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Senior Voice

A publication of Older Persons
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Volume 46, Number 7 July 2023

**Tools and ideas
for staying socially
connected.**

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'Down the middle
solves the riddle'.**

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**Creating a legal trust
is only the first step.**

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Ina Jones hoists an armful of beautiful blossoms at her farm, Alaska Homestead Peonies, near Homer. Boasting 25 peony-growing operations, Homer is dubbed the "City of Peonies," and hosts a month-long peony celebration in July, with farm tours, art classes, gallery exhibitions, workshops and more. For an overview of the many upcoming festivals and fairs around the state, see page 20.

Vicki Jones photo



2022
**National Mature
Media Awards**
Winner





Safety is about awareness and follow-through, not shortcuts

By DAVID WASHBURN

Senior Voice Editor

In this edition, we present the second in our new series on safety, written by City of Houston Fire Chief Christian M. Hartley. He brings wisdom from years of experience working in safety and emergency management and this month he writes about being safe while enjoying



the summer outdoors. Let's face it, regardless

of age, there are always new surprises and lessons to be learned. Earlier this month, I was heading out for a bicycle ride and realized at the last moment I'd forgotten my water bottle. Too rushed (or lazy), I told myself I'd be fine without it. This was going to be just a half hour or so—I wasn't going to die from dehydration. I would soon regret the

decision. Cycling fast, a bug flew into my open mouth and down my throat. I gagged, coughed and sputtered and, though I was OK, it sure would have been nice to have a few swallows of soothing water. Then I started ticking off other needs I've had for water: to clean off a scrape after taking a spill. To rinse fingers after fiddling with the chain. To wash my glasses.

To offer a drink to someone else in need. Next time, I will take that extra minute or two for preparedness. Read Christian's story on page 11 for reminders on other ways to reduce risks of accidents or injuries, and best enjoy the summer.

Bill passages are a win for older Alaskans, families

By MARGE STONEKING

AARP Alaska

The 33rd Alaska Legislature concluded its first year of the two-year session on May 18—one day after its 121-day constitutional regular session limit. The governor called a special session, asking the legislature to agree to a balanced budget funding state services and permanent fund dividends (PFD) for fiscal year 2024 beginning July 1, 2023. The budget impasse during the regular session focused on the size of the PFD. The Senate Majority favored a 25/75 split of the annual 5% Percent of Market Value (POMV) draw of the Permanent Fund Earnings Reserve, providing an approximate \$1,300 PFD and an overall balanced budget in addition to a one-time education funding increase. The House Majority favored a 50/50 split of the POMV resulting in an approximate \$2,700 PFD but left the overall budget with a \$600 to \$800 million deficit. Ultimately, the House Minority joined in supporting the Senate Majority and a handful of House Majority members were swayed to accept the Senate-passed budget, ending the special session after just one day.

SB106 will allow legally responsible individuals, including guardians, parents and spouses, to be paid family caregivers as personal care attendants through the current homecare agency model. This was allowed temporarily under the COVID public health emergency and will now be permanent.

Self-directed care

Both of the budget items that AARP supported passed both the House and Senate, including funding to start a new program using Participant Directed Care. This increment of \$420,000 state funding plus federal Medicaid match provides enough funding for Seniors and Disabilities Services to create a Cost Allocation Assessment Tool. This Assessment Tool would provide better predictability of budget needs, more flexibility and self-directed choice of care providers. Participants in self-directed programs often choose to hire family, close friends or neighbors as paid caregivers. Paid family caregiving through participant-direction addresses multiple needs: the person who needs care can age in place among friends and family; the family caregiver can earn modest income for the difficult work he or she performs, which helps lessen the impact of the caregivers' lost job hours and lost pay; the homecare workforce is

expanded by hiring family and friends who would not otherwise provide care; and it prolongs the use of low-cost home and community-based services instead of forcing individuals into high-cost nursing home and assisted living home placements.

Increased funding for community-based grants

The second budget item that AARP supported was a nearly \$1.5 million increase in Seniors and Disabilities Community Based Grants. Community grants serve Alaskans all over the state from Anchorage to Nome to Juneau and Ketchikan, allowing seniors to live in the community of their choice. These grants had remained essentially flat for the past 10 years, neither keeping up with inflation or accounting for the 50% increase in Alaska's senior population during that time. Last year, the legislature supported this increase to make up for years of flat funding and inflation but the increase was vetoed by the governor.

This year the governor put this funding back in the budget where it stayed in throughout the session.

Expanded home care options

The legislature passed 30 bills in this first year of the legislative session,

which is 8% of the 362 filed. It's not unusual for the Alaska Legislature to pass fewer bills in the first year and many more in the second year of the session. This may have been exacerbated this year by the largest freshman class of legislators in state history. AARP supported 14 bills, two of which passed (14%). SB57 Adult Home Care passed, which encompassed SB106, resulting in

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Send us your letters

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'All the lonely people' includes many of us

By **LAWRENCE D. WEISS**
For Senior Voice

“Ah, look at all the lonely people.” —The Beatles

You hear him talk or you read his words and you think, “Now, this guy’s a real mensch.” It’s all the more amazing considering that Dr. Vivek Murthy has served as the 19th and 21st surgeon general of the United States under Presidents Obama, Trump and Biden. That’s right, a high-level bureaucrat and a good soul.

Dr. Murthy just released a ground-breaking study entitled, “Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation.” Just plug that title into your favorite search engine and it will pop right up. It’s very interesting, pertinent, and written in an easy-to-understand style.

In addition, Dr. Murthy has a podcast I highly recommend called “House Calls.” You can listen to his thoughtful discussions about medical and public health issues while you

clean up the kitchen, take a walk, or do your exercises. On May 2 of this year his discussion was entitled, “You’re Not Alone in Feeling Lonely,” which, not coincidentally, is one of the main points of his study. Dr. Murthy emphasizes that “around half of people in the United States have reported experiencing loneliness.” And it’s a very destructive condition. Dr. Murthy reports in his podcast:

“This week, I released a new Surgeon General’s Advisory on our country’s epidemic of loneliness and isolation. This is the first time that a Surgeon General has issued an official publication on this topic. Now the reason I’m doing this is because loneliness and isolation are at the core of so many of the health issues that we’re facing as a country, and we truly are experiencing a crisis of disconnection. It turns out that people who struggle with loneliness and isolation are at increased risk of



U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy considers loneliness one of the country’s biggest health challenges.
Wikipedia photo

depression and anxiety. But they are also at increased risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, and of other physical conditions, including diabetes...”

Maybe you’re thinking, “OK, so I spend a bit too much time being lonely, but what can I do about it?” Dr. Murthy has a lot of practical advice about what we can do. For example:

“We all need a toolbox of things that we can reach for that help us feel more connected, when we’re feeling lonely, and we’re all going to feel lonely from time to time. Again, there’s no shame in feeling that. But whether it’s reaching out to a friend for a minute or two, whether it’s scheduling something that you can do with family or with friends down the line, or whether that’s just spending a few minutes in solitude, listening to something that’s inspiring, reading something that brings you comfort, and reconnecting with what matters to you, all of this can be helpful, and these are all tools I’ve reached for when it comes to addressing loneliness.

“...This is, for me, one of the great lessons of studying loneliness, has been recognizing that service is one of the most powerful antidotes that we have to loneliness. And that might seem, again, counterintuitive, because you might think, ‘Hey, if I’m

struggling with loneliness, don’t other people need to help me?’ And certainly it’s the case that we need to be more comfortable asking for help... But it’s also true that when we help other people, that helps us feel connected to them in that moment, but it also reminds us that we have value to bring to the world.”

So, what resources do we have in Alaska? Tons of resources. For example, I recently chatted with Ashlyn Dye, volunteer coordinator and event scheduler (907-770-2032) at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center.

“Care Calls is a program we offer our members here at the Anchorage Senior Activity Center, where they would receive a phone call from one of our volunteers who have been trained and gone through screenings,” she explained. “We emphasize with them confidentiality, that’s a big thing... Our members would receive

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Legislature

from page 2

two wins for AARP. Adult Home Care will expand home and community based services options by establishing a new residential licensing category called Adult Host Homes, which are limited to two elders and will provide a new lower level of care than current assisted living homes. The addition of SB106 will allow legally responsible individuals, including guardians, parents and spouses, to be

paid family caregivers as personal care attendants through the current home-care agency model. This was allowed temporarily under the COVID public health emergency and will now be permanent.

To read about the AARP supported bills that will carryover into the 2024 legislative session visit <https://states.aarp.org/alaska/legislative-wins>.

To add your voice to our legislative advocacy visit aarp.org/getinvolved.

Marge Stoneking is the AARP Alaska Associate State Director – Advocacy.

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Senior Voice



Feed Jake: A best friend until the end

By KAREN CASANOVAS

For Senior Voice

Q: I will be moving to a smaller apartment soon and am not sure if I should take my dog with me. What do you think?

A: Our relationship with animals is an interchangeable one, as they can provide a source of comfort and support for us, and we give love and attention in return. They create opportunities for exercise and outdoor activities, better cognitive function in older adults, and more occasions to socialize with others.

Research has found that animals reduce our stress and anxiety, and the benefits of animal interactions decreases levels of cortisol (a stress-related hormone) and lowers blood pressure. Other studies have found that animals can reduce loneliness, increase feelings of social support, and boost your mood.

Animals play a crucial role in the setting of an assisted living facility, group environment, or nursing home. The company of a pet can soothe fears and quell worrisome thoughts. Often senior centers or older adult communities have volunteers who bring in pets to these facilities so adults can interact with them. Therapy dogs are especially good for this purpose, diminishing fear, uncertainty or uneasiness.



“Dogs are very present. If someone is struggling with something, they know how to sit there and be loving,” says Dr. Ann Berger, a physician and researcher at the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. “Their attention is focused on the person all the time.”

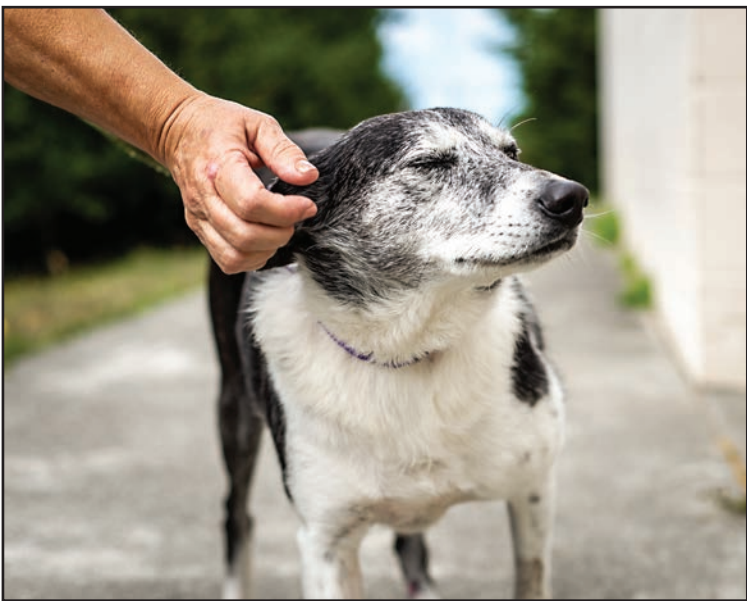
Spending time away from pets can be difficult for your pet, and humans alike. When moving to a new location, there are several factors to consider:

- The pet’s age. Will I be able to care for myself and my pet as we age?
- How much does my pet eat? Can I still easily manage the feeding schedule?
- How much exercise does the pet need? Will that be possible when I move?
- What may be the veterinary care costs as my dog ages? Can I afford them?
- Do I have enough time to properly care for and clean up after the pet?
- What type of habitat does my dog need to be healthy? Will that environment be available at my

new location?

