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# Senior Voice Health & Fitness

Serving Alaskans 50+ Since 1978

January 2018



**Senior Center Without Walls,  
an answer for isolation** *page 4*

**Nutrition – do I have to leave  
the peel on my apple?** *page 11*

*Katharina Sommer, center, leaps for a return during a doubles match of pickleball at the Alaska Club East in Anchorage. Pickleball is an ideal activity for older recreation enthusiasts and athletes and played in many locations around Alaska. See the story on page 3.*

**Easy ways to reduce  
household chemicals** *page 9*







# Partnering with our communities for better health

Mountain-Pacific Quality Health

## Mountain-Pacific Quality Health Foundation

Mountain-Pacific Quality Health is part of a network of quality improvement organizations that operate under the direction of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). We partner within the communities we serve to provide solutions for better health. Although we are part of a regional company that also includes Montana, Hawaii and Wyoming, our work is local to Alaska—connecting experienced consultants and clinicians in the health field

Diabetes self-empowerment classes help people change old habits and develop new ones through sharing and support in a group setting.

Mountain-Pacific Quality Health photo



with nursing homes, hospitals, clinics, Medicare beneficiaries and other community members.

### Helping people take charge of their diabetes

As a chronic health con-

dition, diabetes is complicated, so, if you have diabetes, the more you know about managing it, the healthier you'll be. A diagnosis of diabetes and the changes that go with it can feel overwhelming. Family members and friends are often not sure how to help.

You don't have to go it alone. We help seniors with diabetes or prediabetes manage their condition through a six-week series of classes known as the Diabetes Empowerment Education Program (DEEP™). DEEP™ is an evidence-based, supportive program developed at the University of Illinois, Chicago to

provide an opportunity for people with diabetes and those supporting them to become empowered to successfully self-manage diabetes.

Participants positively change old habits and develop new ones with support from the group. We hear they especially like the safe and sharing environment to talk about their own struggles and successes with managing their diabetes or helping loved ones who have diabetes or pre-diabetes. The classes are free for all participants, including family members and are ongoing in Anchorage, the Mat-Su Valley and

the Kenai Peninsula. Please contact Mountain-Pacific at 907-561-3202 for more information.

### Weekly classes

**Anchorage Senior Center**, 1300 E 19th Ave. 907-770-2000

Jan. 9–Feb. 13, 2018 (Tuesdays), 10 to 11:30 a.m.

**Mountain View Neighborhood Library**, 120 Bragaw St., Anchorage 907-343-2818

Jan. 17–Feb. 21, 2018 (Wednesdays), 1 to 2:30 p.m.

**Peninsula Community Health Service of Alaska**, 230 E Marydale Dr. Soldotna (907) 262-3119. January 10–Feb. 14, 2018 (Wednesdays), 3:30 to 5 p.m.

**Soldotna Senior Center**, 197 W Park Ave. 907-262-2322. Jan. 10–Feb. 14, 2018 (Wednesdays), 1 to 2:30 p.m.

To register for Anchorage classes, call Cathy Colwell at (907) 561-3202 x103.

For Soldotna classes call Lori Chikoyak at 907-690-5495

## Online training in geriatric health care throughout winter

Senior Voice Staff

A series of online geriatric health care trainings will be available via virtual classroom on the internet beginning in January. The series is sponsored by the Alaska Center for Rural Health & Health Workforce – Alaska's AHEC and The Alaska Training Cooperative. The series is a partnership with the Northwest Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Center and will offer 10 weeks of trainings from Jan. 2 through March 6, 2018.

The series is designed to give community-based providers working in the field of aging an opportunity to participate in the trainings without having to travel. Target audience includes physicians, physician assistants, nurses, physical and occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, pharmacists and other interested professionals. Classes feature a different speaker each week discussing their area of expertise. Some of the topics: geriatric traumatic brain injury; clinical marijuana use; pressure injury

prevention; UTIs in women; hypertension in older adults; health issues of older Asian Americans; more.

A list of host sites around the state, schedule of topics and registration is available at <https://www.akcache.org/Training/Class/82004>.

The trainings must be viewed at one of the Host Sites set up around the state and because anyone can apply to be a host site during the series, this list can change daily so it is important to check the website or contact Geri for an updated list. Trainings are every Tuesday from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Alaska time.

Registration cost is \$10 per session or \$60 for the entire series. Continuing Education Credit is available for an additional \$45. Certificates recording hours only are free upon request at the end of the series. Anyone can register at any time for the classes. There is no deadline.

For more information, contact Geri Heiner at (907) 786-6591, or by e-mail at [glheiner@alaska.edu](mailto:glheiner@alaska.edu).

## Make the start of the new year, the start of a new you!



for Anchorage classes call Cathy Colwell at 907-561-3202 x103

for Soldotna classes call Lori Chikoyak at 907-690-5495

### The Diabetes Empowerment Education Program (DEEP)™ offers fun, informative classes to help you:

- ◆ Better understand how diabetes affects your entire body
- ◆ Manage diabetes in a way that makes sense for you and your health goals
- ◆ Become an informed, empowered member of your health care team, as you continue to work with doctors, certified diabetes educators or other health care providers to improve and maintain your health



Developed by Mountain-Pacific Quality Health, the Medicare Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) for Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Territories of Guam and American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. 11SOW-MPOHF-AS-B2-17-63





# Pickleball is great for fitness and fun

STORY AND PHOTOS  
By MICHAEL DINNEEN

For Senior Voice

A sport born of innovation, pickleball fits right in for most Alaskans, where invention and adaptation have been in play for generations. Back in 1965 when a family of frustrated badminton players lacked the critical birdie for an afternoon's game, they repurposed a wiffle ball, inventing the sport on a Bainbridge Island lawn.

Pickleball is a combination of tennis, badminton, racquetball and ping pong. The game involves a thigh-high tennis-like net, a ping-pong like paddle, and a resilient yet lightweight four-inch plastic ball. Rules are similar to tennis and mostly played in a doubles setting, though singles and three-to-a-side cutthroat are not uncommon.

Helping bring pickleball to the Last Frontier in the past year has been local ambassador Ben Cuaresmo, who picked up the sport on a visit to Hawaii. Wishing to grow the sport and through a little innovating of his own, he visited local tennis courts to recruit players who might be more suited to pickleball's gentler nature.

Many players who have left professional sports like tennis have gravitated to pickleball, said Cuaresma.

"It began as a senior citizen-type sport," he said, adding that "the social nature of the sport is the main thing."

Today's version of the sport involves a national affiliation for all ages (USAPA, or USA Pickleball Association) of players who join for exercise, to keep their competitive fires burning and for the social networking their frequent gatherings offer.

