/contact-us

Anthony Giovino is president and CEO of Cynapsus Therapeutics Inc.

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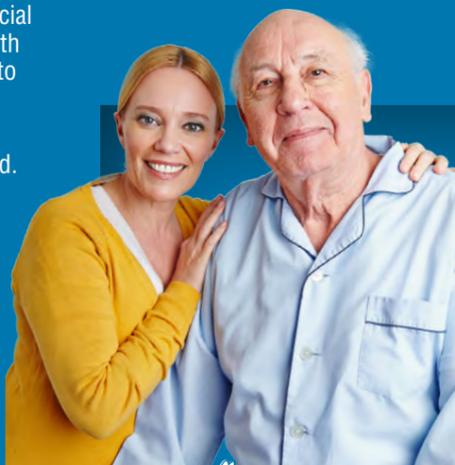
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Senior Calendar

Maitland Senior Center

The Maitland Senior Center is located at 345 South Maitland Ave. and is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The schedule is subject to change without notice. For more information, please call 407-539-6251 or visit itsmymaitland.com. The Maitland Senior Center will be closed on Friday, July 4, for Independence Day and will reopen at 9 a.m. on Monday, July 7.

Join us every Monday and Friday in July at 1 p.m. to **see your favorite movies!** Check our calendar online to see what movies are showing in July. Call to reserve your seat!

Join John every Monday, Thursday and Friday in July at 9 a.m. for **Yoga**. Please wear comfortable clothes and bring your own mat. Cost of the class is \$2 to the teacher.

Join us every Monday in July at 1 p.m. for our **Conversational French group**. Spend some time chatting with others and making new friends.

Join Esther every Tuesday in July at 9 a.m. for **Tai Chi classes**. Cost of the class is \$10 per month to the teacher. Please wear a white shirt, black pants, and comfortable shoes.

Join us every Tuesday in July at 1 p.m. for our **Conversational Spanish group**. Spend some time chatting with others and making new friends. Must be fluent in Spanish to participate.

Join Sher're every Wednesday in July at 10 a.m. for **Instructor's Choice**. This class is a combo of mat and chair yoga that is great for all levels. Cost of the class is \$5 to the teacher. Bring a yoga mat.

Join Ty every Wednesday in July at 11 a.m. for **Yoga Nidra**, a sublime conscious sleep (meditation) class. Cost of the class is \$5 to the teacher. Please bring a yoga mat, something to cover yourself with (if you tend to get cold), and a small pillow.

Join Donna every Thursday in July at 11:30 a.m. for **Chair Yoga**. Cost of the class is a \$2 donation to the teacher.

Join Ann every Friday in July for **Recorder classes** at 12:30 p.m. Lessons are free! Please call the Senior Center at 407-539-6251 for specifics on this class.

On July 11 seniors are invited to a

program providing **free unbiased counseling** about Medicare, Medicaid, HMOs, Medicaid, Prescription Drug Plans, and Long Term Care staffed by counselors from S.H.I.N.E. (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders). All counseling is first-come-first-served. Bring your list of medications or Rx bottles, insurance card and red, white and blue Medicare card. For more information, email information@elderaffairs.org, visit FLORIDASHINE.org, or call 1-800-963-5337.

Casselberry classes

Back 2 Basics is a low-impact workout at noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 8:30 a.m. on Saturdays. It's \$49.99 a month for unlimited classes.

Chair Yoga is at 10 a.m. every Monday and will get you moving again! The cost is \$2 per class.

Gentle/Restorative Yoga is from 8:45 to 10 a.m. on Sundays. The cost is \$10 per class. Senior citizen's discount is \$5 per class. For more information, contact Alice Gomes at 609-290-8195 or email alice@imagineyoga.net

Yoga Technique is 8:45 to 10 a.m. on Saturdays. The cost is \$10 per

class. Senior citizen's discount is \$5 per class.

Chairyobics is from 11:05 a.m. to noon on Mondays and Wednesdays. The class is free. Contact Claudia Laine at 407-718-9066.

Tai Chi for Beginners is at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays. Contact Eric Raboy at 407-731-9130. The cost is \$5 per class or \$20 per month.

Tai Chi for Intermediates is at 2 p.m. on Tuesdays. Contact Eric Raboy at 407-731-9130. The cost is \$5 per class or \$20 per month.

Bingo is from 9 to 11 a.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. The cost is \$3 per session.

