



# KAW VALLEY SENIOR MONTHLY

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Living Well. Staying Active. Staying Connected

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COURTESY PHOTO



Six members of Team Billie: Front row, Elaine Rolfs, Brandon Munger, Adonia David. Back row, Michelle Williams, Billie David, Marsha Williams.

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## Team Billie: Why I'm Walking — and Talking — About Alzheimer's

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# Finding my words: Living openly with Alzheimer's

By Billie David

On October 10, Lawrence will host the 2026 Alzheimer's Association's Annual Walk to End Alzheimer's.

Several members of my family will be there wearing purple T-shirts with forget-me-nots and the words "Team Billie" prominently featured on the front. The purple is the official color of the Alzheimer's Association and represents strength, courage, and hope for a cure, and forget-me-nots symbolize remembrance.

My sisters wanted the words "Team Billie" on the T-shirts because my family is walking in support of me. I was diagnosed with Alzheimer's several months ago.

## Why I'm Going Public

I wanted to write this article for

several reasons, the most important being that many of us baby boomers are reaching our 70s and 80s, the ages when people are most likely to be diagnosed with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Another reason I wanted to go public with my diagnosis is that I have learned some things through my experience that I would like to share with you.

Our generation has spearheaded many movements in our youth, and I believe it is time for us to band together again to help remove the stigma of dementia and support fundraising efforts to find a cure. What better way to do this than to admit when we have it and to confront it directly, not only for ourselves but for others as well.

## I'm Not Alone

I have admired certain celebrities who have had the courage to make their diagnosis public, including most recently, TV news anchor Bill Ritter, who announced that he has early-stage Alzheimer's on live television in June. Others who have gone public

with their diagnosis include Ronald Reagan, Rita Hayworth, Glen Campbell, Tony Bennett, Danny Glover, Pat Summit, Charlton Heston, and airline pilot Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger.

## The Numbers Behind the Disease

At present, more than 55 million people in the world are living with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, and in the United States, seven million are living with Alzheimer's. This affects not only those who are being diagnosed, but also

the 13 million unpaid people who have generously given their time, energy, and money to become our caregivers.

Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia will touch the lives of most of us in some way. Between the years 2000 and 2024, deaths from Alzheimer's have doubled, and one in three adults will die with some form of dementia, killing more people than breast and prostate cancer combined. The estimated cost in the United

States alone will rise to around one trillion dollars by 2050. It now stands at \$400 billion.

## Losing My Words

When I tell people that I have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, they often ask me how I first suspected that I might have it. I first suspected it when I noticed that I was having trouble finding my words. This was especially difficult for me since I am a lover of words because they are indispensable for expressing the most exquisite ideas and inspirations. I am also a former English and Spanish teacher and a reading specialist, and I have an additional degree in journalism. All these pursuits involve words.

But I found myself struggling with simple conversations, thinking clearly, remembering things, and repeating questions. This embarrassed me, and I tried to cover it up, but eventually those close to me noticed too.

## Noticing the Changes

As the situation progressed, I noticed that I was forgetting conversations and wandering through the house trying to remember where

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**Kevin L. Groenhagen**  
Editor and Publisher

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# Billie David

CONTINUED FROM PAGE THREE

I put things. In addition, I noticed that I was not as interested in some subjects that had always piqued my interest in the past, and although I am naturally an introvert, I had begun to withdraw even more socially.

My advice to those who first notice symptoms of dementia is to address them right away because there are steps you can take to slow the progress of the disease. You will also need to make plans concerning your future, have important conversations with loved ones, and address financial concerns.

## Getting Diagnosed

When I first noticed symptoms of dementia, my daughter and I went to my doctor together, and after discussing those symptoms, my doctor referred me to a sleep doctor. Sleep apnea is often a con-

tributing cause of dementia because it deprives the brain of oxygen. The doctor also referred me to the University of Kansas Medical Center, which has proved to be a most excellent resource, and the kindness of the people who have treated me has been truly phenomenal.

## Treatment Options

Another advantage to an early diagnosis is that there are treatments available to slow the advance of Alzheimer's, and further studies will eventually provide us with even more new treatments.

Some treatments are cholinesterase inhibitors such as Donepezil and Rivastigmine, both of which address mild-to-moderate Alzheimer's by increasing levels of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. These medicines are often taken via patches.

Recent medical trials for the treatment of early Alzheimer's have also focused on monoclonal antibodies. Leqembi and Kisunla have been

shown to slow decline by preventing amyloid plaques from forming in the brain in the initial stages of Alzheimer's. They are administered through infusions.

## What the Screening Involves

At the University of Kansas Medical Center, I was given an initial screening and diagnosis. This involves taking a medical history, reviewing symptoms, and administering a test to measure memory and

thinking ability. The examination may also involve a PET scan to show the presence of protein deposits, an MRI that can reveal brain shrinkage, or a CT scan, which uses X-ray technology to rule out tumors, strokes, and other head injuries. Lab tests can look for other underlying health conditions.

