

Senior News

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*Invention or
Discovery...
Alpaca Ball?*

story on page 5

May 2017
Vol. 31, No. 5

Taking Care Experiencing Information Overload? Check Out These Record-Keeping Tips

by LISA M. PETSCHÉ

As caregiver to a frail senior relative, one of your challenges involves managing a wealth of information relevant to his or her health and well-being. This includes medical, financial, legal and other important details.



Lisa Petsche

It's easy to become overwhelmed by all the data there is to keep track of, such as schedules, appointments, due dates, identification numbers, names, locations and phone numbers of health care professionals, and so on. The resulting disorganization may lead to missed appointments or unnecessary expenses, among other consequences.

On the other hand, keeping information organized and centralized makes it quick and easy to access, saving you time and energy and avoiding frustration. It also facilitates communication with service

providers, ensuring timely, thorough and accurate sharing of key information. In addition, a good record-keeping system helps ensure continuity of care when you take breaks from caregiving, and also in the event of a crisis should you become unable to look after your loved one.

What To Organize

The following are various types of information regarding your relative to which it's important to have easy access.

Vital statistics: Date and place of birth, immigration and citizenship papers, military service records, employment history and marriage and divorce records. Keep birth certificates and other identification together in a safe place.

Medical information: Height, weight, blood type, allergies, immunizations, family health history and personal health history - including tests, diagnoses, treatments and results, hospitalizations and surgeries. Keep a log of doctors and other health care professionals seen and recommendations made - for example, lifestyle changes, medication or

referral to a specialist. Maintain a listing, too, of home care providers and other healthcare organizations and services involved with your relative.

This is also the place to include medication information sheets from your loved one's pharmacy; punch holes in them or store them in top-loading page protectors if you decide to use a binder. Do the same with disease-related information in the form of brochures and other literature.

Financial information: Bank accounts, safety deposit boxes, investments, assets, income, debts, credit cards, insurance policies, income tax records and funeral pre-arrangements. Include contact information for banks, financial planner, insurance broker and accountant. Also include household bills if your relative lives on his or her own and you are assisting with their management.

Legal documents: Information pertaining to powers of attorney, advance directives and estate planning falls into this category. Include contact information for lawyers and any other legal professionals that have been consulted.

Personal information: Contact information for relatives and friends is key here. Be sure to obtain work and cell phone numbers in case you need to reach them right away. Some other contacts to include: neighbours (especially if your loved one lives alone) church and clubs and groups to which your loved one belongs. This is also a good place to record your relative's wishes around funeral arrangements if there are no pre-arrangements in place.

Other information: Anything else that doesn't fit into the above categories, including your loved one's daily routines and weekly schedule, and miscellaneous community resources he or she accesses (specialized transportation, for example).

It's a good idea to create a listing of various types of emergency contacts - both family and professional - to post by the phone. Store it in a plastic sleeve or have it laminated to ensure it stays in good condition.

Make a copy to keep with you. Likewise, carry a current list of your relative's medications (name and dosage) in your wallet or purse so you'll always have this vital information handy during medical appointments and in case of an emergency.

How To Organize Information

One option for organizing information is a portable file box containing hanging file folders with plastic tabs and manila file folders. Another idea is a three-ring binder equipped with dividers, lined paper and transparent sheet protectors (a three-hole punch is also helpful). Label hanging folders or dividers according to major types of information - medical, financial and so on. You may wish to subdivide each of these categories, using separate sections or folders for medications, medical visits and hospitalizations in the medical category, for example.

Charts are the best way to organize information such as medication use. Most pharmacies have a medication log available for customers, which saves you from having to create your own.

To centralize vital statistics and financial and legal information, consider utilizing one of the estate planning booklets distributed through funeral homes and financial planning firms.

The final phase after collecting and organizing information is maintaining it so that it remains up-to-date. Set aside a monthly time to review information, and make a habit of updating records immediately after medical visits and hospitalizations.

Another caregiver must-have is a large-grid wall calendar with plenty of space for keeping track of appointments, events and other important dates, such as application deadlines and due dates for bills. These can be found at office supply stores.

Lisa M. Petsche is a social worker and a freelance writer specializing in elder care.

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Let us entertain you

by **CLAIRE HOUSER DODD**

Every man should have a fair sized cemetery in which he can bury the faults of his friends.

Henry Ward Beecher

While at Travis Jean's in Macon, we ran into a friend advertising The Hay House Spring of Macon House and Gardens May 5-7 2017. On Friday at 2:30 p.m. Walter Reeves will present "How to be Sherlock Holmes in your Garden" at The Hay House. Saturday at 11:00 a.m. Tim Lake, Sr., RLA, ASLA, registered landscape architect will lecture on "Practical Regional Gardening Concepts" drawn from his works with hundreds of private gardens in Georgia and The Carolinas.

