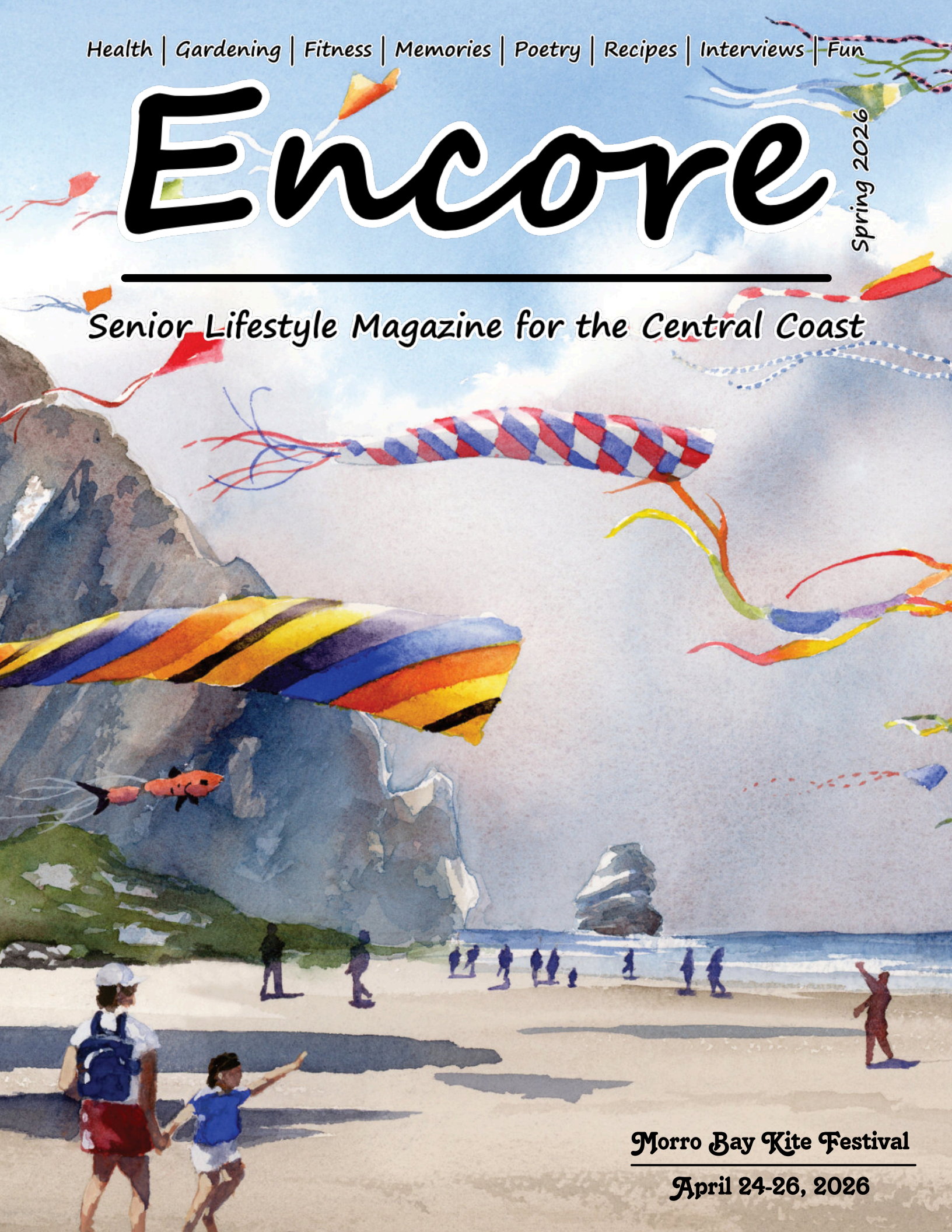


Health | Gardening | Fitness | Memories | Poetry | Recipes | Interviews | Fun

Encore

Spring 2026

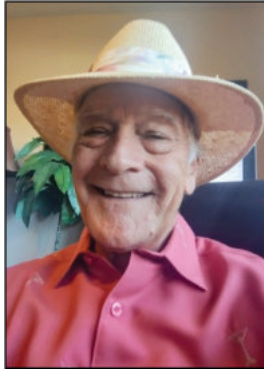
Senior Lifestyle Magazine for the Central Coast



Morro Bay Kite Festival

April 24-26, 2026

Publisher's Introduction - Spring '26



I hope everyone had a wonderful winter season. We certainly had some cold days and even colder nights. For this area, that is as normal as normal gets. There were many days where it was only actually warm between one p.m. and four thirty but, if you had a flexible schedule, it was great. As a good friend of mine once said: "There is no such thing as bad weather, it's all about the right clothing choice. If it's cold, wear a coat or sweater. If it's hot, wear shorts and a short sleeved shirt. If it's rainy, put on your rain gear or grab an umbrella." Don't change your plans, just change your attire.