Cuaresmo is joined locally by fellow USAPA

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*Right, Bob Krenazelok puts his all into a return during a pickleball rally at The Alaska Club East in Anchorage, which hosts games several times a week, below.*



## Pickleball around the state

Interested in pickleball? Here are some places, times, fees and other information.

### Anchorage and Mat-Su

- The O'Malley Center, 11111 O Malley Centre Drive. \$5. Gabe Donnelly, 349-7465
- Salvation Army, Corp Community Center, 1701 "C" Street. \$3. 375-3583
- The Center, 4855 Arctic Blvd. \$5. 907-868-3270
- MTA Sports Center (Palmer), 1507 N Double B St. \$5. 746-7529

### Fairbanks

- Play Pickleball with the farthest North Pickleball Club in the USA at Fairbanks North Star Borough Big Dipper Complex at 1920 Lathrop Street. Tuesdays, 3 to 5 p.m.; Thursdays. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 3 to 5 p.m. Contact Marcia Boyette, 907-479-4900 or boyette@gci.net
- <http://www.pickleball.net/pickleball-locations/480-fairbanks-north-star-borough-big-dipper.html>

### Homer

- HERC Gym, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 5 to 8 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 to 8 p.m.; Saturdays, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.; Sunday: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Contact: Mike Illg, 235-6437
- [www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation/pickleball](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/recreation/pickleball)

### Kodiak

- Pickleball is played at North Star Elementary School gym on Sundays, 1 to 3 p.m. For information, call the city Parks and Rec-

reation office, 486-8665  
Various locations

- The Alaska Club gymnasium facilities. <http://www.thealaskaclub.com/pickleball>. Members free, \$15 guest fee. Contact Ben Cuaresma (907) 301-6344

### Other resources

- Pickleball Alaska Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/pickleballalaska>
- USAPA's national website: <https://www.usapa.org/>





# Coming together in a "senior center without walls"

By **DIANNE BARSKE**  
For *Senior Voice*

"I'm thankful for laughing together, and for the memories we just shared."

"I'm thankful that you are listening to me."

"I'm thankful the sun is shining. Oops! It just went behind a cloud. Well, that's the way life is."

Such simple things were being shared, across distances, over the phone. But the people making these comments have found a way to create community, express interests, to connect and care for each other.

They are part of a program called Senior Center Without Walls (SCWW). According to their catalog, it's "a phone and online based program offering activities, education, friendly conversation, and an assortment of classes and support groups to older adults accessible from the comfort of home." It's a non-denominational program of Episcopal Senior

Astonished by all that is offered in the catalog, I decided to explore. What else could be available in this phone-in community?

I joined a session called "Storytelling." This time, there was the option of taking part on the computer, thus having the ability to see the presenters, to watch their expressions and gestures. For an hour, we were lost in their telling of both folk stories and personal stories, with the opportunity to comment and ask questions after the stories were told. I loved it.

What else? I could take art lessons, writing classes, learn Spanish or cooking techniques. There were travelogues, with photos from these adventures mailed or emailed to me to accompany the presentations. Amazing!

And, lo and behold, there are games to be played. In the mail, I had received my Bingo cards. Yes, sitting at home on the phone, I could play Bingo – and several other games – with others. And, why not? No need to sit at home feeling lonely.

Alaska has a staunch advocate or champion for this Senior Center Without Walls and all the possibilities it offers. Ken Helander is Advocacy Director for AARP Alaska. He feels that program can be of special benefit to elder Alaskans.

"It is so important here," he states. "With greater distances between communities, it is easier to feel isolated. People are often living far away from senior services. And even in the cities, we can feel isolated by winter's dark, cold and ice."

Ken shared with me several recent studies, showing the detrimental effects of loneliness and isolation on individual health and well-being. "The studies are showing that being alone can lead to poorer health, more mental ill-



'The studies are showing that being alone can lead to poorer health, more mental illness, depression, more use of substances, and abuse. In my mind, with programs like Senior Center Without Walls, much of this loneliness can be preventable ... It can be a godsend, especially in rural Alaska. People can sit at home in their PJs – and be connected.'

– Ken Helander, AARP Alaska

morning, a group I'm told has been together for 10 years.

"How's Lila?" someone asks. "We haven't heard from Lila in a few days. I've been worried."

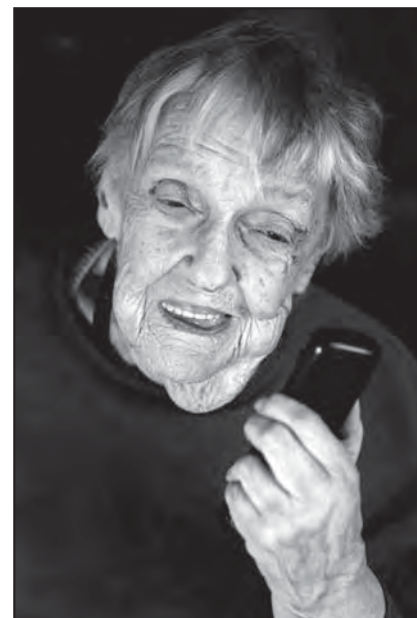
Then, this: "I heard that our good friend Ruthie fell.

She had a slight stroke." Sighs of concern can be heard. "Her daughter will keep us posted about her," comes a reassuring comment.

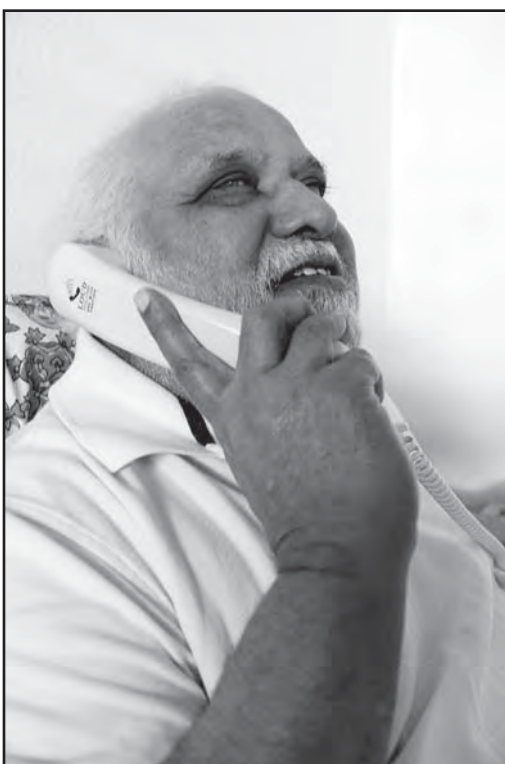
Then, "Is someone taking care of her little cat?"