Older adults often have a difficult decision to make when caring for that animal and to what degree it adversely affects its health, and ultimately the owner’s. Declining mobility, energy or memory can all make it too hard to continue caring for a pet. One suggestion is to bring in a helper to assist in caring, feeding and walking your pet. Senior facilities often have resources to help you find a new home for your pet, and don’t discount friends or relatives. A major advantage of leaving

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Shelters, adoptive agencies or rescue organizations can aid you in finding a new owner. Some shelters and rescue organizations can also arrange visitation before and after adoption.

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Lonely

continued from page 3

a phone call from one of our volunteers monthly, weekly, or daily sometime between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., for someone to either check on them, or for a volunteer to chat with that person... Many of our seniors got used to staying at home alone and isolated from

not only our community, but their families as well, during COVID-19. The Care Calls program is the first step before interacting and indulging again in real life, face-to-face relationships and activities.”

There are senior centers all over Alaska. They all have in-person activities like socials, lunches, dances, classes, and discussion groups where you can meet people just like

you. Be a volunteer. Hang out and play cards, chess or bingo. Say “Hi” to the folks around you. Many of the centers have programs you can be involved with via phone or zoom. Give a call to find out. You don’t have to tolerate loneliness.

Lawrence D. Weiss is a UAA Professor of Public Health, Emeritus, creator of the UAA Master of Public Health program, and author of several books and numerous articles.



The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program at APIA has partnered with several non-profits to meet community needs by encouraging and supporting volunteerism for people ages 55 years and older in the Anchorage and Mat-Su region. We are currently looking for elders to volunteer at the following sites (but not limited to): Alaska Regional Hospital, Alaska Veterans and Pioneer Home, Alaska Veterans Museum, Anchorage Loussac Library, Anchorage Senior Activity Center, Catholic Social Services, Downtown Hope Center, Mat-Su Regional Medical Center, Prestige Care and Rehabilitation Center, Primrose Retirement Communities, Wasilla Area Seniors Inc.

If you are interested please contact:

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Better life quality with a self-care approach

By JOHN SCHIESZER

Medical Minutes

Adopting some self-care techniques may reap huge health benefits. Self-care is defined as the process of establishing behaviors to ensure holistic well-being of oneself. It is about taking the time to really understand your true needs beyond just impulses. We all engage in some form of self-care daily with food choices, exercise, sleep, reading, and so forth. However, self-care also involves a person’s spiritual and social well-being.

Origins and concepts

The concept of self-care has ancient origins and Socrates is credited with founding the self-care movement in ancient

Self-care is a practice you need to return to on a regular basis to make sure you have the energy and the power to face whatever is around the corner. Self-care may be simply a peaceful walk in the fresh air, curling up with a good book, or creating a piece of artwork. It may be connecting with a friend.

Greece. Self-care became very popular during the Black feminist movement through civil rights activist and poet Audre Lorde, who was an American writer, radical feminist, professor, philosopher and civil rights activist. She advocated for self-care to preserve Black feminist’s identities, to energize their activism, and to preserve their minds during the civil rights movement.

Self-care includes anything you do to keep your-

self healthy physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

“Self-care is how you take care of yourself that includes your sleep, diet, exercise routine, daily habits, relationships with others, boundaries and your feelings,” said Hanna Garza, PhD, who is with Texas Child Health Access through Telemedicine (TCHAT) program and a clinical director at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, El Paso,



© Elena Ray | Dreamstime.com

Texas. “When people find themselves in challenging situations, self-care usually gets neglected and that may lead to stress and burnout.” Self-care is very subjective. What may work for one person, may not work for another, Garza

said. “So, it is extremely important to take a step back, evaluate your own life, and determine what you may need in order to boost your self-care and increase life satisfaction,”

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Your Medicare Part D prescription benefits

By SEAN McPHILAMY

Alaska Medicare Information Office

Medicare includes Part D, the prescription drug benefit, offered through private health insurance companies. Each prescription drug plan meets federal requirements as managed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Insurance companies enter into agreements with both drug manufacturers and drug distribution networks. Some of the costs associated with Part D drug coverage are:

Premium: The monthly amount that you pay to your Part D plan for coverage. Premiums vary by plan, and the average national premium in 2023 is \$32.74.

Annual deductible: The amount you must pay for your Part D prescription drugs before your plan begins to pay. The deductible varies by plan, and the maximum deductible in 2023 is \$505.

Coinsurance or copays: The amount that you pay out of pocket for covered drugs after you have met your deductible and before you enter the coverage gap (see below). A coinsurance

is a percent of the cost of a drug. A copay is a set amount. Many Part D plans use tiers to price drugs listed on their formularies. Drugs on lower tiers are less expensive, and drugs on higher tiers are more expensive. A sample tier structure could be:

- Tier 1: Preferred generic drugs
- Tier 2: Generic drugs
- Tier 3: Preferred brand-name drugs
- Tier 4: Brand-name drugs
- Tier 5: Specialty drugs

After you and your plan together spend \$4,660 in total drug costs, you reach the coverage gap; your out-of-pocket cost by this point is approximately \$3,100 if brand name drugs were only obtained. This coverage gap is also sometimes called the “donut hole”. During the coverage gap, you will have to pay 25% of the cost of your drugs. In all plans, catastrophic coverage is the amount above \$7,400, the coverage period when you pay 5% of the drug cost for the remainder of this calendar year.

Following the implementation of the Inflation Reduction Act, beginning next year, an individual enrollee’s maximum out-of-pocket cost is estimated

to be about \$3,250 and in 2025, the maximum out-of-pocket cost will be reduced to \$2,000 for the copayments of brand name drugs.

Extra Help Program

Extra Help is a federal program that helps pay for your out-of-pocket costs with your Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage.

Your income and assets determine if you are eligible. Here in Alaska, the monthly income limit is \$2,296 for

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Misunderstanding words



By **DONNA R. DeMARCO**

Accurate Hearing Systems

Hearing loss is a major factor on your quality of life. One of the qualities is the understanding of your language or languages. Hearing loss can have a cognitive decline on your word understanding and the ability to understand speech. Hearing and understanding are two very different things.

We have all misunderstood part of a conversation and it can be quite funny – when you hear someone order nice water, maybe they want-

ed ice water. I am sure your dad does not want grape ants for Christmas, but maybe grey pants would be more like what he might want. However, when you have a hearing loss and this is your daily conversation, always filling in or trying to interpret what is being said, there is nothing funny about it.

When you have a hearing loss, and you are filling in the blanks and interpreting what words are, you run a huge risk of losing your language.

At Accurate Hearing, we offer free hearing tests. We want to ensure that every patient gets the right hearing aids to best meets their hearing loss, lifestyle and budget needs. Request an appointment by calling 907-644-6004.

Donna R. DeMarco, AAS, BC-HIS, Tinnitus Care Provider, certified by the International Hearing Society.



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Alaska law permits a hearing aid dealer who is not a licensed physician or a licensed audiologist to test hearing only for the purpose of selling or leasing hearing aids; the tests given by a hearing aid dealer are not to be used to diagnose the cause of the hearing impairment.

Medicare

continued from page 5

individuals and \$3,100 for couples. The asset limit is \$16,660 for individuals and \$33,240 for couples. Even if you think your income or assets are above the eligibility limits, you may still qualify for Extra Help because certain types of income and assets are not be counted, including your residence, your personal possessions and your vehicle. You automatically qualify for Extra Help if you have Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, or a Medicare Savings Program.

Extra Help can save you money in many ways. The Extra Help program pays for your Part D premium up to an amount determined by the State of Alaska. It lowers the costs of your prescription drugs. If you delayed Part D enrollment and have a late enrollment penalty, Extra Help eliminates your Part D late enrollment penalty. Finally, people with Extra Help can change their Part D plans more often, if needed, such as to lower costs. Remember that Extra Help is not a

replacement for Part D. It is also not a plan; instead, it is a cost assistance program. To be eligible, you must have a Part D plan to receive Medicare prescription drug coverage. If you do not choose a plan, you will in most cases be automatically enrolled in one.

Other ways to save on drug costs

Whether or not you qualify for Extra Help, you have other options to help save on drug costs. If you are struggling to pay for expensive brand-name medications, you may want to speak to your doctor about whether you can use a less expensive generic drug. You can also speak to your doctor about getting samples of your medication. You may try speaking to your pharmacist about waiving your copay. Although pharmacists cannot routinely waive copays for people without Extra Help, your pharmacist may waive your copay on a case-by-case basis.

If you are getting a drug from a hospital pharmacy, you may also be able to ask if the hospital has a charity care program that would allow you to access the drug at a lower cost.

You may be able to get medications at a reduced price for national or local discount programs, such as NeedyMeds.org or GoodRx.com. You might also be eligible for free or low-cost drugs directly from the drug manufacturer.

An early reminder to remember that the annual Open Enrollment to review your Part D prescription drug plan begins Oct. 15 and lasts through Dec. 7. For any Medicare related questions, please feel free to contact the State of Alaska Medicare Information Office at 800-478-6065 or 907-269-3680; our office is also known as the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), and the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) program.

If you are part of an agency or organization that assists Seniors with medical resources, consider networking with the Medicare Information Office. Call us to inquire about our new Ambassador program.

Sean McPhilamy is a volunteer and Certified Medicare Counselor at the Alaska Medicare Information Office.



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Our glorious summer sun is also hazardous

Also: Volunteering for health fairs benefits everyone.

Alaska Health Fair, Inc.

As we joyfully bask in the extended daylight hours of the Land of the Midnight Sun this July, let's not forget that this month is also UV Safety Month. We Alaskans cherish our unique summers but it's crucial to remember that the risk of harmful UV radiation exposure is real and can increase, especially for those enjoying the outdoors or planning trips to sunnier locales.

Exposure to UV radiation, whether from the sun or artificial sources like tanning beds, can cause significant health issues. It's the leading cause of skin cancer, including melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer. Other harmful effects can include premature aging of the skin, cataracts and other eye damage, and immune system suppression.

The good news is that with a few precautionary measures, we can enjoy our summers while staying sun-safe.

Despite our cooler climate, the reflection of the sun's rays off water, snow or ice can enhance UV radiation exposure, making it as important in Alaska as it is in sunnier states. The good news is that with a few precautionary measures, we can enjoy our summers while staying sun-safe. Wearing UV-blocking sunglasses, broad-spectrum sunscreen and protective clothing, and limiting peak-hour sun exposure, are proven measures to shield you from the sun's harmful rays.

Volunteering in the new health fair season

Now, as you protect yourself, consider extending that caring spirit

toward your community. At Alaska Health Fair, our tireless volunteers, both medical and non-medical, have been the driving force behind our mission since 1980. Whether helping with registration, conducting screenings, or educating others on living a healthy life, these volunteers bring invaluable health services to Alaskans from all walks of life.

Did you know that volunteering could also be good for your health? Alongside the warm summer activities, the interaction with professionals from diverse fields during our health fairs exercises your mind, body and spirit. It promotes year-round health education and en-

agement, warding off the isolation that can sometimes accompany our dark fall and winter months. Moreover, the volunteer hours count toward annual renewals of nursing licenses, accrual hours for student scholarships, and other awards. Our health fairs serve as a venue to gather with old and new friends alike, creating meaningful and positive memories.

Are you ready to join us? Our fall health fair schedule and volunteer application will be available in the first week of August on our website, www.alaskahealthfair.org. Sign up for our newsletter to stay updated.

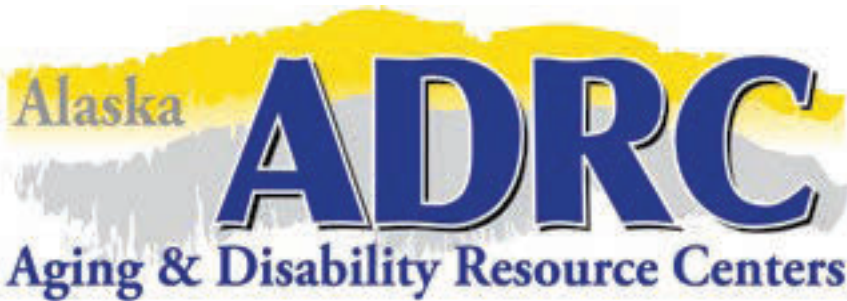
Schedule your fall health fair

For local community organizations, it's not too late to schedule a fall health fair with Alaska Health Fair, Inc. Don't miss the

opportunity to bring affordable blood tests, free screenings, and vital health education to your community. Contact the Alaska Health Fair team at 907-278-0234 for Anchorage and statewide inquiries; 907-374-6853 for Fairbanks; or 907-723-5100 for Juneau and southeast Alaska.

