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May 2015
Vol. 29, No. 5



Scholarship Services – Are they all scams?

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

If your child, or grandchild, is a junior in high school, now is a great time to start looking for college scholarships. The deadline for

awards are months away, giving you and your child a head start on applications, essays and other requirements for those awards.

Billions of dollars' worth of scholarships are awarded each year to college-bound students. Some are based on financial need; others

are based on a student's interests, academic and extracurricular achievements, ethnicity, religious affiliation or a family's relationship with a certain union, company or other group.

Weeding through the numerous types of scholarship offers can be overwhelming, leading some parents and students to seek help from scholarship services. The Better Business Bureau warns consumer to be careful. Despite their elaborate claims and professional images, many are scams.

Legitimate scholarship services tell students and their families upfront what they can and cannot do for them. Typically, they provide students with lists of scholarships, compare their profiles with available scholarships, and provide lists of scholarship awards for which they qualify.

Fraudulent scholarship search services will promise to help you maximize your eligibility for financial aid at a cost of several hundred to several thousand dollars. Some services take your money and never look for anything on your behalf; others provide a list of scholarships for which your child is not eligible. Although some services will come up with a list of scholarships that your child does qualify for, the list is usually culled from information you can get yourself for free.

There are many kinds of scholarship scams. The most common scam is a seminar scam, where you get a letter inviting you to a free financial aid seminar, which turns out to be little more than a high-pressure sales pitch. Sometimes, the promoters will offer to come to your home and meet with you one on one. Scholarship scams can be

hard to spot because promoters often imitate legitimate government agencies, grant-giving foundations, education lenders or scholarship matching services. They may use words like "national," "federal," "foundation," and "administration" in their titles.

The scholarship service may make statements like these:

- "The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back." In reality no one can guarantee that they will get you a grant or scholarship. And the refund guarantees that are offered usually have so many conditions or strings attached that it is almost impossible for consumers to get their money back.

- "You cannot get this information anywhere else." Actually, scholarship information is widely available in books, from libraries and financial aid offices and online, if you are willing to search for it.

- "We will do all the work." In reality, only parents and students can determine and provide the financial information needed to complete the forms. And to apply for scholarships, students must complete the application themselves.

- "You have been selected by a national foundation to receive a scholarship." If you have not entered a competition sponsored by the foundation, this claim is highly unlikely.

- "May I have your credit card or back account number to hold this scholarship?" This is never a requirement for a legitimate scholarship offer.

- "The scholarship will cost some money." Legitimate scholarship offers never require payment of any kind. Free money is free money, unless it is a loan. But if it is not a loan, any fees that may be charged, such as the origination and guarantee fees are taken out of the disbursement check.

If a company makes these types of claims, steer clear of them.

For more tips you can trust, visit www.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@centralgeor-



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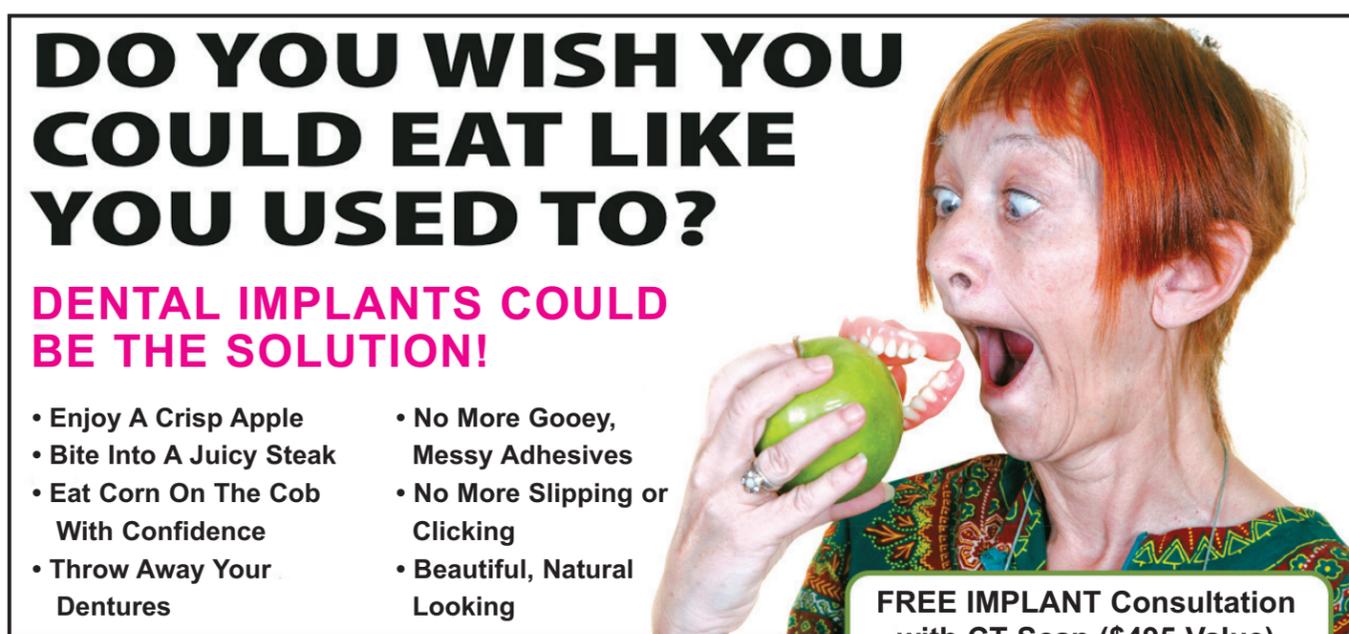
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Having a leg up on the fashion scene

