

Kaw Valley Senior Monthly

Celebrating Our
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Of Publication

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Serving Active Seniors in Northeast Kansas since 2001

Vol. 25, No. 8

INSIDE



The Winter 2026 issue of JAAA's *Amazing Aging* is included in this issue of Kaw Valley Senior Monthly.

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KEVIN GROENHAGEN PHOTO

**Cheryl
Hamilton:
Keeping active
with the 45+
Women's
Sports
League.**

See story on page three

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Cheryl Hamilton has lifelong love of athletics

(Editor's note: Due to out-of-state family emergencies, the profile article scheduled to run in this issue could not be completed before press time. Therefore, we're sharing the following article from the February 2016 issue of Senior Monthly. Some of the information about the 45+ Women's Sports League is no longer valid. Please contact Shawnee County Parks + Recreation athletics at 785-251-6970 for more information concerning sports and other activities for 45+ women.)

By Kevin Groenhagen

If you visit the Oakland Community Center at 801 NE Poplar in Topeka beginning in early March, there's a chance you might see teams with names such Gold Diggers, Forty-Niners, and Bumping Betties playing volleyball. After closer inspection, you might notice that some of the ladies on these teams are in their 50s, 60s, and even 70s.

"It keeps us in shape, we get some

exercise, we get out of the house and socialize, and it's a lot of fun," said Cheryl Hamilton, who is one of the players.

According to Hamilton, a teacher's assistant at a Topeka preschool, without the exercise, she is not sure she could keep up with the kids.

Hamilton is a member of the 45+ Women's Sports League, a group of women 45 and over that plays volleyball in March and September, softball beginning in May, and basketball beginning in January.

"We play most of the year," Hamilton said. "Although we pretty much have November and December off."

Hamilton has been with the league since it formed just over 12 years ago.

"I was the baby then," she said with a laugh.

Arlene Marshall and the other founders of the league started with volleyball and basketball in 2003. In a *Senior Monthly* interview that year, Marshall

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KEVIN GROENHAGEN PHOTO



Cheryl Hamilton

Kaw Valley Senior Monthly

Kevin L. Groenhagen
Editor and Publisher

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Cheryl Hamilton

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

announced that she would form a 45+ women's softball league for the summer of 2004. "I want to get some of the women who played in the city league when they were younger," Marshall said at that time.

Some women in their 50s and 60s played in the city league but faced teams with players decades younger. Marshall and others believed playing sports would be more enjoyable if they played with other players closer to their own age.

"We have a lot of fun, and we can

get competitive," Hamilton said. "But if someone wants to be more competitive, then the city league might work better for them."

Hamilton initially played all three sports, but decided she had to stop playing basketball, which is one of her favorite sports. In fact, Hamilton played on the Protection, Kansas, 1A girls basketball team that won the state championship in 1975.

"I played basketball until I had both knees replaced about four years ago," she explained. "I promised my surgeon and myself that I wouldn't play. There's a lot of physical contact that you can't help in basketball."

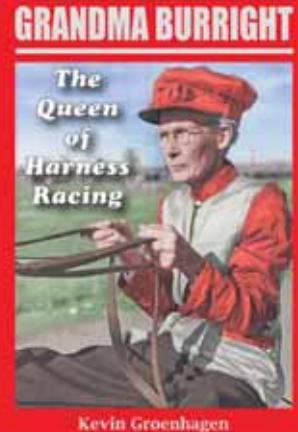
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"Grandma Burright: The Queen of Harness Racing"



Kevin Groenhagen

In *Grandma Burright: The Queen of Harness Racing*, Kevin Groenhagen explores Neva "Grandma" Burright's legacy as a wife, mother, grandmother, and, of course, as a harness racing driver. He examines how a diminutive woman of modest means overcame numerous tragedies (the deaths of a husband, two grandsons, and two sons) to defeat Sep Palin, the "aristocrat of drivers," and become known as "The Queen of Harness Racing."

For more information about this book and other books by Groenhagen, including *Finding Your East Frisian Ancestors and Cousins*, email Groenhagen at groenhagen@sbcglobal.net.



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Cheryl Hamilton

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR

The league plays 3-on-3 half-court basketball, which tends to emphasize players' skills rather than stamina. The league also plays basketball at the Oakland Community Center.

The league plays softball at Shawnee North Community Park, which is located at 300 NE 43rd Street in Topeka. The league uses standard softball rules.

The league also uses standard volleyball rules, but unlike in basketball and softball, the players make their own calls.

"There's no referee," Hamilton said. "If there's a dispute, we just have a redo."

While some of the women in the league participate in the sports to get or stay in shape, there is another benefit associated with team sports that goes beyond physical fitness. According to an article in the May 2010 issue of *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, researchers found that women

who participate in these club sports enjoy better mental health and life satisfaction than women who exercise at a gym or walk alone, even though there were no differences in physical health between the groups.

Hamilton has been athletic for most of her life. Before she played basketball in high school, she kept in shape while living on a farm.

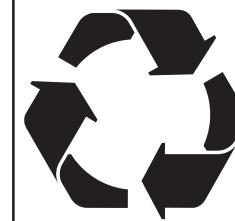
"I have a twin sister, and our grandparents lived about a quarter of a mile down the road," she said. "We used to race to their house. My dad would also have us chase the cattle that had gotten out. We would just run and run and run up and down the hills."

Hamilton continued to be involved with sports while her husband was in the Army and they lived in other parts of the country, including Hawaii. In addition to her participation in the 45+ Women's Sports League after moving to Topeka, she participated in the Kansas Senior Olympics, where she excelled in the discus and shot put. In 2010, she won first place in the discus in the 50-54 age group and won second place in the shot put. In fact, she did

well enough in those track and field events to advance to competition in the National Senior Games at Turner Stadium in Humble, Texas, in June 2011. At the national level, she finished in the top 10 for both events.

While Hamilton continues to work, she noted that some of the retired league members often travel to other states throughout the year to compete in sports. She said that that's just part of what makes the 45+ Women's Sports League so special.

"It's a great group of women from all walks of life," Hamilton said. "I see these ladies who are 15 and 20 years older than I, and I look up to them. They're very inspiring."



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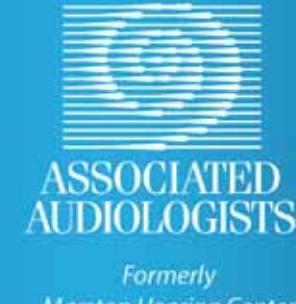
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Kansas-based Midwest Health acquires 15 assisted living communities

Midwest Health, one of the region's largest senior living providers and a proud Kansas-based company, has completed the largest acquisition in its nearly 50-year history – adding 15 assisted living communities across the state. Previously operated as Vintage Park, the communities will now join the Homestead Assisted Living family.

This strategic expansion adds about 600 apartments and more than 315 employees to Midwest Health's growing network, which now serves about 4,000 seniors daily and employs more than 3,800 team members across six states.

"This acquisition is a milestone for our company, expanding our footprint in Kansas," said Brett Klausman, President of Midwest Health. "We're proud to be headquartered in Topeka and even more proud to grow our presence right here at home. With the help of our financial partner, Capital Federal, we're supporting Kansas seniors and creating jobs for Kansans. We're investing in the future of our state while caring for our neighbors."

Jim Klausman, CEO and co-founder, added: "Midwest Health has always believed that great care starts locally. The services these communities provide are essential – especially in rural areas where both access to health care and jobs are needed. With our network of tools and resources, all our communities will continue to provide outstanding support for decades to come. This is the definition of Kansans caring

for Kansans, and we are in it for the long haul."

The newly acquired communities are located in: Atchison, Baldwin City, Gardner, Hiawatha, Holton, Lenexa, Louisburg, Osage City, Osawatomie, Ottawa, Overland Park, Paola, Tonganoxie, Wamego, and Wichita.

Founded in Topeka in 1977 by Jim Klausman and Butch Eaton, Midwest

Health has grown into a leading senior living provider with more than 100 communities across six Midwestern states. The company's Kansas roots continue to guide the company's core initiatives: advocating for seniors, supporting working families through job creation, and delivering high-quality care to thousands of residents each day.

About Midwest Health: Midwest

Health is a family-owned and operated senior living network with more than 100 communities across Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Illinois. Founded in Topeka in 1977 by Jim Klausman and Butch Eaton, the company is a pioneer in senior living and remains dedicated to providing compassionate, dignified care. Learn more at www.midwest-health.com.

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

LMH Health expanding mental health support in Primary Care clinics

By Autumn Bishop

LMH Health

Mental health needs continue to increase within our communities and patient populations. The National Institutes of Health estimate that more than one in five adults in the U.S. live with a mental illness. Over the past year, LMH Health has implemented a care model new to the health system to better support patients – Collaborative Care.

Department of Disability and Aging Services received a grant to implement in five locations, which are rural health



Dixon

clinics or federally qualified health clinics, but LMH Health was the first one to try with free-standing primary care."

Why did LMH Health turn to the Collaborative Care model? Dixon said that patients with co-occurring depression and anxiety challenges sometimes struggle to meet their basic health needs and aren't managing either one of them.

"It's really difficult to get into a psychiatrist or therapist because wait lists are long and sometimes patients don't know how to access care, so they don't take action. We also heard from primary care that they struggle to serve these patients," she explained. "Adding more psychiatry or traditional therapy at LMH isn't feasible from a service or financial perspective, so we're focusing on this model that serves as a bridge."

Matthew Leiste is the Behavioral Health Navigator who serves as that bridge connecting the patient with care.

"We want to give patients the tools they can use to manage their behav-

ioral health challenges," he said. "This program gives them access to cognitive behavioral therapy, resources and tools so that when they're done with me after three or four months, they have the tools to manage their symptoms whether or not they follow through with other resources."

How does Collaborative Care really work?

Primary care physicians drive this model. They make the decision to recommend Collaborative Care to the patient and are involved in the recommendation to discharge. Physicians are the drivers.

"Collaborative Care is a team approach. The patient, their primary care provider, a consulting psychiatrist, and I work together. The approach varies patient to patient and can include medication in addition to behavioral health interventions," Leiste explained.

