



A Honey of a Hobby keeps South Shore Senior Busy as a Bee



By Marie Fricker

When Anya Zola of Braintree dons her white canvas bodysuit, bulky gloves and hat, she has one destination – her own backyard. Zola is conducting a regular inspection of her self-built beehives that became home to two swarms of uninvited, but most welcome, honey bees this spring.

The beekeeper blows a few puffs of smoke from a small can into the framed sections of the first hive so the bees will go into “preservation mode” and won’t attack her. She has been stung hundreds of times, but doesn’t seem to mind it.”

“I actually feel better after the pain subsides,” said Zola. “If they sting you through your clothing, the stinger doesn’t go into you but you still get some of the bee venom, which is very therapeutic.”

The next step in Zola’s monthly inspection of her hives is to check to see if the queen bee is laying. She looks for eggs, larva, and the presence of pollen being brought back to the hive. She also observes honey and honeycomb (hexagonal shaped beeswax cells) being made by the worker bees within the colony.

The efforts of Zola and other beekeepers have become even more important in recent years as the population of honey bees and bumble bees has dropped significantly throughout the world.

“The bees are dying because of the use of pesticides and other chemicals on flowers and lawns,” said Zola. “Bees don’t just make honey. They collect pollen and distribute it from one plant to another. They are responsible for 30 percent of the fruits and vegetables that we buy in our stores. In China, farmers were using chemicals on their plants that were so toxic that the bees died off. They had to hand pollinate their fruit trees to save their crops. People need to realize that bees are important to our environment and our health.”

For Zola, taking a class on beekeeping at the Norfolk Country Agricultural School in 2015 was just the beginning of her fascination with the field of apiology (the science of bees). After several more courses and extensive personal research, the former city girl from Dorchester is now a freelance beekeeper, who is called upon to speak and share ideas with fellow members of the Boston Area Beekeeper’s Association.

The hierarchy of a honey bee colony, which can expand to 60,000 or more inhabitants in a single hive, is pre-established and never altered. There is only one queen, who mates with about 15 male bees (drones) during a

Beekeeping... continued on p.4



All abuzz. Anya Zola (above left and in full gear below) welcomed two unexpected swarms of honey bees to her beehives in May. [Courtesy photos]



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OCES Receives \$4,000 Donation from Good Samaritan Medical Center

ABINGTON & BROCKTON – Old Colony Elder Services (OCES), the non-profit agency proudly serving older adults and individuals with disabilities throughout greater Plymouth County, has received a \$4,000 donation to their Supportive Housing Program from Good Samaritan Medical Center of Brockton.

“We are very grateful to Good Samaritan Medical Center for their generous donation

as it directly benefits our Supportive Housing consumers in Brockton and Abington Housing Authority locations,” said Elizabeth Weiner, OCES’ Housing Programs Manager, who oversees all of OCES’ supportive and congregate housing programs.

The goal of supportive housing is to integrate community resources, information, and services for the individuals who reside at a

particular local housing authority site and to enrich the lives of those residents. Supportive housing programs are designed to create a community environment, which allows residents to age in place.

Through the OCES Supportive Housing Program, a specialist from OCES’ housing team conducts an assessment to determine the specific needs of each resident residing within Abington and Brockton Housing Authorities. All residents at these sites are eligible for information and referral services, case management assistance, and access to social or educational programs. Depending on eligibility, many other services are also available.

For more information about OCES’ Housing Programs, visit www.ocesma.org or call OCES at 508-584-1561.

For more information about Good Samaritan Medical Center, a Steward Family Hospital, visit www.goodsamaritanmedical.org

About OCES. *Founded in 1974, OCES proudly serves greater Plymouth County and surrounding communities. OCES is a private, non-profit organization headquartered in Brockton with a second office in Plymouth. OCES is designated as one of 25 Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. OCES’ mission is to support the independence and dignity of older adults and individuals with disabilities by providing essential information and services that promote healthy and safe living. The agency offers a number of programs to serve older adults, individuals with disabilities, their families and caregivers. For more information call 508-584-1561 or visit www.ocesma.org. ∞*

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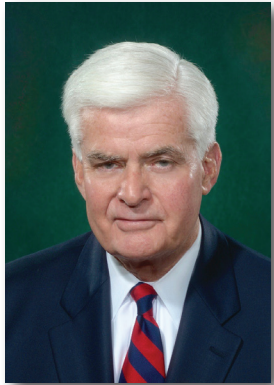
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HOME EQUITY WEALTH MANAGEMENT

How To Protect Your Savings and Survive the Emerging Financial Crisis

Fear of running out of money in retirement is the leading worry among aging Americans for good cause. Fortunately, savvy homeowners have a solution.

By George Downey



BRAINTREE – The dreaded financial crisis has begun. Runaway inflation, skyrocketing interest rates, and supply chain disruptions are among the numerous causes creating turmoil in the U.S. and international financial markets. The severity and longevity are un-

known, but financial experts agree it will be significant and long lasting.

The problem is especially critical for people in or approaching retirement as they depend on savings and retirement income to survive. Since the beginning of 2022, unprecedented increases in fuel and living costs along with financial market declines are depleting retirement savings at alarming rates.

The duration of financial market declines and recovery is unknown. What is known, however, is that seniors do not have time on their side. Their priority is to preserve value and reduce risk.

Home equity – A resource to protect savings and increase financial security.

For the great majority, the home is their largest asset, but can't be used until it is sold or borrowed on. For those who wish to age-in-place and not sell, borrowing is the only option. Fortunately, home prices have risen to record levels in the past two years. Unfortunately, rising interest rates and more restrictive borrowing requirements have made traditional mortgage and credit line financing more challenging and less suitable. A better solution may be a reverse mortgage.

Reverse Mortgage – A unique solution to increase financial security for older homeowners.

Older homeowners (60 and older in Massachusetts) may be eligible to refinance to a reverse mortgage that defers all payment obligations permanently. No repayment is required until the homeowner sells or no longer resides in the property. Depending on individual circumstances, all existing liens are paid off eliminating payment obligations. Further, additional funds or a line of credit will be made available for any surplus. The unique terms of reverse mortgages were developed to meet the needs of aging homeowners, who do not want to sell, but wish to remain in their home and age-in-place.

The HUD/FHA insured Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) reverse mortgage is the dominant program nationally, accounting for over 95 percent of all reverse mortgage programs. HECM property value limits are currently \$970,200. Higher valued properties, and larger loan amounts, may be better served by new proprietary or jumbo programs.

Massachusetts – Jumbo Reverse Mortgages Now Available

The Massachusetts Division of Banks approved new proprietary (jumbo) reverse mortgages for MA homeowners. These programs enable loan amounts up to \$2,000,000 and provide terms substantially similar to the federally insured HECM.

Massachusetts Condominiums – New Developments

Until recently, reverse mortgage financing was only available to MA condominium projects that were fully approved by the Federal Housing Authority (FHA). As a result, only 8 percent of all MA condominium projects have been approved, leaving 92 percent ineligible. Recently, two significant changes occurred expanding and simplifying reverse mortgage financing for MA condominium owners.