by SUSAN LARSON

I recently read in the Wall Street Journal that the latest fashion trend among teenage girls is mismatched socks, which is very upsetting to some parents. And even more upsetting, their daughters are squandering their allowance on socks that are already mismatched! It seems there are a lot worse things happening in the world for people to get upset over, but if this is big enough news for the WSJ, then I think it deserves coverage in Senior News.

First I want to say this is not news. Back in 1960 when I was in 8th grade, colored tights were the newest rage. At \$1.00 a pair, they were a bit pricier than bobby socks, but well worth 3 hours of babysitting money.

Then Seventeen Magazine featured tights with legs of two different colors. How cool! Only problem was they were \$5 a pair! Considering how easily they snagged and resulted in runs, \$5 was pretty pricey. However, my friend Mina, who was a lot smarter than I was, came up with a brilliant idea.

"When we get a run, let's just cut off the bad leg and wear two pair, each with a different colored leg," she said. (I think today that's known as "recycling." Mina was a step ahead there, too.)

When we showed up at school, Mina with red and blue legs, an I, with black and red, we were so proud of ourselves, putting our best foot forward

both in our fashion sense and resourcefulness.

We strutted down the hall together before class, like we'd just walked off the cover of Seventeen Magazine. Then who came stomping towards us but the principal. He stopped us in our tracks, admonishing us not only for dressing in such a ridiculous manner and disgracing the whole school, but pointing out that we were both in the 8th grade algebra class (the only AP class back then) and that we were expected to conduct ourselves like upstanding citizens and set a good example for all the other students.

"You know all the other students look up to you and admire you. What do you think this school would come to if all the other girls start going around looking like this?" he asked.

Yeah, right. Like all the kids in our school got up every morning and said, "Gee, I can't wait to see what the nerds are wearing today so I can try to look just like them."

I don't know if he was really that naive, or thought we were that naive, or just couldn't think of any other reason why we shouldn't have a leg up on this fashion trend, but it was at least one time in my life when I was actually thankful that I couldn't afford something. If we'd managed to come up with the money for those \$5 tights, we'd really have gotten hosed.

Susan Larson is a writer from Lilburn. E-mail her at susanlarson79@gmail.com.



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Senior News & Views of Georgia

Poets' Corner

WHO IS THIS

by Brenda G. Partridge-Brown

Who is this?

That created the whole world in six days by the power of his own hands.

Who is this?

That took clay from the earth and created man by the power of his own hands.

Who is this?

That can speak to the wind and rain without delay causing a violent storm to obey!

Who is this?

That overpowered a great king and his host, and departed the red sea!

Who is this?

That can order the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule over the darkness of night, who gave names to all the stars, these lesser lights that shine so bright!

Who is this?

That can forgive us of all our sins, with a free gift of grace and mercy were able to make in in!

Who is this?

How would he answer this question?