## Join the Walk

In addition to the Walk to End

CONTINUED ON PAGE FIVE



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# Billie David

CONTINUED FROM PAGE FOUR

Alzheimer's in Lawrence on October 10, there will be a Walk to End

Alzheimer's in Gladstone, Missouri, on October 17, and another one in Kansas City, Missouri, on October 24. For more details and/or to make a donation, please visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).

## Understanding Alzheimer's — and what you can do

Alzheimer's, which is the most common form of dementia, starts with the buildup of amyloid plaques and neurofibrillary tangles in the brain. This causes the brain cells to die and the brain itself to shrink.

Some risk factors that are under your control are avoiding head injuries, quitting smoking and excessive drinking, and addressing high blood pressure, obesity, lack of exercise and mental stimulation, poor eating habits, and social isolation. Depression also hastens cognitive decline by affecting brain chemistry.

At present, there is no cure for Alzheimer's, but there are ways to improve symptoms and slow decline. One of the most important ways is to eat a healthy, heart-healthy diet. If you are a heavy drinker or smoker, you should stop. It is also important to get enough sleep and engage in physical, intellectual, and social activities. Depression and negative attitudes are detrimental, so one should work to make peace with oneself, with one's past, and with one's friends and loved ones.

It is also essential to address signs of dementia not only for yourself but also for the sake of your loved ones, because there are legal and financial issues you need to address together. For example, you may need to designate someone to be your durable power of attorney and representative payee so that there is someone who can address matters pertaining to your health

and finances when you can no longer effectively deal with them.

In addition, although it is difficult for many of us to face, you may want to let your loved ones know your thoughts concerning your future care, such as assisted living or nursing homes, or perhaps consider a will and funeral arrangements while you are still able, in order to spare your loved ones some of these burdens when the issues come up.

Some practical ways to address the changes caused by Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia include the following:

- Create routines.
- Keep items like keys and phones in a designated place.
- Develop a system to keep track of medicines.
- Take advantage of automated deposits and payments.
- If you tend to get lost, make sure to program important phone numbers into your phone and consider wearing a location tracking device.
- Use a planner or other system to keep track of important dates.
- Make plans about how you will address important issues in the future.
- Get regular exercise and eat healthy meals.
- Stay socially involved.
- Keep doing the things you enjoy, like music, crafts, and gardening.



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# Liberty Hall celebrates 170 years of history, memories and community

For over a century and a half, Liberty Hall has been more than an event space, concert hall, and movie theater. It's been the backdrop for first dates, last goodbyes, proposals, reunions, celebrations, and countless other moments that shaped our lives. Maybe you had your first kiss in the balcony, celebrated a birthday at a rock and roll show, or simply found comfort in a dark theater during a hard year. This effort to gather and preserve those memories is part of a bigger plan with Tom Alexios, The Ellington Family, and Meyer Music to continue to use Liberty Hall as a community resource: collecting and fixing donated instruments in hopes that the instruments' future homes will give underprivileged kids a jumpstart into the beautiful world of music and create a new batch of positive and meaningful memories for younger generations.

If you have a story, photograph, recollection, or special memory connected to Liberty Hall, Tom Alexios and Josh Millstein would like to hear from you. They can be contacted at [lawrence.liberty.hall@gmail.com](mailto:lawrence.liberty.hall@gmail.com).

## A fiery beginning

Liberty Hall's history dates to the turbulent days of Bleeding Kansas.

In 1854, Kansas' first abolitionist newspaper, *The Herald of Freedom*, occupied the corner of Seventh and Massachusetts streets. During the 1856 Sack of Lawrence, pro-slavery Douglas County Sheriff Samuel Jones started a fire that destroyed the newspaper's building.

Samuel Edwin Poole rebuilt the structure later that year. The new building became a gathering place

for debates, town meetings, political speeches, and other community events. It was eventually named Liberty Hall, inspired by Abraham Lincoln's description of Lawrence as the "cradle of liberty."

In 1882, Lawrence businessman J.D. Bowersock purchased and renovated the building, adding another floor. It became the Bowersock Opera House and developed into a popular destination for theater and entertainment.

But Liberty Hall's history would again be marked by fire.

On February 18, 1911, an electrical fire caused by poor wiring destroyed the opera house. Bowersock rebuilt, and on January 20, 1912, a completely redesigned Liberty Hall opened.

The new building featured a Beaux-Arts design with an Imperial Roman façade. Bowersock touted the new structure as completely fireproof. During World War II, the U.S. government reportedly inspected Lawrence buildings and determined that Liberty Hall was reportedly the only structure in the city that could withstand bombings.

## From movies to nightclubs

The building quickly adapted to changing times and technology.

In 1924, Lawrence's first talking movie, *The Canary Murder Case*, was shown in the main theater. During the 1930s, the building became known as the Jayhawker Theater, a name it retained into the 1950s.

Its entertainment history continued through several transformations. In 1965, it reopened as the Red Dog Inn Night Club. During the 1970s, it



COURTESY PHOTO

Liberty Hall

became Bugsy's, a disco club.

In 1986, Charlie Oldfather, Dave Millstein and Susan Millstein purchased Liberty Hall. They renovated the building and reopened it in a form that many Lawrence residents recognize today—as a video store, coffee shop, independent cinema and community gathering place.