Spring has definitely sprung. I don't know about you but, I got blindsided by the time change. It was not even on my radar. That being said, I like that it is here. It changes morning and night moods/plans/tolerances, etc. I'm not sure if it's easier in the states that don't recognize daylight savings time. Speaking of moods and other states, sometimes the news and world events can change your perception on things. Try to remember when you were a kid and how little mindless activities can create joy (i.e. dance with your pet, kick a rock down the sidewalk, fly a kite, play dress up with your friends, laugh out loud, make some pudding, read the comics, build a sand castle, etc.) It can change your mood!

Speaking of flying kites, our cover for this Spring edition has been provided by local, Morro Bay artist, David J. Rogers. It's a fine depiction of the annual Morro Bay Kite Festival that fills the air with beautiful colors as the many styles of kites are twisting in the ocean breezes. It kicks off on Friday night, April 24th after sunset and continues through Sunday, April 26th. It's a high flying family fun event. Check it out at www.morrobaykitefestival.com

Enjoy each day,
Dixon

Encore

Senior Lifestyle Magazine for the Central Coast

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CONTENTS

5 SLO Trekking with Charlie & The Cat's Meow

6 The Kitchen Hack

8 Cold Water Therapy Shows Promising Results

9 Encore Spotlight: Diamonds Are Forever

10 Be Aware of Limitations Age Can Have on Driving Competence

12 Happy Hour

14 And Another Thing!

15 In the Garden with Janice

16 Gluten Free Recipe

18 Playing Social Doubles The Right Way

19 Poet's Podium



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"Quote"

"As old wood is best to burn, old horse best to ride, old books to read and old wine to drink, so are old friends always most trusty to use." -Leonard Wright



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SLO Trekking with Charlie



In my more youthful years, I was hiking or biking several times a week. Nothing grandiose. No 50 mile rides or 10 mile hikes. Just getting out in nature, expending some energy, doing some aerobic activity. A left knee replacement, a right hip replacement

and painful ankle issues along with a series of lower back problems has curtailed many of those ambitions. However, being inactive has never been my modus operandi. As we get older and have to deal with certain limitations, we still need to remain active.

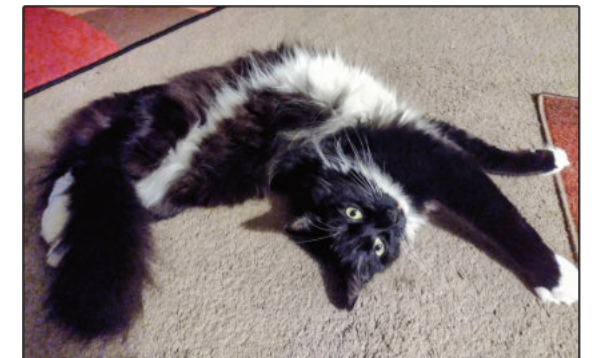
One of my favorite short hikes in the San Luis area is the Lemon Grove Loop, which got its name when a local rancher, G.W. Chandler planted orange and lemon trees on the mountain, which were watered by natural springs. There are not too many citrus trees left, but the moniker has remained. It's a relatively easy hike that should take only about 45 minutes depending on if you stop to take photos or stop to eat a picnic lunch. There are some beautiful panoramic views of the downtown area, Cuesta Grade and much of the Cal Poly Campus heading out Highway One towards Morro Bay.

The trail can be accessed from two locations. You can enter it from the parking area at the bottom of the Cerro Trailhead or you can start your trek up from Hill Street. Just head up Lincoln from Chorro past the Lincoln Deli, take a left on Hill Street and look to your right after the road turns to the right.