I AM THAT I AM

SPRING

by the Elmcroft Writers Club
Ms. Holley Howard, Club Director

*Spring is charming us again
Pompous flowers, green buds send
Romance shows in every bloom.
Inspiring us to live anew
Nature resurrects the land
God's paintbrush in His hand.*

MY BIRTHDAY VILLANELLE

by Nancy Moen

*So quickly have the days gone slowly by.
Each filled with full stops and with exclamations.
Some memories rise and shine.
Some sadly sigh.*

*My golden friends and silver, too, arrived
and colored life with jubilation.
So quickly have the days gone slowly by.*

*United, yellow roses, children thrive...
An epic ear filled with "glad"ulations.
Some memories laugh out loud.
Few sadly sigh.*

*To teach, to write, to love – I am alive.
I meet each falling leaf and greet the season.
So quickly have the days gone slowly by.*

*To think that slowing down is to survive
knows nothing of my grand boys' incantations.
As memories rise, today, there are few sighs.*

*The parchment leaves of sixty-seven arrive.
I'll pen each page a first edition.
So days, go slowly now, not quickly by
and mostly shine between a few sad sighs.*

THINKING AT 75

by Ms. Geri Noel

*Sitting in my bed after a stroke,
So I am thinking at 75,
Am I above the waves,
Or am I sinking?*

*I can walk a little,
Still a little weak.
I can talk and write,
But my body is meek.*

*My God, my belief's in you.
My thought then and now,
Will I ever get well.
Please, God, don't let me down.*

*Thanks to my family,
Who was always there.
Thanks to my daughter,
Who gave me the best of care.*

*Thanks to the Church,
To the people who called.
Gave me the strength,
To withstand it all.*

2015 Georgia Golden Olympics dates set

Special to Senior News

The 2015 dates for the 33rd Georgia Golden Olympics have been set for September 16-19, 2015. The games will be held in Warner Robins, Georgia and hosted by the Warner Robins Recreation Department.

Information about the games, registration forms and schedules will be available by early May. The form will be emailed to past participants and mailed to others. Complete information will also be available on the website as soon as final. The website is www.georgiagoldenolympics.org. On the website you'll also find information about volunteering for the event, making a financial contribution and a media kit for use by athletes and others interested in promoting the event. Also, follow the Georgia Golden Olympics on facebook and twitter for additional information and updates.

2014 Georgia Golden Olympics

The 2014 Georgia Golden Olympics was held September 17-20, 2014 in Warner Robins. Over 650 athletes competed in over 20 sports and hundreds qualified for the 2015 National Senior Games to be held in Minnesota.

2015 National Senior Games

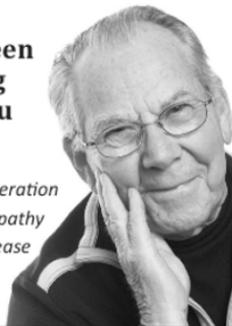
The National Senior Games, presented by Humana is scheduled for July 3-16, 2015 in Bloomington/Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. For more information about the National Senior Games please go to www.nsga.com.

To make a tax deductible contribution to the Georgia Golden Olympics please find more information on the website: www.georgiagoldenolympics.org or send to GGO, P.O. Box 958, Winder, GA. 30680.

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Out & About

Philadelphia Winn Chapter NSDAR visits the Georgia Governor's Mansion



Submitted by
Lee Schermerhorn, Chairman
Philadelphia Winn Chapter
Media & Public Relations
Lawrenceville, GA

Mansion is the official home of Georgia's 82nd Governor, Nathan Deal, and his wife, Sandra.

Many of the furnishings in the house are considered to be of museum quality and make up one of the finest Federal Period collections in the United States. The knowledgeable Docents from the Chi Omega Alumni Chapter in Atlanta gave excellent background and descriptions of each room's treasures.

Books and ornaments are offered for purchase at the Mansion to help with the restoration, maintenance and preservation of the Mansion and its furnishings. Many

of the attendees supported the Friends of the Mansion by purchasing items.

After the tour, the chapter's luncheon meeting was held at the Swan Coach House.

Attending were 40 Philadelphia Winn Chapter members along with nine prospective or pending members and seven guests for this special chapter meeting.

