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JULY 1

The Culper Spy Ring Helped **Gain American Independence**

Robert Folsom, historian

JULY 8

2023 Red River Balloon Rally

Matthew Hammock, Shreveport-**Bossier Sports Commission**

JULY 15

Making Shreveport Better for Seniors and Retirees

Shreveport Mayor Tom Arceneaux

JULY 22

Senior Primary Care Services

REMOTE BROADCAST featuring officials from Centerwell Primary Care Center in Shreveport



JULY 29

Louisiana Legislature Enacts New **Laws to Benefit Seniors**

Andrew Muhl, Director of Advocacy with AARP Louisiana

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Stat! Medical News & Info



Far more older adults these days log on to secure websites or apps to connect with their health information or have a virtual health care appointment. Overall, 78% of people aged 50 to 80 have used at least one patient portal, up from 51% in a poll taken 5 years ago, according to findings from the University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging. Of those with portal access, 55% had used it in the past month, and 49% have accounts on more than one portal. But the poll also reveals major disparities. Older adults with annual household incomes below \$60,000, and those who are Black or Hispanic, have lower rates of portal use. Additionally, those who say they're in fair or poor health physically or mentally were much more likely to say they're not confident about their ability to log in and navigate a portal than those with better physical or mental health.



Popping a pill may bring short-term relief for arthritisrelated joint pain, but many older adults may not realize that what they swallow could raise their risk of other health problems. Even if they're managing the pain on their own, people over 50 should talk to their health care providers about what they're taking, and get advice about potential medication risks and non-medication options that could also relieve their aches and improve their movement. The poll, by University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging, shows many manage their pain with non-prescription remedies such as over-the-counter pain relievers, supplements, or cannabidiol (CBD, derived from marijuana). There are sizable risks associated with many of these treatment options, especially when taken long-term or in combination with other drugs. Yet 60% of those taking two or more substances for their joint pain said their health care provider hadn't talked with them about risks, or they couldn't recall if they had. The guidelines seek to reduce the risk that medications will affect patients' stomach, liver, blood pressure, blood sugar, mood or sleep.

Heart Disease Deaths Linked to Extreme Hot and Cold Days

Exposure to extremely hot or cold temperatures increases a heart disease patient's risk of dying, according to a new study published in the American Heart Association's journal *Circulation*. The global analysis of more than 32 million cardiovascular deaths over 40 years measured more deaths on days when temperatures were at their highest or lowest compared to more moderate climate days. Among the types of cardiovascular disease, people with heart failure were most likely to be negatively impacted by very cold and very hot days, experiencing a 12% greater risk of dying on extreme heat days compared to optimal temperature days in a specific city. Extreme cold increased the risk of heart failure deaths by 37%.



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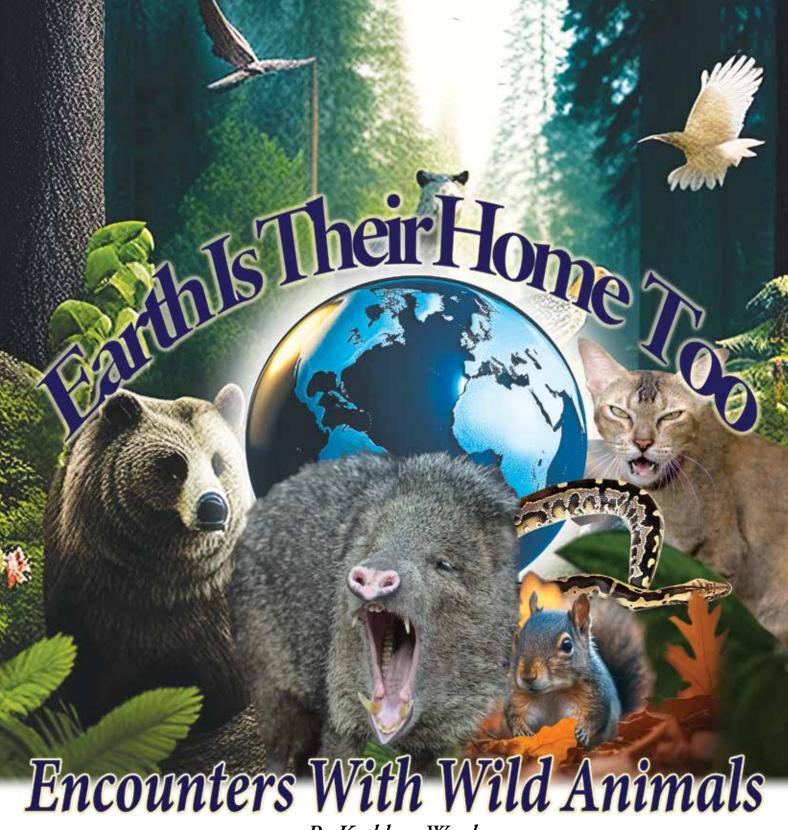
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By Kathleen Ward

When we happen upon a wild creature we may do the wrong thing, sometimes putting both ourselves and the animal in danger. *The Best of Times* spoke with people who control or remove animals from places where they are unwanted or cause damage, and others who help injured wildlife.

"SCALY, NOT SCARY"

EMT/firefighter Steven Kennedy saves people from snakes and snakes from people. While Louisiana has fortyeight species of snakes, only seven are venomous. Snakes mostly hunt at night avoid contact with humans.

and try to

"A snake is not out to get you. If someone sees a snake, don't try to pick it up! They strike if they feel threatened or can't get away. Try to get a picture of the snake, then call me to come rescue the snake. There is no reason to kill snakes, they are good for rodent control,"



Steven Kennedy with Sunny

Kennedy said.
"Even venomous snakes have their purpose and are now being used for medicines."

For more than 20 years, through his rescue organization ("Steve's Snaketuary"), Kennedy has

taught first responders about snakes and bite treatment and educated the general public. He has more than 100 presentations for all ages scheduled in 2023, many of them at local schools and libraries (www.stevessnaketuary.com/events/).

"My wife was very supportive, and now she and my kids love snakes too," said Kennedy. He takes more than 500 calls a year from individuals, animal control and law enforcement to identify and remove snakes. Kennedy does not charge for snake removal but accepts donations to keep his efforts ongoing.

FERAL CATS

Almost all neighborhoods have feral cats. They are



territorial and keep rats, snakes and new feral cats out. Their lives are hard, usually lasting two to three years instead of the average 12 to 18 years of domestic cats. There is no leash law for cats in Shreveport and no limit on how many cats a person can own. If you remove a cat you think is feral, it might be someone's pet.

More than 1.4 million cats are killed at government shelters each year. There is an alternative that has proven effective and beneficial called "TNR" (Trap, Neuter, and Release). Free roaming cats are humanely trapped, spayed/neutered, vaccinated, and then released back into the neighborhood

where they are "the green alternative" to the dangers and costs of poisoning rodents. A notch is cut on one ear so they can be identified.

