

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

Encore

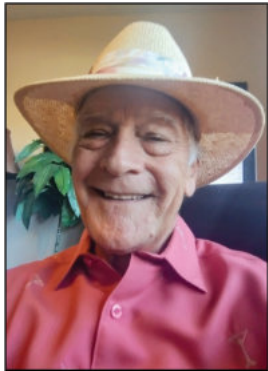
Summer 2026

Senior Lifestyle Magazine for the Central Coast



J. DUNN

Publisher's Introduction - Summer 2026



"Summertime and the livin' is easy" as we all slow down a bit as the temperatures rise. It's just the way it is all across our county as well as the rest of the world. As the seasons change, so does our activity level. It's a proven observation throughout the animal kingdom that when the weather heats up, we, as a species, along with most of the animal kingdom, not only slow down our physical movements, our brains slow down as well. Our minds don't react as quickly, we don't make decisions as decisively and we don't even want to engage in critical thinking.

Seniors, more specifically, need to be careful with their activity level, especially outdoors, but they also need to understand that the increase in heat will have an effect on their brain activity, particularly when it is over an extended period of time. Here on the Central Coast, we are very lucky to have an abundance of activity choices, from community live music concerts to the mid state fair extravaganza to the many winery event offerings. And let's not forget backyard BBQ's, beach outings and hiking and biking meet-ups. Yes, summertime in SLO County can be 'easy livin'. Just remember to plan your outings with the weather in mind.

Our cover image is provided by long time Paso Robles artist Julie Dunn and displays one of our areas most iconic attractions; the rows and rows of grapes on the vine on many of our hills and valleys. The local wine industry supports nearly 9,000 jobs and generates over \$2.6 billion in economic output. I just might have to sample a glass or two this summer. I hope you enjoy our summer edition of **Encore** and also take the time to partake in many of our local attractions.

Dixon

Encore

Senior Lifestyle Magazine for the Central Coast

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CONTENTS

- 5 The Cat's Meow
- 6 The Kitchen Hack
- 7 Estero Bluffs State Park
- 8 Beneath the Surface
- 9 Hotdog vs. Hamburger
- 10 Misery Loves Company... sometimes
- 12 Happy Hour
- 14 S.A.D. II
- 15 My Serenity Garden
- 16 Gluten Free Recipe
- 18 Pickleball
- 19 Poet's Podium



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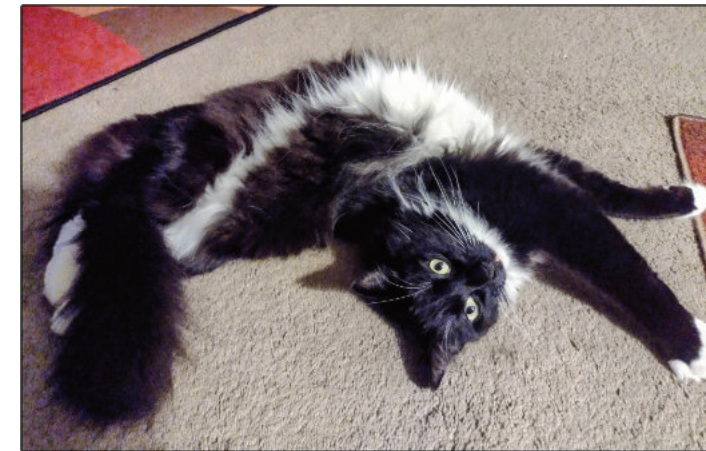
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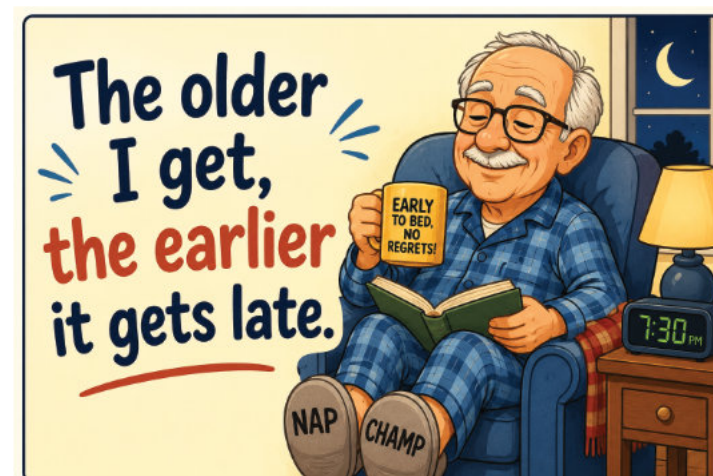
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The Cat's Meow