You may amble through lush, blossoming private gardens in North Macon on The Secret Garden Tour on Friday, May 5 from 10:00 - 5:00, Saturday, May 6 10:00 - 5:00 and Sunday, May 7, 1:00 - 5:00. Tickets are \$20.00 in advance or \$25.00 the day of.

The Historic Interior Tour, May 5, 5 - 8 p.m. tickets, \$20 in advance or \$25 the day of.

The Combo Tickets are \$35 in advance or \$45 the day of.

If you have a form, mail to Hay House, 934 Georgia Ave. Macon, GA 31201 or call 478-742-8155.

Florabrilance returns for its fourth year! It brings unique flower arrangements from some of Middle Georgia's top floral designers displayed at the Hay House in the main floor rooms. They are always amazingly creative. This Spring Stroll is an exceptionally grand tour of some of Macon's finest homes and gardens... not to be missed.

31st Annual Georgia Peach Festival

The Georgia Peach Festival is in its 31st consecutive year and is grateful to the sponsors and the community for their continued support! This year the festival will be held in Byron on June 3rd from 3 to 11 p.m. and in Fort Valley on June 10th from 7a.m. to 11p.m.

There will be entertainment, fireworks, and vendors with interesting and unique items for sale and food vendors with tasty food both weekends. There will be a luncheon and program on Friday, June 2nd, sponsored by the Byron Area Historical Society.

To kick off the week long

celebration of our local Peach Growers, there will be games and entertainment in Byron including the "The Georgia Songbird" E.G. Kight and fireworks. The grand finale in Fort Valley will include the Kiwanis pancake breakfast starting at 7a.m., the parade will have participants lining up at 9 a.m.; and, if all goes according to schedule, can be viewed throughout downtown Fort Valley and down Camellia Boulevard around 10 a.m. The Shriners are back with their special brand of whimsical

fun in the parade!

Live entertainment will take place throughout the day at the gazebo; the Fort Valley Historical Society and the DAR will be offering the famous chicken salad luncheon at noon at the MacArthur/Saxon House on Miller Street; and, the Worlds Largest Peach Cobbler will be dished up to festival goers around 2:00 p. m. in the afternoon downtown by the Court House. The Good Vibrations (Dennis Herbert, Eddie Byrd, Jim Blanton, Ben Caldwell and

John Laugher) will be performing with timeless beach music, rock & roll, soul, oldies, disco and Motown at 8:00 p.m. following the pre-concert at 7:00 p.m. Stay for a wonderful fireworks display around 9:30 p.m.; followed by more music!

For "up-to-date" information as the Festival draws near, visit www.gapeachfestival.com or call 478-320-5551.

Ideas are funny little things. They don't work unless you do.
Anonymous

PBS' National Memorial Day Concert: An American Tradition Honoring Our Heroes Past And Present Live From The U.S. Capital

FEATURING JOE MANTEGNA AND GARY SINISE

Special to *Senior News* Washington, D.C.

For almost three decades, PBS has inspired viewers with the annual broadcast of the multi award-winning NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY CONCERT, dedicated to our men and women in uniform, their families at home and all those who have given their lives for our country. Returning live from the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, the night of remembrance will mark the 75th anniversary of the Doolittle Raid, the daring mission that changed the course of World War II in the Pacific; highlight the emerging technique of music therapy with veterans; and honor America's Gold Star families of all generations.

The concert features Tony Award-winner Joe Mantegna and Emmy Award-winner Gary Sinise, acclaimed actors dedicated to veterans' causes and supporting our troops in active service, and an all-star line-up in performance with the National Symphony Orchestra under the direction of top pops conductor Jack Everly (additional performers to be announced).

The 28th annual broadcast of the NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY CONCERT airs live on PBS Sunday, May 28, 2017, from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m., before a

concert audience of hundreds of thousands, millions more at home, as well as to our troops serving around the world on the American Forces Network.

Also participating in the event are the U.S Joint Chiefs of Staff with The U.S. Army Herald Trumpets, The U.S.

Army Chorus, The Soldiers Chorus of the U.S. Army Field Band, The U.S. Navy Band Sea Chanters, The U.S. Air Force Singing Sergeants, the Armed Forces Color Guard and Service Color Teams provided by the Military District of Washington, D.C.

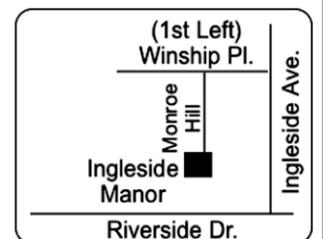
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Poets' Corner

Editor's Note: If you have written a "well-worked" poem which you would like considered for publication, please email it to seniornewsga@cox.net or mail it to Senior News, 214 Wilsons Creek Bend, Bonaire, GA 31005. Please include your name and address on your poem. We will publish selected poems (or excerpts) as space permits.