To be eligible, LMH Health primary care patients age 18 and older are screened using the PHQ-9 and GAD-7 questionnaires, which use

patient-reported information to measure depression and anxiety. Patients whose screening results suggest they are experiencing moderate depression or anxiety, and provide written consent to participating in the program receive a referral. Leiste contacts the patient within a day or two to start the process.

"I then meet with the psychiatrist and they might make recommendations about medications or other interventions. I may have recommendations about connections to community-based resources," he said. "I share that information back with the primary care clinician because they decide the course. The consulting psychiatrist doesn't prescribe, they only recommend."

What does the data show?

Through early December, Dixon said there have been 374 patients referred to Collaborative Care by 38 LMH Health primary care clinicians. More than half enrolled in the program.

"The outcomes are good, with 67% of participants completing the pro-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



"National data indicates that Collaborative Care results in a 50% reduction in depression and anxiety symptoms. Using this model allows us to focus specialty psychiatry care on higher acuity and complex needs," said Sandra Dixon, Behavioral Health Integration director.

Before we dig in, let's define Collaborative Care. It is an evidence-based model developed by the University of Washington to treat common mental health conditions in an integrated fashion *within* primary care.

"The Collaborative Care model is used in many other states, but it's new to Kansas," Dixon said. "The Kansas

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Mental health

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

gram. In the behavioral health world, that's fantastic," she said. Patients who need long-term psychiatry or therapy are also using this program as a bridge to get to the next level of care."

While these numbers are showing positive results, they're also helping clinicians learn which patients receive less benefit from Collaborative Care. Dixon explained that includes patients living with cognitive impairment or who are on the autism spectrum.

"The model is Cognitive Behavioral therapy (CBT) based, so it can be hard to teach, practice and implement skills when you're living with cognitive challenges," she said.

Impact and outcomes

Dr. Matthew Bihlmaier, an internal medicine physician at LMH Health Primary Care – 6th and Maine, said that Collaborative Care has been a great benefit—especially as the number of patients reporting mental health concerns continues to increase.

"The waitlists at some behavioral health clinics can be months long," he said. "This provides my patients with access to care within a couple of weeks. They're able to begin receiving comprehensive mental health treatment to address issues that are having a significant impact on their lives."

Amy Baker is an APRN at LMH Health Primary Care - South Iowa Street. She sees patients who need more

help than she can provide in the scope of family practice and appreciates the additional support to get patients the care they need.

"It takes a lot of trust to talk about your mental health," Baker said. "Patients have a relationship with their primary care provider already. Getting care in this setting can help reduce the stigma and normalize mental health care."

It's not just patients who benefit

from the Collaborative Care program. Dr. Bihlmaier explained that it's also a benefit for the community.

"This program adds a valve to help release the pressure on a behavioral health system that continues to see the need increase," he said. "This may be the first step toward continuing to receive longer-term care, and we're able to intervene early. You're getting a great start from a team that knows you and is already invested in your care."

Baker encourages patients to participate in the care model. She poses this question: If you'd use other specialties like neurology or dermatology, why not Collaborative Care?

"Mental health is an issue that needs

to be addressed. We've got a real opportunity in a primary care setting to use telehealth visits and reduce barriers to care, including transportation needs and long wait times," she said. "Having access to effective treatment benefits patients and in turn, helps create a stronger, more resilient community."

- Autumn Bishop is the marketing manager and content strategist at LMH Health.



Bihlmaier

Getting care in this setting can help reduce the stigma and normalize mental health care."

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Medicinal plants and the New Year

In many societies, the New Year is seen as a symbolic rebirth: a time to leave past hardships behind and welcome health, happiness, and prosperity. It offers an opportunity to realign with sacred or natural cycles and to personally "reset," moving from an

Dr.
Deena
Beneda



Year are frequently used to clear away the old, invite luck and prosperity, and support calm, focus, and vitality in the year ahead. Many traditions incorporate them into teas, baths, simmering pots, incense, or simple kitchen dishes. Medicinal plants used for cleansing and protection include sage, rosemary, and bay leaves, while cinnamon, basil, mint, and lemon balm are associated with prosperity, good luck, and new beginnings. Calmness, reflection, and self-care are often fostered by lavender, chamomile, and holy basil.

Cleansing and protection with sage involves burning it to clear stagnant or "old year" energy and bad luck, promoting health. Rosemary symbolizes remembrance and renewal; by burning, bathing with, and eating it, it's believed to cleanse, sharpen focus, and protect during the New Year. Bay leaves are also used for purification and protection.

For prosperity, good luck, and new beginnings, cinnamon is strongly linked to success, warmth, and courage, and appears in various New Year's rituals. Basil is considered a protective,

old, chaotic period into a new, balanced one. Themes of purification and cleansing are common: people clean their homes to "wash away" bad luck. Certain foods, clothing, and rituals often symbolize hopes for luck and prosperity, such as eating lentils or grapes, wearing specific colors, or consuming pomegranates. These practices treat the first moments and meals of the year as chances to shape or "seed" the rest of the year.

Medicinal plants related to the New

"good luck" plant that attracts abundance and steady income. Mint and lemon balm represent renewal, awakening, and manifestation for work, prosperity, and optimism.

Calmness, reflection, and self-care are also connected to lavender, which invites peace, balance, and protection when used around the New Year and throughout the year. Chamomile, often paired with lavender in bath soaks or teas, helps release stress and encourages gentle reflection on the past year. Holy basil is also used to support emotional resilience, calm focus, and spiritual clarity, especially when setting New Year's resolutions.

There are many ways to incorporate these medicinal plants into your New Year traditions—such as making a New Year's tea (for example, rosemary, mint, and lemon balm for clarity

and renewal, or holy basil, chamomile, and peppermint for calm focus), taking a bath with lavender, rosemary, and sage to symbolically wash away the old year, or my favorite—enjoying a simmering pot with citrus peels, cinnamon, rosemary, and sage to scent your home while reflecting or setting goals. Have a Happy New Year, everyone—may it be filled with many blessings!

- Dr. Deena Beneda, N.D., is a Naturopathic Doctor practicing at Natural Medical Care in Lawrence. She can be reached at 785-749-2255.



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MAYO CLINIC

Enlarged prostate? Don't suffer in silence

By Scott Cheney, M.D.

Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research

DEAR MAYO CLINIC: For a few years, I've been getting up frequently in the night to urinate. It seemed typical for a man in his 50s, so I didn't mention it to my doctor. Then I had blood in my urine, so I made an appointment. After some tests, my doctor says it's an enlarged prostate, not cancer. He started me on medication and says I may need surgery. I'm trying to get over my embarrassment and learn more. What can you tell me about this?

ANSWER: So many times my patients say they wish they had addressed this sooner. It's really sad to know that men are suffering out there, and they just don't want to complain. It may feel embarrassing to admit that there's a problem. They don't want to bring it up.

However, many effective treatments are available for benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). That's the medical way of saying the prostate is enlarged. Usually, it is indeed benign, which means it is not caused by cancer.

Many solutions don't involve a big surgery to take care of the problem. It can be as simple as lifestyle modifications or medications.

First, some background. The prostate is a small gland that helps make one of the components of semen. It's located below the bladder. The prostate can get bigger over time and constrict the urethra, the tube where urine flows.

Think of the prostate like an orange with a straw going through the middle. The prostate enlarges with age. The straw gets compressed by the prostate tissue, which makes it harder for the bladder to push urine through the urethra to empty the bladder. That can lead to symptoms like urgency, frequency of urination, weak stream and

incomplete bladder emptying.

If you look at men in their 40s, about 40% of them have some degree of prostate enlargement and symptoms. As you go up in decades, more patients are symptomatic. By the time a man is in his 80s or 90s, 80% to 90% of them will have symptoms of BPH.

Sometimes patients can have both cancer and prostate enlargement at the same time. But most of the time, we're talking about benign enlargement.

The prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test can help determine if the prostate is enlarged or cancerous. The test checks the level of PSA in the blood. Higher levels may signify a potential risk for prostate cancer. You should discuss your PSA test with your healthcare pro-

fessional.

What age to check PSA depends on if there's a family history of prostate cancer. People typically should start somewhere between ages 40 to 45 and check their PSA every one to two years depending on that initial PSA test.

For the average person who doesn't have a risk of prostate cancer in the family, they should check an initial PSA at age 50, and again check it every one to two years depending on what that initial test showed. It's recommended not to check PSA after age 70 because the risks of diagnosing prostate cancer and treating it outweigh the benefits with advanced age. A prostate exam is also an important part of checking for prostate health. Your healthcare professional will check the prostate for abnormal nodules.

But even benign enlargement can cause problems. Sleep is disrupted with frequent waking to urinate. Driving long distances is difficult because of stopping to use the bathroom. So it's a quality-of-life issue.

Treatment options for an enlarged prostate include:

- Lifestyle modifications:** Avoid excess fluids. A lot of caffeine or alcohol, especially before bed, can cause issues with urination.

- Medications:** There are several different drug classes, but essentially, they work on relaxing smooth muscle in the prostate to open that channel. Medications are not as effective as surgery, but they're also less invasive.

- Surgery:** There are many different types of prostate surgeries. For example, one type uses steam. Another uses lasers. A personalized approach based on the patient's specific case should be considered. Surgical risks are low but can include bleeding and sexual side effects. — Scott Cheney, M.D., Urology, Mayo Clinic, Phoenix

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Derek Osborn

What AI can do for your wallet. From tracking every latte to forecasting next month's bills, AI-powered tools are making financial management more accessible than ever. Some apps categorize transactions automatically, while other platforms offer conversational financial advice through text messages. These tools can monitor your credit score, suggest budget adjustments and even negotiate lower bills on services like cable and internet.

The investing landscape has transformed as well. Robo-advisors use algorithms to build diversified portfolios, automatically rebalance holdings and apply strategies to minimize tax bills. Educational tools powered by AI can explain complex concepts through interactive games and simple question-and-answer formats, making financial literacy more accessible.

Where AI falls short. Here's what the algorithms can't do: understand what truly matters to you.

AI doesn't know whether you value sustainable investing over maximum returns. It can't weigh the emotional complexity of saving for a child's education versus retiring early. When sudden illness strikes or a job change upends your plans, AI lacks the context and empathy to guide you through those human moments.

Technology can crunch numbers brilliantly, but it can't offer wisdom. It can't replace human judgment, experience or ethical reasoning. Robo-advisors' predetermined algorithms may not suit investors with complex financial needs like estate planning or comprehensive tax planning.

