

West Michigan **Plus**

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Welcome to the August-September issue of PLUS! I would like to say "Thank you" to all of the Readers of PLUS who took the time to pick up a copy and to write me. The comments on the first issue from Advertisers and Readers has exceeded my expectations. Here are just a few:

I LOVE your first issue! Congratulations! Thank you so much for bringing this to the community. I think you have hit a much needed niche. - Joan K.

WOW!!!! This is very impressive, and a great addition to our community. - Tom K.

Congratulations Mark! I discovered your first edition of West Michigan Plus today and read it from cover to cover. My favorite articles were John Morgan's and Mike Mattson's as I love local history. Keep up the great work - looking forward to your next edition. Thank you so much for writing about all the wonderful places and things outside of Grand Rapids. - Karin C.

Picked up a copy of PLUS from a C of C table here in Fremont – read through last night, most interesting and very appropriate for those of us who are into concise, good information. I really like the formatting and presentation, obviously a great amount of thought has gone into producing this most interesting West Michigan publication. Look forward to reading you again and again. Thanks for giving me something good to read. - Jim R.

The Muskegon area needs this SO badly and I salute you and everyone associated with the first edition. Light on politics and heavy on what we need to encourage pride in our western Michigan community! So....keep it coming!! - John D.

In this issue of PLUS you'll discover Treasure from Egypt, a great Road Trip to a Lakeshore community, a Great Lakes ship wreck, must read books, Hollywood's latest offerings, fun facts about animation, and the family that brings Blue Berries to your table, Cinnamon Rolls you can't resist, and much more.

As always, I hope as you flip the pages you will discover somethings that adds to your like making the time spent a PLUS!



Mark Williamson
Publisher



inside

West Michigan Plus

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Caring for Laura

By Carolyn Ridders

Say the word "caregiver" and what is the first thing that comes to mind? For most of us, it conjures up the image of a grown man or woman, midway through life, caring for an aging parent while still managing the day-to-day tasks of raising a family. The fact is anyone who regularly looks after of someone else is considered a caregiver.

For many of us, parenthood is our first experience being in the caregiver role. Thanks to childbirth classes, countless authors, websites and blogs, new parents have a plethora of information to prepare them for this exciting new adventure. And grandma is only a phone call away and more than happy to offer her advice on childrearing.

But what if your child is born with special needs? That's not something most parents think about when they first learn they are expecting a child. Sometimes, you can go through your entire pregnancy with no indication that your precious bundle of joy is anything less than perfect. Nothing out of the ordinary shows up during ultrasounds, baby's heartbeat is clear and strong; you eat properly, get enough rest and have a healthy, uneventful pregnancy. Then the big day comes. You eagerly welcome your new baby with visions of taking him or her home and settling into your new roles as parents. You might be daydreaming about baby's first tooth, first words, and maybe even the first day of school. The euphoria quickly evaporates when the doctor announces there is "something wrong" and the nurses whisk your baby from the delivery room. That is precisely how my first child, Laura, came into the world 28 years ago.

I was young and healthy when I became pregnant for Laura. I went to all my prenatal appointments, ate well, didn't smoke or drink. She grew steadily and I went into labor right on time. By all accounts, it was a textbook pregnancy right up until I gave birth. Laura was born with a disease called necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC). NEC is an inflammation of the tissue of the colon causing tissue cells to die. It is most often found in infants born prematurely. If left untreated, one in four infants will die from the disease. Treatments range from monitoring with X-rays, giving IV fluids and antibiotics and halting feeding to more invasive measures such as surgery. Since Laura was born full-term, nobody suspected that she had NEC. At six weeks of age, after several lengthy hospital stays and dozens of tests, she was finally diagnosed. She was immediately scheduled for a bowel resection and colostomy.

For those of you who may not be familiar with the term colostomy, it is a surgical procedure that brings one end of the large intestine out through an opening (stoma) made in the abdominal wall. Stools moving through the intestine drain through the stoma into a bag attached to the abdomen. So instead of changing dirty diapers, you empty a bag. A bag whose contents have only gone through a small portion of the intestine which means it is not solid and is highly acidic. And when your baby is gassy, guess where it goes. That's right...it goes into the bag and it stays there until you open it.

When Laura learned to grasp things, she would grab hold of the bag and pull it off, making a mess of herself

and everything around her. We quickly learned to keep her dressed in one-piece clothing that kept her tummy covered. Once she started to crawl, bag leaks occurred numerous times a day, which meant stripping her down, giving her a bath and putting a new bag in place. Leaks had a tendency to go everywhere making it nearly impossible to clean her up with just baby wipes so she ended up in the bathtub several times a day. And since we weren't always at home when leaks occurred, which meant that we had to bathe her in the restroom at restaurants, grocery stores, doctor's offices, etc. We could never leave the house without several changes of clothing and plenty of colostomy supplies. With such frequent leaks, the skin on Laura's abdomen became raw and red, making it very difficult to get the bags to stick. It became a vicious cycle.



Out of necessity, I went back to my job as a cashier at Red Lobster when Laura was three months old. My shifts varied and most daycare providers are not prepared to take care of an infant with a colostomy bag. With other children to watch after, what sitter would be able to take time out to bathe her several times a day and replace her bag? Thankfully my parents and in-laws were able to care for her but that was not without its challenges. One busy Friday evening, I received a frantic call from my in-laws. Laura had yanked her bag off. They had never had to replace one before and were scared

they might hurt her. My manager - bless his heart - said to have them bring her to the restaurant so I could take care of it. I vividly recall them bringing her in, wrapped in a towel fresh from the bathtub. I found a secluded corner in the coatroom, replaced her bag and sent her back home with her grandma and grandpa.

When it came time for Laura's six-month check, the pediatric surgeon declared that her colon had healed nicely and scheduled her surgery to reverse her colostomy. Two weeks later, she was back to normal and the skin on her belly was starting to heal. Her dad and I were back to changing dirty diapers and happy to be doing so!

We were fortunate that Laura's condition could be treated and she could go on to live a normal, happy life. I know there are many parents whose children are born with much more serious health issues requiring more extensive care than anything I ever had to provide for my child. Caring for a child is difficult enough but if your child requires special care, it can be overwhelming. It's hard to be an effective caregiver if you are physically, mentally and emotionally exhausted. Talk to your child's pediatrician or specialist to learn what resources are available. Remember to take care of YOU.

Carolyn Ridders is a professional in business and non-profit marketing and a lifelong resident of the lakeshore.



MORE
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Treasure Hunting in West Michigan

By John Morgan

Late in the afternoon of November 26th, 1922, two Englishmen cut a small peephole through the block obstructing the doorway of a modest tomb in Egypt's famous royal necropolis known as the Valley of the Kings.

Located at the base of a nondescript staircase, excavated below the remains of simple huts, and with its seals showing it had been breached in antiquity, there was little to indicate how amazing a discovery archeologist Howard Carter and his benefactor Lord Carnarvon had made.

"Mr. Carter, holding a candle before him, put his head in," Carnarvon was to recall a short time later. "He did not say anything for two or three minutes, but kept me in rather painful suspense..." and I said "Can you see anything?" "Yes, yes," he replied, "it is wonderful." Carter himself would later describe the moment with words that still send chills up the spine, "At first I could see nothing, the hot air escaping from the chamber causing the candle flame to flicker, but presently, as my eyes grew accustomed to the light, details of the room within emerged from the mist, strange animals, statues, and gold—everywhere the glint of gold."

Such was the discovery of the tomb of the boy-king Tutankhamun, with arguably the most fabulous treasure ever found. Not only was this an incredible find of gold and gems, but also of historical knowledge. From hieroglyphs on the gilded shrines detailing politics of the pharaoh's kingdom of thirty-four hundred years ago to model boats and life-size chariots informing on the technology of the times, the tomb was full of wonders to capture the imagination.

And capture it, it did. News of the discovery went 'round the world and everybody got caught up in the craze for Tut and all things Egyptian. And that meant style. Particularly in the decorative arts, like architecture, fashion, furniture, statuary, jewelry, and more. The Art Deco movement of the early twentieth century, with its elegant rectilinear forms and posed, yet graceful, figuratives, seemed almost perfectly suited to embrace the richly organized iconography of Egyptian art and design. In the heady interlude between the Great War and the Great Depression, business was booming, novelty was the thing, and suddenly everyone wanted scarabs and cartouches, palm fronds and lotus blossoms woven into the fashion fabric of their lives.

Fast forward now to ninety years or so later. Into my jewelry store walked a nice, modest, little older couple with something to show me, perhaps even to sell. "Happy to take a look," I let them know with a smile, thinking I'd probably be seeing another old high school class ring, a kinked herringbone chain, maybe an odd earring or two. Everyone seems to accumulate a little worn out, broken, or dated jewelry; things with the intrinsic value of the silver or gold, but mostly destined for the "Great Melting Pot in the Sky." Like Carter and Carnarvon, there was little to suggest what I was about to see. Then, as the unassuming little lady opened up the bundle on the counter to reveal the contents within, a chill went up my spine...

Reel back time once more, now to 1916 and the wedding of wealthy, 55 year old inventor Irving C. to the vivacious 36 year old, west



Michigan native, Ida H. It's love at last for the two never before married people, but like Tut's reign, their relationship is splendid and short. There's a whirlwind of fetes, shopping, exotic travel, romance...and then Irving passes away unexpectedly nine months later, leaving a wife with a love that will keep her a widow the rest of her life.

As the years go by, there is at least the security of the estate for Ida, and she is able to live in comfort and style and to dote on her nephews and nieces. Particularly her niece, Suzette H., who years later will stand at my counter and show me the gift her aunt bequeathed to her over fifty years before and which has spent nearly the entire time locked away in a dark, cool safety-deposit box, like Tut's treasure beneath the desert sand.

The two pieces before me that day were a wide cuff bracelet and a heavy multi-strand décolletage style necklace in solid gold, with a glow and richness of hue that only comes to that

metal with age. Both are set with large, matched, vivid opals; outstanding examples of the early finds from Australia's Lightning Ridge, or thereabouts, and like nothing you'd find in a store today. And both pieces are exquisitely decorated with geometric fields and centered with the motifs of... Egyptian cobras. The jewelry workmanship and design are breathtaking examples of the Art Deco Egyptian Revival made popular by the discovery of the tomb. They look like something Tut's beautiful grandmother, Nefertiti, or his powerful and politically astute great-grandmother, Tiye, could have worn.

At some point after 1922, and probably before the Wall Street Crash of 1929, Ida decided she wanted to treat herself. A wealthy woman of good taste, she was able to purchase first rate examples of the style from some upscale jeweler's salon in New York or Paris and wear them to the periodic social or family event, including at least once in front of an impressionable great niece with whom she had a special bond. The niece commented on the pieces and when the older woman passed on they became hers, but now with some reluctance the niece was letting them go. Not because she didn't appreciate the gift or dearly love her aunt, but because there were never opportunities to wear such fancy things and there were other priorities to tend. After more than half a century it was time to say goodbye, and so we concluded a purchase and she left them at the store.

I looked at the set she'd sold. Antique broker, auction, retail, melt...I had no idea what I was going to do with them.

Fast forward to the present. I've moved my store to a new location, where we gutted an old building and completely built out the interior, replaced the brick façade, and redecorated in antiques, all with a turn of the century style to capture the grand, old time, downtown jewelry store feel. A nondescript older woman comes up to me at the counter. "That opal set in the case there is something you bought from me." It takes a second for me to realize what she is referring to and who she is. "Of course," I say then, remembering our transaction from a few years back. "They look lovely," she says, and admits she's always felt

Continued on next page

The True Benefits of Coaching

By Melanie Sportell



Spending more time with my children, staying active, teaching the game while continuing involvement in sports are all obvious benefits of coaching. These are some of the motives that push me to find the time to coach in an already crazy schedule. However, the true and lifelong benefits of coaching go way beyond these reasons.

This past May, my boys' soccer team was playing in a soccer tournament in Traverse City, MI. It was our second game and our goal keeper came out of the box to stop a one-on-one fast break. He slid, diving for the ball. The player from the other team tried to stop quickly and fell—hard and in an awkward position. The player was severely hurt with a broken leg that required surgery. The game continued on and we ended up winning—but winning would not just be shown by the score at that moment, but became more evident the next morning as our team was warming up for our third game.

