



# Vital!

VITAL INFORMATION FOR A VITAL LIFE®

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**M**y son is on his high school varsity lacrosse team. I have to say, it is **THE** most intense team he has ever played on. These guys are *serious*. One of their coaches sends out multiple messages each day that are either the “fire ‘em up!” type or messages that inspire good character. One of today’s was the latter: “It’s important to realize that what makes a person really special isn’t their skill, their talent or their title. It’s how much they’re willing to give of themselves to help others. It’s about putting others first and understanding that the world is about more than just themselves!”

Good advice to a bunch of super-competitive teen boys. One can only hope they internalize even a piece of the daily inspirations.

It’s been often said that in giving, the giver often gains more than the recipient. By giving of yourself, you reap benefits far beyond anything material given or received. April is National Volunteer Month. It’s the month dedicated to honoring all of the volunteers in our communities as well as encouraging volunteerism throughout the month. It’s the perfect time to take a moment to thank those that give back to your communities, and think about how you can give back as well.

Talk about inspiring generosity—This month we’re featuring the Delaware Hospice Center. The volunteers at Delaware Hospice (and every hospice) give of themselves every single day, and make immense contributions to families everywhere. We’d like to thank them, and invite you to learn more about getting involved. Volunteers are always welcome!

Jamie McPherson from Your Own Home invites you to inspire others through mentorship. We agree with him: Mentorship matters! Find out why on page 12. Opportunities are all around you.

Want to put your skills to work? Visit [www.volunteer.delaware.gov](http://www.volunteer.delaware.gov) for ideas ranging from becoming a member of the crew on the Kalmar Nyckel to being a creekwatcher to writing grants. Because, to paraphrase Coach, it’s not your skill that makes you special. It’s your willingness to share your skills.

Happy April!

*Karyn and Heidi*

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**ON THE COVER:** Dr. Ralph DeMario, Delaware Hospice Center Team Physician and Debbie Taylor, RN, BA, OCN, Associate Director of the Delaware Hospice Center stand in one of the 16 private suites at the Delaware Hospice Center. Each suite enables patients and families to be together through spacious rooms and private French doors to the garden. Every patient and family receives personalized care through the support of our interdisciplinary team at the Delaware Hospice Center. All suites are deep cleaned after each use and staff follow rigorous health and safety protocols.



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## How Has the Pandemic Changed Me?

By Margo Ewing Woodacre, MSW

Now that a year has passed since the official start of the COVID-19 pandemic—a year full of uncertainties, frustrations and fears—we find ourselves at a crossroads, wondering what's next for ourselves, our country, our world. Safety measures imposed on us did have a bright side: they afforded us time. Time for introspection, and for considering where we've been, where we are, and what we'd like the rest of our lives to look like. With vaccines finally a reality, we're looking forward to sauntering back into the world. But despite our excitement to leave 2020 behind, it's worthwhile to ask ourselves: What have we learned from this past year?

### What have you learned?

Knowing I'd moved through my own growth during the pandemic, I wanted to see how other women, similar to myself, were surviving and dealing with this disconcerting state of affairs. So I emailed a simple questionnaire to 55 diverse Baby Boomer women. Turns out, they, too, had been pondering similar questions. Each woman was asked to write the first thoughts that came to mind.

**Question: After these many months of solitude during the quarantine, what three words come to mind to describe what you have felt?**

Of the participants, 70% listed at least one positive word to describe their spirits including such terms as: hope; faith; peacefulness; blessings; resilience; flexibility; empathy; reflection; renewal. The most used description among them was gratitude and gratefulness.

On the other hand, 30% listed only negative descriptions such as: uncertainty; loneliness; anger; limita-

tion; social disruption; boredom and, understandably, the most used terms: anxiety and fear.

**Question: In one sentence, what have you learned about yourself?**

Fully 97% respondents said they learned something positive from their experiences. Their statements included: I learned how to enjoy my own company; I will not take freedom for granted ever again; I can adapt when necessary; I must stay stimulated and engaged with new things; I can depend on my creativity and resourcefulness; I need to let go of that over which I have no control; I will work on looking for the brighter side of life; I need to do more acts of kindness; I can overcome my anxiety through mindfulness; I am stronger than I thought.

These results, on the most part, did not surprise me. Anyone who has lived 55 or more years has dealt with many a challenge. Some of us have faced divorce, lost loved ones, lost jobs, combated illnesses, and taken care of others in need, to name just a few of life's ordeals. The common thread I found through this survey is that we can find the good in the worst of times and through that, we do more than survive. We thrive.

Moving forward, the sadness, fears and inconveniences of the pandemic will still exist, of course. But hopefully the time we have had to reflect and contemplate has strengthened us, allowing us to imagine the next chapter of our lives. Although the years behind us may outnumber those ahead, we're secure in knowing that we have the energy, creativity, and drive to thrive.

*Margo Ewing Woodacre is a Life Transitions Coach, blogger and keynote speaker. Read her blog at [www.Margo360.com](http://www.Margo360.com).*



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# What's the Difference Between HDL and LDL Cholesterol?

**C**holesterol frequently gets a bum rap, but it's necessary for your body to function properly. Your body uses cholesterol to make hormones and vitamin D, and support digestion. Your liver generates enough cholesterol to handle these tasks, but your body doesn't just get cholesterol from your liver. Cholesterol is also in foods such as meat, dairy, and poultry. If you eat a lot of these foods, your cholesterol levels may become too high.

## HDL vs. LDL cholesterol

There are two main types of cholesterol: high-density lipoprotein (HDL) and low-density lipoprotein (LDL). Lipoproteins are made of fat and proteins. Cholesterol moves through your body while inside lipoproteins.

HDL is known as "good cholesterol" because it transports cholesterol to your liver to be expelled from your body. HDL helps rid your body of excess cholesterol so it's less likely to end up in your arteries.

LDL is called "bad cholesterol" because it takes cholesterol to your arteries, where it may collect in artery walls. Too much cholesterol in your arteries may lead to a buildup of plaque known as atherosclerosis. This can increase the risk of blood clots in your arteries. If a blood clot breaks away and blocks an artery in your heart or brain, you may have a stroke or heart attack.

Plaque buildup may also reduce blood flow and oxygen to major organs. Oxygen deprivation to your organs or arteries may lead to kidney disease or peripheral arterial disease, in addition to a heart attack or stroke.