Duplicate bridge is from noon to 4 p.m. on Mondays. Shore up your skills in this classic game. Casual bridge is from noon to 4 p.m. on Tuesdays. Progressive bridge is from noon to 4 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays.

Line Dancing is from 1 to 2 p.m. every Wednesday.

For more information on classes and registration, contact Mario Almarin at 407-262-7700, ext. 1576,

or malgarin@casselberry.org or visit casselberry.org/register

Winter Springs Senior Center **Learn ceramics** from a talented group at ceramics class from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Mondays at the Winter Springs Senior Center at 400 N. Edgemon Ave. in Winter Springs. Call 407-327-6556.

Have fun and get moving at **yoga classes** at 10 a.m. every Friday morning. Chair yoga is also available.

Bingo is Wednesday, Friday and the last Sunday of the month. Lunch is served at 11:45 a.m. followed by Bingo at 1 p.m. There is no bingo prior to the last Sunday of the month.

A **bridge class** meets at 10:30 a.m. every Tuesday to help your game.

Need to relieve some stress? On Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. join our 30-minute **"Guided Meditation."**

Altamonte Springs programs AARP's **Smart Driver program** helps refresh driving skills and develop safer driving habits for drivers aged 50 or older. It's from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. July 12 at Altamonte Mall COPS Center, 415 E. Altamonte Drive. Call 1-888-227-766.

Senior Sneakers

RHETT WICKHAM, CPT

Question 1: I know that I should get more exercise, but I don't know where to start.
—Mary Boone

Question 2: Why do I need to exercise? I'm too old to start.
—John S.

I want to address both of you, John and Mary, together, because up front the message is the same: everybody has to start somewhere, sometime. While it's never too late to start improving your health, now is the most important time for people over 50. The benefits for a mature population are physical, emotional, mental, and ...yes, even financial!

The human body is capable of building muscle throughout your lifetime, John, regardless of age. Exercise — particularly a regular, focused, programmatic approach — means that you see your energy improve almost instantly, as well as sleep, digestive health and cardiovascular health. As we mature, many people are concerned with the risk of falling and injuring themselves. Nothing is better for preventing this than a strong core that helps you stay stable and flexible and agile. Men, for example, can improve the muscle strength in their back and abdominal muscles as well as their legs, and women find it particularly important to improve upper body strength (shoulders and arms.) Regardless of your gender, the body wants to be equally strong — front to back, left to right, top to bottom. It's the beauty of the human body; it naturally seeks balance.

Getting started is simple, Mary. Get up, get in the gym, and



select a trainer to guide you. If you're more comfortable with a mature trainer there are plenty of us making a difference for young and mature alike. Going to a gym for the first time without a trainer is like visiting a foreign country without consulting a good guide — you risk missing out on the best benefits and, worse, injuring yourself. Trainers teach you carefully, slowly, thoughtfully so that you feel comfortable and see results. A trainer can help guide your nutrition and get rid of the confusions about diet; plus we want you to have the foods you enjoy not just rice cakes and fish, I promise!

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANYTIME FITNESS
Trainers can help seniors plan workouts.

Remember what I said about financial benefits? Well, many clients I've trained have had their doctor reduce — or in some instances completely eliminate — medications for high blood pressure, cholesterol and other conditions improved by exercise and good nutrition. The potential for money saved on medication and extended, repeat visits to health care specialists is substantial. Check with your insurance programs to see if they offer a discount — or even free membership — to the gym, such as Silver Sneakers.

Finally, why start late in life? My favorite quote about health and wellness is from Socrates and I repeat it every day, "No citizen has a right to be an amateur in the matter of physical training ... what a crime it is for one to grow old without ever seeing the beauty and strength of which their body is capable." You can have a longer, healthier, happier life. Exercise science is far more advanced now and we know from years of research that people who engage in some form of vigorous exercise,

for an hour a day at least three days a week, add years to their life. Not just hours and days, but

happier, healthier, more independent years of living. Emerging research is pointing toward exercise as a way to improve mental health and counter the effects of diseases such as Alzheimer's. Women can increase bone density, men can improve their performance in leisure activities such as golf and tennis, and we all improve our sexual health (shhhh ... don't tell the 20-somethings we're still active; let it be a surprise.)

So find a health club, gym or exercise studio, take a friend — or meet new friends, and join the revolution of age-defying exercisers

realizing the unlimited potential of their bodies. Oh, yes, and when in doubt, always ask a trainer!

