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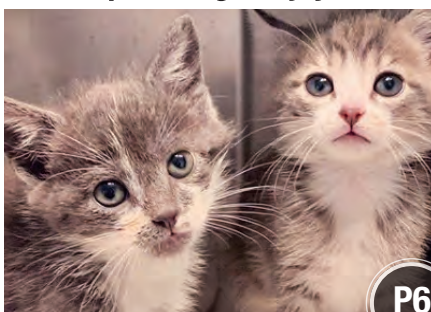
Milestones™

May 2020 • Free

IN THIS ISSUE

FOSTER ANIMALS:

Furry companions
provide great joy



P6

THINGS TO DO:

Your guide to staying
entertained at home



P8

STAY CONNECTED:

Digital tools help you reach out

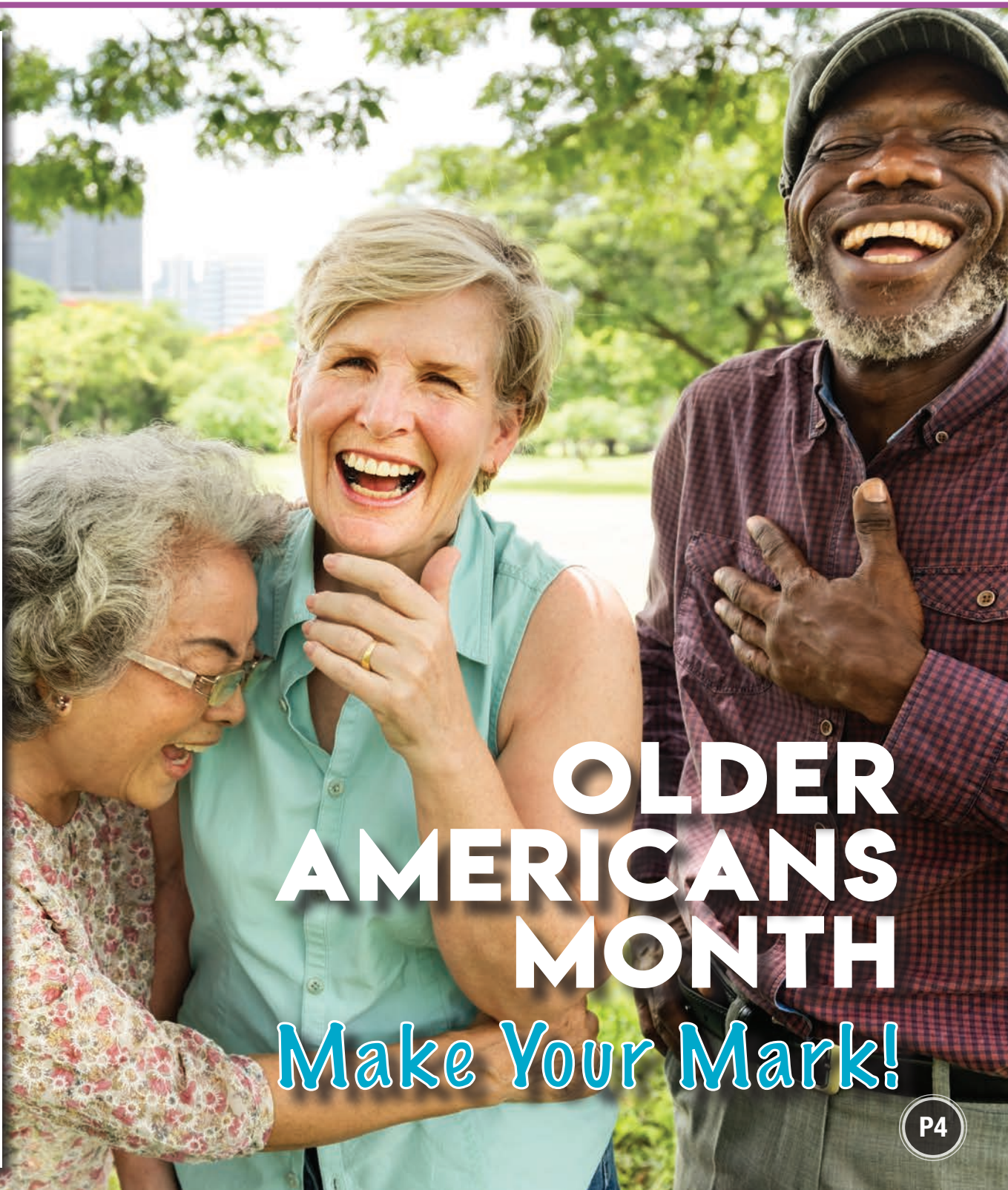


P10

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

Make Your Mark!

P4





PHILADELPHIA CORPORATION FOR AGING

WHAT IS PCA?

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) is a nonprofit agency dedicated to serving Philadelphia seniors. In addition to bringing you Milestones newspaper, PCA offers:

- Care in the home
- Home-delivered meals
- Home repairs and modifications
- Protective services
- Senior centers
- Caregiver support
- Employment and volunteer programs
- Legal services
- Transportation



- Ombudsman services
- Health education
- Information and referral

For more information, call the PCA Helpline at 215-765-9040 or visit pcaCares.org.