Animal shelters lend out humane traps for a refundable deposit (\$50 in Shreveport and \$45 in Bossier). Once trapped, cats can be taken to a veterinarian for surgery and then released. Robinson's Rescue, one of only 159 ASPCA Spay/ Neuter Alliance clinics in the U.S., will spay/neuter and vaccinate cats that are not pregnant for \$35 or slightly more for pregnant cats. They also have special prices for people with low incomes.

Hog WILD

The estimated one million wild pigs throughout the



state match the combined populations of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport and Metairie. They kill all kinds of animals; destroy water resources, roads, fields and landscaping; carry diseases and parasites; and

account for \$78 million in annual damages.

LSU chemistry professor John Pojman labeled the fast-breeding animals' destruction a "pigdemic" and LSU is developing methods to help trap and eliminate them. Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries recommends that 70-75% of them be eliminated, allowing hunting all year with no limit for anyone with a standard Louisiana Basic Hunting License.

Shreveport police officer John Jackson estimates there are thousands in the south Shreveport area, where he has a hunting lease. "Sometimes the hogs are too big for us to move, or the terrain is so rough it is too hard. We leave the animal where it is. The coyotes and other scavengers make quick work of them, said Kennedy. He kills about 100 each year, dresses the sows and freezes the meat or has it made into sausages.

"If we have full freezers, then we try to reach out to friends and family before our hunts and ask if anyone needs meat.



We usually have plenty of takers," said Jackson. "We process the meat at the house. We like to smoke whole quarters or bacon wrap the loin on a smoker. We don't eat any of the big boars but the sows, even the real big ones, have great flavor. The meat is similar to domestic pork but much leaner."

Cole Jackson

Invasive Critters



Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries does not remove wildlife, but they approve Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators ("NWCOs") who do.

Ellis Dewayne Lee, one of 100 NWCOs statewide, can remove armadillos, beavers, coyotes, feral hogs, moles, nutrias, opossums, otters, raccoons and squirrels in Caddo, Bossier and DeSoto parishes. His busiest seasons are spring and winter.

"I am a small operator. I work by myself, and I also have a full-time job. If the animal is outside it will move on most of the time," Lee advises. "Stay

away from it. If it's in the yard and looks sick call Animal Control, but if it's in the house they will have to call a NWCO."

"Once I was called to remove a skunk from a bed and breakfast in Grand Cane. I caught it without it spraying and they had a customer in there that night," said Lee.

Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation of Louisiana ("WERLA")

Natural disasters, encroaching neighborhoods and food scarcity push many animals from their relatively safe home grounds into ours, often with disastrous results. Last year 750 injured or orphaned animals were taken in by WERLA, a nonprofit dedicated to healing and then returning injured animals to the wild.

WERLA works with animal control and other agencies that receive calls about wild animals, but they also are available to help individuals who find an injured animal (phone 318-405-2282).

Ellis Dwayne Lee's granddaughter with baby raccoons



BIRDS



"Owls, hawks, eagles and other raptors are part of nature," said ornithologist Cliff Shackelford, host of "Bird Calls" on Red River Radio (KDAQ 89.9 FM). "They keep rodents, snakes, and other unwanted critters in check. Without owls and other raptors, we'd be overrun with a variety of pests. These birds are doing natural pest control and doing it for us for free."

If birds are eating from your garden or fruit trees, Shackelford suggests having a lot of trees, if possible, because netting is expensive and usually ineffective. "Folks with a few trees are basically feeding the birds, squirrels, raccoons, etc. with an open cupboard."

"Ninety-nine percent of the birds you see flying around are native, thus protected by laws. The non-native birds without (legal) protection (House Sparrows, European Starlings) usually aren't visiting the fruit trees and neither is a raptor. All owls and other raptors in the U.S. are native, thus protected. Best thing to do is be neighborly to those who live around us – not just the human neighbors but the feathered kind, too!"



These links provide more information on:

Snakes

www.snaketuary.com

Birds

www.redriverradio. org/show/bird-calls

Cats

- www.robinsonrescue.
 org
- www.caddo.org/349/ Stray-Cats
- www.bossiercity.org/ faq.aspx?qid=144

Hogs and other wildlife

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to Help Avoid Inflammation

Scientists have shown a pathological link between chronic inflammation and heart disease, cancer and even depression. Now, several large studies have shown an association between chronic inflammation and the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

There are two types of inflammation: acute and chronic. Acute, short-term inflammation is a normal, healthy process within the body that helps protect us from infection, pathogens, and pollutants, and accelerates healing. The inflammatory response involves immune cells and blood vessels that work along with special molecules to eliminate damaged tissue and support the production of healthy new tissue.

Problems arise when, instead of being acute and short-term, inflammation is low-grade and chronic, meaning it persists beyond the need to heal an injury or to fight a pathogen. In our day-to-day lives, however, we may be unaware of our chronic, low-grade inflammation because it produces no obvious signs of its presence. Nevertheless, we should work to avoid it. Here's how:

1. EAT MORE PLANTS.

Perhaps the most important strategy, a diet that is full of dark leafy greens, such as spinach, kale, and collards, and brightly colored fruits (especially berries) and vegetables, as well as nuts like walnuts and almonds, is associated with lower levels of inflammation. Conversely, steaks, burgers, fried foods, soft drinks and





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Forest Park West Cemetery: 318-686-1461



other sugary beverages, margarine, and white bread are foods that lack these protective substances and tend to promote inflammation.

2. MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT.

We know that levels of inflammation increase as excess body weight increases, because the visceral fat that accumulates around internal organs produces inflammatory compounds. As excess weight is lost, blood markers of inflammation invariably drop.

3. SKIP ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO.

Alcoholic beverages increase levels of inflammation, first in the gut and then systemically. Alcohol use is associated specifically with neuroinflammation in the brain. Smoking triggers an inflammatory response in the blood. There are numerous additional benefits to eliminating both alcohol and tobacco.

4. GET ENOUGH SLEEP.

There is also evidence that insufficient sleep results in a rise in blood markers for inflammation. This may be because the normal reduction in blood pressure that occurs in our sleep has been hampered. As a result, cells in our blood vessels that can initiate inflammation may be activated. According to the American Sleep Association, up to 70 million Americans are

affected by a sleep disorder. For help addressing sleep deficits and sleep quality, visit sleepfoundation.org

5. TAKE A WALK.

At least ten large studies have shown a lasting antiinflammatory effect from regular, moderate-intensity exercise. A study from the UC San Diego School of Medicine found that just 20 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise resulted in an anti-inflammatory response in subjects.