## Know your numbers

According to the Centers for Disease Control, over 31 percent of Americans have high LDL cholesterol. You may not even know it because high cholesterol doesn't cause noticeable symptoms.

The only way to find out if your cholesterol is high is through a blood test that measures cholesterol in milligrams per deciliter of blood (mg/dL). When you get your cholesterol numbers checked, you'll receive results for:

- **Total blood cholesterol:** This includes your HDL, LDL, and 20 percent of your total triglycerides.
- **Triglycerides:** This number should be below 150 mg/dL. Triglycerides are a common type of fat. If your triglycerides are high and your LDL is also high or your HDL is low, you're at risk of developing atherosclerosis.
- **HDL:** The higher this number, the better. It should be at least higher than 55 mg/dL for females and 45 mg/dL for males.
- **LDL:** The lower this number, the better. It should be no more than 130 mg/dL if you don't have heart disease, blood vessel disease, or diabetes. It should be no more than 100 mg/dL if you have any of those conditions or high total cholesterol.

## Causes of high cholesterol

Lifestyle factors that may cause high cholesterol include obesity; a diet high in red meat, full-fat dairy products, saturated fats, trans fats, and processed foods; a large waist circumference (over 40 inches for men or over 35 inches for women); lack of regular exercise.

According to a 2013 study, smokers typically have lower HDL cholesterol than nonsmokers. Research shows quitting smoking can increase HDL.

It's unclear if stress directly causes high cholesterol. Unmanaged stress may lead to behaviors that can increase LDL and total cholesterol such as overeating fatty foods, inactivity, and increased smoking.

In some cases, high LDL is inherited. This condition is called familial hypercholesterolemia (FH). FH is caused by a genetic mutation that affects the ability of a person's liver to get rid of extra LDL cholesterol. This may lead to high LDL levels and an increased risk of heart attack and stroke at a young age.

## How to treat high cholesterol

To treat high cholesterol, doctors often recommend patients stop smoking, eat a healthy diet, exercise regularly and reduce stress.

Sometimes lifestyle changes aren't enough, especially if you have FH. You may need one or more medications such as:

- Statins to help your liver get rid of cholesterol.
- Bile-acid-binding medications to help your body use extra cholesterol to produce bile.
- Cholesterol absorption inhibitors to prevent your small intestines from absorbing cholesterol and releasing it into your bloodstream.
- Injectable medications that cause your liver to absorb more LDL cholesterol.

Medications and supplements to reduce triglyceride levels may also be used such as niacin (Niacor), omega-3 fatty acids, and fibrates.

## The impact of diet

The American Heart Association recommends eating these foods to help reduce total cholesterol and increase HDL:

- A range of fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Skinless poultry, lean pork, and lean red meat
- Baked or grilled fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, or sardines
- Unsalted seeds, nuts, and legumes
- Vegetable or olive oils

These foods may increase LDL cholesterol and should be avoided or rarely eaten:

- Untrimmed red meat
- Fried foods
- Baked goods made with trans fats or saturated fats
- Full-fat dairy products
- Foods with hydrogenated oils
- Tropical oils

## Outlook

High cholesterol can be concerning. But in most cases, it's a warning signal. Being diagnosed with high cholesterol doesn't mean you'll develop heart disease or have a stroke, but it should still be taken seriously.

If you have high cholesterol and act to reduce it, your risk of heart disease and stroke will most likely decrease. Lifestyle steps that help reduce cholesterol also support your overall health.

## Prevention tips

You're never too young to start thinking about preventing high cholesterol. Eating a healthy diet is an important first step. Here are some changes you can make today:

- Choose whole wheat pasta and brown rice over white.
- Dress salads with olive oil and a splash of lemon juice instead of high-fat salad dressings.
- Eat more fish. Aim for at least two servings a week.
- Swap soda or fruit juice with seltzer water or plain water flavored with fresh fruit slices.
- Bake meat and poultry instead of frying.
- Use low-fat Greek yogurt instead of sour cream.
- Opt for whole-grain cereals instead of sugar-laden varieties. Try topping them with cinnamon instead of sugar.

Exercise may also have a positive impact on your cholesterol levels. If you're sedentary most of the day, move more. If you work at a desk, set an alarm on your cellphone or computer, or get a fitness tracker to remind you to get up and move for five minutes each hour. Try to fit in at least 30 minutes of exercise daily. Walking, swimming, or riding a bike are great options.

If you're a smoker, talk to your doctor about how to stop. Smoking increases your risk of not only high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and heart disease, but also many types of cancer.

If you don't know your cholesterol numbers, ask your doctor about getting tested, especially if you have a family history of high cholesterol or heart disease. The earlier you know your cholesterol numbers, the sooner you can take steps to manage them.

For more, visit [www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com)  
References available upon request.

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# Have an Exercise Snack: Try the Standing 7-Minute Workout



By Tara Parker-Pope

Just as you might grab a handful of chips or nuts to break the monotony of your day, an exercise “snack” is a short burst of movement you can enjoy at home or in the office or outdoors. It can last for mere seconds or for several minutes. You can do it while talking on the phone or just because you want to take an hourly break from sitting in your chair. You don’t even have to change your clothes.

A number of scientific studies show that exercise snacking several times a day leads to meaningful gains in fitness and overall health. A recent study concluded that even just 4-second bursts of exercise have been shown to improve fitness.

“We’ve sort of been conditioned that exercise is this thing you do in a special place once you change into spandex, and it’s very daunting for people,” said Martin Gibala, professor of kinesiology at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada, whose lab has conducted several studies of exercise snacking. “Let’s get people out of the mindset that exercise is this special thing we do. You can just be active, even if it means setting your watch to trigger you to do some squats or wall sits for one minute after an hour of sitting.”

Several studies show that these small bursts of exercise can have a big impact on health. One recent study, published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, recruited 11 overweight men and women who were asked to sit for nine hours a day in cozy recliners, where they worked

or watched television. They were all served three meals while sitting in their chairs. One day the participants never left the chair except to go to the bathroom. On another day, they left the chair just once an hour to race up three flights of stairs, which took about 20 seconds. Among the overweight participants, adding a 20-second burst of stair climbing to an otherwise sedentary day led to improvements in insulin sensitivity, a sign of metabolic health.

The study built on similar research at McMaster University that showed exercise snacks can lead to meaningful improvements in fitness. In that study, a dozen exercisers raced up three flights of stairs just three times a day for three days a week. After six weeks of these 20-second snacks of exercise, the exercisers had increased their aerobic fitness by about 5 percent. They also showed improvements in leg power and could generate more power while cycling.