NEVER BE BLUE
by Joy L. Albright

*As we live our lives
to others be true
Building good memories
that will take us through
Doing good deeds today
will bring joy our way
So when things go wrong
our lives are in disarray
We can go back in time
pick up our memories
And be on our way!*

I'M TIRED – I'LL SIT AWHILE
by Dot A. Jones

*I cleaned the baths, washed loads
of clothes and now,
I'm tired, I'll sit for awhile.*

*Resting some always helps a bit,
so now I can vacuum with
a hit and a miss, until my back
gives me a fit.*

*Dusting is the next chore. I'll do
my best. I have been told there
are three ways to dust: move
everything, dust around or pull
the shades. The latter is a must.
I'll just sit for awhile. I'm tired.*

*I remember the days when I worked
with a vengeance. It was fun to
clean for most of the day. I really
looked forward to it, I could say.*

*But, Father Time slipped into my
home. He changed my lifestyle,
the years took their toll and before
I knew it I was old.*

*So, when you are young enjoy
your work, the day will come
when you need to shirk.*

*Just remember, you can always
say in "old age," I'm tired and
sit awhile; and, maybe others will
help you with a hug and smile.*

*They will know you always did
for them and they will give you
a hand and say: "You have earned*

*the right to say, I'm tired; and,
you can just sit for awhile."*

THE RISEN SAVIOR
by Shirley Glisson

*There was no beauty there that day
As Jesus' blood was shed
And fell beneath the rugged cross,
Our Lord and Savior was dead.*

*They laid Him in a borrowed tomb.
Put a seal upon the door
So those who followed after Him
Could see His face no more.*

*Alas! What is that springing up
Where Jesus' blood did fall?
Love, so great and so abundant,
It, our sins, will cover all.*

*Still there's more, look at the tomb,
He's no longer bound within.
He gave His life for all mankind,
And now He lives again.*

*The Seed was bruised but not
destroyed.
New life He gives to all
Who'll trust and yield their
lives to Him
When upon His name they call.*

Opinion

Policy... Strategy... Leadership

by DANIEL W. GATLYN, USN Ret.
Minister/Journalist

What I am about to put forth will be quickly shuffled to "back burner" (if retained at all); but, somebody needs to hear these words... subjects that many are afraid to utter! Most recipients are still in their prime. I am not! If I am going to be heard, it means "spitting it out now!" for the grim reaper is not far away.

On April 6 our nation experienced the milestone of our President launching (unannounced) strikes on Syria. General commendations have been arriving but many with questions as to what policy and strategy is "on the slate;" and, with elaboration as to his responsibility to legislative bodies. Well, whoopee!

First of all (and I have been around the block a few times in military, moral and leadership dimensions) let me remind every reader/listener, that strategy and process changes with each rising of the sun! We face a new world every day! What worked yester-

day may not work at all today! And seldom is effective when "Bubba, and all his cousins, have been informed!" Sorry! That's just the way it is!

Next (and I am very much aware that we have three branches of government – Legislative, Judicial and Executive), tons of Policy has been penned over two hundred years with a mad and continuous scramble as to who will "take precedence over what." It never ends! But why not?

May I shed a moment's light on what is happening? The various sectors write painstaking policies and then we proceed to violate the same! We choose a Commander in Chief; a Congress; a Senate; an AG; CIA; Secretary of State; various Ambassadors; Generals; Admirals... and more – each with specific job descriptions – and then we "jump ship" and try to tell each other how to function! Makes no sense!

Volumes have been promulgated on Leadership – the main theme being "Choose your most qualified person(s) and then LET THEM DO THEIR JOB!" Check it out! Most of the world's error is caused by unauthorized people

meddling in another's corner! If it is not your responsibility, THEN GO HOME! (Note: Trumps Team appears to be operating sensibly in spite of being hammered by a host of pundits.)

I have been in leadership for a half century (and more) from the local setting to an international scope. Much of what I have learned did not come from "the academy;" but rather, from trial and error. My greatest lesson has been to "remain in portfolio." I do not know all things! Nor can I fix everybody or everything! (I do not try, though I often jest about fixing the world.)

I lean heavily on my fellow workers! I will endeavor to do my job! And I will trust others to do the same. And I will close the day with both good and bad, trusting tomorrow will be more profitable! That way, my sleep is unhampered. The sandbox and soap box are not good platforms for Leadership. America fares better when the Congress does the WRITING, the Commander in Chief the SIGHTING and the Military, the FIGHTING! The waters are navigable when "our ducks are in a row!"

On the Cover

Invention or Discovery... Alpaca Ball? Where the future meets the past!

by **CLAIRE HOUSER-DODD**

COVER:
Paul Cardwell and "Jasmine"

When asked how in the world we can meet all these interesting people to write about, we have to be honest, we don't. We just happen to have some really good friends who are also "on-the-go" remember us, and make the introductions.