The human touch still matters. This is where human financial advisors remain indispensable. They provide what technology can't:

- Long-term perspective:** Help you maintain focus when markets get volatile and emotions run high

- Goal coordination:** Balance competing priorities, help partners merge their financial visions and remind you of goals you've tucked away and didn't know still mattered

- Accountability:** Keep you on track with your financial strategy through life's inevitable changes

- Emotional support:** Offer reassurance and wisdom during major financial decisions

Research validates it: Those who regularly work with a financial advisor and have a financial strategy are more likely to feel optimistic about their financial future than those who manage finances on their own, according to 2025 research from Edward Jones and Morning Consult.

Find the right balance. The future likely lies in a hybrid approach: com-

bining data-driven AI insights with the human wisdom of a financial advisor who understands your values, priorities and life's inevitable curveballs. Think of AI as a powerful calculator and your financial advisor as the mathematician who knows which equations to use.

As these technologies evolve, the key is treating AI as a tool, not a guide.

Stay curious about what technology can do for your finances. Stay critical

of its limitations. And remember: What matters most in your financial life is something only you can define.

- *Derek Osborn is with Edward Jones, 1311 Wakarusa Drive, Suite 2200, Lawrence. He can be reached at 785-371-1301 or Derek.Osborn@edwardjones.com. This article was provided by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Member SIPC.*

Great Adventure Tours

We love meeting people from all over the world, and we make it our mission to provide memorable tours and experiences for our clients. We decided to become professional Tour Planners & Guides in 1987 and we have not stopped travelling since!

Our upcoming tours:

Feb 5, Thurs	TRAVEL MEETING GOLDEN CORRAL	9:30am
Mar 5, Thurs	TRAVEL MEETING GOLDEN CORRAL	9:30am
Mar. 11, Wed	Royals BB Stadium Tour/Negro League BB Museum	8:30am
Mar. 18, Wed	Elvis & Elton/New Theatre/Victor Trevino, Jr	85 9:45am
Mar. 25-27	Nebraska Sand Hill Cranes & Prairie Chickens	BROCHURE
Mar 28, Sat.	Elvis & Elton/New Theatre/Victor Trevino, Jr	85 9:45am
April 2, Thurs	TRAVEL MEETING GOLDEN CORRAL	9:30am
April 8, Wed	Royals Stadium Tour, Negro League BB Museum	107 8:30am
April 11, Sat.	Elvis & Elton/New Theatre/Victor Trevino, Jr	9:45am
April 22, Wed	Mystical April Mystery Tour	104 8:30am
April 26-May 4	Columbia/Snake River Riverboat Tour	BROCHURE
May 7, Thurs	TRAVEL MEETING GOLDEN CORRAL	9:30am
May 20, Wed	Beautiful May Mystery Tour	108 8:00am
May 26, Tues	Yankees vs Royals Baseball	105 4:00pm
May 28-June 1	West Kansas Sunflower Tour	BROCHURE
June 3, Wed.	Cactus Flower/New Theatre/Marilu Henner	85 9:45am
June 4, Thurs	TRAVEL MEETING GOLDEN CORRAL	9:30am
June 18-19	Wicked/Omaha, NE/Boys Town	BROCHURE
June 24-25	Wicked/Omaha, NE/Boys Town	BROCHURE
June 27, Sat.	Cactus Flower/New Theatre/Marilu Henner	85 9:45am
July 26-Aug	Alaska Cruise/Tour/2 Nights Denali	BROCHURE
Aug. 5, Wed.	Legally Blonde Musical/New Theatre	85 9:45am
Sept. 2-17	Heart of the British Isles Tour	BROCHURE
Sept. 5, Sat.	Legally Blonde Musical/New Theatre	85 9:45am
Sept. 22, Tues	White Sox vs Royals Baseball	95 4:00pm
Oct. 3-11	Albuquerque Balloon Festival 100 Year Anniversary	BROCHURE
Jan 9-Feb 1, 2027	22 Day Antarctica & South America Cruise	BROCHURE

PO BOX 4126, TOPEKA, KS 66604

785-633-8761

Email: greattours@gmail.com

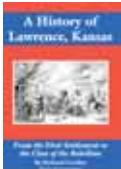
www.greattourstopka.com



A History of Lawrence, Kansas

By Richard Cordley

Available at the Watkins Museum of History,
1047 Massachusetts St., Downtown Lawrence.



JILL ON MONEY

Venezuela's oil — What it means for your wallet

After the capture and arrest of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, President Donald Trump announced plans to revitalize Venezuela's struggling oil industry with American investment.

Putting aside the huge political and legal issues, the question I have fielded boils down to this: What will this mean for energy prices?



Jill
Schlesinger

With an estimated 303 billion barrels of proven reserves, roughly 17 percent of the world's total supply, Venezuela has the largest oil reserves on the planet.

But here's the catch: having oil and actually getting it out of the ground profitably are two very different things. Although Venezuela was one of the five founding members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1960 (the other four were Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia), its oil production has collapsed dramatically since peaking at 3.5 million barrels per day (bpd) in the 1970s, which at the time represented over 7% of global oil output.

In the early 2000s, the country still produced around 3 million bpd, but that amount fell below 2 million during the 2010s, and now that amount is just 1 million barrels daily—a measly 1% of global oil production, and about the same production level as the U.S. state of North Dakota.

That makes Venezuela only the 18th-largest oil producer worldwide, despite those massive reserves. There are two additional hurdles about monetizing

Venezuelan oil: (1) about three-quarters of it is "heavy and sour," which is hard to extract and to refine and (2) the infrastructure has been degraded by decades of under-investment and mismanagement.

Shortly after Maduro and his wife were captured, Trump said that U.S. oil companies would "spend billions of dollars, fix the badly broken infrastructure" and "start making money for the country."

But rebuilding would likely take years, not months. You can't flip a switch and suddenly have a functioning oil industry. It requires enormous capital investment, legal frameworks that protect foreign contracts, and political stability — none of which are guaranteed.

Additionally, with crude oil prices currently below \$60 per barrel, there may not be enough financial incentive for companies to make such a massive long-term investment. It's a risky proposition even in stable countries — let alone in Venezuela, which is experiencing political upheaval, according to David Oxley of Capital Economics.

He notes that "even if the political environment backdrop was more predictable, in a world already awash with oil, the business case for significantly ramping up drilling in Venezuela is far from strong."

Even if production were successfully restored to levels from a decade ago, it would add only about 2% to global supply, which is not exactly going to move the needle on prices, at least in the short term.

The good news is that even without added Venezuelan supply, West Texas Intermediate crude oil dropped more than 22% in 2025, and gas prices are down about 25 cents per gallon compared to a year ago, according to AAA.

Several factors are contributing to this, including surging U.S. oil production. Over the longer term, increased Venezuelan oil production could contribute to lower energy prices, particu-

larly for diesel, which is an important factor in transportation costs.

The bottom line: We should all manage our expectations for lower energy prices for the immediate future. Venezuela's oil potential is obvious but translating that potential into reality — and into savings in your weekly budget — is a complex, expensive, and lengthy process.

For now, you might be better off enjoying the recent current decline in crude oil and gas prices, which has more to do with existing global supply and demand, rather than anything happening in Caracas.

- Jill Schlesinger, CFP, is a CBS News business analyst. A former options trader and CIO of an investment advisory firm, she welcomes comments and questions at askjill@jillonmoney.com. Check her website at www.jillonmoney.com.

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SENIOR CALENDAR

Editor's Note: While every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the events listed below, some changes may occur without notice. Please confirm any event you plan to attend.

If you would like to include your north-east Kansas event(s) in our monthly calendar, please call Kevin Groenhagen at 785-841-9417 or email kevin@senior-monthly.net. Deadline is the 20th of the month for the following month's issue.

ARTS & CRAFTS

FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

ARTSCONNECT FIRST FRIDAY ARTWALK

During the ArtsConnect First Friday Artwalk, you will find every corner of Topeka filled with art, friends and exciting special events. It's an opportunity to shop local, buy art and see the best that Topeka has to offer. Every month is different—and every business is different, so please check our website at www.artstopeka.org for information each month, including an interactive map of First Friday Artwalk businesses and a guide to public art all across Topeka. Free. TOPEKA, artstopeka.org/firstfriday

SECOND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH

OPEN AIR ART MARKET

2nd Saturday of each month in East Lawrence Warehouse Arts District. Come see a local art market. Art Emergency, Delaware and E. 9th St., 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

LAWRENCE

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

FINAL FRIDAYS

Final Fridays is a celebration of the arts that includes special exhibits, performances and demonstrations in Downtown Lawrence on the Final Friday of the month. See website for participating locations.

LAWRENCE, 785-842-3883

unmistakablylawrence.com

FEB 21

AN ARTIST'S LIFE WITH STAN HERD

Join us to hear Kansas artist Stan Herd talk about his life and work. This event is part of the Grassland Heritage Foundation's *Prairie Presentations* series. As a Kansas native, Stan shares a deep connection to the tallgrass prairie, and is known for incorporating natural elements into his landscape-scale works of art across the United States as well as beyond our borders. Lawrence Public Library, Auditorium, 707 Vermont St., 2-3:30 p.m.

LAWRENCE

lawrence.bibliocommons.com/v2/events

EDUCATION

FEB 4

FT. LEAVENWORTH SERIES: THE FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN WAR

The Ft. Leavenworth Series is an annual roster

of lectures focusing on significant historical events, usually with an emphasis on military history. Each lecture is presented by faculty from the United States Army Command and General Staff College in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. Established by General William Tecumseh Sherman in 1881, the CGSC is the graduate college for U.S. Army and sister service officers. The esteemed faculty and guests of the CGSC provide unique and captivating insights into the history of military conflict from the ancient to the modern ages. Hybrid event. Dole Institute of Politics, 2350 Petefish Dr., 3-4 p.m. Free.