EDITOR'S COLUMN

By Alicia M. Colombo, Milestones editor



Most of us have been working and living remotely from within our homes for several weeks now, since social distancing was mandated in Philadelphia since March.

Personally, it has been a surreal experience.

My senses crave daylight, physical human contact and live entertainment. Spring is the season for revitalization and renewal of the mind, body, spirit and atmosphere. But it feels like we're stuck in the perpetual doldrums. It's time to get "un-stuck."

This issue of Milestones is full of ideas to keep your mind and body active. For example, our center spread this month provides suggestions for shows to binge, exercises to do and recipes to consider to change up the routine a bit. There are also stories that share the benefits of animal fostering, video communications and more.

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"For there is assuredly nothing dearer to a man than wisdom, and though age takes away all else, it undoubtedly brings us that."

~ Roman philosopher Cicero

.....

The media frenzy over coronavirus has gotten out of hand. I've had to tune a lot of it out, with the exception of important updates from various government officials. The wealth of stories about young people casually disobeying stay-at-home orders while older people are being shown as "feeble" have made me angry.

These portrayals are not only ageist; they are simply wrong.

Older adults have lived through the Great Depression, as well as many other national and worldwide crises. They grew up before technology was the norm, so they know how to do things "manually" and have developed a level of resourcefulness that younger generations could not even comprehend. All of this life experience adds up to 70, 80, 90 or even 100 years of first-hand knowledge, coping skills and experience. Older adults have made a lifetime of mistakes and learned valuable lessons.

Use that experience to enjoy the benefits of spring, from the inside:

- **Nurture growth.** Ever want to learn a new language or travel the world? There are tons of lectures or classes online.
- **Get out!** Take a socially-distant walk around your block to enjoy fresh air and sunshine. This would be a great time to research and plan your next vacation. You can visit family; take a day trip to the Jersey Shore; or tour your own city.
- **Clean house.** We all have that one messy place in our house that needs attention. Break large areas up into sections. Put all items into piles: keep, toss, donate or recycle. Then organize the items you've decided to keep.
- **Be nostalgic.** Think back to a time that you remember fondly. What made you happiest? Do that! 🌻

Milestones

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Older Americans: Make your mark!

By Alicia M. Colombo

For nearly 60 years, the month of May has marked the nation's observance of Older Americans Month. This year, the Administration for Community Living has developed the theme urging older adults to "make your mark," which encourages and celebrates the countless contributions seniors make in our communities.

While older adults enrich the world around them, communities and individuals of all ages are in turn making their marks to improve the lives of older adults. Therefore, this year's theme also highlights the difference everyone can make by honoring older adults, supporting caregivers and strengthening age-friendly communities.

Around the nation, older adults make

their marks every day as caregivers, volunteers, employees, employers, parents, grandparents, mentors, teachers and advocates. Whether retired or still working, older adults continue to offer their time, talents and experience to the benefit of our society. These unique and lasting contributions can range from sharing a story with grandchildren to leaving a legacy of community action.

For Older Americans Month, here are a few ways to "Make Your Mark" by recording your personal history.

Research your family history

Do you know the history of your family name, crest or origin? If you've always wanted to learn more about your genealogy, services like Ancestry.com make it easy

to get started. You may be surprised by the results.

To make it more personal and interesting, write down what you remember about your parents and grandparents. This is a special opportunity for younger generations to learn more about family members they didn't have the chance to meet. On the flip side, you can also write about what your children were like growing up. Include any funny or embarrassing stories, information about their hobbies and interests, and career aspirations or life goals. It will be interesting to compare or contrast your memories with their current lives and personalities.

Share YOUR story

There are so many ways to do this, from



showing your grandkids around your old neighborhood to writing a book. Take an online class and learn how to express yourself with the arts, or assemble a photo album of important moments in your life. It can be as simple as writing in a notebook or typing a document on the computer.

