



# Reports



**INSIDE  
JUNE 2013**

**PAGE 2: CENTER  
ADMINISTRATORS'  
RETREAT HELD**  
**PAGE 3: HELP FIGHT  
MEDICARE FRAUD  
AND ABUSE**  
**PAGE 4: NATIONAL FRUIT  
AND VEGETABLES  
MONTH**  
**PAGE 6: CAREGIVERS  
CORNER**  
**PAGE 7: THE BEST YEARS OF  
OUR LIVES**

**SEMO Area Agency on Aging**, 1219 N. Kingshighway, Suite 100, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
*An Informational Newsletter for Senior Citizens in Southeast Missouri*

## Missouri's Lt. Governor Peter Kinder names Austin as Senior Service Award Winner

CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO - Missouri Lt. Governor Peter Kinder announced Wednesday, May 8 the 35 winners of the Lieutenant Governor's Senior Service Award, including Doug Austin of Cape Girardeau.

Lt. Governor Kinder presented the awards today at a luncheon for the winners and their guests outside his office in the Capitol. Austin was nominated by Jackson Police Chief James Humphreys and Julia Thompson, director of the Cape Girardeau Parks and Recreation Department.

Austin has been active in many organizations in the Cape Girardeau area,

including the Southeast Missouri Area Agency on Aging, Cape Girardeau Seniors and Lawmen Together (SALT), Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Southeast Missouri Hospital Auxiliary, Girardeau Goes Green Advisory Council, Cape Girardeau 2010 Census Committee, Cape Girardeau Community Relations Advisory Council, Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce, Citizen's Police Academy, I Love Cape Committee, Keep Cape Beautiful Committee, Old Towne Cape, Gideon International, SEMO Son Riders Christian Motorcyclist Chapter, Silver Haired Legislature Alma Schrader Elementary School volunteer tutor, Toastmasters, Friends of

the Library, Missouri Baptist Bikers Fellowship and Patriot Guard Riders.

He also is active in Bethany Baptist Church, the Shining Light Baptist Outreach Center Inc., Cape Girardeau Baptist Association, Missouri Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

"Doug is the epitome of what a community servant, friend and truly sincere and caring person should be," said Humphreys in his nomination. "I would hate to see where SALT would be if Doug Austin was not a part of it. He is what keeps the wheels turning in this program, (and) his commitment to senior citizens and law enforcement is unwavering."

Thompson said Austin has been a key leader in Cape Girardeau's "Keep Cape Beautiful" committee. "Mr. Austin is bigger than life with a gregarious personality of which you can tell he supremely cares about his city and is ready to give back," she said. "He loves this city and . . . participates in many city volunteer efforts."

Lt. Governor Kinder presented Austin with an official declaration and a Senior Service Award lapel pin at a ceremony in the Capitol.



"Doug Austin sets an example for all Missourians with his kindness and willingness to serve his community, his church and the entire Cape Girardeau area," Kinder said. "His selfless service is an inspiration to all who know him."

Austin is a 1956 graduate of Hoxie High School and son of the late Leonard & Cloyce Austin of Walnut Ridge. In 1959 he married Frances Moore, daughter of Bonnie Moore and the late Truman Moore of Walnut Ridge.

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 453  
Cape Girardeau  
Missouri

## AAA Reports changing publishing dates

As with most state and federally funded operations, money is very tight. We, at the Southeast Mo. Area Agency on Aging, have had our funding reduced and have had to make decisions as to how best to use the money that we receive. To that end we have decided that we will have to cut back our newsletter, the *AAA Reports* will now be published only quarterly. The next issue will be the September issue.

## Center administrators' retreat held May 22-23

SEMO AAA held their annual Center Administrators Retreat May 22-23 in Cape Girardeau. There were 31 people in attendance representing all 32 centers in the AAA service area. Topics included Care Transitions, Technology, Sunshine Law, Emergency Situations, Photography, Financial Oversight, Scanning in place of Signatures and Aging Information & Referral Updates. There were door prizes given on both days. Every Administrator is required to have 18 hours of documented training per year.



Center Administrators who attained a perfect assessment were recognized and given a flower in appreciation of this accomplishment. Congratulations to: (L to R Backrow): Terry Harmon/Puxico, Lisa Hicks/Sikeston, Susan McClanahan/Cape Girardeau, Susie Pobst/Chaffee, Sari Kersey/East Prairie, Pat Poe/Fredericktown, Rhonda Green/Hayti, Debbie Stockton/Jackson, Susan Foster/Perryville, Bobbie Cole/Naylor. (L to R Front Row): Janet Hitt/Scott City, Cher Robinson, Carol Rawson/Caruthersville, New Madrid & Portageville, Dena Rawson/Dexter, Sharon Montgomery/Kennett, Wendy Hurlbusch/Malden and Martha Peters/Marble Hill.