1. FHA Single Unit Approval. This process enables HECM reverse mortgage financing with simplified and limited FHA approval required – eliminates FHA full project approval.
2. New proprietary (jumbo) reverse mortgages. The MA Division of Banks approved these programs in February, 2020. Now, reverse mortgage loan amounts up to \$2,000,000 are enabled for homes and condominiums without the previous requirement of FHA project approval.

Reverse Mortgage Benefits / Obligations

- No monthly payment obligations – prepayments are permitted without penalty but not required. Monthly charges are deferred and accrue.
- Credit line growth – the undrawn balance of the credit line grows (compounding monthly) at the same rate charged on funds borrowed.
- No maturity date – repayment not required until no borrower resides in the property.
- Non-Recourse loan – neither borrowers nor heirs incur personal liability. Repayment of loan balance can never exceed the property value at the time of repayment. If loan balance exceeds property value at time of repayment, the lender, borrower(s), and heirs are not responsible for the deficiency as they are



Photo credit: istock.com/ronniechua

protected by FHA insurance.

- Access to funds and loan terms are guaranteed – cannot be frozen or cancelled as long as borrower obligations are maintained.
- Borrower obligations (to keep loan in good standing) are limited to:
 - Keeping real estate taxes, liability insurance, and property charges current
 - Providing basic home maintenance
 - Living in the property as primary residence

TO LEARN MORE

Get the facts and determine if, or how, the various options to utilize housing wealth may enhance your individual needs and circumstances. For more information, visit the National Reverse Mortgage Lenders Association (NRLA) website www.ReverseMortgage.org, or feel free to contact Harbor Mortgage Solutions, Inc. for a private consultation.

About the Author: George Downey (NMLS 10239) is a Certified Reverse Mortgage Professional (CRMP) and the founder of Harbor Mortgage Solutions, Inc., Braintree, MA, a mortgage broker licensed in Massachusetts (MB 2846), Rhode Island (20041821LB), NMLS #2846. Questions and comments are welcome. Mr. Downey can be reached at (781) 843-5553, or email: GDowney@HarborMortgage.com ∞

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mating flight just six days after her birth. She then returns to the hive and lays up to 1,500 eggs a day (200,000 in her lifetime) in the cells of a honeycomb made by her worker bees. She can live seven years, but is usually replaced with a new queen at around age 3.

The “heavy lifting” of the colony is done by the female worker bees, which comprise 80 percent of the colony and have a lifespan of only 45 days. They extract pollen and sweet nectar from flowers in endless flights within a 4-mile radius of the hive and bring it back to the colony to make honey and honeycomb.

The male drones live only to mate with a virgin queen bee, which results in their immediate death. They do not forage for pollen, have no stingers, and spend their days in “drone congregation areas” waiting for an unmated queen to fly by.

Zola’s first attempts at beekeeping in 2017 fell a bit short of her expectations. “I purchased two packages of bees from Georgia and installed them in the two hives I had built,” she said. “I lost the first hive early on as the bees were sickly and couldn’t produce enough bees to build the colony. The second hive was strong but it failed over the winter because of an infestation of varroa mites, which is a menace to the bees.”

Not to be discouraged, Zola persevered, and has had up to four working hives over the last few years. She sold some of them and lost her last colony unexpectedly in February of 2022. Now left with two vacant hives, the decision not to buy any more bees this year was overturned when two swarms of honey bees voluntarily took up residence in her hives in May.

“I couldn’t believe it when I saw the first swarm arrive,” said Zola. “It was so exciting to watch it move right into my hive and then a second one came 10 days later.”

Zola is not a commercial beekeeper, selling bees or honey for profit. “This is strictly a hobby for me,” she said. “I keep bees because I like to provide a place for them to survive and grow. I



Beekeeping is a historic pastime – Woman (C.1895) shown hiving a swarm.

do collect and process the honey, but I don’t pasteurize it because you lose the beneficial aspects of the honey. I encourage people to buy from local bee keepers. If you see traces of pollen in your jar, that is a healthy thing. It can actually build up your immunity to seasonal allergies.”

For Zola, being the caretaker of bees is not an easy job, but it is a labor of love.

“If we could work with as much intensity and cooperation as these little creatures do, what would our community, our country, our world be like?” said Zola. “They have an attitude of all for one and one for all. There is nothing about honey bees that I don’t like.”

To learn more about beekeeping, visit www.bostonbeekeepers.org. ∞

8 Fun facts about honey bees from BuzzAboutBees.com

- Honey is the only food made by an insect that is eaten both by humans and the insect itself.
- Drone bees have no fathers. They are “haploid,” made from unfertilized eggs.
- To replace a queen, worker bees will create queen-sized cells.
- Each honey bee will produce only 1/12 of a teaspoon of honey in its lifetime.
- If resources in the hive run low at end of summer, the drones are kicked out first.
- Saint Valentine was the patron saint of beekeepers.
- Bee pollen contains lots of nutrients and antioxidants.
- The queen is the mother of every bee in the hive.



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Business Manager/Owner: Thomas Foye

Editor: Marie Fricker

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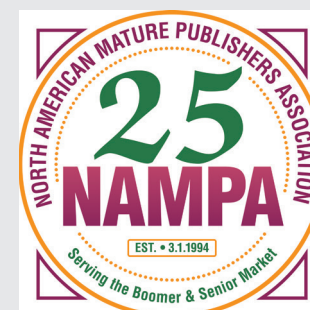
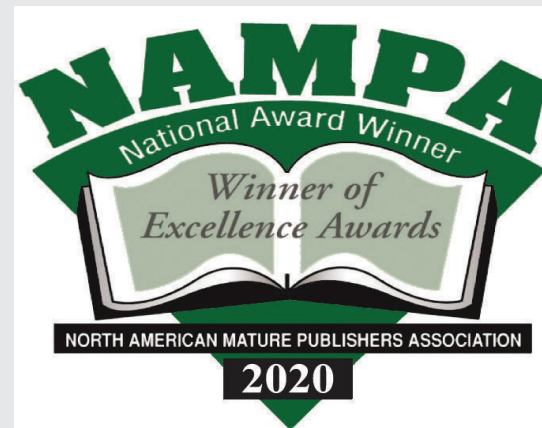
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Falmouth Road Race: Strangers to Start – Friends to the Finish

By Toni L. Eaton, RN, BSN, MS,
President & CEO of
Old Colony Hospice & Palliative Care



For most of us, friendships define our world. Having friends that you can count on to support your wacky ideas, celebrate your milestones, and encourage you when you need it the most can make all the difference. And watching

and cheering them on in their adventures is rewarding, inspiring, and life-affirming.

I'm lucky to count among my friends many who meet that description, but one, in particular, would never have been part of my life if I didn't take a chance to turn a stranger into a friend. She now is a lifelong friend who comes every year to run for our Old Colony Hospice & Palliative Care team in the Falmouth Road Race.

I think about all the lost opportunities during the last few years of the pandemic for people to not only connect with the friends they already have but also turn strangers into friends. We've been on a social pause. Now that we're able to get out more, we have the chance again not only to enjoy the people already in our lives but to come out of our shells and create new relationships.