Amber Carroll is SCWW Director and one of four members of its tiny staff based in California. She tells me that there is no doubt that real friendships form.

"Absolutely," she states. "We have a quarterly memorial service for people who have passed. It's so beautiful. Most of these people never meet physically, but the fear of being alone dissolves among participants. They have each other."



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Photos courtesy SCWW

Communities.'

Having received the catalog and gone through the brief registration process, I picked up the phone, called the group number, and was instantly a part of this community. It's a group called simply "Gratitude" in the listings. About a dozen people had called, to share some expression of thanks that morning.

What a great way to start the day, I thought.

ness, depression, more use of substances, and abuse.

"In my mind, with programs like SCWW, much of this loneliness can be preventable," he states. "It can be a godsend, especially in rural Alaska. People can sit at home in their PJs – and be connected."

Ken has worked in fields associated with geriatric issues for over 40 years. "I've come to recognize that one of the greatest fears among that population is fear of being alone. There is a special fear of dying alone – 'I might die and no one would even know'," he says.

I'm reminded of some of the comments I heard in the Gratitude group that

## Power to Change: A Creative Aging Symposium, Jan. 17, 2018

Amber Carroll, Director at Senior Center Without Walls, is excited about a new project planned by the SCWW program. "Senior Center Without Walls began about 14 years ago in California. Since then, outside of California, we've found our growth across other states has come mostly through partnerships with other organizations and programs.

"So on Jan. 17 we are launching a Creative Aging Symposium called Power to Change. Through this virtual symposium, we're hoping to engage more groups of people in se-

nior housing communities, senior centers, and villages throughout the country."

A brochure about the symposium states, "It will be a full day of presentations, discussions, and workshops targeting adults aged 60 or older throughout the United States and professionals working in aging services. We expect hundreds of adults to attend the symposium, either as individuals in their homes or by joining in a group at their senior residence, senior center, local village or community center."

There will be presentations on the power of art, poetry or storytelling to promote creative change

at any age. Nationally known authors and speakers will address how to get your voice heard, or how to advocate and shine a light on a cause or concern.

The symposium will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 17, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Alaska time. If interested in participating as a group or individual, call 877-797-7299 or email [scww@jtm-esc.org](mailto:scww@jtm-esc.org). The website is [seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org](http://seniorcenterwithoutwalls.org).

Anyone interested in helping promote the event can contact Katie Wade, Program Manager, at [kwade@jtm-esc.org](mailto:kwade@jtm-esc.org) or 415-895-6692."





# Unique neuropathy treatment in Anchorage

By **MARK RINDLISBACHER, DPM**

Neurogenx NerveCenter of Anchorage

One of a growing network of 22 specialty NerveCenters, the newest Neurogenx NerveCenter in Anchorage provides an effective, clinically-proven medical treatment for neuropathy and chronic nerve pain.

Neuropathy is the tingling, burning pain and numbness in feet and hands caused by nerve damage due to illness such as diabetes; chronic nerve conditions such as fibromyalgia and carpal tunnel syndrome; chemotherapy and trauma, among many other things. Neuropathy is progressive and can lead to debilitating, chronic pain; changes in skin sensitivity; muscle weakness; loss of reflexes; sleeplessness; loss of balance and injuries that don't heal.

Neuropathy now affects nearly 30 percent of Americans over the age of 40 and is the leading cause of disability in the U.S. It is also the most prevalent undiagnosed medical condition in America.

Unfortunately, neuropathy has been traditionally difficult to treat, prompting patients to go from one doctor to another in search of help. Current treatments, including prescription medications, surgeries, TENS therapy or lasers, are not typically successful – frustrating both patients and physicians. In contrast, neuropathy treatment with FDA-cleared Neurogenx technology effectively reduces or eliminates neuropathy symptoms and helps heal and re-grow nerve fibers – all without surgery or medication. Independent laboratory test results demonstrate an overall average of more than 165 percent increase in nerve fiber density six months after a Neurogenx Treatment course.

The Neurogenx Treatment eliminates or significantly reduces neuropathy symptoms in more than four out of five patients. Clinical evidence shows that even patients who have struggled with neuropathy



for years improve after treatment. The treatment is non-surgical and non-narcotic. The technology behind the treatment is patented and FDA-cleared as the only device of its kind. Thousands of pa-

tients nationwide have had dramatic improvement in their conditions following treatment with Neurogenx.

Dr. Mark Rindlisbacher is a foot and ankle specialist with expertise in treating neuropathy. With nearly 30 years of medical experience, he has developed a special interest and expertise in treating nerve conditions in the feet and legs and is a certified Neurogenx practitioner. When asked about bringing Neurogenx to Alaska, he said, "I have seen so many patients with neuropathy. For years I have worked with them to try to lessen their pain and make life more tolerable as

they dealt with debilitating symptoms. In my research to find the best relief for neuropathy, I came across this new treatment called Neurogenx. It has been met with much success, and I decided it was time to bring it to Alaska."

When asked about the success of his new nerve center, Dr. Rindlisbacher said, "We are seeing amazing results. I have patients who haven't felt anything in their feet for years who can now feel again. I have patients who haven't been able to sleep because of pain, and they have reported to me that they have finally slept through the

night sometimes after just one treatment. Patients are becoming less dependent on pain medication, and that's exciting! I wouldn't want to introduce a gimmick to my patients. This isn't a gimmick – it's the real thing."

You can find out more about how the Neurogenx Treatment can help you or someone you love by contacting Dr. Rindlisbacher and the Neurogenx NerveCenter of Anchorage, 4050 Lake Otis Parkway, Suite 102, Anchorage, AK 99508, 907-290-8178 or 907-562-2370. Or visit online at [neurogenx.com/anchorage](http://neurogenx.com/anchorage) or [www.facebook.com/ngxanchorage/](http://www.facebook.com/ngxanchorage/).

## GOT NEUROPATHY?

### Don't Suffer Any Longer!

**Proven Medical Neuropathy Treatment with an 87% Success Rate Available in Anchorage**

The Neurogenx NerveCenter of Anchorage now provides a proven physician-administered medical neuropathy treatment that reduces or eliminates symptoms for 87%\* of patients.

Our medical providers are passionate about what they do and our patients are excited about the results they're getting. Many patients report being pain-free for the first time in years!