While there is a little bit of rise in elevation, some switchbacks and you have

to go through a metal gate, it should not be too taxing on your senior body. By the way, the Lincoln Deli is a great spot to pick up a few snacks for the trek or as a refreshing stop after you have completed your journey. Even though it is a short hike, always be prepared with plenty of water, good hiking boots and relief from sun exposure.

Keep on trekking!



The Cat's Meow

Feline Advice Column by Kozmo

- If they ignore you, ignore them harder.
 - If it's not about you, make it about you.
 - Disappear for emotional impact.
 - Love-bomb. Then bite.
 - Stare at the wall.
- Let them question reality.
- Break something.
- Maintain eye contact.

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THE

KITCHEN HACK

by Carrie Head

Welcome Spring!

From Easter Treats To Garden Greens

Spring has arrived on the Central Coast and Easter will be here on Sunday, April 5. Many of our Encore readers are proud grandparents and will be welcoming family during the Easter holiday. If you are planning on having family visit, and young grandchildren will be along, here are some practical hacks for dyeing Easter eggs.

vegetables and fruits available at San Luis Obispo County's Farmers Markets. Creating a delicious, colorful, healthy salad isn't just greens in a bowl — it's about texture, balance and the right combination of wholesome ingredients. These simple tips turn everyday salads into one that is creative, original and nutritious:



• Start with boiling the eggs: For tender whites and sunny yolks without the gray ring, place eggs in cold water, bring just to a boil, then turn off the heat, cover, and let sit for 10–12 minutes. Transfer immediately to an ice bath for easy peeling.

• Dyeing eggs: Skip messy cups of liquid color. Add dry rice and a few drops of food coloring to a zip-top bag, place the egg inside, and gently shake. The result is a softly speckled, artisanal finish — no drips required.

The Spring season is also a great time to take advantage of all the fresh, colorful

• Start with dry greens. After washing, spin thoroughly or pat dry with a clean towel. Dressing clings better to dry leaves, giving you more flavor in every bite.

• Season in layers. Sprinkle a pinch of salt directly onto greens before adding dressing — it wakes up flavor instantly. Then dress lightly and toss well. You can always add more, but be careful not to overdress the salad; it can make it soggy and weigh everything down.

• For better texture, think contrast. Pair crisp (cucumbers, nuts, red peppers), creamy (avocado, cheese), and chewy (dried fruit, grains) elements. Even a simple salad feels elevated with mixed textures.

• Make dressing in the bowl first. Whisk vinaigrette ingredients at the bottom, then add sturdier ingredients like chopped vegetables, grains, and proteins. Toss before folding in delicate greens. It distributes flavor evenly and saves dishes.

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Cold Water Therapy Shows Promising Results

by Doris Lance



Have you ever heard of the Iceman? No, not the one from Marvel Comics but the Dutch-born Wim Hof who developed the 'cold water therapy' technique. Once espoused for elite athletes, it is now being studied with surprising and numerous health benefits for the average individual. First, let us define what cold water therapy is.

When the body contacts or is immersed in cold water such as in showering, bathing or swimming, it responds by increasing blood flow to the vital organs in the core to protect and keep them warm. Healthy circulation ensures your blood can efficiently remove waste products and deliver oxygen and nutrients throughout the entire body.

Before you stop reading, the list of benefits that cold water therapy can deliver is very promising:

- 1) **Reduced inflammation**
- 2) **Increased blood circulation**
- 3) **Relief for sore muscles**
- 4) **Boosts your immunity systems**
- 5) **Increased energy levels**
- 6) **Increased overall metabolism**

One study found participants who ended a hot shower with 30 seconds of the coldest water temperature available, for at least 30 days, had significant reduction in sickness. This activation of the immune system helps reduce inflammatory responses.

According to the American Academy of Dermatology, simply showering in lukewarm water (rather than hot water) can significantly promote skin health. That is because hot water can strip the skin of moisture, as well as worsening certain skin conditions like eczema, psoriasis, and acne.

Again, ending a daily shower with 30 seconds of the coldest water one can tolerate improves blood circulation and decrease inflammation, which has shown to improve hair and skin health plus tighten your skin pores.

If you want to take it to the next level and take the cold water plunge, you need to prepare yourself by practicing the following breathing technique:

Resist the urge to gasp for air as soon as you feel the cold water. Instead, breathe deeply for several inhale/exhale breaths. Next, inhale through the nose for a count of four (4), hold for a count of seven (7), and exhale through the mouth for a count of eight (8). It is known as the 4-7-8 breath technique developed by Dr. Andrew Weil.