Feline Advice Column by Kozmo

- Why does my roommate keep staring at that glowing rectangle? Oh well, as long as he doesn't move too much or start yelling again, I can use his lap as my cushion.
- It sure seems to be getting warmer these days. I keep finding little patches of my fur all over the house. How am I supposed to keep my handsome appearance?
- Why does that bird keep mocking me? I'm minding my own business, staring out the window and it just starts squawking at me. If this glass partition wasn't here, I'd have a mouth full of feathers right now.
- I sure do wish that door bell would stop ringing. I'm really getting tired of running and hiding under the bed.



Not only are we getting older as a population, but our workforce is also getting older as now 1 in 4 workers are 55 years or older and the share of workers over 65 increased by more than 40%. Does this mean individuals are enjoying working and being a constructive, contributing member of our society or is this happening out of financial necessity?



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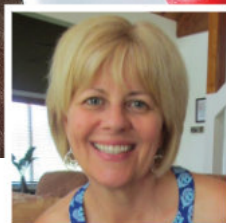


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THE

KITCHEN HACK

by Carrie Head



CREATE HEALTHY SNACKS

You're more likely to eat healthy if nutritious foods are readily available. All it takes is some advanced planning and prep work. Keep a "snack box" in the fridge: Pre-cut cucumbers, watermelon, cheese, deli meat and hard-boiled eggs are quick and easy healthy snacks full of vitamins and protein.

THE WONDER OF A ROTISSERIE CHICKEN

A store-bought rotisserie chicken is inexpensive and can add protein and variety to any dish. Shred the chicken for tacos, salads, wraps, grain bowls and sandwiches. You can also freeze it in a zip-lock bag for later use.

FRIDGE & PRODUCE HACKS

Store lettuce and vegetables by wrapping paper towels around them, it will absorb moisture and extend the life of the veggies well-beyond keeping them wrapped in plastic. Berries - do not wash before eating they will get limp and moldy. Before eating berries, rinse in a colander and pat dry.

TURN SAUCES INTO DRESSINGS

Thin pesto, hummus, peanut sauce or yogurt dips with lemon juice or water for a salad dressing that's healthier than the bottled varieties, which often have added sugar and preservatives.

COLD IDEAS TO MAXIMIZE THE AGE-OLD ICE CUBE TRAY

- Maximize your fresh herbs by freezing them for later use. Chop fresh herbs such as basil, parsley, cilantro, rosemary and freeze in ice cube trays with olive oil. Add them to a variety of dishes for an added flavor bonus.
- Freeze leftover wine in ice cube trays and toss into soups, sauces and marinades.
- Freeze coffee in ice cube trays and pop into your iced coffee for maximum flavor.

Send us your kitchen hacks!

email:

carrie3936@gmail.com



Estero Bluffs State Park

by Renne Gardner

As I hike along the four mile stretch of trail on the bluffs overlooking the sea, I know that I hike on protected ground: the Estero Bluffs State Park. The bluffs and the beach protected by California. As I continue my hike, it occurs to me that the native peoples who lived here for centuries didn't need a special designation. For all the ocean, all the land were sacred to the Chumash.

How could it be otherwise with such beauty and bounty? A place where salt water meets fresh, and abundant sea life provided nourishment. Where streams supplied fresh water. And nutrients for rock fish and perch caught to accompany gathered acorns and seeds. With their bone and shell spears, Chumash fishermen would take only what they needed.