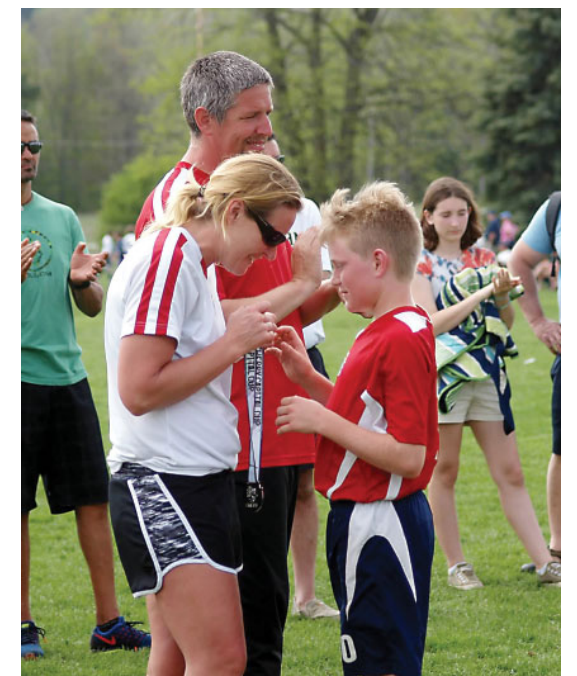
I was making my rounds, checking in on each boy, when my goal keeper mentioned to me that he didn't think he was going to play very well today. Shocked, I started the lecture about needing to give it his all because, after this game, we were headed to the championship—our goal for the last four years. My goal keeper, head down, stated that he barely slept the night before as he was worried about the boy he hurt. I stopped—silenced by his words and embarrassed by the lecture I had just given. He got it. It isn't just about winning by the score; it's bigger than that.

I have the privilege of coaching fourteen amazing young men who consistently hear me say that soccer is just a game, but how we carry our self on and off the field is what really matters. They know I expect them to treat their teammates and opponents with respect even in the heat of the game—no matter what the score.

This is just one of a few instances where I was able to see the true benefits of coaching. Having been with essentially the same team for the last four years, I have witnessed a tremendous amount of improvement in their skills. I have spent countless hours teaching my goal keeper how to kick a drop ball since he was 8 years old, now he can punt it to the half line. A great

improvement in his skills, however, witnessing him maturing into an incredible young man—priceless. By no means will I take the credit for my goal keeper's reaction to a hurt player, but I will remember it. I will keep coaching, hoping I get to witness more instances of the real benefits, ones that aren't shown on the scoreboard.

Melanie Sportell is the mother of the modern day blended Brady Bunch—four boys and two girls ages twelve to twenty. She holds her Master's in Curriculum and Instruction and teaches science for adjudicated youth. In her "free time", she teaches group fitness, does personal training, and coaches a girls' basketball and boys' soccer team.



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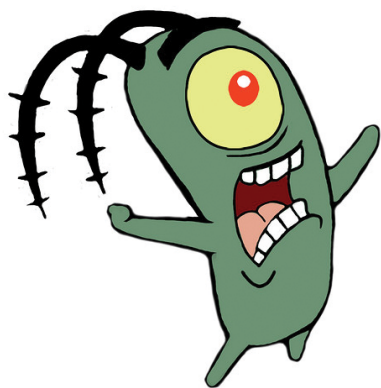
guilty about letting them go because she had thought she would never see her aunt's lovely gifts again. She's also surprised they haven't sold yet. When I tell her why they haven't, a most wonderful look of relief comes over her face. I tell her that in addition to antique clocks and statuary, I've decided to decorate my new store with scattered cases of vintage jewelry. And hers is the center piece of it all in a glass pedestal case facing the front door with no tags and no price. And like the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities if you ask to buy something from the Tut exhibit in the Cairo museum—how do you say it in Arabic?—NOT FOR SALE. Just something for everyone to come in and enjoy for free in perpetuity.

There's a lot of treasure in west Michigan. A lot is hidden away in safety deposit boxes or safes or drawers. But sometimes it comes to light. When it does, ask about it. "Hey Uncle Joe, what's the story on that pocket watch?" I didn't really ask about the bracelet and necklace story until the second time Suzette came in and we collaborated on documenting the provenance. Write it down before the details are lost. And if you want to be a real treasure prospector, learn about it, read about it. Keep an eye out for it. Not just in estate cases like at my store, but in antique stores and malls, garage sales and flea markets around the area. Ya never know. Looking for better stuff? Estate auctions are common and a good source for higher end antique and vintage varieties. And if you get

something good, show it off, display it, enjoy it. And that's just jewelry. There's also another treasure from Michigan in this story, but I'm not the best one to describe it. If you ever run into old Irving C. up in Heaven though, you might ask him.

John Morgan
J. Morgan Ltd.
Fine Jewelers





Tim's Cartooniverse

Hollywood is making a pajillion leveraging the kid in all of us.

By Tim Wheeler

In our last little sojourn down Animation Alley, I mentioned that Stephen Hawking is a cartoon fan. Someone didn't believe me. Seems like there are other ways to spend one's doubt, but maybe this person is loaded with doubt and doesn't mind splurging now and then. If you have a ton of doubt, does that make you a doubtaire?

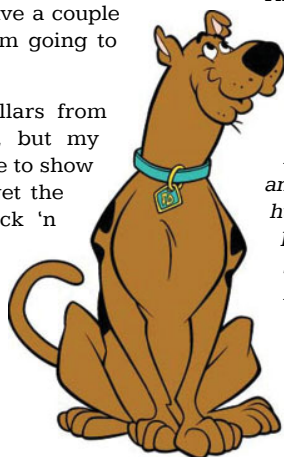
Hopefully that doubter held onto the receipt, because here's a quote from Stephen Hawking: "I like physics, but I love cartoons."

There are lots of reasons to not believe me. This isn't one of them. When a real reason to not believe me comes along, I will be sure to let you know. Believe me. I kind of see how this logic doesn't really build my case, but I'm sticking with it anyway.

Physics lesson over. Let's open our books and do some cartoon math, shall we? Not the cartoon math where the number nine picks up the number four and uses it as a sword to battle the number eight, the other kind of cartoon math. Like this: Toy Story earned just over \$370 million. In ticket sales. Not merchandise. Not DVD sales. Just ticket sales. And the movie came out twenty years ago. The next time I head to the water hole for a refreshment, Woody and Buzz better pick up the tab.

If you think that staggering number is amazing (and if you don't please be aware that I am almost completely housebroken and still available for adoption), then try this on for size: Toy Story is in 49th place on the list of top grossing animated films. 49th! Hey! There's the four and the nine again! This really is cartoon math! And this must be really important because I used up all of my exclamation points. I still have a couple semicolons in the fridge, but I'm going to hold them for now.

I tried to add up the total dollars from 50th place through 1st place, but my calculator only has enough space to show me how much it will cost if I get the Heath Bar AND the Faygo Rock 'n Rye. Plus I got distracted by a friend who offered me a free Whatchamacallit Bar and then told me that Shaggy's real name is Norville Rodgers. Once you get a hankering for a Heath Bar it's tough to jump



tracks, but a free Whatchamacallit? Who says no to that?

Norville Rodgers. Really? It is? Why doesn't Scooby call him that? It's easier to say Norville Rodgers than it is to say Shaggy if you have a Scooby voice. Go ahead and try it. See? I told you.

That's why I love the Cartooniverse (I think it should be capitalized, don't you?). Not because of the 18 pajillion dollars (real word, no matter what spell check tells me), but because you just talked like Scooby-Doo. I heard it. Don't try to deny it – you'll just come across bitter like Old Man Henderson who rigged the sea serpent to scare off the tourists so he could have the silver mine all to himself.

No matter what your driver's license tries to tell you, you're not really as old as it says you are. Somewhere in there – underneath the mortgage payments, the PowerPoint presentations and that unfounded fear of quinoa – is a kid. A kid who loves cartoons. Maybe that's just wishful thinking on my part, but not many nine-year-olds have 18 pajillion dollars to spend at the movies, so I think I'm right. I also think that if I say pajillion a few more times, it will catch on. Like quinoa. It's no Heath Bar, but it's a start.

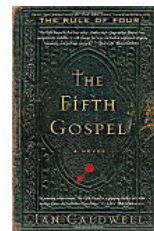
Tim Wheeler is the founder and owner of Wheeler Creative Studios (WheelerCreativeStudios.com) and is the recipient of nearly 200 national and international awards for writing and advertising. Tim is a nationally published humor columnist, an award-winning radio show host and the creator of the original animated series, Rocketoons. His e-book, Chevy Kokomo: Drive The Passion, was released earlier this summer through Barnes & Noble and Amazon. Readers are reporting few lasting side effects. Tim holds degrees from Western Michigan University, Villanova University and Northwestern University.



Good Reads

The Fifth Gospel

by Ian Caldwell

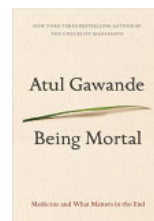


If you've been looking for the next *Da Vinci Code*, look no further. Caldwell's long-gestating tale is an erudite page-turner of the first order, complete with shadowy Vatican conspiracies, a disputed version of the Gospels, and a mysterious murder.

Two brothers, one a Roman Catholic priest and one a Greek Catholic priest, become caught up in a dangerous series of events surrounding an exhibit being mounted at the Vatican Museums about the Shroud of Turin. Father Alex, the Greek Catholic, seeks to protect his young son as well as his endangered brother and solve the mystery behind who doesn't want the exhibit to open to the public. Caldwell gives a precise and illuminating sense of what it is like to live in Vatican City, full of detail and texture. The family relationships between Alex and his son Peter, Alex and his brother Simon, the brothers and their uncle, a powerful figure in the Vatican hierarchy, and Alex and his estranged wife Mona add a unique layer to an excellent thriller.

Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End

by Atul Gawande



If you are a human being who cares about another human being, you should read this book. Dr. Gawande, a well-known surgeon and author, takes on a subject that many don't want to consider: aging and the eventual end of life.

Using examples from his own clinical experience alongside the story of his father's decline and eventual death, he proposes an alternative methodology for dealing with the process of decline, death and dying. He argues that the primary concern of patients and their families is the quality of life, and that modern medical practice, with its "at all costs" attitude is diametrically opposed to this concern. A more compassionate, considerate treatment plan includes placing quality of life over extending it, fulfilling experiences over excessive safety restrictions, and honest communication over dictatorial mandates from doctor to patient.

Gawande is an elegant writer who has drawn on a lot of research but isn't afraid to include personal examples, particularly those where he feels he has failed his own patients. He includes many thought-provoking interviews with people working in assisted living, hospice, and geriatric medicine, and finds a great deal of evidence that a meaningful life is more fulfilling and important than a longer life. Hopefully, this book will prompt everyone to have meaningful and honest conversations about our wishes as we age and face our eventual mortality.

Laura J. Kraly is the Head of Adult Services at the Loutit District Library in Grand Haven, MI where she answers questions, selects books for the collection, provides tech support for the library's electronic resources and gives reading, watching and listening suggestions. While reading is a lifelong passion, she also enjoys watching hockey, doing Zumba and yoga, cooking Italian food, and traveling.



Ever Heard of the North Country Trail?

By Laura Holmes

I'll admit, I had never heard of the North Country Trail until about 10 years ago, introduced to it by bikers instead of hikers. The trail runs through my entire home state of Michigan, approved by Congress in 1980. It spans 4,600 miles through seven states, from New York to North Dakota. Funny, I grew up hearing about the Appalachian Trail, its epic through hikers



and reading about it in Bill Bryson's novel, *A Walk in the Woods*. Not to enlist a competition, but the NCT has a long hike to go, to live up the AT's long-standing lore. The AT covers 2,170 miles from Georgia to Maine and winds through the Appalachian Mountain range. Thousands have hiked its entirety and many more are planning to as I type.

In contrast, most people have never even heard of the NCT, including people like me in the very states, where the trail exists. After some quick research, it appears that just 11 people have completed the entire NCT hike. Another interesting detail, the NCT is not all a traditional hiking trail, some of it parallels roads or two-tracks. Possibly the biggest difference, the NCT lacks a magnificent mountain range on its stat sheet. Even so, after some digging, the NCT is impressive in its own right and its sights, ecosystems, rivers, great lakes, forests and meadows are worthy of planning a trek. Just in Michigan, the NCT passes through the Manistee National Forest and also Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. A mere 1/2 hour drive from my condo, I can access the NCT for some much needed time with nature. Pristine

wilderness is much closer than we all think, especially if you are a Michigander, in West Michigan.

Lucky for me, my trail-riding friends discovered that the NCT is open in sections to biking and the MMBA (Michigan Mountain Biking Association) touts information on its website. Ironically, allowing biking on the NCT has been controversial, primarily because of erosion and other issues that go along with sharing the trail. But, so far bikers and hikers (and runners too) have found a way to share this resource in certain areas, at least in Michigan. In fact, one of my favorite sections to bike is east of Hesperia off Highway 20, northeast of Fremont, Michigan. I gather a group, bike north on a fun, hard-packed trail that rolls up and down perfect slopes, turning an afternoon into a pedal festival. The slight uphill, give enough of a challenge and the ensuing down hills are thrilling, rocketing past hardwoods, just inches to spare outside the handlebars. The only biker

problem—it's difficult to take in the scenery with your attention focused on the trail, tree limbs brushing your helmet.