Remember, taking care of your health is a year-round commitment, not just a summertime affair. Let's greet the sun safely, serve our community, and together we can make a lasting, positive impact on the lives of our fellow Alaskans.

Have a wonderful summer season from the Alaska Health Fair Team.



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The State of Alaska, Division of Senior and Disabilities Services, administers the ADRC grant in partnership with the 6 regional sites. For more on the ADRC grant program, contact an ADRC Program Manager at 907-465-4798 or 1-800-478-9996.

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Pill may reduce need for knee, hip replacements

Also: Alzheimer's research at record high; AI 'virtual therapy' for depression

By JOHN SCHIESZER

Medical Minutes

New pill may help prevent knee and hip replacements

A new study is suggesting that a low dose of colchicine may be associated with lower incidences of both total knee replacement and total hip replacement surgeries. The analysis, published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, suggests this might be a simple and safe way of lowering the risks for knee and hip replacements.

Osteoarthritis is an increasingly common joint disease that can be associated with low-grade inflammation in response to weight-bearing traumatic injury. Previous studies have demonstrated an association between the use of anti-inflammatory therapies and the slowing of osteoarthritis disease progression. Colchicine is effective in many inflammatory and fibrotic conditions, but it is not currently recommended for treatment of osteoarthritis. Its long-term effects have also not been assessed.

Researchers from the Netherlands examined whether colchicine reduced incident total knee replacements and total hip replacements. In the study, 5,522 participants age 35 to 82 from 43 centers in Australia and the Netherlands received 0.5 mg of colchicine daily or matching placebo. The participants were followed for more than two years (28.6 months).

The authors found that 2.5% of persons receiving colchicine had total knee replacement or total hip replacement compared with 3.5% of persons who received placebo. The observations support the hypothesis that inflammation



plays a role in the progression of osteoarthritis. Colchicine has been widely used to treat other diseases and is generally considered to have a favorable safety profile. This makes it a good candidate for treatment of osteoarthritis.

Colchicine is used to prevent or treat attacks of gout (also called gouty arthritis). This condition is caused by too much uric acid in the blood. An attack of gout occurs when uric acid causes inflammation (pain, redness, swelling and heat) in a joint. Colchicine does not cure gout, but it will help prevent gout attacks.

Promising new treatments for Alzheimer's disease

The annual Alzheimer's Disease drug development pipeline report for this year is providing a good reason for optimism. According to the "Alzheimer's Disease Drug Development Pipeline: 2023," there are currently 187 clinical trials in the Alzheimer's drug development pipeline. This is the most ever on record. This momentum is driven in part by greater investment from the pharma industry and a bump in biologic therapies, particularly monoclonal antibodies.

The annual report, published in *Alzheimer's & Dementia: Translational*

next page please



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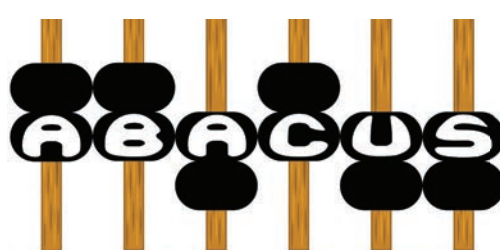
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Alzheimer's

from page 8

Research and Clinical Interventions, was led by Dr. Jeffrey Cummings, a leading Alzheimer's clinician-scientist and research professor at University of Nevada School of Integrated Health Sciences. The goal of the annual report is to spot trends in clinical trial design and outcome measures, and also investigate the types of agents and biological targets that are being pursued.

"Our database has gotten stronger and our ability to draw analysis from the pipeline is ever better," said Dr. Cummings, who first began the annual pipeline project in 2016. "We can derive lessons from both positive and negative trials that will inform and accelerate the development of new treatments."

More than 6 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease, a staggering number that's expected to double within the next 30 years. Recently,

the FDA approved Aduhelm (aducanumab) and Leqesbi (lecanemab) to treat early-stage symptoms of the disease. These are the first-ever disease-modifying therapies (DMTs) to earn the green light for use against Alzheimer's.

Researchers identified data from all current phase 1, 2 and 3 clinical drug trials for Alzheimer's Disease and Mild Cognitive Impairment as of Jan. 1, 2023. The team tracked all therapies in the pipeline, the types of agents used, and how far along each is in the drug development process. The researchers also analyzed the agencies and industries funding clinical trials.

They found 58 new drugs have entered the pipeline in the past year and DMTs are the most common agents used in trials. Approximately 28% of candidate therapies are repurposed from other diseases.

"We are at an inflection point in the Alzheimer's field," said Maria C. Carrillo, who is the chief science officer at the Alzheimer's Association. "The recent landmark FDA approvals

There are currently 187 clinical trials in the Alzheimer's drug development pipeline. This is the most ever on record. This momentum is driven in part by greater investment from the pharma industry and a bump in biologic therapies, particularly monoclonal antibodies.

we've seen for both disease-modifying and symptomatic treatments, as well as the diversification of the pipeline of potential new Alzheimer's therapies, provide hope to those impacted by this devastating disease."

Improving mental health with artificial intelligence

An artificial intelligence (AI) voice coach is showing promise for treating depression and anxiety treatment. Researchers at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) tested an AI voice-based virtual coach for behavioral therapy and they found changes in patients' brain activity along with improved depression and anxiety symptoms. This was all thanks to Lumen, an AI voice assistant that delivered a form of psychotherapy.

The team says the results, which are published in the journal Translational Psychiatry, offer encouraging evidence that virtual therapy can play a role in filling the gaps in mental health care.

"We've had an incredible explosion of need, especially in the wake of COVID, with soaring rates of anxiety and depression and not enough practitioners," said Dr. Olusola A. Ajilore, who is a professor of psychiatry at UIC. "This kind of technology may serve as a bridge. It's not meant to be a replacement for traditional therapy, but it may be an important stop-gap before somebody can seek treatment."

The researchers recruited more than 60 patients with mild-to-moderate depression and anxiety symptoms. Two-thirds of the patients used Lu-

men on an iPad for eight problem-solving therapy sessions.

After the intervention, study participants using the Lumen app showed decreased scores for depression, anxiety and psychological distress compared with the control group. The Lumen group also showed improvements in problem-solving skills that correlated with increased activity in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, a brain area associated with cognitive control.

It's about changing the way people think about problems and how to address them, and not being emotionally overwhelmed, according to the researchers. They stress that the virtual coach doesn't need to perform better than a human therapist to fill a desperate need in the mental health system.

John Schieszer is an award-winning national journalist and radio and podcast broadcaster of The Medical Minute. He can be reached at medicalminutes@gmail.com.



We'd love to get your input on Juneau as an Age-Friendly community through our online questionnaires! Please use the link or QR code below to access our short or long versions to add your voice to the initiative:

<https://bit.ly/jnu-age-friendly-questionnaires>



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Help with utility bills for Anchorage seniors

By MAUREEN HAGGBLOM
Anchorage ADRC

ADRC ANSWER OF THE MONTH

Do you know an Anchorage senior living in a household having difficulty paying a utility bill? Starting up again on July 1, the Anchorage Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) may be able to help. We all know sometimes life just isn't easy and doesn't always go the way

we want. Dealing with the unexpected is difficult and can sometimes impact our ability to pay the bills. The Anchorage ADRC may be able to help. If you find yourself in a hardship situation, are an Anchorage resident (residing between Girdwood and Chugiak), age 60 years or older and

have a utility delinquent notice and your household's ability to pay your utility bill is in jeopardy, contact us directly at 907-343-7770. Experienced Resource Specialists will help guide you to the resources that are the most appropriate for the situation. Funds are available to pay a variety of utilities including gas, electric, water and

wastewater, heating oil and propane. Sometimes life can be difficult to navigate. Give us a call and we will do our best to help get life back on track. Submitted by Maureen Haggbloom and the Anchorage Aging and Disability Resource Center Team. Alaska's Aging and Disability Resource centers connect seniors, people with

disabilities, and caregivers with long-term services and supports. For assistance and answers, call your regional ADRC toll-free at 1-855-565-2017. Or visit the Alaska Div. of Senior and Disabilities Services ADRC website at <https://dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/pages/adrc>.

Free training, support for family caregivers

Senior Voice Staff

Family Caregiver Support Programs offer free support meetings to allow you to share your experiences as a caregiver, or support someone who is a caregiver. If you are helping a family member or friend by being a caregiver, learn

what kind of help is available. There is no charge for these services and everyone is invited to attend. Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska (ARA) organizes caregiver support meetings around the state, including Anchorage, Eagle River, Fairbanks, Homer, Juneau/Southeast,

Ketchikan, Kodiak, Mat-Su Valley, Seward, Sitka, Soldotna, Talkeetna, Willow. Call 1-800-478-1080 for details. ARA also hosts a statewide call-in meeting on the first Saturday and third Wednesday of every month, 1 to 2 p.m. For information, call Gay Wellman, 907-

822-5620 or 1-800-478-1080. The Homer caregiver support group meets at the Homer Senior Center on the second and fourth Thursday of each month (July 13 and 27), from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Contact Pam Hooker for information, 907-299-7198. In Southeast Alaska, the

Southeast Senior Services Caregiver Support Group meets every Thursday, 1 to 2 p.m. via Zoom. The group is available to all caregivers in the region. For more information and a Zoom invitation, call Denny Darby at 907-463-6181 or email Denny.Darby@ccs-juneau.org.

Lung cancer screening: Convenient and saves lives

By KATHY RZESZUT
Providence Imaging Center

Why should I get screened for lung cancer? Current and former smokers have a higher risk for lung cancer. Screening could save our life by catching lung cancer early when it's more likely to be treatable. **Who can get screened**

for lung cancer? If you meet all the criteria below, you are eligible for lung cancer screening:

- Age 59 to 80 years old
- Have a 20-pack year history of smoking, such as smoking one pack of cigarettes per day for 20 years, or two packs per day for 10 years
- Currently smoke cigarettes or quit smoking

within the past 15 years

- You must have a documented shared decision-making visit with your doctor or primary care provider, and you must have an order for your screening.

Will I feel anything during my lung cancer screening? It's painless and quick. You'll lie on a table that

slides in and out of a scanner. The whole process only takes a few minutes and you don't need to do anything to prepare. **How often should I get screened for lung cancer?** If you qualify for lung cancer screening you should get screened yearly. **Is lung cancer screening covered by insurance or Medicaid?**

Confirm coverage with your insurance company or Medicaid. For more information on lung cancer screening, visit <https://bit.ly/46qeX4G>. Kathy Rzeszut is the Providence Imaging Center Marketing and Communications Manager.

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Remember to play it safe when playing outdoors

By **CHRISTIAN M. HARTLEY**

For Senior Voice

Staying active is crucial for physical and mental health. Walking is a low-impact exercise that provides numerous health benefits. As we all head outdoors for our walks, we need to take every chance we can to reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.

Know your route

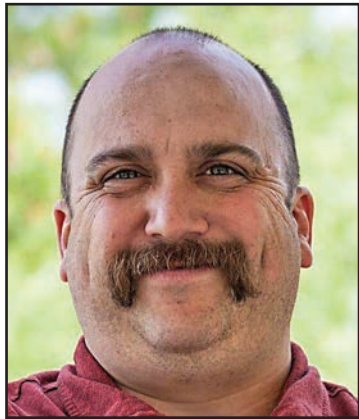
Like going on a drive across country, a walk across the neighborhood means first picking the right route. Use well-lit paths and trails. Look for routes with pathways separated where possible and stick to the main routes so you have access to pedestrian crosswalks. Focus on lower traffic densities such as neighborhoods or school districts after school hours. Public parks, walking trails, and designated walking paths are ideal choices as they provide a controlled environment for walking while keeping you around other people and help, should a need arise.