Dr. Gibala said the lesson from the research is that with a little effort, we can stay active anywhere under almost any circumstances — no matter how busy we are. The key to getting the benefit of brief exercise is to pick up the pace.

“You need to push it a little bit,” said Dr. Gibala. “Get out of your comfort zone. If your normal exercise is walking around the block, pick it up a little bit. As you go about your day, as you’re playing with grandchildren, as you’re walking to the bus; the key is to encourage people to do it in a vigorous manner, and that may lead to some real health benefits.”

## Try an Exercise Snack

This week, try one or more of these exercise challenges to add short bursts of exercise throughout your day.

### Add exercise to your phone call:

A work or social call is a great time to add some activity to your day—and the person on the other end of the phone doesn’t have to know about it. Just get up and start walking around your home as you talk. If you have hand weights, do some arm exercises. Do a yoga pose or a wall sit while you chat.

### Add music to your movement break:

Every hour or few hours, turn on a favorite song, and dance or do jumping jacks or another physical activity.

### Do the 7-Minute Standing Workout:

All you need is a wall, a chair for balance and sturdy shoes. The workout was designed for newcomers to exercise, older people, pregnant women or anyone with an ache or injury that keeps them from easily getting down on the floor or back up. But anyone can take advantage of the benefits of this exercise snack.

If you find the workout too difficult, start with just one or two exercises and add more when you’re ready. And if you don’t like one of the exercises, such as the chair push up, just switch to a wall push up instead. The great thing about this workout is that you can do it at whatever intensity level is right for you.

### The Workout

You’re going to do just 12 exercises: 30 seconds each with a 5 second rest in between. That’s it!

- 1 **Start by walking in place.** If you can, take it up a notch to marching or jogging in place. Raise your knees and pump your arms to raise your heartbeat. Work at your own pace.
- 2 **Now you’ll use your chair for squats.** With your back to the chair, feet shoulder width apart, use your arms to counterbalance and lower yourself to almost sitting in the chair, then raise up again. Keep a quick enough pace that your heart rate stays up. It’s only for 30 seconds.
- 3 **Wall pushup is next.** With hands shoulder width apart,

lower yourself to the wall then push back out. It’s easier if your feet are closer to the wall, harder if they’re farther out.

- 4 **Standing crunches for your core.** Hands behind ears, march in place and bring your elbow to the opposite knee. Tighten your core and make sure you’re crunching your abs, bringing the upper body toward the lower body.
- 5 **Cardio: stand and box.** With feet shoulder width apart, alternate throwing punches. If you can, add a squat. The goal is cardio, so move quickly.
- 6 **Split squats.** Using your chair for balance, one leg straight behind you, the other bent at 90°, using the chair for balance and stability if you need to, drop your back knee toward the ground, keeping an upright posture. Switch legs after 15 seconds.
- 7 **Chair assisted pushup.** With hands on either side of the chair, feet behind you, lower your body to the chair, squeezing your abs and glutes and keeping your core straight and stable.
- 8 **Wall plank.** With forearms against wall, feet away, hold your body straight from head to heels. To make it harder move your feet away from the wall. Squeeze abs and glutes.
- 9 **Stepping or jumping jacks.** It’s more cardio.
- 10 **Wall sit.** Sit against the wall, back flat and arms crossed across your chest.
- 11 **Wall pushup.** With your feet away, lower yourself to the wall. Feel the arms, chest and shoulders working as you lower yourself and push back up.
- 12 **Standing side crunch.** Hands behind ears, elbows straight out to the sides. Bring left knee to left elbow, then right knee to right elbow, crunching your side muscles as you go.

Congratulations! You just completed a whole-body workout in just 7 minutes!



# Cancer's Blessing: A Patient's Perspective

## (4th in a series)



*In January we introduced you to our friend, Paul Bohannon. Eight years ago, Paul was diagnosed with prostate cancer, and given 6 months to live. Yet here he is to tell his story, eight years later, cancer free. How did he do it? What was his path? What did he learn? What can you or a loved one learn if you are going through a cancer diagnosis? We invite you to follow Paul's story each month, although if you don't want to wait, you can read more of his story at [www.vitalmagonline.com/cancers-blessing-a-patients-perspective](http://www.vitalmagonline.com/cancers-blessing-a-patients-perspective) right now.*

By Paul Bohannon

Last month we talked about having an advocate. This month we're focusing on establishing a treatment plan.

## Establish a Treatment Plan

Establishing your treatment plan is complex, particularly since you'll be getting suggestions from your doctors, friends, other patients, and loved ones.

As it turned out, my own treatment plan happened in two phases. I refer to them as Round 1 and Round 2. Round 1 was removing the tumor. The cancer had also escaped into my urethra and bladder, which was the basis for my six-month life expectancy.

I was furious that for two years no physician thought my issues could be cancer, simply because of my age. I was so furious that my initial plan was a war plan. I ate the most aggressive diet I could imagine: raw vegetables and VERY limited fats. I ate avocados and put coconut oil in my coffee, did coffee enemas, took daily saunas, ate more raw vegetables, and worked out to the point my body fed itself from my muscle tissue. It was an exhaustive plan, but it was what my brain needed. This was war and I was prepared to destroy anything related to cancer. I had to actively participate, to train, to exhaust myself doing something.

I thought I'd won.

### Round 2

In Round 2, I was forced to focus my energy tackling a very adaptive opponent who'd figured out how to sidestep my initial plan and show up in my bones and spine.

Initially, I sought out two different types of doctors. The first were urologists, surgeons who focus on urological issues. The second were oncologists, cancer specialists who use drugs, radiation, and chemicals to knock out the cancer through a combination of focused and systemic approaches. Both treatments come with their benefits and consequences.

I'd like to make a point here. The scientific approaches and research in these fields are dramatically advanced beyond where I was in 2013. I mentioned earlier that anger was one of my immediate responses to my diagnosis, and no one got a higher dose than my treatment professionals. I became a caged animal, and when the treatment plans were at loggerheads it helped me realize something very important: Doctors are humans. Humans rely on their training, experiences, outside influences, education, peer groups and pharmaceutical research to develop their approaches to cancer treatment. You would not ask an oncologist to perform surgery nor a surgeon to radiate your cancer. I was presented with two dramatically different plans and had no clear idea on which was better or how to tell.