It all starts with hello.

While on vacation in Aruba seven years ago, my husband and I were sitting by the pool when another woman smiled hello, and we struck up a conversation. Within minutes, I knew this was a person to enjoy. I learned her name was Johna B. She liked running and lived in Philadelphia. We talked about families. We talked about Aruba. We hung out over burgers and beer. We talked about dogs. It turns out we are both diehard dog people.

A few days later, when it was time for us to



part company, I was sad to leave this new friend behind. I figured we would probably never see each other again. In the spur of the moment, I invited Johna and her friend to my husband's birthday bash happening just three weeks later. We didn't really expect they would come. But they did, and I couldn't have been happier.

Shortly after meeting Johna, OCH was selected to run a charity fundraising team in the 7-mile Falmouth Road Race. Being chosen to wear these race bibs is an incredible honor in one of the country's most storied and competitive races. I was very excited, but not being a runner myself, I was a little nervous. Amazingly, Johna immediately said to count her in, and she's been running for us ever since, along with several other terrific volunteers.

It's odd now to think we were ever strangers.

The Falmouth Road Race on August 21 will have extra meaning for Johna this year. When we met, she had had no direct experience with hospice yet threw herself into our fundraising efforts with an open heart. But this last year, Johna's grandmother fell ill, and hospice has made a healing difference for her family. This year's race is a way for her to acknowledge that

and help others who need that care.

During the race, her family's journey, and Johna's other wild adventures, I am honored to be there to cheer her on. She continues to inspire me with her enthusiastic approach to life, and I am grateful for her support and friendship. All of this, just from saying hello to a stranger.

About the Author: Toni L. Eaton, RN, BSN, MS, is the President & CEO of Old Colony Hospice & Palliative Care of West Bridgewater, a dynamic non-profit hospice serving more than 55 communities south of Boston. OCH also runs the Dr. Ruth McLain Hospice Home in Braintree. A native and resident of the South Shore, Toni brings her compassion and experience as a nurse, veteran, and community leader to her insightful South Shore Senior News columns. Her leadership has been honored by several groups, including the South Shore Women's Business Network. She currently sits on the boards of the Hospice & Palliative Care Federation of Massachusetts and the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization Regulatory Committee. For more information, call (781) 341-4145 or visit Old Colony Hospice & Palliative Care at www.oldcolonyhospice.org. ∞

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What's Up with Your Resting Blood Pressure?

By Rita La Rosa Loud, B.S.



QUINCY – Many individuals who walk through our doors are referred to us by medical specialists for various health reasons. The most common incentives given are to lose weight and improve blood pressure. Surprisingly, many people who have high blood pressure do not even know what their systolic (top) or diastolic (bottom) numbers are or mean. Yet these numbers are crucial to a person's heart (cardiovascular) health condition. What they *do* recall is that their measurements were higher than they should be, which understandably is of great concern.

So, I ask, “*What did your doctor suggest?*” The typical reply is, “*My physician told me to lose weight, eat better, and exercise more.*” Of course, that's good advice. The physical activities prescribed by most physicians to lower blood pressure are predictably aerobic exercise like walking, jogging, and swimming, which are certainly effective for improving our blood pressure. Unfortunately, there is a common misconception that resistance exercise is a detrimental physical activity for those with this medical condition. Thankfully, this is not the case. Based on several research studies that carefully examined the effects of strength training on blood pressure (ours included), resistance exercise is considered a safe and effective option to managing and reducing resting blood pressure. Before sharing some of these study results, please take note of some of the risk factors and symptoms associated with hypertension.

Risk Factors and Symptoms

Hypertension is a major cause of cardiovascular disease. Unfortunately, roughly a third of adult men and women in the United States suffer with hypertension. A few risk factors include (1) age, (2) sedentary lifestyle, and (3) specific medical ailments. Some individuals with hypertension are symptomless. The two most common symptoms, however, are severe headaches and shortness of breath. Others may experience nose bleeds, severe anxiety, neck pulsations, and head throbbing. Fortunately, simple adjustments in lifestyle can control this condition. However, if blood pressure remains dangerously high despite changes in lifestyle, like exercising and losing weight, physicians, as a rule, recommend hypertensive patients go on

medication for life.

Blood Pressure Guidelines

According to the ACC, the American College of Cardiology and the AHA, American Heart Association, blood pressure classifications for early detection, prevention, management, and treatment of high blood pressure are shown in the chart below.

Blood Pressure Studies

Numerous studies have shown that resting blood pressure readings (systolic/diastolic) reduced after eight weeks or more of a basic resistance training or strength circuit program.

Kelemen and Effron, JAMA, 1990 Study: In this combined resistance and endurance training study, subjects experienced significant blood pressure reductions.

Kelley and Kelley, 2000 Study: This meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials established that resistance exercise is effective for reducing resting blood pressure readings. Interestingly, another meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials showed that diastolic blood pressure reductions from resistance training correlate with blood pressure reductions from aerobic exercise (-6.0 mm Hg systolic, and -4.7 mm Hg), in that order.

Westcott, et. al., Physician and Sports medicine, 2009 Study: This prominent study of 1,600 subjects (20 to 80 years of age) showed significant improvement in both resting systolic and diastolic blood pressure readings from engaging in 20 minutes of strength training, and 20 minutes of cardiovascular exercise, just two or three days per week for 10 weeks. Notably, strength training two days per week significantly reduced resting systolic and diastolic pressures by 3.2- and 1.4-mm Hg, compared to strength training three days per week, which substantially improved blood pressure readings by 4.6- and 2.2-mm Hg.

Manage Hypertension with Exercise

According to research, it turns out that several weeks of a basic resistance training and endurance exercise program two or three times per week is a successful non-drug approach to normalizing blood pressure. Talk about a simple lifestyle change that works! So... What's up with *your* blood pressure?

Whether you have blood pressure issues or not, consider joining the *Quincy College Health and Fitness Center's* resistance training, aerobic exercise, and stretching program, and take ad-

YOUNG AT HEART PROFILE

Debbie Barrett

Demonstrating the Lat Pulldown Nautilus One Machine is Debbie Barrett, 72. Debbie, together with her husband, Jim, has been strength training regularly at the Quincy College Community Health & Fitness Center for about 10 years now. To this day, she has been able to significantly cut her blood pressure and cholesterol medication in half.



“I measure my blood pressure at home every day, first thing in the morning, and I am pleased to say that it is still going strong,” said Debbie. Because of participating in this inclusive exercise program of strength, cardio, and stretching, Debbie reported, “Not only is my blood pressure in control, but my lower back pain is gone, I am stronger, have more endurance, and I have increased my flexibility. Not bad for someone my age! So, I highly recommend this program for people of all ages”

vantage of a *free training session* with a certified trainer to help you get started. We are located at Presidents Place, 1250 Hancock Street across from the Quincy T Station. Take the North Tower elevator down one level, and our fitness center is right there. Free one- and two-hour parking is available on Hancock, Coddington, and Washington Streets. A parking garage next to our building is also available for a nominal fee. For more details, call 617-405-9878.