The building celebrated its 100th anniversary at the Seventh and Massachusetts location on January 20, 2012.

## A stage for generations

Over the decades, Liberty Hall has welcomed an extraordinary variety of performers. Its stage has hosted entertainers ranging from Oscar Wilde to Tina Turner to the

Wu-Tang Clan.

Today's musicians and performers continue to stand on the same stage used by performers of previous generations.

The building itself also tells the story of its long and sometimes turbulent history. The original Greek Revival murals in the main concert hall were lost through the many changes in ownership and use during the past century. During the 1986 renovations, new ceiling murals were added, depicting an ascent from the sky to the stars, planets, and heavens.

The result is a building that combines its historic character with the changes brought by generations of Lawrence residents.

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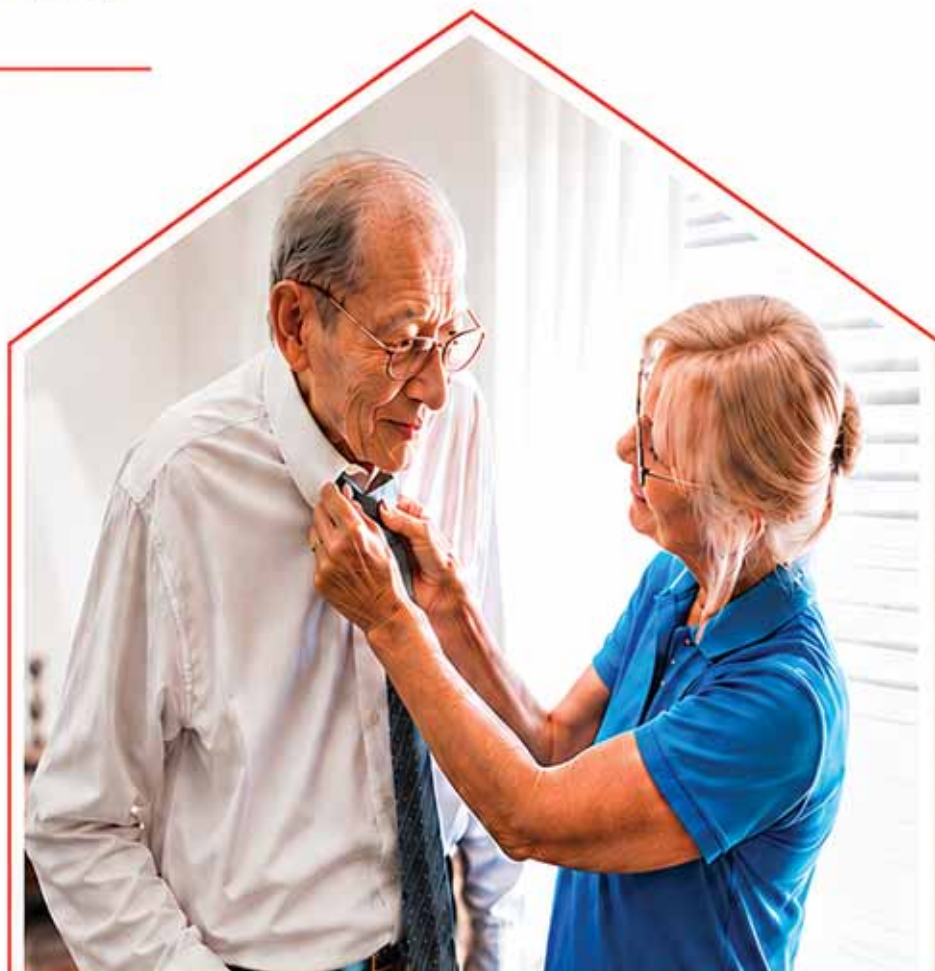
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# A Piece of Japan in the Heart of Kansas: The Kay McFarland Japanese Garden

By Billie David

As autumn brings in cooler weather that is more amenable to outdoor excursions, you might consider taking the children or grandchildren to the Topeka Zoo to see the animals and visit the Kay McFarland Japanese Garden, or maybe you could just go to the garden alone or with a friend to sit quietly and soak in the peace that nature provides.

## A Judge's Vision, Rooted in Portland

The garden was the brainchild of the late Kansas Supreme Court Judge Kay McFarland, who fell in love with the concept of the traditional Japanese garden on a visit to Portland, Oregon.

Thanks to her idea and generous donation, visitors can stroll through the garden and take in its natural beauty, which was designed to combine the aesthetics of Japanese culture with the beauty of the Kansas landscape.

McFarland began discussing the garden with zoo officials in 2015, and it opened in 2020. It incorporates all the elements of the Japanese garden and is maintained in the traditional Japanese style. For example, it can take one full day to trim one pine tree so that it looks like a cloud.

## Doing It the Traditional Way

"Things are done out of tradition. There are rules, and you have to follow the rules," said Rick Knight, Topeka Zoo's lead horticulturist. "They've done it that way, and we try to do it that way. All of my staff has gone through extensive training."