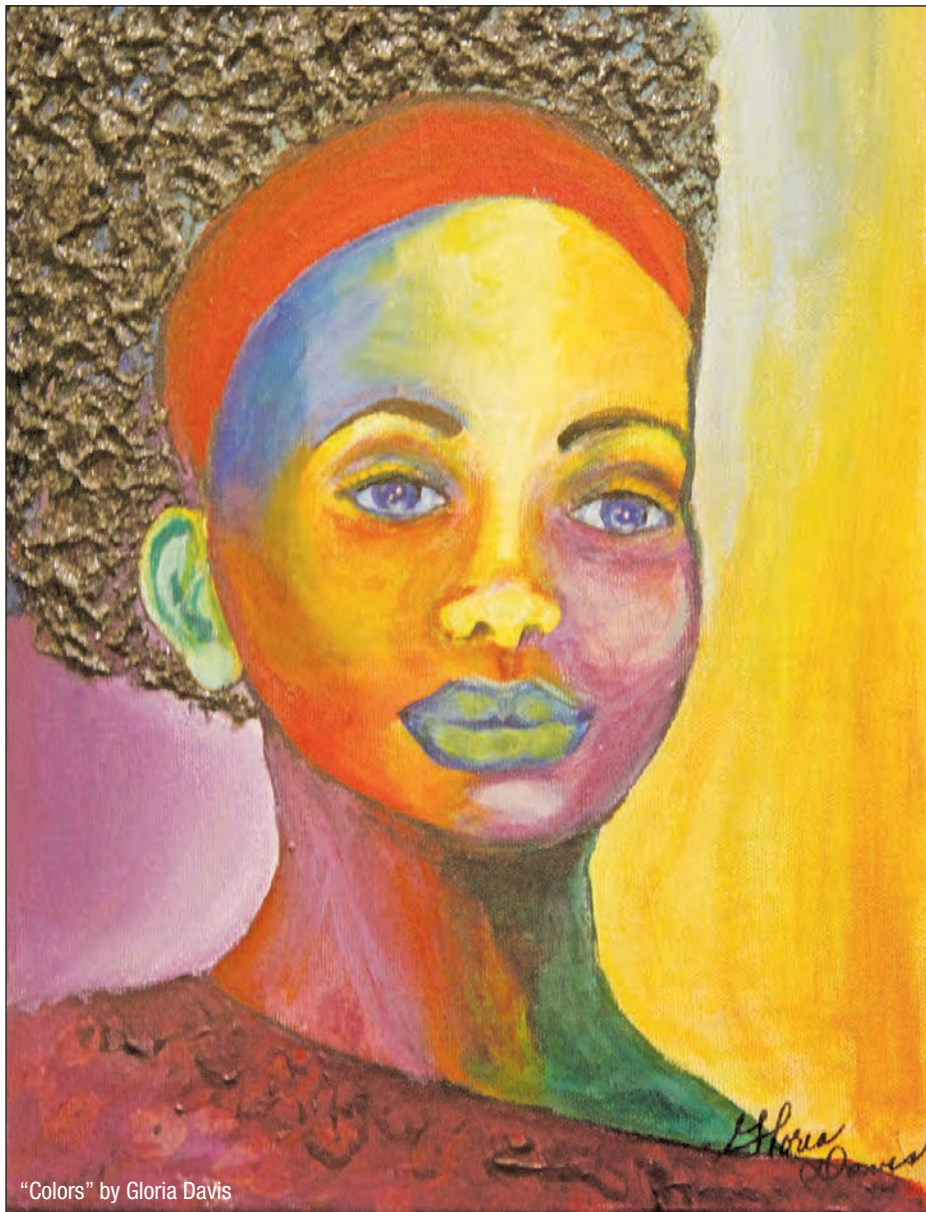
With Philadelphia schools shuttered for the rest of the year, this would be a great opportunity to connect with your grandchildren whom you may not be able to be with physically. Below are some questions that your grandchild or other young relative could use for a family interview:

- What invention from your lifetime are you most amazed by?
- What was the best day of your life?
- What are you the most proud of?
- What is your biggest regret or mistake?
- How have your dreams and goals changed throughout your life?
- How do you want to be remembered?
- What are the most rewarding things about getting older?
- Who has influenced you the most?
- What life advice would you pass along?
- If you could go back to any age, what would it be, and why?

The LegacyProject.org provides additional questions and activities to help you and other aging relatives recall and share your life stories. Whether you write down the answers, record them on your phone or just take the time to connect with a loved one, you will have left an indelible mark.

Alicia M. Colombo is editor of Milestones.





"Colors" by Gloria Davis

PCA's Celebrate Arts & Aging festival rescheduled for September

For the past 17 years, Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) has hosted its month-long Celebrate Arts & Aging festival to coincide with Older Americans Month in May. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, PCA has postponed the 2020 Celebrate Arts & Aging festival until September. All submissions that have already been received have been entered into the show, which will feature exhibits of artwork by seniors at Center on the Hill, City Hall and West Philadelphia Senior Community Center.

Due to the postponement of the festival, the deadline for senior artists, 55 or older, to submit an original artwork for inclusion in the show has been extended to August 5. All submissions must be two-dimensional art that has been created within the past three years. Acceptable mediums include painting, drawing, photography and prints.

For more information about Celebrate Arts and Aging, contact PCA's Special Events Manager at Amanda.Buonomo@pcaCares.org or call 215-765-5000, ext. 5055 or go to pcaCares.org/SeniorArt. 🌟

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World-famous soprano has ‘voice like liquid sunshine’

By Dorothy Stanaitis

Music critics have heaped many accolades upon soprano Julianne Baird, describing her sound as “a voice like liquid sunshine.” At 67, she is one of America’s most-recorded women, with more than 130 solo records to her credit. This vocal beauty has performed more than 300 times at New York City’s Lincoln Center. Her voice has been accompanied by the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra and our own Philadelphia Orchestra.

“Making my debut at Carnegie Hall at 40 was especially exciting,” said Philadelphia resident Julianne Baird. “So many members of my immediate family were able to attend, and I’m lucky to often have received great reviews in the [press].”

Her love of music stems from the music education she received throughout her life. Baird’s parents first recognized the outstanding quality of her voice when, at 5, they heard her singing along to country music on the radio. By 10, she was taking formal piano and voice lessons. Her first paying job was singing solos and playing piano at a local church. She used the money she earned to buy all of Mozart’s recorded operas.

Baird continued her formal education at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, earning bachelors and master’s degrees in Music History and Musicology. After one year at Stanford University pursuing her doctorate, she was offered an opportunity to sing professionally.

“I told my adviser in January 1979 that I would take a one-year leave of absence,” Baird said. “I performed at Lincoln Center and The Stereo Review said I stopped the show. I sang for the next 13 years and didn’t finish my doctoral dissertation until 1990.”