Lastly, and extremely important is the results of cold-water immersion for chronic pain. People with gout arthritis who participated in a study for four weeks experienced a reduction in pain plus better joint mobility.

On a personal note, I have been doing cold water therapy for over six months and at first, I decreased the warm water, a little at a time, and found I could tolerate the cold water much better with a gradual change. Always check with a physician in case there may be some additional precautions you need to consider depending on your overall health.



Marriage can be a difficult journey for many of us as the current American statistics show that 34-42% of first marriages ends in divorce, which is actually an improvement from just 20 years ago. Many younger individuals take the plunge before they have a good understanding of what the future may bring and the adjustments that they will invariably need to make if they are to have a successful union. To many, it's a leap of faith based on the emotional spell they may be under, which unfortunately was actually infatuation that they mistook for long lasting love. To have an enduring, long term marriage takes many ingredients including:

- ✓ Discipline
- ✓ Commitment
- ✓ Adaptability
- ✓ Compromise
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Shared Goals

There is a couple here on the Central Coast who have just celebrated their 75th Anniversary, which is appropriately called "The Diamond Anniversary". According to national statistics this is a very rare event that has only been reached by approximately 1,000 couples in the entire nation. Bill and Jean Carter, a Cambrian couple, achieved this milestone in February 2026. It's a remarkable achievement.

However, it was not love at first sight. They lived near each other in the city of Bakersfield, attending the same high school and even riding on the same bus every day. While they certainly knew of each other, there was no spark. In fact, since they hung around with the same group of friends, Jean tried unsuccessfully to fix Bill up with a couple of her friends. While Bill thought about asking Jean out, he just didn't have the nerve. Until one chilly day, during their senior year, while with friends at a local hangout, Bill offered Jean his jacket and she accepted. This

finally emboldened Bill to ask her to a movie. But Jean put her foot down and said no. If you want to ask me out then call me on the phone and ask me the proper way.

Bill followed her rule and they started dating. After graduation in 1948, they both attended San Jose State University. It turns out, Bill wasn't all that crazy about college and instead enlisted in the USAF. Though they were now separated, they still stayed in touch and saw each other when they could. However, Jean was also seeing another suitor at the same time. Unfortunately, the 'other guy' had joined the U.S. Merchant Marines and was gone for much longer stints than Bill. This opened the door for Bill and things became much more serious and they tied the knot in 1951.

And are still together 75 years later. They lay claim to 6 children, 14 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren. In fact several years ago Bill rented out Camp Ocean Pines for a family reunion that had 80 attendees. They had an absolute wonderful time.

I asked Bill for a few words of advice regarding long term relationship success. He responded with a few phrases. #1 They do everything together. #2 They communicate and really listen to one another. #3 They respect, honor and are committed to each other. And they both said accommodation is key. These are great words of wisdom for anyone who is in any kind of relationship. It is so refreshing for me to meet people like Bill and Jean and hear their story. It just makes me feel a little better about the world in which we live.

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Be Aware of Limitations Age Can Have on Driving Competence

As we age, our pupils become smaller and because of that, they do not let in as much light and are less responsive to light. It follows that our older pupils take longer to adjust to the dark, making night driving or driving in dimly lit areas more difficult. It is also why oncoming headlights, when driving at night, can seem much brighter than when we were younger. Even on a clear sunny day, with the sun causing glare off of another car's windshield or exterior can cause temporary blind spots. This sensitivity can detract from seeing objects clearly, especially in critical situations.