I start my hike at the southern end of the state park, just north of Cayucos. Here lies the final resting place of the fishing vessel, the Point Estero. No value in salvage, so it slowly rusts amid sand and salt water. Navigational error and fog-

shrouded rocks poked an irreparable hole in the hull where she shed oil, gas and other maritime detritus.

The wreck is like one of those tests where one must choose the item that doesn't belong. The Point Estero does not belong. A place where red wood logs that drifted south after storms were hewn with stone tools, then assembled into canoe-like vessels called tomols. A place where the Chumash paddled their tomols to fish and trade.

No Chumash fisherman would have been caught unaware in a fog bank. And only after many years, when the pine pitch "yop" was worn away and the redwood planks weathered to the point of leaking, only then would all of the tomol materials be returned to the earth and sea. No gas or diesel oil, no plastic deck supplies. Just wood, shell and resin returned to their place of birth. Yes, tomols belong in this picture.

I imagine ceremonies where tomols were honored, and great stories told of trade and catches. There are no great stories for the Point Estero. Just photos taken at low tide for social media. Certainly commercial fishing practices have evolved. We can't over-fish or pollute marine habitat. We can't utilize fishing methods that kill protected species. Perhaps this is what we should celebrate when we see the Point Estero.

Celebrate this at Estero Bluffs State Park. But also celebrate what the native Chumash knew and lived. We hike on sacred land. Here is much more than bluffs and streams and rocky shore line. And so much more than a state park.

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Beneath the Surface

by Doris Lance

It may look like a piece of cellophane wrap, but it is a visual of what your internal "wetsuit" can be compared. Yes, this is fascia. Just below the skin, fascia surrounds every muscle and organ, like a spider web. It is primarily composed of collagen, elastin, and a gel-like substance. Many individuals have never heard of it or even know of its existence.

Think of fascia as a thin, strong, elastic sheet of connective tissue that wraps around, supports, and separates every muscle, organ, nerve, and bone in the body. So, let's delve into what its function is, and how to make sure we can have healthy fascia.

Consider these five functions of our bodysuit (fascia):

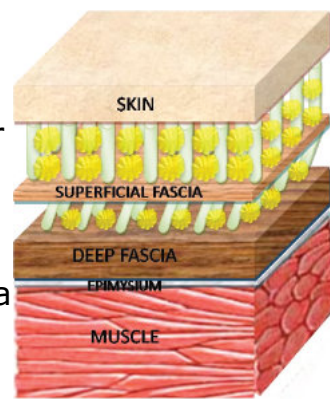
1. It provides support and holds all organs and muscles in their proper place.
2. It facilitates movement and tissues to glide smoothly over each other without friction for smooth motion.
3. It helps transmit force and tension throughout the body when muscles contract.
4. It provides padding and acts as a protective barrier around organs and nerves.
5. It provides sensory feedback and contains sensory receptors that give the brain information about body position and pain.

Fascia is an integral part of a healthy body, however, there are factors that can affect the optimum functions of fascia: There are conditions that can inflame or irritate fascia such as receptivity stress, dehydration, lack of exercise, poor posture or injury. These conditions cause fascia to tighten and become stiff, thickening, or develop adhesions (sticky spots) resulting in stiffness, reduced mobility, and myofascial pain.

Let's look at the three types of fascias: superficial, deep and visceral.

Superficial fascia lays just under the skin and contains fat, nerves, and blood vessel endings.

Deep fascia surrounds our muscles, bones, nerves and lies deeper in the body and lastly the visceral fascia wraps around the heart, lungs, and intestines. When fascia is healthy, it can help our body recover faster and thoroughly.



The best way to maintain healthy fascia is daily gentle movement, such activities as stretching, tai chi, or yoga, can help keep fascia loose and lubricated. Some other techniques include foam rolling 30-60 seconds on targeted areas, holding deep stretches for 1-3 minutes and massaging the area to break down any adhesions. These practices can also help you recover from injury by calming the nervous system and increasing local circulation to the impacted area.