Chronic inflammation poses a serious risk to health and may significantly increase our risk of experiencing cognitive decline and developing Alzheimer's dementia. But by making a few key lifestyle choices, we can help keep it under control. Joseph Keon is an investigative writer in the field of preventive medicine. He holds fitness expert certifications from both the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research and the American Council on Exercise. In his work as a wellness consultant in the public and private sphere for over 20 years, Keon focused on chronic degenerative diseases and their relationship to modifiable lifestyle choices. He is a past member of the Board of Directors of the Wild Oats Wellness Foundation and Dr. Helen Caldicott's Nuclear Policy Research Institute as well as the Marin Health Council, an advisory to the Marin County Board of Supervisors. Keon is currently a member of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine. Keon is the author of "The Alzheimer's Revolution" as well as three other books.



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Odds & Em



RESOURCES FOR LONG-DISTANCE CAREGIVERS

Long-distance caregivers can perform a variety of roles in the care of their friends and relatives, including helping with finances or money management, arranging for in-home care, and providing emotional support for the primary caregiver. The National Institute on Aging suggests that if you are a long-distance caregiver, you should familiarize yourself with resources local to the person you are caring for. You can find these resources by visiting:

- National Institute on Aging: www.nia.nih.gov/health/ getting-started-long-distance-caregiving
- Eldercare Locator: 1-800-677-1116 (toll-free)
- National Institute on Aging: www.nia.nih.gov/health/caregiving
- Family Care Navigator: www.hrsa.gov/behavioral-health/ family-care-navigator-tool
- State of Louisiana, Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs: www.goea. louisiana.gov/resources/caregiver-resources/

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NEW STUDY FINDS OLDER ADULTS SKIPPING MEDICATIONS DUE TO HIGH COST

A recently released study reported in *JAMA Network Open* and performed at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine found that in 2022, over 20% of adults age 65 and older experienced costrelated medication nonadherence, meaning they decided not to fill a prescription, skipped doses, took less medicine, delayed filling a prescription, or used someone else's medication due to cost. Some respondents used extreme forms of cost-coping, including foregoing basic needs or going into debt to afford medications. Just over half of the study respondents said that they used some strategy to help them afford their medications. Rising prices for prescription drugs and other consumer goods has left many older adults with less ability to afford their living and medical expenses.

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Build a Healthy Charcuterie Board For Your Next Gathering

harcuterie boards are very popular these days. What's not to love about a board covered in meat and fancy cheeses? Though these fun food arrangements are trendy now, they have actually been around for years. Traditional charcuterie is a French art tracing back to the 15th century, which involved preparing cured meats. Today's charcuterie has evolved to include a variety of other foods on the board, as well as other types of specialty boards.

A basic charcuterie board you may see at a gathering with friends could include meats, cheeses, dips, nuts, olives, and much more. A colorful charcuterie board is quite impressive when hosting gatherings as well. Wondering how you can incorporate a healthy twist to your charcuterie

board? Keep reading!

When building a healthy charcuterie board, try to include healthy options from each of the five food groups: fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and protein. Traditional charcuterie board favorites often have high salt and fat contents, so aim to create a healthy balance and include a variety of options. The high salt/ fat options can still be enjoyed as well, just consume them in moderation.

Fruits and vegetables:

Including a variety of different fruits and vegetables with different colors and shapes not only adds some healthy options to the board, but also makes the board more pleasing to the eyes. Different colored produce also provides





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different nutrients. Experiment with adding grapes, kiwi, apples (dip in lemon water first to prevent browning), carrots, oranges, blueberries, raspberries, broccoli, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, sugar snap peas, celery, or bell peppers to your board. Include at least 2-3 different fruit and vegetable options for a mix of nutrients and fiber. Dried fruits are also great options and can help with adding different textures and tastes to the board.

Grains: Consider grains as the vessel on your board - they are great for holding dips, cheeses, meats, and olives. Aim to include some whole grain products, as whole grains provide fiber and lots of helpful nutrients. Some healthier grain options for your board include whole wheat crackers, toasted whole wheat pita bread, low-sodium pretzels, or toasted whole wheat bread slices (try a crusty bread like a baguette).

Protein: Traditional charcuterie protein options, like salami, prosciutto, and cured meats, tend to be high in fat and salt. These can still be included on your board, but just be mindful of how much you consume and keep moderation in mind. In addition to the traditional protein choices, provide some healthier options to balance the board like low-sodium deli meats, boiled eggs, bean dips (hummus), low-sodium nuts, and edamame.

Dairy: Cheese usually encompasses a great portion of charcuterie boards today, but oftentimes these options are also high in fat and sodium. Be mindful of portion sizes and add some lighter, lower sodium options on the board as well. Some great choices include light mozzarella, parmesan, Swiss, low-fat cream cheese, and cheddar. Greek yogurt-based dips can also be a fun, light way to incorporate some dips on the board.

Some other factors to keep in mind when building a board are the size of the board you are working with, small bowls or cups needed for dips and spreads, and utensils needed for board items, including tongs, forks, spoons, and spreading knives. Rectangular boards can provide more surface area for larger foods, while circular boards often become "crowded" easier due to the more confined surface area.

The best way to get started making a charcuterie board is to just jump in! Brainstorm what items you'd like to include, make a trip to the store, and start building your board. There is no right or wrong way to build a perfect board - the part everyone will remember is how good it tasted! Charcuterie boards can be customized to accommodate yourself and others by keeping a few things in mind. You never know which of your friends or family members will be so glad they can enjoy an appetizer with some healthy options that they

can eat too!



Abigail McAlister is a Registered Dietician and nutrition agent with LSU AgCenter for Caddo and Bossier Parishes. Her focus is adult nutrition education and promotion. Contact her at amcalister@lsu.edu.





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The U.S. Constitution and the Seventh Amendment

he next two amendments to the United States Constitution are very important amendments to all citizens of the United States even though we hear less about them. Both of these amendments impact our lives in different ways. This month we will discuss the Seventh Amendment.

The Seventh Amendment to the United States Constitution provides:

In Suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury

shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

This is an interesting provision as it relates to suits in Federal Courts. In the United States, we have a two-tier court system. We have the Federal Courts which involve federal matters,

such as interstate commerce, taxation, federal crimes, and regulations made by the Federal Government. We also have a State Court system which involves state rules and regulations like criminal statues and legislation made by our state legislature. This provision applies to the Federal Courts.

There are two ways to be involved in a Federal Court. One way is the violation of a Federal Statute. The second way is a controversy involving a dispute between two diverse citizens of the United States where there is a certain amount in controversy.

Diverse citizenship refers to parties that are from two different states. For example, if a citizen of Louisiana sues someone from the State of Texas, the courts would consider there to be diversity of citizenship. Numerous times there are many litigants in Federal lawsuits. All parties have to

have diversity of citizenship before

Federal Court. If there are multiple parties and two of the parties are from the same state, the suit cannot

be brought in a Federal Court. In addition to diversity of citizenship,



the amount in controversy must be over a certain amount. When the drafters of the United States Constitution wrote the Seventh Amendment, twenty dollars was a large amount. As you can imagine, this amount has been increased over the years. The present amount that has to be in controversy is seventy-five thousand dollars. I am sure in future years, we will see an increase in this amount.