The May meeting for the Philadelphia

Winn Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, will be held at Ashton Hall Senior Living, Lawrenceville, Georgia on Sunday, May 17th at 1:00 p.m. A salad luncheon and silent auction will be held and chapter achievement awards will be announced. The silent auction begins at 11:00 a.m.

For more information contact philwinndar@gmail.com.

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In keeping with the DAR mission of historic preservation, education and patriotism, the Philadelphia Winn Chapter NSDAR celebrated Georgia Day by visiting the Georgia Governor's Mansion for their April 16th meeting. The Governor's

Roswell Historical Society "Dressed for Drama" Exhibit at Bulloch Hall

Special to *Senior News*

The Roswell Historical Society will present this vintage clothing exhibition during the months of May and June 2015, at Bulloch Hall. Pieces on display will be drawn from the extensive collections of vintage clothing housed in the Roswell Historical Society/City of Roswell Research Library and Archives.

Period literature, films, and television, including the wildly popular PBS series "Downton Abbey," will provide the inspiration for this exhibit.

"Dressed for Drama" can be seen at Bulloch Hall during regular scheduled tours: Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Sundays, 1-3 p.m.

For information and tickets, call Bulloch Hall at 770.361.6075.

Wait, There's More!

This exhibit coincides with Bulloch Hall's special presentation on Saturday, May 2nd, "Dressed for Drama" Downton Soiree.

Wedding folklorist and costume historian, Cornelia Powell, will be the guest speaker. Ms. Powell was guest speaker at Winterthur Museum last year during their "Costumes of Downton Abbey" exhibition and will speak at the "Dressing Downton" exhibit at Biltmore House this spring in Asheville, North Carolina.

She is bringing her "Downton Abbey" costume expertise to Bulloch Hall. The day's event – kicking off

National Preservation Month celebration – includes a talk and PowerPoint presentation by Ms. Powell, book signing, shopping at a "Vintage Collections" pop-up boutique, an afternoon tea, and a tour of Bulloch Hall to see the beautiful vintage clothing exhibit provided by the Roswell Historical Society.

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On the Cover

Alpacas provide purpose and pleasure

by SUSAN LARSON

ON THE COVER

Courtney Williams and an award winning Alpaca

Fifteen years ago Courtney and Holly Williams were living as “ITP” (Inside The Perimeter) as anyone possibly could. From their loft in Castleberry Hill, they could walk to Phillips Arena events, Hawks games and the Georgia Dome.

“We used to tailgate and then walk to the Falcons games,” Courtney said. “On the Fourth of

July we could see the fireworks from our loft.”

Although city life was wonderful, Holly, who grew up on a farm in Ohio, still had her heart in the country. She wanted horses, but Courtney was hesitant

about that. So Holly searched around online for an alternative and stumbled upon alpacas. After some research and kitchen table talks, they realized that not only would alpacas satisfy Holly's desire to raise farm animals, but for Courtney, they would provide a good business opportunity.

They owned some property in Blairsville and over a couple of years turned it into an alpaca farm which they named “Lasso the Moon.” In December of 2000 they welcomed their first alpacas – two females – and in 2002 announced the birth of the first baby alpaca in north Georgia.

“The business is relatively new so the opportunity to make an impact is real,” Courtney said. “Alpaca fiber is hypoallergenic and does not contain lanolin. It is several times warmer than wool and much stronger.”

Today, instead being nestled inside I-285, Courtney and Holly live out in the open, encircled by nothing more than a five-foot high no-climb fence. But that's only to keep the pack dogs out. The couple welcomes visitors and are eager to share their knowledge and their pas-

sion for their alpacas. They do ask that visitors make an appointment, as this is a working farm and they want to schedule time to offer a quality experience.

Holly regularly conducts craft classes which include felting, spinning and painting with fiber. She is also a glass artist and creates lampwork alpaca shaped beads, as well as other custom designs.

Holly's classes include a warm lunch she cooks from scratch using organic and locally grown ingredients. (She posts her recipes on their Web site.)

“Following the lunch break we visit with the alpacas,” Holly said. “After class we can visit the glass studio where I will be glad to do a glass bead making demonstration.”