Fascia changes appearance depending on its health. Healthy fascia appears smooth, and translucent. Unhealthy fascia looks clumpy, sticky, and tangled.

Repairing or maintaining healthy fascia involves a combination of consistent mobility, hydration, massage and stretching to keep this internal "wetsuit" pliable. If you can make a habit of these practices, your fascia will work with you instead of against you.



Hotdog vs. Hamburger

Another frivolous & futile debate:

(In honor of our 250th anniversary as a nation, the topic will be; which is more American - the hot dog or the hamburger?)

RP: There's nothing better than a burnt dog in a toasted bun, slathered in mustard. The 4th of July equals hot dogs. Baseball, hotdogs, apple pie and lemonade. All truly American. Except no substitutes.

DM: Sure, hot dogs are a tradition at baseball games, but where else? The hot dog had it's day in the bun, I mean sun. Look around. There are literally thousands and thousand of burger drive-ins all across our country. Take any exit off a freeway and you're bound to have several choices of burger drive-in options. Hot dogs aren't even on the menus.

RP: Attend any outdoor event; art shows, car shows, music concerts, barbeques. Picture people walking around, trying to eat a hamburger without most of it ending up on the ground.

DM: Even if you discount the thousands of burger drive-ins, go into the classiest, hautiest restaurants and chances are you'll find a hamburger on the menu. A hot dog? I think not.

RP: Okay, I'll give you that there are more burger joints than hot dog stands, but

you've slipped off the tracks. The debate is, which is more American? We've been singing the praises of The All-American Hot Dog for years...from Perry Como's "hot diggity, dog ziggity, boom, what you do to me" to Elvis Presley's, "Hot dog, you say you're really coming back?"

DM: The real truth is in the numbers. And I'm not talking about "Golden Oldies". The hamburger passed the hot dog in popularity decades ago. And not just in all the eating establishments, but also on the backyard BBQ grill.

RP: Be sure to check out the upcoming Mid-State Fair this summer and see if you can find a "burger on a stick" stand.

DM: Okay, let me ask you this, what was the last item you cooked on your grill?

RP: Darn! I cooked hamburgers last night.

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I hear 'ya



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Misery Loves Company... sometimes

by Charlie Lansford

Have you ever been cornered at a party or some other social gathering or even at the grocery store by a friend or maybe just an acquaintance in a very one-sided conversation? The subject is always centered around the health issues of themselves or one of their loved ones or the sister of a neighbor who moved to Arkansas.

One of the certainties of aging, if we live long enough, is our bodies start to break down. Sometimes bit by bit, sometimes all at once. Then we get to join the parade to the doctors offices, the imaging centers and the physical therapy tables. Surgeries happen, recoveries follow and sometimes we have to change our lifestyle to accommodate the glitch in our giddyup or the shoulder that doesn't want to work the way it used to.

In fact, there are too many instances of seeing friends or neighbors or co-workers, if you're still working, at the same medical facilities. It can almost become it's own social gathering. And guess what we're all talking about? Obviously, there are times when it is a very serious situation, but

other times, it can all seem quite comical. It's the new drive-in or meet up.

A neighbor told me recently that when their daughter was visiting for a few days, she pleaded with them to quit talking about getting old. We, as a group, do have a tendency to not only talk about our miseries, but we also try to out-do the others in the conversation. "Oh, yeah! I can beat that malady. Listen to my sad story." My brother and I have been doing this for decades.

You might as well laugh at the absurdity of the conversations sometimes. After all, humor can be an elixir of sorts when we are deep in our co-misery.

Here are a couple of even better quotes regarding the subject:

"If misery loves company, why don't all the miserable people find each other and stop trying to convert others?"

"If misery loves company, then triumph demands an audience."

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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.