Baird kept up her busy performance



schedule, while raising two children and teaching classes at Rutgers University, The Julliard, School, Yale University and Rowan University.

“I know how to compartmentalize and make adjustments,” she said. “Since singing a concert requires a great deal of stamina, I sing the program twice in rehearsals so that my actual performance seems like just half the work. I’m also careful to avoid eating dairy products and to drink tons of water, a gallon before noon on concert days. Although my children knew that I might have to miss a birthday due to a concert, they also knew they could accompany me to Hawaii and the Caribbean when I performed on Cunard Line cruises.”

When she was younger, she often took red-eye flights to Philadelphia from concert venues to teach her morning Rutgers classes. “Now, on occasion, I hire someone to do that for me,” she said. “But I miss seeing my students.”

Infusing her students with a great love of music is gratifying to Baird. She knows how it can fill their lives, as it has filled hers, with creativity and joy. Seeing the students change their career paths from something “completely practical to something they love” is very rewarding. “Music is a joyous career,” Baird said. “It can change the worst mood to a happy one. It is impossible to cry and sing at the same time.”

Dorothy Stanaitis, a certified Philadelphia Tour Guide, writes about history and culture.

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CABIN FEVER?

Here's your guide
to staying
entertained
at home.



The lengthy social distancing and stay-at-home mandates have left many of us feeling bored and lonely. In place of the monthly calendar of events, we've compiled some helpful hints and suggestions to keep your mind and body engaged while you're at home.



WHAT TO WATCH

With so many choices of things to watch, we wanted to make sure you're watching something that uplifts your spirits, gets your competitive juices flowing or forces you to think. These five do exactly that.

"Grace and Frankie" – The unlikelyst of people become best friends over the unlikelyst of circumstances. You'll have a great time laughing (and sometimes, even crying) over this Emmy-nominated series on Netflix.

"The Wall" – This NBC weekly game show is perhaps one of the few where you're cringing for the contestants as they watch balls fall Plinko-style into a series of dollar amounts that could change their lives forever. You can also stream episodes online at nbc.com/the-wall.

"Dirty Money" – Now in its third season on Netflix, this eye-opening documentary series accurately conveys the greed, backstabbing and near-criminal activity that goes into everything from the production of honey to maple syrup exports to legalized money laundering in other countries.

"La Esclava Blanca" – This Netflix telenovela is a beautiful story about love and family. It chronicles the life of an orphan girl who is adopted and raised by black slaves. Years later she comes back to find the family and childhood love she lost.

"Modern Love" – Based on the popular New York Times column, Amazon Prime turned many of those stories into dramatic re-enactments that are sure to make you want to binge the whole series.



WHAT TO READ

Looking to pass the time with a good book? Check out these top picks from The New York Times Best Sellers List. For more picks, visit nytimes.com/books/best-sellers

Fiction:

- **"Little Fires Everywhere"** by Celeste Ng: Now a hit Hulu television series, this novel traces the lives of two star-crossed families in an idyllic suburban town.

- **"The Boy from the Woods"** by Harlan Coben: This mystery thriller chronicles the search for a missing girl, led by a man with a mysterious past of his own.

- **"In Five Years"** by Rebecca Serle: This moving love story takes a powerful glimpse into the future and its lasting effects on the life of a Manhattan lawyer.

- **"Where the Crawdads Sing"** by Delia Owens: A coming-of-age tale about loner Kya Clark, who suddenly finds herself in the middle of a murder mystery in the marshes of North Carolina.

- **"American Dirt"** by Jeanine Cummins: The dramatic story of a bookseller and her family, who are forced to flee Mexico for the United States with a drug cartel in pursuit.

Non-Fiction:

- **"The Splendid and the Vile"** by Erik Larson: A portrait of Winston Churchill and life in London during the Blitzkrieg.

- **"Lady in Waiting"** by Anne Glenconner: A dramatic and tragic memoir from a close member of the royal circle.

- **"Educated"** by Tara Westover: A gripping memoir tracing the incredible journey toward education for a young girl born to survivalists in the isolated mountains of Idaho.

- **"Becoming"** by Michelle Obama: The former First Lady chronicles her journey from the South Side of Chicago to the White House.

- **"The Gift of Forgiveness"** by Katherine Schwarzenegger Pratt: Reflections and interviews on the importance of letting go.



WHAT TO COOK

These recipes can be made with pantry staples.

Warm Chicken Tortellini Au Gratin

Ingredients:

2 cans (14 oz. each) water-packed artichoke hearts

3 cups cooked chicken, shredded

3 cups tortellini (fresh or frozen), cooked

1 ½ cups mayonnaise

1 ½ cups grated Asiago cheese, divided
Basil, optional

Directions:

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Drain artichoke hearts, reserving ¼ cup juice. Coarsely chop; combine with chicken, tortellini, mayonnaise, 1 cup cheese and reserved juice.