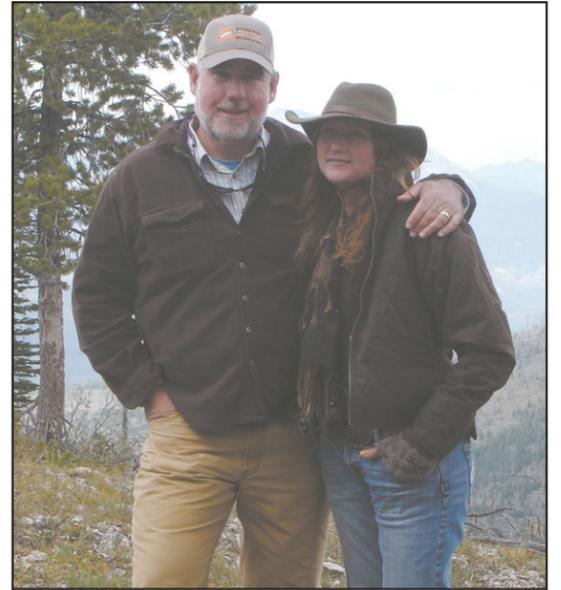
Courtney and Holly are also happy to advise anyone considering raising alpacas.

“We are both very involved in all aspects of owning alpacas from cleaning the pastures, daily herd health, shearing, to making finished products with alpacas. We are both also committed to positive change in the alpaca community through service on organization boards, having both served on the GAA board (Georgia Alpaca Association), and managing events, such as the Royal Alpaca Challenge Show and the Southern Select Alpaca Show. Courtney has also served on National AOA committees,” Holly said.

Being encircled by buildings and businesses is all part of the Williams' past. Today they're surrounded by alpacas, dogs, cats, chickens and ducks. As for the Hawks and Falcons they left behind;

well, now they have real ones flying aloft.

Information: www.alpacamoon.com or 706-835-1837.



Courtney and Holly Williams at Lasso the Moon Alpaca Farm in Blairsville, Georgia.



Holly Williams designs lampwork glass beads at her Lardworks Glass and Fiber Studio at Lasso the Moon.



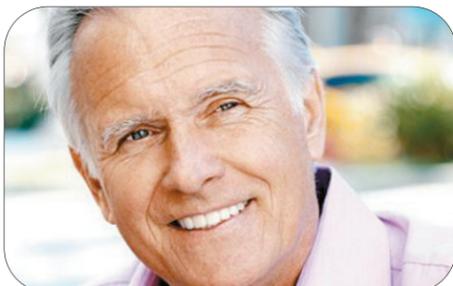
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The story of the next-to-last person to get a cell phone

(wait for the happy ending).



Okay, I confess. I was probably the next-to-last person in the USA to get a cell phone. I didn’t see the need. For years, when I needed to make a call, there was always a phone booth around. Then one day there wasn’t. Phone booths had gone the way of the typewriter. And I didn’t give up my typewriter until the Millennium. Clearly I’m not big on technology. My motto is: keep it simple.

Cell phones are not simple. You open one up and there are little red and green phone icons, and three dots here, and an envelope symbol there. What’s it all mean? Where’s the dial tone to greet you? Incoming calls are no fun either: when it rings, there’s nobody there when you say: “Hello? Hello?” Is there a step I’m missing in all this? And is this extra step necessary? And what’s up with a phone that works in only one part of the country? Wouldn’t it make sense for all phones to make use of all the towers in the U.S.? Thinking you have phone service and not having it is a scary prospect. Is there any reason to sign a long-term contract to get a cell phone? I’m not buying a house here—it’s a tiny little phone. And why do cell phones have to be so small anyway? You can’t press one number without hitting two or three of them. Something must be wrong with the design of most of them too, since people are always yelling into them. I’d yell too, if I had to pay \$40 or \$50 a month for the few little calls I would make. I can’t imagine who people need to talk to on the phone as they’re walking down the street or standing in a grocery store line. Do they really think they’re that important? I think cell phones are fine in an emergency or a pinch, but don’t expect to find me driving along talking on the phone. I have to ask: Does anyone really need a cell phone that plays music, provides video games,

connects to a computer, downloads and offers 25 other features unrelated to phoning? Not me! I don’t even use call waiting and caller ID at home. The only reason I would ever need a cell phone at all would be for security, like when I’m out in the car and have a problem. Or for emergency 911. Or maybe sometimes just to call my daughter and check in when I’m out and about.