Sandee & William Khoury met Paul and Linda Cardwell at the Forsythia Festival in Forsyth and knew immediately they would make a wonderful subject for an article. So... Sandee put us together and here is the story for you.

Paul & Linda Cardwell are not yet retired, but they are preparing for it. They live "natural ag farming: Alpacas to Zucchini" named Yellow Rock Farm located in Macon, GA. This farm name is actually a square dance term meaning hug! Linda says, "kind of a gentle reminder to embrace life and the ones you love."

How in the world, you ask, did the Cardwells end up in Macon, GA on an Alpaca Farm?

Linda tells us... "What began as an 'I want those' after seeing the I Heart Alpacas commercials, has resulted in a new lifestyle for us. We visited farms and went to an informational seminar in February 2012 determined not to buy anything. You know where this is going: we bought our first herd, then had to come home and work to have

a place for them! We now have 13 huacayas guarded by two llamas, and, our herd is growing larger with two new crias and two more expected any time now. We've been a part of a couple of rescues and that's always special. We love farm visits, so drop by any time!"

We love Alpacas and Llamas, but our main interest for this article is the Alpaca Balls that they sell. Paul says they had to find something to do with the hair shearing and left-overs.

They knew of the balls made of wool and plastic and decided on developing their own pure Alpaca Balls.

Now you ask the question, "What in the world are Alpaca Balls?" Well, as stated, they are balls made of Alpaca wool and they help the economy. Universally and individually, what can they do for you? Put the balls in your dryer and your clothes dry faster, which saves money and energy; cut down on static; and, tumble dry to take out wrinkles (less or no ironing) making for a happy housewife. Paul said he and Linda know it to save 20%-50% in energy and some people say they have saved even more. They are natural (100% filtered Alpaca fiber) so you don't use dryer sheets... consequently, no chemicals.

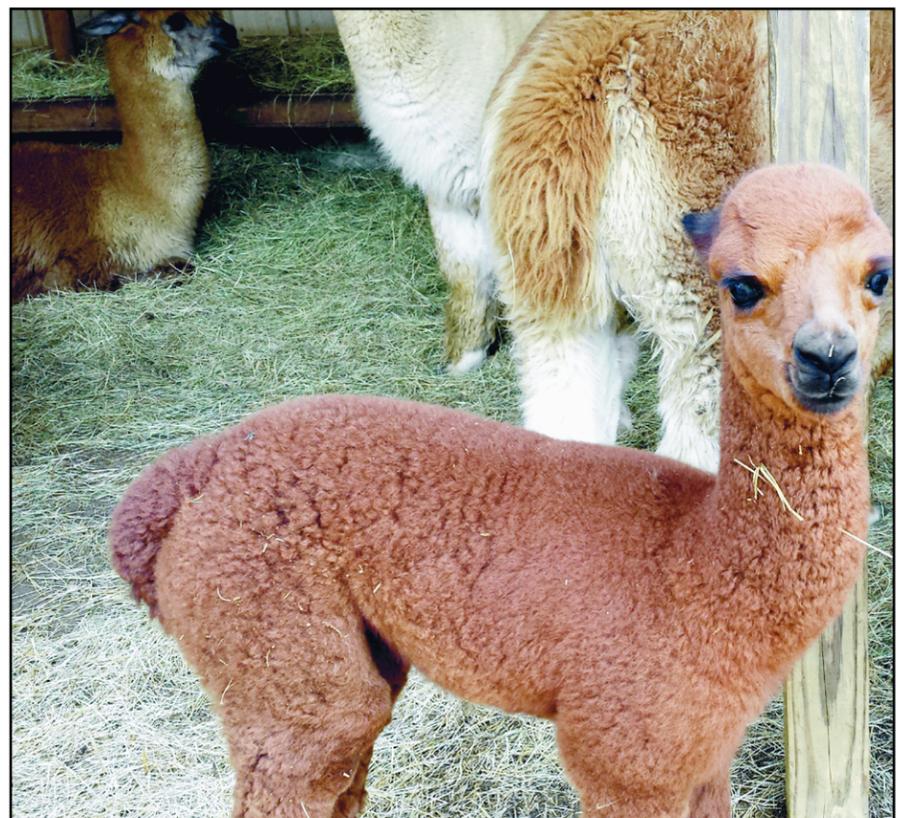
Thanks to Sandee for introducing us to the Cardwells. We plan to take our grands out. If you are interested, you may call Linda at 478-951-1822 or email placardwell@aol.com.



Paul and Linda Cardwell



Dryer Balls



Alpacas

Additional Senior Services & Events Information Available at www.seniornewsga.com

MACON METRO AREA Senior Services & Events Directory For additional *Services & Events* listings, please visit our website at seniornewsga.com.