With tradition in mind, the zoo hired a Japanese gardener to do the designing.

"He designed the garden to be like a stroll garden," Knight said. "All of the sidewalks are wider so that two people can walk comfortably down the sidewalks together."

## The Four Elements of a Japanese Garden

A Japanese garden has four main elements, and the zoo represents all four.

"We touch on all of them," said Knight. "There are plants, and there are four major plants in the garden. There are maples, cherries, pines, and

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COURTESY PHOTO



The Kay McFarland Japanese Garden combines traditional Japanese garden design with the natural beauty of the Kansas landscape, offering visitors a peaceful place to stroll, sit and enjoy nature.

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## Japanese Garden

CONTINUED FROM PAGE EIGHT

bamboo, and each one has significance in Japanese culture.”

“The second element is water. Our garden has two smaller ponds and a big pond, and lots of water streaming through the rocks.”

Rocks are the third element, and finding the right kind of rock was an issue because Japanese gardens contain very hard rock formed from volcanic activity.

“Our designer helped us find a quarry that would satisfy our needs,” Knight said, adding that they located suitable rock on the Minnesota and Wisconsin border.

“We imported 650 tons of rock to fill the streams and the ponds,” he said.

The fourth element in a Japanese water garden is ornamentation.

“That’s the lanterns and the benches and the path lights that are

added to the landscape,” Knight said.

“The path lights are designed and built according to Buddhist monastery lanterns. There’s one story about a monk who dreamed that he saw a spirit knight riding a white deer out of the mountains,” Knight said, explaining that deer are very special in that culture. “His dream started a monastery, and we have some of the symbols from the spirit and the white

deer in the lanterns.”

Another lantern — Judge McFarland’s Lantern — is located in the main pond and has one leg of the lamp in the water and one leg on land.

“That lantern represents the heavenly knight,” Knight explained. “It has a big crown on it that shows how much snow has fallen because it accumulates on the top of the lantern.”

## A Walk Through the Garden’s “Rooms”

Entering through the Crane Gate, visitors come into an area with a view down into the garden. From there they go over the Zigzag Bridge, which represents the lines from a group of poems written in 927, which talk about “walking across the plank bridge, and the irises were

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

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# Japanese Garden

CONTINUED FROM PAGE NINE

blooming”.

“This is the first room, and the irises are planted around it. When the irises are blooming, it’s very stunning,” Knight said.

The second room is the room of ancestors, where groupings of rocks represent ancestors, male and female, and one grouping has a rock down in front that represents a child.

The third room is a red bridge.

“Buddhist monks brought the bridge from China, and the red represents money and prosperity,” Knight explained. “In Japan, it’s a symbol of the pathway to heaven and eternal life.”

“From there the path leads into the pond area. The fish are koi, and they’re multi-colored,” Knight said. “The fish were brought from China. They were grown in the rice paddies to improve the people’s diet. They don’t need a lot of water or care.”

When the fish were introduced to Japan, the Japanese didn’t want to eat them because they were too pretty, so they made them pets, he explained.

## The Tea House and the Cranes

The next stop is a tea house with a big pond and numerous plants, where you can sit, listen to the water, watch the fish, and contemplate.

“You may not know everybody you’re in the tea house with, so it’s time to get to know everybody,” Knight said. “Whether you’re rich or poor, you’re going to the tea house ceremony, and you’re all on the same level.”

On the edge of one of the ponds is a bronze set of cranes.

“Cranes are very important in Japanese culture,” Knight said. “They represent longevity. The male crane is singing, and the female crane is dancing.”

“We have a lot of outdoor rooms, like extensions to houses that are connected along a pathway. They’re ADA-compliant, so anybody coming to the garden will be able to maneuver

the whole area,” Knight said. “We’ve got a lot of sitting areas and lots of places where you can sit and listen to the streams, or listen to nature, or watch the fish, or whatever you want to do.”

## The Visitor Venue and Sand Garden

There’s also a venue to go with the gardens, where you can read about Kay McFarland and how Japanese and Kansas cultures are similar. The venue also has accessible men’s and women’s restrooms.

A wallboard in the venue describes how the gravel in the sand garden compares to Kansas cornfields planted in long rows or hay mowed in circular patterns.

“In summer we rake the gravel every morning,” Knight said. “There’s no wrong way to rake the gravel. It comes from the heart and head and out through the hands. The one in front of the venue has three hills of gravel with it, like those are islands, and the sand looks like waves crashing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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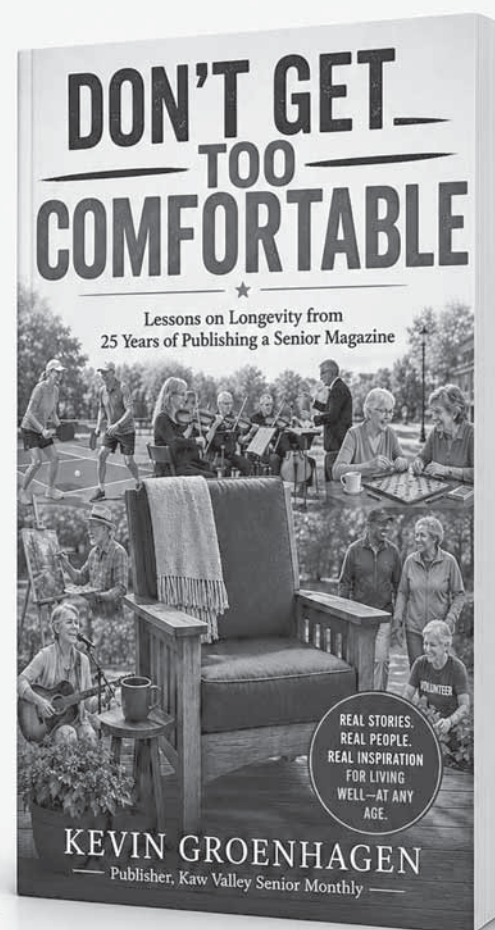
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# Japanese Garden