*Can you imagine that for yourself?*

#### If you suffer from:

- Pins and needle sensations in your feet or legs
- Burning leg or foot pain
- Numbness
- Difficulty walking or loss of balance due to numbness
- Sharp, stabbing or electric-like pains in your feet or legs
- Inability to sleep due to painful feet
- Cold-feeling feet and legs

**Then YOU May Be A Candidate For This Amazing Treatment!**

#### This treatment is for people who:

- Have neuropathy due to diabetes or other illnesses
- Are tired of taking medications that aren't working
- Had chemotherapy
- Are afraid their neuropathy is getting worse
- Have been exposed to Agent Orange or other toxic substances
- Are looking for an effective solution

**The Neurogenx Care Network Includes 22 NerveCenters & More Than 200 Providers Nationwide!**

#### What PATIENTS are saying about treatment with Neurogenx

"I have Happy Feet!!! Finally after 16 years I found a treatment that works. I have been coping with neuropathy as a result of Chemotherapy. After my first treatment I left the office noticing a slight difference, but saying to myself "that's not possible". But it was! I had suffered with neuropathy for so long that I had accepted the discomfort as a way of life for me. When I began to concentrate on what was happening in my feet, the realization allowed me to know that the treatment was indeed working. The tingling and numbness are now gone."

-M. Hatcher

"I feel a huge amount of difference! I came in because my quality of life was not there due to neuropathy. Before I started treatment, I could not walk across a parking lot due to so much pain in my feet. I'm now experiencing relief. My quality of life is better. Neurogenx has given me hope. If I had to do it over again, I wouldn't hesitate."

-D. Kirsch



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**Special \$250 Offer Yours Free!**

Please use code ANK-016 when making your appointment to receive this special offer.

#### Meet Your Neurogenx Doctor

**Mark Rindlisbacher, DPM**  
**Medical Director**

Dr. Rindlisbacher is a foot and ankle specialist with expertise in treating neuropathy. As a podiatric physician, he has been helping people improve their quality of life for nearly 30 years, with the last 25 of those years in Anchorage.



**NEUROGENX**  
**NERVECENTER**  
*Anchorage*

Neuropathy & Chronic Nerve Treatment

4050 Lake Otis Parkway, Suite 102  
Anchorage, AK 99508  
[www.neurogenx.com/anchorage](http://www.neurogenx.com/anchorage)

\*87% reduction in symptoms is based on published medical studies. Offices following these protocols have seen similar results. Results may vary depending on age, condition, treatment compliance, genetics, diagnosis and other factors. Not all patients are candidates for treatment or are accepted for care.

**ANK-016**





# Aging eyes need good lighting design

BY PATRICIA M. JOHNSON  
*Senior Wire*

I've found that it was not the kitchen and hall overhead lights that were dimming, but the beginning of cataracts. I had the electrician install brighter recessed lighting – only to find after cataract surgery that those same lights appeared so bright, I needed sunglasses.

As we mature it's not a bad idea to check out some automated, non-disturbing lighting scheme designed to assist us visually in getting in and out of bed at night. Tired of stubbing a toe or two or three? Let's face it – vision does change somewhat as we get older

even though we often don't want to admit it. The following ideas are not builder's options. These are individual choices made for accessibility in our years ahead that keep us living in our homes without the need of an assisted living facility. Plan ahead with needed choices.

### Bed and bath

Do you find it difficult to get out of bed at night because the light controls are not reachable? You might fall by the time you reach the switch. If you turn on the overhead lighting, it's bright and can wake up a sleeping spouse – not a desirable choice.

You can have an electrician install custom LED fixtures in

the bedroom and bathroom and even the hallway. You can mount amber-colored LEDs under your bed frame, over the bathroom door or under the bathroom mirror. You will use less power and fewer lumens than with overhead lighting. With a sensor, the light only goes on when you get out of bed or enter the bathroom. This system has been used for several years in hospitals and rehabilitation facilities. They even light up the hallway handrails.

These advanced technologies are an effective use of light. The LEDs, photo sensors and occupancy sensors are for any age, but especially helpful as we settle into advancing years. These lights are

not bright enough to interfere with affecting your sleep pattern. They only go on when you need them. Remember: use amber lights; psychologists say blue lights will keep us awake or sometimes disturb your sleeping pattern. If your computer and speakers share your room, cover the blue light glow at night.

### Rock and roll your way

As far as design goes, you have many choices: dimmer, push button, toggle, rocker, mercury or electronic switches, and three and four-way switches. The traditional light-switch mechanism is the

next page please

# Health fairs provide vital service statewide

*Alaska Health Fair, Inc.*

Happy New Year! Our Alaska Health Fair Team hope that you and your family enjoyed a wonderful, happy and safe holiday season to close out 2017; and we look forward to your active participation in 2018. Thank you for providing generous support for Alaska Health Fair. We love working with and providing services to the wonderful people of our great state.

### Who is Alaska Health Fair?

Alaska Health Fair, Inc. is a statewide non-profit agency founded in 1980 to focus on meeting the need for improved health screenings and health promotion. We coordinate over 100 health fairs each year in locations such as schools, worksites, senior centers, villages and urban communities throughout Alaska; traveling to and providing services anywhere we are invited. The health screenings and education provided at community fairs, which are free and open to the public, and various worksites enable participants to take responsibility for their health and well-being with a goal of improving quality of life and increased longevity, saving lives in the process – from finding leukemia and other cancers, to severe diabetes

and other life changing health conditions.

The Alaska Health Fair mission is to promote statewide health education and preventative screenings, our vision is optimal health for all Alaskans and our core purpose is to promote wellness and save lives. Our 501(c)(3) non-profit is proud to have provided affordable blood tests, along with convenient and easily accessible health services for over 38 years to Alaskans statewide. We attribute our success to people – thousands of committed and devoted medical and non-medical volunteers support health fairs in Alaska. Time volunteered for Alaska Health Fair meets continued competency requirements for RN license renewal and reinstatement. If you would like to volunteer at a health fair in your community, a local worksite or the Alaska Health Fair office (which is a great place to volunteer), please contact us.

Our Spring 2018 Community Events calendar will be posted on our website at [www.alaskahealthfair.org](http://www.alaskahealthfair.org) after Jan. 4, so please check out the variety of events that are offered statewide from late January until late May.

Our Fall 2018 Community Events calendar is usually published the first week of August at the same website, showing events

from late August to late November. So remember to check us out several times per year for updated information, health newsletters, creative ideas for taking care of your health,

and announcements. Sign up for the AHF newsletter at [www.alaskahealthfair.org](http://www.alaskahealthfair.org), and be the first notified of the Spring 2018 schedule, and the availability of volunteer and exhibitor

applications. We would love to hear from you. Call the Anchorage office at (907) 278-0234 or the Fairbanks office at (907) 374-6853. Have a great 2018.