Coliseum Health System "Medicare Made Easy and Advanced Directives"

Coliseum Northside Hospital, 400 Charter Blvd. For complete information call 478-746-4646.

Support Groups

- Bipolar Support Group: Call (478) 741-1355 for details.
- Bosom Buddies + (PLUS): Call (478) 765-4805 for information.
- Breathe Easy' Support Group: Reservations are required; please call (478) 751-0449.
- Caregiver Support Group: Everyone is welcome. For questions, call (478) 765-4336.
- Chemo and You: Managing the Side Effects of Chemotherapy. Call (478) 765-4805 for information.
- Chronic Fatigue/Fibromyalgia Syndrome: Call (478) 475-4908 for information.
- Helping Hands Grief Support: For information, call (478) 464-1401.
- G.L.A.D.: Call (478) 765-4338 for information.
- Lap-Band Support Group: For information, call (478) 476-8045 or email chandra.churchwell@hca-healthcare.com.
- Look Good ... Feel Better: Registration is required. Call (478) 765-4805 for information.
- Survivors of Suicide: Call (478) 741-1355 for information.
- Strive from Stroke and Heal ?The Heart Support Group: Call (478) 765-4413 for details. This support group is for patients, families and caregivers whose lives have been touched by stroke.
- United Ostomy Association Support Group: Call (478) 477-8337 for information.

H2U Activities

For information call 478-765-4116

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Golden Opportunities

The Wellness Center
3797 Northside Drive, Macon 478-757-7817

Heartworks

389 First St. (Inside the MHC)
478-633-9090

Central Georgia Rehabilitation Hospital

3351 Northside Drive
478-201-6500

Cancer Life Center

Information and Reservations: 478-633-8537; www.cancerlifecenter.org

Alzheimer's Association, Central Georgia Regional Area Caregivers' Support Groups

Call 478-746-7050 or 800-272-3900 for details.

Bibb County

• 2nd Tues., 3:30 p.m., Alzheimer's Association, 886 Mulberry St., Macon, 478-746-7050

• 1st Wed., 10 a.m., Martha Bowman UMC, 500 Bass Rd., Macon, 478-743-7050

Houston County

• 4th Thurs., 7 p.m., Peachbelt Rehab Center, 801 Elberta Rd., Warner Robins, 478-397-4669

• 4th Tues., 7 p.m., Houston Health Care, Classroom #1, 1601 Watson Blvd., Warner Robins, 478-923-2532

Dodge County

• 3rd Thurs., 5:30 p.m., Dodge County Hospital, Educational Annex, 901 Griffin Ave., Eastman, 478-374-0600

Lamar County

• 4th Tues., 6:30 p.m., First United Methodist Church, 375 Thomaston St., Barnesville, 770-358-4516

Laurens County

• 1st Thurs., 2 p.m., Carl Vinson VA Medical Center, 12-A Family Room, 1826 Veterans Blvd., Dublin, 478-272-1210, x2328

Monroe County

• 1st Thurs., 6 p.m., Monroe County Hospital Dining Hall Downstairs, 88 Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr., Forsyth, 478-747-8754

Peach County

• 3rd Thurs., 7 p.m., The Medical Center of Peach County Cafeteria, 1960 Highway 247 Connector, Byron, 478-951-3613

Putnam County

• 3rd Wed., 10 a.m., First Baptist Church, 115 N. Madison Ave., Eatonton, 706-485-3331

Upson County

• Last Thurs., 7 p.m., Thomaston Reflections, 302 S. Bethel St., Thomaston, 706-647-1607

Telephone Support Group

• 1st & 3rd Tues., 7-8 p.m., "Care Connection" facilitated by an

Alzheimer's Assoc. staff member, 1-866-453-5550. To learn more about "Caring Connection" call 800-272-3900.

Free Legal Services Available to Seniors

The Macon Office of Georgia Legal Services provides free legal services to seniors (60 and over) as resources allow. We interview clients in the following counties BY APPOINTMENT ONLY: Bibb, Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs and Wilkinson.

Call the Macon Office at 478-751-6261 for an appointment.

Meals on Wheels of Middle Georgia, Inc.

Meals on Wheels of Middle Georgia, Inc. needs volunteers to help deliver meals to home-bound clients. Volunteers must have a valid Georgia driver's license and a positive attitude. If you can spare two hours a day one day a week, then you may just be the person needed. We're currently needing volunteers Mondays and Fridays. Meals on Wheels is a wonderful organization which takes pride in everything it does. This program would not exist without volunteers.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact our Volunteer Department at 478-745-9140.