So, how come I’m writing a recommendation for a cell phone? Because I heard about Jitterbug. Jitterbug is incredibly easy. It’s easy to use. It’s easy to see. It’s easy to hear on. It’s easy to talk on. It’s easy to afford. And it’s easy to love, even if you’re formerly a cell phone hater like me. So, if you’re the LAST person around without a cell phone, look into a Jitterbug. Better yet, call them up and they’ll give you all the details (1-888-802-9912). Jitterbug is the cell phone designed for those of us with the good sense to wait for exactly what we need.

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The Next Chapter

Recommendations by
ANNE B. JONES, PhD

• *It's What I Do*; Lynsey Addario, Penguin Press, New York, 2015

It's *What I Do* by Lynsey Addario is an informative eye-opening account of the risks and rewards of photojournalism. Too many of us take for granted the pictures displayed on our TV screens. We put little thought into the human toil and effort that goes into bringing them into our living rooms. In many instances, pictures, not words, touch our hearts evoking emotions that rivet us to the toll of human suffering in wars, famines and epidemics. Pictures of the coffins of soldiers, starving infants, fleeing refugees and maimed women and children pierce our souls with their reality.

Addario removes the veil of safety we feel when we push news stories to the back of our minds and brings us into a world of imagery we might prefer to forget. But, we can't forget. To forget means to abdicate our personal responsibility for being aware of what is happening and taking an active part in trying to shape our country's foreign and domestic policies whether through our votes or more hands-on activities.

To say photojournalism is a risky profession is a grand under-

statement in relation to Addario and her colleagues. She has been kidnapped and physically abused while on assignment, often lucky to escape with her life. Some of her associates have been killed. Why do they do it? This is a question she has asked herself. To sum it up, she is fulfilling a mission, one that is a responsibility and a calling that gives her a sense of purpose in bearing witness to history and influencing policy.

But not only does she witness history, she experiences it first-hand. "With my subjects – the thousands of people I have photographed – I have shared the joy of survival, the courage to resist oppression, the anguish of loss, the resilience of the oppressed, the brutality of the worst of men and the tenderness of the best." One of the issues she addresses and portrays is the horrific way in which the wars she has covered have brutalized women both physically and psychologically. Her stories and pictures of individuals willing to die for stories that had the potential to educate people and save lives.

In relation to our war in Iraq "I wanted to make people think, to open their minds, to give them a full picture of what was happening in Iraq so they could decide whether they supported our presence there." In Mogadishu, "I

always felt horrible about photographing people in such states of misery, but I hoped my images, in bringing greater awareness of the desperation, might also bring food and medical aid."

Addario lives in London with her husband and young son. She has learned to live in two very different realities. "It's not always easy to make the transition from a beautiful London park filled with

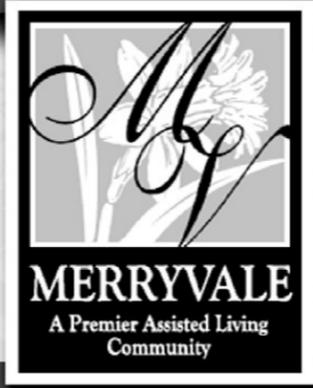
children to a war zone, but it's my choice. I choose to live in peace and witness war – to experience the worst in people but to remember the beauty."

You may contact Anne at annebjones@msn.com... (*Tides of Fear, Gold Thunder, A Light on Peachtree, All Around the Track, Brave at Heart*).



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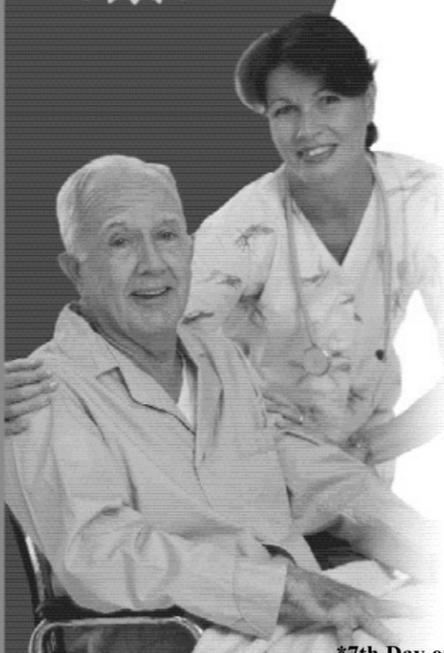
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What exactly is long term care and are you in need?