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# Specialty eye care in Anchorage for 45 years

## Ophthalmic Associates

A lot was happening in Anchorage back in 1972, when Dr. Ken Richardson first hung the Ophthalmic Associates shingle. The area was still recovering from the '64 quake, oil and gas were coming out of Cook Inlet and "The Pipeline" would soon be complete, running from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez.

A lot has happened since then. The population of Anchorage has nearly tripled, chicken no longer costs \$0.79/lb., and Ophthalmic Associates consists of six doctors and 31 professional staff that live, work and play right here in Anchorage.

Everyone on the Ophthalmic Associates team

is dedicated to providing excellent care for its patients. Routine eye care, diagnosis and treatment of eye disease such as glaucoma, keratoconus, dry eye, eye related problems from diabetes or hypertension, and vision treatment, such as cataract surgery, are core to the practice. Though each doctor has their own specialty, consulting



amongst the associates ensures comprehensive patient care. A wide array of eye specialists currently practice at Ophthalmic Associates.

Carl Rosen, MD: Orbital surgery, Neuro-ophthalmology, and Cataract Surgery.

Griffith Steiner, MD: Corneal Disease and Cataract Surgery.

Elizabeth Morgan, MD: Glaucoma and Cataract Surgery.

Nathan Frank, OD: Orbital Disease and General Eye Care.

Kelly Lorenz, MD: Glaucoma and Cataract Surgery. Chad Bouchard, DO: General Ophthalmology and Cataract Surgery.

Since 1981, Ophthalmic Associates has been located at 542 W. 2nd Avenue. Inside a collection of historic Anchorage homes is their full suite of state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment, 14 exam rooms and

an administrative/patient education center. The staff is looking forward to an upcoming remodel that will provide two additional exam lanes and more patient waiting area.

Indeed, Ophthalmic Associates reaches well beyond its walls. It is a participant in Anchorage Project Access and a longtime supporter of the Alaska Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, both local 501-C-3 non-profit organizations. The doctors rotate as "on call" specialists to the local hospitals and perform surgical procedures at area hospitals and surgery centers.

Now, in 2018, Ophthalmic Associates continues its commitment to a modern, progressive approach to eye care, just as it has done these last 45 years. By way of a daily reminder from "Our Old House", Ophthalmic Associates maintains its ties to the past and to the Alaskan community it serves today.

## Age: Lighting

from page 6

toggle snap-action switch which most of us have. You'll find more and more builders installing that wonderful rocker switch in new homes, especially in newer 55-plus communities. It is also decorative, quiet, and now comes in colors. Grandchildren love to push them. The cover is screwed in to prevent electrical shocks should the little ones have wet hands when using.

### Come fly with me

I have a depth-perception problem. In other words, I must stop flying airplanes. That's fine with me, as I never did pilot a plane and don't expect to do so now. But I "fly" my kitchen so I installed lighting fixtures mounted on the underside of the cabinets. They are very thin, not noticeable to most, and I avoid smacking my fingernails into the cabinet door.

### Some more tips

- Always have some dim lights on in the room when watching television or using the computer to minimize the harsh contrast of the bright screen and a dark room.

- In the bathroom, use a

shower light for good visibility. Choose non-shiny vanity countertop surfaces with light colors to reflect light to the underside of your chin.

- Install light switches with toggles that glow in the dark. You can apply a small swatch or decorative cutout of reflective tape.

- An extra design trick: Use light and dark colors to help you see steps and railings. In some houses these steps may lead up to the storage area above the garage. Or that crucial step leading from the laundry room to the garage. If your stairs are dark, paint the vertical portion (riser) of the stair with a light color. If your walls are dark, paint the railing a light color.

Our everyday chores such as cleaning, cooking, selecting an outfit or even reading a prescription label, can become difficult even with good sight. Good lighting is essential. And with today's designs in light switches and lights, you'll find they fit right in with good interior design.

Patricia Johnson is a retired designer/architect helping seniors ease the chore of renovation. She can be contacted through this publication.



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# Find a pool near you and get to work

By **MACKENZIE STEWART**  
*Senior Voice*

Whether it's to tackle a New Year's resolution or to find a new activity that encourages you to venture outside the house during the winter months, swimming, a low impact activity that works your entire body from head to toe while also managing to take the pressure off hips, joints and knees, is an excellent way to stay active during the coldest, darkest time of the year.

Classes like water aerobics allow a more guided experience and provide another way to connect with others and cultivate friendships while various high schools, gyms and community centers around the state offer open swim hours for those interested in independent practice or looking to spend extra time with children and grandchildren.

Check out the list below to find a pool near you.

## Anchorage, Eagle River

- Dimond Athletic Club (membership required), Dimond Center Mall, 344-7788. Lap swim, water exercise, arthritis water exercise

- Anchorage Community YMCA, 5353 Lake Otis Pkwy., 563-3211. Lap swim, water exercise

- University of Alaska Anchorage Public Pool, 3211 Providence Dr., 786-1231. Lap swim, open swim

- H2Oasis Indoor Waterpark, 1520 O'Malley Rd., 522-4420. Lap swim, Riverwalk, water exercise

- Moseley Sports Center at Alaska Pacific University, 4400 University Dr., 564-8314. Lap swim, water exercise, adult training classes

- Alaska Club East (membership required), 5201 E. Tudor, 337-9550. Lap swim, water aerobics, private swim lessons

- Alaska Club South (membership required), 10931 O'Malley Centre, 344-6567. Lap swim, lessons

- Alaska Club Eagle River, 12001 Business Blvd., 694-6677. Lap swim, water aerobics, open swim

- Buckner Physical Fit-

ness Center, Bldg. 690 D St., Fort Richardson, 384-1308. Lap swim, water exercise

- High school pools: contact city Dept. of Recreation (343-4402) for pool schedules, activities in Anchorage and Chugiak

## Fairbanks

- Fairbanks Alaska Club South (membership required), 747 Old Richardson Hwy., 452-6801. Lap swim, water exercise

- Mary Siah Recreation Center, 805 14th Ave.,

Swimming is a low impact activity that works your entire body from head to toe while also managing to take the pressure off hips, joints and knees. It's an excellent answer for cold, dark months.