LAWRENCE

youtube.com/@TheDoleInstituteofPolitics

FEB 7

COMPUTER AND GADGET HELP

Drop in for help with basic technology tasks like downloading documents, setting up apps, filling out online forms, online job searching, or setting up your new smart phone or eReader. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Digital Arts Studio (2nd Floor) 9-10:30 a.m. TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 10

COMPUTER AND GADGET HELP

Drop in for help with basic technology tasks like downloading documents, setting up apps, filling out online forms, online job searching, or setting up your new smart phone or eReader. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Digital Arts Studio (2nd Floor), 11 a.m.-1 p.m. TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 11

SEED STARTING 101

Starting your own seeds at home is an enjoyable way to get a jump on your flower and vegetable garden! Learn what supplies you'll need, varieties to pick, and when to get your seeds started. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Marvin Auditorium 101B 6-7:30 p.m. TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 12

PLANNING A VEGETABLE GARDEN

Are you thinking about growing your own vegetables, but don't know where to start? Let us guide you through the planning process for a successful and satisfying vegetable gardening experience. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Marvin Auditorium 101B 7-8:30 p.m. TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 15

COMPUTER AND GADGET HELP

Drop in for help with basic technology tasks like downloading documents, setting up apps, filling out online forms, online job searching, or setting up your new smart phone or eReader. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Digital Arts Studio (2nd Floor), 7:30-9 p.m. TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 17

GRAY ANATOMY: PAIN MANAGEMENT - WHAT WORKS?

LMH Health and Lawrence Public Library bring you local health experts to discuss the effects

of aging on the body. Online event, 4-5 p.m. Register online.

LAWRENCE

lawrence.bibliocommons.com/v2/events

FEB 18

COMPUTER AND GADGET HELP

Drop in for help with basic technology tasks like downloading documents, setting up apps, filling out online forms, online job searching, or setting up your new smart phone or eReader. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Digital Arts Studio (2nd Floor), 1-3 p.m. TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 21

COMPUTER AND GADGET HELP

Drop in for help with basic technology tasks like downloading documents, setting up apps, filling out online forms, online job searching, or setting up your new smart phone or eReader. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Digital Arts Studio (2nd Floor), 1:30-3 p.m. TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 26

COMPUTER AND GADGET HELP

Drop in for help with basic technology tasks like downloading documents, setting up apps, filling out online forms, online job searching, or setting up your new smart phone or eReader. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Digital Arts Studio (2nd Floor), 3-5 p.m. TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

ENTERTAINMENT

JAN 16-FEB 7

DRINKING HABITS 2 "CAUGHT IN THE ACT"

The Sisters of Perpetual Sewing miss the excitement of the old days when they were saving convents and reuniting long-lost families. So when they learn that the orphanage where Paul and Kate grew up is in peril, they can't wait to come to the rescue. Everyone pitches in to mount a play to raise money, but it's no easy feat when Kate's expecting any day, Sally's hiding from stage-fright-stricken Paul after another flight from the altar, Mother Superior's acting is unexpectedly narcoleptic, and the sisters' award-winning wine keeps getting switched with the grape juice. The merry mix-ups multiply in this warm and winsome sequel to *Drinking Habits*. Topeka Civic Theatre and Academy, 3028 SW 8th Ave. Fee. See website for showtimes.

TOPEKA, 785-357-5213

topekacivictheatre.com/shows/drinking-habits-2

JAN 23-FEB 1

THE CAKE

Della makes cakes, not judgment calls – those she leaves to her husband, Tim. But when the girl she helped raise comes back home to North Carolina to get married, and the fiancé is actually a fiancée, Della's life gets turned upside down. She can't really make a cake for such a wedding, can she? For the first time in her life, Della has to think for herself. Topeka Civic Theatre & Academy, 3028 SW 8th Avenue. Fee.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



February Birthdays

90 Years Old

Feb 4: Gary Conway, actor (*Land of the Giants*) and screenwriter

Feb 27: Roger Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles

80 Years Old

Feb 2: Blake Clark, American actor (*The Waterboy*)

Feb 20: Sandy Duncan, American comedian, stage and TV actress, and singer

Feb 21: Tyne Daly, American TV and stage actress (*Cagney and Lacey*)

70 Years Old

Feb 14: Dave Dravecky, baseball pitcher

60 Years Old

Feb 6: Rick Astley, English pop music singer, "Never Gonna Give You Up"

Feb 19: Justine Bateman, American actress and filmmaker (*Family Ties*)

Feb 20: Cindy Crawford, American model and actress

Feb 24: Billy Zane, American film actor (*Titanic*)

Feb 25: Téa Leoni, American television and film actress (*Bad Boys*)

Feb 26: Jennifer Grant, American television actress (*Beverly Hills 90210*)

Feb 28: Elbert "Ickey" Woods, American NFL running back

Calendar

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

See website for showtimes.
TOPEKA, 785-357-5213
topekacivictheatre.com

FEB 1

OVATION! USD 497 TALENT SHOW

The Lawrence Schools Foundation and Lied Center of Kansas are proud to announce the 10th annual, district-wide talent show for middle and high school students. Ovation! proceeds will benefit the Lawrence Schools Foundation and showcase the amazing talents of USD 497 students. Held on the main stage of the Lied Center with full production, the community will come together to celebrate Lawrence's talented youth, with acts ranging from instrumentalists to singers and dancers, and more. Lied Center of Kansas, 1600 Stewart Dr., 7 p.m. Fee.
LAWRENCE, 785-864-2787, lied.ku.edu/event

FEB 7

PRAIRIE WINDS FESTIVAL WITH SPECIAL GUEST JASON TREUTING, PERCUSSION

A founding and current member of the influential quartet Sō Percussion, composer/percussionist Jason Treuting has appeared in performance throughout the world, from the Barbican to Lincoln Center, to Carnegie Hall, DOM Moscow, Walt Disney Hall and elsewhere. His compositions, widely noted for their compelling rhythmic language and evocative expressivity, have been performed by artists, including Shara Nova, the JACK Quartet, TIGUE, Susan Marshall and Company, and others. Lied Center of Kansas, 1600 Stewart Dr., 7:30 p.m. Fee.
LAWRENCE, 785-864-2787, lied.ku.edu/event

FEB 13

FREE STATE STORY SLAM | GOOD RIDDANCE

Real stories, live and uncensored. Stories are told live, MOTH-style, with a new theme each month, the second Friday of every month. Never the same story or evening. Live music and social hour at 7 p.m. Slam begins at 7:30 p.m. Story Slam will take place in the Black Box Theater in the Main Building. Lawrence Arts Center, 940 New Hampshire Street. \$10 suggested donation.
LAWRENCE, 785-843-2787

FEB 13

KU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Among the finest music schools in the United States, the KU School of Music offers comprehensive programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. For generations, the School of Music has provided the soundtrack to KU's rich traditions. Our music performance, education, and therapy students perform on the world's biggest stages, learn from leading experts in their fields and take their studies beyond the classroom to concert halls, clinics, schools and hospitals. Lied Center of Kansas, 1600 Stewart Dr., 7:30 p.m. Fee.
LAWRENCE, 785-864-2787, lied.ku.edu/event

FEB 14

LAWRENCE COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA PRESENTS "SHALL WE DANCE?"

Celebrate Valentine's Day with a concert featuring works for the string orchestra, including pieces by Bach, Duke Ellington, and Tchaikovsky. Tickets available at lawrenceorchestra.org or at the door. Lied Center of Kansas, Pavilion, 1600 Stewart Dr., 7:30 p.m. Fee.
LAWRENCE

FEB 17

KINGS RETURN

Dynamic and soothing four-piece vocal group Kings Return take pride in crafting a diverse yet supremely cohesive a cappella sound. The blend of their unique vocal timbres is so rich and so smooth that, at times, it sounds more like a full choir than merely four men. Discovered after posting a series of bare-bones stairwell performances that went viral, their music is balm to the soul, laced with expansive harmonies that flex the agility and effortless range of their vocal talent. Lied Center of Kansas, 1600 Stewart Dr., 7:30 p.m. Fee.
LAWRENCE, 785-864-2787, lied.ku.edu/event

FEB 19

KU WIND ENSEMBLE & KU WIND SYMPHONY

Among the finest music schools in the United States, the KU School of Music offers comprehensive programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. For generations, the School of Music has provided the soundtrack to KU's rich traditions. Our music performance, education, and therapy students perform on the world's biggest stages, learn from leading experts in their fields and take their studies beyond the classroom to concert halls, clinics, schools and

hospitals. Lied Center of Kansas, 1600 Stewart Dr., 7:30 p.m. Fee.
LAWRENCE, 785-864-2787, lied.ku.edu/event

FEB 25

STORY SLAM - LOVE STORIES

Join us for a new library program, Story Slam! Our open mic night will feature different themes throughout the year. This time, our theme is love stories, both good and bad! Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Marvin Auditorium 101BC 7-8 p.m.
TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 27

4TH FRIDAY FILM

Let's watch The Ghost and Mrs. Muir (1947) together. Step back in time and appreciate fine acting, directing and stories. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Marvin Auditorium 101A 1:30-4 p.m.
TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

MAR 5

ARISTO SHAM, VAN CLIBURN INTERNATIONAL PIANO COMPETITION GOLD MEDALIST

Pianist Aristo Sham exudes astounding intellect and a deep emotional resonance; a cultivated sophistication and an immediately engaging presence; a penchant to take on the great monuments of the piano repertoire; and a natural, infectious spontaneity. This makeup is fueled by a fascination with the world and its rich cultures—he was an international prodigy, is a

voracious student of wide-ranging interests and currently splits his time between three continents. Lied Center of Kansas, 1600 Stewart Dr., 7:30 p.m. Fee.
LAWRENCE, 785-864-2787, lied.ku.edu/event

MAR 13

THE SENIOR CLASS

TCT's Second Improvisational Comedy Company of the "mature" (over 55) set. The Senior Class is another zany troupe of comedians. Only this time, the company is made up entirely of actors in our community who are over 55 years old. This group defines life in the golden years as a terrifically fun-filled trip. Topeka Civic Theatre and Academy, 3028 SW 8th Avenue, 7 p.m. Fee.
TOPEKA, 785-357-5213
topekacivictheatre.com/senior-class

FARMERS' MARKETS

THURSDAYS

COTTIN'S HARDWARE FARMERS' MARKET
April-September (Outdoors) Every Thursday from 4-6:30 p.m. The outdoor market has 15+ local vendors, live music, a hot food vendor, and Free State Beer each week. October-March (Indoors) Every Thursday from 4-6 p.m. The indoor market is located inside the store and has up to six vendors each week. Cottin's Hardware, 1832 Massachusetts St.
LAWRENCE
cottinshardware.com/farmers-market

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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Some restrictions apply. Age 62 & older. Mobility Impaired.