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

According to the National Clearinghouse for Long Term Care Information (www.longtermcare.gov), long term care is “a range of services and supports you may need to meet your health or personal needs over a long period of time.” These services fall into two major categories:

- “Activities of Daily Living” include bathing, dressing, transferring to or from a bed or chair, and eating.
- “Instrumental Activities of Daily Living” include (but are not limited to) housework, taking medication, errands, caring of pets, and using communication devices.

The need for long term care, which can be provided at home or in a special facility, usually stems from a health condition, such as a chronic illness or disability. Age-related factors can also increase the likelihood for needing services. The National Clearinghouse for Long Term Care Information is a government website that provides information and resources to those who are inquiring about long term care needs for themselves or a family member. Here’s a short list of age-related factors or risks they cite when considering long term care:

- Age: The older you get, the more likely it is that you’ll need help.
- Living alone: If you live alone, you’re more likely to need paid care than if you live with others.
- Gender: Women are more like-

ly to need long-term care than men, primarily because women tend to live longer.
Lifestyle: Poor diet and exercise habits increase the chance that you’ll need long-term care.
Personal history: Health and family history can increase the chances you’ll need long-term care.

The cost of long term care is a major issue to consider, and you may benefit from signing-up for coverage early on. Medicare, VA benefits and employer programs may cover some costs of long term care, but more and more people are adding private long term care insurance policies to their retirement planning. Make that decision sooner rather than later; the younger you are when you buy the policy, the less it will cost you. And once you have a major health issue, such as stroke, Alzheimer’s, metastatic cancer or Parkinson’s, you may not be able to get coverage.

To find out more information about long-term care, go to www.longtermcare.gov/LTC. For more consumer tips or to find a trustworthy long-term care insurance broker, go to 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.



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Don't give away your Security Code

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

Identify thieves looking for credit cards may already have a lot of information about you – like

your credit card number, the card's expiration date, and your name, address, and phone number. With all that information in his hands, why would he call you? Simple, he's after one vital piece of information – the security code on your credit card.

Here's how this scam works. The scammer says he's calling from your credit card's security or fraud department. He says that they've flagged some suspicious activity on your card. He makes up a bogus transaction and asks if you authorized it. Of course, you didn't. So he says he'll open a fraud investigation, gives you a case reference number, and tells you to call the phone number on your credit card if you have any questions. It all seems fine so far, right?

But, he says, there's just one more thing. He needs to verify that you are in possession of the card – so he asks you to tell him the security code for the card. And that is the final piece of the puzzle he's after.

If you get a call like this, the Better Business Bureau and the Federal Trade Commission offer these tips:

- Don't give the caller any information about your account – even if he already knows some of the details.
- Hang up the phone. Call the customer service number on the back of your credit card. Talk to the fraud or security department and ask about the unauthorized charges the caller told you about.
- Report the suspicious call to the FTC at www.ftc.gov or 1-877-FTC-HELP and the BBB at bbb.org.
- Tell your friends, family, neighbors, and others about it. By spreading the word, you can help someone you care about avoid falling for a scam.

Identity thieves will try a lot of different tricks to get your personal information. No matter the story they tell you, don't give anyone your personal information if you did not initiate the contact using contact information that you know is trustworthy. If you do fall for this scam, contact your credit card company immediately to have them cancel your card.

For more consumer 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: bbb.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org or info@csra.bbb.org.

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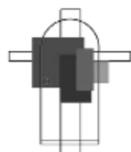
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- 2) a support group with focus.

We'll be starting our 13-week series Tuesday evening, Aug 5 in the Education Building in the Library (Room 313) from 6:30-8:30 pm. at McKendree United Methodist Church, 1570 Lawrenceville Suwanee Rd, Lawrenceville, 770-339-9801. All are welcome and invitation is considered an open door arrangement... meaning you can join us at any time.

For additional information, contact Susan Rowe, Director of Christian Education, at 770-339-9801, ext. 26 or facilitators, Jay & Nancy Rowland, at 678-618-8735 or nancy.m.rowland@gmail.com.