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

against the beaches on the islands.”

“The entire garden is a little less than three acres in area. It took me about 15 minutes to run through it quickly, but if you stop and observe, it could take an hour and a half to two hours to take it all in,” Knight said.

## When to Visit

As for the best time to visit the garden, Knight said every season has its highlights.

“In the winter, it’s the pines, the junipers, and the hollies. They all show themselves really well in the spring. It’s the cherry blossoms and the new Japanese maple foliage coming out,” Knight said. “In the fall we have all the fall colors. I like late fall, when the leaves are floating on top of the water, and you can see all the leaves bobbing down the stream.”

In the summer, Knight recommends early morning before it starts getting warm, and early morning is also ideal for photographers.

“In the winter, if you like frosty looks, the best time is early morning. And if it’s really cold, the waterfalls have icicles on them. If it’s snowing, the sidewalks are always treated.”

“I’m a spring person,” Knight added. “I like the cherries when they bloom, and cherries in Japan when the petals fall; they’re supposed to remind you that you’re not perma-

nent either.”

## Judge McFarland’s Lasting Legacy

The Topeka Zoo is located in Gage Park, where Knight said there’s plenty for the children to do, including a 100-year-old carousel and a mini train, both of which run, and a Discovery Center. A world-class rose garden is just a stone’s throw from the Japanese garden.

“It’s a nice place to come and have a picnic,” he said. “It’s got lots of history.”

The Kay McFarland Japanese Garden is just one piece of her outstanding legacy, although her professor at Washburn Law School cautioned her that as a woman, she probably couldn’t find a job when she graduated. She was the first one of her graduating class to be hired. She eventually started her own law firm, entered the juvenile court system, and obtained a degree in social work from KU so she could be a social worker; shortly afterward, she was in the juvenile court. In 1995, she became the first woman Chief Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court.

“I came to Topeka in the early ‘80s, and I knew her and her mom,” Knight said. “She loved to sew and quilt, and she raised horses and Irish wolfhounds. She was always doing something. This is her lasting legacy. She ended up underwriting all the gardens and all the fishponds, and she left an annuity to help maintain it.”



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## NATURAL MEDICINE



# The health benefits of pumpkin

DR. DEENA BENEDA, N.D.

**P**umpkin is a popular seasonal food, often used for outdoor decoration, carved into Jack-o'-lanterns for Halloween, or cooked to enhance dishes or enjoyed on its own. Rich in nutrients, it supports vision, immunity, digestion, heart health, prostate health, and urinary health. It helps reduce inflammation, regulate blood sugar, and promote overall wellness. Its vibrant orange flesh, edible seeds, and natural plant compounds make pumpkin a versatile, nutritious ingredient suitable for any meal, especially during holidays.

Pumpkin has been valued as both food and a traditional remedy across many cultures. Modern studies confirm its health benefits because of its vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. Regular pumpkin consumption could help support bodily functions and lower the risk of chronic diseases.

Pumpkin is high in beta-carotene, the pigment that gives pumpkin its orange color and converts to vitamin A in the body; it supports good vision—especially in low light—and protects the cornea. It also contains antioxidants such as lutein and zeaxanthin, which are linked to eye health and may help

protect against age-related issues like cataracts and macular degeneration.

Pumpkin may bolster immune defenses through vitamin A, which helps maintain the skin and mucous barriers of the respiratory and digestive tracts. It also provides vitamin C, folate, and other nutrients that support immune cell activity. While it doesn't prevent all infections, adequate intake enhances immune response and recovery. Additionally, pumpkin supports digestion. Its low-calorie, high-fiber content promotes regular bowel movements, adds bulk to stool, and supports gut health. Fiber increases satiety, aiding weight management, and helps regulate blood sugar and cholesterol levels when part of a balanced diet.

Moreover, pumpkin benefits heart health. Its high potassium content helps regulate fluid balance, heartbeat, and blood pressure. Consuming potassium-rich foods can counteract the effects of excess sodium. Fiber and antioxidants in pumpkin also support cardiovascular health by managing cholesterol and protecting cells from oxidative stress.