Dress for success

Proper clothing cannot be overstated but is often overlooked. Attire, including footwear, greatly contributes to your safety. Choose comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing that allows freedom of movement. Pick bright and reflective colors. Proper footwear with good arch support and slip-resistant soles will reduce the risk of falls. Your old reliable slippers may work inside, but not outside.

Never go on a walk without water. Keep a small backpack or waist pouch to store essentials such as a mobile phone, identification card, a list of emergency contacts, and any required medications and a list of medical conditions such as diabetes. If the unthinkable happens, rescuers can correctly identify your emergency faster.

Some people use walking aids such as canes, walkers or trekking poles. These provide stability and support while walking and reduce the risk of falls. Consult with a healthcare



professional to determine the most suitable walking aid based on individual needs and preferences. Believe it or not, they are not all equal and can make a big impact on your gait, pace and movements. It's amazing how much they help alleviate pressure on your knees and back.

Strength in numbers

Walking in groups can enhance safety. Go out with a friend or reach out to local walking groups, community centers, or senior organizations to find walking companions. Company not only provides conversation but also increases visibility and security, making it less likely to be targeted by potential threats.

If you cannot find someone to go with you, make sure a couple of people know when you are headed out, where you are going, and when you should be back. That way, if something happens, you know someone will be calling for your search.

Stay alert, stay upright

Speaking of threats, they are out there. We aren't just talking about people who may threaten you, but the walking environment itself. Traffic signals can catch you by surprise halfway across the road if you didn't realize you were entering the road at the very end of the green light. Road crossings themselves may be across busy streets, and pedestrian right-of-way rules vary based on where you are. Avoid distractions or listening to loud music that can impair your ability to notice hazards. Stay vigilant and be cautious of uneven surfaces, potholes and other hazards. I have treated more people who were injured by tripping than I have from being struck by a car.

Posture and gait can sig-

nificantly reduce the risk of falls and strains. Walk upright and without slouching, look straight ahead, and swing your arms naturally. Take shorter steps and maintain a moderate pace to ensure stability and balance. If you feel pain when you are walking, you need to talk to a physical therapist or your primary healthcare provider for gait and balance exercises.

What about the weather?

Check the weather forecast before heading out.

Rain, extreme heat, and wind usually don't come without warning and a quick check before you leave will tell you how far you should walk. Dress accordingly and bring protective gear such as a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, umbrella or a light rain jacket. Change your normal practices for weather conditions because the weather won't change for you no matter what names you call it.

Walking is a fantastic exercise promoting physical fitness and overall well-being. You can

minimize risks associated with walking outdoors by choosing a safe route, wearing appropriate clothing and shoes, having water, and being mindful of where you are going. Be safe out there.

Christian M. Hartley is a 40-year Alaskan resident with over 25 years of public safety and public service experience. He is the City of Houston Fire Chief and also serves on many local and state workgroups, boards and commissions related to safety. He lives in Big Lake with his wife of 19 years and their three teenage sons.

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Focus your pickleball on ‘high percentage’ shots

By **JIM LAVRAKAS**
For Senior Voice

Whether you’ve played a racquet sport in the past, or are new to pickleball, hitting the ball without thinking about what kind of shot you’re hitting is a typical mindset of the amateur player. Focusing on hitting high percentage shots is the way to move from a beginner to a more advanced player in the sport.

What are high percentage shots? They are what they sound like: those shots that have a high likelihood of staying in bounds. That’s it. Not ones that your opponent can’t return, not hard forehands or super-slice backhands. Not down the line, not inside out.

More like “down the middle solves the riddle”.

Your aim in competition is to make fewer mistakes than your opponent. Mistakes in a racquet sport are called “unforced errors”. Think about that phrase: a mistake that is voluntary. Why would you volunteer



Holly Van Pelt of Homer gets her paddle ready early for a high ball return.

Jim Lavrakas/Far North photo

your opponents points? Much of the time it’s because we don’t understand, or consider, the kind of shot we’re returning.

Are you on the defense or offense? Do you have a ball high in the air to hit down at your opponent’s feet? Or is it at your own feet? In the end, on defense, just getting the ball back over the net, down the middle if possible, is your solution.

Why the middle? Down the middle forces your opponents (if you’re playing doubles) to decide who is going to make the return. Down the middle, for your opponents, means two brains trying to work together. And if they’re not good communicators, or haven’t played together as a team, those two brains are going to work against each other. They will hesitate on

the return and that puts them on the defense.

The other thing about high percentage shots? They stay in bounds. Trying to hit to the court sidelines is self-defeating, especially on defense. If you try to hit an inch, or a foot, inside the far baseline when on defense, you’re doubling the difficulty of your return. “Just get it back over” is my mantra, and let the other side beat me.

Sure, it’s fun to hit a down-the-line return, or a passing shot (a shot that is hit with the intention of the ball bouncing behind the opponent). But they require a lot of control and if you’re on defense, it’s tough. When you have good court position, your feet under you, and plenty of time to prepare for the shot, go ahead and make that passing shot, or the inside out (a ball hit from the middle of the court to the sideline) winner.

Avoid attacking balls that come low over the net. Don’t be impatient to end the point. Hitting a ball that

is low at the net will likely result in you “dumping” it into the net. Keep working the point until you have an attackable ball. At the net an attackable ball is one that is stomach-high (or above) when it gets to you.

The other place to think about hitting the ball? In tennis it’s often called the “open court”.

I call it the area of the court where my opponent is not. It’s easy to get into a mindless round of returning the ball directly to the players on the other side of the net. But if they get pulled to the side (by a setup from your partner) be ready to hit to the area that’s wide open.

Avoid attacking balls if your paddle is not in a ready position to hit. I’ve talked about this before, the “ready position”. This is the one thing I see players fail to do that can improve their game immediately. Get, and keep, your paddle in the ready position. That means, get your paddle out

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Gardening’s enduring gifts

By **MARALEY MCMICHAEL**
Senior Voice Correspondent

One spring morning during breakfast, back in 2003 when we lived in Slana, my husband Gary said, “I turned the oil stove on out in the greenhouse. Let’s move plants today.” “Fine,” I replied, glad to get the seedlings in the upstairs room and the front porch out of the house. This was our second

season to have a garden and greenhouse in Slana. The greenhouse was his domain and the vegetable and flower gardens were mine. We didn’t plan it that way; it just happened.

When I was a kid growing up in Glennallen, Dad grew potatoes and carrots most every summer. Some years there were other vegetables as well. Weeds always grew with gusto. One summer he built a little

“bubble” greenhouse off the dining room windows and grew some Alaska State Fair prize-winning cucumbers. He later built a real greenhouse out of wood and glass. When I was 16, I bought one of those ready-made seed trays of snapdragons for the windowsill in my bedroom. Those beautiful blooms lasted almost up until Christmas.

After Gary and I got

married, it was two years before we grew a garden of our own. We started from scratch clearing the willow brush and then turning the ground over on our 10 acres at 23½ mile on the Chena Hot Springs Road. Gary even fashioned a small greenhouse attached to the south side of our trailer house. Neighbors bought the extra tomato plants we started. Our tomatoes never did much because once the willow and aspen trees leafed out, they shaded the greenhouse too

much. Since we hauled our water, we only grew edible plants with a few marigolds strategically located for pest control.

Although we were pleased with the results of the garden, we ended up selling out and moving to California that fall. That decision was spurred on by Gary’s longing for the fresh fruit he grew up with in California and the negative changes we saw in the Fairbanks area as the oil

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McMichael garden with dog Patches, July 2004 in Slana.
Photo courtesy Maraley McMichael

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State’s Elder Mentors come together in Anchorage

RurAL CAP Elder Mentor Team

Last month, fifty Elder Mentors from all over Alaska gathered in Anchorage for the annual Elder Mentor conference. This year’s theme was “Connecting Through Service”. Returning Elder Mentor volunteers were celebrated for completing another year of service as new volunteers were welcomed into the program, all the while preparing for another upcoming school year mentoring youth.

Elder Mentors participated in several workshops and presentations, sharing their stories, learning and growing together as a community. Volunteers were trained in trauma-informed care, participated in meditation and self-care exercises, reflected on why they became Elder Mentors, and discussed the successes and challenges they faced this year. Old and new volunteers exchanged



Elder Mentors pose together during their conference in June.

Courtesy RurAL CAP

experiences and supported one another. Friendships and long-lasting bonds were made. Tons of pictures were taken. Lots of cookies were eaten.

The final day of the conference came to a close with a wonderful recognition luncheon, featuring keynote speaker Earl from Chevak, and a fantastic dance performance by the Ladies of the Pacific Dance Academy.

“I have 25 grandkids and 27 great-grandkids. I’m glad you [RurAL CAP] are doing this program,”

said Natalia Wassilliey, recently joined Elder Mentor volunteer in New Stuyahok. “You’re bringing back our culture. The kids we teach can go home and say to their family, ‘look what I made in Yup’ik class.’ We are saving our culture. I tell the kids, these aren’t my words, these are my great grandmother’s words. We have to pass down the wisdom and traditions. I hope to bring back our dance group this year, too.”

The Elder Mentor Program volunteers and staff wish Tatianna Andrew a

happy retirement. She has been a site supervisor for the program for several years. Thanks for all you do.

The Elder Mentor Program is currently accepting applications for the coming school year. Benefits for qualifying seniors age 55 and older include paid time off, a tax-free stipend, paid holidays, free meals and travel assistance. For more information and to apply, call 907-865-7276. Check out the online application and learn more at www.eldermentor.org. Reach the team via e-mail at eldermentors@ruralcap.org.

Search “Elder Mentor” on Facebook.

Longtime Elder Mentor Sophie Moxie is our featured volunteer of the month. Enjoy her smoked salmon recipe on the Senior Voice website.

Teaching the important things, by Sophie Moxie

I am Sophie Moxie and I am from New Stuyahok.



Elder Mentor Sophie Moxie

Courtesy RurAL CAP

I have a gray house. Our village is beautiful. I love picking berries and splitting fish. I like to cut meat

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Malcolm Roberts and daughter
A.R. Keiner, Spring of 2021.

It’s easy to reduce my father to a resume. He met amazing people and traveled to incredible places. Born in 1936 to immigrant parents who had no money, he insisted they were “never poor.” As a child in Los Angeles, they walked the hills where he could hear the concerts at the Hollywood Bowl without buying a ticket. Through WWII his family rented an apartment on a ranch where the kids worked picking fruit after school. Malcolm became a day student at a boarding school. Unable to afford school housing, he lived with a family trading farm labor for room and board. He received a private scholarship to Princeton. As a child of

Malcolm Blair Roberts 1936 - 2023

immigrant tea-totalers, the Ivy League was a shock. His classmates were sons of senators, movie stars, and millionaires, but Malcolm was more comfortable with international students, campus laborers, and custodians.

After finishing university in 1958, he traveled as a stagehand/ advance man for a series of theatrical productions and later as a photojournalist. Malcolm was always on the support team for someone else’s vision, never the star of the show. The stories from this time would become family legend. During a 1962 tour in Venice, Italy, a gondola carrying the production’s equipment capsized, dumping the play’s valuables and Malcolm into the canals. Other fables included a train-jacking in Bolivia, malaria in Brazil, concerts in Watts, and a production in post-war Korea, where local children taught him folk songs. In 1968, he and one of his many friends called John traveled by car from LA to Mexico City, interviewing people about the upcoming Olympics. This solidified his love for Mexico, its language, and people.