### Narrowing Options

Each of my visits to a medical professional, whether oncologist, urologist, naturopath, or pharmacist, began with me asking a series of questions. They then replied with key concepts or ideas to consider, and we discussed viability, impact, and options. At first, I listened and tried to remember.

It soon became clear that I was shellshocked and could not be the point person. I asked my advocate, my sister-in-law, to help. Katie (my amazing sister-in-law) was a STUD. She challenged everything, as I started to write down questions. She started off on the offensive, and

the list of doctors narrowed as we separated those who could and would game plan with us vs. those who were agenda-driven or dogmatically focused.

At the time, if I felt that the doctor was not able to embrace my approach or wouldn't answer the question "What would you recommend outside of this plan?" I would leave and find a new doctor. I know this is a controversial approach, but my opinion was that a singularly-focused approach that narrowly addressed only a piece of the cancer would not work. I was toxic; cancer was about to win because my mind was twisted around this notion of kill or be killed. I was angry and alone (despite an amazing and loving support team, which I was too blind to see).

### Refining My Questioning

I had no idea how or where to start my treatment. My first oncology appointment was with a practice in Seattle that had both a naturopathic oncologist and traditional oncologist on staff. During my quest I had learned to ask each person what they would recommend in addition to the treatment plan—was there anything I should do, eat, or try in order to augment a treatment plan. Later I refined the question to "If you were me in my situation, what ELSE would you do?" The naturopath and I had a lengthy discussion.

### Building the Plan

To help illustrate how I built a treatment plan, I am giving a very specific example. By no means is this a recommendation for treatment.

That first naturopathic oncologist mentioned a dietary supplement and several other basic items to help with my cancer approach. I subsequently met with six other medical professionals from different clinics and had the opportunity to meet with

a traditional Chinese doctor while traveling in Seoul, South Korea.

Each of these was asked the following question: "My advocate and I have done research and it is recommended I add these things to my treatment plan. What are your thoughts?" I journaled their answers and shared them with my advocates. The cycle of developing my plan emerged.

My conclusion was to (1) look at where the research and evidence sat on a question (for example, is the preponderance of data in support of or against adding a specific supplemental treatment plan?) (2) Validate or contradict it with your healthcare professional. (3) Rinse and repeat.

The objective is to assimilate a combination of data inputs into a plan that supports your goals. Are there things you can safely add to your plan and do you think they will work in helping you achieve your treatment goals.

To sum up this point amazingly, I'd like to recount a conversation I had with Dr. Anthony Pham, my current oncologist and one of the wonderful people at [www.compassoncology.com](http://www.compassoncology.com) in Portland, OR,

**Paul:** I take modified citrus pectin, CBD, melatonin and a host of supplements.

**Dr. Pham:** Ok, I don't see any conflicts or contraindications with the treatment plan we've discussed. Do YOU think they are helping you with your treatment?

**Paul:** Yes!

**Dr. Pham:** Good, keep doing it.

And thus my plan was built.

Next month: Healing begins.



# Delaware Hospice Center

## *A Unique Option*

Over 96% of Delaware Hospice patients receive care at home, but every once in a while, there are special circumstances that require 24-hour, short-term care outside the home. That's where the Delaware Hospice Center comes in. Join us as Jennifer Saienni shares what makes the Delaware Hospice Center special.

### **Vital: What makes care at the Delaware Hospice Center different than typical hospice care?**

**JS:** Care at the Delaware Hospice Center is an alternative to hospital care. While our goal is the same—to provide support to every individual with compassionate and expert care—the environment is completely different. For instance, our state-of-the-art facility includes 16 private patient and family suites, complete with French doors that open onto sunny patios leading to a beautiful garden. With round-the-clock care, caregivers have peace of mind knowing that their loved one's needs are immediately addressed. At the Delaware Hospice Center, caregivers don't have to be nurses...they can just be a spouse, child, or loved one.

### **Vital: Can anyone get care at the Delaware Hospice Center?**

**JS:** While all individuals with a life-limiting illness are eligible for hospice care, the Delaware Hospice Center is specifically designed for our patients who temporarily require a higher level of specialized, short-term management care.



A COUPLE WALKS THROUGH THE GARDEN  
AFTER VISITING WITH A LOVED ONE.

The Delaware Hospice Center is ready to help those coping with a serious illness. It's an excellent option for anyone that needs more help with symptoms, medications, or education than can be provided in your home. We can also help make coming home from the hospital safer and easier, wherever home may be.

### **Vital: That sounds like you really go above and beyond when caring for people.**

**JS:** We do. For us, it's not just about comforting our patient. At the Delaware Hospice Center, the needs of our patient's family and loved ones are also addressed. The Center has social workers and chaplains on staff to meet with families to discuss the various medical or personal questions that almost always arise.

We've found that our patients and their families often use the Center as a place to learn about managing medications, pain, and disease-specific information. There are many different reasons our patients come to the Delaware Hospice Center, but one of the most common reasons is for peace of mind. Once a patient's symptoms are properly controlled, they are often transitioned back into their home.

### **Vital: You'd said "wherever that home may be." What do you mean by that?**

**JS:** It's simple. Home is where the heart is. And peace of mind comes when someone is safe and happy. We make that happen.

Just recently we cared for Johnny. Johnny was a homecare patient living alone, and needed additional help to manage his symptoms. He and his care team decided it was best for him to stay at the Delaware Hospice Center for a couple of days. While at the Center, he had several family members stop in to see him and check on him.

But really, he wanted to see his best friend, his sister, Darlene. She was able to make the trip from Georgia to visit him, and together they decided they wished to both travel back to Georgia in the coming days.

Social worker Roxanne Couzens explained, "Because of Johnny's health, they had a small window to be able to safely make the trip." With the help of Delaware Hospice, Johnny and Darlene got ready to leave the next day.

Our staff at the Delaware Hospice Center made arrangements with another hospice in Georgia to admit Johnny upon his arrival. Everyone was excited for Johnny, pleased he'd be able to see the rest of his family again.



AFTER HIS STAY AT THE DELAWARE HOSPICE CENTER,  
JOHNNY WAS ABLE TO TRAVEL WITH HIS SISTER  
TO HER HOME IN GEORGIA.

Roxanne was able to speak with Johnny after a few weeks in Georgia, and reports "he is very happy that we made his trip possible."

"Delaware Hospice was a wonderful organization for my brother and family," Darlene tells us. "I would love to share with everyone our experience. Hospice is much more than what people think of it."