Pumpkin seeds offer additional health benefits, including support for prostate and urinary health, reduced inflammation, and blood sugar regulation. They are rich in protein, healthy fats, magnesium, zinc, and other minerals. Zinc is crucial for immunity and wound healing, while magnesium supports muscles, nerves, and bones. Overall, pumpkin is an adaptable, cost-effective food that promotes health through fiber, carotenoids, vita-

mins, minerals, and antioxidants. You can add it to your diet through roasted pumpkin, canned puree, soups, smoothies, roasted seeds, or pumpkin pie. Enjoy pumpkin in cooking or as a decorative touch during the season, while recognizing its numerous health advantages.

- 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 Q &amp; A



## Abdominal aortic aneurysm: Spreading awareness of a lesser-known heart condition

By Sam Farres, M.D.

Mayo Foundation for Medical Education  
and Research

### DEAR MAYO CLINIC:

Recently, my husband's doctor recommended that he get a screening for an abdominal aortic aneurysm. We have never heard of this condition. What do we need to know?

**ANSWER:** Although abdominal aortic aneurysm, or AAA, is a lesser-known cardiovascular condition, this disease is more common than people may think. Each year, about 200,000 people in the U.S. are diagnosed with AAA, and a ruptured AAA is the 15th leading cause of death nationwide.

The aorta is the body's main artery. AAA occurs when the part of the aorta that passes through the belly area becomes damaged or weakened, allowing it to bulge outward. If it ruptures, you are at risk for life-threatening bleeding. AAA also increases the risk of developing

blood clots, which can be dangerous. This is why it is important to know the symptoms and risk factors and understand when to get a screening or seek emergency care.

AAA often grows slowly without noticeable symptoms. Although difficult for the average person to detect, AAA can be found in a physical exam — healthcare clinicians can feel enlarged aortas by pressing on the abdomen.

Some AAAs grow larger over time. If your AAA follows a typical growth pattern, you may feel a pulse near the belly button. However, if you feel pain in your belly or back due to AAA, it could be a warning sign of a serious problem, such as the aneurysm starting to leak or rupture. This is a medical emergency, and you should seek emergency care right away.

Being male and smoking significantly increases the risk of developing AAA. It is recommended that men aged 65 to 75 years old with any

history of smoking undergo a one-time AAA screening via an abdominal ultrasound. This screening uses high-frequency sound waves to take pictures of the inside of your belly, including your abdominal aorta.

Selective screenings also may be recommended for men who have never smoked but have other risk factors, such as a family history of aneurysm. Your insurance may cover the cost of the ultrasound if screening criteria are met. An ultrasound of the heart also can help to detect AAA.

When a patient with AAA is accurately diagnosed, there is a high chance of survival. Vascular surgeons can perform surgery to repair the enlarged part of the aorta before it ruptures.

When an AAA ruptures, it is a medical emergency because blood loss from the aorta can lead to death. Symptoms of a ruptured AAA include sudden and severe pain in the lower back or abdomen, a fast heart rate,

low blood pressure, and sometimes nausea or vomiting. If you think you have a ruptured aneurysm, call 911 or have someone take you to the closest emergency department.

To help prevent developing AAA, people should be mindful of managing their blood pressure. The cornerstones of cardiovascular health — eating a healthy diet, being a nonsmoker, exercising and getting enough sleep — can help to reduce the risk of developing or dying from this disease. — Sam Farres, M.D., Vascular Surgery, Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Florida

*- Mayo Clinic Q & A is an educational resource and doesn't replace regular medical care. This Mayo Clinic Q&A represents inquiries this healthcare expert has received from patients. For more information, visit [www.mayoclinic.org](http://www.mayoclinic.org).*

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## RYAN'S RETIREMENT TIPS



# Six tax pitfalls to avoid

RYAN SHUMAKER

I'm a big fan of the saying "Give to Caesar his due, but not a dollar more!", which is why at Retirement Portfolios we focus on helping clients create tax-efficient retirement plans and portfolios. With many likely feeling they paid more than their due, we thought we'd share a few common issues we see when reviewing previous tax returns of new clients.

**1) Selling too soon** - Depending on when you sell an investment, you can pay anywhere from 0% federal tax on your gains to a whopping 40.8%! Losing 40% of your gains to federal taxes when you could potentially lose nothing dramatically changes how much of your profit actually ends up in your pocket. Waiting to sell an investment after you've owned it for at least a year and/or when your income may be lower can significantly decrease your tax burden.

**2) Poor recordkeeping** - Prior to 2012, it was up to the taxpayer to keep a record of the purchase price

of their investments. Thankfully, since then, brokerage firms have been required by law to keep track of this information and relay it to any firm an account may subsequently be transferred to. Despite this change, we have seen situations where this information isn't transcribed properly or at all and investors pay tax on the entire sale price of an investment, rather than on just the gains. This happens even more frequently with investments bought prior to 2012, as firms won't always provide the original cost on tax forms in this scenario. If you're filing your own return, pay careful attention to tax documents when you receive them and don't blindly input numbers from these forms into tax software. If you're utilizing a professional to help you file your taxes and they don't catch this problem, you may want to consider a different preparer.