Calendar

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

HEALTH & WELLNESS

FEB 5, 12, 19, 26

GERI-FIT AT THE MALL

Build muscle and strength to live better as you age. Designed exclusively for older adults, Geri-Fit helps rebuild strength that has been lost through the aging process. Book Nook at West Ridge Mall 10:30-11:30 a.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 6, 13, 20, 27

ZOOMERS - GERIFIT

After successfully completing the Gerifit Strengthening class, the next step is the Zoomers workout. Designed exclusively for older adults, Geri-Fit helps rebuild strength. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Learning Center, 10:30-11:45 a.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 11, 18, 25, MAR 4

GERI-FIT: STRENGTHEN FOR FREEDOM

Build muscle and strength to live better as you age. Designed exclusively for older adults, Geri-Fit helps rebuild strength that has been lost through the aging process. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Learning Center, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

HISTORY & HERITAGE

FEB 5

HISTORIC PROPERTIES OF TOPEKA

Discover the stories behind some of Topeka's many historic landmarks. Learn about our local history resources that will help you learn more and do a deeper dive on your own. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Marvin Auditorium 101C, 6-7 p.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 10

FINDING YOUR FAMILY IN MILITARY RECORDS

Discover your family in military records using online military sources and add them to your online family tree. This workshop helps you answer questions about finding military records from Fold3. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Menninger Room 206, Virtual Room 02 5:30-6:30 p.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 26

KANSAS SAVE THE FLAGS PROJECT

Topeka Genealogical Society Monthly Meeting. Tom Schmidt will speak about the Kansas Save the Flags Project. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Marvin Auditorium 101BC 7-8:30 p.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

MEETINGS

MONDAYS

GRIEF SUPPORT (VIRTUAL)

Join us for an online grief support group. This group is held weekly via Zoom. For more information about this group or to sign up contact our grief and loss department. Midland Care Connection, 4 p.m.

TOPEKA, 785-232-2044

MONDAYS

TOPEKA NEEDLEWORK GUILD

Join our needlework enthusiasts every Monday (except holidays) at the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, Menninger Room (second floor), 9-11 a.m. Bring a project to work on while we share our skills and ideas. Drop ins welcome.

TOPEKA, 785-207-1165

FIRST AND THIRD TUESDAYS OF THE MONTH

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

A Diabetes Learning Center staff educator facilitates each support group session. Attending will give you the opportunity to share your concerns and ask questions. There is no fee to participate and no need to pre-register. Cotton-O'Neil Diabetes and Endocrinology Center (lower level classroom), 3520 S.W. 6th Ave., 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

TOPEKA, 785-368-0416

FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Meet with other caregivers in the Baldwin area who may be struggling with some of the same issues you face while caring for your loved one. This support group is for caregivers of individuals age 60 or older. Baldwin Methodist Church, 704 Eighth St., 1-2 p.m.

BALDWIN CITY

FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Join us in this safe environment for caregivers. Caregiver support specialists will guide us as we share our experiences. Anyone is welcome to join us. Basehor Community Library, 1400 158th Street, and Zoom, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

BASEHOR

SATURDAYS

LAWRENCE BRIDGE CLUB

The Lawrence Bridge Club plays party bridge every Saturday night (weather permitting and some holidays excluded). Kaw Valley Bridge Center (suite 120) located in the I-70 Business Center, 1025 N. 3rd St. (next to the drivers license office), 6:30 to 9 p.m. First visit free.

LAWRENCE

SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD VETERAN EMPLOYEES

Meets at Grace Episcopal Church, 701 SW 8th Ave. (enter on N.W. corner), at 9:30 a.m.

TOPEKA

SECOND AND FOURTH THURSDAYS

PITCH PALS

Join us for Pitch and fun. We play 10 point pitch, which is a fast-paced, partnership, trick-taking game. The goal is to capture cards representing at least the number of points bid. We will explain "house rules" and assist new players. Wellsville Community Center, 6 p.m. WELLSVILLE, 913-314-0819 or 785-248-9470

THIRD MONDAY OF THE MONTH

Y(OUR) ALZHEIMER'S JOURNEY: A SUPPORT GROUP FOR CAREGIVERS

Join Y(our) Alzheimer's Journey, a free caregiver support group led by Stormont Vail Clinical Research Neurology Department team members. In each session, you'll connect with others who share your experiences, learn effective coping strategies, find new resources, and more. Stormont Vail Topeka Campus Hospital Pozez Education Center Centennial Rooms, 1500 SW 10th Ave., 4-5 p.m.

TOPEKA, 785-368-0795

THIRD FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging, 2910 S.W. Topeka Blvd., 12-1 p.m.

TOPEKA, 785-235-1367

FEB 9

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Being a caregiver can be incredibly stressful. Meet and talk to others in the same situation. For more information call April Maddox at Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging (785) 235-1367. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Anton Room 202, 2-3 p.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

FEB 19

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Being a caregiver can be incredibly stressful. Meet and talk to others in the same situation. For more information call April Maddox at Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging (785) 235-1367. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Anton Room 202, 2-3 p.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

LAWRENCE

FEB 1

15TH ANNUAL KAW VALLEY SEED FAIR

Seed exchange, local farmers and vendors, food, education and speakers. Douglas County Fairgrounds, 2110 Harper, Building 21, 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Free.

LAWRENCE

Perkins Room 201, 2-3 p.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

MAR 2

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

Being a caregiver can be incredibly stressful. Meet and talk to others in the same situation. For more information call April Maddox at Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging (785) 235-1367. Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library - Perkins Room 201, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

TOPEKA, events.tscpl.org/events

MISCELLANEOUS

MOST SUNDAYS

EXPLORING LIFE'S BIG QUESTIONS

These Unitarian Universalist programs, which are open to the public, are hybrid so you can join in person at 1263 N. 1100 Rd., south of Lawrence, west off Highway 59 or via zoom. Please visit uucls.org to confirm weekly programs and access the link to join live via zoom. The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lawrence (UUCL) hosts presenters with expertise on a wide range of topics who give a brief talk followed by Q&A and informal conversations over coffee and treats. 9:30-10:30 a.m.

LAWRENCE

FEB 1

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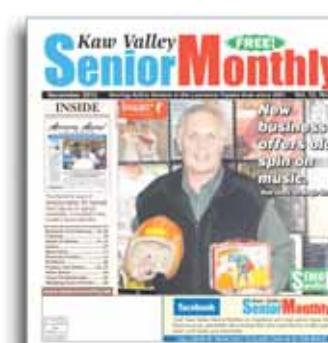
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HUMOR HOTEL

More kava root, A2 and sea moss in 2026, please

By Greg Schwem

Tribune Content Agency

Staying healthy in 2026 is going to require a dictionary. Or maybe a translator.

I realized this recently while strolling through Santa Fe, New Mexico, known, appropriately, as "The City Different." In between the dozens of art galleries, Pueblo-inspired architectural sites and western wear retail stores sat a small shop advertising day spa services and "apothecary" dining.

It was the "dining" that drew my companion and I inside, as we saw patrons sipping assorted beverages and decided we, too, were thirsty and in need of some liquid libation.

Artificial Intelligence, specifically ChatGPT, helped me understand that apothecary dining focuses on a "food as medicine" concept, using "botanical infused ingredients to promote positive health benefits and well-being."

In other words, not your average Starbucks.

Our server appeared with menus, told us to take our time, and said she'd return shortly in the event we had any questions.

She would soon regret that offer.

Where to begin? Should I opt for an iced A2 milkshake? Having never heard of A2 milk, I relied on ChatGPT again and learned it comes from cows that "naturally produce only the A2 beta-casein protein, unlike most conventional milk which contains both A1 and A2 proteins, with the A1 variant potentially causing digestive discomfort for some people."

Up until now I didn't know it was possible to tell a cow what kind of milk it should produce. Having once milked a cow by hand, I wondered how it would react if I said, "Let's try this again. And no A1 this time!"

Mind you, this is not the first time I have been befuddled by terminology describing products that, if I would just stop asking questions, would immediately make me a healthier individual. At a Chicago farmers market last summer, I encountered a vendor selling sea moss. All I had to do, she said, was slip a few teaspoons in my morning coffee or smoothie and it would improve my "conscious living."

"I think I'm already doing that," I replied. "When I'm living uncon-

sciously, then it's time to be concerned."

Sea moss sales people, I learned, have zero senses of humor.

Returning to the drink menu, I scanned the herbal hot toddy selections. All were made from "Boxcar Farm elixirs." Boxcar Farm is an actual Santa Fe-based business. It sells not only herbal remedies along with Mountain Goat Cedarwood Soap. Thanks again, ChatGPT.

But it was the kava cocktails that intrigued me the most. Because, as the menu stated, the sacred kava root, with a long history of ceremonial use, would help calm my nervous system, promote relaxation and give mood support. I was neither nervous, tense nor moody when I entered the apothecary establishment and wanted to keep those feelings intact. A blueberry lavender coconut kava, blended to open up my heart chakra, should do the trick.

My companion looked equally confused as she scrolled the menu. Eventually she decided on an adaptogenic mushroom power latte infused with chocolate and the aforementioned kava. She neglected to add reishi, lion's mane and turkey tail, though all were available.

"By the way, the kava can numb your lips a little bit," the server said as we struggled to place our orders. "It's a lot different than if you were drinking something like cloverwood."

Ah yes, cloverwood. Up until now, a staple of my diet.

We sipped our drinks in silence, waiting for our nervous systems to calm, even though we were unsure what that would feel like if it actually happened. Suffice it to say, both drinks were delicious. Considering the bill was just north of \$40, I expected nothing less.

After an hour we left for our hotel, enlightened and hopefully healthier and clearer of mind. I felt like I had just attended a college lecture, as my brain was awash in new information and terminology. Would I ever drink Diet Coke again? It contains aspartame, not kava root. Also, a cold beer seemed positively hypocritical at this point.

As we approached a busy crosswalk, I looked both ways and did so a second time before venturing forward.

After all this health infusion, it would absolutely suck to get hit by a bus.