Malcolm’s enthusiasm could be disarming. He could make a cheddar, margarine and pilot cracker sound like high tea, and would present a California avocado (his only extravagance) with the gusto of a sommelier. As a 6’4” lanky British-American guy he was never afraid to make a fool of himself in the name of community. He was always up to write and read a poem for someone’s birthday. He would

fearlessly attempt someone else’s native tongue, or attempt traditional cultural dances at gatherings when invited up to the stage. About 10 years ago in Anchorage, the Korean Special Olympics team members goaded Malcolm to sing his favorite song; he took a deep breath and pulled that old Korean song out of thin air, much to the delight and surprise of everyone in the room, including his wife, Cindy.

In 2012, he and my mother began writing a memoir. By the time they self-published in 2017, he was in the early stages of dementia. As his disease became more acute, he established new relationships with his children. Malcolm 2.0 was able to laugh, listen to music, and enjoy our company, meeting us again for the first time.

Mal is survived by his wife Cindy, his brother Gavern Roberts, his best friend and son, Bret Roberts; Louie, Theo, Ooloe & Cheyenne (Roberts)Hallie; Grant, Harper, Alder and Alexis (Roberts) Keiner. He is survived by his “adopted” kids, Keema Waterfield, Lena Massey, Kevin Rogers, and Mead Treadwell. He is preceded in death by Erling and Muriel Roberts, and his grandson, Erling Munro Keiner.

Malcolm’s legacy of values, humor, and heart will live on.

A.R. Keiner is an artist living and working in Los Angeles.



Rambles

News from the Grapevine

Valdez Senior Center’s Deborah Plant is retiring, after eight and a half years as the center’s executive director. She writes in the center’s June newsletter that **Byron Hales** has been training since the end of March and will take over July 1. Best wishes to Deborah, and be sure to stop in and welcome Byron ... In Fairbanks, **Leslie Siegfried** is resigning from her position as program director with **Aging at Home Fairbanks (AAHF)**. In a June email, she explained that she is going back to school this fall, with the ultimate plan to get into veterinarian school. Her last day will be Aug. 1, although she will continue to volunteer for the organization. Thanks for your work, and congratulations for pursuing your dreams, Leslie ... **Homer Senior Citizens, Inc.** launched a new website last month. Check it out at www.homerseniors.org. Their **annual Alzheimer’s Fundraiser** takes place Aug. 19. Formerly held at the Second Star Mansion, the event is being relocated this year to the center’s Silver Lining Café, which will be transformed for the extravaganza featuring exquisite food, beverages (including wine and beer) and live music from the **Tim Fitzgerald Chicago Jazz Band Quartet**. Tickets are \$100, available for purchase at the center or online via its website. All proceeds to go operation of the center’s new Alzheimer’s Wing ... **Senior Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program check booklets** are available now at local senior centers and other agencies. Each booklet includes \$35 worth of checks that can be used to buy fresh Alaska-grown fruits, vegetables, fresh-cut herbs and honey at participating locations. Must be at least 60 years old and meet low-income eligibility guidelines. Information and a downloadable application are at <https://bit.ly/3BfGvLV>. Checks may be used through Oct. 31.

Rambles is compiled from senior center newsletters, websites and reader tips from around the state. Email your Rambles items to editor@seniorvoicealaska.com.

Gardening

continued from page 12

pipeline was being built. The year was 1975.

Supposedly, we would have an even better garden in California, where we bought 20 acres in the foothills of the Sierras. As it turned out, between the rocky soil, scorching heat, lack of running water, and the gophers, after two months, we only had three hot pepper plants left. After some wandering cows passed through and ate the pepper plants, we gave up.

The next summer Gary helped his mother improve her little garden on the foggy coastal mountains in the San Francisco Bay area, which was another totally new gardening climate for me. The next year we returned to Alaska.

Settling in the Cooper Landing area of the Kenai Peninsula, we reclaimed a garden spot that had not been used in over 20 years and built a little make-shift greenhouse. I took a gardening class from the Cooperative Extension Service in Soldotna to learn about the local techniques. I especially wanted to learn how to combat the cooler



Gary McMichael with tomatoes, snap peas and cucumbers, September 1989 in Palmer.
Photo courtesy Maralee McMichael

soil temperatures compared to interior Alaska. We had lots of vegetables for eating fresh, freezing and canning. I also started experimenting with different types of flowers for the first time.

Five years later we moved to Palmer and it was time to start over again. We bought a 10-year-old house that had a nice greenhouse attached. We received permission to plant the greenhouse before closing on the June 1 purchase, just so we wouldn’t lose a good growing season. That greenhouse provided all we could eat tomatoes and cucumbers for seven years. The vegetable garden had to be developed from scratch, though.

When we moved to a smaller house in Palmer, Gary built a greenhouse for the tomatoes and cukes, but this time I concentrated on flowers rather than vegetables. I had become acquainted with several farmers in Palmer, from whom I could buy vegetables at reasonable prices.

For the next six years, I worked at Bushes Bunches Greenhouse and Gardens for three months every spring and could purchase wonderfully healthy six-packs of flower starts at employee discount. I greatly enjoyed watching the growth and blooms of annuals and perennials, and heartily endorsed my employer’s philosophy that flowers are food for the soul.

Then we moved to Slana – an area where some locals warned us that a garden would not grow. While that is not true, I will be the first to admit, it was rather difficult. Especially the year we experienced a killing frost June 11 and then the

first frost of the fall August 14! That is an impossibly short growing season. Only die-hard gardeners will understand our behavior to keep going under those circumstances. In Slana, Gary built our nicest and biggest (12’x20’) greenhouse and we reclaimed a garden spot that hadn’t been used in 10 years.

After breakfast that spring morning back in 2003, we moved all the plants out to our heated greenhouse, where we spent several hours transplanting, puttering and dreaming. The previous fall we’d harvested over 50 pounds of green tomatoes, and although I had successfully experimented with more than one green tomato recipe, I was hoping the new season would produce more vine-ripened.

With our 2011 move back to Palmer, we started from scratch again. The greenhouse didn’t get built until 2016, but it produces enough wonderful tomatoes and cucumbers to share with family and friends. I do not have a large vegetable garden, just a carrot patch in a raised bed – a nod to the fact that my aging body can no longer do the physical work my younger body could. Any extra energy and time is spent on flowers (mostly perennials) enabling the enjoyment of numerous and beautiful cut flower bouquets.

Here’s wishing tasty produce and fragrant blossoms to all my fellow gardeners this 2023 growing season.

Maralee McMichael is a lifelong Alaskan currently residing in Palmer. Email her at maraleymcmichael@gmail.com.



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14 | Senior Voice, July 2023



Age-friendly ideas abound in Juneau

By **LINDA KRUGER**
For Senior Voice

In May, the Juneau AARP Community Action Team (CAT) and the Juneau Commission on Aging (JCOA) joined forces to celebrate National Older Americans Month with three listening sessions to gather information for Age-Friendly Juneau.

Earlier this spring Juneau became the second Alaska Age-Friendly community, joining the AARP Age-Friendly Network shortly after Anchorage. Co-chairs of Age-Friendly Juneau, Dr. Emily Kane (Chair of the Juneau Commission on Aging) and

Linda Kruger (Lead for the AARP Juneau Community Action TeamAT), announced the kick-off of Age-Friendly Juneau and the listening sessions on KTOO Radio's Juneau Afternoon program. The listening sessions were held on consecutive Tuesdays at the three local libraries.

After a short introduction about the AARP Age-Friendly Network, the Juneau Community TeamAT and Juneau Commission on Agingneau COA, there were lively discussions of what could help Juneau become more aAge-fFriendly. During the

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Mentors

continued from page 13

when I have nothing to do and clean the house. My hobbies include knitting and bingo. I also enjoy babysitting. Sometimes we go outside to have some fresh air and go hunting, which I love. We hunt many kinds of animals. Sometimes people like to give elders different foods and meats, and we gladly accept. And we share. I started as an Elder Mentor on Aug. 14, 2014. I tell stories to the kids in school,

I help during Exploration Week, and I assist tenth graders with math and Yup'ik words. When they are having problems, like when they can't finish their homework, we talk to them and find out what's wrong, and figure out what to do.

Ihavethreegreat-granddaughters and I walk with them to school. We have to teach the kids while they are young. If we don't, they won't know the important things. Now they will look back and remember us.

Visit www.seniorvoicealaska.com for Sophie's instructions for smoked salmon.



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Calendar of Events

July 3 Kodiak Kodiak Senior Center annual Stan and Nita Nelson Fourth of July Barbecue, noon to 1 p.m. All your favorite cookout foods. Free. 907-486-6181.

July 4 Nationwide Independence Day

July 4 Juneau Fourth of July Parade. This year's theme is "Voices of Alaska." Parade begins at 11 a.m. next to Cycle Alaska, 1107 W. 8th Street, and will proceed downtown. For more information and parade route, visit traveljuneau.com/events, and use the search window.

July 4 North Pole Fourth of July Pancake Breakfast at Santa's Senior Center, 8 to 10 a.m. With pancakes, sausage, juices, coffee/tea, more. Suggested donation \$8 adults, children 10 and under, \$4. 907-488-4663

July 5 Fairbanks Library services available on location at Tanana Valley Farmer's Market, every Wednesday through the summer, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Place holds, learn about eMaterials, get a library card, check out books, and more from Fairbanks North Star Borough Libraries Reference and Adult Services staff. Call for information, 907-459-1022.

July 12 Chugiak CarFit event at Chugiak-Eagle River Senior Center, 10 a.m. to noon. Sponsored by Center for Safe Alaskans, CarFit experts will be on-site performing free vehicle inspections and driver orientations and assessments to improve safety behind the wheel. Call to register, 907-215-6980.

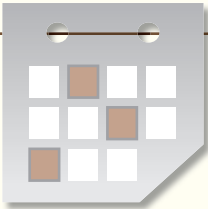
July 12-15 Fairbanks World Eskimo Indian Olympics at the Big Dipper Ice Arena. Unique traditional Native games, art and dance. Daytime admission is free; evening admission, \$15 for adults, \$10 youth and seniors, children and elders free. www.weio.org.

July 18 Anchorage Hospice of Anchorage Paint Night, 2612 Northern Lights Blvd., 6:30 to 8 p.m. Free event for anyone experiencing loss or caring for a loved one with a serious life-limiting illness. Share experiences, build a network of support, learn about hospice resources. No painting experience required; supplies provided. Limited to 10 participants. Call to reserve spot, 907-561-5322.

July 25 Ketchikan Rainy Day Quilters Guild meets at Holy Name Parish Hall, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Email for information, stbrainard14@gmail.com. Or find them on Facebook, search for @RainyDayQuilters.

July 26 Anchorage Anchorage Senior Activity Center 40th Anniversary celebration, 11:30 a.m. Join for a barbecue and festivities. RSVP to 907-770-2008.

July 27 Ninilchik Nilnilchik Senior Center Annual Meeting, 1 p.m. Membership business and board elections. 907-567-3988.



Send us your calendar items

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City of Seattle turns to cultural piracy

By LAUREL DOWNING BILL

Senior Voice Correspondent

If you have ever traveled to Seattle you may have visited its iconic Pioneer Square, which once was the heart of the Washington city. During the Klondike Gold Rush of the late 1890s, Seattle was the center for travel to Alaska.

A group of businessmen decided it would be a great idea to connect Seattle’s city center to its neighbor to the north by displaying an icon that was uniquely tied to Native culture. Their plan included enlisting one of the most well-known steamships of the day and a bit of larceny.

As the story goes, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce wanted to erect a totem pole in Pioneer Park in downtown Seattle. However, those who carved the magnificent monuments only came from the tribes of northern Vancouver Island, the Queen Charlotte Islands, and the adjacent tribes in British Columbia and Alaska.

So in the summer of 1899, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer put a delegation on board the City of Seattle, a famous steamship that often sailed to and from Alaska, to travel to Sitka to see if they could find a totem pole suitable for the park. Since most of the totems by this time were stationed in Indian burial grounds, the delegation’s mission was indeed delicate.

After a brief stay in Alaska’s old capitol, guests returning to the ship were advised by the purser not to believe anything they heard and only half of what they saw from that time forth.