### **Vital: What are some of the reasons to visit the Delaware Hospice Center?**

**JS:** While everyone's situation is different, the most common reasons include when:

- Symptoms are getting worse, such as nausea or diarrhea.
- The patient has trouble breathing.
- Wound care is hard to manage.
- Signs of depression, anxiety, or agitation appear.
- The patient experiences bleeding, seizures, or kidney failure.
- There is a need for support from medical professionals for help more often (needing instructions).
- There are repeated trips to the Emergency Room or hospital.
- The patient experiences uncontrollable pain.
- New injuries occur from coping at home.
- A person needs IV antibiotic therapy to avoid





DEBBIE TAYLOR HOLDS A TABLET FOR A PATIENT WHILE HE SPEAKS WITH HIS FAMILY IN VIRGINIA.

unnecessary Emergency Room or hospital admissions.

■ Or there is a need for comprehensive patient/family education.

**Vital: How are you dealing with COVID-19?**

**JS:** The Delaware Hospice Center Staff continues to monitor the number of positive COVID-19 cases in Delaware. The safety of our patients, families, and staff are at top of mind, and we have increased the health precautions taking place at the Delaware Hospice Center. If a family has any specific questions, regarding our current health precautions, please give us a call at 302-478-5707 for more detailed information.

**Vital: Is there a fee to stay at the Delaware Hospice Center?**

**JS:** Patients of Delaware Hospice are welcome to stay multiple times at the Delaware Hospice Center. Care at the Delaware Hospice Center is covered by Medicare, Medicaid, or private insurance. However, in the past year, we have seen an increase in our uninsured care and anticipate that trend to continue into this year. Thanks to donations and support from the community, families facing serious illness don't have to worry about not receiving proper healthcare due to an inability to pay.

**Vital: How can readers get in touch with you to learn more?**

**JS:** Our team goes above and beyond expectations, keeping people in the comfort of their own homes or providing additional care at the Delaware Hospice Center when needed, and freeing families to focus on what matters most.

To learn more about the care we provide, or to view a tour of the Delaware Hospice Center, please visit our website at [www.delawarehospice.org](http://www.delawarehospice.org) or call us at 302-478-5707.

**Some of our families have said the following:**



Even though there is "no place like home," if that is not possible, Delaware Hospice is the best. Have been there with a few friends and just recently with my Mother. Beautiful facility and staff is absolutely wonderful. So accommodating, empathetic, loving not only to patient but family. A very welcoming, peaceful and comforting atmosphere. God bless each one of them for their caring and loving hearts! – K.P.

It was such a beautiful place for my father. The staff was just so wonderful to him and my family. – D.B

They were at my side every step of the confusing way... I am so grateful for their expertise, care, concern and love. I'm not sure I could have done it without them! Eternally grateful! – M.R.

Without a doubt Delaware Hospice is the most compassionate care anyone could ask for. My mother passed away there so peacefully. God Bless all who participated in her care! Thank you from the bottom of my heart ♥ – S.S.

Just this past week, I spent several days with a dear friend at the Delaware Hospice Center. From the physician to the housekeeping staff, the degree of professionalism and compassion was wonderful. Such a calling. – C.W.

I have never seen anything so beautiful and people so caring in my life. This is a wonderful place! – K.L.



DELAWARE  
HOSPICE  
Since 1982

Total Delaware Hospice Staff That  
Have Received the COVID-19 Vaccine Is

DOUBLE

The National Healthcare Average





# First Came Phishing, Now There's... Smishing

Most of us have heard of the term “phishing.” But did you know that phishing done by SMS (that stands for Short Message Service) text message has its own name? That’s right, it’s called “smishing.” (Get it? SMS + phishing?) And just like other types of phishing, smishing relies on the senders pretending to be someone they are not in hopes of getting a hold of your money or personal information.

## How It Works

You receive a text message that appears to be from a government agency or a company you are otherwise familiar with.

The text asks for personal information, such as a Social Security number or an online account password.

It may direct you to click a link to resolve a problem or access a service. A new twist: During the ongoing pandemic, it may relate to COVID-19 testing, vaccines or contact tracing.

## What You Should Know

Scammers use technology to make it appear that texts are coming from a particular number, like the IRS or Social Security Administration, or from a company you may do business with.

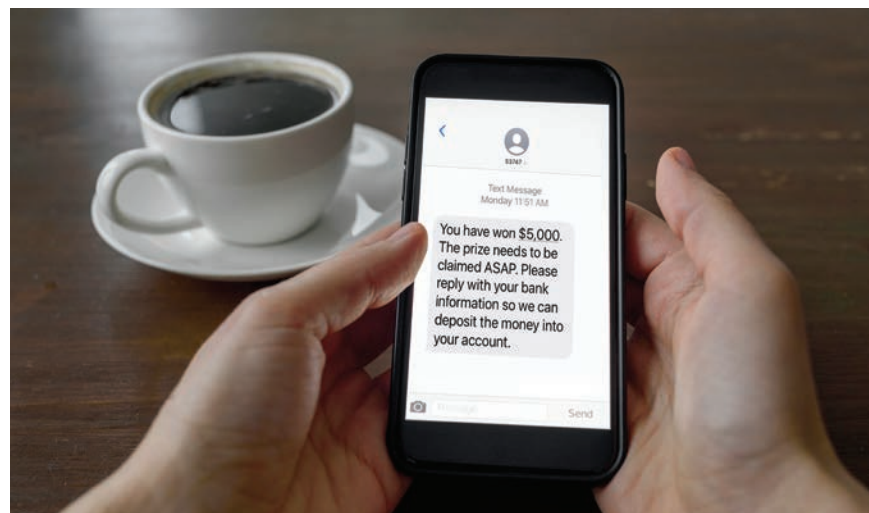
The message will relay seemingly urgent information that requires you to act right away—your benefits have been suspended, your account has been compromised, or you need to sign up for a COVID-19 vaccine, for example.

The message will include a link for you to click on to address the situation.

## What You Should Do

Develop a habit of pausing before clicking on texts. Surveys show we are more likely to read and react to a text message than an email, which is why scammers have flocked to smishing.

DON'T click on links from suspi-



cious texts; it may result in loading malicious software onto your device that will harvest your credentials, or sending you to a website that will do the same.

If you have reason to believe the text may be legitimate, reach out to the sender—the IRS, UPS, Amazon or whomever—at a number or web address you know to be legitimate.