The Seventh Amendment talks about all decisions will be decided in common law. Louisiana has presented unique challenges to this amendment as we are the only civilian law state in the union that has laws relating back to the French and Spanish Civil Codes. Our Federal Courts in Louisiana and their judges have done a wonderful job in performing their duties and applying the law in those unique situations where both a Louisiana State law and a Federal law may be involved in a controversy.

As you can tell, the drafters of the United States Constitution wanted to make sure that citizens of the United States had access to our Federal Courts and provided that



juries would make decisions regarding controversies over a certain amount. The drafters understood the need for all citizens to be involved and insured this through this amendment.

Judge Jeff Cox is judge of the Louisiana Circuit Court of Appeal for the Second Circuit.





Seasons in the Sun

by Lauren Leon-McMillian, MS, P-LPC (NOTE: David asked his wife Lauren to pen this month's column. Enjoy!)

ave you noticed the sun waking you earlier each morning and lingering longer into the evenings? As spring gently climbs into summer, we are graced with increasing hours of sunlight, and therefore increased energy. This time of longer days and increasing energy allows us an opportunity to examine how we are allowing in and using this increased energy and light.

Like the old song says, "Let the sunshine in!" How are you allowing the sun and light into your life? Perhaps the first word to "key in" on here, is <u>allow</u>. As tempting as it may be in the growing southern sun to immediately shield your face as you walk out into its powerful energy, I might encourage you to linger there a minute longer than usual. Especially in these semi-comfortable days of growing warmth, in contrast to the anticipated "dog days," ALLOW the sun to penetrate your being. Invite it in your physical body to invigorate its natural processes of producing essentials like Vitamin D. Being present in the light and recognizing how it can cleanse our bodies offers by natural extension, a feeling and state of gratitude.

Summer is also an invitation to allow and experience more sun and light in your mental and emotional body. What areas of your life need to be *en-lightened*? Increased sun and warmth often prompts LIGHTER clothing. In much the same way, what heavy thoughts and emotions can you shedor at least be willing to put down for a while? We can observe our natural propensity to this theme of summer in the classic "summer beach vacation" where people take some time off to shed some clothing and responsibilities to open and allow the sun to LIGHTEN their mental and physical load. While



this practice of bringing more light into your life can look like giving yourself more opportunities for joy through vacation, it can also be a simple, intentional invitation wherever you are; just taking a moment to pause, maybe go outside, and be in the present. Each moment we spend in the present is a moment of light.

No matter what "season" of life one may be experiencing, the natural and present season of summer invites us into its energy. Each summer, we have the opportunity to re-experience this time of increased light on the planet as a child again. Though our physical bodies may not allow us to "do" summer as a child, we are never too old to enjoy and "be" summer, for we are the light of the world.

Hear life coach Dr. David McMillian on "Strategies for Living" each weeknight 7 p.m.-8 p.m. and Sunday morning 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on KEEL 710 AM and 101.7 FM, on the KEEL app. or on our Facebook page, Strategies for Living with David McMillian.





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The Case of the Adopted Kitten

There is a woman in New Orleans who loves cats. And lawsuits. Perhaps a bit too much.

Let's call this woman Ms. Garrett. That's not her real name. but her case is real. Ms. Garrett had a kitten that she wanted to put up for adoption. Thanks to the internet and online video conferencing, she was able to find a couple in North Carolina that wanted the kitten so much that they were willing to pay \$650! But before the couple travelled to New Orleans to pick up their new fur baby, they met with Ms. Garrett by Zoom. Ms. Garrett explained that this kitten was a very special "Himalayan" kitten, which means that it couldn't be vaccinated or declawed. The North Carolina couple, let's call them

the Drummonds, drove to New Orleans, paid the \$650 and took the kitten home.

A week or two later, Ms. Garrett followed up with the Drummonds to make sure that the kitten was OK. They told Ms. Garrett that the kitten was fine and that they had found a vet to care for it. Ms. Garrett, not being a trusting person, then called the vet to ask about the kitten. The vet explained that he had vaccinated the kitten and shortly thereafter it became lethargic, ill and dehydrated for a little while, but it was fine now. That didn't sit too well with Ms. Garrett. Things only got worse when the Drummonds told Ms. Garett that they were considering having the kitten declawed.

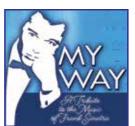
Care to guess what happened next? That's right, Ms. Garrett



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sued. Not once, but twice. And she didn't limit her suing to just the Drummonds. She also sued their children! And their vet!

One of the things that Ms. Garrett was asking for in one of her lawsuits was a temporary restraining order, which the judge granted. That means that the judge, without holding a hearing, temporarily ordered that the kitten not be declawed until a preliminary hearing could be held.

At the preliminary hearing, which was held remarkably quickly, Ms. Garrett explained that she and the Drummonds had a deal: for \$650 they would get the cat, but they could not have it vaccinated until it was 1 year old and could never have it declawed. The Drummonds said that was not the deal. They told the judge that "they did not agree to any terms or conditions of the adoption other than the payment of the purchase price."

Sounds like a typical he said/she said type case, but the first thing the judge wanted to know was whether the deal had been put in writing. It hadn't, which means that the judge was stuck with a special Louisiana law that deals with oral agreements for more than \$500: the deal must be proven by "at least one witness and other corroborating circumstances." (Note that this special law does not apply to automobile accident cases or divorce

cases. It only applies to oral contracts, i.e., "Let's make a deal and not put it in writing.")

In Ms. Garrett's case, she was able to prove the deal by her testimony. In other words, she had "at least one witness," i.e., herself. But that was it. She had no other evidence, which meant that without "other corroborating

circumstances," she automatically lost her case.

Lee Aronson is an attorney in Shreveport with Gilsoul & Aronson, LLC. His practice areas include estate planning and elder law.







Lee County, Florida: Discovering an Unanticipated Bonus Compliments of Hurricane Ian

By Fyllis Hockman

Shangri-La Springs Organic+ Restaurant

Walking along the Ft. Myers Yacht Basin in the center of the city, you would never know that several months ago, it was littered with boats and destruction, havoc wreaked by Hurricane Ian. The feeling of calm felt almost eerie as I remembered the horrific TV images of months past.

Lee County's Ft. Myers and Bonita Springs are beach towns, bastions of sun and surf for snowbirds and tourists alike. With beaches closed and without facilities – possibly true for the foreseeable future – I found myself seeking other entertainment options – and I wasn't disappointed.

There are still museums, island cruises have just started up again, hiking, canoeing, boat excursions, flea markets, historic sites but I'm going to focus on three unusual attractions that don't usually fall on the must-see itinerary.