Macon-Bibb County Parks & Recreation Department Senior Center

1283 Adams Street Macon, Georgia 31201; Phone: 478-751-2790, 478-751-9238; Daily activities 9:00-2:00

Warner Robins Senior Citizen Services (50+ Years Old)

Warner Robins Recreation Department Felicia Wright, Director

Email: FWRIGHT@wrga.gov; 478-293-1066

Senior Activity Center

152 Maple Street, Warner Robins

Support Group for Caregivers of Frail Elderly Family Members

First & third Tuesdays of each month, 3:30-5 p.m., 6060 Lakeside Commons Place (off Bass Rd.), Macon. Call Martha Duke at 478-808-6957.

Houston County Council Of The Blind

The Houston County Council of the Blind meets the first Saturday of each month at the Centerville Lions Club located on Houston Lake Road voicing state and local concerns for the blind or visually impaired. Fellowship and membership are welcomed.

Georgia Leathercrafters Guild

The Guild meets every second Sunday in the month at Geico on Weaver Road. All who wish to learn and/or expand their knowledge of leather craft are invited. For additional information call 478-745-2320 or 770-688-2315, Tom Maldonado.

Central Georgia Genealogical Society

Meets 2nd Mon., 7 p.m., Flint Energies Conference Room, 900 Hwy. 96, Warner Robins. For complete details call 478-987-7260 or visit www.cggs.org.

• May 8: May meeting will address the question: "Ever Wonder If Facebook Could Help Break Through Some of Those Brick Walls or Deep Holes?" Members will share their successes in finding "new cousins" and guidelines on using this social media as a research resource. Monday, May 9, 7 p.m. Guests Welcome.

Health Education

The Office of Health Education at the Macon-Bibb County Health Department has brochures-pamphlets on various topics available in English and Spanish. These materials are available to businesses, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations upon request.

For additional information call 478-749-0113.

The Macon Arts Alliance

486 First St., Macon 478-743-6940

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Crossword Puzzles & Games
available at
www.seniornewsga.com

General Business Directory For Seniors

St. Paul Apartments & Village
62 & Older and Disabled Persons Welcome
1330 Forsyth Street • Macon, GA 31201
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Rent Includes All Utilities • Beauty Shop
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VAMktPub@aol.com

EVENTS
from page 6

Macon Little Theatre
4220 Forsyth Road, Macon
Reservations: 478-471-PLAY

Theatre Macon
438 Cherry Street, Macon
478-746-9485
• *Auntie Mame*: May 26-June 4

Warner Robins Little Theatre
502 South Pleasant Hill Rd.
478-929-4579; www.wrlt.org
• *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valence*
(Western Drama): May 3-6

Douglass Theatre
355 Martin Luther King, Jr.
Boulevard, 478-742-2000

Tubman Museum
340 Walnut St., Macon
www.tubmanmuseum.com

**Middle Georgia Art Association
Gallery**
2330 Ingleside Ave., Ingleside
Village, Macon. 478-744-9557; mid-
dlegeorgiaart.org. Tues.-Fri., Noon-5
p.m.; Sat., Noon-3 p.m.

Divorce Recovery Group
First Baptist Church of Macon,
located at 511 High Place, is offering
a Divorce Recovery Group for those
interested. The meetings are held on
Wednesday evenings. Child care and
children's activities will be provided.
For additional information call
the church office at 478-742-6485.

**DivorceCare Offered
By Central Baptist Church**
Divorced? Separated? Find help
at DivorceCare.
DivorceCare is a special weekly
seminar and support group for peo-
ple who are separated or divorced.
The group meets at Central Baptist
Church located at 1120 Lake Joy
Road, Warner Robins. Childcare is
provided for babies through 5th
grade.

For additional information call
478-953-9319.

**New Dimension of Praise International
Ministries, Inc.**
Uletha Durham, Pastor, 207 S. Davis
Dr., Warner Robins, Church: 478-
329-8780, Cell: 478-283-9494

**NAMI Central Georgia
National Alliance on Mental Illness**
Barabra Long, Executive Director
478-328-0508
(Call for details on events)
• Monthly support group for con-
sumers and families: Last Mon. each
month, 7 p.m., New Hope, 100
Story Road, Warner Robins. Free.
Refreshments.

• SOS (Survivors of Suicide)
Support Group: First Thurs. each
month, 7-8 p.m., Houston County
Medical Center, Board Room next to
the coffee kiosk, Watson Blvd.,
Warner Robins. For loved ones of
those who have experienced suicide.
Free.

Volunteers Needed
GeorgiaCares, Georgia's State
Health Insurance Assistance Program
(SHIP), needs volunteers to assist
seniors and persons with disabilities
with Medicare problems, fraud, and
abuse. Must be computer savvy.
Rewarding volunteer work. Call
Carol Cannon, GeorgiaCares
Coordinator for the Middle Georgia
Regional Commission/Area Agency
on Aging, at 478-751-6489 or email:
ccannon@mg-rc.org for details.