459-1081. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim

- Hamme Swimming Pool, 931 Airport Way, 459-1086. Lap swim, open swim

- Patty Pool in Patty Center at University of Alaska Fairbanks, Tanana Loop, 474-6810. Lap swim, open swim

## Juneau

- Augustus Brown Pool, 1619 Glacier Ave., 586-5325. Lap swim, water exercise, aqua aerobics

- Dimond Park Aqua Center, 3045 Riverside Dr., 586-2782, Lap swim, water exercise, swim lessons, sauna

## Around the state

- **Barrow** Barrow High School Pool, 1684 Okpik St., 852-8950. Lap swim

- **Bethel** Yukon-Kuskokwim Regional Aquatic Health and Safety Center, 267 Akiachak Dr., 543-0390. Lap swim, water exercise

- **Cordova** Bob Korn Memorial Pool, next to Cordova City Hall, 424-7200. Lap swim, open swim

- **Craig** Craig Aquatic

page 10 please

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# Creating a healthier, chemical-free home

By **MOLLY RICE**

For Senior Voice

Healthy living is a much-discussed topic. Often the focus is on eating nutritious food and maintaining an active lifestyle. These are certainly key components to a healthy lifestyle but not all-inclusive. The home environment is many times overlooked as a crucial piece to the puzzle.

According to the Environmental Working Group, there are over 200,000 unregulated chemicals lurking in our cleaning products. The hazards and side effects of these compounds have been linked to cancer, asthma, allergies, skin reactions and even long-term neurological damage. Many companies hide these toxins by labeling them as “natural” proprietary blends, as

proprietary information is not legally required to be disclosed.

Avoiding these harmful products is important to everyone but especially to more vulnerable populations like infants/children and the elderly. The most dangerous products – and perhaps most popular – include dryer sheets, laundry detergent and disposable cleaning wipes. These products are full of toxins that disrupt endocrine function, irritate the respiratory system, and can be absorbed into the bloodstream. Because the chemicals used do not biodegrade, they remain on the surfaces they come into contact with. Repeated and prolonged use creates layers of harmful buildup on your clothes, washing machine, and the most-used surfaces in your home such

Microfiber cleaning cloths, when used and cared for properly, have the ability to remove up to 99 percent of germs on surfaces without using dangerous chemicals.

as kitchen and bathroom counters.

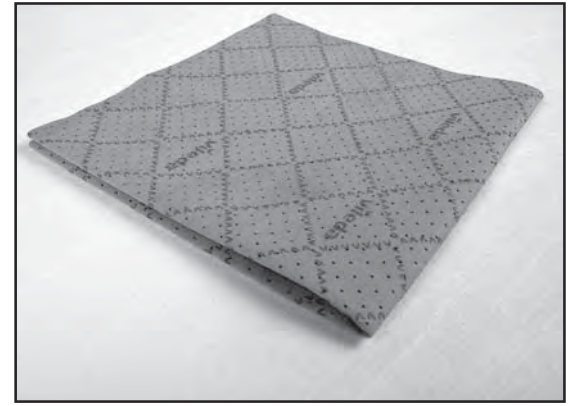
## Simple starters

There are several simple ways to begin clearing out the toxins from your home:

- Replace dryer sheets with wool or BPA-free plastic dryer balls. The dryer balls work to soften clothes and reduce static while also decreasing overall drying time. Essential oils, such as lavender, can be added to wool dryer balls towards the end of the drying cycle to lightly scent laundry
- Switch to a laundry detergent free of sulfates (SLS/SES), fragrances, dyes

and phthalates. Detergents free of these ingredients often last longer and are more effective because they do not leave a coating of chemicals on your clothing or in the washer and dryer

- Try reusable cleaning cloths, such as high-quality microfiber, in place of disposable cleaning wipes. Microfiber cleaning cloths, when used and cared for properly, have the ability to remove up to 99 percent of germs on surfaces without using dangerous chemicals.



Creating a safe home environment is essential to healthy living. Simple product swaps are a great way to start. Reading product labels and being educated on the hidden dangers found within the everyday products used in our homes is key. What changes can you make today for a healthier tomorrow?

*Molly Rice is a human and family development specialist and consults in the health and wellness field.*

# Assistance dogs provide help and love

By **JIM MILLER**

Savvy Senior

**Dear Savvy Senior:** What can you tell me about assistance dogs for people with disabilities? My sister, who's 58, has multiple sclerosis and I'm wondering if an assistance dog could help make her life a little easier. – *Inquiring Sister*

**Dear Inquiring:** For people with disabilities and even medical conditions, assistant dogs can be fantastic help, not to mention they provide great companionship and an invaluable sense of security. Here's what you and your sister should know.

While most people are familiar with guide dogs that help people who are blind or visually impaired, there are also a variety of assistance dogs trained to help people with physical disabilities, hearing loss and various medical conditions.

Unlike most pets, assistance dogs are highly trained canine specialists – often Golden and Labrador Retrievers, and German Shepherds – that know approximately 40 to 50 commands, are amazingly well-behaved and

While most people are familiar with guide dogs that help people who are blind or visually impaired, there are also a variety of assistance dogs trained to help people with physical disabilities, hearing loss and various medical conditions.

calm, and are permitted to go anywhere the public is allowed. Here's a breakdown of the different types of assistance dogs and what they can help with.

**Service dogs.** These dogs are specially trained to help people with physical disabilities due to multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injuries, Parkinson's disease, chronic arthritis and many other disabling conditions. They help by performing tasks their owner cannot do or has trouble doing, like carrying or retrieving items, picking up dropped items, opening and closing doors, turning lights on and off, assisting with dressing and undressing, helping with balance, household chores and more.

**Guide dogs.** For the blind and visually impaired, guide dogs help their owner get around safely by avoiding obstacles, stopping at curbs and steps, negotiating traffic and more.

**Hearing dogs.** For those

who are deaf or hearing impaired, hearing dogs can alert their owner to specific sounds such as ringing telephones, doorbells, alarm clocks, microwave or oven timers, smoke alarms, approaching sirens, crying babies or when someone calls out their name.

**Seizure alert/response dogs.** For people with epilepsy or other seizure disorders, these dogs can recognize the signs that their owner is going to have a seizure, and provide them with advance warning, so he or she can get to a safe place or take medication to prevent the seizure or lessen its severity. They are also trained to retrieve medications and use a pre-programmed phone to call for help. These dogs can also be trained to help people with diabetes, panic attacks and various other conditions.

## Finding a dog

If your sister is interested in getting a service dog, contact some assistance dog training programs. To find them, Assistance Dogs International provides a listing of around 65 U.S. programs on their website that you can access at [AssistanceDogsInternational.org](http://AssistanceDogsInternational.org).

After you locate a few, you'll need to either visit their website or call them to find out the types of training dogs they offer, the areas they serve, if they have a waiting list, and what upfront costs will be involved. Some groups offer dogs for free, some ask for donations and some charge thousands of dollars.