**3) Not using losses optimally** - While having losses isn't fun, don't add insult to injury by failing to use

them in the most tax-advantageous way possible. Losses from prior years can be carried forward to future tax years and can be used strategically. For instance, it makes far more sense to offset your gains with losses if you're facing a 40.8% tax rate versus a 0% tax rate, like in pitfall #1. You can also use up to \$3,000 worth of losses per year to offset the tax on other income that may be taxed at a higher rate. When an investment is sold should not be based solely on performance. Having a strong return is nice, but keeping more after taxes is nicer. If you fail to account for tax implications, a large investment gain could result in less money making it back to your bank account versus a smaller gain with smart planning.

**4) Buying too soon** - Washing dirty hands before eating is a good idea, but rebuying an investment you recently lost money on usually isn't. Why? Well, if you sell an investment for a loss, but repurchase the same or

a substantially identical one within 30 days, you can't claim the loss on your taxes. If you're looking to maximize your after tax investment return, which investments you buy and when can sometimes be just as important as which investments you sell and when.

**5) Missing tax breaks** - According to the IRS, over 1/3 of all errors on tax returns involve either the child tax credit (16%), earned income tax credit (10%), or taking deductions (8%). These 3 are the most commonly caught by the IRS as they're usually something computer systems can catch automatically, but you shouldn't bank on the IRS finding missed tax credits or deductions for you. With the newly available tax breaks as part of The Big Beautiful Bill, you may want to seek out a second opinion as to whether you're receiving every tax break you're entitled to.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

**Ryan Shumaker**  
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## FINANCIAL FOCUS



## What does financial fulfillment actually feel like?

DEREK OSBORN

Feeling financially fulfilled means so much more than just the number in your bank account. It's about being able to take your family out to dinner without calculating whether you can afford it. It means sleeping soundly on a Sunday night, knowing that if the water heater gives out tomorrow, you can handle it. And it's saying yes to a vacation because you planned ahead and the money is there.

In short, financial fulfillment is the feeling that your money is supporting the life you want.

Yet true fulfillment is surprisingly rare. Only 16% of Americans are financially fulfilled, according to a 2026 study by Edward Jones and Gallup, "Money and Meaning: Understanding Financial Fulfillment." Those at the other end of the spectrum, the financially stressed (32%), often say that money regularly controls their daily decisions. Most Americans (51%), however, fall in the middle — the financially conflicted. They manage to get by but often carry a persistent undercurrent of worry.

Notably, where you land on this spectrum has less to do with your income than you might expect. More than half of households earning \$175,000 or more are still financially conflicted.

### Building the foundation

So, the question becomes, "What do financially fulfilled people do differently?" Simply put, they tend to have foundational planning structures in place. Five behaviors show up consistently among the financially

fulfilled, and they're simple steps you can take, too.

- **Build an emergency fund** (98% of fulfilled have this). Aim for saving three to six months of living expenses in a liquid, easily accessible account. When you know you can handle the unexpected, you stop bracing for it, and lower stress gives you a higher quality of life.

- **Create a financial plan for retirement** (91% of financially fulfilled have one). It's hard to feel in control if you don't know where you're going. A retirement plan puts a real number on what you'll need and lays out a clear path to get there, with built-in protection against life's unexpected curveballs.

- **Save intentionally for major milestones** (87% of financially fulfilled do). A home renovation, a new vehicle or a child's education don't have to feel disruptive. Setting money aside deliberately for the milestones you anticipate means you can say yes without scrambling.

- **Put an estate plan in place** (66% of financially fulfilled have). Estate plans are not just for the wealthy. A will and basic estate plan help ensure what you've worked for still reflects your wishes after you're gone.

- **Work with a financial advisor** (60% of financially fulfilled who sought any guidance have used an advisor in the past year). The internet is great, but real guidance comes from a credentialed person who knows you and your family and what you want your money to do for you.

Knowing that your money is working toward the life you want doesn't happen by accident. Feeling financially fulfilled is worth the effort and may be more achievable than you realize.

- 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](mailto:Derek.Osborn@edwardjones.com). This article was provided by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Member SIPC.

## Tax pitfalls

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

### 6) Using the default tax plan

- Taxes are complicated. There are over 6,800 pages of tax code and 70,000 pages of interpretations and guidelines related to that code. When confronted with something this overwhelming, it is easy to throw up your hands and say, "whatever I owe, I owe." The issue with taking this route is that you're accepting the "default tax plan." Given that the default plan was created by the government, who do you think it benefits most?

Being able to select great investments is only one small part of creating the highest investment return that you can spend in retirement. It doesn't necessarily matter how much you make with your investments, it matters how much you keep after

taxes since what you keep is what you can spend. Unsuccessful investors react to what has already happened, while successful ones continuously act on a plan, so get a tax plan you're continually acting on. Don't get stuck reacting to the default tax plan, as that can be quite costly.

- Ryan Shumaker hosts a radio show Saturdays at 7:30 a.m. and Sundays at 8 a.m. on FM93.5/AM1440. Listen anytime at [RetireFromTaxes.com/Radio](http://RetireFromTaxes.com/Radio). Other great articles about retirement, investing, and tax reduction are available at [RetireFromTaxes.com/Blog](http://RetireFromTaxes.com/Blog). Material discussed is meant for general/informational purposes and is not intended to be used as the sole basis for any financial decisions, nor be construed as advice to meet your particular needs. Please consult a financial professional for further information. Investment advisory services offered through Retirement Portfolios, LLC.