Place artichoke mixture in a greased 9x13 baking dish; sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake until bubbly and starting to brown, about 30 minutes. If desired, garnish with basil. (Source: Taste of Home)

One-Pot Chili Con Queso Mac & Cheese

Ingredients:

1 tbsp. olive oil

1 lb. lean ground beef

4-5 cloves garlic, minced

1 medium onion, chopped

1 tbsp. ground cumin

1 tbsp. ground coriander

1 tbsp. chili powder

1-2 tbsp. sriracha (optional)

1 (14.5 oz.) can fire-roasted tomatoes

1 (4 oz.) can diced hatch chilies

2 cups milk

1 ¾ cup chicken broth

Salt and pepper to taste

12 oz. elbow macaroni

3 cups cheddar or colby jack cheese

Directions:

Heat oil in a large skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add onions, garlic, and ground beef. Cook until browned, about 3-5 minutes. Drain excess grease.

Add in the cumin, coriander, chili powder, sriracha, tomatoes, chilies, milk, broth, salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a simmer. Stir in pasta. Bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until pasta is cooked, about 13-15 minutes.

Add 1 cup cheese; stir to combine. Remove from heat; sprinkle cheese on top, cover and let sit 3-5 minutes until cheese melts. (Source: Little Spice Jar)



WHAT TO DO

For health reasons, it's important to keep a daily routine. Take some time to think about what you want to do that day. You could also meditate, practice deep breathing, pray, read or write down your feelings.

Missing the gym? Plan activities that aren't seated, such as cleaning or gardening. Turn on the radio and dance to the music.

The Center at Journey's Way offers free online fitness classes. For details: IntercommunityAction.org or 215-487-1750.

Basic 10-minute in-home workout

To begin each exercise, stand facing a kitchen countertop with legs apart. Place hands, palms down, on the counter surface and bend elbows slightly.

Tandem Stance: Place one foot in front and the other directly behind, toe to heel. Hold for 60 seconds. Switch feet.

Squat: Move hips back and down slightly. Your knees will bend and move forward over your feet.

Pushup: Stand up on your toes. Walk back, keeping body and arms straight.

Shoulder stretch: Place fists on the counter surface. Walk back, keeping arms and back straight.

Calf raise: Push up on toes. Go down slowly. Repeat.

Calf stretch: Move one foot back, keep foot and knee straight. The front knee will bend. Hold. Switch feet.

March: Stand tall; raise one knee up. Alternate knees. Repeat.



Navigating the digital tools to help you stay connected

By Shannon Reyes

There is very little that the COVID-19 pandemic has not impacted. Businesses and schools have restructured to continue operating from the home, instead of the community. But for those living alone or separated from family, the pandemic has also impacted how much they are able to connect with loved ones.

Fortunately, technology is helping people to bridge that gap. Many people are finding creative ways to use everyday online tools and devices to be present with one another, even if they are not physically occupying the same space.

For those who are looking to navigate these digital tools to help stay connected, assistance is even available through Generations onLine, a Philadelphia-based nonprofit that offers free tools and workshops

for older adults to help familiarize them with smart devices.

Through “Easy Tablet Help for Seniors,” a free application or “app” created by Generations on Line, older adults can explore several training modules aimed at familiarizing them with all the basics and tools available on mobile tablets and phones, such as navigating apps and internet safety.

“It has all the basic training you would need if you were brand new to a tablet or a cell phone,” says Generations on Line founder and CEO Tobey Dichter. “The whole idea is to make it as simple and as easy as possible for anyone who is intimidated by new technology.”

Easy Tablet Help for Seniors is available for Apple, Android and Amazon devices. It can be found at GenerationsOnLine.org.

Now is the perfect time to learn or take

a refresher on smart device usage, as there are a host of digital tools available that allow individuals to connect digitally with loved ones.

Social media

Social networking platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat, are a great way to stay connected to multiple people in your life, including friends, family and acquaintances. These services allow you to post status updates, photos and videos, as well as share links and articles. An added bonus is that most of these platforms also include direct messaging features, which sometimes include the ability to video chat. Some of the most popular platforms that offer video chatting include Facebook Messenger, Google Duo and WhatsApp.

Video conferencing software

With the majority of the workforce doing their jobs from home, video conferencing has become more popular than ever. But these platforms are not just for the workplace. Many people have taken to these platforms during the pandemic to host virtual family dinners and even happy hours with friends.

Since these platforms are designed to support multiple people in one digital space, they are ideal for larger online social gatherings. Dichter also notes the following platforms are also ideal for a grandparent who may want to simultaneously connect with grandchildren who live in different states or countries:

- GoToMeeting
- Skype
- Zoom
- Join.me
- Google Hangouts
- FaceTime (for Apple users on iPad, iPhone or Mac)

Home assistant devices

It’s almost as simple as saying, “Alexa, call my grandkids.” Home assistant devices are physical devices to connect you with others who use similar technology. Right now, these three brands currently dominate the home assistant device market, each offering its own video-calling product line:

- Portal (Facebook)
- Echo (Amazon)
- Nest Hub (Google)

Dichter also encourages older adults to explore different forms of digital communication, since they are not one-size-fits-all. “To see each other during the holidays, share a meal or play a game with a grandchild, video chatting may be a terrific option,” Dichter says. “However, traditional phone calls may be good for lengthy, intimate conversations as there may be some hesitancy on video.”

Shannon Reyes is public relations specialist at Philadelphia Corporation for Aging.



SCAM ALERT!