When it comes to fraud, vigilance is our number one weapon. You have the power to protect yourself and your loved ones from scams. If you can SPOT a scam, you can STOP a scam. Please share this alert with friends and family.

*For more information, to report an issue or to simply ask a question, call AARP's Fraud Watch Network toll-free at 877-908-3360.*

# Last Minute Tax Filers – This is for You

Hate April 15, tax day? Well, this year you're in luck. To cope with all the changes that COVID-19 brought, including a delayed due date last year, stimulus checks and an enormous backlog, the IRS has changed its filing deadline. For the 2020 tax year, your deadline is now May 17, 2020.

And that's not all.

**Were you due a stimulus check but never received it?** You can claim the missing stimulus money on your 2020 tax return in the form of a tax credit. Tax credits reduce your taxes, dollar for dollar, and can even produce a refund.

**You did receive a stimulus check?** That money is not taxable. It is not considered income and is not used to consider eligibility for federal benefits or assistance programs.

**Did you receive unemployment?** Yes, your jobless benefits are taxable—but fortunately, up to \$10,200 of 2020 unemployment benefits is exempt from federal income tax for households with an adjusted gross income under \$150,000. Married couples who got unemployment payments can each exclude \$10,200 of unemployment benefits.

**Are you 65 or older?** Enjoy a bigger standard

deduction. Married taxpayers born before Jan. 2, 1956, whether filing jointly or separately, get an extra \$1,300 apiece added to their standard deductions. The additional standard deduction is \$1,650 for singles and heads of households. You are also eligible for the same additional standard deduction amounts if you are blind and younger than 65. If you are over 65 and blind, the amounts double.

**Taxpayers age 65-plus also enjoy their own tax return.** Calculating the bigger standard deduction is made easier with Form 1040-SR, “U.S. Tax Return for Seniors.” The special tax return for those 65 and older includes a simple-to-use standard deduction chart at the bottom of the form that shows the amount of the bigger standard deduction based on your filing status and how many boxes you check for age and blindness.

**The 7.5% threshold for medical deductions is now permanent.** If you itemize deductions, you can continue to deduct medical expenses above 7.5% of your adjusted gross income. There are lots of expenses you can deduct aside from the usual out-of-pocket fees you pay to doctors and dentists. You can deduct the costs of nursing home care, for example, provided that medical services are the main reason for being in the nursing home. You can also deduct acupuncture



sessions, smoking cessation programs, false teeth and some insurance premiums.

**Giving is good.** Even if you take the standard deduction, you are allowed to deduct up to \$300 in cash donations made to charities directly on your 1040. The limit is per “tax unit,” which means you can only deduct \$300, no matter whether you're filing a joint return or a single return.

**Mind your Social Security payroll taxes.** If you are still working and your employer chose to defer collection of your portion of Social Security taxes between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31, 2020, you will need to repay those deferred taxes. You have until the end of 2021 to repay those taxes before penalties and interest start to accrue.





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## Create a Gorgeous Edible Garden

You can grow quite a bit of food in just a few pots. These herb and veggie container garden ideas will also make stylish additions to your doorstep, deck, patio, or garden.

### 1 Add Color with Containers

Boost the color in your garden by using bright pots. These glazed containers in cheery shades of blue, orange, and yellow instantly add interest to a display of purple basil, Hungarian Wax pepper, tomato, parsley, and golden oregano.

### 2 Grow Up

Plant your vegetables in hanging baskets if ground space is scarce. Compact or "bush" varieties are best, though many herbs are also perfect picks for baskets. This pairing of tomato and basil, for example, creates a delicious and attractive display.

*Test Garden Tip: Set up a drip-watering system to save you a substantial amount of time with a hose or watering can.*

### 3 Be Creative

Give your plantings personality and save money by using recycled containers. Here, old wine crates provide a perfect home for small varieties, including lettuce, Thumbelina carrots, everbearing strawberries, and signet marigolds.

### 4 Stagger Height

Select containers of different sizes and create a grouping to offer additional interest. These four containers filled with cucumber, tomato, pepper, basil, thyme, and parsley add lots of visual appeal to a landscape.

### 5 Go Upside Down

Down is the new up! Why not try growing your tomatoes underneath their pot? Whether you choose hanging baskets, a five-gallon bucket with a hole on the bottom, or something else, it can be an interesting way to cultivate your favorite vegetable.

### 6 Incorporate Colorful Varieties

Use vegetables with attractive foliage, flowers, or fruits in your favorite planters. Here, red-stemmed Swiss chard, glowing Lemon Gem marigolds, and a hot pepper add great color and texture to a container.

### 7 Grow Edible Flowers

Add color and cheer to your containers (plus your salads, desserts, and other dishes) by growing edible flowers. Note how calendula and signet marigolds brighten a planting of Swiss chard, cabbage, basil, and tomatoes.

### 8 Use Textural Contrasts

Grasses seem to go with everything because their fine textures show off other plants well. Get the look in your vegetable garden by incorporating onions and chives. They work well with the cucumbers, tomatoes, and peppers shown here. And happily, their flavors are a perfect fit, too!

*Test Garden Tip: Lemongrass is another great pick for adding a grassy texture.*

### 9 Match Your Style

Create a lush look by growing plants that seem to explode with color, texture, and fragrance. See how nasturtiums, signet marigolds, peppers, tomatoes, basil, and pineapple sage fill this area with cottage garden elegance.

### 10 Provide Support

You can also give vines such as cucumber, beans, or peas an upright support such as this obelisk. By letting vines grow up, there's space in the container to grow trailing plants such as nasturtium and fillers such as kale, signet marigolds, and eggplant.

### 11 Try Succession Planting

Gardeners get more produce from a small space by using a technique called succession planting. Once your plants are finished producing fruits or veggies for the summer, replace them with something else (such as a cool-season vegetable like broccoli if the warm weather is coming to an end). For example, the lettuce in this container will fade in summer, allowing you to grow eggplant, pepper, or another heat-loving variety with lovely lemon verbena.

### 12 Enjoy Climbers

A scrambling cucumber is the star of this container creation. With its big leaves, bright flowers, and yummy fruits, it's a natural showstopper, especially when paired with an upright plant such as rosemary.

*Test Garden Tip: Make harvest easy by letting cucumbers grow along the railing of your deck or patio.*

### 13 Make Them Handy

Place your containers where you'll be able to access them easily. It might be right outside your kitchen door, next to the grill to enhance a summer meal, or beside your favorite bench or chair for convenient harvesting.