To get an assistance dog, your sister will need to show proof of her dis-

ability, which her physician can provide, and she'll have to complete an application and go through an interview process. She will also need to go and stay at the training facility for a week or two so she can get familiar with her dog and get training on how to handle it.

It's also important to understand that assistance dogs are not for everybody. They require time, money and care that your sister or some other friend or family member must be able and willing to provide.

*Send your senior questions to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit [SavvySenior.org](http://SavvySenior.org). Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.*

## We want to hear from you

Send letters to the editor to Senior Voice, 3340 Arctic Blvd., #106, Anchorage AK 99503. Maximum length is 250 words. Senior Voice reserves the right to edit for content and length.

Space may be made available for longer opinion piece essays up to 500 words. Please contact the managing editor at [seniorvoice@gci.net](mailto:seniorvoice@gci.net) to discuss this.

Copy deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication.





# Swimming: Opportunities all around the state

continued from page 8

Center, 1400 Watertower Rd., 826-2794. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim, sauna

• **Haines** Haines Pool, 631 Haines Hwy., 766-2666. Lap swim, senior aquatics class, open swim

• **Homer** Homer High School Pool, 600 E. Fairview Ave., 235-4600. Lap swim, senior exercise class, open swim

• **Ketchikan** Gateway Aquatic Center, 601 Schoenbar Rd., 288-6650. Lap swim, senior swim, open swim

• **Kodiak** Kodiak Community Pool, 800 Mill Bay Rd., 481-2519. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim

• **Naknek** Kvimarvik

An Anchorage woman builds strength and stamina walking against the current in the Lazy River at Anchorage's H2Oasis indoor water park. The facility opens early weekdays for these "River Walk" sessions.

Senior Voice file photo

Pool, School Rd., 246-7665. Lap swim, water exercise, open swim

• **Nikiski** Nikiski Pool, 55497 Poolside Ave., 776-6410. Lap swim, open swim

• **Nome** Nome Beltz Jr/Sr High School, 3.5 Nome-Teller Rd., 443-5201. Lap swim, open swim

• **Palmer** Palmer Pool, 1170 W. Bogard, 861-7676. Lap swim, swim lessons

• **Petersburg** Melvin Roundtree Memorial Pool,



Elementary School Bldg., Dolphin St., 722-3392. Lap swim, swim exercises, open swim

• **Seward** Seward Jr/Sr High School Pool, 2100 Swetmann Ave., 224-3351. Lap swim, swim exercises, open swim

• **Sitka** Blatchley Pool, 601 Halibut Point, 747-5677. Lap swim, swim lessons, open swim

• **Soldotna** Soldotna High School Swimming Pool, 425 W. Marydale Ave., 262-7419, Lap swim, swim

exercises

• **Unalaska** Unalaska Aquatics Center, 55 E. Broadway, 581-1649. Lap swim, swimming lessons

• **Valdez** Valdez Swim-

water aerobics, open swim

• **Wrangell** Wrangell Pool, 321 Church St., 874-2444. Lap swim, arthritis swim, water aerobics, open swim

ming Pool, 319 Robe River Dr., 835-5429. Lap swim, therapy swim

• **Wasilla** Wasilla Pool, 701 E. Bogard Rd., 861-7680. Lap swim, swim lessons, senior swim, open swim

• **Wasilla** Alaska Club Wasilla (membership required), 1720 E. Parks Hwy., 376-3300. Lap swim,

## Connecting: Senior Center Without Walls

continued from page 4

Amber also clarifies that some people are on the phone, toll free, "pretty much all day, connecting to various groups, while others jump in just once in awhile. It's completely up to each person."

The program, which started in California about 14 years ago, is growing and now reaches about 1,000 older adults across 34 states. Currently, in Alaska there are people calling

in from Sutton, Sitka and Anchorage.

How to join? It's simple and it's free. Anyone interested may call (877) 797-7299 to register. They then receive a catalog and a calendar, telling them how to access groups.

"I see it as an invaluable way to connect and share with others, to spark new interests, every day across the country," Ken summarizes. "I think I'm its biggest fan."

### Moving? Let us know!



Send your change of address information to Senior Voice 3340 Arctic Blvd., Suite #106 Anchorage, AK 99503 Or call 276-1059 (Anchorage area) or 1-800-478-1059 (toll-free statewide)

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# Produce and nutrition: To peel or not to peel?

By **LESLIE SHALLCROSS**

For Senior Voice

As an adventuresome high schooler, I was lucky enough to spend seven months in beautiful northern Norway – Nord Norge. My host family did everything possible to give me a true cultural immersion. The rhythm of family life seemed at once the same and very different from home. Food, of course, makes a culture, and fresh poached cod, sweet, brown goat cheese on dense rye bread and buttered boiled potatoes were the daily features of my new food culture. Fruits and vegetables, other than potatoes and homemade wild raspberry jam (yes, I am counting this as fruit), were uncommon out of season, although cucumbers, apples, mandarin oranges, lettuce and rutabaga occasionally made it to the dinner table or the “matpakke” (packed lunch).

As I mentioned, I was somewhat adventuresome and committed to fitting in. But, I was taken aback, when picnicking, when my Norwegian brother proceeded to eat a whole apple – skin, flesh, seed and core. I think that he was quite pleased to shock me, perhaps knowing that this was not how we did things in the U.S. I was dubious, but in the interest of cultural immersion, I followed

*Should you eat the skins of fruits and vegetables for maximum nutrition, or peel them to avoid chemicals and other contaminants? The answer depends on a number of factors.*

*Wikipedia commons/  
Sreejithk2000*

suit and ate my apple in the same manner. It went down surprisingly easily with no waste or core to toss. No ill health resulted from eating the parts normally disposed of and I think that my brother was impressed. Maybe this was a better way to eat an apple?

More than 40 years have passed since ingesting my whole apple and as a nutritionist, I am frequently asked about what is the best way to eat fruits and vegetables. With the best of intentions, many people try to make use of every edible milligram and many believe that peeling or cooking fruits and vegetables removes most of the important nutrients. I've even seen a suggestion that we should be eating banana peels!

There is some truth to the idea that eating peels and whole, raw food provides the biggest nutrient boost. But this doesn't mean that peeling, cooking or otherwise processing food leads to total nutri-



ent loss. The amount of nutrients lost by peeling or cooking varies considerably and loss of some nutrients may not be the only consideration for good health.

For some consumers, concerns about pesticides, fungicides and waxes on food challenge the notion that we should eat all produce unpeeled. Produce is washed after harvest, but some pesticide residues remain. Natural or synthetic wax coatings combined with fungicides are commonly applied to produce so that the fruits and vegetables arrive in the grocery store, shiny and plump and free of mold or bacterial growth (we like our produce to look fresh and clean).