Shangri-La Springs Resort, in concert with its name which usually conjures up a fantastical paradise, is actually where the springs that give the city of Bonita its name were first discovered by the Calusa Indians – the first mineral springs spa in North America. The hotel oozes history and healing inside and out.

At the Harvest and Wisdom Restaurant, I felt my mind expand even as I was being seated. Architecture, landscape and gardens provide extensive farm to table offerings. With only regenerative farming practices used, the 100% organic, sustainable products preserve the natural state of the plants. This was now over my pay grade dealing with essential oils, natural yeasts and beneficial bacteria but I was pretty sure the vegetables I was eating were pretty fresh.

Asian art proliferates throughout the property, inside and out. It's a boutique hotel impersonating an art gallery. Even the lobby aquarium has tiny Asian sculptures. The fish, I assume, were local.

Welcome
You are entering the largest gift store in the USA. Also the largest retail shell store in the world. Our exhibits and museums are free. Gujou



Fudge Factory within Shell Factory

The springs themselves resemble a small river floating under extensive tree canopies. The large fountain erupting in the center was probably not there when first discovered... The grounds bring to mind a mini-Botanical garden proffering a quiet, restful ambiance accentuated by streams, fountains and sculptures.

So from the sublime to the ridiculous – and I say that in the most loving of ways....
As a long-time travel writer, there are a few things I find anathema due to de rigueur repetitive visits. I tend to avoid tours of forts, butterfly gardens and shell factories. But the world's largest Shell Factory and Nature Park in Ft. Myers beckoned despite my internal protestations.

Apparently, they left off amusement park in the site's name because these are the activities I first noticed: a carousel, mini-golf, zip-line, climbing wall, gem mining, paddle and bumper boats, arcade games, a performance arts center and two restaurants. And oh yes, there is also a shop that sells shell necklaces. Well, okay – perhaps a tad more than that.

How about the World's Largest Shell Factory and this country's largest gift shop.

A place so big it warrants its own zip code and, no surprise, they have their own post office to accommodate it. Inside, in addition to those afore-mentioned shells, there's a fudge factory, a Christmas store, ice cream bar, t-shirts galore, more greeting cards than in a Hallmark warehouse (maybe several warehouses...) and miles and miles of quirky items you never knew you wanted until you tripped over them. They have everything and all of it in abundance, attested to by a self-aware sign that states: "If you can't find

something in this store, they just don't make it!"



The original Bonita Springs



Wildlife iguana at Everglades Wonder Garden

And did I mention the Nature Park? Four-hundred-and-fifty animals ranging from the expected alligators, tortoises and peacocks to lesser-known lemurs, camels and reptiles to virtually unknown tayras, caracels and a huge Eurasian Eagle-Owl. And, of course, a petting zoo with goats, alpacas and an ox. Although I suspect the animals are well-taken care of,

some of the habitats felt a little cramped and I wasn't sorry to leave. Nonetheless, apparently, I have to rethink my aversion to Shell Factories.

But the Everglades Wonder Garden in Bonita Springs -- a sort of hidden gem -- left all thoughts of its Nature Park behind – it was a place I didn't want to leave.

Though a step-back in time to a mainstay of Florida tourism, this roadside

attraction -- which often conjures up an image of unhappy animals in an unsavory environment -- evokes a totally different mind-set.

Scarlett, Calypso, Rudy and Murphy act as a very colorful and loud welcoming committee. Compared to the Shell Factory, these parrots are in luxury outdoor accommodations. Visiting the various rescued animals over three very airy and well-signed acres – alligators to tortoises, flamingos to lorikeets, alongside streams and splashing waterfalls, amid an avalanche of tropical plants – the feeling is one of expansiveness and immersion in nature, with an appreciation of what a wonderful home these animals have. I suspect many of them think they are still in the wild.

Whether an exotic plant, animal or waterfall, there's something to gawk at around every turn. My personal favorite? A giant orange and black iguana straddling a tree. Squawks, shrieks, yelps and tweets (no, not THAT kind!) reinforce the jungle atmosphere. Even the few cages on the property are expansive enough to resemble the same jungle impression prevalent outside of them.

Even as I re-read this, I realize how much of Lee County involves a natural habitat of sorts. So yes, Bonita Springs and Ft. Myers may be all about beaches, but they are also, thankfully, all about nature. Besides, who had time to sunbathe?

For more information, visit www.shangrilasprings.com, www.shellfactory.com and www.wondergardens.org.

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Donny Osmond's Summer Tour

ans of Donny Osmond won't have to travel to Las Vegas to experience the singer's long-running popular stage show currently headlining at Harrah's Casino. The 70s teen idol begins his summer tour in July, his first in almost seven years (see www. donny.com for cities and dates).

"I'm taking it across the country for people who can't get to Las Vegas," said Osmond from Las Vegas. "I'm bringing the entire company – singers, dancers, musicians, and a full video production.

I'm really looking forward to it because I was born on the road!"

While longtime fans remember Osmond as part of the Osmond family singers, not to mention the "Donny & Marie" variety show from the 70s, the "Donny & Marie" daytime talk show in the late 90s, and a string of musical theater roles on Broadway, Osmond has continued to reinvent himself to keep up with changing times.

He hosted a TV game show ("Pyramid") in the early 2000s, was a runner-up in the first season of Fox's "The Masked Singer" in 2019, and won season 9 of ABC's "Dancing with the Stars" a decade earlier.

"That was probably the hardest thing I've ever done in my life," he said. "And to win the trophy was probably one of my favorite accolades."

For the Utah native, those accolades began at the age of five when he joined four of his brothers in 1963 on "The Andy Williams Show" singing his debut song "Yes Sir, That's My Baby" on Williams's lap. Later in the program, he belted out his first solo performance on television, "You Are My Sunshine."

"I remember doing the show and have a lot of respect for that man because he gave me my start," recalled Osmond. "In fact, I do a duo with Andy Williams singing 'Moon River' on the big screen behind me in the show. It's become a very emotional part of the evening and people tell me quite a tearjerker. It's included in my rap song that looks back on my career."



Wait, the kid who tore up the pop charts in the early 70s with hit singles such as "Go Away Little Girl," "Puppy Love," and "Too Young," not to mention recording 65 albums over his career, does rap?

"I sure do," said Osmond laughing. "It's become one of the most popular parts of my show where I do a 10-minute rap in front of a big screen video projection outlining my

Like many entertainers,
Osmond's career had its low
points and these are not
excluded from his biographical
rap review. "I did one
Broadway show that opened
and closed on the same
day!"

six-decade career."

Another favorite
Osmond song for younger
fans is "I'll Make a Man
Out of You" from Disney's
1998 film "Mulan." While
appearing in a Chicago
stage production
of "Joseph and
the Amazing



(above) Donny Osmond performing in Las Vegas Show, 2022. (Photo credit: Denise Truscello)

(right) Donny Osmond. (Photo credit: Lee Cherry)

Technicolor Dreamcoat," Osmond was spotted by Disney and asked to join the vocal cast for their new animated feature.