Being a hiker as well, I can understand the NCT purist, who would rather see the scenery, from their confines of two shoes. You'll see wild berry bushes lining the trail, hidden wetlands and marshes with deer grazing and a great number of birds and other wildlife, that you will be privileged to see on a day hike or a bike. And, I've barely scratched the surface of the NCT in western and northern Michigan. In all honesty, tackling a through-hike even in Michigan would be tough, merely to find the time. Yet, I am encouraged to have discovered the sibling or at least the first cousin to the famous Appalachian Trail. And, it is right in my own backyard. Maybe, you've never heard of the NCT? For more information

on the North Country Trail and access points you can visit: <http://northcountrytrail.org/>

Laura Holmes is a FineLine Creative career girl and writer who always has a trip up her sleeve. Gotta pack, write, travel, play! Reach her at www.4fineline.com or www.contentqueens.net



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PLUS MOVIE MINUTES

Mad Max: Fury Road

(2015, Rated R)



Think of *Mad Max: Fury Road* as an old car (for kicks, let's say a 1973 Ford Falcon) that you loved so much, you opted to replace all its failing parts instead of ditching it for a new

set of wheels. The original *Mad Max*, Mel Gibson, was the franchise engine that needed replacing (even impressive V8's run their course eventually). Thankfully, Writer-Director George Miller's quasi-sequel comes standard with the shiny, new Tom Hardy model, which handles just as smoothly. And what's nice about opting to replace car parts is that everything you loved about your ride before is either still around or has been upgraded. This means that all of the high-octane, NOS-raged vehicular warfare that George Miller did so well in previous *Mad Max* films, as well as the tenderer, human aspects you've come to expect from a *Mad Max* outing, remain intact; meanwhile, contemporary special effects give the franchise a sharper, more modern appeal. The young actor Nicholas Holt and Oscar-winner Charlize Theron are sleek new additions that help smooth out the ride and make it even more enjoyable. Now, thirty years down the road, your Falcon not only runs like new, but it doesn't look or feel like anything on the road today. It's something special.

Aloha

(2015, Rated PG-13)



Aloha is a mixed bag full of quirky, endearing moments that make you want to let it into your soul as well as an equal number of awkward, insincere moments

that make you want to walk out. Writer-Director Cameron Crowe (*Almost Famous*, *Jerry Maguire*) assembles a tremendous cast here, including, but not limited to: stud Bradley Cooper, the gifted Rachel McAdams, and the ever-infectious Emma Stone, in some sort of convoluted Hawaiian space race story. And while on-screen talent is in no short supply, it is Crowe's writing behind the scenes that often finds his characters

acting and reacting to each other and their circumstances in laughably cartoonish (sometimes creepily bizarre) manners. Thankfully, these scenes are strung together by smaller, more intimate interactions that allow these fine actors to play off of each other and showcase their renowned talents. It is these more private exchanges that make up for the rest of *Aloha*.

Jurassic World

(2015, Rated PG-13)



The T-Rex may have been King of the Dinosaurs, but *Jurassic World* is King of the Box Office. Breaking all sorts of records, this dino-sequel roared its way to the biggest

worldwide opening weekend ever and there's a good reason for it. *Jurassic World* is a lot of fun! Director Colin Trevorrow (*Safety Not Guaranteed*) teams up with Funny Man Chris Pratt to revive this dormant franchise, injecting it with a much needed sense of goofball humor and delightful dinosaur duels. After failing miserably to achieve his dream of a family friendly dinosaur theme park featuring live dinosaurs (no way that could go wrong, right?), the late John Hammond's legacy lives on through what is now the fully functional, newly named *Jurassic World*—only these ain't your daddy's dinos. These days, genetically engineered hybrids are all the rage, literally. The park's latest attraction, dubbed the Indominus Rex, gets loose on the island and begins an angry rampage through the park, devouring anything and everything in its path. It's up to Chris Pratt and his tamed pack of velociraptors to hunt the beast down and save the day! Look, this may sound ridiculous (and it is), but this plotline thrashes up quite a bit of action and plenty of laughs. If you're looking for an excuse to indulge in a bucket full of tasty theater popcorn, look no further than *Jurassic World*.

Jordan Peterson is a film student at Grand Valley State University and works as a projectionist at Celebration! Cinema Carousel in Muskegon. He is an aspiring writer-director as well as an amateur screenwriter and reviewer. Some of his favorite movies include (500) Days of Summer, The Muppets, and Evil Dead 2.



The “religion” behind High School Football

By Mike Mattson

In Muskegon County, high school football is sort of a religion.

And why not? There's an established tradition, packed stadiums on Friday nights, and success documented in trophy cases from one end of the county to the other. Big schools and small schools help make Muskegon County the hotbed for Michigan high school football.

Why all the success?

“These are hard-nosed communities,” said Muskegon coach Shane Fairfield. “These are tough kids growing up in Muskegon County. This is a blue collar county. People are not afraid to work. You look at schools like Oakridge, Ravenna, Muskegon Catholic and Muskegon, I think that toughness pours over to the kids.”

Schools will launch the 2015 season with games starting on August 27.

The area's tradition starts with Muskegon High School and its many legendary athletes and coaches. Muskegon ranks as the winningest football program in the state, compiling a 798-273-43 record since 1895. The Big Reds have made 23 appearances in the state playoffs with five state championships (1986, 1989, 2004, 2006, 2008) and runner-up finishes the past three seasons.

Fairfield, who has a five-year record of 52-13, said the Big Reds plan to make another trip to Detroit's Ford Field to finish what has eluded them the past three seasons.

“Our mindset is to keep digging deeper and pushing harder to finish the job,” Fairfield said. “We've beaten a



lot of good football teams to get to the state finals, so we are doing something right. Our expectations are to keep doing what we've done. We just need to continue to find a way to win the big game.”

No area school has won the big game more than Muskegon Catholic. The Crusaders have made 26 playoff appearances over the past 34 years, with 10 state championships and three runner-up finishes.

Steve Czerwon, former player, assistant coach and current head coach at MCC, said consistency has been a key factor in the Crusaders' success.

“Roger Chiaverini came to Catholic in (1971), and from Day 1 the practice Chiaverini had for the 9 a.m. practice of doubles, it is the one that Coach (Mike) Holmes used, and the one I use,” said Czerwon, who enters his third season as head coach after leading MCC to state titles the past two seasons. “The practice plan and instillation of certain plays hasn't changed in thirty-some years, it's been that consistency. The other thing is every coach on the staff is a Catholic graduate and they know the system.”

Other schools—many from the West Michigan Conference—have carried the football torch for Muskegon County.

Oakridge has 24 playoff appearances with three state titles (1997, 2005, 2008) and two runner-up finishes. Ravenna has 19 playoff appearances, with four state titles (1994, 1996, 1997, 2003) and one runner-up.

Montague, which has 15 playoff appearances, captured

back-to-back state titles in 2008-2009 with another runner-up in 1992.

Orchard View, with 14 playoff appearances, broke through for a state title in 2004 after a runner-up in 1995.

And Reeths-Puffer, with nine playoff appearances, earned a thrilling last-minute state title in 1992.

Mona Shores, Fruitport, North Muskegon and Spring Lake from nearby Ottawa County also have reached the state finals in prior years. Shores is one of the best stories—the Sailors had not previously made the playoffs but qualified the last two seasons under Coach Matt Koziak and recorded a runner-up finish in 2014.

Czerwon believes Muskegon County is a special place for football due to talented athletes from families spanning different eras, and quality coaches dedicated to year-round programs. The area also embraces a culture of high school sports rather than the college and professional environments in other parts of the state, he added.

“For a lot of people in Muskegon, it's about the kids playing on Friday nights,” Czerwon said.

So another year of high school football in Muskegon County is upon us. The bands will play, the crowds will cheer, and the teams will perform.

And it's very likely an area school will add to a rich tradition and make a run toward the state finals.

“There is an expectation,” Fairfield said. “My dad played in a state championship or my grandpa played in a state championship, so I have to play in a state championship, too.”

Mike Mattson is an award-winning sports journalist, with 23 years of experience at *The Muskegon Chronicle*. He enjoys sports, reading and leadership development. Mattson is a graduate of Central Michigan University.



'Tis the Season for Fresh Produce

By Melissa Wikman

I admit it, I'm obsessed with the farmer's market. It must be genetic because my mom has been a farmer's market regular for as long as I can remember and decades before it became the cool thing to do. She has frozen strawberries and blueberries and canned tomatoes, chili sauce and salsa for years. We do it together now and after a day elbow-deep in tomatoes we end up with enough to last the winter for both of us.

I'm lucky that the YMCA's on-staff registered dietitian Jessi Boehme can back up my love of the market and all of the fresh local food there with great reasons for all of us to shop the markets.

"There are so many reasons to take advantage of what's in season and offered at the markets" according to Boehme. "Fresh local food is great for the community and great for your health".

"Locally grown produce from the markets is more affordable to buy in season when the food is most plentiful and buying it supports local farms to keep our money in the community. Plus fruits and vegetables can be picked at their peak knowing they don't have long or far to travel to their destination so they simply taste better".

Taste is a big one for Boehme. As a dietitian she does nutrition coaching for individuals and teaches groups about making healthy choices through the YMCA's Cooking Matters® program so she's constantly



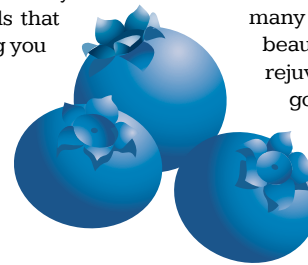
helping people find healthy foods that work for them. "Even eating the healthiest foods won't help if someone isn't truly enjoying the experience so satisfaction is key. I'll often ask my students if they really enjoyed a meal or snack. If not, we find something else. If someone isn't satisfied with what they eat, they'll just go looking for something later that might not be as healthy".

The health benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables are well documented and variety is important to get a good mix of vitamins, antioxidants, and fiber which will fill you up and keep you full longer. Farmers are a great source of information about the things they grow. They're always willing to share ideas on how to prepare foods that may be new so it's a great time to try something you wouldn't normally buy (kohlrabi, anyone?).

So, what's in season now? One of the favorites plentiful here and often touted as a "superfood": blueberries. My freezer is probably already stocked with big bags of them but to enjoy them now, Boehme shares her blueberry salsa recipe:

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pints of blueberries (coarsely chop one pint, leave the others whole)
- 1 de-seeded jalapeno, minced
- 1 cucumber with skin on diced
- 1 red bell pepper diced



3 green onions thinly sliced
Optional: include 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro and 1 teaspoon salt

Mix and enjoy with whole grain tortilla chips. Feeling like you want to make your own tortilla chips too? It's not difficult, here's how:

Cut whole grain tortillas into triangles, place on baking sheet and sprinkle with desired seasoning (salt and garlic powder are great options). Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes.

We are fortunate in Western Michigan to live among many sources for fresh food brought to us at the beautiful new Muskegon Farmer's Market and rejuvenated Muskegon Heights City Market. So go check out the markets. Maybe my mom and I will see you there while we're buying bushels of tomatoes for canning.

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Melissa Wikman is the Director of Fitness and Membership Development at the Muskegon Family YMCA. She is a native of Muskegon and graduate of Hope College and the State University of New York.

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Some Facts about Pelvic Health

By Marla R. Miller

Ladies, if you're lucky, maybe your mom talked to you about your period and what to expect when you are expecting.

But most women are left in the dark – or left to suffer in silence – when it comes to knowing what is normal regarding pelvic health and bladder function. Running to the bathroom every 45 minutes is not; neither is pain during urination or intercourse.

Many women suffer in silence for several years before talking about bladder issues or pelvic pain with their doctor. While loss of bladder control is not a natural part of aging, many factors can weaken a woman's pelvic floor muscles, including childbirth, menopause, pelvic surgery, diabetes, obesity, urinating habits, nutrition, strenuous exercise, and simply gravity.

An estimated 33 million Americans are affected by chronic bladder control issues and pelvic pain, including Interstitial Cystitis, a chronic urological condition with symptoms like urinary urgency, frequency and pelvic pain.

Facts about bladder control and pelvic pain issues:

- One in three new moms experiences chronic loss of bladder control six months after childbirth.
- 30-50 percent of childbearing women over 40 develop a chronic, out-of-control bladder.
- Nearly 30 percent of women over age 75 experience daily incontinence.

West Michigan women will have the opportunity to hear insider tips from Missy Lavender, founder of the Women's Health Foundation (WHF) and Total Control program, during a special event 6-9 p.m. on September 17, 2015, at Muskegon Harbor Holiday Inn. The event is free, but registration is required and space is limited. Reserve your spot by calling 231.727.7944.