About the Author: Rita La Rosa Loud holds a B.S. in Exercise Physiology with additional education in Sports Medicine and Athletic Training. She is NASM Certified and has been actively involved in the fitness industry for over 35 years. She is also an author and writes fitness-related articles for various publications. Currently, she is a fitness researcher and directs the COVID compliant, Community Health & Fitness Center at Quincy College. She can be reached at 617-405-5978 and is available for speaking engagements. ∞

Normal Blood Pressure	< 120/80 mm Hg
Elevated Blood Pressure	Systolic 120-129 mm Hg; Diastolic < 80 mm Hg
Stage 1 Hypertension	Systolic 130-139 mm Hg or Diastolic 80-89 mm Hg
Stage 2 Hypertension	Systolic at least 140 mm Hg or Diastolic at least 90 mm Hg
Hypertensive Crisis	Systolic > 180 mm Hg or Diastolic > 120 mm Hg patients requiring prompt changes in medications if no other problems indicated, or Immediate hospitalization if signs of organ damage are present



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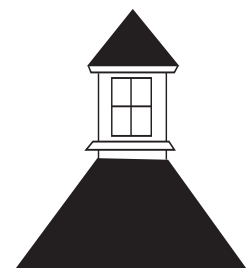
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"THE WICKED SMART INVESTOR"

A Big Name is not the Secret Ingredient



By Chris Hanson

HANOVER – Consumers of many products or services are frequently offered a choice—go with the little guy or the big, branded behemoth. This is true whether you're baking blueberry muffins or hiring an investment advisor. Before you succumb to the will of marketing myth makers, let's examine your choices in both decisions.

Let's talk about the legendary Jordan Marsh blueberry muffin. Mention these treats to Bostonians of a certain age and you'll likely evoke blissful memories of downtown shopping trips with Grandma. If children behaved, they were rewarded with muffins glistening with crunchy sugar on the top and slightly tart, juicy blueberries in the middle. At the right time of day, the appetizing scent of the muffins baking even overpowered Grandma's Jean Nate' perfume. The muffins were so good that amateur bakers eagerly sought out the recipe. Yet the recipe was a closely guarded secret and many were misled by the counterfeit concoctions of parish cookbooks and handwritten index cards.

One day, the culinary cliffhanger was almost solved. The food section of the Boston Globe featured a recipe formulated by pastry chef Nick Malgier. It seemed the secret ingredient was buttermilk; the acid in it helps keep the muffins moist. The Wicked Smart Investor used this recipe a few times enjoying great adulation from all that devoured my muffins. Imag-

ine my dismay years later when Jordan Marsh baker John Pupek revealed the true recipe with absolutely no buttermilk! I felt like a fraud, passing my muffins off as legit Jordan Marsh when they were just another fake. Dejected but determined, I baked muffins using both recipes and held a few blind taste tests. The muffins baked with buttermilk won by an overwhelming majority. This may rock Bostonians right to their "R" dropping core but just because it is a Jordan Marsh blueberry muffin does not mean it is the best blueberry muffin.

So, are investment advisors from big institutions better than the small independent outfit? That is a question for you to decide. Since I'm independent I obviously have a bias. Let me do my best to educate my readers objectively.


First, you do not lose any fraud protection with an independent advisor when a third party has custody of your money. Usually a large outfit, this custodian offers many checks and balances that assure your advisor never has physical custody of your funds or the reporting function. You receive statements directly from the custodian bypassing the advisor.

Next, an independent advisor usually has more freedom of investment choices. If your advisor works for a firm with proprietary products, it is very likely you'll be placed in those products even if they are not best for you. Or, the advisor may have a quota for certain third-party products that also fall short. Don't be fooled into thinking that advisors from big firms have the best research, and better returns will likely follow. The internet has democratized investment research; small players have access too.

Finally, larger firms also tend to be publicly traded and/or have layers of expensive management. The constant pressure to produce growing revenues and pay large salaries reduces the ability for larger firms to be fee competitive. Frequently, advisors at these firms are paid less, fueling high turnover. You may never speak to the same advisor twice. Smaller firms usually enjoy less turnover.

The stock market simply does not reward investors based on the size of their advisory firm. The myth makers be damned. I recommend choosing a fee-based advisor offering great service and held to the fiduciary standard. That's the crunchy sugar on top.

About the Author: Chris Hanson is the author of *The Wicked Smart Investor* blog and a Certified Financial Planner (TM) at Cardea Capital Advisors in Hanover. He earned his BBA at the Isenberg School of Management University of Massachusetts and an MBA at Babson College's F. W. Olin Graduate School of Business. He may be reached at (978) 888 - 5395 and you can read his blog at wickedsmartinvestor.blogspot.com. ∞



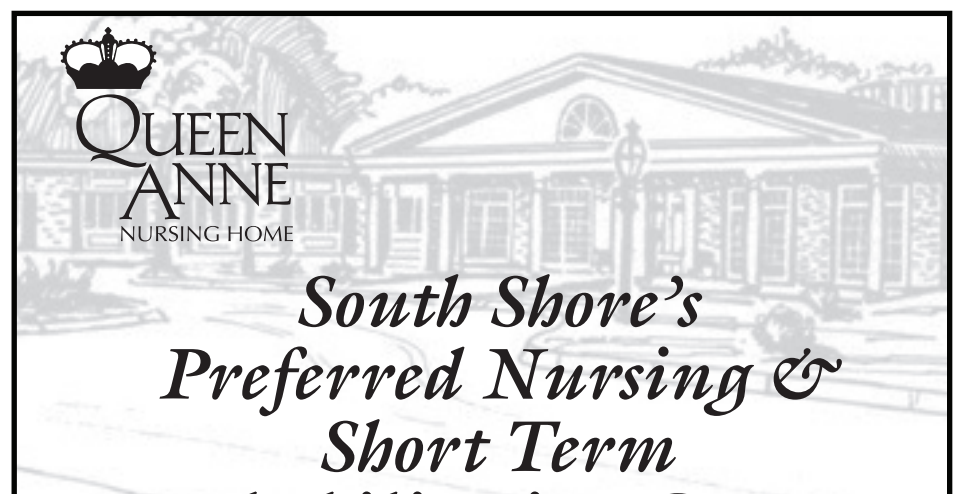
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5 Tips to Stay Healthy This Summer as COVID Remains a Concern

By Maria Burke, RN
Owner - Celtic Angels Home Health Care



Summer is finally here, and you're eager to get out of the house. But with COVID cases rising and falling weekly, how can you stay safe? Here are 5 tips to stay healthy this summer.

After two long years of living with the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us are tired and want to participate in the activities we used to enjoy, especially now that summer is here. But with COVID cases rising once again, how can you enjoy the summer weather while still avoiding getting sick? Here are five tips to stay healthy this summer, even as COVID cases rise.

1. Keep Your Vaccinations Up to Date. The most important thing you can do to stay healthy this summer is keeping your vaccinations up to date. If you haven't yet received a COVID-19 vaccine, do it as soon as possible. The vaccines are safe and will help you avoid a severe case of COVID-19 if you become infected with the virus.