- Greg Schwem is a veteran comedian, motivational speaker and humor specialist known for blending business insights with standup comedy. He is also the author of three Amazon bestsellers. His latest, "Turning Gut Punches into Punch Lines: A Comedian's Journey Through Cancer, Divorce and Other Hilarious Stuff," was released in September 2024. Visit Greg on the web at www.gregschwem.com.

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GOREN ON BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES

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LOVELY REVERSE

Neither vulnerable, South deals

NORTH
 ♠ A K 4
 ♥ Q 9 8
 ♦ 9 7 6
 ♣ A 9 8 6

WEST
 ♠ 8 5
 ♥ 6 5 2
 ♦ Q 10 5 4
 ♣ K Q J 10

EAST
 ♠ Q 10 9 2
 ♥ 7 3
 ♦ J 3 2
 ♣ 7 5 4 2

SOUTH
 ♠ J 7 6 3
 ♥ A K J 10 4
 ♦ A K 8
 ♣ 3

The bidding:
SOUTH **WEST** **NORTH** **EAST**
 1♥ Pass 2♣ Pass
 2♦ Pass 5♦ Pass
 6♦ All pass

Opening lead: King of ♣

Our thanks to the great English player, Andrew Robson, for bringing this deal to our attention. We don't know what North was smoking when he bid five hearts, but he earned himself a citation for BUI – Bidding Under the Influence. The five-heart bid asked South to go on if he held a diamond control, and South was

happy to bid slam – at least until he saw the dummy.

There were only 10 top tricks and South had plenty of work to do. He won the opening club lead with dummy's ace and ruffed a club with the ace of hearts. He cashed the king of hearts and led a low heart to dummy's nine. He ruffed another club, this time with the jack of hearts, and crossed back to dummy with a high spade to ruff dummy's last club. The 4-4 club split improved his chances.

He again crossed to dummy with a spade and then drew the last outstanding trump with dummy's queen, shedding the low diamond from his hand. He now led dummy's remaining spade. He was hoping that the suit split 3-3 or that East started with four spades. His luck was in, as East won with the queen and had to give South the lead. The jack of spades was the twelfth trick. Beautifully done! North was last seen in the bar, bragging about his five-heart bid.

(Bob Jones welcomes readers' responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Content Agency, LLC., 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, TX 75001. E-mail: gorenbridge@aol.com)



By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



INSTRUCTIONS: Find as many words as you can by linking letters up, down, side-to-side and diagonally, writing words on a blank sheet of paper. You may only use each letter box once within a single word. Play with a friend and compare word finds, crossing out common words.

BOGGLE POINT SCALE

- 3 letters = 1 point
- 4 letters = 2 points
- 5 letters = 3 points
- 6 letters = 4 points
- 7 letters = 6 points
- 8 letters = 10 points
- 9+ letters = 15 points

YOUR BOGGLE RATING

- 151+ = Champ
- 101-150 = Expert
- 61-100 = Pro
- 31-60 = Gamer
- 21-30 = Rookie
- 11-20 = Amateur
- 0-10 = Try again

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PUZZLES & GAMES

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

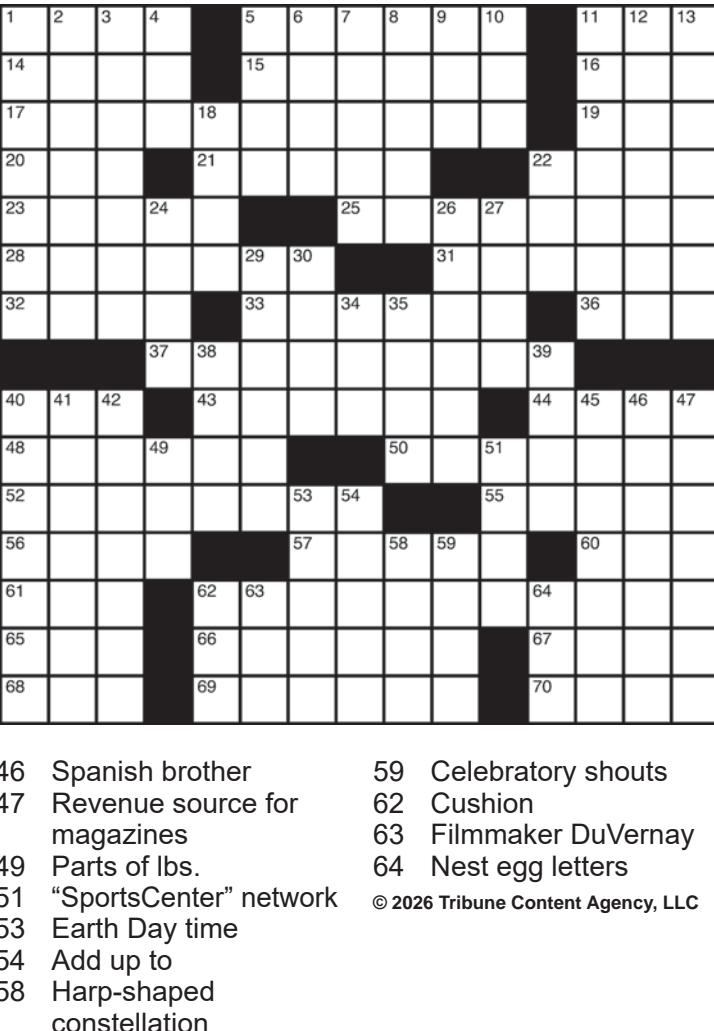
1 Pool or polo
 5 Groups of troops
 11 Understood, as a joke
 14 Persian Gulf country that borders Armenia
 15 Noggin
 16 NPR host Shapiro
 17 Vegetable patch pest
 19 "Mm-hmm"
 20 Lawyer's org.
 21 Unwilling (to)
 22 Band bookings
 23 Native Costa Ricans, informally
 25 Feline who lives indoors
 28 Anthem heard in Nova Scotia
 31 Olympic gymnast Biles
 32 Vanity Fair publisher Condé
 33 Tooth's outer layer
 36 Neither's partner
 37 Workplace companion
 40 Cable network with many reruns

43 "Good enough"
 44 Job inspection org.
 48 Baltimore ballplayer
 50 Walked stealthily
 52 New York City rodent that went viral in 2015
 55 Mixes
 56 School support orgs.
 57 Coral producer
 60 Combat sport, briefly
 61 Ad-__: improvise
 62 Really fun person, or an apt descriptor of 17-, 25-, 37-, and 52-Across?
 65 Subj. for some new immigrants
 66 Zoo section with birds
 67 Actress Russo
 68 __/her pronouns
 69 Prime-time soap opera set in Texas
 70 Commotions

DOWN

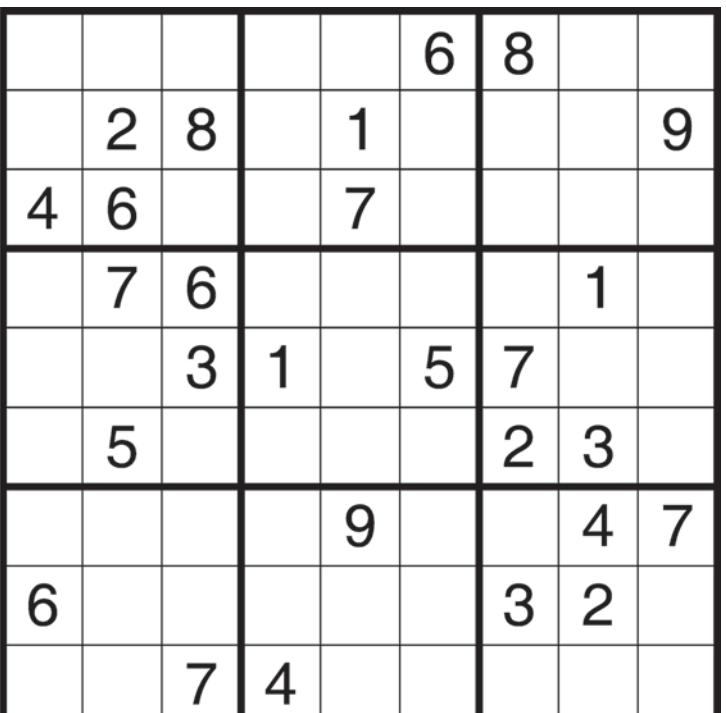
1 Unit of explosive force
 2 Coffee bean variety
 3 Seed-filled percussion

4 pair
 5 Stop
 5 __ Domini
 6 Civil rights activist
 7 Parks
 7 Calendar viewing option
 8 Washington neighbor
 9 Former quarterback Manning
 10 Salt, in French
 11 Judy Garland or Cher
 12 Herb in Italian seasoning
 13 Bettor's adviser
 18 Anna's sister in "Frozen"
 22 Precious stone
 24 Not fooled by
 26 Applied to
 27 Storage tower
 29 More adroit
 30 Deep blue dye
 34 Oft-torn knee pt.
 35 Rx items
 38 Seoul-based athleisure brand
 39 Billy __
 40 Brings down
 41 "The Great __ Baking Show"
 42 Quite large
 45 Read quickly



59 Celebratory shouts
 62 Cushion
 63 Filmmaker DuVernay
 64 Nest egg letters

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SUDOKU: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9 with no repeats.

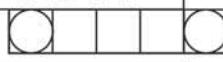
JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

PMILE



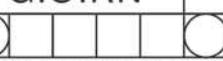
ONAPI



CAROTF



GIOIRN



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Print your answer here: "  "  "

THAT SCRABLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

SCRABBLE GRAMS

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RACK 1



RACK 2



RACK 3



RACK 4

3rd Letter Double

Triple Word Score

PAR SCORE 150-160
 BEST SCORE 231

FOUR RACK TOTAL
 TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, 5th Edition.

For more information on tournaments and clubs, email NASPA - North American SCRABBLE Players Association info@scrabbleplayers.org. Visit our website - www.scrabbleplayers.org. For puzzle inquiries contact scrgrams@gmail.com

11-25

Answers to all puzzles on page 26

MY PET WORLD

Helping anxious dogs learn to feel safe again

By Cathy M. Rosenthal

Tribune Content Agency

Dear Cathy: Five months ago we adopted a two-year-old year rescue that looks to be a German Pinscher and Dachshund mix. The veterinarian feels he was abused but has adjusted fairly well living with us.