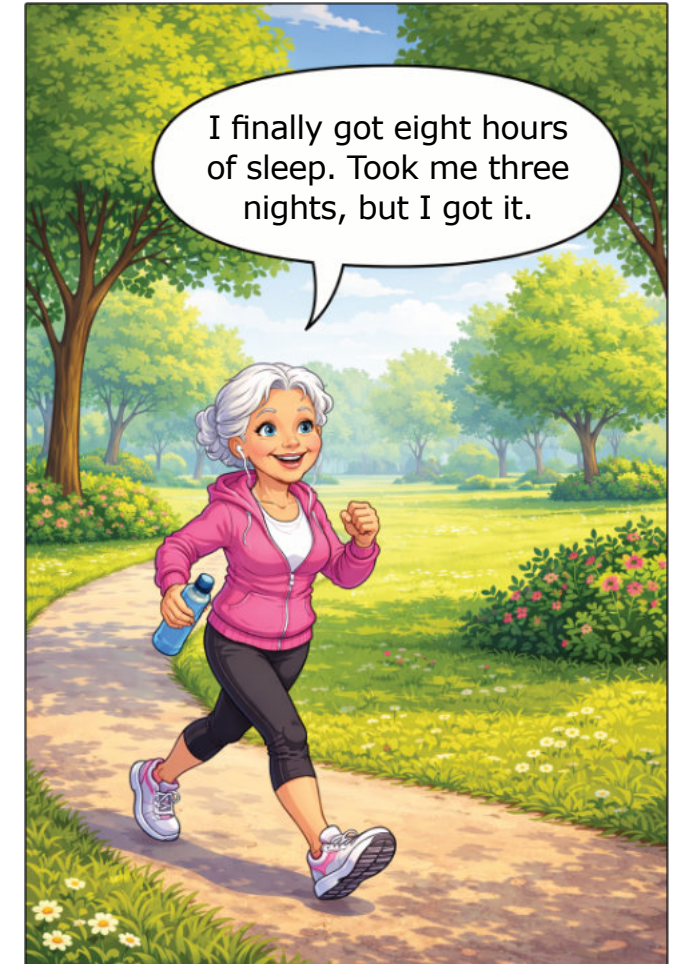
While vision is a factor when discussing safe driving, hearing also plays an important part. Hearing the sounds of traffic, horns, warning signals or emergency vehicles is essential for maintaining your overall awareness in certain situations. As we age, our hearing diminishes and it becomes more challenging to pick up on auditory clues from our environment.

Our vehicles are a lifeline that keeps us independent and truly is a source of freedom that we have enjoyed ever since we attained our first drivers license. If we want to continue to have access to these transportation devices, we have to make sure we are keeping up with our health screening. Make sure you always get your eyes and ears checked every year. Most health insurance policies provide for annual checkups. Find out if you might need hearing aids or if you are showing any signs of such conditions such as glaucoma, cataracts or macular degeneration.

As we get older, we must make some smart and sometimes difficult choices. We need to determine when it might be better a better choice not drive ourselves, when it might be better to ask a friend for a ride or to call one of the transportation services to take us where we want or need to go. It's a judgment call. We all want to feel safe and secure with our own abilities and for every other driver out there on the road with us.

FYI

It took over 100,000 slaves over the course of 20 to 30 years to build the Great Pyramid of Cheops, in Egypt. There is enough stone used in its construction to build a wall around the entire perimeter of France.



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Happy Hour

Happy Hour is one of my favorite times of the day. I mean just the name makes you smile. So, each issue will have a Happy Hour section in it. The column will contain 1 or 2 cocktail recipes plus 1 or 2 appetizer recipes for you to try, taste and enjoy. The first contributions will come from our editorial staff, but we would love to hear from our readers for future recipes which we will reprint, giving the creator full credit.

CHOCOLATE MARTINI MOCKTAIL

Combine 1C milk, 1/4 C chocolate syrup & 1 Tbsp. corn syrup & crushed ice in a blender & stir in a blender until smooth

Pour some chocolate syrup on a plate & some chocolate sprinkles on another plate. Dip a glass, (preferably a martini glass) in the syrup & then dip the glass onto to the sprinkles

Pour the chocolate milk into the glass & have a chocolaty good time

Italian Manhattan

- 2 oz. rye, bourbon or whiskey
- 1 oz. Italian Amaro liqueur
- 1 splash of simple syrup
- 2-3 dashes of orange or raspberry bitters

Stir robustly in a tumbler, add large ice cube & enjoy pre or post dinner

ROASTED RED PEPPER ROMESCO DIP

- 1 15 oz. jar of roasted red peppers
- 6 oz. almonds
- 4-5 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 3/4 tsp. paprika
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1/2 C chopped cilantro
- Add salt & ground pepper to taste

Place in blender or food processor & hit puree
Serve with pita bread chunks, chips and/or veggies



Sense of Smell = Early Warning System

New research suggests that our olfactory organ could be a valuable portent of certain neurological disorders. While the loss of smell is usually associated with colds, allergies and other respiratory tract infections, it turns out it could also be indicative of more serious issues down the road.