After finishing her business in the port of Sitka, the City of Seattle sailed out a bit and then anchored in a stream. Passengers watched as the crew lowered one of the ship’s boats into the water and rowed ashore. Later, third mate R.D. McGillvery described what happened: “The Indians were all away fishing, except for one who stayed in his house and looked scared to death. We picked out the best looking totem pole. I took a couple of sailors ashore and we chopped it down – just like you’d chop down a tree. It was too big to roll down the beach, so we sawed it in two.”

Members of the Committee of Fifteen paid McGillvery \$2.50 (about \$90 in 2023 dollars) for his effort to cut down the totem, which belonged to the Raven Clan. It was carved in 1790 to honor a woman called Chief-of-all-Women who’d drowned in the Nass River.

The City of Seattle then returned to her home port with the looted totem pole, which then was put back together and unveiled in Seattle’s Pioneer Square late in

1899. The totem was “greeted by cheers of a multitude of people,” according to a newspaper article of the time.

The Tlingits were not pleased that their totem had been stolen and demanded \$20,000 for its return. They settled for \$500, which the Seattle Post-Intelligencer paid.

The original totem stood proudly in Pioneer Square until a careless smoker tossed a cigarette butt against its decaying base in 1938. The city then removed the original totem and replaced it in 1940 with a replica carved by the descendants of the original totem’s carvers.

This column features tidbits found in Aunt Phil’s Trunk, a five-book Alaska history series written by Laurel Downing Bill and her late aunt, Phyllis Downing Carlson. The books are available at bookstores and gift shops throughout Alaska, as well as online at www.auntphilstrunk.com.



A delegation of businessmen stole this carved totem pole from Southeast Alaska so they could put it on display in Pioneer Park in Seattle in the early 1900s.

University of Washington

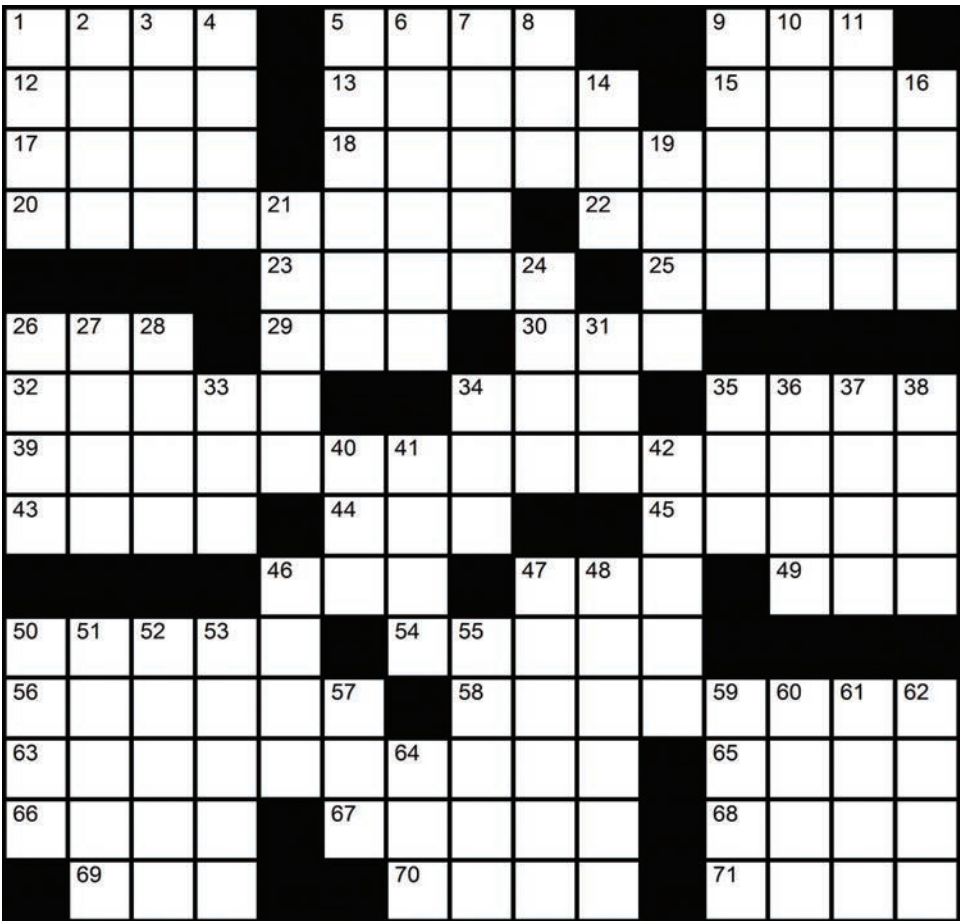
Expressing Emotions

Across

- 1 Merganser
- 5 New Testament book
- 9 Washington minutes
- 12 Tipsy
- 13 Boxer’s record
- 15 Singular, to Caesar
- 17 Berry often used in smoothies
- 18 Exclamation of surprise
- 20 Sacré bleu’s kin
- 22 Tributary of the Ohio
- 23 Mulroney of Canada
- 25 Breviloquent
- 26 Taradiddle
- 29 Nationality suffix
- 30 Spanish exclamation
- 32 Bean products?
- 34 ___ in the sky
- 35 Do as directed
- 39 Exclamation of surprise

- 43 George Harrison’s “___ It a Pity”
- 44 Wolf down
- 45 Lofty nest for a golden eagle
- 46 School of Mahayana Buddhism
- 47 Scorecard number
- 49 Predatory fish
- 50 Winesap

- 54 1947 Rex Harrison flick, “The ___ and Mrs. Muir”
- 56 Acquits
- 58 Expression of disappointment
- 63 Exclamation of understanding
- 65 It precedes a return
- 66 Fencing sword



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- 67 Modern surgical tool
- 68 Nebraska City’s county
- 69 Upper house member (Abbr.)
- 70 Like a pomegranate
- 71 Call in a bakery

Down

- 1 Hop-filled dance
- 2 Isinglass
- 3 Melodramatic exclamation
- 4 Brainiac
- 5 Finds repugnant
- 6 One of Dagwood’s kids
- 7 City on the Arkansas River

- 8 Piggery
- 9 Investigate
- 10 Senegal’s capital
- 11 Lock of hair
- 14 Pilothouse abbr.
- 16 Tennis great Arthur
- 19 Buddy, in Queensland
- 21 Corpulent
- 24 Roulette bet
- 26 Pacific island nation
- 27 Middle of March
- 28 “___ there, done that”
- 31 Filmmaker Spike
- 33 Appropriate
- 34 Loan figure inits.
- 35 Expose, poetically
- 36 “Lulu” composer
- 37 Silkworm

- 38 River of Flanders
- 40 Female ruff
- 41 Warbled
- 42 Solar system member
- 46 Goose egg
- 47 Take a ___
- 48 Categorize
- 50 Masseur’s target
- 51 Plunks down
- 52 Flycatcher
- 53 Burdened
- 55 Northern Nigeria native
- 57 Word part (Abbr.)
- 59 ___ reflection
- 60 Baby-faced
- 61 Kentucky county
- 62 Editor’s mark
- 64 Meal starter?

Crossword answers on page 22



Donny Osmond takes his show on the road

By NICK THOMAS

Tinseltown Talks

Fans of Donny Osmond won't have to travel to Las Vegas to experience the singer's long-running popular stage show currently headlining at Harrah's Casino. The 70s teen idol begins his summer tour in July, his first in almost seven years (see www.donny.com for cities and dates).

"I'm taking it across the country for people who can't get to Las Vegas," said Osmond from Las Vegas. "I'm bringing the entire company – singers, dancers, musicians, and a full video production. I'm really looking forward to it because I was born on the road."

While longtime fans remember Osmond as part of the Osmond family singers, not to mention the "Donny & Marie" variety show from the 70s, the "Donny & Marie" daytime talk show in the late 90s, and a string of musical theater roles on Broadway, Osmond has continued to reinvent himself to keep up with changing times.

He hosted a TV game show ("Pyramid") in the early 2000s, was a runner-up in the first season of Fox's "The Masked Singer" in 2019, and won season 9 of ABC's "Dancing with the Stars" a decade earlier.

"That was probably the hardest thing I've ever done in my life," he said. "And to win the trophy was probably one of my favorite accolades."

For the Utah native, those accolades began at the age of five when he joined four of his brothers in 1963 on "The Andy Williams Show" singing his debut song, "Yes Sir, That's My Baby," on Williams's lap. Later in the program, he belted out his first solo performance on television, "You Are My Sunshine."

"I remember doing the show and have a lot of respect for that man because he gave me my start," recalled Osmond. "In fact, I do a duo with Andy Williams singing 'Moon River' on the big screen behind me in the show. It's become a very emotional part of the evening and people tell me

quite a tearjerker. It's included in my rap song that looks back on my career."

Wait, the kid who tore up the pop charts in the early 70s with hit singles such as "Go Away Little Girl," "Puppy Love," and "Too Young," not to mention recording 65 albums over his career, does rap?

"I sure do," said Osmond laughing. "It's become one of the most popular parts of my show where I do a 10-minute rap in front of a big screen video projection outlining my six-decade career."

Like many entertainers, Osmond's career had its low points and these are not excluded from his biographical rap review. "I did one Broadway show that opened and closed on the same day."

Another favorite Osmond song for younger fans is "I'll Make a Man Out of You," from Disney's 1998 film "Mulan." While appearing in a Chicago stage production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," Osmond was spotted by Disney and asked to join the vocal cast for their new animated feature.

"We turn the whole theater into a 'Milan' moment with a six-minute full production number including a stick fighting dance on stage and my character, Captain Shang, on the big screen behind me," said Osmond. "I had no idea the song would become a Disney classic." Currently, the YouTube video of the song has over 160 million views and may still be a hit with the grandkids.

Of course, not everyone is a Donny Osmond fan and the 65-year-old singer often chuckles when he looks out into the audience during a show.

"Recently, there was a bearded guy in the front row who looked like one of those Grateful Dead Deadheads and by his attitude I could tell his wife had dragged him to the concert," laughed Osmond. "But at the end of the show, he was the first on his feet to give me a standing ovation. So it's very satisfying to win over people like that. I'm sure audiences on the summer tour will not only enjoy the music but learn

Donny Osmond on the stage of his Las Vegas show in 2022. From childhood appearances on "The Andy Williams Show," to 70s teen idol stardom, Broadway, game shows, Disney soundtracks – Osmond has stayed busy.

Denise Truscello photo

about what I've accomplished over my six-decade career."

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



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Trusts and assets: Getting it all in there

By KENNETH KIRK

For Senior Voice

Some years ago I had a meeting with a woman who had created a trust, using another lawyer, a few years earlier. She had questions about the trust, which I was able to answer, and it turned out that it still did what she wanted.

But when I asked her whether everything was in the trust that needed to be, she looked puzzled. So I turned to my computer and pulled up the property records. Both her home, and her rental property, were still in her own name. As were, apparently, all of her accounts and other assets. Nothing was in the trust.

I asked her why she had not put anything into the trust, and she said, “I didn’t know anything about that.”

I then asked her whether her attorney had not said something about funding the trust, and she said, “Is that what that means? Because when I left the other attorney’s office after I signed everything, the last thing she said was ‘don’t forget to fund your trust’. But she never told me what funding the trust meant”.

I think I may have audibly groaned at that point. If you are going to have a living trust, you need to put your assets into the trust. That is called “funding the trust,” and it is absolutely essential.

At this point some of you are probably asking, “Why? I have a will, and I didn’t have to fund my will”. Well, a will is a very different animal from a living trust.

A will (or “last will and testament”) is your final instructions to the probate court, whereas a trust is a separate entity that holds assets while you are alive. A will doesn’t hold any assets. When you die, any assets that belong to you, in your own name, have to go through probate court. Your will tells the judge who you want to have appointed as your executor, and who the executor should give those assets to at the end of the



process. The executor files a bunch of paperwork with the probate court, and then the judge signs an order called “letters testamentary,” which authorizes your executor to transfer assets. And once the executor jumps through all of the necessary legal hoops, such as publishing notice to creditors, the executor distributes the assets according to the will, and reports back to the judge.