The problem is he gets anxious and barks and snaps when my adult son comes to visit. My son comes over about three times a week. My son has tried ignoring him, but the dog's eyes get big and he sometimes snaps at him when he walks by. The first day we had the dog my son picked him up because he didn't want to come in the house. We have since discovered he doesn't like to be picked up. Can you help? — Jim, Portland, Connecticut

Dear Jim: When a dog has a history of abuse, reactions like barking, snapping, and wide, fearful eyes are often signs of anxiety rather than aggression, especially when those reactions are tied to one specific person or situation. In your dog's case, being picked up on that first day likely created a lasting association between your son and a very uncomfortable experience.

Over-the-counter calming chews

can help take the edge off anxiety, and canine pheromones, whether in a collar, plug-in diffuser, or spray, can create a more reassuring environment. Having your son lightly spray a pheromone product on his shoes or clothing while visiting may help reduce your dog's stress response.

Just as important, ask your son to move slowly, avoid direct eye contact, and let the dog choose when and how to approach. No reaching, no talking to him—simply existing calmly in the same space can be very powerful.

Pair your son's presence with good things by tossing high-value treats on the floor when he arrives, without asking anything of the dog in return. Over time, this helps your dog learn that your son predicts safety and rewards, not pressure or fear. Progress may be slow, but patience helps dogs relearn that the world—and the people in it—can be trusted.

- Cathy M. Rosenthal is a longtime animal advocate, author, columnist and pet expert who has more than 25 years in the animal welfare field. Send your pet questions, stories and tips to cathy@petpundit.com. Please include your name, city, and state. You can follow her @cathymrosenthal.

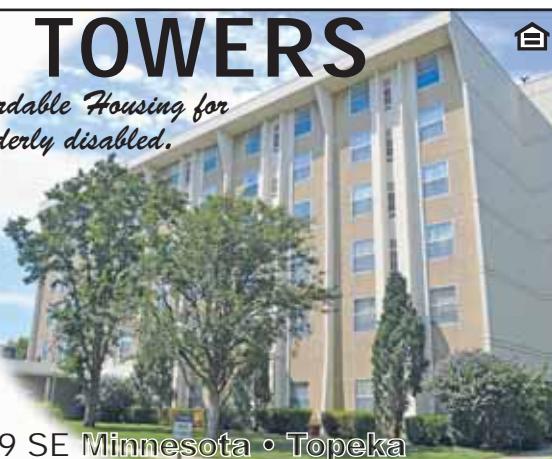
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SAVVY SENIOR

Do I need to file a tax return this year?

By Jim Miller

Dear Savvy Senior: What are the IRS income tax filing requirements for retirees this tax season? I didn't file a tax return last year because my income was below the filing threshold, but I got a part-time job in 2025, so I'm wondering if I need to file this year. - Semi-retired Joe



Dear Joe: Whether you need to file a federal income tax return this year depends on several factors: how much you earned in 2025, the source of your income, your age, and your filing status.

Here's a quick guide to this year's IRS filing thresholds. For most people, it's straightforward: if your gross income (all taxable income, excluding Social Security benefits unless you're married and filing separately) is below the threshold for your filing status and age, you generally do not need to file. But if it's over, you will.

2025 IRS Federal Filing Thresholds:

- **Single:** \$15,750 (\$17,750 if you're 65 or older by Jan. 1, 2026).
- **Married filing jointly:** \$31,500 (\$33,100 if one spouse is 65 or older; or \$34,700 if you're both over 65).
- **Married filing separately:** \$5 at any age.
- **Head of household:** \$23,625 (\$25,625 if 65 or older).
- **Qualifying surviving spouse:** \$31,500 (\$33,100 if 65 or older).

For a detailed breakdown, including

a Health Insurance Marketplace plan, you'll need to file.

You may also need to file if you're receiving Social Security benefits, and one-half of your benefits plus your other gross income and any tax-exempt interest exceeds \$25,000, or \$32,000 if you're married and filing jointly.

To figure all this out, the IRS offers an online tax tool that asks a series of questions that will help you determine if you're required to file, or if you should file because you're due a refund. It takes less than 15 minutes to complete.

You can access this tool at [IRS.gov/help/ita](https://irs.gov/help/ita) – click on "Filing Requirements – Do I need to file a tax return?" Or you can get assistance over the phone by calling the IRS helpline at 800-829-1040.

Check Your State

Even if you're not required to file a federal tax return this year, don't assume that you're also excused from filing state income taxes. The rules for your state might be very different. Check with your state tax agency before assuming you're off the hook.

A complete list of state tax agencies is available at [Taxadmin.org/ita-members](https://taxadmin.org/ita-members).

Tax Prep Help

If you find that you do need to file a tax return this year, you can Free File at [IRS.gov/freefile](https://irs.gov/freefile), which is a partnership program between the IRS and tax software companies. Your 2025 adjusted gross income must be below \$89,000 to qualify.

If you need some help with your tax returns, the IRS sponsored Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program provides free tax preparation and counseling to middle and low-income taxpayers, age 60 and older. Call 800-906-9887 or visit [IRS.treasury.gov/freetaxprep](https://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep) to locate services near you.

You can also get help through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide service at AARP.org/findtaxhelp or call 888-227-7669. You don't have to be an AARP member to use this service.

- Send your questions or comments to questions@savvysenior.org, or to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.

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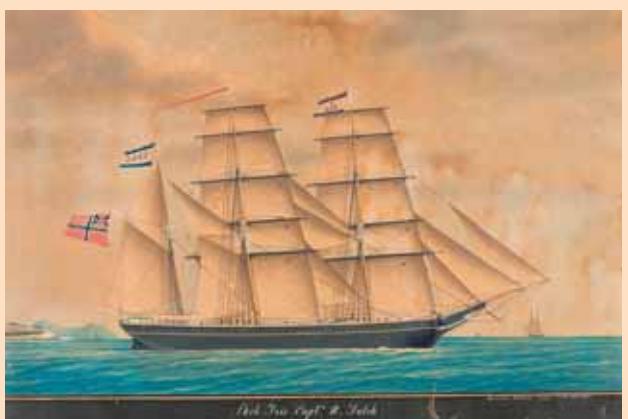
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BARK IRIS GENEALOGY



The Bark Iris. Kevin Groenhagen's third great-grandparents, Siebelt Cornelius Groenhagen and Grietje Harms Rademaker, sailed from Bremen, Germany, to Baltimore aboard this ship in 1871. This 1865 painting of the Bark Iris by Domenico Gavarrone (1821-1874) is on display at the Larvik Museum in Larvik, Norway.

While writing an article about a 100-year-old woman in 2018, Kevin Groenhagen, the publisher of *Kaw Valley Senior Monthly*, discovered that her grandfather had served in the Civil War. She and her sister never knew about his military service.

Do you have a Civil War veteran in your family tree? An American Revolutionary War veteran? When did your ancestors come to America? What ship did they use? Kevin has researched his own family's genealogy for more than 30 years and can help you find the answers to these and many more questions you might have.

Have you had your DNA tested and aren't sure how to read the results? Exactly how are you related to all those cousins the testing company found for you? Kevin can help you answer these questions as well.

Contact Kevin at 785-841-9417 or kevin@seniormonthly.net to discuss what you would like to find and what the research costs would be.

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RICK STEVES' EUROPE

A walk through Ghent

By Rick Steves

Tribune Content Agency

Once one of Belgium's medieval powerhouses, Ghent today is home to one of Belgium's biggest universities and a vibrant student popu-



*Rick
Steves*

lation. While it has plenty of pretty canals and gables, it also enjoys a certain amount of urban grittiness, with a welcome splash of creative hipster funkiness.

Ghent is very walkable, and I enjoy strolling through the old town in this

extremely Flemish city, where the native language is Dutch—but everyone also speaks English.

I start in a square called Korenmarkt (Grain Market), the center of historic Ghent. This still looks much like it did circa 1500, when this was one of Europe's greatest cities, bristling with skyscraping towers, rich with art, and thronged with hard-working and prosperous citizens. Back then, Ghent's population was around 65,000—north of the Alps, only Paris was larger. Two-thirds of its citizens were textile workers, meaning Ghent was arguably Europe's first industrial city. With its wealth, it became the proud city of soaring towers you see today.

Near the square, I wander onto St. Michael's Bridge, which provides Ghent's best 360-degree panorama. The waterway under my feet—now plied by tourist-laden boats—was the city's busy

CAMERON HEWITT, RICK STEVES' EUROPE



Ghent's St. Bavo's Cathedral houses the pearl of Flemish painting—the gigantic Adoration of the Mystic Lamb, which is perhaps the most stolen painting in existence.

harbor. Lining the embankment are several ornately decorated guild houses—meeting halls for the town's boatmen, grain traders, and weighers.

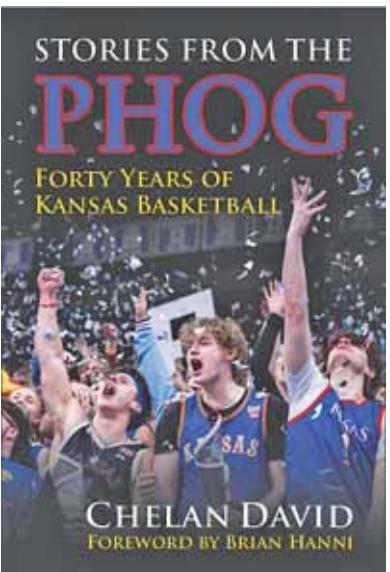
Turning around, I then head away from the river. Beyond a medieval church stands the big, wooden roof of the market hall. Just a couple decades

ago, this space was no more than an ugly parking lot. Now, it's a public square, partially sheltered by the hall's modern twin-gabled roof, meant to evoke the rooftops of medieval Ghent. While many residents embrace the market, some find its avant-garde style

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

Stories from the Phog

A must-read for any KU basketball fan, *Stories from the Phog* puts readers in the seats at Allen Fieldhouse as the Beware of the Phog banner is unfurled for the very first time, the Jayhawks score 150 points against Kentucky, and Nick Collison receives a standing ovation from Dick Vitale. Relive the exhilarating come-from-behind victories against Missouri in 2012 and against West Virginia in 2017, a game that set the record for the loudest crowd roar at an indoor sports event.