Smell testing equipment is not an easy process to install at your local primary care provider's office. That may change as more research is carried out in laboratories and as technology in the field advances. While a patient's medical history must be factored into the whole diagnosis, smell testing may be another way to predict what lays ahead with the potential to prescribe early treatment options.

Time Travel

Match the actor with the TV Series

- 1) Mary Tyler Moore
- 2) M*A*S*H
- 3) All in the Family
- 4) Happy Days
- 5) Sanford & Son

- A) Demond Wilson
- B) Tom Bosley
- C) Ted Baxter
- D) Sally Struthers
- E) Gary Burghoff

Answers on bottom of page

SUDOKU

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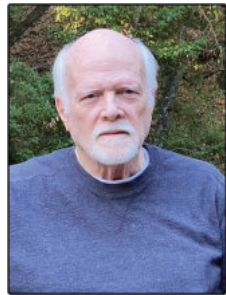
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1-C 2-E 3-D 4-B 5-A



And Another Thing! By Rod Pound

I've been informed that I'm too irritable - too negative. Really? Look around. Not like I don't have reason.

"You need to get outside and get some sunlight on your face," she says. "Lord knows, you've got a lot of face ever since you lost your hair." Where I went wrong was telling her I loved her quick wit.

So, I grumbled my way outside. Nothing happened. "Stroll downtown. Look for happy people," she adds. One: I don't like happy people. They annoy me. Two: Walk? Not a day goes by that you don't hear about some fool out for a walk having a heart attack. Proof positive walking is dangerous. Besides, I have a car. I made payments for 60 months so I could own it. I'm not walking when I can drive. Another thing, I buy gas and pay insurance. I contribute to the financial well-being of the oil and insurance industries. I'm doing my part. In the spirit of compromise plus the realization that she's not going to let it go, I drive the three blocks to downtown.

I expected to see, and avoid, sneezes and sniffles from the newly-introduced Spring pollen foisted on the general public. Instead, I'm surrounded by frolickers. I don't frolic. Downtown restaurants have added outside dining. A couple set up barbecues. The smells drag me in their

direction. I'd bet the farm, if I had one, that these people never heard of In 'N Out Burger. This requires further investigation. I get in line.

Back at home, I change into shorts to wash my car.

"Admit it, you enjoyed yourself," she smirks from the porch.

"You want to fix something?"

I respond, refusing to smile.

"Take on Daylight Savings Time."

She's gone, leaving me to gripe into the biosphere, and to you. I don't want to spend another winter arguing with my dog, whom I firmly believe can tell time, that the clock says it's 4:00, not 5:00, so he has to wait to eat. Or, being told that I'm an hour early or an hour late. Spring ahead, Fall behind? Not my problem.

Try to follow me here. You've just turned your clocks ahead. Now, leave them alone! My dog and I would really appreciate it.

One more thing, and I'll deny ever saying it, "It's Spring, tra-la!"



In the Garden with Janice

From Gray to Green: How Spring Color Lifts the Spirit

by Janice Van Bever

It's amazing to experience the emotional benefits of adding color to your spring garden. After we go through what seems like eons of time with grey skies and naked trees, color feels especially refreshing. The site of the first little white blossom on a neighbor's tree lifted my spirit instantly. Spring gardening offers a gentle way to re-connect with nature.

One of the ways to improve your mood and outlook is to add bright colors like yellow, orange or red which tend to energize and uplift. Planting some perennials will give you lasting pleasure through the years. The below suggestions are all considered to be generally drought tolerant, once established. The following plants prefer full sun and are well-suited to the area's climate. They thrive in sunny, well-drained locations with minimal water requirements, making them excellent choices for low-maintenance, dry, or Mediterranean-style garden

Yellow

- Coreopsis
- Daffodils
- Prairie Sun Black-eyed Susan
- Echinacea (Coneflower)
- Moonshine Yarrow

Orange

- Arctotis 'Sun Spot'
- Daylilies
- Kniphofia - Red Hot Poker
- California Poppies
- Lantana
- Echinacea (Coneflower)

Red

- *Salvia greggii* 'Autumn Sage'
- Kniphofia 'Rockets Red Glare'- Red Hot Poker
- Japanese Blood Grass
- Echinacea (Coneflower)

Cool tones like blue, lavender, and soft pink create calm and relaxation. One of my personal favorites, besides lavender, is the Penstemon Margarita BOP which sprouted as a seedling at the Bottom of the Porch (BOP) in the local Las Pilatas Nursery. It thrived there without any care, a beautiful blue, and it also thrives in my Paso Robles yard with so little water during the summer (except the first one).