A trust is a very different thing. When you sign a living trust, you are creating an entity. It is a legal thing, the same way, for instance, a corporation or an LLC is a legal thing. In the trust document—it is usually called a declaration or agreement of trust—you say who will manage the assets of the trust, and who those assets go to when you are gone. In a typical trust, you will declare that you will manage the assets yourself and that, while you’re alive, you can do anything you want with them.

But the rules of the trust only apply to the assets that are in the trust. When you first create that trust, it doesn’t have any assets in it. To make the whole thing work, you have to transfer the assets into the name of the trust.

How you put the assets into the trust depends on what kind of assets they are. If it is real estate, you record a quitclaim deed to put the property into the trust. A bank or brokerage account can be transferred to the trust directly, or you can designate the trust as the pay-on-death beneficiary. For ordinary stuff like furniture, jewelry, tools and artwork, you just have

to sign something saying you have put those items into the trust. And there are special procedures for vehicles, boats, airplanes, firearms, savings bonds and a lot of other things.

What happens if you don’t do that? The assets that could have been transferred through the trust end up going through the probate court. That is unfortunate, because chances are one of the reasons you created a living trust, was to avoid probate. Having to go through probate costs money, delays distribution,

and can lead to all sorts of undesirable consequences.

General Patton once said (and I don’t know if this was in real life, or just in the movie) that the reason he refused to retreat was that he did not like to pay for the same piece of real estate twice. A living trust costs money, a lot more than a simple will. It can save your heirs a lot more money (and time) on the back end by keeping your estate out of probate. But if you don’t fund the trust, you will have paid good money for the trust, and

then your estate will have to pay even more money for probate.

And that, my friends, is paying for the same real estate twice.

Kenneth Kirk is an Anchorage estate planning lawyer. Nothing in this article should be taken as legal advice for a specific situation; for specific advice you should consult a professional who can take all the facts into account. ‘And then you can let the other poor, dumb son-of-a-gun pay for his probate,’ as General Patton may have said.

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PC and mobile games; motion sensor nightlights

By **BOB DELAURENTIS**
Bob's Tech Talk

Q. I would like to get back into playing PC games. Where should I start?

A. The universe of high-quality “traditional” computer games is bigger than ever. Online storefronts for computer-based games fall into two major groups: mobile games for handheld devices like tablets and smartphones, and traditional games for desktop and laptop computers. Where you start depends on the device. For PCs probably the most popular game store is Steam. Steam is a digital distribution platform operated by Valve Corporation. It is one of the most popular and widely used platforms for purchasing, downloading and playing games on PC, Mac and Linux operating systems.

Overall, Steam has become a central hub for PC gaming, offering a convenient and comprehensive platform. It has a large and active user base, and its regular sales, updates and community features contribute to its popularity among gamers. In my opinion, the game marketplace can be an unwelcome experience, especially for newcomers. Titles that feature gunplay, horror, warfare and all manner of violent mayhem are easy to find.

Modern smartphones can pack more computer power than all but the latest top-of-the-line desktops and laptops, making them increasingly more popular as gaming devices.

However, computer gaming is a vast universe. There are puzzle games, word games, strategy games, simulations and much more. There are gentle games, and slow moving games. If you want to explore gaming, be sure to look at the different categories of games, because there is a rich world of entertainment out there if you have the patience to find it.

Q. I left the traditional computer world behind a decade ago. Where can I find games for my smartphone?

A. Smartphones and tablets also sport a huge catalog of available games. These games can be less elaborate than traditional computer games. Some of them are very simple. However, modern smartphones can pack more computer power than all but the latest top-of-the-line desktops and laptops, making them increasingly more popular as gaming devices.

The best place to start looking for mobile games is each device’s respective game subscription service. For a nominal monthly fee, you gain access to hundreds

of games immediately, allowing you to try as many as you like. Apple offers Apple Arcade, which is available for \$4.99 a month. Google Play has its Pass service, which costs \$5 a month. Both services provide access to hundreds of games, and may be the best places to discover the kinds of games you enjoy most.

For many people, a game subscription service will be all they ever need. But mobile app stores also offer thousands of titles that can be purchased individually. But watch your budget – the in-app purchase fees inside these titles can balloon into hundreds or thousands of dollars.

Until you gain some experience with mobile games, the safest way to explore is a fixed-price game service such as Apple Arcade or Google Play Pass.

Q. What is your favorite home automation device

Wander the Web

Here are my picks for worthwhile browsing this month:

Computer Games
When it comes to traditional computer games, Steam is probably the most active online game community.
<https://store.steampowered.com>

Game Reviews
MetaCritic is a review aggregator website that provides info from various sources, including mobile games. Use it to find games or other review sites.
www.metacritic.com/game

How deep is the ocean?
Explore Davy Jones’ Locker in this entertaining interactive illustration of the relative distances from sea level to the ocean floor.
www.neal.fun/deep-sea/

these days?

A. Home automation hardware remains complex, unforgiving and expensive. After decades of promises, it’s still not ready for any homeowner except early adopters with a great deal of patience and low expectations.

That said, there is one simple, inexpensive automation device that I can no longer live without: a motion sensor nightlight. They come in dozens of shapes, sizes and intensities. Some need a wall

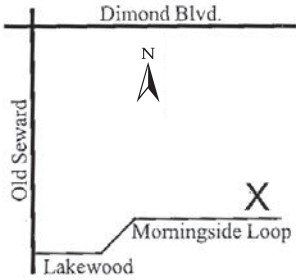

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IN-PERSON WORKSHOPS:

Anchorage Senior Activity Center
1300 E. 19th Avenue, Anchorage
July 11, Aug 16, Sept 7 | 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Wasilla Senior Center
1301 South Century Circle, Wasilla
July 24, Sept 11 | 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Palmer Senior Center
1132 South Chugach Street, Palmer
Aug 7 | 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Free initial consultation for those who attend the workshop. Book now to protect your loved ones.

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Summer offers festivals and fairs, near and far

By DIMITRA LAVRAKAS

Senior Voice Travel
Correspondent

It seemed like it would never happen, but the snow is gone and you can take to the road to check out all the great summer fairs and festivals Alaska has to offer. This year, try voyaging in a direction you've never gone by taking the Alaska Marine Highway to Cordova, Haines or Ketchikan, and be treated to bubble feeding whales, porpoises trailing alongside and breaching belugas—all at no extra cost.

Here are some fairs and festivals to put on your list.

Southcentral

Anchorage Love My Pet Fest, July 8, Arctic Rec Center, 4855 Arctic Blvd., 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Vendors exhibit products and services related to owning a pet, including groomers, trainers, crafters, medical rescues, food and fun. Free.

Anchorage Galway Days Irish Festival, Aug. 12, 544 W 5th Ave., 11 a.m.

Irish music and dancers, street performers, workshops, genealogy information, vendor booths, and a children's Lá Féile (St. Patrick's Day) tent. A festive fare of fish and chips, an Irish bake sale, and the McCarthy Stout beer garden by 49th State Brewing Company. Free. www.irishalaska.org/galway-days.html

Anchorage Alaska Greek Festival, Aug. 18-20, 2800 O'Malley Road.

Enjoy the best of Greek culture in Alaska! Taste traditional foods from lamb to vegan and traditional Greek pastries, listen to live Greek folk music, watch and learn how to Greek dance. Free parking and admission. OPA! www.akgreekfestival.com

Palmer Alaska State Fair, Aug. 18-Sept. 4. Food, rides, concerts, exhibits — too many to list here. Senior (age 65+) ticket prices range from \$8 weekdays, \$9 weekends to \$55 for a full "season pass". There are also group ticket purchases, and all active and retired military personnel pay just \$5 for Military Appreciation Day on Sept. 4. See the full schedule at

www.alaskastatefair.org.

Chugiak/Eagle River Bear Paw Festival, July 12-16. Community-wide celebration with food and other vendors, carnival rides, games, entertainment. Grand Parade is July 15 at 11 a.m., and Adult Trivia Night is Thursday, July 13, 5-7 p.m., at Corks & Hops. Free. Full schedule at www.bearpawfestival.org.

Girdwood Forest Fair, July 7-9, Mile 2.2 on the Alyeska Highway. Family fair featuring Alaskan artists, hand-crafted items, many food vendors, and entertainers from all over Alaska. Free. <https://girdwoodforestfair.com/>

Homer Peony Celebration, July 1-30. Dubbed "The City of Peonies," Homer boasts 25 peony farms and comes alive with beautiful and fragrant peonies during the annual Homer Peony Celebration. Visitors worldwide come to witness the blooms at their peak and enjoy farm tours, art classes, gallery exhibitions, workshops, and self-guided tours. Free. www.homer.alaska.org/events/annual-events/homer-peony-celebration/

Seward Mount Marathon Race, July 3-4. The Mount Marathon Race, 5K or 3.1 miles with an elevation gain of almost 3,000 feet, became an organized run in 1915 and has since become a key part of Independence Day celebrations in Seward. Watch men and women race the sharp steep slopes. <https://mountmarathon.com/>

Valdez Gold Rush Days, Aug. 2-6. Annual five-day celebration honoring the past, present and future of Valdez, with costumes, parade, ice cream social, open air market, games, contests, more. Money raised is donated to a variety of local charities and organizations, especially to those focused on children and the future of Valdez. www.valdezgoldrushdays.org.

Southeast

Cordova Copper River Salmon Jam, July 14-15

Season your cast iron, dust your rolling pin, and fire up your grill for the annual Taste of Cordova potluck (Mt. Eyak Ski Area,



Animal encounters are a state fair favorite.

Tom Ganner/SEAK Fair, Inc.

July 15, 3-5 p.m.), featuring dishes made from locally harvested foods. Bring a dish of your own, or stop by to sample bite-sized servings. Artisan Market and musical performances, too. Free. <https://salmon-jam.org/>

Haines Southeast Alaska State Fair, July 27-30. Contests, exhibitions, concerts, parade, Frisbee golf tournament, much more. Show off your special talent for the judges in the Alaska's Got Talent Competition and winners in the adult and youth divisions qualify for the finals in Palmer in September. Fishermen's Rodeo tests your net mending, gear baiting, survival suit donning skills for cash prizes. <https://seakfair.org>

Ketchikan Blueberry Arts Festival, Aug. 4-6. Enjoy the local musicians and performers, slug races, or pie-eating contest; enter your beard (real or created) to win fabulous prizes, and take in lots of amazing art. Handmade Human Powered Blueberry Boat Race in Thomas Basin, and the annual Richard Brautigan, Dick Whitaker and Lillian Ference Memorial Trout Fishing in America Poetry Slam, plus the Annual Giggles Dance Festival. Free. www.ketchikanarts.org (search under "events").

Wrangell Alaska Bearfest, July 26-30. In the heart of the Tongass National Forest, Wrangell is home to both black and brown bears. Bearfest celebrates these creatures and their natural habitat with cultural events, symposiums, various workshops including bear safety, photography and art. Schedule at www.alaskabearfest.org.

Interior

Delta Junction Deltana Fair and Music Festival, July 21-23. This year's theme, "Where the Highway Ends, the Fun Begins," includes a blueberry pie contest, the Pipeline Run, Miss Deltana and Cutest Baby Contest, live music, annual parade, more. There's Dr. Crusberg's Memorial Pet Show — if your pet does tricks, is adorable, enter them for free for a chance at stardom. Each year, the Forget-Me-Knot Quilters Guild members work to create a quilt to be raffled off that supports the guild's effort to make and deliver quilts to Delta area residents who have suffered a loss as a result of a house fire. Seniors 60 and older, \$7. www.Deltanafair.com

Fairbanks Summer Arts Festival, July 17- 28

Multi-disciplinary festival with classes in music, dance, theatre, visual arts, literary arts, culinary arts, and healing arts, FSAF brings in 120-plus guest artists from around the globe to afford Alaskans the opportunity to learn new artistic techniques. Whether you want to be part of a drum circle, learn to play the spoons, overcome stage fright, or take your singing to the next level, there's a class for you at FSAF. Ticket prices vary. <https://fsaf.org/>

Fairbanks Tanana Valley State Fair, July 28 - Aug. 6. Fair theme: "Don't Go Bacon My Heart." The fair is the oldest in Alaska and farthest north in the United States. Dating back to at least 1926, events include the Baby Show, Most Attractively Decorated Booth, and the Giant Cabbage Contest. New events are The Competitive Exhibits Scavenger Hunt, track and field, The Alaska Heritage Day Fiddle Fest, Adult Hula Hoop Competition, and Fairbanks Has Talent. Aug. 2 is Senior Day, so don't miss the fun. Tickets: Senior (60+) \$8. Senior Season Pass, \$40. www.Tvsfa.org.