Lana Johnson, SEMO AAA Nutrition Project Director, welcomes the Administrators to the Retreat.



Tom Neumeyer gives tips to Administrators on photography techniques.



Ima Sosick (Shirley Bentley-SEMO AAA In-home Services Manager) and Bea Happy (Ruth Dockins-SEMO AAA I & A Director) perform a skit that highlighted various senior issues and the services available for older adults.

## Silver haired elections

Some new representatives and one new senator have been elected into the Silver Haired Legislature (SHL) in Southeast Missouri.

The new representatives are George Cox from Stoddard County, Vickie Sue Watling from Cape Girardeau County, and Barbara Rogers and Betty Laseter from Carter County. Also the new senator will be Ray Freeman from Ripley County.

There are a total of 12 representatives and 3 senators from each of the 10 Area Agencies on Aging in Missouri. All these will meet in Jefferson City in October to hold a mock legislative session to choose 5 priority proposals for which they will then advocate with their General Assembly representatives and senator to get taken up as a proposed bill and passed into law.

The local SHL delegation will meet on June 11 in Cape Girardeau to choose proposals that this delegation would like to propose to the state-wide SHL bills committee. If you have any ideas of issues you would like to see presented be sure and contact your local SHL delegate. They are as follows:

County	Name	City
Mississippi	June Majors	East Prairie
Stoddard	George Cox	Dexter
Dunklin	Janie Lamar	Gibson
Mississippi	Gail Pang	Charleston
Stoddard	Catherine Bockhold	Dexter
Ripley	Ray Freeman	Doniphan
Butler	Connie Larrew	Poplar Bluff
Carter	Barbara Rogers	Van Buren
Carter	Betty Laseter	Van Buren
Wayne	Minnie May	Piedmont
Cape Girardeau	Loretta Schneider	Cape Girardeau
Cape Girardeau	Doug Austin	Cape Girardeau
Cape Girardeau	Lee Anderson	Jackson
Cape Girardeau	Vickie Sue Watling	Jackson
Cape Girardeau	Estelee Wood	Jackson

## Advanced beneficiary notice

If you have original Medicare, your doctor, other health care provider, or supplier may give you a notice called an "Advanced Beneficiary Notice of Noncoverage" ABN. This notice says Medicare probably (or certainly) won't pay for some services in certain situations.

If the provider believes this to be the case they may ask you to sign an ABN. If you choose to sign it, you may still ask the provider to bill Medicare and if it is denied you may still appeal it, however, if Medicare determines that the items or services aren't covered you will be responsible for the charges. The operative word in the title of the ABN is "ADVANCED" which means before the services are issued you have been told that Medicare may not pay and that you will be respon-

sible for the charge.

The reason for an ABN to be offered is to warn you that Medicare likely will not pay for the service and they are giving you the opportunity to say "I want the service anyway, even if I have to pay for it myself," or "If Medicare doesn't cover it I don't want to have it." Never sign a blank ABN and never sign one "after the fact."

If your provider was required to give you an ABN but didn't, the provider, in most cases, will be responsible for the charge. If you have already paid the charge they must, again in most cases, reimburse you.

If you have questions regarding this article you may call SEMO AAA at 1-800-392-8771 or locally at 573-335-3331.

## Help fight medicare fraud and abuse

\$60 billion a year is lost to Medicare fraud. That is \$6.8 million per hour, 24 hours a day. To put this into perspective the difference between a million and a billion is: A million minutes ago is a little over two years ago, a billion minutes ago is around 2000 years ago. Just think what this country could do with \$60 billion. Maybe Medicare Part B could stop going up each year, maybe Medicare deductibles could stop rising, and maybe co-pays could be reduced.

Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius recently announced a proposed rule that would increase rewards paid to Medicare beneficiaries and other individuals whose tips about suspected fraud lead to the successful recovery of funds.

Today's announcement is a signal to Medicare beneficiaries and caregivers who are on the frontlines of the fight, that they are critical partners in helping protect taxpayer dollars.

Over the last three years our government has recovered over \$14.5 billion in fraud. Some of this has resulted from fraud reporting by individuals, a proven tool for the government to detect fraud, waste and abuse in the Medicare

program. Under the proposed changes a person that provides specific information leading to the recovery of funds may be eligible to receive a reward of 15 percent of the amount recovered up to \$10 million. HHS currently offers a reward of 10 percent up to \$1000 under the incentive reward program. The changes are modeled on an IRS program that has returned 2 billion in fraud since 2003.