A native of Lawrence, Kansas, author Chelan David has a unique bond with Kansas basketball. Some of his earliest memories emanate from fabled Allen Fieldhouse, a limestone theater filled with tradition, pageantry, and ghosts of former Jayhawk greats. Visit cdavidbooks.com for more information or to order a copy.

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Rick Steves

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

jarring. (It's been called the "Sheep Shed" and the "Hall of Shame.")

Next door is the Belfry. Although most of this tower has stood here since the 14th century, its Neo-Gothic top spire was added when Ghent proudly hosted a World's Fair in 1913. Visitors ascend the Belfry to share the gargoyle's decent, if not stunning, view over town.

On the other side of the Belfry is St. Bavo's Square and Ghent's top sight: St. Bavo's Cathedral. This towering Gothic church houses the pearl of Flemish painting—the Ghent Altarpiece, also known as the Adoration of the Mystic Lamb. Jan and Hubert van Eyck's work has been called the most influential painting in European art. It's considered the first masterpiece done in the medium of oil, and the first to portray the stark realism of the everyday world. Hubert began the painting, but after his death, his better-known younger brother, Jan, completed his vision in 1432, taking a colossal stride in Northern European art from medieval stiffness to Renaissance humanism.

The work is monumental: 15 feet wide and 11 feet tall, it's composed of a dozen separate panels depicting hundreds of figures—and weighs more than a ton. Its central panel shows pilgrims gathered to honor the Lamb of God (representing Jesus), while other panels depict the Annunciation, Adam and Eve, the Virgin Mary, and John the Baptist. It challenges visitors with its complex symbolism, multitude of rich details, and sheer scale—but it rewards those willing to invest the time to take it all in.

Somehow the Ghent Altarpiece has survived for six centuries. It's been the victim of a half-dozen art thefts—perhaps the most stolen painting in existence. Even Hitler claimed it as war booty. In 1934, someone broke into St.

Bavo's and stole the Just Judges panel and, nearly a century later, the panel has yet to turn up. In its place is a top-notch copy, and the theft remains Belgium's greatest unsolved art mystery.

Leaving the church, I walk north until I hit Hoogpoort, the main street of medieval Ghent. I'm headed for the castle at the end of this lane—the Castle of the Counts.

Built in 1180, this rough-stone fortress was designed not to protect the people of Ghent, but to intimidate the

city's independence-minded citizens. You get a real feel for the medieval world as you twist through its towers and ramble its ramparts. It has all the parts of a typical castle: courtyard and keep, throne room, chapel, 18-foot-deep dungeon, and high walls. Inside, there are displays of authentic swords and suits of armor, along with a guillotine that was last used in 1861.

Since it's so close to Brussels and Bruges—about 30 minutes away from both—Ghent is a popular day-trip des-

tiny. But it's the kind of town that makes many who visit for just a few hours leave wishing they had more time.

- Rick Steves (www.ricksteves.com) writes European guidebooks, hosts travel shows on public TV and radio, and organizes European tours. This column revisits some of Rick's favorite places over the past two decades. You can email Rick at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

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MY ANSWER

To downplay the work God gives us to do lacks thankfulness

From the writings of the Rev. Billy Graham

Tribune Content Agency

Q: It is discouraging to have finished college, and I can only find a job as a bank teller. I know that I have more ability than that, but no one will give me a chance. It doesn't seem that this pleases the Lord to do so little with my college degree. – B.J.

A: The Lord gave the first man, Adam, his life's work: to care for the garden. Throughout Scripture, we see Jesus speaking to the people in terms of working the land. And we sometimes forget that during most of His life, Jesus was a carpenter, working with His hands among His neighbors in the town of Nazareth. "Isn't this the

carpenter?" some of His critics asked scornfully, implying that no mere carpenter could possibly be the promised Messiah (see Mark 6:3).

To downplay the work God gives us to do lacks thankfulness for the ability to earn an honest living. There are many who are physically not able to work with their hands, for instance. To say "I'm only a cashier," or "I'm just a plumber," or "just a teacher or accountant" is to belittle honest work. When pipes break, we are grateful to see the plumber coming to our

aid. When we send our children off to school, we're thankful for men and women who will teach children to read and write. We're grateful for bookkeepers who watch over the details of business.

This does not mean that we cannot move on to other work, but it is important that we thank Him for the opportunity to work. The Bible tells us, "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10, NKJV). Work is valuable and significant in the sight of God. "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men" (Colossians 3:23, NKJV).

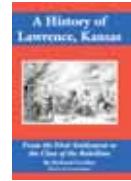
- This column is based on the words and writings of the late Rev. Billy Graham.

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A History of Lawrence, Kansas

By Richard Cordley



Available at the Watkins Museum of History,
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SERIOUSLY SIMPLE

Chocolate and almond butter brownies are a delicious surprise

By Diane Rossen Worthington

Entrée

Brownies are the classic all-American dessert — a sweet that crosses all generations, from young to old. Brownies might have a cake- or fudge-like texture, depending upon the amount of flour and fat called for in the recipe. They can be cut into big squares or rectangles and are often dusted with powdered sugar.

I am partial to a fudgy brownie texture and love the delicious surprise of swirled-in almond butter. An extra bonus is it's a one-pot recipe. You'll need to use a large double boiler insert or a large mixing bowl atop a pot of simmering water for this recipe.

Chocolate and almond butter create a unique flavor for brownies. While these brownies are delicious on their own, you can dress them up with a scoop of vanilla ice cream on top of the brownie and garnish with toasted almonds. Bring these to any meeting, gathering or event and watch how fast they disappear.

Chocolate Almond Butter Brownies

Makes 24 2-inch square brownies

3/4 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon salt

3/4 cup unsalted butter
4 ounces unsweetened chocolate, broken into pieces
1/2 cup almond butter
2 cups granulated sugar
4 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
To finish:
1/4 cup almond butter, softened 15 seconds in the microwave
Powdered sugar, for garnish

1. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl. Reserve.

2. Butter a 9-by-13-inch baking pan. Preheat the oven to 350 F.

3. In the top of a large double boiler over medium heat, combine the butter and chocolate and melt. Add the almond butter and mix well.

4. Remove the chocolate mixture from the heat. Add the sugar and whisk vigorously. Don't worry if the mixture looks grainy. Add all of the eggs and the vanilla and whisk them until they are completely incorporated into the chocolate mixture. Add the reserved flour mixture to the chocolate mixture and whisk until just incorporated. The mixture should be a shiny batter-like consistency.

5. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Dot the top of the brownie mixture with the 1/4 cup of almond butter, swirling it with a knife, making sure

DIANE ROSEN WORTHINGTON/TCA



The almond flavor is unique.

that the almond butter is evenly distributed. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out slightly fudgy.

6. Remove from the oven and cool on a rack, then slice into 2-inch square brownies. Sprinkle lightly with the powdered sugar before serving.

Advance preparation: The brownies may be prepared one day ahead and

covered in an airtight container.

- Diane Rossen Worthington is an authority on new American cooking. She is the author of 18 cookbooks, including "Seriously Simple Parties," and a James Beard Award-winning radio show host. You can contact her at www.seriouslysimple.com.

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Books written or reprinted by Kevin Groenhagen:

- ***A History of Lawrence, Kansas: From the First Settlement to the Close of the Rebellion*** by Reverend Richard Cordley (1885, reprint)
- ***Find Your East Frisian Ancestors and Cousins*** by Kevin Groenhagen
- ***Grandma Burright: The Queen of Harness Racing*** by Kevin Groenhagen
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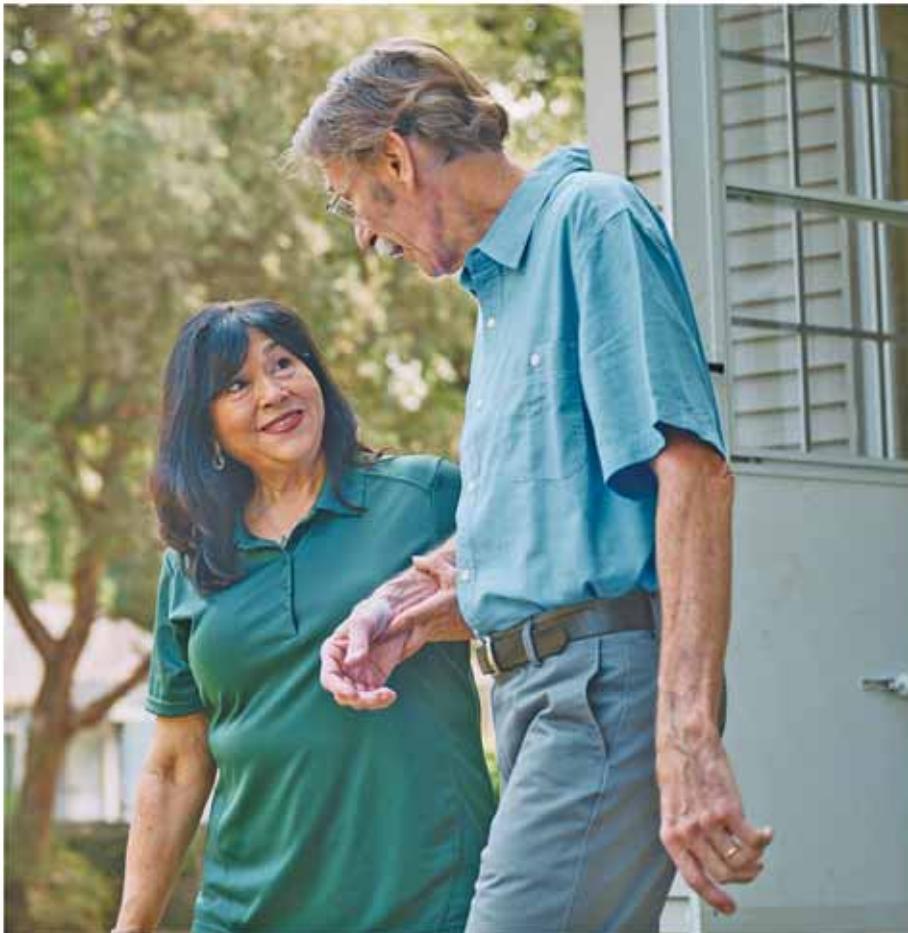


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