Although the low levels of chemical residue and wax found on foods are considered safe, many people legitimately have reservations about ingesting compounds that can affect hormones, the nervous system or the immune system. Children seem especially susceptible to pesticide from food and exposure has been associated with learning difficulties, diabetes and cancer. Use of several strategies can help reduce one's exposure to chemical residues – choosing organics, cleaning/soaking or peeling.

## Organic advantage

Choosing organics may be the best bet if you want to eat produce whole – you might also choose based on where it is grown, i.e. Alaska Grown from a farmer that you know who doesn't use pesticides or post-harvest treatments. A list published annually

from an organization called the Environmental Working Group (EWG), ranks produce based on the amount of pesticide residue found on produce by the Environmental Protection Agency. The EWG suggests that you choose organic or from their “Clean Fifteen” for eating unpeeled and avoid peels, or choose organic versions of the “Dirty Dozen,” seen below.

## Clean and scrub

Produce should always be rinsed or scrubbed with clean tap water to remove dirt. Just washing our produce doesn't remove all the chemical residues partly because they are hard to remove and because the chemical compounds may be absorbed into the flesh of the food. Most common produce washes don't remove the wax coatings. However, a recent article in the Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry reported that soaking apples in a baking soda and water solution very effectively removes and breaks down pesticides (one teaspoon baking soda in two cups of water for 2 to 15 minutes; longer soaks removed more pesticide). They suggest that this can work for other produce.

## Skins and peeling

In some cases, washing and then peeling may be the most appropriate approach because it gets rid of the external wax/fungicide mix and even some of the potentially contaminated flesh underneath. Peeling the fruit or vegetable, while a good option for getting rid of the surface contamination, does

take away some valuable nutrients. Among these are fiber and a multitude of antioxidant and other potentially beneficial plant compounds. Just how much is taken away by peeling depends upon the specific fruit or vegetable. There are a number of commonly consumed vegetables and fruits where eating peel and all could affect the benefits gained.

Getting back to that whole apple in Norway, apples and especially the skin are very high in antioxidants and other beneficial phytonutrients. Quercetin from apple skins may reduce cancers and heart disease and removing the skin takes away about half of the total fiber. The adage could be changed to an “unpeeled apple a day, keeps the doctor away”.

Potatoes also hold a lot

The amount of nutrients lost by peeling or cooking varies considerably and loss of some nutrients may not be the only consideration for good health.

of value in the skins, especially if you have started eating colorful yellow, purple, blue or red potatoes – phenols, carotenoids, flavonoids and anthocyanin are contained in the skins. Cooking and eating potatoes with the skins on gives you more fiber and more vitamin C.

If you cut a carrot, you will notice that the color fades as you move toward the center. The outer portions, including the skin layer, contain more pre-vitamin A and other beneficial compounds like falcarinol, which has anti-cancer properties. If you are really getting into eating whole foods, you could also try the carrot greens. Although bitter, the greens contain Vitamin K and could be sautéed or eaten in a salad.

Eating the peels of citrus fruits could boost your intake of numerous ben-

## The dirty dozen and clean 15 of produce

### Clean 15

(eat lots of these)

1. Sweet corn
2. Avocados
3. Pineapples
4. Cabbage
5. Onions
6. Frozen sweet peas
7. Papayas
8. Asparagus
9. Mangoes
10. Eggplant
11. Honeydew
12. Kiwifruit
13. Cantaloupe
14. Cauliflower
15. Grapefruit

### Dirty Dozen

(try to choose organic or avoid)

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Nectarines
4. Apples
5. Peaches
6. Celery
7. Grapes
8. Pears
9. Cherries
10. Tomatoes
11. Sweet bell peppers
12. Potatoes





# Pickleball: More people playing the game

continued from page 3

ambassador Kimo Hansen. With an affiliation to the national organization, the sport has seen a growth explosion in Anchorage, according to Hansen, and the sport is gaining members all across the state. Anchorage has well over a hundred members, and Homer, Fairbanks, Wasilla and Juneau have active players, totaling between two and three hundred, Hansen said.

Gatherings of up to 24 players can be found almost any time of the week at several locations in the Anchorage area. The Alaska chapter has held two sanctioned tournaments to date, the last being held last month in Wasilla, the first in Soldotna.

Retired child psychiatrist Bill Terry loves his twice weekly Alaska Club East gatherings. He enjoys the physical exercise, which is like his long-time favorite tennis, but less demanding. The movement,



Michael Dinneen photo

Katharina Sommer taps handles with Wayne Oxfore after a match of Pickleball at the Alaska Club East. Players like the social aspect of the sport, local organizers say.

he says, is “more forward and back and less side to side,” and therefore less demanding on his 75-year-old frame.

Katharina Sommers discovered the sport a year ago and took a couple of seminars to help her learning curve.

“You just have somebody show you how to hit the ball, and pretty soon, you’re hooked,” she said. The sport carries Katharina

through the winter season, as she has spent less time with outdoor sports, like snowboarding.

## Produce: To peel or not to peel?

continued from page 11

eficial plant compounds, including some that may be anti-inflammatory and neuro-protective and anti-helicobacter pylori agents. The white inner portion of the skin provides bioflavonoids that enhance the effects of vitamin C. Citrus peel can be grated and used for flavoring savory or sweet dishes. Citrus rinds can be candied or the whole lemon or orange can be fermented and used as a condiment.

There are many other vegetables and fruit that we commonly eat without the skin despite the fact that it is edible – kiwi, watermelon, persimmon, cucumber, eggplant, beets and rutabaga. Even though the skins may contain beneficial compounds, they are often bitter, the texture may be unpalatable, and

the beneficial compounds may not be absorbed by the body.

If your New Year’s resolution includes health, you might focus on getting more fruits and vegetables – 7 servings per day. Most of us fall short of that mark. Even if you don’t eat the skin, you are still getting plenty of nutrients. Many of the beneficial nutrients are present in the flesh as well as in the skin. Whether raw or cooked, peeled or unpeeled, organic or conventionally grown, greater vegetable and fruit consumption is associated with better health. If you happen to be in Norway, try the whole apple.

Leslie Shallcross is a registered dietitian and associate professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Natural Resources and Extension.

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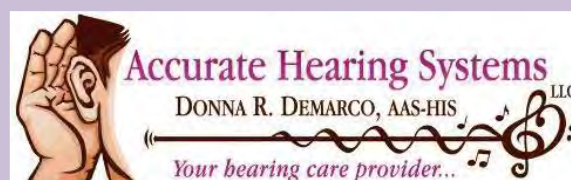
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