Hosted by Mercy Health Bladder Clinic, this special

evening for women of all ages will include shopping, prizes, giveaways and evidence-based information about pelvic health and the Total Control program.

Women are encouraged to attend with their mothers, daughters and friends. The event will include appetizers and vendors selling women-focused products and services.

The evening will culminate with Lavender's presentation, "What I Wish MY Mom Had Told Me – Secrets From a Mom to a Daughter About Pelvic Health." Lavender, a mother of two, lives in Chicago and stays actively involved in the daily operation of the Women's Health Foundation. She is a tireless advocate for the Chicago-based nonprofit organization, which has become a national pioneer and champion for pelvic health and wellness for women of all ages. Founded in 2004, WHF's mission is to increase public awareness around pelvic issues through research, educational initiatives and community programs.

Lavender worked with physical therapists, OB-GYNs, nurses and exercise professionals to design the research-based Total Control program. She developed stress urinary incontinence after the birth of her first child and didn't feel there were enough resources or education available for women.

Mercy Health Bladder Clinic is West Michigan's exclusive provider of Total Control, a seven-week fitness and education pelvic health program that focuses on fitness from the inside out. It can help women of all ages improve bladder control by also strengthening the pelvic floor. Other outcomes include: Flatter abdominals and a stronger core, improved posture and back strength, less nighttime urination and increased sexual function.

The Bladder Clinic's founder, Leslie Wooldridge, is a nurse practitioner with specialized training and certification in urinary incontinence. She has more than 30 years of

advanced practice experience and helped bring the Total Control program to this area.

In May, Wooldridge received the WHF's Medical Activist Award, which recognizes a health care professional "who has broken down barriers or changed science in women's pelvic health."

Locally, Mercy Health Bladder Clinic offers an empowering approach to pelvic health through medical treatments, research and education and outreach programs. The Bladder Clinic provides comprehensive assessment, treatment and evaluation of urinary incontinence, overactive bladder, pelvic pain, pelvic prolapse and fecal incontinence.

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Marla R. Miller is an award-winning journalist who started her career working at community newspapers in Indiana. She relocated to West Michigan in 2005 to cover arts and entertainment and features for the Muskegon Chronicle. Now a professional, freelance writer, she worked as a beat reporter for more than a decade, covering education, health, arts and entertainment, religion, township government, general assignments and social and human services. She has a special interest in features and enjoys meeting interesting people and telling their stories. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Ball State University and a master's degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University. She also teaches Total Control for Mercy Health's Bladder Clinic and enjoys walking her dog, hiking, yoga, boating and going to the beach.



What is Estate Planning and Why is it Important

By Nancy Ann Hornacek, Parmenter O'Toole, P.C. Attorneys at Law

Estate planning is the process of placing your wishes down on paper to ultimately dispose of your property either during your lifetime or after your death. Estate planning is important to avoid probate of your estate, to maintain family harmony, and to transfer your property according to your desires. The ultimate goal is to find the simplest and most effective manner possible to dispose of your property.

Any person over 18 years old, including a person with a developmental disability, can prepare an estate plan as long as they know who their heirs are and the general nature of their property. The most common estate plan documents prepared are a Will, a Trust, a Durable Power of Attorney for Financial Matters, and a Durable Health Care Power of Attorney.

A Will is a document that directs distribution of your property upon your death. A Will controls disposition of your property not effectively disposed of by will substitutes. An example of a will substitute is a beneficiary named on your insurance policy. If the named beneficiary dies before you and you do not change the beneficiary, the insurance would be

transferred according to your Will.

A Trust is a document that can be used as a will substitute to avoid probate, provide for management of your property for minor children, and to save taxes.

A Durable Power of Attorney for Financial Matters is a document that gives another person the power to act on your behalf while you are alive. It provides for management of your property in the event you become incompetent or otherwise unable to manage your estate.

A Durable Health Care Power of Attorney is a document that expresses your wishes regarding use of artificial life support to prolong your life. It also may appoint a person to make your health care decisions if you are unable to do so.

Estate planning is not the same for all people. Each person's needs and problems must be approached on an individual basis. The job of an estate planning attorney is to help you understand the options available to you so that you can dispose of your property as you choose.

.....

Nancy concentrates her practice on estate planning, probate, elder law, and health care law.

Prior to attending law school, Nancy provided more than 20 years of assistance as a paralegal in Parmenter O'Toole's estate planning and business sections. Nancy's first-hand experience with clients allows her to bring a unique perspective to her practice of estate planning, probate administration, and trust administration.

Nancy's health law practice encompasses work with health care providers on a full range of regulatory, transactional and compliance issues, including health care fraud and abuse, corporate structure, and health care privacy issues.

*Nancy Ann Hornacek, Phone: (231) 722-5406
E-mail: nah@parmenterlaw.com*





By Marla R. Miller

On a near-perfect day in early June, blue skies and sun beaming down, Howard Behm walks the rows of blueberry bushes sprouting with clusters of green berries.

"This is a sweet spot," he says, taking a closer look at the developing plants on property near M-45 that used to be a wooded lot with his house. "This is like our baby. We prune all the U-pick by hand."

As he shows off the high-yielding bushes, his excitement for the coming crop in the U-pick fields becomes apparent.

"Jeez, I've turned into my dad," he says.

Customers swarm the farm for five or six weeks during the harvest, but there's a lot of behind-the-scenes preparation that goes into growing a quality blueberry. Behm learned the business working with his father, Howard R. Behm, who had the dream of being his own boss and bought the farm in 1952 from other local farmers.

This year marks the 63rd season for Behm Blueberry Farms at the corner of M-45/Lake Michigan Drive and 144th Avenue in the heart of Ottawa County's blueberry country. At first glance, Behm's doesn't look all that different than its competitors, one of which has built a new market across the street.

But Howard and Sharon Behm's no-frills farm has a line of cars and customers during prime picking season, usually beginning in late-July and running through Labor Day. Like other types of farming, the blueberry harvest is all weather dependent, Behm says.

"It can come and go really quick," he says. "You have to stay in tune with the weather and the harvest. If the crop is quick and short, you can miss it."

Thanks to word of mouth and some big wholesale customers, Behm's doesn't need expensive overhead or even to self-promote. The size and sweet, juicy taste of the blueberries draw customers from other states – and even landed a contract to be the sole supplier for Walt Disney World in Florida.

Yes, blueberries from this small farm in Grand Haven Township are used in desserts, smoothies and other culinary treats at one of the country's most popular tourist attractions. Between the U-pick, We-pick and wholesale business, Behm's farm processes and sells 200,000 to 300,000 pounds of blueberries every season, Behm says.

The owners have opened the farm to U-pick customers on and off throughout the years, but stopped in the 1990s due to the success of their wholesale business. In 2010, the Behms cleared land that contained a vacant farmhouse where they used to live, built a new farm stand and reopened the U-pick fields due to demand for low-chemical blueberries and a safe environment for families.

"When we first got married, we really didn't do a whole lot with allowing people to come in and do the U-pick and didn't sell a lot of already picked blueberries," Sharon says. "When

The thrill of fresh

people found out we had a blueberry farm, the family and friends program kind of grew into this huge thing. A young mother said to me, 'We really would love to bring our children out. We already buy your already picked berries. We want to show them that a blueberry doesn't come out of a box; it comes from a bush.'"

The Behm family has always taken pride in being hands-on and growing the freshest, best-tasting blueberries. Today, they farm 40 acres and focus on quality using a low-chemical approach.

"You can be bigger and sacrifice quality or smaller and have more quality in it," Behm says. "We haven't used fungicides in 15 years. We don't use near the chemicals as other growers do."

The farm isn't organic, but the Behms use food-grade fertilizers applied directly on the bush to enhance the bush's growing process. The idea is to keep the bush healthy, rather than fight disease by spraying heavy chemicals.

"If you feed the plant nutrients, you're going to have a better quality berry," Behm says. "It's not rocket science. If you're healthy, you fight off things on your own. If the bush is healthy, it fights off a lot of diseases on its own."

Even 60 years ago, the elder Behm's goal was to grow the finest quality blueberries in the area. The Behm family has always put in long hours managing quality, whether working in the fields weeding, pruning and monitoring the health of the bushes or helping to sort berries, fill boxes and load the semi during the processing period.

Behm also credits being close to the lake – and good soil – for the family's success.

"The soil here is really good, and it's a good location," he says.

The harvest may be short, but growing blueberries is a year-round endeavor. It starts with fertilizing in spring, farm and field maintenance during the growing season, and pruning in fall. Howard Behm recently hired full time help, along with employing seasonal workers, but he still visits the farm daily.

"It's complicated," he says of growing blueberries. "There's a lot to it. It's like anything; you have to put a lot into it to be fairly good at it."

Raised on a farm in Agnew, Behm's father was accustomed to the hard work and long hours. Behm's mom, Phyllis, spent most of her life as a city girl living in Grand Haven and the Detroit area. They both worked hard and made many sacrifices to build Howard R. Behm Farms into what it is today, Behm Blueberry Farms, Inc., Behm says. His dad passed away nearly three years ago and his mom died this January.

"He had been working in a factory and didn't want to be inside," Behm says of his dad's decision to become a blueberry farmer. "He said 'If I am going to work this hard, I might as well work for myself.'"

The younger Howard A. Behm, nicknamed Howie, arrived in 1954 and worked alongside his parents and older sister Gwen throughout high school. He left for a season in the early 1970s, but it's pretty much the only job he has ever known.

"He was always grateful and glad I was back," Behm says. "But he was old school. He made me start at the bottom. He was a huge blessing in my life. I've learned a lot from him." The two eventually figured out a deal for Howie to take over the family business in the late-1980s. In a similar turn of fate, Howard's wife, Sharon, grew up in Muskegon Heights and had never worked on a farm until they married in the 1990s.

Sharon, who owns and manages Borr's Shoes but still helps on the farm, has an interest in holistic health and used to work at a chiropractor's office. She began asking questions about why the bushes needed so many chemicals in an effort to minimize exposure to her family,

Behm Blueberry Farms, Inc.

11101 144th Ave. at the corner of M-45/
Lake Michigan Drive & 144th Ave. in West Olive
Phone: 616-846-1650

behmblueberryfarms.com

Harvest typically runs through August,
but call or visit the website for details

U-pick hours:

9 a.m.- 6 p.m. Monday-Friday
9 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday
Closed Sunday

In the event of rain, please
call to make sure Behm's is open

We-pick hours:

8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday
8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday
Closed Sunday

blueberries... time to get your fill!

employees and customers.

They also discovered the blueberry bushes did not seem to winter very well, nor were they maintaining a steady yield. They both became interested in growing blueberries using more fertilizer and fewer chemicals.

After researching different products for blueberries, the Behms contacted the Agro-K Company and reached out to Dr. Harry Rajamannan, or Dr. Harry, as the Behms call him. Agro-K's philosophy is to provide the grower with the nutrients to produce a high-quality crop in a profitable and environmentally sustainable manner. Agro-K's products unlock valuable nutrients already found in nature's soil, feeding the bush directly, which increases plant vigor and quality yields.

The Behms started replacing chemicals with food-grade fertilizer and had successful results. They use a variety of nutrients, but potassium makes the berry sweeter and calcium

one of my kids, someone in the family gets it done. I get over 800 pounds every year. I have gotten as many as 1,000 pounds and that's the absolute limit. I actually have to start turning people down."

After family and friends tasted the berries, they started adding to the order. Biggs doesn't make any money off the trip; he just does it because of the quality of the berries.

"We can't really get anything like them," he says. "They're huge. They're typically sweet and very consistent. If you make pies out of these, you have to cut the sugar in half. You can make a blueberry pie without sugar they are so sweet and juicy. I personally get about 60 pounds and eat them every morning in oatmeal or just sit down and eat them."

Another big aspect of the Behm's business is the process and sale of frozen berries. They used to own several farms, but sold some of their property to upgrade processing equipment about 12 years ago, Sharon says.

The farm's wholesale blueberries are machine picked daily during harvest time and placed in a cooler overnight to help minimize damage during processing. They go through a line where the stems and soft berries are removed, then cleaned and inspected. Other farmers also use their processing plant, which is third-party audited by American Institute of Baking (AIB) International and received superior ratings for the last several years.

The Behms have been active in the frozen market for more than 35 years and offer wholesale pricing on frozen product. There have been a lot of changes in the way of government regulations and food safety laws, Behm says.

They pack, ship and store their frozen berries at a facility in Benton Harbor and work with a broker on wholesale distribution. Besides the contract with Walt Disney World, Behm Farms has supplied blueberries to companies such as Gerber, Dannon and Yoplait yogurt, Dawn Doughnuts and Bake Mark, just to name a few.