If you want to join this fight against Medicare fraud you can by becoming a Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) volunteer. There is a two day training to attend and plenty of support from others who have gone through the training. If all of us that are on Medicare would just join together we could save this country billions of dollars. It might be something like the victory gardens of World War II, the country came together to fight a common enemy from a foreign land. This time we could come together to fight a common enemy that is in our own country stealing our tax dollars right from under our noses.

If you are interested in becoming an SMP volunteer call SEMO AAA at 1-800-392-8771 or locally at 573-335-3331.

## New way to check hospital charges

You can now go on line and compare what hospitals charge for common inpatient services. "Currently, consumers don't know what a hospital is charging them or their insurance company for a given procedure, like a knee replacement, or how much of a price difference there is at different hospitals, even within the same city, this data and new data centers will help fill that gap," stated Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Sebelius.

The data posted on CMS's website include information comparing the charges for services that may be provided during 100 most common Medicare inpatient stays. Hospitals determine what they will charge for items and services provided to patients and these "charges" are the amount the hospital generally bills for an item or service.

These amounts can vary widely. For example, average inpatient charges for services a hospital may provide in connection with a joint replacement range from a low of \$5,300 at a hospital in Ada, Okla. to a high of \$223,000 at a hospital in

Monterey Park, Calif.

Even within the same geographic area, hospital charges for similar services can vary significantly. For example, average inpatient hospital charges for services that may be provided to treat heart failure range from a low of \$21,000 to a high \$46,000 in Denver Colo. And from a low of \$9,000 to a high of \$51,000 in Jackson, Miss.

Business and consumers alike can use these data to drive decision making and reward cost-effective provision of care.

To view the new hospital dataset, please go to: <http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Statistics-Trends-and-Reports/Medicare-Provider-Charge-Data/index.html>

Once on the site you can input the area you want to search, such as Cape Girardeau, you will then get a list of hospitals in the selected area, not all hospitals are included in this database. Then select the procedure you wish to compare or browse the different costs of all the procedures.

# Fireflies, whipporwills and other night things

By: Jim Ferguson

It's dark. I wish they would leave a night light on for me. I know the boogiemer is under the bed—well, if not there he is in the closet. I don't understand why Mom and Dad made me go outside earlier tonight and put the dogs in their pen. They knew it was dark and they knew something could have gotten me. I have heard them several times in the past talking about being goblins outside. Oh year, Dad called me a scaredy cat. Well if what they say about goblins is true then it doesn't mean I was scared; rather it means I have good sense.

It is a shame that this is how some children were brought up: being taught to fear the night. The fact is the night is a great time to be outside. There are things to see and hear that you cannot see or hear at any other time. Take fireflies (lightning bugs). Do you ever see them during the day? I remember as a young kid we

looked forward to the time of the year when the fireflies would make their appearance. We would all run around the yard trying to catch them and put some of them in a fruit jar. Or we would squeeze the tail off on our fingers declaring they were diamond rings or on the earlobes of girls saying they were wearing diamond earrings. I have done this for as long as I can remember and still do so today. This last spring I had the joy of teaching my granddaughter how to make diamond rings out of them.

Another joy of life that is exclusive to the night is the song of a whippoorwill. Whippoorwills are nocturnal birds that start their mating call in the spring as the sun sets and they continue through the night. I have enjoyed the evening call for years. Their call sounds like their name: "WHIP POOR WILL" and is often repeated many, many times before they stop to rest. A few years ago my wife

Brenda and I witnessed one at our cabin sing his love song for thirty-six times before taking a break. After a few seconds, he began again. Now I will say if you are camping or trying to sleep they can be annoying after a few minutes.

There were always things to do when we were young at night especially when we would have company. While Mom and Dad were inside talking to their friends, we kids would be out playing hide and seek. No flash lights were needed because we just used the stars and moonlight. We could and would play for hours. Now I am sure a lot of you remember how to play the game but for those that don't it is really simple. There is a home base and one person must begin their search for the others. If you