"We turn the whole theater into a 'Milan' moment with a 6-minute full production number including a stick fighting dance on stage and my character, Captain Shang, on the big screen behind me," said Osmond. "I had no idea the song would become a Disney classic." Currently, the YouTube video of the song has over 160 million views and may still be a hit with the grandkids.

Of course, not everyone is a Donny Osmond fan and the 65-year-old singer often chuckles when he looks out into the audience during a show.

"Recently, there was a bearded guy in the front row who looked like one of those Grateful Dead Deadheads and by his attitude I could tell his wife had dragged him to the concert!" laughed Osmond. "But at the end of the show, he was the first on his feet to give me a standing ovation. So it's very satisfying to win over people like that. I'm sure audiences on the summer tour will not only enjoy the music but learn

about what I've accomplished over my six-decade career."

Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery, Ala, and has written features, columns, and interviews for numerous magazines and newspapers. See www.getnickt.org.



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The Best Of Times

July 2023 **27**

Old Friends (Endless Love) by William McDonald

Dear SPAM

Dear SPAM, I have, after five hours, just finished deleting over 2000 of your emails! Okay, four and a half. I took a break to go buy a couple of bottles of wine.

Can you blame me?

Just to clear a few things up:

- 1. I do not want or need to re-finance my mortgage; fifty offers is at best, a bit redundant.
- 2. I know I'm beginning to have "crepey" skin and am getting older. Pointing that out many, many times is not good psychology. Assuring us that the man of our dreams will love us just the same would be more hopeful.
- 3. Perhaps I do need to lose weight, but again, poor psychology.
- 4. I really do not believe that Ken Burns, being a busy professional filmmaker, does not spend even a single minute wondering how many

times a day I, or anyone else, poops!

- 5. There may be lovely ladies in Japan and Russia who would be happy to come to the USA for marriage but I'm guessing they're not interested in me, an almost 70-year- old female.
- 6. I, being female, have no need for testosterone, male enhancement or an opportunity to "drive her crazier than ever" in the bedroom.



- 7. I do not want more or less hair, different color of eyes or even a bigger brain
- 8. If a Nigerian prince really wants to give me \$8 million wouldn't he rather have my mailing address than my social security number?
- 9. I am a perfect candidate for breast enhancement? No thank you. If I need more weight to carry around on my

shoulders, I'll go back-packing.

10. The only end-of-life expense I'm interested in is the price I may have to pay to keep my first husband out of my piece of heaven.

So, please, SPAM, narrow down the messages you send to something that suggest/advertise real issues and possible solutions.

By the way, I'm still on the first bottle of wine. You may hear from me again if I make it through to the second.

"From "Old Friends (Endless Love) available exclusively at Amazon.com





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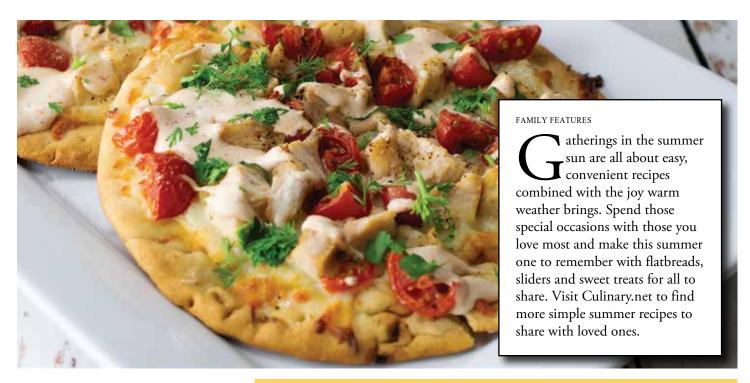
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Chipotle Chicken Flatbreads

Recipe from butteryourbiscuit.com

- 2 flatbreads
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 clove garlic, diced
- 4 chicken tenders, cooked and cubed
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, quartered salt, to taste

pepper, to taste

½ cup ranch dressing

1½ teaspoons chipotle seasoning

2 tablespoons cilantro leaves, chopped

Preheat oven to 375° F.

Place parchment paper on baking sheet and add flatbreads. Sprinkle cheese on flatbreads. Top with garlic, chicken and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Bake 16 minutes until cheese is melted.

In small bowl, mix ranch and chipotle seasoning.

Drizzle ranch dressing on flatbreads and sprinkle with cilantro leaves.

Chicken Shawarma Sliders

Recipe courtesy of eMeals Registered Dietitian Rachel West; Find the entire recipe collection by visiting emeals.com/campaign/Fresh-Cravings-Healthy-Eats.

2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts

3 tablespoons olive oil

4 cloves garlic, minced

½ tablespoon smoked paprika

½ tablespoon ground cumin

½ tablespoon ground coriander

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 package (12) slider buns

1 container (17 ounces) Honey Jalapeno Hummus

1 package (8 ounces) shredded lettuce

½ small red onion, sliced

In zip-top plastic bag, use meat mallet or heel of hand to pound chicken to even thickness. Cut into 2-inch pieces and place in large bowl. Add oil, garlic,

paprika, cumin, coriander, salt and cavenne; toss.

Cover chicken and chill 8 hours, or up to 2 days.

Preheat grill or grill pan to medium-high heat. Grill chicken 4-5 minutes per side, or until done.

Serve chicken on buns with hummus, lettuce and onion.



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Locate the words in the grid which are running horizontally, vertically, or diagonally - forward or backward.

"I Love Lucy"

| Arnaz | Lucy |
|------------|-----------|
| Audience | Mertz |
| Babalu | New York |
| Ball | Nightclub |
| Bandleader | Redhead |
| Brownstone | Reruns |
| Cuban | Ricardo |
| Desi | Ricky |
| Emmy | Singer |
| Ethel | Spanish |
| Fred | Tango |
| Funny | Tropicana |
| Landlords | Wacky |
| Lucille | |