The CDC recommends that adults over the age of 50 receive two booster shots in addition to the primary series of vaccines you received. That means you'll need a dose five months after your second Moderna or Pfizer vaccine (three months if you're immunocom-

promised), or after two months if you received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Then, you'll need your second booster approximately four months after the first booster vaccine.

2. Wear Your Mask. Even if you're not required to wear a mask, choosing to wear one, particularly when you're indoors or in crowded areas, is a good idea. Currently, cases are high in some areas, so wear an N95 grade mask indoors if you need to go out of your home.

Remember, even if you've been vaccinated, you should still wear a mask, especially when COVID cases are running high. Although vaccines help prevent severe cases of COVID-19, you can still catch the virus. Wearing a mask lowers your risk.

3. Enjoy the Outdoors. COVID-19 doesn't spread as easily outdoors in the fresh air, so meeting up with friends outside is a safer option. Plus, you can take advantage of the beautiful summer weather.

Try taking a walk around your neighborhood, visiting a park, or having a picnic with friends. Alternatively, invite friends and family over for a barbecue or ice cream social. The warm weather allows you to participate in activities and socialize without the added risks that come with being indoors.

4. Keep it Small. In the recent months, with COVID-19 cases spiking, this isn't the best time for large indoor events like concerts, potlucks, or bingo games. Instead, focus on spending time with your closest friends and family. Don't be afraid to discuss your COVID concerns and make sure everyone is on the same page with vaccinations and other precautions.

Visiting in small groups, where everyone is being conscientious of reducing the risk of spreading COVID, is a safer choice than attending large gatherings. If you do decide to visit indoors, consider wearing masks or opening windows. You'll enjoy the fresh summer air, and the increased ventilation will also reduce your risk of catching COVID.

5. Get Moving. Movement helps us all to stay healthy, so make time for some form of exercise. Gardening, taking a stroll with a friend, or going bird watching are all great ways to get moving outdoors.

With a little creativity, almost everyone can get in some movement. If mobility is a problem, try adaptive exercises like chair yoga, hand cycling, or seated dance programs. Remember, any movement is beneficial, so find what you can do, and do it!

Need help managing your health or participating in activities this summer? At Celtic Angels Home Health Care, we're always happy to lend a hand. Learn more about our services here.

About the Author: Maria Burke, RN, is owner and founder of Celtic Angels Home Health Care. Maria Burke was born in Midleton, County Cork, Ireland. She is the eldest of six and immigrated to the United States in 1988 to pursue a nursing degree to become a registered nurse. She served as a visiting nurse and from there, launched her own home health care company. Celtic Angels has two offices; Weymouth and Needham and provides a full array of the highest quality in-home health care services with certified and skilled CNAs, HHAs, and RNs. ∞



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Dear Maria,

Your CNA Kelly has been coming to see me for well over a year now. She has been doing everything for me including cleaning, cooking, grocery shopping, and taking me to my many doctor's appointments.

Kelly is a kind and caring person and I look forward to her coming on Tuesdays. My children are also happy that I have Kelly here to take care of me. It gives them such peace of mind to know if anything goes wrong with me, she will be there to take care of me and let them know.

Sincerely, Susan C.

www.celticangelsinc.com



Exploring options for your loved one with dementia

By Steve Carrier
Advisor/Owner of Assisted Living Locators

When an elderly loved one is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, many families opt to care for them at home. This approach allows the person to experience their dementia journey in familiar surroundings.

However, dementia conditions are degenerative, leading to an inevitable cognitive decline. As the disease progresses, families will eventually need to explore options that can provide the ongoing specialized care required to support the older relative.

Memory Care is a viable choice for people experiencing dementia. These communities are staffed by healthcare professionals trained to provide specialized dementia care in an environment designed specifically for mental stimulation. Some Memory Care facilities are aligned with an Assisted Living community, while others are standalone communities or part of a full continuum of care.

However, the challenge for families is recognizing when it's time to place their loved one into Memory Care. Here are eight signs to watch out for:

Providing care is becoming too difficult for your family

Families who choose to care for an older relative who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease are selfless, noble, and admirable. However, as the condition progresses, the person will eventually require 24-hour care. Providing care around the clock can become taxing on your mental and physical health, leaving you feeling depressed and exhausted. You might also start becoming disconnected from your family, friends, career, and pursuits you enjoy. Plus, if your health becomes adversely affected by the increased responsibilities, your ability to provide adequate care can become diminished.

When you find yourself at this point, it's time to consider placing your

loved one in Memory Care. Many Memory Care facilities provide 24-hour care by specially-trained staff who can provide the best support for your relatives. You can still be involved in their healthcare plan while still having time for yourself.

Your relative is getting harder to handle

Alzheimer's disease and dementia can cause severe behavioral changes in older adults. Confusion, frustration, or fear associated with cognitive decline can trigger violent or aggressive behavior, putting the person and anyone else in the immediate vicinity at risk of injury.

As the behavior progresses, it might be time to consider Memory Care. Their staff is fully trained to provide progressive, empathetic support to de-escalate situations and keep the older adult safe and content.

Your older loved one is becoming increasingly disoriented in their home

Most homes aren't built for people living in cognitive decline. People with memory impairments often need to live in smaller, cozier spaces with optimal lines of sight that allow them to easily read their environment. If the pathways or edges in their living area aren't designed for easy navigation, your loved one could become disoriented, confused, and frustrated.

Memory Care apartments are custom-designed specifically for people with memory impairments, allowing for easy navigation and familiarity.

The person isn't taking their medication properly

Alzheimer's disease and dementia are cognitive conditions affecting memory, creating a risk of not taking medications or taking the wrong dosage. The health consequences of mismanaging medications can be severe. In Memory Care, trained staff manage your loved one's prescription and over-the-counter medications, ensuring that the proper dosages are taken at the correct times.

The older adult tends to wander

Wandering is a common occurrence among people with Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Older people who wander put themselves at risk of getting lost or injured, especially if they get behind the wheel of a car. Wandering can happen at any time of day or night, no matter how much you secure their home. You can't safeguard against wandering 24-hours per day, so when this becomes an issue, you should consider placement into Memory Care. These communities are equipped with enhanced security features, both inside the apartments and at all entry/exit points of the community, ensuring that residents are safe and accounted for at all times.

Your loved one is ignoring their hygiene

People with progressive cognitive impairment often begin neglecting their hygiene. They may forget to bathe, brush their teeth, wash their hair, or dress properly. Toileting might also become difficult, exacerbating hygiene issues. Family members might be uncomfortable helping an older relative in these areas, but Memory Care can help. Trained, professional staff in Memory Care can assist your loved one with bathing, toileting, brushing their teeth, dressing, and more. Their goal is to keep residents feeling fresh and comfortable while preserving their dignity and self-respect.