**Heart of Georgia Chapter 2
Blue Star Mothers of America**
The Blue Star Mothers of America,
Heart of Georgia Chapter 2, meets
the first Thursday each month at
7:30 p.m. at Coldwell Banker's SSK
Realtors located at 470 S. Houston
Lake Road, Warner Robins. For
additional information contact PJ
Johnson at 478-284-6905 or email:
chiefstribes@cox.net.

Open Sketching Portraits
Presented by the Fine Art Society of

Middle Georgia. Every Tuesday that
is not a holiday, 6-7 p.m., Nola
Brantley Library, Watson Blvd.,
Warner Robins. For details contact
Leslie Hoops-Wallace at 478-396-
9198 or email: unicornsquest@hot-
mail.com.

**Fine Art Society of Middle
Georgia**
Meets 4th Mondays at the Flint
Electric Building, Hwy. 96 &
Sutherlin Dr., Warner Robins. For
details call 478-396-9198, email: fas-
midga@gmail.com, or visit
www.fasmidga.org. FAS Gallery of
Art is located at 2507 Moody Rd.,
Warner Robins.

**Houston County Council on
Aging/Meals on Wheels**
Houston County Council on
Aging/ Meals on Wheels is a non-
profit that delivers meals to home
bound seniors. We have openings for
seniors in need of meals and for vol-
unteers able to distribute meals.
Please call Alesha Mathis, Meals on
Wheels Coordinator, at 478-
328-6070 for more informa-
tion, to sign up for meals, or
to volunteer.

Ocmulgee Audubon Society
Meets 2nd Monday monthly
(except July), 7:30 p.m.,
Museum of Arts and
Sciences, 4182 Forsyth Rd.,
Macon. Birders and visitors
welcome. Additional infor-
mation, call 478-477-7016;
http://ocmulgeeaudubonso-
ciety.blogspot.com.

Free Car Seat Checkup
2nd Wed. of the month, 10
a.m.-2 p.m., Bibb County
Health Dept., 171 Emery
Hwy., Macon. SAFEKIDS
Central Georgia. For details
call 478-749-0144.

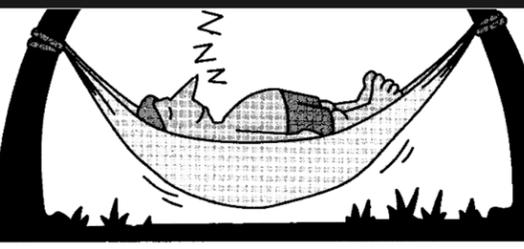
The GeorgiaCares Program
The GeorgiaCares
Program helps people with
Medicare understand their ben-

efits, make informed decisions about
health care options and provide ways to
protect themselves from Medicare fraud,
error and abuse. Call 1-866-552-4464
(option 4) or (478) 751-6489 to schedule
an appointment at a counseling station in
Baldwin, Bibb, Crawford, Houston,
Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam,
Twiggs and Wilkinson Counties. Visit
www.mygeorgiacares.org for counseling
site locations and hours.

Mid Georgia Orchid Society
Meets 2nd Tues. each month from Jan.
through Nov., 7 p. m., Houston Lake
Baptist Church, 2300 Houston Lake Rd.
(2300 GA Hwy 127 E), Perry. Meetings
include social gathering and fellowship
periodd, business discussion, "orchids"
program, refreshments, show & tell and
raffle (members only please). For addi-
tional information please email:
rwfaber1@gmail.com.

Turkey Creek Festival
Sat., May 6, 10:30 a.m. Parade 10
a.m. I-75, exit 122, Highway 230,
Byromville.

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Five tips to ease your Spring Allergy and Asthma Symptoms

Submitted By **LINDSAY BLACK**
VP, Marketing, Fairview Park
Hospital; 478-274-3935

Nobody said spring allergies would be fun, but you never thought it would be this bad. What if you had some simple ways to avoid the sneezing, wheezing, itchy eyes and runny nose that come in the spring?

“People think they’re doing everything they can to battle spring allergies,” said allergist, Rodney Johnson, M.D., FAAAAI. “But many still find themselves under siege from pollen and other allergens that appear once the weather starts to warm up. What they don’t realize is that by following a few simple rules they can make life a lot more pleasant, and their allergies more bearable.”

Spring cleaning can spruce up your nasal passages:

Sweeping up the cobwebs that gathered over the winter is good for more than just making your house look better. A deep house scrub can help eliminate existing allergens and clear the air. It’s especially important to get rid of mold, which builds up in bathrooms and basements and is a major allergen – especially in spring months when there’s lots of moisture. Because your pets have spent a lot of time indoors over the winter, fur, saliva and dander have probably collected. Vacuuming frequently and washing upholstery and pet beds can help.