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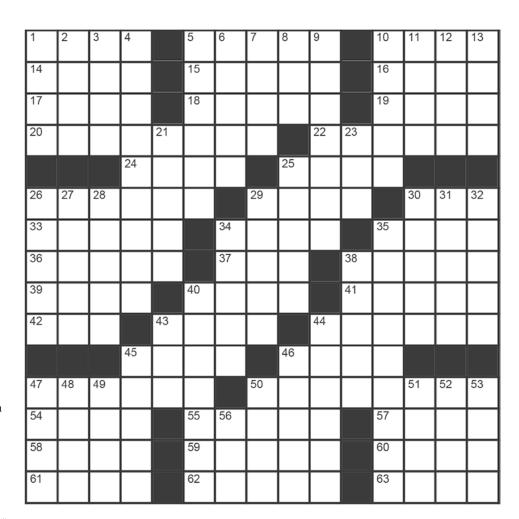
CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Voting group
- 5 Big name in grills
- 10 Run through
- 14 Kind of lamp
- 15 Spin doctor's concern
- 16 Sport with mallets
- 17 Footnote word
- 18 Seafood entree
- 19 Soufflés do it
- 20 Mountains between France and Spain
- 22 Make fit
- 24 Grimace
- 25 Suspend
- 26 1984 Cyndi Lauper hit
- 29 Spanish appetizer
- 30 Scottish cap
- 33 Uncle Sam's due
- 34 Bern's river
- 35 Crime boss
- 36 Sky-blue
- 37 Draft choice
- 38 Chanced upon
- 39 Informal term
- for money 40 Percussion
- instrument 41 Sri Lankan cash
- 42 Extreme suffix
- 43 Mavens
- 44 Some like it hot
- 45 Zodiac symbol
- 46 Champagne designation
- 47 Maintenance
- 50 Tire name
- 54 Babe in the woods
- 55 Fabricators
- 57 Java is in it
- 58 List
- 59 Island National
 - Monument
- 60 Wheelchair access
- 61 Orbison tune, "___ the Lonely"
- 62 Flirt with
- 63 Maid's job

Down

- 1 Radar screen image
- 2 Lord's mate
- 3 Completed
- 4 Soft creamy French cheese
- 5 Get smart
- 6 Roast host
- 7 Saloons
- 8 I problem?
- 9 Bureaucratic stuff
- 10 Bit of parsley
- 11 Slave away
- 12 In addition
- 13 Orange Free State settler
- 21 Lasso loop
- 23 Literary olio
- 25 Sheik's bevy
- 26 Rocket section 27 Harasses at
- school
- 28 Jump for joy
- 29 Anklebone
- 30 Hosiery shade
- 31 Sleeper's woe
- 32 Runway walker
- 34 Early priest
- 35 Atrium
- 38 Early shrink
- 40 Dew, maybe
- 43 Cobbler
- 44 La , Wisconsin
- 45 Southpaw
- 46 Spassky of chess
- 47 "Do ___ others..."
- 48 Anguish
- 49 Annihilate
- 50 Hearty party
- 51 Old Testament twin
- 52 Intentions
- 53 Deeply engrossed
- 56 French Guiana's Royale,



SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

| | | 1 | 4 | 9 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | | | 6 | | | | 2 | |
| | 6 | | 1 | | 7 | | | 5 |
| | 5 | | | 4 | | 2 | | |
| | | | | | 3 | | | 8 |
| 4 | | 7 | | | | | | |
| | | 2 | | | | | | |
| | | 5 | | 8 | | 7 | | |
| 3 | 7 | | | | | 9 | | |

SAVE the Parte

CADDO COUNCIL ON AGING

■ Presentations

CCOA will be offering the following programs this month. All programs are presented at Caddo Council on Aging/ Shreve Memorial Library, Wallette Branch, 363 Hearne Avenue, Shreveport at 10:00 a.m. (unless otherwise noted). For additional information call 318.676-7900. FREE.

- Thursday, July 6 "Trekking thru Nepal", Ann Shideler
- Thursday, July 20 " Medicare 101& Bingo", Jon Baccarini, Blue Cross
- Thursday, July 27 "Fall Prevention" Jennifer Cole, Amedisys Home Health



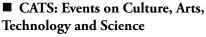
34 July 2023

EVENTS

■ Red River Balloon Rally

July 14 - 15, 5 - 10 p.m. Louisiana Downs, Bossier City. The CenterPoint Red River Balloon Rally presented by the Louisiana Office of Tourism is a familyfriendly event, featuring

AEP Swepco kid zones, tethered balloon rides, and entertainment suitable for all ages. Each night has live entertainment, food, retail vendors, and the magical balloon glow at dusk. Tickets are \$5. For more info or tickets visit www.redriverballoonrally.com



The Glen will host a series of events for residents and the community. All CATS events begin at **3 p.m.** at The Glen, located at 403 East Flournoy Lucas Road in Shreveport. Each event is **FREE** and open to the public; however, space is limited. To attend, call 318-213-3555 to RSVP.

- July 8 Eighth Air Force and Barksdale Field history
 - August 8 Metro Aviation
- September 12 Performance by members of the Shreveport Symphony

EXPO

■ 59th Annual Ark-La-Tex Coin, Stamp, and Card Exposition

Saturday, July 29, 9 a.m. -6 p.m.; Sunday, July 30, 9 a.m. -3 p.m. Bossier Civic Center, 620 Benton Rd., Bossier City. Buy-sell-trade coins, currency, postage stamps, and sports cards. Largest coin show in Louisiana. \$3 Adults, 12 and



Red River Balloon Rally● July 14 - 15

■ Senior Health Expo

Saturday, July 22 from 8:30 am to 11:30 am at CenterWell Senior Primary Care Center, 7551 Youree Drive, Suite 11, Shreveport. Hosted by CenterWell Senior Primary Care and The Best of Times. FREE admission and parking. Light refreshments and snacks. Resource information and giveaways will be offered from the many exhibitors. Free tours of the CenterWell's center. FREE copies of the 2023 edition of Silver Pages – Senior Resource Directory will be available. Register to win the "Grand Door Prize" and other door prizes drawings! You must be present to win. Attendees are invited to be part of an audience of the "live" remote broadcast of The Best of Times Radio Hour at 9 am on News Radio 710 KEEL where radio show host Gary Calligas will interview special guests.

MARKETS

■ Bossier City Farmers Market Saturdays through November. 9 a.m.

- 1 p.m. South parking lot of the Pierre Bossier Mall in Bossier City. Visitors can get fresh fruits and vegetables and other handmade goods from over 100 vendors. **FREE**, open to the public,

www.shreveportcoinclub.com.

www.TheBestOfTimesNEWS.com

and welcomes leashed pets. For more information, follow Bossier City Farmers Market on Facebook, or email bossiercityfarmersmarket@gmail.com.



■ Shreveport Farmers Market
Every Saturday June 3 - August 26,
7:30 AM - 12:30 PM in Festival
Plaza, 101 Crockett Street, Shreveport.
Handicapped parking available on
Commerce Street. Fruits, vegetables and
other food artisans. For more info, visit
www. redriverrevel.com/farmers-market.

MEETING

■ Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association Meeting Saturday July 8 from 1 to 3 PM at the Broadmoor Branch Library, 1212 Captain Shreve Dr., Shreveport. Guest speaker is Winston Hall, Musician, Historian. His topic is "Shreveport, Louisiana – Cradle of the Stars". FREE and open to the public. For more info visit www.altgenealogy.com or call 746-1851.