Your older relative isn't accessing proper nutrition

Even if your relative has cooked their entire life, they might lose the desire to prepare healthy meals as their cognitive decline progresses. They might simply forget to eat or begin losing the skills necessary to operate in the kitchen safely. Memory Care communities offer their residents diverse, brain-healthy menus that focus on nutrition. Meal options are customizable to their dietary preferences, nutritional needs, and religious requirements. Along with three nutritious meals every day, residents enjoy several snack options.

There is a lack of engagement

People with impaired cognitive abilities may not be as responsive as they once were. If they're not properly engaged, they might become bored or frustrated, leading to behavioral problems.

In Memory Care, residents are stimulated with safe and effective techniques and therapies that exercise their brain, keeping them happy and entertained while slowing the condition's progression.

Always remember that placing a loved one in Memory Care doesn't mean you failed as a caregiver. It's an act of love that will ensure your relative has the specialized care he or she needs, allowing you to have happy, engaging visits together.

About the Author: Steve Carrier, a Scituate resident, is a Certified Dementia Specialist and Senior Care Advisor/Owner of Assisted Living Locators Southeastern Massachusetts, a free senior placement and referral service that helps you explore and understand eldercare options. Contact him at 508-681-3016 or visit www.assistedlivinglocators.com/semass. ∞



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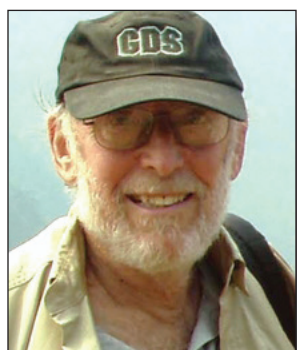
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'Travels with Vic'



by Victor Block

'Fish. Party. Repeat.'

Those words, printed on a sign in a South Padre Island, Texas, restaurant, refer to two of the popular pastimes there.

SPI (as locals call it) and nearby Port

Isabel also boast a long list of other things to see and do.

That's well known to "Winter Texans." They are people primarily from the Midwest who spend several winter months soaking up the sun, and fun at those twin towns nestled along the Gulf of Mexico at the Lone Star State's southern extremity.

This is an area of outstanding beaches, a long list of both land and water activities, and intriguing historical tidbits that add color to the setting.

At first glance, both communities present the atmosphere of many beachfront locations. Hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops abound. Colorful golf carts are a popular mode of transportation. The favored attire gives new meaning to the words "casual clothing."

These are among attractions that draw visitors, then keep them returning year after year. Much more awaits those who find their way to this inviting destination, within a seashell's throw of Mexico.

Seashells are a fitting image because South Padre Island's beaches have won well-deserved accolades, and the proximity of Mexico has influenced the local culture. After the Spanish exploration period, the area was owned by Mexico and then the Republic of Texas before becoming part of the United States.

Visitors soon learn why the destination is a magnet for people who like to fish. The waters are so productive that one charter boat captain advertises "No fish – no charge."

The A (antiquing) to Z (ziplining) list of activities includes many that are water-related. They range from kayaking and canoeing, snorkeling and sailing, to speeding along on a jet ski and loping along a beach on horseback.

Birding also attracts its fans. At the South Padre Island Birding, Nature Center & Alligator Sanctuary, I spotted some of the 350-plus species that reside in or migrate through the area. Some have colorful names like marbled godwit and semipalmated plover.

Another expedition took me on a dolphin watch cruise in Laguna Madre Bay. Captain Bob pointed out the first prey as soon as we left the marina.

Whenever someone saw a telltale fin, or, better yet, a dolphin leaping out of the water, a collective "Ooooh, aaaah" echoed among the passengers.

Adding to the enjoyment was inspecting specimens that a net had dredged up from the bay floor. Among sea life we examined were a sting ray, several fish and shrimp.

It's no surprise that shrimp were part of the catch because those crustaceans have been the source of an industry that has thrived in the area since the 19th century. Trawlers drag their nets through the Gulf of Mexico for as long as three weeks at a time, working at night because the shrimp are nocturnal.

Also not surprising are variations on shrimp dishes that are served at local restaurants. They augment the American, Mexican and Texas-based cuisine, which is included on many menus. Preparations using shrimp that were new to me included tacos, quesadilla, chipotle, omelet, Benedict and added to a BLT sandwich.

The story of shrimping is among those told at the Port Isabel Historical Museum. Exhibits portray the area's past, beginning with the Spanish exploration period, and moving on to the arrival of Native Americans, the Civil War and colorful tales of local folklore. The museum



A dolphin watch cruise in Laguna Madre Bay with Captain Bob.

is housed in a historic building (1899), which once served as a dry goods store, post office and railroad station.

Port Isabel also is home to a lighthouse, which was completed in 1853 to guide ships bringing supplies to U.S. military posts. During the American Civil War, it was used as an observation tower by both forces. Of 16 lighthouses along the Texas coastline, this is the only one that's open to visitors, and those who climb to the top are rewarded with dramatic 360-degree views of the surroundings.

Both Port Isabel and SPI also lay claim to being art appreciation destinations, in a non-traditional way. Any flat surface inside or outside a shop, restaurant, home or other building can serve as a palette for paintings.

If clambering to the top of a lighthouse isn't your thing, perhaps world-class fishing or relaxing on celebrated beaches is. They're among many treats that await those who visit SPI and Port Isabel, Texas.

For more information log onto sopadre.com and portisabel-texas.com.

About the Author: After gallivanting around the U.S. and more than 75 other countries, Retiree Victor Block retains the travel bug. He believes travel offers a wonderful education, and says he still has a lot to learn. He loves experiencing new destinations and cultures, and his stories have won many writing awards. ∞

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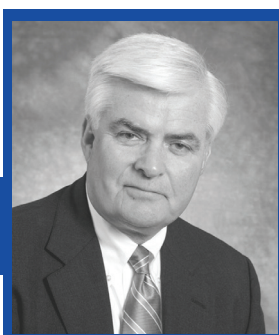
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Celebrating the Independence of Older Adults and Independence Day



**By Nicole Long,
MSW, LICSW**

July is a time to celebrate independence! In addition to celebrating the anniversary of the U.S. Declaration of Independence on July 4th, OCES also celebrates 48 years of supporting the independence and dignity of older adults and individuals with disabilities. We do this through the provision of essential information and services that promote healthy and safe living.

OCES' programs offer significant life-supporting care, which contributes to an individual's ability to live within the community as independently as possible for as long as possible while preserving dignity and quality of life. In fact, OCES is the largest provider of in-home and community-based services for older adults and people living with disabilities in the southeastern part of Massachusetts.

Did you know? OCES offers comprehensive care services that help individuals (who may

otherwise require nursing facility placement) so they can remain independent at home. Programs include Adult Family Care; Congregate Housing; State Home Care; Personal Care Management; Senior Care Options; Supportive Housing; and Veteran/Self-Directed Home Care.

The Nutrition Department provides vital food services to older adults and people living with disabilities through Home Delivered Meals and Community Dining sites. Many older adults, who are unable to shop for groceries or prepare their own meals, benefit from "Meals on Wheels" which provides a daily meal delivered to their homes. For OCES' most vulnerable older adults and individuals with disabilities, the delivery is not only a delicious and nutritious meal, it is often the only social contact of the day. A connection to the community through Meals on Wheels serves as a safety check to make sure these individuals are okay.