Self-care

continued from page 5

she said. “Take a walk and think about small daily changes that you may need to add to your life in order to function better. Write your stressors in order, biggest to smallest, and decide what needs to be adjusted at this time and what can wait.”

Maital Neta, Ph.D., an associate professor of psychology and the Director for the Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Lab at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, Nebraska, agrees and said self-care is different for everyone. “It’s anything that you do to take care of yourself so you can stay physically, mentally, and emotionally well. It is important because it translates into better physical, mental and emotional health and well-being,” Neta said. “Extensive research has demonstrated that self-care promotes positive health outcomes, including living longer, having healthier and more satisfying relationships, and promoting resilience in the face of stress.”

She said self-care means identifying what resonates with you. What soothes you and what fills your soul. You need to examine what really empowers you and what makes you feel happy/whole, Neta said. “Life can chip away at you. Work and responsibilities to other people, even though they

can be fulfilling at times, can chip away at your sense of self and your sense of wholeness.”

In looking at yourself on a deeper level, you can establish a way to add activities to your life for your physical wellbeing, as well as your spiritual and social comfort. “Self-care is also about the things we build into our daily lives, our routines, that help us to ‘keep swimming.’ True self-care keeps you going forward, feeling ready and able to take on the day and face new challenges,” Neta said.

You can’t buy self-care

For some people, retail therapy may be a perfectly valid method of self-care. For example, if you are a person who is normally very frugal, letting loose and treating yourself can feel good. “Also, if you are someone who often struggles with insecurities, buying new clothing that makes you feel more confident and more ‘you’ can be enormously powerful,” Neta said. “It will bring benefits long after the specific shopping trip ends. But that doesn’t work for everyone and not everyone has those means.”

When considering self-care activities, experts recommend asking yourself what feeds you, what empowers you on a deeper and longer-term level. Another important tip is to try to come up with a variety of activities, because not everything will work in every situation.

“For example, if you are someone that feels empowered when going for a run, the breeze in your hair, the sun on your skin, the sound of your feet hitting the pavement, but then you get an injury and that’s no longer a viable option, then you’ll need to have some back-up plans in place,” said Neta.

Self-care isn’t a band-aid that you put over a particular challenge or stressor to get through that one isolated event, Neta said. Self-care is a practice you need to return to on a regular basis to make sure you have the energy and the power to face whatever is

around the corner.

Self-care may be simply a peaceful walk in the fresh air, curling up with a good book, or creating a piece of artwork. It may be connecting with a friend.

Neta said some self-care may require a few hours of your day and be less frequent, and some might only require a few minutes, such as a short walk around the block, and can be done more often. Whatever specific things are on your bucket list, try to build time into your schedule for them. “And not just when you’re in crisis. Instead, doing these things regularly can help you to meet

the inevitable crises when they hit,” Neta said.

Garza said sleep is very important to self-care and she recommends trying to get seven to eight hours of sleep a day, developing an exercise routine, and setting boundaries.

“Learn to set limits with yourself and others and learn to say ‘no,’” said Garza. “Recognize your own negative emotions and convert them into positive.”

John Schieszer is an award-winning national journalist and radio and podcast broadcaster of *The Medical Minute*. He can be reached at medicalminutes@gmail.com.

Tech

continued from page 19

outlet, others can operate for months on a couple of batteries.

Motion sensor night-lights are gloriously inexpensive, often available for 10 dollars or less, especially when bought in packs of two or four.

All but the cheapest models include photo cells, so the room has to be dark already in order for

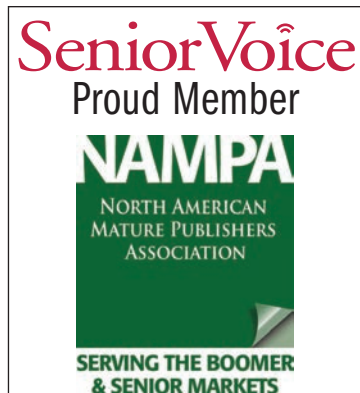
Motion sensor lights deliver the best bang for the buck of any technology I own.

the light to come on. As a result, they adapt their schedule as each day gets longer or shorter. Some designs illuminate a small pool of light on the floor while others can rival candlelight, enough to fill an entire room.

Simply put, they deliver the best bang for the buck of any technology I own.

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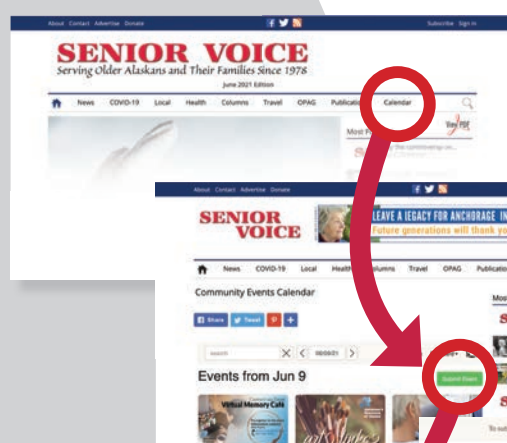
Bob has been writing about technology for over three decades. He can be contacted at techtalk@bobdel.com.



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2 You will see the list of upcoming events. To add your own event, click the “Submit Event” button on the upper right.

3 You will be taken to a forms page where you can quickly enter your details.

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Additional information is available at:
www.alsc-law.org

*Funded by State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Senior and Disabilities Services. Preference for seniors in social and economic need.

Age-friendly

continued from page 15

listening sessions, eight flip charts representing each of the Age-Friendly domains of livability were posted around the room. There were flip charts for Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Work and Civic Engagement, Communication and Information, and Community and Health Services. A ninth chart welcomed comments that didn't fit any of the eight categories or applied to more than one. Participants wrote comments and suggestions on post-it

notes and posted them on the appropriate flip chart pages. Several participants completed a detailed questionnaire providing targeted suggestions for improving Juneau for seniors.

In addition to JCOA and action teamCAT members (who had lots of ideas!) around 25twenty-five members of the public participated in the sessions. Several people who could not attend in person submitted comments by email.

Comments and suggestions from the listening sessions, completed questionnaires – (hard copies and online –), and other comments that are received will be compiled into a report and provide the background for a five-year plan

for moving Age-Friendly Juneau forward. Some of the suggestions received so far include: a dedicated senior center for presentations, information (with a navigator), social events and games, and senior exercise classes; transportation to senior events and congregate meals and provision of transportation services out past the ferry terminal; an affordable, pedestrian friendly, small-scale co-housing village for seniors; City and Borough of JuneauBJ support for home modifications to

help seniors stay in their homes; senior specific exercise classes; more in-person social activities and programs for seniors; an Age-Friendly Day; hHospice and hHomecare services; and additional affordable and accessible senior apartments.

To be more inclusive, the Age-Friendly Juneau co-chairs are reaching out to groups in the community who may not have participated in the listening sessions. If you have a group who would be interested in learning more, or meeting

with the planning team, please reach out to Linda Kruger at Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.linda-laska2003@gmail.comlin-laska2003@gmail.com or 907-957-0335.

All Juneau seniors are encouraged to complete the online questionnaire at Error! Hyperlinkreference not valid.https://states.aarp.org/alaska/age-friendly-questionnairehttps://bit.ly/jnu-age-friendly-questionnaires.

Linda Kruger is the AARP Alaska Community Action Team Coordinator.

Pets

continued from page 4

pets with loved ones is the chance to visit them. You can continue to enjoy their company while also seeing that they have adjusted to the change. Someone can "Feed Jake."

Additionally, shelters, adoptive agencies or rescue organizations can aid you in finding a new owner. Some shelters and rescue organizations can also arrange visitation before and after adoption, for similar closure.

Coping with pet separation when you are no longer able to care for a pet independently makes it a tough choice emotionally. Letting go of your animal can be

heart-wrenching for you, and can cause problems for your pet. When it becomes an insurmountable chore feeding a pet, exercising them, cleaning up after them, and/or arranging veterinarian appointments, those are all signs that it is time to let each other go. It can be hard but, despite the difficult emotional toll, recognize there are options to reconcile yourself to the pet separation yet still have animals in your life.

May you choose the best decision for you and your dog.

Karen Casanovas, PCC, CPCC, CLIPP is a health, wellness and simplified living coach practicing in Anchorage. If you have questions write to her at info@karen-casanovas.com.

Social Security Administration

The Social Security Administration partners with locations throughout Alaska to offer a secure video service option. Video service is a convenient and no-cost way for people to talk directly to a Social Security employee through a secure computer link that includes two-way video and sound.

The video service locations are available at:

- In Nome, Norton Sound

Health Corporation, located at 1000 Greg Krushek Ave. Video service is available for walk-ins on a first come, first served basis, on the second and fourth Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

- Kenai Senior Center, 361 Senior Court. Video service is available for walk-ins on a first come, first served basis, on the first and third Wednesdays, 9 a.m. to noon.
- Kodiak Job Center, 211 Mission Road, Suite

103. Video service is available here for walk-ins on a first come, first served basis, on the second and fourth Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

The agency strongly encourages people who can to use its online services at www.socialsecurity.gov, call on the phone, or use the video service option when possible. These service options can save people a long trip to a busy office.

Crossword answers from page 16

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Pickleball

continued from page 12

in front of you with your non-paddle hand resting near your paddle hand wrist (see photo). To get into the habit of doing this when I first started playing, I said to myself “paddle ready, paddle ready” after every shot, and that prompted me to bring my paddle back up after a shot. In this position you have your paddle out in front of you, you’re not swinging it up from your knees to make a shot. With your paddle out in front, you’re meeting the ball early and have better control. Swinging the paddle up from your knees involves too much motion to get to the ball, and that movement will cause erratic shots. So, “Paddle ready!”

And avoid attacking balls if your feet are not in position, if you’re off balance, lunging, or your shoulders aren’t square. Yes, there’s a lot to consider in pursuing the lofty goal of only hitting high percentage shots. And sometimes we just want to get out there and swing for the bleachers. It’s okay if you want to just have fun. But if you want to improve your overall game and maybe compete on a higher level, go to tournaments, then focusing on high percentage shots will be very satisfying. Next column: Drilling. *Jim Lavrakas has lived in Alaska for almost a half century. The self-proclaimed “squirrel man” has found a lively outlet in the pursuit of pickleball. You can reach him at <http://www.FarNorthPress.com>.*

Networking for Anchorage, Mat-Su area providers

Interested in learning more about fellow businesses and agencies providing senior services in the Anchorage and Mat-Su area? Want to get the word out about your own service? The monthly Service Providers Breakfast, sponsored by Older Persons Action Group, Inc., is an opportunity for all the above. Informal, early and free, the event begins at 8

a.m., second Wednesday, at a different host location each month. Breakfast provided. The next date is July 12, hosted by Anchorage Senior Activity Center. Call Older Persons Action Group, Inc. at 907-276-1059 for location information and to RSVP for this event, or for more information on future events and to be added to our e-mail reminder list.

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- Fenced one acre property
- One caregiver for every three residents.
- Specialized training on caring for seniors with dementia. Staff is required to complete continued education for Dementia and Alzheimer's.
- ADA compliant

To schedule a personal tour or to receive
additional information please contact us today.