Twenty Mule Team (Your choice)

Moscow Mule

2 oz. Vodka
4-6 oz. ginger beer
Splash or two of lime juice

Mexican Mule

2 oz. Tequila
4-6 oz. ginger beer
Splash or two of lime juice

Kentucky Mule

2 oz. Bourbon
4-6 oz. ginger beer
Splash or two of lime juice

Irish Mule

2 oz. Irish Whiskey
4-6 oz. ginger beer
Splash or two of lime juice

COOL & CRISP CUCUMBER SALSA

(great for hot summer days)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups finely chopped cucumber, peeled & seeded
- 1/2 cup finely chopped seeded tomato
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 2 tbsp. minced parsley
- 1 finely chopped seeded jalapeno pepper
- 4 tsp. minced cilantro
- 1 minced garlic clove
- 1/4 cup reduced fat sour cream
- 1 1/2 tsp. lemon juice
- 1 1/2 tsp. lime juice
- 1/4 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp. seasoned salt

Directions:

- Combine in a small mixing bowl the first 7 ingredients
- Combine the remaining ingredients in a separate bowl
- Pour the second bowl over the cucumber mix and stir until well coated

Serve with chips, crackers or small pieces of bread



Two thirds of Americans diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease are women. A recent study has linked this memory decline phenomenon to less estrogen in the brain tissue post menopause.



MUSIC ROYALTY

Match the epithet with the singer

- A) King of Cool
- B) King of Swing
- C) Queen of Jazz
- D) Queen of Soul
- E) King of Rock 'n Roll

- 1) Aretha Franklin
- 2) Elvis Presley
- 3) Ella Fitzgerald
- 4) Dean Martin
- 5) Benny Goodman

Answers on bottom of page

SUDOKU

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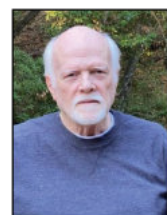
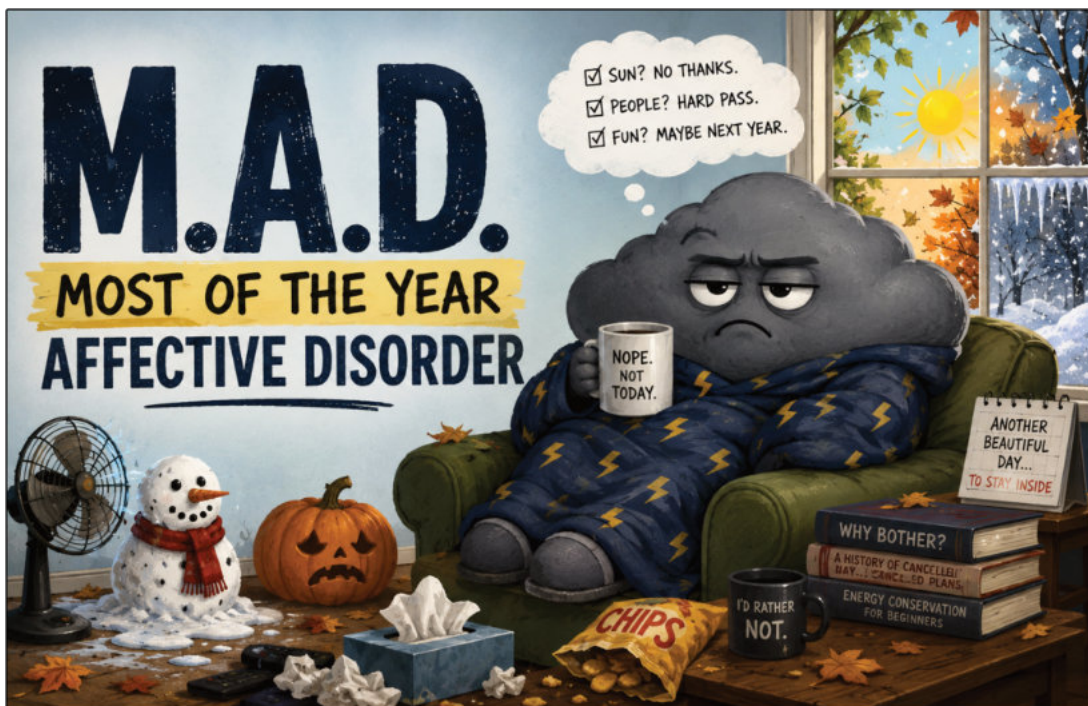
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A-4 B-5 C-3 D-1 E-2



S.A.D. II

By Rod Pound

Man, it was hard enough to complain about Spring in the last issue. Summer? Too warm? Baloney. Days too long? Not hardly. Bunches of tourists bringing in bunches of money and leaving it? C'mon. Female swimsuits getting smaller? I can live with that.