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

# June is national fruit and vegetables month!!! Lets celebrate!

## Top 10 Reasons to Eat MORE Fruits and Vegetables

### Why eat MORE fruits and veggies?

- 10 **Color and texture.** Fruits and veggies add color, texture...and appeal...to your plate.
- 9 **Convenience.** Fruits and veggies are nutritious in any form – fresh frozen, canned, dried and 100% juice, so they're ready when you are.
- 8 **Fiber.** Fruits and veggies provide fiber that helps fill you up and keeps your digestive system happy.
- 7 **Low in calories.** Fruits and veggies are naturally low in calories.
- 6 **May reduce disease risk.** Eating plenty of fruits and veggies may help reduce the risk of many diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure and some cancers.
- 5 **Vitamins and minerals.** Fruits and veggies are rich in vitamins and minerals that help you feel healthy and energized.
- 4 **Variety.** Fruits and veggies are available in an almost infinite variety...there's always something new to try!
- 3 **Quick, natural snack.** Fruits and veggies are nature's treat and easy to grab for a snack.
- 2 **Fun to eat!** Some crunch, some squirt, some you peel...some you don't, and some grow right in your own backyard!
- 1 **Fruits and veggies are nutritious AND delicious!**

### Shopping for fruits and vegetables and sticking to your budget

**Buy in season.** Although most fresh fruits and vegetables are available year-round, some are less expensive when they are in season. Also keep in mind that all forms of fruits and vegetables are nutritious, so canned and frozen forms are okay too!

**Buy more.** When there are specials on fruits and vegetables, buy extra. They can be frozen, or you can prepare a dish to be frozen for a busy night's dinner. But don't buy it if you won't use it or you'll just be tossing the money in the garbage.

**Don't shop when you're hungry.** You may be tempted to buy things that are not on your list. An impulse purchase of a bag of cookies...on sale...can cost you \$2.50 or more.

**Comparison shop.** The larger size is not always the best price.

Limit or avoid expensive snack foods, desserts and soft drinks that provide little or no nutrition value for your money. Compare the value...

### What you get for \$1\*

- 4 oz. bag chips
  - 1 1/4 pound carrots
  - 2 small cookies
  - 3 small (2 3/4 in) apples
  - 2 liters soda
  - 64 oz. 100% orange juice
- \*Prices are approximate and will vary depending on location, sales, coupons, etc.

### Nutrition value for your \$\$

- Calories from fat, salt
- Vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants
- Calories from fat and sugar
- Vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants
- Calories from sugar
- Vitamins, minerals, antioxidants

Article from: <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>

### How to make your meals last using fruits and vegetables

**Cabbage:** Use 1/2 head to make coleslaw; use the other half in cabbage rolls.

**Carrots:** Cut half the carrots in the bag to use as carrot sticks for snacks. Use the other half for Carrot Salad or in a stir-fry.

**Sweet potatoes and potatoes:** One pound will provide about 4 servings. Try some baked sweet potato fries for a delicious change of pace.

**Broccoli:** One pound of fresh broccoli will provide about 5 servings of cooked spears. Use the stalk in a vegetable soup or shred and add to salads or slaw.

**Cauliflower:** A medium head may provide about 9-10 servings of cooked cauliflower. Use half the head to make mashed cauliflower. Use the other half in soup.

**Beans:** Include legumes such as black beans, kidney beans, etc. in at least 1 or 2 meals per week.

**Apples:** Great as a grab and go snack. Make baked apples for dessert.

**Oranges:** Great to take along as a snack. Add some orange slices to a spinach salad.

**Grapefruit:** Share one with someone. Serve grapefruit sections with a dollop of your favorite sherbet for dessert.

**Bananas:** The classic grab and go snack. Add a sliced banana to canned fruit cocktail.

**Watermelon:** A watermelon goes a long way. There are many different ways to enjoy your watermelon.

**Grapes:** Stretch chicken salad by adding grapes. Freeze grapes for a different sweet treat.



## Corn, rice and bean burritos

- 1 1/3 cups fresh or frozen corn, thawed
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium green pepper, sliced
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 1/2 tsp. chili powder
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 can (15 oz.) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 1/2 cups cooked brown rice
- 8 flour tortillas (8 in.), warmed
- 3/4 cup shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup reduced-fat plain yogurt
- 2 green onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup salsa

In a large skillet, saute the corn, onion and pepper in oil until tender. Add the garlic, chili powder and cumin; cook 1 minute longer. Add beans and rice; heat through.

Spoon 1/2 cup filling off center on each tortilla. Top with cheese, yogurt and green onions. Fold sides and ends over filling and roll up. Serve with salsa.

## Turkey and fruit salad

- 1/4 cup fat-free plain yogurt
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. spicy brown mustard
- 1/2 tsp. dried marjoram
- 1/8 tsp. ground ginger
- 3 cups cubed cooked turkey breast
- 2 celery ribs, thinly sliced
- 1 large red apple, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts, toasted

In a small bowl, combine the first six ingredients. In a large bowl, combine the turkey, celery, apple, cranberries and walnuts. Add yogurt mixture; toss to coat. Refrigerate until serving.