OCES supports different cultures and their independence. For example, in recognition of Cape Verde Independence Day on July 5, Caribbean meals will be offered as home delivered meals in all of Brockton. Many of our staff members are fluent in several languages, including Haitian Creole, Cape Verdean Creole, and Spanish.



OCES aspires to welcome everyone without exception. Whether you are looking for help or are interested in helping others remain independent, we are here to support you! Learn more about us at www.ocesma.org.

About the Author: *Nicole Long is the Chief Executive Officer of Old Colony Elder Services (OCES). Founded in 1974, OCES is a private, non-profit organization proudly serving greater Plymouth County and surrounding communities. OCES is designated as one of 25 Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. OCES' mission is to support the independence and dignity of older adults and individuals with disabilities by providing essential information and services that promote healthy and safe living. The agency offers a number of programs to serve older adults, individuals with disabilities, their families and caregivers. For more information call 508-584-1561 or visit www.ocesma.org ∞*

SOCIAL SECURITY UPDATE

Celebrate Your Independence with Social Security



**By Delia De Mello,
Social Security**

Every July, we take pride in celebrating our nation's independence. For nearly 90 years, our programs have helped provide financial independence to millions of hardworking people.

We have useful online tools like the Social Security Statement (Statement) and our benefits estimator tool that help people not yet receiving benefits. The Statement shows the benefits that you and your family may be entitled to with personalized fact sheets tailored to your age and earnings situation. The benefits estimator tool allows you to get estimates based on different ages you want to begin receiving benefits. These tools can help you plan the financial independence you deserve in retirement.

Don't receive benefits? You can get the most out of your online experience if you have a personal my Social Security account. You can:

- Get your Statement instantly.
- Request a replacement Social Security card (in nearly every state and the District of Columbia).

- Find out if you qualify for benefits.
 - Appeal a decision we made on your claim.
- Already receiving benefits? If so, you can use your personal my Social Security account to:
- Request a replacement Social Security card (in nearly every state and the District of Columbia).
 - Get an instant benefit verification letter for *Social Security, Medicare, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)*.
 - Start or change your direct deposit. (Social Security beneficiaries only)
 - Check your information and benefit amount.
 - Change your address. (Social Security beneficiaries only)
 - Request a replacement Medicare card.
 - Get a replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S instantly for tax season.
 - Report your wages if you work and receive disability benefits or SSI.

You can create your personal my Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

Our blog at blog.ssa.gov features messages and information direct from our Acting Commissioner and other experts. You can subscribe and get an email each time we post a new blog so you can stay informed. From the blog, you can also connect with us on Facebook, Twitter,



LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube.

With so many services and helpful information available online, we are here for you when it's convenient for you. Be sure to tell friends and family about all they can do with us from any device at www.ssa.gov.

About the Author: *Delia DeMello, metropolitan public affairs specialist, has been with the Social Security Administration since 1986. For information, call 800-772-1213 or visit www.socialsecurity.gov ∞*

Art Matters XXXIII: Reflections on various art media

Sculpture, Part 10d – History of Byzantine Medieval Art, Fall to the Ottoman Empire & Importance to West



**By Janet Cornacchio,
President, Scituate Arts Association**

The last discussion on the Eastern Empire and Constantinople concluded with the destruction of the city by the Fourth Crusade. While the city did survive, in time it inevitably succumbed to the advancing forces of the Ottoman Empire. Constantinople as a city and Byzantium as an Empire represents 2,200 years of continuous Roman tradition and 1,600 years of Hellenistic civilization. There were centuries when the Western Roman Empire was in transition to what was to become the Western European states and this city was the major repository of much of the knowledge of Ancient Greece and Rome. Indeed, approximately two-thirds of the ancient manuscripts of the likes of Plato, Ptolemy and Aristotle were sourced from the East.

To review: from the time when Constantine first moved the Roman Empire's capitol to Constantinople, the Eastern Empire's borders waxed and waned, through multiple cycles of expansion and contraction—expanding under Justinian in the 6th century, contracting during the first waves of Muslim conquest in the 7th and then expanding again under the Macedonians in the 9th through the mid-11th century. The Komnenian dynasty recovered much of Constantinople's wealth and under them, in the 12th century, it became the largest and wealthiest European city, only to be overwhelmed by the onslaught of the Fourth Crusade.

By 1261, Byzantium recovered, though not as the powerful empire it once was. It became one of several small rival states in the region and its territories were gradually annexed by the expanding Ottomans. The city of Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, its walls unable to withstand the onslaught of the Turks' enormous cannons (bombards) firing balls a meter in diameter and weighing 400 kg.

The last Byzantine dynasty was that of the Palaiologans who came to power during the government's exile from the city of Constantinople while the Crusaders were in control. Theirs was to be the last and longest-lived dynasty in Byzantine history. Under their rule the focus of the Empire shifted from their relationship to the Roman Empire to their Greek heritage. Referring to themselves as Hellenes (ancient Greece), the Palaiologan court in Nicaea on the Anatolian Peninsula saw a flowering of scholarship, art and literature with artists and scholars traveling there from throughout the Byzantine world. Artists focused on a new subject: landscapes and pastoral scenes and continued to work in mosaics and moved on to detailed cycles of narrative frescoes. Icons became a favored medium for artistic and spiritual expression and evinced a new appreciation for the purely decorative qualities of painting, which has been characterized as Palaiologan "Mannerism." Their descendants can be found in Italy—Montferrat, Genoa and throughout Europe—Bulgaria, Georgia and Serbia.



The Annunciation from Ohrid, one of the most admired icons of the Palaiologan mannerism, bears comparison with the finest contemporary works by Italian artists wood early 14th century

Byzantine influence spread in other ways. In 1212, the city-state of Venice came to control the island of Crete, which had been under Roman and Byzantine control at different times over the centuries. It was a result of the presence of Venice on the island that the Cretan School evolved. The school was characterized by a style, which combined both Byzantine and Western art traditions, and they exported large numbers of icons to the West. The tradition's most famous artist was El Greco (1541-1614) who is best known as a Spanish Renaissance artist. El Greco was born in Crete under Venetian rule, worked in Venice, then opened a studio in Rome prior to finally landing in Toledo where he produced his most well known works.



Just as Venice was shaped by its exposure to Byzantium, so too were Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania and Russia. These eastern European nations, Russia in particular, were important as they became the center of the Orthodox Christian religion following the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople and the Balkans. The importance of the icon as an art form and an interpretive symbol continued under Ottoman rule. Byzantium icons and other smaller scale art continued, serving as a unifying factor for the Orthodox Church and the former Empire. The art traditions of the Byzantium Empire, especially those of icon painting and church architecture continued in Greece, Cyprus and the other Eastern Orthodox countries and are often so strictly observed that even today they follow the conventions of their 6th century antecedents.

The greatest exception to this conservative understanding of art conventions was the Cretan School mentioned above, which was open to Western European trends and was more readily recognized in the West in turn. The Republic of Venice and the Kingdom of Sicily both had close ties to the Byzantine Empire and were originally in Byzantine possession, gradually winning independence as the Empire's control waned.