### 14 Keep it Manageable

You may be able to get more plants than you think in a tight space. Here, just four pots provide a plethora of produce: Cucumbers, rosemary, Swiss chard, tomatoes, kale, eggplants, basil, peppers, and more. Limit the number of varieties you grow to only what you can use to save time and effort.

[www.bhg.com](http://www.bhg.com)





# Everyone is a Mentor in Some Way

By Jamie McPherson,  
Your Own Home

Everybody wants to have a lasting impact on the next generation. After all, we were once in their shoes and know how confusing and frustrating growing up can be. It is easy to look back and see the individuals who helped shape us into our current selves, but what are we doing to continue that legacy of ethical mentorship on which we often credit our own success?

Over the years, a multitude of studies have been conducted on the power of positive role models in youth and adolescents. The results are no surprise—mentorship matters! Young people with effective role models consistently show healthier lifestyle choices and less risky behavior than their peers. This translates into educational achievements, positive relationships, active decision making,

and growing confidence as young leaders.

Whether we realize it or not, we are all mentors in some way. Young people instinctively look to adults, especially of the same race and gender, as examples of acceptable attitudes and behavior. Due to this relationship and the changing nature of our society, it is a growing necessity that we exemplify integrity and admirable traits.

There are five important qualities which constitute an influential role model:

- Passion and ability to inspire
- Clear set of values
- Commitment to community
- Selflessness and acceptance of others
- Ability to overcome obstacles

Getting started is easy: begin at

home. A strong rapport with a mentee means established trust and a sturdy framework on which to grow, so grandparents, we're talking to you! There are also plenty of local opportunities to make a difference through groups such as "Connecting Generations." Founded in 1996, this Delaware-based organization trains mentors and matches them with students in need through the public school system. They currently have 1430 active mentors and are represented in 92 schools. In addition to structured mentorship, they also offer a series of workshops called "Seasons of Respect" which focus on respectful listening, expressing positive emotions, bullying, and conflict resolution.

Leading by example regardless of success (failure is an important part of our stories) means imparting a lifetime of lessons on someone who, for whatever reason, may not have the advantage of reliable positive in-

fluences. The time you spend with that young person will have a lasting impact and forever change the trajectory of his or her life, and maybe yours too. Plus, taking an active role inspiring today's youth is a rewarding adventure guaranteed to keep you feeling young.

Mentorship is a generational responsibility and skill which should be passed down, so do what you can to make a difference. The world will be a healthier place as a direct result of your efforts.

*At Your Own Home, we care about you, your family and our community. Your Own Home, LLC provides personalized In-Home Care Plans that meet your loved one's every need. Call us today at 302-478-7081 or email [info@yourownhomecare.com](mailto:info@yourownhomecare.com) to find out how we help make your time together enjoyable and not a chore. We're here for you!*



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# Doing for Others

*In our world, there is always someone in need of our best efforts to rally a group of helpers and healers.*

By Madisyn Taylor, [www.dailyom.com](http://www.dailyom.com)

When we feel bad, often our first instinct is to isolate ourselves and focus on what's upsetting us. Sometimes we really do need some downtime, but many times the best way to get out of the blues quickly is to turn our attention to other people. In being of service to others, paradoxically, we often find answers to our own questions and solutions to our own problems. We also end up feeling more connected to the people around us, as well as empowered by the experience of helping someone.

When we reach out to people we can help, we confirm that we are not alone in our own need for support and inspiration, and we also remind ourselves that we are powerful and capable in certain ways. Even as our own problems or moods get the better of us sometimes, there is always someone else who can use our particular gifts and energy to help them out. They, in turn, remind us that we are not the only people in the world with difficulties or issues. We all struggle with the problems of life, and we all feel overwhelmed from time to time, but we can almost always find solace in service.

In the most ideal situation, the person we are helping sheds light on our own dilemma, sometimes with a direct piece of advice, and sometimes without saying anything at all. Sometimes just the act of getting our minds out of the obsessive mode of trying to figure out what to do about our own life does the trick. Many great inventors and artists have found that the inspiration they need to get to the next level in their work comes not when they're working but when they're walking around the block or doing dishes. We do ourselves and everyone else a great service when we take a break from our sorrows and extend ourselves to someone in need.

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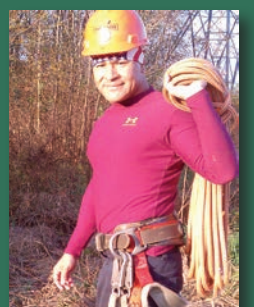
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# Crossword

By Dave Fisher

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
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56					57	58					59	60	61	62
63					64					65				
66					67					68				
69					70					71				

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Answers on page 13

ACROSS

- 1. Stairs
- 6. Death notice
- 10. Remain
- 14. Relating to a city
- 15. Dash
- 16. Poems
- 17. Betel palm
- 18. Algonquian Indian
- 19. Ailments
- 20. Supporter of royalty
- 22. Bristle
- 23. Sense
- 24. Waif
- 26. Part of a comparison
- 30. American Sign Language
- 31. Caviar
- 32. Certain
- 33. Sun
- 35. Pee
- 39. She works with yarn
- 41. Spray can
- 43. Statistics
- 44. Largest continent
- 46. Forearm bone
- 47. Chemist's workplace
- 49. Explosive
- 50. Observed
- 51. Cling
- 54. Breezed through
- 56. Partiality
- 57. Independent
- 63. Within
- 64. Component of urine
- 65. Striped equine
- 66. Consider
- 67. Lean
- 68. Mournful poem
- 69. Being
- 70. Cheers

71. Infections of the eye

DOWN

- 1. Fraud
- 2. Novice
- 3. Not odd
- 4. Printer's unit
- 5. Neck warmer
- 6. Musical group
- 7. Glasswort
- 8. Frosts
- 9. Move unsteadily
- 10. Unruly
- 11. Lazybones
- 12. Greek letter
- 13. An analytic composition
- 21. Stop
- 25. Not sweet
- 26. Sounds of disapproval
- 27. Stalk
- 28. Diva's solo
- 29. Causing irritation
- 34. Trench coats
- 36. Small island
- 37. Not a single one
- 38. Dash
- 40. Russian emperor
- 42. Consumed
- 45. Courtly
- 48. A very attractive woman
- 51. Dwell
- 52. Eats
- 53. Despises
- 55. Snoozes
- 58. Murres
- 59. Defrost
- 60. Comply with
- 61. Desire
- 62. Articulates

# MOREL MUSHROOM AND WILD RICE RISOTTO

The grand dame of spring mushrooms, morels are available fresh for only a few fleeting weeks in spring. Prized by chefs for their rich, smoky flavor, morels are also delightful simply sautéed or dipped in batter and fried.