Clairmont Oaks Retirement Community 40th Anniversary

Family Fun Day, Sat., May 9, 3-8 p.m., 441 Clairemont Ave., Decatur. Event is for the entire family! Free parking and shuttle from Decatur First Baptist Church.

Heritage Day... Visions of the Past

June 13, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Presented by The William Harris Homestead Foundation, Inc., 3636 Georgia Hwy. 11, Monroe. For details visit www.harishomestead.com.

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Taking Care

Thoughtful Gifts for Caregivers

by LISA M. PETSCHÉ

The contribution of informal caregivers of seniors often goes unrecognized in our society.



Lisa Petsche

These unpaid helpers provide practical assistance and enhance quality of life for ill or frail older adults who might otherwise require

placement in a long-term care residence.

Typically, caregivers are spouses or children; many are seniors themselves. The majority are women. The loved ones they care for have physical or mental impairment (perhaps both) caused by one or more chronic health conditions, stroke and dementia being most common.

The caregiver role involves physical, psychological, emotional and financial demands. It is a heavy load, exacerbated by the limited availability of community support services.

But there are rewards for caregivers, too. These may include a closer relationship with the care recipient; increased creativity and assertiveness; increased insight into their own strengths and limitations; a general increase in compassion for others; re-thinking of values and priorities; learning to live in the present and appreciate the simpler things in life that make it enjoyable. Then, too, there is the satisfaction of knowing they are doing something meaningful.

The caregiving journey can be long, though, and particularly challenging when the elder has heavy hands-on needs, a demanding personality, or cognitive impairment. A variety of emotions may be experienced along the way, including sadness, grief, frustration, anger, resentment, guilt, anxiety and loneliness. Burnout is common, due to the physical toll of caring for someone who is ill and the emotional strain of dealing with the suffering and decline of a loved one.

Thoughtful Gifts:

To show you care, the following are a variety of gift ideas for the caregiver in your life – for special occasions and for no particular occasion (that is, as a nice surprise).

- Booklet of IOUs for one or more of the following: home-cooked meals, baked goods, respite care, household chores or repairs, yard work, chauffeuring, running errands.

- Answering machine, cordless phone or cell phone.
- Wall calendar with plenty of space for noting appointments.
- Caregiving binder for keeping records and organizing paperwork.
- Membership in a caregivers organization or the non-profit organization associated with their relative's disease (for example, the Alzheimer's Association or Parkinson Foundation).

- Gift certificate for a home healthcare agency, medical supply store or housecleaning service.

- Book of tickets or gift voucher for accessible transportation, if the care receiver is not able to ride in a car, so they can go out together.

- Inspirational book (choose a collection of verses or short stories if the caregiver does not have much time for reading).

- Subscription to a caregiving periodical, or a magazine that reflects an interest (such as nature) or favorite pastime (gardening, for example).

- Decorative journal for recording their experiences, thoughts and feelings, and a high quality pen that glides smoothly.

- Relaxation tapes or miniature fountain.

- Bird feeder and seed, or binoculars for bird watching.

- Hobby or craft supplies.

- Writing paper and envelopes, or a set of all-occasion note cards, along with postage stamps.

- Scented items: hand and body lotion, cologne, bar soap, bath salts or shower gel, drawer sachets, potpourri or votive candles.

- Basket of sweets, gourmet coffees and teas, jams and jellies or dried fruit and nuts.

- Gift certificate to a restaurant with takeout and delivery service, a dry cleaner with pickup service or a pharmacy or grocery store that delivers.

- Two tickets to a cultural event so a friend can accompany them and an IOU for respite care.

- For higher-cost items, pool resources with family members or friends.

- Keep in mind that emotional support and your time are the two most valuable gifts you can give a caregiver.

Lisa M. Petsche is a social worker and a freelance writer specializing in boomer and senior health matters. She has personal and professional experience with elder care.

Our Skilled Nursing Center is

Deficiency FREE

When the Department of Community Health last visited for their annual survey, we did not receive any citations of non-compliance in the areas used to monitor state and federal guidelines related to the care and services we provide our residents.

This ranks our regulatory compliance as one of the top centers in Georgia.

We hope that you take comfort in knowing that you will receive such highly ranked service from our community, and that this accomplishment will help us meet your expectations.



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