When 'tech support' is actually a scam: How to avoid computer-based fraud

Milestones' series of scam alerts targeting seniors continues with a popular computer-based scam where con artists pretend to be associated with a well-known technology company, such as Microsoft, Apple or Dell. These alleged tech support representatives falsely claim that a person's computer has been infected with a virus. Con artists prey on a person's fear to gain remote computer access. While connected, the fake tech support agent may install malware (malicious software), such as a virus, or spyware that can steal information from your computer, such as bank account information and online passwords.

The mother of a Milestones staff member fell for the tech support scam, allow-

ing remote access to her computer by an alleged Microsoft agent. Thankfully, she ended the call when the fraudster asked for a credit card to pay for computer repair services.

However, thousands of people fall for these schemes every year. In March 2019, the Department Justice, Federal Trade Commission and several state Attorneys General announced the takedown of multiple tech support schemes that collectively defrauded tens of thousands of victims in the United States.

Below are several of the most common variations of the tech support scam.

Con by phone: In the most prevalent variation of this scam, con artists randomly

• continued on page 14

How to avoid computer-based scams:

- Do not give control of your computer to anyone who calls you out of the blue.
- Do not rely on caller-ID to authenticate a person's identity. Scammers may appear to be calling from a legitimate company or a local number, when they are not even in the United States.
- If you want to contact tech support, look for the company's contact information on its software package or your receipt. Never provide your credit card or financial information to someone who calls and claims to be from tech support.
- If a caller pressures you to buy a computer security product or pay a subscription fee associated with the call, hang up.
- If you're concerned about your computer, call your security software company directly and ask for help.
- Make sure you have updated all of your computer's anti-virus software, firewalls and popup blockers.

For more information, go to ftc.gov/scams. If you spot a scam, please report it to the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357) or ftccomplaintassistant.gov.

Source: Federal Trade Commission



Volunteers Wanted for a Research Study

Are you an older adult (over 65) looking for something meaningful to do while at home and practicing social distancing?

Temple researchers are looking for seniors who receive Home and Community Based Services (ie. Home Health Care, Community Access Support, Domestic Support) to participate in a research study.

Getting services at home or locally is important for people with disabilities. To make those services better, we have to know if they are working. We are trying to make a new survey that asks the right questions about how well Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) are helping people. We have developed and refined our questions over the past year and are ready to practice administering the survey to ensure that the questions make sense and the survey gives the information needed to answer important questions about HCBS.

Participants will be interviewed up to 2 times, using an online meeting app like Zoom. Participants will be asked to respond to survey questions, and then provide feedback on the process.

Participants will get \$20 Amazon eGift Card for each interview completed as a thank you. If you are interested in participating in this research study or would like more information, please contact: Laura Slugg at laura.slugg@temple.edu or 215-429-0005.

Stay active: Get moving at home!

"As long as you have a heartbeat, you're meant to move," said Eric Ramos, fitness instructor specializing in aerobics and other exercises for seniors. Ramos has more than 20 years' experience in exercise instruction and personal training. He and his staff lead weekly Enhance Fitness exercise classes at 16 senior community centers throughout Philadelphia. "Not all seniors are frail, not all seniors are fit," said Ramos, whose oldest Enhance Fitness participant is 102. "Do whatever you can. Anything is better than nothing."

The stay-at-home mandates have disrupted everyone's daily routines, including exercise and fitness activities. Since gyms, senior centers and parks are all closed, we've been forced to occupy ourselves at home. But Ramos cautions seniors not to become sedentary. It's important to get up and move throughout the day. Ramos has prepared three simple 30-minute exercise videos, which are available on pcaCares.org, that make working out at home easy and fun. "If people are unable to go to the gym, these are all simple and effective exercises," Ramos said. "My goal with these videos was to encourage activity in the senior community. Whether you are

sedentary or new to exercise, these videos are for you. The programs engages all the important muscles of the body." The videos include Chair Aerobics for Seniors; Stretching and Strength for Seniors; and Corporate Fitness, an all-levels workout that's designed for people who are sitting all day with little movement.

If you don't have access to computer with internet access, tablet or smartphone to view Ramos' videos, he offers the following tips for staying active and safe at home.

For more exercise and activity tips, see pages 8-9.

Always wear shoes.

Shoes and comfortable clothes are a must, whenever you are doing exercise. "When you are in the comfort of your own home, falls and accidents can happen," said Ramos. "Make sure you have sneakers or other lace-up shoes with the right support. No slippers, no flip-flops. It's important to be safe."

Don't start cold.

Never stretch or exercise cold muscles. Do a light warm up by walking around first. To get the muscles warmed up and moving, stand up and sit down 10 times. If you are able, do 2-3 sets. If you need assistance standing from a seated position, use a chair with arms or your walker for support.

Disrupt sitting.

If you're been working from home at a computer or desk, or just sitting excessively due to the extended disruption of normal activities, you have to make an effort to get up and move. "By doing practical and functional movements, your muscles will be disengaged from a temporary sedentary lifestyle," Ramos said. He recommends this easy, seated stretch to "wake up" your leg muscles. Place both feet firmly on the floor with legs apart. Kick one heel out, so the leg is straight and stretch both arms forward; not down. Switch legs and repeat 4 to 8 times for 15-30 seconds.

Get moving.