## Cocoa meringues with berries

- 1 egg white
- 1/8 tsp. cream of tartar
- Dash salt
- 3 Tbsp. sugar, divided
- 1 Tbsp. baking cocoa
- 1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2 Tbsp. finely chopped bittersweet chocolate

### Berry Sauce:

- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp. orange juice
- 1 Tbsp. water
- 1/2 cup fresh or frozen blueberries, thawed
- 1/2 cup fresh or frozen raspberries, thawed

Place egg white in a small bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Add cream of tartar and salt; beat on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in 2 Tbsp. sugar. Combine cocoa and remaining sugar; add to meringue with vanilla. Beat on high until stiff glossy peaks form and sugar is dissolved. Fold in the chopped chocolate.

Drop two mounds onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Shape into 3-in. cups with the back of a spoon. Bake at 275 degrees for 50-60 minutes or until set and dry. Turn oven off; leave meringues in over for 1 hour.

In a small saucepan, combine the sugar, cornstarch, orange juice and water. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 1 minute or until thickened. Remove from the heat; stir in berries. Cool to room temperature. Spoon into meringues.

## Poppy Seed Chicken Salad

- 3 Tbsp. thawed limeade concentrate
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 3/4 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into thin strips
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil

### Dressing:

- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. dried minced onion
- 1 tsp. ground mustard
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup canola oil
- 1 Tbsp. poppy seeds

### Salad:

- 1 pkg. (6 oz.) fresh baby spinach
- 2 cups sliced fresh strawberries
- 1 cup fresh sugar snap peas, trimmed
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup pecan halves, toasted

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine limeade concentrate and pepper. Add the chicken; seal bag and turn to coat. Refrigerate for 2 hours.

Drain and discard marinade. In a large skillet, saute chicken in oil until no longer pink.

Meanwhile, in a blender, combine the vinegar, sugar, onion, mustard and salt. While processing, gradually add oil in a steady stream. Stir in poppy seeds.

Divide spinach among four salad plates; top with strawberries, peas, onion and chicken. Drizzle each serving with 2 Tbsp. dressing; sprinkle with pecans. Serve immediately. Refrigerate leftover dressing.



## MAKING MEDICARE *Make Sense*

### **Answers to some of the most commonly asked Medicare questions**

**Q: My spouse needs to go to a nursing home. Will Medicare pay for it? Can Medicare help me select a nursing home that will provide high quality care?**

**A:** Medicare Part A pays for short-term stays in a nursing home, if it is needed after an inpatient hospital stay of at least three days. This usually means skilled nursing home services are required for rehabilitation after an injury, disability, or illness. If this is the case, and the person needing the skilled nursing care has Medicare Part A; has a doctor's order for skilled nursing services; they require the skilled care on a daily basis and the services, as a practical matter, can only be provided in a Skilled Nursing Facility on an inpatient basis, then the first 20 days in the nursing home are paid completely by Medicare. The next 80 days in the nursing home requires a payment by the person with Medicare of \$148 per day in 2013. After 100 days, Medicare will no longer pay any portion of the stay.

Medicare does not pay for long-term nursing home care. And Medicare won't pay for any skilled short-term care unless it immediately follows, and is directly related to an inpatient hospital stay.

Medicare provides a great deal of information for you about nursing homes, to help you select one that will provide quality care. Simply go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) and click on "Find a Nursing Home" on the home page. You can search by name, or by location.

Medicare's Nursing Home Compare listings show quality of care information on every Medicare and Medicaid-certified nursing home in the country – over 15,000 facilities. Note that facilities not

certified to participate in Medicare or Medicaid are not listed, but are regulated by your state, which may publish its own information.

On [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov), and on the Nursing Home link, you can see information about recent health inspections, staffing information, and summaries of recent deficiencies. You can also see how an individual facility rates on the CMS Five-Star Quality Rating. In a few cases, you also see a facility marked with an "SFF" icon. SFF stands for "Special Focus Facility." This means the nursing home has a recent history of poor quality and will be surveyed (inspected) twice as often as nursing homes without this designation. However, it's worth noting that many facilities in the SFF program significantly improve their performance, which is the goal.

Information on Nursing Home Compare is something you should consider carefully, but not alone. Talk to your doctor or other health care provider about this information. In many cases, some categories of performance may matter to you more than others. CMS does not endorse any nursing home, even the ones with good star ratings, and you shouldn't rely only on the ratings to make this important decision. The most important thing you can do is to visit the facilities you are considering, to get a first-hand feel for how they operate. Talk to the staff, and to people who live there. If you can't visit, have someone you trust do that for you.