The U-pick business has taken different directions since the farm first opened, and the Behms are excited to once again be open to the public.

"There are a lot of young families now looking for that natural approach," she says. "We have been blown away with the interest in the U-pick and our already picked blueberries. People said we needed a website and that has grown our U-pick and We-pick by leaps and bounds."

Local customers Kim and Shawn Schrader met the Behms through church and quickly became U-pick regulars. The Schraders also buy enough to freeze and find they have to ration them.

"We went out to support keeping it local and fell in love with their blueberries," she says. "We just haven't found anything in this area that beats their Bluecrop. When they're ripe, it's just the most delicious blueberry out there. It's one of the best summer treats you'll find."

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Marla R. Miller is an award-winning journalist who started her career working at community newspapers in Indiana. She relocated to West Michigan in 2005 to cover arts and entertainment and features for the Muskegon Chronicle. Now a professional, freelance writer, she worked as a beat reporter for more than a decade, covering education, health, arts and entertainment, religion, township government, general assignments and social and human services. She has a special interest in features and enjoys meeting interesting people and telling their stories. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Ball State University and a master's degree in public administration from Grand Valley State University. She also teaches Total Control for Mercy Health's Bladder Clinic and enjoys walking her dog, hiking, yoga, boating and going to the beach.



makes the skin thicker and snap, Sharon says.

"Most farmers are using way too many chemicals and changing the balance of nature," she says. "Dr. Harry came to the farm and we went out and looked at the other trees in the forest. You don't find holes or insects in healthy trees and bushes. If you're pruning and feeding the bush, insects do not like a vibrant, healthy bush."

The Behms use the Bluecrop variety in the U-pick fields, which customers rave over due to their size and taste. The two acres near Lake Michigan Drive receive a lot of care and attention from the Behms.

"We're really fussy with that area," Behm says. "It's a great spot to pick, what you're picking is safe."

Even all the We-pick blueberries are handpicked, Sharon says. They are available at the farm stand or pre-order and packaged in 5, 10 or 30 pound boxes. Customers can call ahead and place special orders, especially for 100 pounds or more.

Bill Biggs travels from Illinois for his "annual blueberry run." His family discovered the farm while vacationing in the Grand Haven area, and he's been coming for the last 20 years at least.

"I have five kids and they like fruit," he says. "My kids are all grown now, but I drive up or

How to avoid 3 common myths standing in the way of retirement security

By Tom Kendra

Today, most of us expect to live longer, healthier and more active lives. How are you going to spend your time in retirement? Will you visit family? Travel? Volunteer?

The possibilities are endless but when you do decide, the next step is determining how your choices translate into dollars and cents. So ask yourself: can you afford the lifestyle you envision? Will you have dependents? What will my other expenses be?

These are just a few of the questions that need answering, but following through still does not guarantee a dream come true. There are 3 popular myths about retirement that you want to avoid falling prey to.

MYTH #1: LOWER EXPENSES IN RETIREMENT.

In the past, it's been suggested that a good target for retirement income was 50% to 80% of pre-retirement after-tax income. However, your mortgage might not decrease, your healthcare and insurance costs may increase and with more free time you may tend to spend more money, depending on your situation. In short, you can't just assume your retirement income needs will decrease during retirement. A good tactic is to base your planning on a range of scenarios.

MYTH #2: MY SOCIAL SECURITY AND PENSION WILL BE ENOUGH. Traditionally, income at retirement has come from three sources —government programs,

employer-sponsored plans, and private savings. However, today private savings is becoming an increasingly more important part of the equation.

Social Security was never designed as an alternative to personal responsibility. And, the higher your pre-retirement income, the less money you will receive from Social Security. When it comes to employer-sponsored pension plans, the trend in recent years has been for employers to offer tax-advantaged retirement savings plans to employees instead of employer funded pensions. One difference is that while a pension plan is guaranteed, a retirement savings plans (401(k) plans are the most popular) are subject to the ups and downs of the stock market. Another difference is that retirement savings plans today are often funded largely with the employee's contributions.

If you fail to contribute or make poor investment choices, the benefits you receive from your retirement savings plans could turn out to be less than expected.

MYTH #3: I KNOW HOW LONG MY MONEY'S GOING TO LAST.

Life expectancy is on the rise. You may end up being retired longer than you were in the workforce and this can make a big difference in how much you have to save while still working. Your life expectancy can make a big difference. For example, if you start with a retirement nest egg of \$775,000 and earn 6% on your money, you can expect to

receive about \$75,000 per year for 15 years before your money runs out. If you live 20 years in retirement, you will need to start with \$915,255 instead of just \$775,000, to stay in the money for the duration of life.

After dispelling these myths, you may want to recalculate the estimate of what it's going to take to finance the retirement lifestyle you envision. If you're like many people, you may encounter a gap between what you need and what you can expect to have. Your choices are pretty straightforward:

- Delay your retirement date.
- Reduce your retirement income goal.
- Increase your savings level.
- Increase the return on your investment.

A well thought-out retirement strategy can be flexible enough to incorporate these changes.

A licensed financial professional can get you started and help you monitor your strategy over the years..

Tom Kendra is a Financial Advisor with Prudential, with an office in Muskegon. He can be reached by phone at (231) 563-6638, fax at (231) 375-5229 or e-mail at tom.kendra@prudential.com



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The Naomi Shipwreck of 1907

By Peter Manting

Headlines in the Grand Haven Tribune on May 21, 1907 read

"STEAMER WITH EIGHTY PERSONS ON BOARD BURNS, ALL ARE SAVED EXCEPT FIVE."

The steamer NAOMI, one of the finest passenger boats on the Great Lakes, left Grand Haven May 20th around 11:00pm making its overnight lake crossing to Milwaukee. The ship was about 30 miles west of Grand Haven when at 1:15 am on the morning of May 21st sleeping people in the staterooms were startled by the sounds of running feet and loud, continued pounding on the cabin doors. Fire had broken out in the bow of the boat and smoke was starting to fill the cabins. Cabin boys and officers were hurrying here and there reassuring passengers that there was nothing to fear. There was a fire but it had been subdued. Although, in the same breath, calmly ordering the amazed people to strap on life belts and prepare for the worst. Soon smoke was piling up through the deck and the main cabin was one dense mass of smoke. Even though people rushed to the open air there remained composure among the crew and the passengers. Life boats were lowered into the calm, dark, chilly waters that surrounded the NAOMI. Eighty people in total were on board, more than the four life boats could hold. The burning ship could be seen for miles on the lake in the clear weather. Three ships which were specks of light in the distance when the fire started, all came to the rescue of the NAOMI. Big steel freighters KERR and SAXONIA were the first to arrive on the scene. The sister ship KANSAS, a wooden hulled boat got there soon after. The captain of the KERR put his ship's prow into the side of the burning NAOMI on the side least swept by the flames and thus enabled the balance of the crew and passengers, including the captain, to leave the burning decks. The KANSAS meanwhile circled around the site and picked up all of the passengers who had escaped via the lifeboats. One of the lifeboats went back to the burning ship as the cries of four sailors were heard. They were caught in the forecastle and were trying to squeeze out a porthole. The porthole was too small and the four seamen perished in the fire. One passenger was also overcome by fire and did not survive.

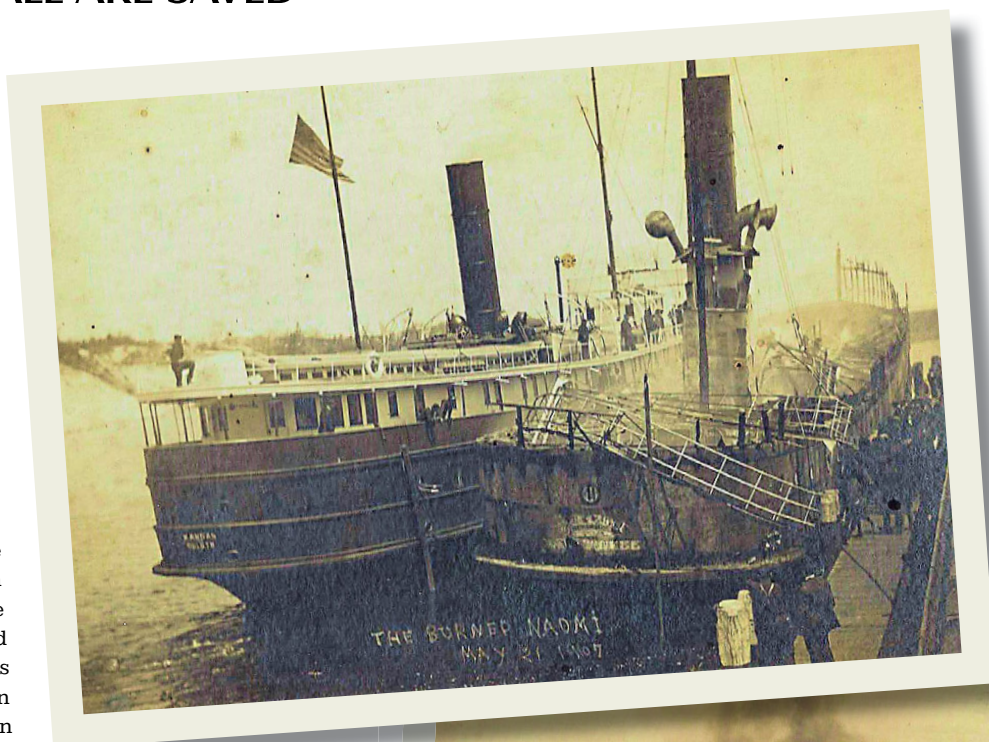
As morning dawned the Naomi rapidly burned. After the cabin dropped into the steel hull, steamships KERR and SAXONIA took the wreck of the NAOMI in tow and brought her within three miles of the harbor. The KANSAS then took over and towed the NAOMI's steel hull into port as thousands of townspeople and visitors lined the Grand River to watch the steamer KANSAS and her ill-fated tow come back to Grand Haven. The KANSAS left the NAOMI at her dock, at the foot of Washington Street. Once at the dock the local fire department continued to pour water on the vessel until the fire was extinguished. Later that summer the NAOMI was towed to Manitowoc, Wisconsin and rebuilt. She was back sailing the Great Lakes by 1909.

Built originally for the Goodrich Line as the S.S. WISCONSIN in 1881, E.G. Crosby renamed the ship for his daughter Naomi when he purchased the ship in 1898. His heirs renamed the steamship the E.G. CROSBY in his honor in 1912 after Mr. Crosby perished

aboard the TITANIC. In 1918 it was sold to the U.S. Shipping Board and taken to the Atlantic coast to be used as a hospital ship for the war effort. During this time it displayed the name GENERAL R.M. REILLY. After WWI, she was sold to the Chicago Racine and Milwaukee Line and renamed the PILGRIM. In 1922 the Goodrich Line reacquired the

steamer and renamed the vessel one last time the WISCONSIN. On October 28th 1929, just days after the stock market crash, the WISCONSIN floundered in heavy seas off the coast of Kenosha, Wisconsin, taking nine of her crew and five passengers with her. The Coast Guard rescued 60 from the sinking WISCONSIN despite heavy weather. That same evening the car ferry MILWAUKEE also floundered just miles west of Grand Haven and 52 lives were lost as Lake Michigan swallowed the car ferry, its crew and passengers.

Today, the WISCONSIN lies in 90 to 130 feet of water, 6 miles east of Kenosha, Wisconsin. Some passenger cabins still remain intact.



Peter Manting is the Executive Director of the Sable Points Lighthouse Keepers Association. SPLKA's mission is to preserve, promote and educate the public and to make our lighthouses accessible to all. SPLKA manages 4 iconic Lake Michigan lighthouses: the White River Light Station in Whitehall, Little Sable Point Lighthouse in Silver Lake, the Ludington North Breakwater Lighthouse and the Big Sable Point Lighthouse in the Ludington State Park. Peter grew up and lives in the Grand Haven/ Spring Lake area. He has had a love of local Maritime history fostered by his grandfather who would tell him stories of the many ships that frequented the Grand Haven harbor in the early 20th century. Peter has been active in the community as a former board member for the Tri-Cities Historical Museum which houses many of his grandfather's historic ship models.



If it were easy, everyone would do it!

By Dale P. Zahn

So, you've decided to sell your home. Your castle that has been your family domain for quite some time. It's the place where memories were made, laughs were heard and tears may have been shed.

Perhaps the selling process is something new to you, having never experienced it before... so the first decision to be made is whether to fly solo or the engage the services of a REALTOR.

For some, during a upbeat market, selling "By Owner" might sound like a great idea, after all, who knows the property better than the persons that have been living in it, right? History has shown the reality to be that if it was that easy, everybody would be doing it - yet they don't.