Furthermore, perhaps the subtlest and greatest source of Eastern European knowledge and artistic forms resulted from the Crusades. From 1096 through 1291, multiple waves of knights and yeoman traveled across Europe by land and sea and, for a short period, had Crusader states in Antioch, Edessa, Tripoli, and Jerusalem. The increase in trade, improved transportation and resultant increase in wealth were very important to the development of the West. The returning Crusaders brought back knowledge and many physical artifacts that supported the wisdom they'd gained and ultimately led to the Renaissance, Age of Exploration and beyond.

For some entertaining insights on the Crusades' influences, read or watch the Brother Cadfael stories. It's a great way to gain a relatively accurate perspective on that time in England, and in many ways circles back to how important and influential the Eastern Empire was in the development of the West in a time when its culture was in transition. That transition was reflected in the evolution of Western art, which is the focus of this series of columns.

Next time, a break from art history for a bit and then a return to explore how art evolved in the Medieval period in Western Europe.

Lastly, some great works of Medieval art are on display at the MFA. For another source of research and study, check out Harvard's Dumbarton Oaks Research Library in Washington, DC. It is a center for study and exhibition of Byzantine history and art and more, as well as having gardens and landscape areas. I studied under some of its researchers. Remember, if we don't understand from whence we've come, how can we understand who we are now and where we would like to be in the future?

About the Author: Janet Cornacchio is an artist member of Front Street Art Gallery, President of Scituate Arts Association, and a Realtor. You can contact her at jcornacch@aol.com ∞

'Brown Furniture' Update



By Natalie Ahern,
Owner, All the Right Moves

One of the most frequent questions I receive from my clients is what to do with furniture they no longer need or want. As a downsizing specialist, the families I work with are usually moving to a smaller home. They often have family heirlooms (such as great grandma's jelly cabinet) or beautifully made pieces of furniture that were purchased in the 60s or 70s. As much as my families push and prod their children to take these items, very

little is passed to the next generation. What now?

You may have heard the term "brown furniture," which refers to the heirlooms and secondhand furniture that no one seems to want these days. Remember the old supply and demand theory of economics? The greater the supply of an item, the lesser the value. That is the current status of "brown furniture." It is hard to sell or donate because there is such a glut on the market. So, what can you do with these items you need to purge?

I always encourage my clients to focus on two things. The first is how much joy they received from the item while it was in their home. Did they get their money's worth of memories from that piece of furniture? Usually, the answer is a resounding "yes." Secondly, I am not an expert on the val-

ue of heirlooms, so I always consult with a local auctioneer or estate sale representative. I never assume an item does or does not have value until I have an expert's opinion.

You may only get \$25 for an item, but it is often better than paying to have it hauled away. If you are downsizing an entire house, an auctioneer or antique dealer may want to walk through your home and look at many other items. While the jelly cabinet mentioned earlier might not have much value, there may be art, jewelry, coins, etc., that might be worth something. As one appraiser recently told me, "People often think the valuable items in their homes are furniture, but it is often the items they never thought much about that are enjoying a seller's market."

Currently, Victorian furniture is not a popular category for New England buyers, but Art Deco and Mid-Century furniture and accessories are in high demand. Take a walk through local consignment and antique stores to see what is selling. Talk to the sales associates and show them pictures of the furniture you want to part with. Perhaps your items will be saleable. If not, it may be time to donate or "gift" your unwanted furniture.

About the Author: Natalie Ahern, founder and principal of All the Right Moves Boston and downsizing and transition specialists serving Greater Boston and the South Shore, has extensive experience in project management, home decorating, and floor planning in homes on and around Boston's South Shore. Whether a client is downsizing, relocating, or aging in place, Natalie manages it all. She is a member of the National Association of Senior Move Managers. You can reach her at 781-724-1681 or visit alltherightmovesboston.com for more information. ∞



ASK THE HIPPIE

The journey that caregivers are on when caring for someone with Alzheimer's/dementia is full of mystery, self-doubt, and loneliness. This column offers a chance to reach out, seek new ideas, and by reading about the experiences of others, learn that you are never alone.

Acceptance

By Phyllis DeLaricheliere, MS

WEYMOUTH – Life changes in a split second. One minute you could be surrounded by friends and family who seek your advice, your time and your company, and the next you may be surrounded by the same friends and family who look at you with sheer concern or even terror. They shy away and now your company feels like a burden. You have dementia, and, in some cases, this is what you might experience.

Throughout various times of our lives, we seek some sort of acceptance or validation. Whether it be from a parent, a boss, or a loved one. The concept of acceptance in human psychology comes from the Latin word 'acquiescere,' meaning to find rest in. With acceptance comes a sense of peace and belonging. Hand-in-hand with acceptance is tolerance. To tolerate something demonstrates the willingness to go along with behaviors or opinions that we might not agree with.

When someone is faced with the diagnosis of dementia or Alzheimer's, they go through a Monopoly board of emotions having to hit on each place and not being able to pass "GO." Acceptance is one of these places where they must face what they have and accept what is. So here, accep-

tance is not gaining it from others but finding it within themselves. They no longer seek it from others, for their world and concerns have changed, but at the same time there is an unspoken "given" that those in their lives, friends and

family, would just accept them as is. So, ask yourself, do you?

Here is where I see so many times the challenges families and friends face. Because they at first do not know what's wrong, as perhaps their loved one has not yet been diagnosed or they don't have a real understanding on dementia.

Eyes roll, frustration builds, and patience is tested. This is when acceptance and tolerance must be applied.

Although the journey of dementia is a tough one, there are so many things to be thankful for. The first step is being able to see that one of the gifts of dementia is acceptance. Once you accept the reality, you will be able to see the gifts that your loved one will give you and show you while on this journey. The second step is tolerance. The popular phrase, "Don't sweat the small stuff, it's all small stuff," helps us put challenges in perspective. We must exercise patience, find the laughter in each moment, and not disrespect the trust that your loved one with dementia has placed in you. They believe that you will continue to love them, cherish them, be with them.

REMINDER: All you are seeing with dementia is their Hippie side—another side of themselves. So, whether or not it's your friend, your partner, your spouse, or your parent, you have loved them through so many times, both good and bad. Now is the greatest test of LOVE of all.

Dementia will test both the patient and the caregiver. You must face the journey as a team! Don't let the disease divide and conquer. Acceptance and tolerance are the first two steps in walking together down that path. This is, and always will be, your partner, your friend, your parent, your spouse. Don't let dementia define you, don't shy away, don't be afraid, don't mourn...just because they might be different now does not mean they are not still ours to love!

About the Author: Phyllis DeLaricheliere MS, author/columnist/lecturer/consultant is on a mission to help others understand compassionately the journey of Alzheimer's/dementia. She is a welcomed educator for nursing programs and other clinical settings as well as a vibrant guest speaker to those caring for someone with Alzheimer's and allows them to feel supported and to see the disease from another side. WEBSITE: www.askthehippie.com to learn more. ∞





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