As always, for more information about any Medicare question, please call 1-800-Medicare, which is 1-800-633-4227. Customer Service Representatives are available, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## CAREGIVERS CORNER

by Kathy Bullis

### **The pen is mightier than the sword and maybe the prescription as well!**

Therapeutic journaling is a vastly underused tool in the battle against the stress depression and anxiety which affect many caregivers. There have been a number of studies which have investigated the benefits of therapeutic journaling. Some researchers attribute the positive effects to the fact that writing activates a different section of the brain than verbal counseling and there may be some benefit in that. Also writing down repetitively occurring troubling thoughts tends to act as a powerful brake to the mental tread mill we all can experience from time to time. It also allows us to look more clearly at an experience which often provides a relief of tension. It has been found that test subjects who were given journaling assignments experienced a marked strengthening of their immune system, decreased visits to the doctor and significant increases in psychological well being. These findings were measured using physiological markers such as long term serum measures, antibody levels, cell activity, enzyme levels, muscular activity, etc. and behavioral markers which were self-reported like reports of distress or depression. One researcher theorizes that these benefits occur because actively inhibiting thoughts and feelings about traumatic events requires constant effort and serves as a cumulative stressor on the body. So by relieving those stressors through writing we can actually improve our physical well being as well as making improvements emotionally and mentally.

In today's challenging financial climate many people struggle to do more with less wouldn't it be nice to swap the cost of medications and counseling for the cost of a pen and paper. In some cases that might be possible. One study found "gratitude journaling" as effective in a test group of severely depressed visitors to a self help website as medications or psychotherapy. Fifteen days after beginning their gratitude journals, 94% of the 50 individuals reported feeling significantly less depressed. Their scores on a

depression inventory dropped by 50% and the effects lasted for a full 6 months!

There are as many ways to journal as there are people. There isn't a right or wrong way, and no one will grade your spelling grammar or format you can allow the solitude of your time spent in this private space to nourish you and to strengthen you.

Here are some suggestions that might help you get started.

- Try Gratitude Journaling – Take time each day to write down three things that went well that day and why you thought so. You might also try writing and delivering a gratitude letter to someone. Cultivating gratitude is a powerful way to overcome adversity and depression.
- If you are anxious about committing private matters to paper, remember the pages can always be destroyed once you have unloaded on them. My favorite disposal method is to carefully burn them in the fireplace or BBQ pit, but a shredder works just as well.
- Try writing to your journal as if you expect it to answer you.
- Use your journal to create a special devotional space.
- Choose a journal that is attractive to you, one that is very simple or might have meaningful art work on the cover or which appeals to you for some other reason. The same goes for writing tools. You may prefer ink, pencils or something fancier such as colored ink or markers, have fun with it!
- Explore the subject at your local library or online. There may even be classes offered in your area.

Journaling can reveal the great potential that is within you and can help you find more meaning in life as well as reduce stress, depression and anxiety in a very cost effective manner. I would encourage everyone to give it a try!

# The Best Years of Our Lives!!

“Hey Dad,” one of my kids asked the other day, “what was your favorite fast food when you were growing up?”

“We didn’t have fast food when I was growing up,” I informed him. “All the food was slow.”

“C’mon, seriously. Where did you eat?”

“It was a place called ‘at home,’” I explained. “Grandma cooked every day and when Grandpa got home from work, we sat down together at the dining room table, and if I didn’t like what she put on my plate I was allowed to sit there until I did like it.”

By this time, the kid was laughing so hard I was afraid he was going to suffer serious internal damage, so I didn’t tell him the part about how I had to have permission to leave the table. But here are some other things I would have told him about my childhood if I figured his system could have handled it;

Some parents NEVER owned their own house, wore Levis, set foot on a golf course, traveled out of the country or had a credit card. In their later years they had something called a revolving charge card. The card was good only at Sears Roebuck. Or maybe it was Sears AND Roebuck. Either way, there is no Roebuck anymore. Maybe he died.

My parents never drove me to soccer practice. This was mostly because we never had heard of soccer. I had a bicycle that weighed probably 50 pounds, and only had one speed, (slow). We didn’t have a television in our house until I was 11, but my grandparents had one before that. It was, of course, black and white, but they bought a piece of colored plastic to cover the screen. The top third was blue, like the sky, and the bottom third was green, like grass. The middle third was red. It was perfect for programs that had scenes of fire trucks riding across someone’s lawn on a sunny day. Some people had a lens taped to the front of the TV to make the picture look larger.