Two favorite northwoods ingredients come together in this delicious recipe to make a risotto-like meal. Using a mix of wild rice, brown rice, and morel mushrooms ensures a nice creamy, and 'earthy' flavor. If your morels are particularly large, make sure to chop them into 1/2-inch pieces.

Prep: 15 mins Cook: 1 hr 20 mins Total: 1 hr 35 mins  
Servings: 8

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups chicken broth, or as needed
- 3 cups water, or as needed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1 cup brown rice
- 1 cup wild rice
- 1/2 pound fresh morel mushrooms, chopped, divided
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- salt and ground black pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon grated Pecorino Romano cheese, or to taste (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine chicken broth and water in a large stockpot. Heat over medium-high heat until boiling; reduce heat to low and keep warm.
2. Heat olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter over medium heat in a large Dutch oven until butter melts. Add brown rice; cook and stir constantly until toasted, about 5 minutes. Stir in wild rice, 1/2 the morel mushrooms, carrots, celery, onion, and garlic. Cook, stirring constantly, until onions are translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Pour in white wine; cook until evaporated, 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Mix 1/2 the chicken broth mixture into the rice; stir to combine. Cover and cook over medium heat until thickened, about 30 minutes, stirring every 5 minutes. Pour in remaining chicken broth mixture, remaining morel mushrooms, and thyme. Cover and continue to cook over medium heat, stirring every 5 minutes, until wild rice is tender, 30 to 40 minutes.
4. Stir in remaining 1 tablespoon butter and heavy cream. Cook until butter is melted, about 1 minute more. Season with salt and pepper. Top with Pecorino Romano cheese.

www.allrecipes.com





# Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares so that each row, each column and each 3-by-3 block contain all of the digits 1 thru 9.

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

Answers on page 13

(courtesy of KrazyDad.com)

# The Funny Bone

One fine day, John and Don are out golfing when John slices his ball deep into a wooded ravine. He grabs his 7-iron and proceeds down the embankment into the ravine in search of his ball.

The brush is quite thick, but he searches diligently and suddenly he spots something shiny. As he gets closer, he realizes that the shiny object is in fact a 7-iron in the hands of a skeleton lying near an old golf ball.

John excitedly calls out to his golfing partner: "Hey Don, come here. I've got some real trouble down here."

Don comes running over to the edge of the ravine and calls out: "What's the matter, John? Is everything okay?"

John shouts back in a nervous voice, "Throw me my 8-iron! Apparently you can't get out of here with a seven."

A man got on a bus, with both of his front pant pockets full of golf balls, and sat down next to a beautiful blonde.

The blonde kept looking quizzically at him and his obviously bulging pants.

Finally, after many such glances from her, he said, "Its golf balls."

The blond looked at him compassionately and said, "Oh you poor thing. I bet that hurts a whole lot worse than tennis elbow?"

I was recently playing a round of golf with a nice young fellow. On the first hole, which was a long par four with water to the right and a deep ravine to the left, the young man took out a brand new sleeve of balls, teed one up and immediately hit it into the water on the right. Undaunted, he pulled another ball from the sleeve and hit that one into the ravine, as well. Then he took the last ball from the sleeve and hit it, too, into the water. He then reached into his bag and pulled out another brand new sleeve of balls. "Why don't you hit an old ball?" I asked. He responded, "I've never had an old ball."

A priest is playing a round of golf at the local public course when he arrives at the 15th tee. This hole is a 160-yard par three with a lake in the front of the green. It is also the padre's nemesis, no matter how well or how poorly he is playing.

Upon arriving at the tee, the priest tees up his ball, gets ready to hit and, at the last minute, looks toward the heavens and says, "God, I have been a good and decent man. Please, just this once, let me hit a shot which will carry the lake and get onto the green."

As he is about to swing, a loud, deep voice booms from the heavens and says, "Use a new ball, they go farther."

The preacher steps back, thinks about the heavenly advice and goes to his bag and gets a brand new ball. He takes his stance and once again the heavenly voice booms, "Take a practice swing first."

The preacher is now awestruck by the heavenly advice, so he steps back from the ball and takes a practice swing.

He takes his stance and gets ready to hit and the heavenly voice booms, "Use the old ball."

## VIRTUAL SENIOR PROGRAMS



### FITNESS

Virtual Senior Programs with Absalom Jones Senior Center brings you **Tai Chi** with Winston, **Power Moves** with Yolanda, **Senior Yoga**, **Tap Dancing**, and new **Line Dancing for Beginners!** Watch on YouTube, Facebook, and at [newcastlede.gov/vsptv](http://newcastlede.gov/vsptv).

### ARTS & CRAFTS

Learn to a new artistic skill with **live virtual art classes** with The Art Studio. Try machine quilting with our series **Quilting with Maryanne**. Find out more about these programs at [newcastlede.gov/artstudio](http://newcastlede.gov/artstudio) and [newcastlede.gov/vsptv](http://newcastlede.gov/vsptv).



### COOKING & MORE!

The Reader's Café presents **Cooking with Chef Ben**. This series takes you step-by-step to create the perfect dinner including great sides, how to cook a spatchcock chicken, along with delightful desserts, supper-worthy soups, and even canning techniques! [NEWCASTLEDE.GOV/READERSCAFE](http://NEWCASTLEDE.GOV/READERSCAFE).



New Castle County Executive Matt Meyer  
Department of Community Services  
Division of Community Resources







# Seniors can live safely at home now and in the brighter days of our future

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Saint Francis LIFE seniors living in New Castle County have received all-inclusive medical and social services from the safety of home. With home visits from our nurses, telemedicine with our doctors and rehabilitative therapists, group phone activities, and home-delivered supplies, meals and medicines, our seniors have been able to live safely at home throughout this pandemic.

In the brighter days of our future, we look forward to once again providing our services in our health center, adult day center, in the community and at home.

Do you know a senior who wants to live safely and independently at home? Saint Francis LIFE can help.

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