Blue

- Penstamen 'Margarita Bop'
- Pozo Blue Salvia
- Geranium 'Rozanne'
- Electric Blue Penstamen

Purple

- Purple Echinacea (Coneflower)
- Ceanothus many varieties
- Verbena del la Mina
- Lavender many varieties

Hopefully you will allow your gardening to be a gentle, joyful activity where you can be with nature and appreciate beauty at any scale and time.

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Gluten Free Recipe By Pat Chaney

CHICKEN CHEDDAR CHOWDER

- 2 bacon slices
- 1 lb. skinless boneless chicken breast, cut into bite size pieces
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 2 pressed garlic cloves
- 4 1/2 cups fat-free chicken broth
- 2 cups diced red potatoes
- 2 cups whole kernel corn
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour (use gluten free flour if you have celiac or wheat allergy)
- 2 cups 2% lactose free milk or regular 2% milk
- 3/4 (3 oz) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper



Cook bacon in Dutch oven (preheated on stove top) until crisp. Crumble & set aside. Add chicken, onion, bell pepper & garlic to bacon fat, sauté 5 minutes. Add broth & potatoes, bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat & simmer 20 minutes. Add corn, stir well. Place flour in a bowl. Gradually add milk, stir with a whisk until blended, add to soup. Cook over medium heat 15 minutes or until thick, stirring frequently. Stir in cheese, salt & pepper. Top with crumbled bacon. Yields approximately 7 servings (1 1/2 cups each)

Ta da!!! This a tasty soup perfect for a cool evening.

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Playing Social Doubles the Right Way

by Gregg Whitfield - National Award Winner and Instructor/Trainer

Pickleball was created as a family game — fun, active, and welcoming to all ages and skill levels. Yet as the sport has grown, so has the competitive mindset. Tournaments are everywhere, paddles are more powerful, and many players rush to end points quickly.

Competition is great. But recreational doubles should not always feel like a championship match.

When playing socially, especially with mixed skill levels, remember the spirit of the game. Not every ball needs to be slammed. Not every rally needs to end in three shots.

Sometimes the better play is to be the “wall” — reset the ball, extend the rally, and keep everyone involved.

If you’re playing with beginners or lower-level players:

- Share the ball to all four players
- Avoid targeting the weakest player repeatedly

- Slow the point down with a drop shot
- Reset hard balls instead of finishing them

Play like you’re teaching your grandkids — or your grandparents. Hit quality shots that give others a legitimate chance to respond.

You can still challenge yourself. Work on:

- Consistent baseline drives, drops, and lobs
- Transition-area resets and soft defensive shots
- Kitchen rallies focused on control rather than winners

Social doubles is about balance. Compete — but also cooperate. Keep the ball in play. Build rallies. Create fun.

That’s the game the founders imagined — and it’s still the best part of pickleball today.



POET'S PODIUM



By Kevin Clark

Nothing reminds me more of the rare unhurried gesture my mother made, maybe

twice each year, than the scent of clean street water in mid-spring, say, when a crisp

airborne freshness suggests a plenitude of time and my own sweet promise. In the sun-mist

of second grade, I once breathed that new scent as we strolled down 3rd Avenue. The trucks

hadn't yet dumped their gas into the air lining the sidewalk to my grandmother's apartment

on 54th. I can't know why but for blocks she held my bare hand without the usual speedy tugs,

the quick, rough squeeze meaning *Keep Up*, meaning *Now*. And I remember the same scent

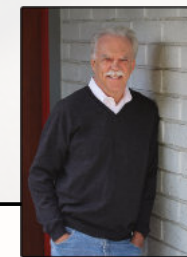
one unheralded July midmorning, my tenth year, a sun shower ending a game of stickball

before I stole in to join her quietly on the couch as she read. So it was I carefully stretched out

beside her, and for a full thirty seconds, as absentmindedly as turning the next page

of a mystery, that fierce, untrustworthy hand began scratching through my summer crew cut,

while I lay in the brief capacious gift happened upon like love.



Don't miss a peep



Turn the
chick up
louder.



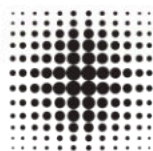
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