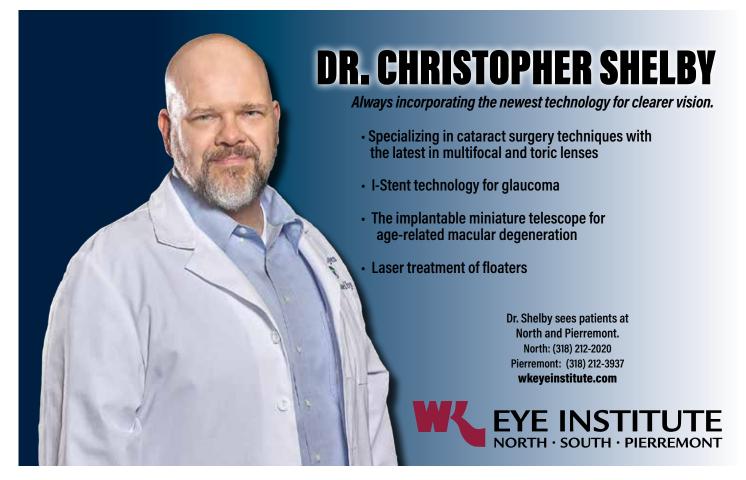
MOVIE

■ "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington" July 18 at 10:30 a.m. Robinson Film Center, 617 Texas Street in downtown Shreveport presents a Silver Screening of Mr. Smith Goes to Washington. Silver Screenings feature a matinee and luncheon for senior citizens showcasing a classic film on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Movie begins at 10:30 a.m. and is followed by a buffet lunch. Cost is \$16 for movie and lunch. For persons 60 and older, there is a senior discount of \$5, compliments of AARP Louisiana. Mr. Smith Goes to Washington is a 1939 American political comedy-drama film directed by Frank Capra, starring Jean Arthur and James Stewart. The film is about a newly appointed United States Senator who fights against a corrupt political system. For info or tickets, visit www.robinsonfilmcenter.org or call (318) 459-4122.

SEMINAR

■ Welcome to Medicare Virtual Seminar

July 21, 10 - 11 a.m. Call Caddo Council on Aging @ 318.676-7900 to register & for zoom link. FREE.





Do you recognize any of the people or recall anything about the events in these photographs?

The Best of Times has partnered with Northwest Louisiana Archives at LSUS to identify individuals and events in their collections. If you can help, please email Tina at editor.calligas@gmail.com or Laura at laura.mclemore@lsus.edu.

Both of these photos are from the Lawrence Lea Collection. The jacket says "Holiday Inn-Boxers" and A-26-77, possibly meaning that they were taken April 26, 1977.





There is a plaque on the wall in the photo to the left, perhaps suggesting that this photo was taken at the Holiday Inn Bossier.





Answers from the Experts

EXPERTS: If you would like to help your community by answering a question here, call 636-5510 READERS: Send your questions to The Best of Times, Box 19510, Shreveport, LA 71149



What is a "floater" and can they be treated?

A floater is debris in the vitreous fluid behind your lens. Vitreous is a clear fluid that allows light to pass all the way from your lens to your retina. Everyone has a little debris in the vitreous that floats around. When this debris passes through light it casts a shadow onto your retina and you see that as a floater. Some floaters are black dots, some look like strings and others can look like clouds that float across your vision. If we can see the floaters in the vitreous fluid and they are not too close to your retina, we can use a laser to break them up so you don't see them as much.



Chris Shelby, MD WK Eye Institute 7607 Youree Dr. Shreveport, LA 71105 (318) 212-3937 See our ad on page 35.

What are the symptoms and treatment of torn cartilage?

Meniscus tears are the most common surgical condition involving the knee. Medial meniscus (inside) tears are 3 - 4 times more common than lateral tears (outside). The meniscus support 50% of the body weight with the knee extended and 90% with the knee flexed 90°. Because the meniscus supports body weight every attempt should be made to repair or maintain as much meniscus tissue as possible. Popping, giving way, locking, tenderness at the joint line, stiffness, and swelling are some of the signs/symptoms of cartilage tears. Arthroscopic surgery is generally done on an outpatient basis and recovery is from a few days to a few weeks.



John J. Ferrell, M.D. Mid South Orthopaedics 7925 Youree Drive Suite 210 Shreveport, LA 71105 (318) 424-3400

Who is Always Best Care and what areas do your service?

Always Best Care is a licensed, bonded and insured non-medical in-home care agency with a passion for helping people maintain a safe, independent and dignified lifestyle. We provide senior care services in many communities around Northwest Louisiana, including Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Claiborne, Bienville, and Red River. We offer 24/7 care, but can provide any schedule to fit the client's needs.

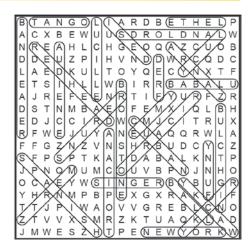


Keith Carter, CEO/Owner Always Best Care 4700 Line Avenue, Suite 111 Shreveport, LA 71106 (318)424-5300 See our ad on page 8.

PUZZLE answers (from pages 32 -33)

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Senior Health Expo

Sponsored by CenterWell Senior Primary Care Bossier City



Join us at 9:00 a.m. for a "live" broadcast of *The Best of Times Radio Hour* where host Gary Calligas will interview Centerwell Senior Primary Care officials.

For more info about the Expo, call 318-618-8163.

A Senior Wellness Event

- · FREE admission and parking
- FREE copies of the 2023 edition of SilverPages resource directory
- Light refreshments and snacks
- Information on healthcare and other topics from 30+ exhibitors
- Tours of CenterWell Senior Primary Care Center
- Participate in our BINGO game to win valuable prizes.
- · Pre-registered attendees will be entered into a "Special Door Prize" drawing
- Numerous door prizes, including a Grand Door Prize Gift Package valued at \$1,000*!

*No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. Must be 18 and present to win all door prizes. CenterWell Employees and their family members are not eligible. Subject to official rules which can be obtained at CenterWell Shreveport, 7551 Youree Drive, Suite 11, Shreveport, LA 71105...



Pre-Registration Form - Special Door Prize Entry Form

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| Name: | | | | |
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| City | | State: | Zip | |
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Email to seniordayexpo@gmail.com with subject line "Senior Health Expo" to pre-register and be eligible to win our Special Door Prize. Or drop off or mail to: Senior Health Expo, 7551 Youree Drive, Suite 11, Shreveport, LA 71105. The deadline to submit this form is July 21, 2023.



Certified Hip and Knee Replacement

Are you considering hip or knee replacement surgery? If so, **WK Bossier Health Center** is your connection to certified joint replacement in our community.

The Joint Commission (TJC), a national peer review body for hospitals and healthcare organizations, has awarded the Joint Replacement Program at WK Bossier Health Center its Gold Seal of Approval for Advanced Total Hip and Knee Replacement.

TJC evaluated Bossier surgeons, support team and protocols for clinical quality and safety and they met the rigorous standards. **Find a joint replacement surgeon in Bossier at wkhs.com.**