Loads of people play golf, but few can call themselves pro's let alone touring professionals... many people are terrific drivers on a local go-kart track but few will ever experience the rush behind the wheel of a NASCAR race car... many can search the internet for ways to self-diagnose medical problems and then engage in do-it-yourself remedies. Might work, then again... well you get the picture.

Let's not forget the old adage about a person representing themselves in court when being sued or charged with a crime has a fool for a client.

Real estate is no different. The Voice For Real Estate along the Lakeshore stops shy of saying going solo is a bad idea or one that can't be done, but it does understand that there is way more to a successful marketing effort and selling real estate than initially may appear. A good client/REALTOR relationship can be a wonderful thing providing peace of mind and getting the desired results without complications - though unexpected complications sometimes still may take place.

When thinking of selling, we recommend doing your 'home'work before launching the marketing effort. This means researching REALTORS, interviewing them, asking exactly what their plan is to market the property beyond placing a sign in the front yard and entering the listing into the Multiple Listing Service. Get a feel for the agent, their availability to you, their responsiveness and understanding of your needs. Once comfortable, discuss terms and conditions that go beyond just price, but certainly price is a good place to start!

Think you know what the home is worth? How? Based on what? Ask for a comprehensive market evaluation. The SWAG approach (Sophisticated Wild A__ Guess) or the Magician's approach to value (Oh, its magically worth "X") should be scrubbed. Get the evaluation for

pricing done right, and in understandable detail. Then discuss Closing and Possession dates. Do you have a place to go? Can you actually give the keys to the new buyer at the Closing table or do you need time to move after closing, and if so, how long? What items are to be left with the property? Appliances? Dining room chandelier? The gas grill and picnic table? Detail it!

When talking with REALTORS, ask about the many nuances that are part of the selling process....things like local inspection ordinances, tax pro-rations, title reports, drawing up the legal documents like deeds and bills of sale, and the first document that starts the whole ball rolling, the purchase agreement! There is a reason they are six pages long plus addendums! You'll need to know what they say, and why they say it.

So, if comfortable with all of that, and your ability to sell the sizzle and not just the steak, maybe going solo will work - but chances are and odds say, the listed way with a professional is the more effective way to go.

Over the course of history, its been found that working with a REALTOR as a seller is the best way to get the price you reasonably want in the time frame in which you want it. Now, sure, there are exceptions to the rule and we are not suggesting every transaction will be completely trouble free but in the big scheme of things, most are enjoyable experiences as they should be, and your REALTOR becomes your long term friend.

We've chosen to hone in on Sellers in this article and will save the Buyer/REALTOR team effort to address in a future issue. One thing is certain, no matter what, "West Michigan Is A Great Place To Call Home" and the West Michigan Lakeshore Association of REALTORS is the Voice For Real Estate along the Lakeshore.

Dale P. Zahn
Chief Executive Officer
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Food for THOUGHT

Answers on Page 23

SUDUKO PUZZLE #1

4			3	2			1	
	7	3			4	5		
	1		8		6	7		4
	8	6			2		4	
	3	7		4	9	1		
5		4	7				6	
			1			4		
	5						8	2
6		8			5			

SUDUKO PUZZLE #2

5	8			6	9		2	1
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68				69						70				
71				72						73				

PAL AROUND By Tim Burr, edited by Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS

- Offered one's seat
- Greek writer of fables
- "Right in the kisser" precede
- Not asleep
- 1960s jacket namesake
- Palindromic constellation
- Brit's kerosene
- "Mike & Molly" network
- Quid-quo connector
- Sis, bro or cuz
- Caboodle partner
- Large in number or quantity
- Lift up
- Biochem focus
- Big hunk of meat, e.g.
- Men only
- Whisper's target
- Help for a struggling student
- Bunches
- Brad of "Moneyball"
- Iceberg to an ocean liner
- Smooth out a rough draft
- Don in a dressing room
- Lilies with bell-shaped flowers
- "Acetyl" add-on
- Nuclear component

DOWN

- Bounder
- Step into character
- Like some markers or code
- Pierces with many holes
- "Chemical" Iraqi
- Significant time period
- Ambulance chaser's girl
- "Fi fo" follower
- Waterway with the same alternating letter
- Cosmetic-safety gp
- Greek gathering place
- Cause to gradually vanish
- Candidate for spitchcocking
- Judges to be
- Where fathers may gather
- Maple extract
- "Up, up and away" defunct flier
- What a thole supports
- Giraffe cousin
- Clear of ice
- Young Skywalker
- Nighttime, poetically
- Driftwood site
- Cantilevered windows
- Domestic hens

- All-inclusive offer
- What a satellite may be in
- Useless venture
- Make a mess of
- Went at a snail's pace
- Currently showing
- One who's always up for a good time
- Completely appeases hunger
- Depressed area between hills
- Hole-making bug or tool
- Strict precision
- Grimace
- Leaves in, editorially
- Bag with handles
- Mrs. John Quincy Adams
- Memo writer's need
- Entices
- Desert illusion
- Social blunder
- Give the slip to
- Buckeye or birchbark
- Term of affection
- You may wrestle with it
- Some parental nicknames
- "Stop" or "stick" lead-in
- "Much ___ About Nothing"
- Was a trendsetter

Shutting the Door on Stress

By Michelle Martin, M.A.

As a psychotherapist, I work with clients experiencing many types of issues. Almost all of them have high levels of stress. While not all stress is avoidable, some of it can be circumvented or at least reduced. One of the causes of avoidable stress is the inability to say no and set effective limits with other people, in effect, shutting the door on a source of stress.

The word "no" acts like a door on a house. If a person is unable to say no it is much like living in a house with a door that cannot be closed. Imagine what that would be like; there would be little protection from the elements: snow, leaves, rain would blow into your living space. It would be cold in the winter and hot in the summer. Vagrants and thieves would have access to the space and to the belongings. It might be scary to go to sleep at night or to leave during the day. Life would be extremely stressful and people in this situation would be likely to feel little control over their lives and surroundings.

People who cannot say no often feel they have little control and that they are always at the mercy of others. This can lead to feelings of helplessness and result in many problems such as feeling overwhelmed, excess stress with accompanying health problems, resentment, avoidance and damaged relationships. It is a frequent contributor to both anxiety and depression.

There are various reasons people struggle with saying no. Fears of being harshly judged, rejected or even attacked are common concerns. Many people have been directly and indirectly taught that they do not have the right to deny requests from others. Some people find that before they can say no, they need to be so upset that they lose control and say it in an unkind or hurtful manner, damaging relationships. If we close the door softly, no one gets hurt and rarely does anyone get upset. What most of us fail to realize is that the person we must please and care for first, and foremost, is ourselves. If we do not put ourselves first occasionally, we will get burned out and will be unable to help anyone. This is why flight attendants warn us to place the oxygen mask over our own face before assisting anyone else. If we faint, we will be unable to assist others and can even become an obstacle to them. This is a good analogy to apply to all of life.

Most of us have difficulty saying no because we want to be liked, or at least we want to avoid anger. Much of the time we are guessing at the thoughts, feelings and needs of the people who are asking things of us. A good rule of thumb is to assume that we are at least half wrong about what someone else is feeling and thinking unless they have shared their motives with us. Many times it is not nearly as upsetting to others as we fear it will be when we say no. Others may actually believe that we may be offended if not asked to contribute.

There are many ways to softly close the door while minimizing the risk of hurting others. Below are suggestions for saying no without damaging relationships.

- Let me get back to you about that.
- I'm not sure I can (meet your request), but I can do (fill in the blank) for you.
- I wish I could help you out, but this is such a busy time for me.
- The "hot potato" technique. This is done internally; you remind yourself that you are not responsible for solving some else's problems, only your own. You can offer sympathy without taking on another's problems.
- Do I understand you correctly? (restate their request) I will have to think about that. When do you need to know?

The more we practice these phrases, the more comfortable we become in using them effectively, thus shutting the door on stress.

Michelle Martin, M. A. is a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, Limited Licensed Psychologist, (supervised by a Licensed Psychologist,) and Certified Sex Therapist at Harbor Psychological Associates in downtown Muskegon. She has twenty years experience working both in agency and private practice settings. She has also worked as an educator teaching subjects related to mental health. Her areas of expertise include relationship issues including couples and parent-child problems, anxiety and mood disorders, sexual problems in adults and the behavior disorders of children. She can be reached at michelle@harborpsychological.com.



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Homemade Cinnamon Rolls

By Colette Kufahl

I take for granted that I learned how to make bread growing up and am surprised to learn that many people are apprehensive to take on any kind of yeast bread baking. Although I do love whole grains for most of the breads I eat, who can resist made from scratch cinnamon rolls!

Growing up in our family of ten, bread was a part of every meal. My mom made traditional homemade bread often to supplement the 22 loaves of bread we went through a week for sack lunches and meals. By traditional I mean she made the kind of yeast bread that you let it rise twice. Occasionally she would surprise us with cinnamon rolls that never lasted long enough! They were so tender and sweet and satisfying! I could feel the love in every bite!

The recipe that follows is my busy life version of those homemade sweet rolls of love! This recipe is a great way to introduce oneself to working with yeast dough. Its a 'quick bread' that only requires one rising and calls for buttermilk.

Busy Life Homemade Sweet Rolls

- 2 Packages active dry yeast (or 2 generous tablespoons of bulk yeast)
- 1/2 Cup warm water - not over 115 degree temperature Use a candy or deep fry thermometer to test
- 1-1/4 cups buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- 5-1/2 to 6 cups all-purpose flour (or unbleached bread flour which has the best gluten forming proteins)
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted in microwave
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons salt

In a large mixer bowl, dissolve the yeast in warm water with a pinch of the measured sugar and salt mixed in, and let it set for 5 minutes. Why let it sit you ask? Well, think of it this way if you are not a morning person . . . give the yeast time to 'wake up'. It should look foamy and fluffy in the bowl after it sets. The pinch of salt and sugar give the awakening yeast a kick start. Incase you were wondering if your yeast was 'too old', this step will 'proof' it before you go through a whole bread making process only to find out the yeast was indeed dead and no one cares about the glutinous sidewalk paver you just made.

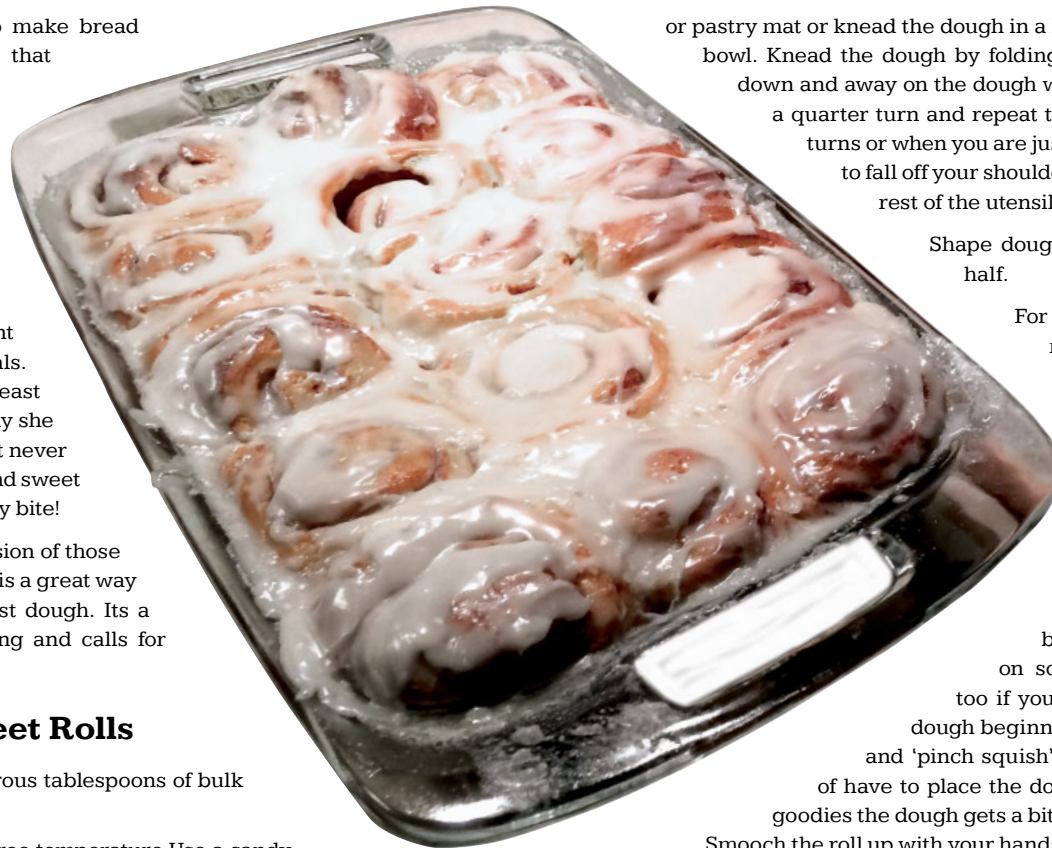
NOW we can add the rest of the ingredients to the yeast mixture except start with only half of the flour. Test the temperature of your melted butter if you are not sure it's between 105-115 degrees. My experience would advise that it is more important to make sure the liquids are not too hot instead of too cool. If the liquid temperatures are above 115 degrees it may kill the yeast. Blend these ingredients together for 1/2 minute on low speed, scraping bowl constantly, then an additional 2 minutes on medium speed. This step activates the gluten molecules in the flour and helps stretch them out. The yeast provides gases that inflate the gluten molecules, which is what permits the dough to rise. Now add enough of the remaining flour to make the dough easy to handle or when it's just starting to not stick to sides of the mixer bowl any longer. This dough will be sticky but don't overdo the flour or the rolls won't rise well. If you have a Kitchen Aide® mixer or like mixer with the dough hook attachment, knead on low for 4-5 minutes longer. If you are kneading by hand turn the dough onto a well floured board

or pastry mat or knead the dough in a big, floured fix-n-mix Tupperware® bowl. Knead the dough by folding it over on itself toward you, push down and away on the dough with the heel of your hand, then turn a quarter turn and repeat this kneading process for about 200 turns or when you are just about certain your arms are going to fall off your shoulders and hang themselves up with the rest of the utensils.