Must I complain, you ask? Check out the title of this column: "And Another Thing!" It isn't called, "Ain't Everything Peachy?" I've got a job to do and it doesn't involve smiling.

As for summer complaints, I take the easy way out and search the internet. "Seasonal affective disorder (S.A.D.) The summer blues disorder, also known as 'summer-onset S.A.D.' is a seasonal disorder occurring during the warmer months, often leading to weight loss and increased agitation. Unlike Winter S.A.D. where individuals may gain weight and sleep more, Summer S.A.D. often leads to irritability, insomnia, restlessness, lack of appetite, headaches, and feelings of frustration and increased agitation." And long walks ordered by my wife (I added this). Look around. You really need summer for this?

Have a nice summer.



My cure? Change into shorts and wash the car, go to the beach for lunch, order extra fries with that burger, and check out those swimsuits I referred to earlier. I may have told you this last spring, except for the extra fries and the swimsuits, but it still applies and is good until next fall.

Of greater concern is the "Most of the Year Affective Disorder (M.A.D.)." To be fair, I may have made this up.

Symptoms: Unlike the seasonal summer or winter seasonal affective disorders, M.A.D. becomes apparent in early January and runs through late December, is especially prevalent in November every other year, and increases once every four years. Note the similarity to the common Cicada who lie dormant for several years only to seemingly rise from the dead to ravage farmland while emitting a sound quite annoying to the ear.

By the way, I'm not buying the S.A.D. theory for summer. You should ignore it. Winter is just around the corner and then we can get back to gaining weight and sleeping more.

And another thing: Just when you thought there was no hope for life as we know it, Phil "Dr. Phil" McGraw, former psychologist/television host, is now the spokesman for CarShield commercials. The world just might have returned to its proper axis.



Merriam-Webster defines serenity as the quality or state of being serene. It is officially defined as "the quality or state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled". My personal serenity garden in my backyard has taken a number of years to develop from a blank slate covered with gravel and an overgrown pomegranate tree in an over 55 community of twin homes. Twin homes means right on top of each other and attached to your neighbor. I was grateful for the privacy provided by being enclosed with a 6 foot fence.

For me, I feel serene when in nature surrounded by trees, shrubs, birds, bees and their aromas and sounds instead of traffic and sirens. Fortunately, I was still young enough to dig out and haul gravel, double dig the new planting areas, plan, then plant my future serenity garden. The first summer, there was just one area about 8'x8' in the center of the yard that was filled with the best tomatoes I've ever grown, then by fall I'd purchased a double dwarf peach tree that took the center focus where the tomatoes had lived. The heavenly pomegranate stayed, then I placed an apple, fuyu persimmon and fig tree around the perimeter as well as a smoke tree and the ginkgo biloba that I'd always wanted. The goal was not to be able to see any of my neighbors' houses! The Lady Banks rose (no thorns) on the side yard is a great screen and eventually an orange trumpet vine and star jasmine on the back fence hid almost everything.

Since the fruit trees are deciduous (lose

leaves in winter) the garden felt bare in the winter and I added a California native Toyon and 2 Arbutus marina (Strawberry trees) and various salvias to provide greenery year round along with berries, flowers and birds. Other additions have been iris, hollyhocks and Love in the Mist annual flowers, all of which have naturalized and return faithfully as well as the different varieties of bumblebees and butterflies. The beds were surrounded by gravel paths for a long time, but a few years ago, I had a crew come in and remove a lot more gravel and replace the walking paths with decomposed granite and a drip system.