Stand up and walk from the front of your house to the back, as often as you can. Do it 10-20 times, depending on the size of your house. Rest, and then do it again, until you are able to do that 4-5 times. If you are fit and can walk up and down the steps with ease, do that up to 10 times. "What and how much you do depends on your fitness level," said Ramos. "You can use cans as weights to do bicep curls even while sitting. Try to lift your arms above your head, if you can. If not, do what you can."

Listen to your body.

While trying to stay active, be careful not to strain or hurt yourself. "Once your hips get tight, it causes lower back pain, especially if you have back problems or inactive muscles," Ramos said. "Think of an imaginary scale of 1 to 10 — 1 being very, very light intensity and 10 being the point where you're going to hurt yourself. Strive for a 5 or 6." Take breaks, whenever you need to and be sure to drink lots of water.



Mr. Wiggles to the rescue

By M.L. Polak

When I first set eyes on Mr. Wiggles — an impossibly cute, scruffy white Bichon Frise, he was running around at the end of my street, happily sniffing scattered curbside trash and drinking from puddles. He had no leash, no collar, no ID tags and no owner in sight. This sweet dog had gone AWOL right in front of the CVS parking lot on a busy center city street.

My heart literally jumped into my mouth as I ran out my house and down the block to grab him. He was wiry and compact, maybe even underweight. There was really nothing to him. Fortunately, he let me pick him up. Who did this hyper-kinetic pup belong to?

Something made me walk down the alley of the apartment house next to the CVS dumpsters, where the building's maintenance technician Ennis lived with his new bride, Tia. I remembered meeting her a

few months back. She was looking for her missing orange kitten, who turned up at home, asleep in a bureau drawer. Despite me being in my 70s and she in her 30s, we bonded instantaneously over our shared connection with animals.

I knocked on her door and she emerged, crying out in a mix of terror and delight: "Mr. Wiggles, you're back!" The little dog's tail thumped out "I love you," and I gave him over to his real mom.

Two weeks earlier, she had returned from having her second baby. Now, she had two infant girls under a year old, a kitten, a dog and a husband. She said she wanted even more pets. Despite my bruised knees from a fall two days prior, I offered to help with the dog if she ever needed someone to walk him.

So, each day at 2 p.m., I came for Mr. Wiggles. At home I had found a leash and collar set from my departed dog Freda and affixed it to a very accommodating Mr.

Wiggles. And, so we walked. With each step I took, I was in incredible pain from my fall, but I persisted. The little dog was so excited to see me that I quickly forgot how badly my legs hurt. We walked around the block in the 15th and Pine neighborhood where I had lived on and off ever since graduating from college decades ago.

Day after day, for about six weeks, winter into spring, I walked "Wiggy," as I called him. We had grown very fond of each other. It seemed like he looked forward to seeing me as much as I looked forward to seeing him. But something held me back from asking to keep the dog, though Tia was clearly overwhelmed. What if I passed away? What would happen to Wiggy?

So, when Ennis and Tia finally asked me if I wanted to adopt Mr. Wiggles, I reluctantly declined. I asked Ennis about his ultimate hopes for Mr. Wiggles. He wanted to keep him in the family and envisioned giving the dog to his grown son in New



Jersey, with a large fenced-in backyard that afforded the freedom to run. That sounded good to me.

Just like that, Mr. Wiggles was gone. He stayed in my life long enough for us to walk away my knee pain. While my legs were healed, my heart felt just a little broken by Wiggy's departure. But I knew it was for the best of all concerned. I had given him all my love, and he had accepted it. For a time, life was better for both of us.

M.L. Polak writes, edits, draws cartoons and gardens in Philadelphia.

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Fostering animals

• continued from page 6

opportunity for those willing to open up their homes to dogs and cats. Many people are normally too busy with work or travel to foster an animal. "Especially right now, you can have the enjoyment of living with an animal but not the long-term commitment," Gove said.

Some older adults may not have good access to transportation, making it difficult for them to visit friends and family and to have social interaction. Others may have limited mobility. For them, taking care of animals is something they can do "to bring happiness, fulfillment and richness into their lives,"

Bernstein said, "It's nice to have animals in the house that you can take care of."

Lynn Berkowitz can attest to the joy of fostering animals. The 67-year-old East

Falls resident works with animals rescued from neglectful and abusive situations by Pennsylvania SPCA, where she has volunteered for the past four years.

Almost three years ago, Berkowitz took her commitment to animals one step further and became a foster parent. She ended up adopting the first dog she fostered, a tiny Lhasa Apso/Pekingese mix she named Pitzel.

"The joy of fostering neglected animals is more than in the feeding and the walking of the pets," Berkowitz said. "It's helping them overcome their pasts and helping them get ready to be adopted. [Fostering] is a chance to be around animals, to help animals, and to be of service."

Jay Nachman is a freelance writer in Philadelphia who tells stories for a variety of clients.

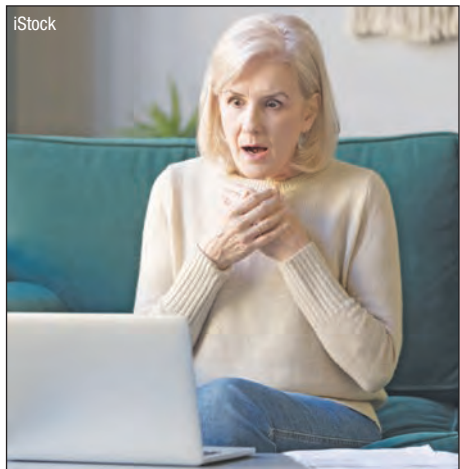
Scam alert

• continued from page 11

call potential victims to offer phony computer cleaning and/or sell technical support services. If a person expresses concern about the cost of such services, the con artists will often offer a "senior citizen discount."