Shape dough into one large 'bun' and cut it in half.


For each half: Flour a board or pastry mat. Using a rolling pin, stretch and coerce the dough out to resemble some sort of 13" x 9" rectangle. Slather this rectangle with butter right up to the edges. For each half mix 3/4 cup sugar and 4 teaspoons of cinnamon, 1/4 teaspoon Cardamom, and sprinkle over the slathered butter up to the edges. You can toss on some chopped walnuts at this time too if you want - 1/2 to one cup. Roll up the dough beginning at the wide side into a log shape and 'pinch squish' the seam tightly together. You sort of have to place the dough into a roll because with all the goodies the dough gets a bit cumbersome to just roll up like rug. Smooch the roll up with your hands from the ends to keep it around 13-15" long. Cut the roll into 12 even slices (3/4-1 inch-ish wide slices) and place each slice in a greased 9x15 pan. Cover the pan loosely with a clean kitchen towel and let rise until doubled in size - about 1 to 1-1/2 hours. Sometimes when I put my pan in the oven to rise, I do so over another pan of hot water placed on the bottom shelf of the oven - the dough likes the humidity and it keeps the air just warm enough for the yeast to do its thing. Bake 15-20 minutes at 350 degrees. While the rolls are hot out of the oven, for each pan of rolls, frost with icing made of: 2 cups confectioner sugar, 1/8 teaspoon almond extract if desired, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract and 2-4 tablespoons of milk. Eat while warm or cold and feel the Love in every bite!!

Have a favorite "dish" or "dessert" and want to share it with PLUS readers? For consideration submit your recipe, recipe story in WORD format, and photo of the finished product to: mark@orshalrdproductions.com. Not all submissions are guaranteed to be published. Orshal Road Productions, LLC reserves the right not to publish questionable and non-family friendly submissions.



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MEDIA WATCH:

Hallelujah? Your Call.

By Chad Lerch

Universities and the mainstream media are the most powerful institutions in the United States when it comes to shaping the impressionable minds of teens and young adults. Universities plant mostly liberal seeds and the media nurtures them into full-blown liberal movements.

Five unelected judges, with lifetime job security, legislated from the bench in mandating that gay marriage shall be legal in all 50 states – even though the issue had only popped up in a few liberal leaning states. Apparently, the 10th Amendment, which gives states power to determine what's right and just for its people, is dead. That's a topic for another column.

Applause erupted on college campuses as the U. S. Supreme Court released its ruling to the public. At the same time, the liberal media rejoiced in a successful ending to years of biased reporting on an issue driven by a vocal minority. The inertia of the moment led millions to add a rainbow filter to their Facebook profile pictures, many of whom did so out of implied peer pressure – the media says this is great, it *must be* great.

In an attempt to drive the dagger deeper into the conservative movement, reporters rushed to presidential candidates like Mike Huckabee, a former Baptist preacher, for reaction. *As if it's news* that Huckabee, the most conservative of the presidential hopefuls, thinks marriage shall be as it is commanded in the Bible. Paint him as a bigot and move on – that's the job of a fair and balanced media, eh?

Bob Dylan once wrote: "Come writers and critics, who prophesize with your pen, keep your eyes wide, the chance won't come again, and don't speak too soon, for the wheel's still in spin."

Maybe the media should focus on things like...

We have a record 47 million Americans on food stamps; a national debt approaching \$20 trillion; terrorists trying to kill us; unsecured borders; an unemployment rate that the government refuses to properly calculate (it's much higher than reported); murder rates skyrocketing in mostly poor communities; Christians being persecuted and beheaded overseas; and the main stream media's main focus over the past year has been.... gay marriage.

In July 2014, Time Magazine cited a CDC analysis that suggests 1.6% of adults in the United States identify themselves as gay. The next U.S. Census will, for the first time, count people who identify as "gay", so we may have a more accurate picture. I'm willing to bet it's somewhere between the 1.6% accounted by the CDC, and 3%, projected by your's truly.

To put things into perspective, I hope enterprising journalists report gay marriage numbers. Not just the initial surge following the Supreme Court's ruling. But follow up a year from now. I'm willing to bet the numbers will be shockingly low, not just by numbers, but by percentage of gay couples.

The massive amount of news coverage on this issue is puzzling when it's put into context considering how few people the Supreme Court's ruling affects.

Keep your eyes wide, mainstream media. Terrorists want to kill us; if it were a business, the government would be shuttered; and our people are hurting and hungry. But hallelujah, we have marriage equality.

Wait, am I still allowed to say hallelujah? Its ties to Christianity may offend someone. Pardon my insensitivity.



Chad Lerch is a marketing consultant based in Grand Haven, Michigan. He is a former business and political reporter for the Muskegon Chronicle and MLive.

Is QuickBooks the Answer?

By Bruce M. Duff

One the first questions new small business owners ask when starting his or her business is what accounting software should I buy? In reality the answer to the question is it doesn't matter which software you choose, but if your plan is to grow your business you will need it. What is important are the records you keep and the timeliness in which you capture information. You can have the best software money can buy, but if you wait several months after transactions take place to record them or misplace receipts the information will lose value and relevancy. Your financial reporting won't be accurate and it will make it more difficult for your tax prepare to prepare your tax returns.

Some people will meticulously plan for months or even years before starting a venture and there are other individuals who have been more less thrust into the becoming self-employed. In any case, start your accounting system with the basics. Start a filing system as soon as you can. A filing system can be as simple as manila folders in a desk drawer or something electronic, such as scanned documents. At the very least have one file for expenses and another for receipts (income). Creating files will allow you to easily refer back to documents you need when you are reconciling bank accounts or reviewing monthly results. Next, make sure to reconcile your bank accounts monthly. Make this a part of your routine. Even if you reconcile by hand on the back of the bank statement, include it in your routine. Cash is king and if you don't have a good understanding of your cash balance it will be tough to keep the rest of your accounting in line. These are the types of basics you can build off and will make a smooth transition when adding accounting software to the mix.

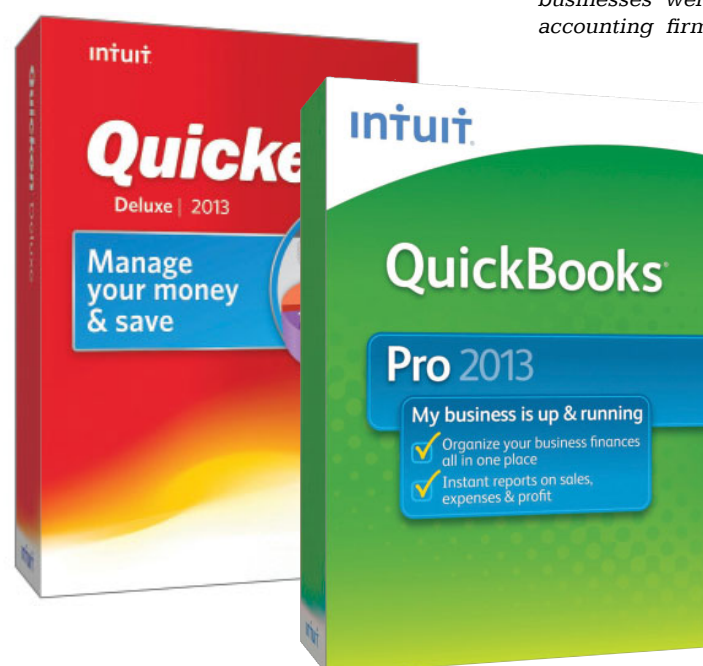
When you decide to purchase accounting software QuickBooks Pro is a very good option for most people. The software typically retails for about \$200. Out of the box QuickBooks can handle customer billing, bill payment and the ability to balance your bank and credit card accounts. Payroll is a module that can be added when needed for an additional annual fee depending on the level of service you choose. Another option to consider is QuickBooks Online. The online version has the same basic features as the desktop version, but is available for a monthly subscription which can be also be customized to add different modules such as payroll. The desktop version can be converted to the online version at anytime. A word of caution here, if you have been using a desktop version and switch to online, you may have a difficult time navigating around the online version. The features are essentially the same, but trying to find transactions and run reports are a bit different.

In the end accounting software can be a great resource in helping grow any business, but you need to have discipline and systems in place. QuickBooks or any software for that matter, is only capable of producing what you put into it. The old saying "garbage in garbage out" really does apply here, so do yourself and your accountant a favor and keep your information up to date with solid records.

Bruce Duff is a graduate of Michigan State University. He has over twenty years' experience in the accounting field. Bruce recognized the specialized attention individuals and small businesses were not receiving from larger accounting firms led him to start his own practice, BMD Financial Solutions.



Bruce serves as Treasurer for the Michigan Irish Music Festival and the Muskegon Irish America Society. He serves on the MSU Alumni Club of Muskegon County Board Of Directors.



7 Steps to Healthy Living As You Age

By Laurie Semlow

Subtle changes begin occurring in your 40s and need to be addressed before they become problems. Following are some of the more common changes we experience:

- Metabolism:** begins slowing by 2% per decade
- Muscle:** decreases by 6-7 pounds from our 30s
- Bone density:** drops by about 1% per year since our mid-30s
- Stress:** is higher due to worries about our children, parents, health, career and finances
- Depression:** more likely now than later in life

This is an important decade for preventing health problems such as diabetes, heart problems and many types of cancer later in life. If you've been making healthy changes, keep it up! If not, now is the time to start!

1. EAT BREAKFAST EVERY DAY

Nutritionists agree that eating breakfast is essential to keeping weight down and calorie-burning metabolism up. In one study, those who ate a big breakfast lost 21% of their body weight after 8 months, compared with 4.5% for participants on a low-carb diet who made breakfast their smallest meal. The healthy-breakfast eaters continued losing over time even though they ate more total calories, while the low-carb group started regaining weight after 4 months.

2. METABOLISM

Strength-training for 6 months can increase your resting metabolism (a study on men showed a boost of 7%), so you'll burn more calories even when you're sitting on the sofa. Strength-training also helps you increase bone density, maintain balance, and avoid injury—important for protecting your skeleton both now and when you're older. Aim to exercise at least 30 minutes most days of the week.

3. CALCIUM AND VITAMIN D

Both are essential for strong bones, but many experts feel current benchmarks are too low. The National Osteoporosis Foundation recommends that women in their 40s get 1,000 mg of calcium and 400 to 800 IU of vitamin D3 every day from foods like fortified milk or salmon, along with supplements if needed. Some nutrition experts suggest getting up to 2,000 IU vitamin D3 a day for optimal health.

4. STRESS CONTROL

A healthy, calm heart beats faster when you breathe in, slower when you breathe out.

But stress inhibits this natural "heart rate variability," triggering unhealthy changes body wide, including increased blood pressure, lower libido, and faster cell death. "In effect, stress makes you age faster," says Claire Michaels Wheeler, MD, PhD, author of 10 Simple Solutions to Stress.

5. INCREASE PROTEIN

Getting foods with all the amino acids needed to form complete proteins at least twice a day boosts levels of mood-lifting neurotransmitters in the brain, which can help relieve symptoms of depression, like slow thinking and poor memory. Aim to get 4 ounces of protein at each meal. Good sources include fish, eggs, and quinoa. But don't totally skip carbs: They boost mood by increasing production of serotonin in the brain.