My neighbor installed some nice speakers and a ceiling fan on the patio and a mist system for cooling in the summer months. This garden has not only provided me with fruit and vegetables to share, many hours of much enjoyed yard work, but mostly serenity just being in this space.

Email me if you'd like pictures or have questions.

Janicevanbever@gmail.com

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Gluten Free Recipe By Pat Chaney



CRANBERRY CHICKEN

Makes approximately 6-8 servings

- 3 to 4 lb of chicken pieces***
- 1/2 tsp salt**
- 1/4 tsp pepper**
- 1/8 tsp dried thyme leaves**
- 3/4 cup diced celery**
- 1 cup diced onion**
- 1 clove garlic**
- 1 14 oz can whole cranberry sauce**
- 1 1/4 cup BBQ sauce (I use Sweet Baby Ray's BBQ sauce)**

Combine all ingredients in an 8 qt slow cooker.
Cover. Cook on high for 4 hrs or on low for 6 to 8 hrs
Serve over your choice of rice or mashed potatoes.

Note: * if using boneless chicken breasts, reduce cooking time to 4 hrs on low.

This is a simple, easy & tasty recipe. Enjoy!





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Doubles Strategies

by Gregg Whitfield - National Award Winner and Instructor/Trainer

Pickleball doubles strategies should involve your shot selection and whether you should play the ball offensively or defensively. Winning is not always about hitting the hardest shot. Especially for senior players, success often comes from smart decision-making, consistent play, and understanding when to attack — and when to defend.

The best players “play the percentages.” That means choosing safer, higher-percentage shots most of the time and waiting patiently for the right opportunity to become aggressive. Think of a skilled baseball pitcher who works the corners of the strike zone instead of throwing every pitch as hard as possible. In pickleball, smart placement often beats raw power.

A key goal is to keep opponents uncomfortable by placing shots low and wide. Balls hit down near an opponent’s feet are difficult to attack because they force upward contact and awkward swings. On the other hand, high balls are dangerous because they give opponents a chance to hit aggressively.

Defense in pickleball is really about staying in the point until your team earns a favorable position at the Non-Volley Zone (NVZ), commonly called the kitchen line. After the serve, deep returns are important because they keep opponents farther back in the court and buy time for

your team to move forward.

The strategies for the serving team rely on two common strategies: the third shot drive or the third shot drop. The third shot drive is a firm aggressive shot designed to force a weak defensive reply. It is safer to hit a drive and play the opponent’s shot after the ball bounces. The third shot drop is a soft shot that lands in the kitchen and allows players to move safely toward the net. Bear in mind, the drop is a more difficult shot because the target area is smaller and requires more ball control.

Good defense also depends on strong fundamentals. Successful doubles teams move well together, stay balanced, and remain ready to move laterally or forward at any moment. The paddle should function like a “human backboard,” consistently returning balls safely into play.

The teams that succeed most often are usually the teams that make the fewest unforced errors. Skill levels are determined by hitting accurate shots that land in front of their opponent’s feet.

The bottom line is simple: play safely until you receive a high, attackable ball. In pickleball, patience, positioning, and smart shot selection often matter more than power.



What I Want - Hiking the Rinconada Trail by Will Jones



What I want is sacred ritual,
chanting, fire, strong tobacco,
animal spirits on the edge of darkness,
dancing until I collapse in ecstasy,
boundaries disappearing like morning mist,
thoughts scattered like windblown seeds,
consciousness replaced
by numinous awe and wonder.

What I get is a slow walk,
in bright sunshine under blue skies,
up a steep hill with good friends
on a late winter trail that cuts through
scrub oak, sage, manzanita, sudden meadows
flush with pink and purple shooting stars,
tufted orange poppies, rush-rose,
delicate chocolate lilies, an endless vista
of coastal ridges receding in all directions
like pebbled ripples in a quiet pond,
a mountaintop communion of strawberries,
apples, laughter and grateful talk.

What I want will have to wait.
What I get will more than do.



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