Online ads: Some people unknowingly call a fraudulent tech support number they saw online. Internet searches for tech support may include the number for a scammer at the top of the "sponsored results." Other fraudsters use pop-up messages on consumers' computer screens that direct potential victims to call them.

Fraudulent refund: Scammers contact victims stating that they are owed a refund for prior services and request computer access to process an online wire transfer. Then, fraudsters use the victims' account information to steal money and/



or commit identity theft.

Ransomware: Software may be used to encrypt a person's computer so it cannot be used until a fee is paid. If the ransom is not paid, the computer is rendered useless, prompting the appearance of a blue screen that can only be removed with a password known by the scammer.

This is part of a series of Scam Alerts targeting our nation's seniors.

Health Brief

Clear your mind of COVID-19

With anxieties at an all-time high, thanks to COVID-19, there hasn't been much conversation around the things older adults can do to keep their mental health strong during uncertain times. Despite the overwhelming amount of stress that can arrive from the unknown, there are positives that we all should focus on to improve our mental stamina – at any age.

With temperatures in Philadelphia taking a turn for the better, there's no reason to suffer through this pandemic inside any longer, so consider the following as we all transition.

Get out and garden

Not only will it keep you active and mobile, gardening is also a great way to work on your mental acuity. Also, researchers say it greatly reduces cortisol, the stress hormone. High levels of cortisol have been linked to significantly affect memory and raise the risk of mental illnesses, like depression and dementia. A study conducted using close to 3,000 people over the age of 60 found that not only did gardening reduce the risk of dementia, it reduced future risk by nearly 36%. It pays for your brain and body to develop a green thumb.

It's time to develop a craft

If you've been putting off learning how to do [insert hobby or craft here], now would be as fantastic a time as ever to consider picking one up. Beyond just passing the time, it's great for continued cognitive development, memory management and happiness. Also, research shows that completing a craft builds a sense of purpose which we all need and can value in our lives right now, especially for seniors battling with isolation. If you've created something you'd like to share with Milestones, send a picture with a brief story to MilestonesNews@pcaCares.org. We might print it in a future issue.



Soundtrack to the 'new normal'

Life is better with music. Even if you have it on in the background as you go about your daily routine, the social and emotional benefits are proven to have a profound effect on the brain. The stimulation the right song provides to the mind and body is proven. For those who love to sing or play an instrument or have been looking to pick one up, there's no reason why they can't start now. It's vital to have something to relax you, and music truly is the cure for what ails.

Dust off that old cookbook

If you're fortunate enough to craft a meal on your own, there's no reason why this wouldn't be a good time to explore a new recipe. There are many grocery stores opening early or closing later to accommodate people vulnerable to COVID-19, which means less people in the market while you shop for unique spices to make your perfect meal. Wary about exploring stores right now? That's totally understandable. Many of those same stores offer delivery right to your door. Call your favorite market to see what options are available for home delivery. Whipped up something great you want to share? Send the recipes to us at MilestonesNews@pcaCares.org.

Crossword

Currency

Across

- 1 Small bills

5 Inflight

9 Yards

14 All one's holdings

16 Bowed, just to be devilish

17 Odd as a ____

19 Airport abbreviation

20 Different kind of market

21 Burning

24 Break-in sound

26 ____ now, Dow-Jones?

29 Truckloads

30 Soul, in St. Malo

31 Play ____

34 NYSE purchase

35 Bond-issue span

37 Up-and-down syndrome

39 Capital items

40 Profit

42 "We ____ amused"

43 Scotland's longest river

44 A juicy fruit

45 Tel. listing

46 Like ____ not

48 Gloria ____

49 Amerind

51 Lad

52 Broker-dealer tally sheet

60 Kind of price

61 Independent broker, at times

62 Trading plus

63 For Pete's ____

64 "Don't throw bouquets ____"

Down

- 1 Make a choice

2 Japanese dance drama

3 Do wrong

4 Guides

5 Root beer

6 Arafat's org.

7 Be sick

8 Red ____, ex-Yankee

9 Piece of land

10 Singer McEntire

11 Yalie

12 ____ or none

13 The sun

15 Honor

18 Deity or dollar

21 From ____ Z

22 This Gun ____

23 Cost-of-living levels

24 Prayer endings

25 Toast start

26 Snood

27 Recession

28 Tiny

30 Da Vinci dream

32 Arnie's holders

33 ____-mo: replay technique

35 Actor Ray

36 On ____: carousing

38 Half a work crew

39 Distant

41 Before state or partite

44 '50s airwave problem

47 Tryouts

48 Somewhat: mus.

49 Good-till-cancelled

50 Koppel, *et al.*

51 Alphabet run

52 Slacken

53 Made in ____

54 Go downhill?

55 Honolulu suburb

56 Right on!

57 Prior month, briefly

58 Asian land, for short

59 Three, at Trevi

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