6. GO OUT WITH FRIENDS

Relaxing with friends reduces stress, boosts self-esteem, and even makes you more loving toward your partner when you get home. "Women are terrific at connecting socially but often let it fall by the wayside in their 40s because of career and family demands," says Edward Schneider, MD, emeritus dean and professor of gerontology and medicine at the University of Southern California's Andrus Gerontology Center. Those with strong friendships typically have lower blood pressure, less diabetes, reduced risk of heart disease, and half as many strokes as those who are less well connected.

7. GET ESSENTIAL CHECK-UPS

In addition to making health-boosting, stress-busting habits a part of your lifestyle, don't neglect these routine tests:

Eye exams, blood pressure, pap test and pelvic exam, prostate exam, thyroid, skin cancer screening, mammogram, blood glucose and spinal screenings.

Laurie Semlow is a Certified Creating Wellness Coach and Office Manager at Semlow Chiropractic, 5353 Grand Haven Road, Norton Shores. She can be reached at 231.798.9355.



AN EYE ON EDUCATION

Public Education – We ALL Play a Role

By Steve Edwards

“Great Things Are Not Done By Impulse,
But By A Series Of Small Things Brought Together.”
– Vincent van Gogh

Whether it is a painting, a performance, a contest, or a student achievement outcome, very few things are completed or measured with only one aspect. A painting may take thousands of independent and seemingly disconnected strokes to come together in a masterpiece. A performance might take many instruments, with all of their unique sounds and qualities coming together to create something none could have created in isolation. An athletic contest requires individuals mastering their own unique skills and then blending them together to compete and succeed.

A successful high school graduate or student is no different. A successful student requires thousands of seemingly unique and distinctive brush strokes to become the masterpiece to which all of our kids aspire. The brush strokes

are applied by parents, teachers, counselors, peers, administrators, and other members of our community. The performance takes dedication, perseverance, tolerance, and passion from and for each individual student. We all have roles to play and parts to perfect! As you think about the role of public education and the role that each of us plays in the lives of our youth, consider whether the brush strokes you apply are adding to the value of the youth in our community.

As you continue to consider all of the potential of this new and vibrant generation, please join me in celebrating all of the small things brought together in our schools, community, and the lives of our children.

Steve is the Superintendent of Reeths Puffer Schools, located in Rocket City, Michigan. He graduated from both Eastern Michigan University and Grand Valley State University and holds his Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. He has two school-aged children, Sydney and Kaden and is the lucky husband of Karyn. Steve enjoys teaching, coaching, leading, and reading.



Welcome to Fremont

A great place to vacation, work, and to raise a family!

By Karen Baird

As the largest municipality in Newaygo County, Fremont is a community with a proud heritage and is home to the world's largest baby food company, Gerber Products Company! Within an hour of busy metropolitan areas, Fremont offers the charm of small town living, with an excellent school system, abundant churches, and businesses that pride themselves on good old-fashioned customer service.

The Fremont is also known for its wealth of natural beauty. After a single visit, you will be planning a return trip to enjoy the great year-round recreational opportunities that are a huge part of this area. Mother Nature has decorated Newaygo County with numerous natural resources, including 234 natural lakes and ponds, and 356 miles of rivers and streams that provide the ideal setting for boating, camping, fishing, or just plain relaxation. The 100,000 acres of the Manistee National Forest is only the beginning....

During the winter months, Newaygo County becomes a playground for the cold weather enthusiast. There are numerous miles of skiing, sledding, and snowmobile trails that welcome all to come out and play!

As the birthplace to Gerber Products Company, Fremont proudly boasts of its position as the "World' Baby Food Capital." Every year during the third-full week of July over 110,000 people gather to participate in fun-filled events for the entire family throughout the downtown and surrounding areas. Family fun and a celebration of children are the key components for this one-of-a-kind festival.

For the golf enthusiast, there are numerous area courses, ranging from a par three, to several challenging eighteen-hole courses with scenic fairways. For the sports fanatic, there are youth and adult recreation and exercise programs. For the energetic, there is bowling, archery, tennis, volleyball, basketball, softball leagues, a skate board park and our non motorized Town & Country Path for walking/bicycling through the recreational areas within the community and surrounding townships.

Fremont also boasts four community parks that provide visitors and residents with a variety of recreational alternatives. Veterans Memorial Park, in the heart of downtown, occupies an entire city block. A war memorial in the center of the park honors area veterans from all of our country's wartime conflicts. The park features an open-air amphitheatre with free summer concerts during June and July, in addition to the National Baby Food Festival, the Fremont Harvest Festival and the Christmas Stroll/Santa events. The playground and picnic pavilion are also popular places to hang out.

Located on the north shore of the beautiful 800-hundred acre, all-sports lake, you will find Fremont Lake Park. This park caters to all water lovers with a fully serviced summer RV park and campsites, a boat launch, picnic pavilion, an ice cream stand, swimming beach, Fort Fremont playground, and a sand volleyball court. Whether you come to fish, ski, swim or sun, enjoying the clean waters of Fremont Lake area is a must on your agenda.

William J. Branstrom Park, located on the northern edge of Fremont, features miles of trails for hiking and cross country skiing, an ice skating rink and a sledding hill, picnic areas, a playground, connection to the non-motorized Town & Country path and a baseball field as well as the 24 hole Disc Golf Course. The Town & Country Path goes from Branstrom Park at the north end of town to Fremont Lake at the south end of town. It provides paved trails that connect area schools, parks, and other points of interest. The trail is six miles long and maps are available at the Chamber office, Fremont Lake Park and the trail head in the industrial park. This unique trail takes users through scenic wooded areas, as well as residential communities, commercial areas and the industrial park.

Fremont Market Place Pavilion, located downtown is home to the local farmers market which opens at the end of June each year and closes the second weekend in October. The market is open on Tuesdays' from 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm and Saturdays' from 8:00 am to 1:00



pm. The market features locally grown produce as well as baked goodies, honey, plants and fresh cut flowers, spices and meats.

Come celebrate 60 years of the Newaygo County Agricultural Fair, one of the longest running fairs in the State of Michigan, the week of August 1st through 8th. Since 1955, the goal of the fair has been to provide educational experiences and fun for the public and its participants, while promoting the area's agriculture and youth. The fairgrounds are located at 815 S. Stewart in Fremont.

Fremont's Harvest Festival takes place the last weekend in September with a celebration of our area's farming heritage. It's the one time of year dedicated to antique tractors, games and a parade full of farm equipment. Massive displays of Hay Art decorate Veterans Memorial Park, parking lots, and store fronts as well as residents yards all over town! Hay Art is simply a display using hay to represent businesses, animals, or some other item of interest to the creator. This unique celebration concludes on Saturday evening with a beverage tent featuring great live music and Michigan made craft beers.

The Stephen F. Wessling Observatory, completed in 2005, is located six miles north of the city, on the corner of Baseline and Stone Road. It's part of the Kropscott Centennial Farm. Today, the property is widely known as the Kropscott Farm Environmental Center (KFEC). In conjunction with the Center, the SFW Observatory's goal is to provide the general public, area students, and local and regional

amateur astronomers the opportunity to observe and study the amazing universe in which we live. Newaygo County is blessed with 'dark skies', therefore interested people from West Michigan, Northern Indiana and Eastern Illinois also visit the observatory to take advantage of the dark skies.

When you're in Fremont, there is no need to travel miles to "shop 'til you drop" or get a nice meal, everything you need is right within reach. Fremont is Newaygo County's shopping destination. You will find a thriving retail and service community offering a wide variety of shopping pleasures, products and services. Like all of Fremont's shopping areas, downtown has plenty of free and convenient parking.

Entertainment in Fremont reflects the well-rounded tastes of our residents who enjoy a variety of arts and cultural events. The Dogwood Performing Arts Center is a state-of-the-art facility. It offers a comfortable technologically advanced center for quality performances of all types. Concerts, performing arts and dance events are on the schedule year round.

Questions? Visit or call the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce office at 7 E. Main Street, downtown Fremont or (231) 924-0770 and one of our staff members will be pleased to provide guidance, or visit our web site at www.fremontcommerce.com for information. Find us on Facebook. The Chamber office is open Mon-Fri 8:30 am to 4:30 pm all year long, stop by and chat. Our friendly team enjoys meeting visitors, new residents and current residents.

Karen Baird is the Executive Director of the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce since 2012. Karen was raised in White Cloud, graduated from White Cloud High School and then pursued her BA from Central Michigan University in Journalism/Public Relations with a minor in Public Health. She returned to the area after graduation, working for the Hi-Lites Shoppers Guide as their Advertising Manager until she retired in 1999. In 2002, the Executive Director of the Chamber offered her the job of membership director. Karen and her husband have 2 daughters, Sydney who will be senior at Ferris State University this fall and Sierra, who is junior at Fremont High School.



Knowing Your Health Insurance Coverage Can Help You Save a Bundle

By David Van Winkle, MD

Since the Affordable Care Act went into effect five years ago, health insurance costs have increased at a lower rate, yet have become harder to understand. Follow these tips to make sure you are getting the most out of your health insurance.

KNOW YOUR COVERAGE

Understand what your health insurance does and does not cover. Many insurance plans have a defined set of providers – primary care physicians, specialists, other health care providers and suppliers – that will accept your insurance plan, sometimes known as a “value network” or a “narrow network.” Using providers that are “out of network” will cost you more. Your plan should include a list of providers in your network covered by your insurance.

Many plans require more out-of-pocket costs from covered patients. This can include co-pays, deductibles and non-covered services. It is important to understand what these terms mean (see glossary below) and how they can impact your cost. Be sure to read your plan carefully to fully understand your benefits.

If you require urgent care for a true emergency, get care from the closest hospital that can help you. Insurance companies cannot charge more for emergency services, even if you have to go out of network. However, if you are just looking for after-hours care, or care for an acute health problem that cannot wait, contact your primary care physician, as they may be able to answer a question over the phone, see you after hours in their office, or direct you to the best location to get care for your type of problem –potentially saving you hundreds of dollars. Remember, any follow-up care after an emergency room visit must be done within your network for proper reimbursement.

The same goes for prescription drugs. Health plans help pay the cost of certain prescription medications. Make sure you know which of your prescriptions are covered and which pharmacy in your area works with your plan. Use generic medications and use fewer medications; consult with your primary care doctor for advice on what you need to take.

USE YOUR HEALTH COVERAGE TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

Schedule regular health maintenance appointments that do not require a co-pay or deductible. Most health insurance plans must now cover preventive care such as immunizations, as well as screenings for diabetes and certain cancers. Use your insurance to help you maintain optimum health.

APPEAL A HEALTH PLAN DECISION

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), you have the right to appeal a health insurance company’s decision to deny payment or terminate your health coverage.

ESTABLISH A PRIMARY CARE MEDICAL HOME

Utilizing your primary care “medical home” can minimize your costs. Studies show that care received from a well-trained primary care doctor for problems within their scope of practice typically costs less – and with similar outcomes – than those same services received from an emergency room, urgent care, or a specialist’s office.

GLOSSARY

Affordable Care Act: The comprehensive health care reform law enacted in March 2010. The law was enacted in two parts: The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was signed into law on March 23, 2010 and was amended by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act on March 30, 2010. The name “Affordable Care Act” is used to refer to the final, amended version of the law.

Appeal: A request for your health insurer or plan to review a decision or a grievance again.

Co-payment: A fixed amount (for example, \$15) you pay for a covered health care service, usually when you get the service. The amount can vary by the type of covered health care service.

Deductible: The amount you owe for covered health care services before your health insurance or plan begins to pay. For example, if your deductible is \$1,000, your plan won’t pay anything until you’ve met your \$1,000 deductible for covered health care services subject to the deductible. The deductible may not apply to all services.

Network: The facilities, providers and suppliers your health insurer or plan has contracted with to provide health care services.

Source: www.healthcare.gov

Dr. David Van Winkle is medical director for Affinia Health Network and Affinia Health Network –Lakeshore, a Clinical Integration Network bringing together a health network of 1,000 physicians, five hospitals, and other professional health care professionals in West Michigan. He received his medical degree from Wayne State University School of Medicine. Dr. Van Winkle is a family medicine doctor affiliated with Mercy Health in Muskegon. and has been in practice for 24 years.



ANSWERS FOR THE GAMES ON THE FOOD FOR THOUGHT PAGE ON 17

4	6	5	3	2	7	8	1	9
8	7	3	9	1	4	5	2	6
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2	3	7	6	4	9	1	5	8
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3	2	9	1	6	8	4	7	5
7	5	1	4	9	3	6	8	2
6	4	8	2	7	5	3	9	1

5	8	4	3	6	9	7	2	1
6	7	9	2	8	1	3	4	5
1	3	2	4	5	7	8	9	6
7	9	6	5	2	4	1	3	8
2	1	3	6	7	8	4	5	9
8	4	5	9	1	3	6	7	2
9	5	1	7	3	6	2	8	4
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