The power of pollen:

Some people with allergies may not realize that symptoms they think are allergy-related, might actually be asthma. Studies have shown that nearly two-thirds of those with asthma also have an allergy, which can make the spring season particularly difficult. If you can’t get rid of a cough, or get winded easily, you might have asthma related to allergies and should see an allergist. An allergist can identify the source of your asthma, and help you treat your allergies to improve symptoms.

Time to clear the air:

Despite what you may have heard, the best way to clean the air in your home is not with an ionic air filter. The ionization changes the charge on a particle of pollen or dust and the particle sticks to the next thing it comes into contact with, often a wall or surface. There is usually not enough air flow to effectively filter many particles, so ionic filters don’t provide much benefit for allergy sufferers. There is also a health risk which comes from the ozone they produce. The best way to clean the air is with a HEPA room air cleaner rated with a Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR). For those with central air, change your air filters every three months and use filters with a MERV rating of 11 or 12.

Wait, don’t smell that “fresh” air:

Spring comes and you just want to open your windows and let in the fresh air. Don’t do it. Opening your windows allows pollen to drift inside, settle into your carpet, furniture and upholstery and continue to make you miserable. So keep your house and car windows shut during allergy season. Use your air conditioning with the new air filter you just put in.

Don’t trust “Dr. Google:”

You know you shouldn’t believe everything you read on the internet, but

it’s so tempting to look up cures for your symptoms. Instead, consult an allergist. An allergist is trained in how to identify your allergens and treat your symptoms. They can suggest the most appropriate medications to treat your allergies and asthma. You might even benefit from allergy shots (immunotherapy) which can greatly alleviate allergic suffering.

If you think you might be one of the more than 50 million Americans that suffer from allergy and asthma Find an Allergist or take an allergy and asthma test at Allergy Symptom Test.

Rodney Johnson, MD, FAAAAI is head of Middle Georgia Allergy and Asthma in Dublin, Georgia. He completed his training and fellowship in Adult and Pediatric Allergy and

Immunology at Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas city, Missouri. He is Board Certified in Allergy and Immunology and Internal Medicine, and is a Fellow in the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. For more information visit FairviewParkHospital.com/Blog.lindsay.black@hca-healthcare.com.

Scam artists even target the bereaved

by **KELVIN COLLINS**
President/CEO, BBB of Central
Georgia & the CSRA, Inc.

It is a sad fact of life that scam artists frequently prey on the vulnerable. Unfortunately, some of those victims can include people who have recently lost loved ones. The Better Business Bureau cautions those with elderly parents to bear this in mind if their mother or father passes away.

It might make sense to gently counsel the surviving parent to be alert to the following ploys, which have been reported to BBBs:

Contracts for services allegedly signed before the spouse’s death. Less-than-ethical people offering driveway paving, tree-trimming or other home-related services sometimes visit the surviving spouse in the weeks after the funeral. When the spouse claims they know nothing about having hired the company, the sales rep produces a contract, allegedly signed by the husband before his death. The signature is typically scribbled or blurred and the service is highly priced. The company states that they won’t require the widow to take the service, but insists that she pay

the agreed-upon fee. They remind her how “forgetful” her spouse used to be and that is why he never informed her about the contracted work.

Specially-engraved trinkets. After the funeral, the surviving spouse receives in the mail a fountain pen, Bible or other trinket engraved with the name of the recently deceased. Included with the invoice is a note from the business, with a message saying, “I thought you’d want this to remember him by.” Sometimes the trinket is engraved with the name of the surviving spouse, and the note from the company mentions that her husband had ordered the gift especially for her.

Delinquent life insurance premium ploy. An insurance “agent” phones the surviving spouse, with an employee allegedly from the funeral home also on the line. The widower is advised that his wife’s life insurance premium was delinquent and that he must pay \$3,000 so that the insurance funds can be released to the funeral home. He is asked for his credit card number to make a partial payment on the premium and to wire the remaining amount to the insurance company. Turns out that both the insurance company “representative” and the funeral home employee are bogus.

Scam artists probably obtain the names and general information of their victims from obituaries published online or in local newspapers. Seniors are advised to check with the BBB whenever they are contacted by an unknown individual or business demanding payment for an unfamiliar product or service. After the loss of a loved one, never make rush decisions without first ensuring that you are dealing with a trustworthy company. Also be sure to discuss these issues with other family members and be very cautious of anyone who tries to persuade you to skip this step.

For more tips you can trust, visit bbb.org.

Kelvin Collins is president/CEO of the Better Business Bureau of Central Georgia & the CSRA, Inc. serving 41 counties in Central Georgia and the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA). This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the Council of Better Business Bureaus. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: www.bbb.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org or info@csra.bbb.org. For more consumer tips that you can trust, visit bbb.org.

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