Rhett Wickham is a Certified Personal Trainer and Strength and Conditioning Coach at Anytime Fitness in Winter Park and he can be reached at 321-972-5833 for both personal and group training. For answers to your health and fitness questions email: askatrainer@anytimefitness.com. Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, Anytime Fitness, Winter Park prides itself on providing a friendly, well-maintained facility featuring top-quality exercise equipment. Members enjoy the benefit of being able to use any of more than 2,300 Anytime Fitness clubs now open in all 50 states and 19 countries. For more information on Anytime Fitness, visit anytimefitness.com

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Hepatitis C: Older Americans are at risk

RON POLLACK
Guest columnist

Hepatitis C is a disease that is caused by a virus that affects the liver. Even though the disease often doesn't produce symptoms, it can seriously damage the liver and can be fatal. An estimated 3.2 million Americans have Hepatitis C.

Older people are more likely to have been exposed to Hepatitis C, but many older Americans are not aware that they need to be tested for it. A December 2013 report found that Hepatitis C infections are concentrated in the Baby Boomers generation (find more information on that report here: <http://bit.ly/TTsXih>). In one major study of people with the virus, 75 percent of the patients were born between 1945 and 1964.

What is Hepatitis C?

Hepatitis C is a contagious liver disease that results from infection with the Hepatitis C virus, which is spread primarily through contact with the blood of an infected person.

Hepatitis C ranges in severity from a mild illness that lasts a few weeks (referred to as an "acute" infection) to a serious, lifelong illness that can destroy the liver (referred to as a "chronic" infection). Most people with Hepatitis C do not have any immediate symptoms. However, 75 to 85 percent of people who are infected eventually develop a chronic infection.

Chronic Hepatitis C is a serious disease that can result in long-term health problems, including liver damage, liver failure, liver cancer, and even death. It is the leading cause of cirrhosis of the liver (liver scarring) and liver cancer, and is the most common reason for liver transplants in the United States. Approximately 15,000 people die every year from Hepatitis C-related liver disease.

What are the symptoms of chronic Hepatitis C?

Most people with chronic Hepatitis C do not have any symptoms, and they may not have symptoms until years later when they develop liver problems. In people with no symptoms, Hepatitis C is often detected during routine blood tests to measure liver function.

Infected people who do develop symptoms may experience the following: fatigue, joint pain, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, fever, dark urine, light-colored stools, or yellowish eyes and skin, called jaundice.

Can a person spread Hepatitis C without having symptoms?

Yes. Most people who are infected with Hepatitis C do not know they are infected because they do not look or

feel sick. An infected person with no symptoms can spread the virus to others. Any activity that exchanges blood between two people can put a person at risk for exposure.

Before 1992, Hepatitis C was commonly spread through blood transfusions and organ transplants. Widespread screening of the U.S. blood supply for Hepatitis C began in 1992.

Should I be tested for Hepatitis C?

Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Preventive Services Task Force recommend screening for the Hepatitis C virus for people born between 1945 and 1964. Talk to your doctor about being tested for Hepatitis C if

- any of these apply to you:
- You were born between 1945 and 1964
 - You were treated for a blood clotting problem before 1987
 - You received a blood transfusion or organ transplant before July 1992
 - You are on long-term hemodialysis treatment
 - You have abnormal liver tests or liver disease
 - You work in health care or public safety and were exposed to blood through a needle stick or other sharp object injury
 - You have HIV
 - You engaged in sex that could have caused bleeding
 - You are a current or former injection drug user, even if

you injected only one time or many years ago

Can Hepatitis C be treated successfully?

Yes. In about 25 percent of people, an acute infection clears up on its own without treatment. However, if acute hepatitis C is diagnosed, treatment reduces the risk that it will become a chronic infection.

There are several medications that treat chronic Hepatitis C, including new treatments that appear to be more effective and have fewer side effects than previous options. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) keeps a list of approved treatments online at <http://1.usa.gov/1q9Gq1w>. However,

treatment can be expensive. Clinical trials of new drug treatments may also be available.

Hepatitis C and the Affordable Care Act

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, hundreds of thousands of Hepatitis C patients have new access to treatment.

— All insurance must provide free screening for Hepatitis C for anyone born between 1945 and 1964.

— People with Hepatitis C cannot be turned down for insurance or discriminated against by an insurance company.

— Limits on out-of-pocket costs will make expensive treatment more affordable.



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