I was 13 before I tasted my first pizza, it was called “pizza pie.” When I bit into it, I burned the roof of my mouth and the cheese slid off, swung down, plastered

itself against my chin and burned that, too. It’s still the best pizza I ever had.

We didn’t have a car until I was 15. Before that, the only car in our family was my grandfather’s Ford. He called it a “machine.”

I never had a telephone in my room. The only phone in the house was in the living room and it was on a party line. Before you could dial, you had to listen and make sure some people you didn’t know weren’t already using the line.

Pizzas were not delivered to our home. But milk was.

All newspapers were delivered by boys and all boys delivered newspapers. I delivered a newspaper, six days a week. It cost 7 cents a paper, of which I got to keep 2 cents. I had to get up at 4 AM every morning. I had to collect the 42 cents from my customers. My favorite customers were the ones who gave me 50 cents and told me to keep the change. My least favorite customers were the ones who seemed to never by home on collection day.

Movie stars kissed with their mouths shut. At least, they did in the movies. Touching someone else’s tongue with yours was called French kissing and they didn’t do that in movies. I don’t know what they did in French movies. French movies were dirty and we weren’t allowed to see them.

If you grew up in a generation before there was fast food, you may want to share some of these memories with our children or grandchildren. Just don’t blame me if they bust a gut laughing.

Growing up isn’t what it used to be, is it?

## MEMORIES from a friend:

My Dad is cleaning out my grandmother’s house (she died in December) and he brought me an old Royal Crown Cola bottle. In the bottle top was a stopper with a bunch of holes in it. I knew immediately what it was, but my daughter had no idea. She thought they had tried to make it a salt shaker or something. I knew it as the bottle that sat on the end of the ironing board to “sprinkle” clothes with because we didn’t have steam irons. Man, I am old.

## How many do you remember?

- Head lights dimmer switches on the floor.
- Ignition switches on the dashboard.
- Heaters mounted on the inside of the fire wall.
- Real ice boxes.
- Pant leg clips for bicycles without chain guards.
- Soldering irons you heat on a gas burner.
- Using hand signals for cars without turn signals.

## Older Than Dirt Quiz

Count all the ones that you remember not the ones you were told about! Ratings at the bottom.

1. Blackjack chewing gum
2. Wax Coke-shaped bottles with colored sugar water
3. Candy cigarettes
4. Soda pop machines that dispensed bottles
5. Coffee shops with tableside jukeboxes
6. Home milk delivery in glass bottles with cardboard stoppers
7. Party lines
8. Newsreels before the movie
9. P.F. Flyers
10. Butch wax
11. Telephone numbers with a word prefix (Olive-6933)
12. Peashooters
13. Howdy Doody
14. 45 RPM records
15. S&H Green Stamps
16. Hi-fi’s
17. Metal ice trays with lever
18. Mimeograph paper
19. Blue flashbulb
20. Packards
21. Roller skate keys
22. Cork popguns
23. Drive-ins
24. Studebakers
25. Wash tub wringers

If you remembered! 0-5 = You’re still young

If you remembered 6-10 = You are getting older

If you remembered 11-15 = Don’t tell your age

If you remembered 16-25 = You’re older than dirt!

## With early detection and proper treatment, millions of Americans can avoid blindness caused by diabetic retinopathy and macular degeneration

During Healthy Vision Month in May, the American Society of Retina Specialists (ASRS) urges adults to schedule an eye examination to check for early signs of diabetic retinopathy or age-related macular degeneration (AMD), the 2 leading causes of new cases of vision loss and blindness among adults.

Diabetic retinopathy is a complication of diabetes that affects more than 4 million Americans and results in the most new cases of blindness in typical working-age adults age 20-74. An estimated 15 million adults also have some form of macular degeneration, which can progress to an advanced stage in more than 100,000 people age 60 and older each year and lead to blindness if not detected and treated promptly.

These diseases can severely damage the retina, the light-sensitive layer of tissue

at the back of the eye that provides clear, sharp images. Symptoms include blurred or distorted vision, spots or shadows in the field of vision, difficulty reading or recognizing faces, and vision loss. Often, both diseases go undetected for years until these noticeable changes occur.

No one should take their vision for granted. During a routine examination, an ophthalmologist can see early signs of these and other retinal diseases, long before vision loss begins and, if diagnosed, refer the patient to a retina specialist who can begin a treatment regimen to prolong vision.

Retina specialists are highly trained physicians who specialize in the treatment of diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, and other eye conditions and diseases. These physicians treat patients by slowing the progression of AMD, diabetic retinopathy, and other retinal

diseases and making living with them very manageable.

Take the first step in preserving vision. Visit [www.savingvision.org](http://www.savingvision.org) to learn about these and other retinal diseases and locate a retina specialist.

Free posters! - ASRS provides free "Got AMD?" posters to senior centers, community centers, libraries and public places.

### About ASRS

ASRS is the largest retinal organization in the world, representing more than 2,400 members in the US and more than 55 countries.

Its mission is to provide a collegial open forum for education, to advance the understanding and treatment of vitreoretinal diseases, and to enhance the ability of its members to provide the highest quality of patient care.

## Fireflies

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

were hidden and thought you could run to home base without being tagged, you could attempt it. However if you were tagged then you became the hunter and the game continued.

Now for us boys there were other things to do at night. For instance if we had an outdoor light, we could always bet there would be toad frogs sitting close by trying to eat the bugs that were drawn to the light. As you know frogs and boys go together like well... just like frogs and boys! They just fit. As young boys, my friends and I often caught frogs and had jumping contests with them. We also loved chasing the girls with them because the screams of girls were priceless at that time of our lives. Now frogs have this unique thing about them. Because their tongues are very sticky, anything it touches goes to the mouth and it is hard for them to spit it back out. Now this is a good thing to know since you can have a lot of fun when you have this information about them. The theory was (as I was taught)

that you could load a frog up so full with bee-bees that he could not hop. However I was never able to do this although I have fed them a lot of bee-bees. We could just roll the bee-bees in front of the frog. It would assume it was an insect and out his tongue would come--very accurately. Once the bee-bee was on the sticky tongue, into his mouth it would go. I must say that watching them try to spit it out was funny. More often than not he would swallow it. I have fed them as many as twenty bee-bees before they would stop grabbing them.

Another fun night activity was taking our northern cousins snipe hunting. Now I'll not tell you the details of this adventure, but if you would like to go sometime let me know. It would be an honor to take you on one of America's favorite hunts.

So as you can see the nights should not be a scary thing for children. Instead we should teach them the fun they can have--more fun than the games they play now with these contraptions we buy for them at Wal-Mart. The benefit of this is that you spend more time with your children and thereby create more lasting memories.

One night just take them away from the

city lights so they can really grasp the beauty of the stars and the moon. But as always, time changes all things. This is true about the night sky, too. The stars and moon have been shining since time began but we know there are satellites in space now. On a clear night you can see them orbiting the earth. Go out and look for them; they are there. And yes it is true--it can be dark. While I was serving in the U.S. Navy aboard the USS Cleveland, we were at sea doing war exercises. As the scenario went we were declared dead in the water which meant no lights aboard ship. The cloud cover cooperated by hiding the light of the moon and stars. It was really dark. As I stepped onto the cat walk I realized that I couldn't even count the fingers on my own hands. The darkness was astounding! It made me feel totally alone and caused me to consider the men who have been lost overboard or who have gone down on sinking ships in total darkness. The loneliness and fright they experienced knowing the chance of being found was slim had to be awful. So unless you are in those conditions, enjoy the amazing night life our Father has provided for us.

Thanks for the (dark) memories.

### ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

#### CIRCULATION

Would you like to receive the newsletter? Do you need to be dropped from the mailing list? Has your address changed or are you receiving more than one copy of the newsletter? Please let us know. Simply fill out and mail the form below to:

The Reports  
1219 North Kingshighway, Suite 100,  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

(Please print)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

(Check one)

- Place me on mailing list  
 Receive more than one copy  
 Remove name from mailing list  
 I wish to make a donation. Make checks payable to SEMO Area Agency on Aging.

Address change

OLD ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

#### ADVERTISING POLICY

Donations for advertising are accepted only to defray the costs of printing and producing the newsletter, The Reports. Although the editorial staff and the SEMO AAA do not endorse or guarantee any of the businesses, products, or services advertised herein, we reserve the right to restrict advertising material to those goods, services and public announcements which are suitable for inclusion in a publication designed to promote the welfare and interest of the elderly. Anyone interested in advertising in this newsletter should contact the SEMO Area Agency on Aging.

#### FUNDS

Funds for this project were made available through the Division of Aging of the Missouri Department of Social Services under provisions of the Older Americans Act. The total project is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to the Regulation of the Department of Health and Human Resources issued pursuant to the Title to the end that no person shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin be excluded from the benefits of the project.

PUBLISHED BY:  
SOUTHEAST MISSOURI AREA AGENCY ON AGING  
EDITOR:  
RUTH DOCKINS  
INFORMATION & REFERRAL:  
1-800-392-8771