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Our print calendar is limited by page space. Readers will get a much more complete calendar because we can add many additional events, including dozens of events outside our distribution area.



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No more circling events on newsprint. Readers can also download an event reminder, which increases the likelihood they will attend.



Print listings must be very short. Online listings can include full descriptions, links to maps, and registration links. This is especially helpful for classes, health screenings, and trips.



A printed calendar is harder to use when someone is already out. With an online calendar, readers can check events on their phones.



— KAW VALLEY —  
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## SAVVY SENIOR



# Is long-term care insurance worth it?

JIM MILLER

**Dear Savvy Senior:** My husband and I have been thinking about getting a long-term care insurance policy, but we hate the idea of paying expensive monthly premiums for a policy we may never use. Is long-term care insurance worth it? - Approaching Retirement

**Dear Approaching:** Two key factors can help you decide whether buying a long-term care (LTC) insurance policy is a smart decision for you and your husband. One factor is your financial situation, and the second is your health history. Currently, around 7.5 million Americans own a policy.

## Who Needs LTC Insurance?

As the cost of LTC—which includes nursing home, assisted living, and in-home care—continues to rise, it's important to know that most people pay for LTC either from personal savings or Medicaid when their savings are depleted, or through an LTC insurance policy.

The national median average cost for nursing home care today is over \$100,000 a year, according to the Genworth Cost of Care survey. Assisted living facilities and home care aides average more than \$65,000/year.

While national statistics show

that about 70 percent of Americans 65 and older will need some kind of LTC, many people don't need to purchase LTC insurance. This stems from a range of factors, including the fact that relatively few people have enough wealth to make purchasing a policy worthwhile.

Another important factor is that most seniors who need LTC only need it for a short period, for exam-

ple, while recovering from surgery. For those people, Medicare covers in-home health care and nursing home stays of 100 days or fewer following a hospital stay of more than three consecutive days.

## So, who should consider buying a policy?

LTC insurance makes the most sense for people who have investable

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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# Savvy Senior

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

assets of \$500,000 to around \$2 million that they want to protect. Anything less, and you will likely deplete your resources and go on Medicaid for LTC coverage. Anything more, and you can probably afford to pay for care yourself.

Another factor to weigh is your personal health and family health history. The two most common reasons seniors need extended long-term care is because of dementia and/or disability. And, almost half of all people who live in nursing homes are 85 years or older. So, what's your family history for Alzheimer's, stroke or some other disabling health condition, and do you have a family history of longevity?

You also need to factor in gender too. Because women tend to live longer than men, they are at greater

risk of needing extended LTC.

## Choosing LTC Coverage

After evaluating your situation, if you're leaning towards buying a LTC policy, be aware that premiums can vary widely. According to the American Association for Long-Term Care Insurance, premiums for a policy bought by a couple who are both age 65 for a benefit pool of \$165,000 each, with a 3 percent inflation rider, ranged from \$7,137 to \$8,493 a year.

You can buy LTC insurance from an insurance company or through an agent. Or you might also be able to buy a policy at work. Be sure to get quotes from several sources for the same coverage to compare prices.

There are two main types of

long-term care coverage you'll want to consider. Traditional LTC insurance, which is "use it or lose it." And hybrid policies that combine LTC coverage with life-insurance benefits. These policies promise that if you don't end up needing long-term care, your beneficiaries will receive a death benefit. Both types of policies require medical underwriting to qualify.

Another hybrid product to consider is an income annuity that

includes a provision to increase your payout if you need LTC. However, the payout may not cover the full cost of care, and the added cost of this provision, known as a rider, can reduce the standard payout from the annuity.

- Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit [SavvySenior.org](http://SavvySenior.org). Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book.



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## NORTH

♠ J 9 7  
♥ A 2  
♦ A K 8 6  
♣ 9 7 6 5

## WEST

♠ 6 5 2  
♥ 8 6 5  
♦ J 9 3  
♣ A K 10 4

## EAST

♠ 4 3  
♥ 9 7 4 3  
♦ Q 10 5  
♣ Q J 8 2

## SOUTH

♠ A K Q 10 8  
♥ K Q J 10  
♦ 7 4 2  
♣ 3

The bidding:

| NORTH | EAST | SOUTH | WEST     |
|-------|------|-------|----------|
| 1♦    | Pass | 1♠    | Pass     |
| 1NT   | Pass | 2♣*   | Pass     |
| 2♠    | Pass | 4♣**  | Pass     |
| 4♦    | Pass | 4NT   | Pass     |
| 5♥    | Pass | 6♠    | All pass |

\*New Minor Forcing

\*\*Slam try with shortness in clubs

Opening lead: Ace of ♣

South's two-club bid asked opener if he held either four hearts or three spades. He followed that up with a bid sometimes referred to as a "self splinter", which was a slam try in his

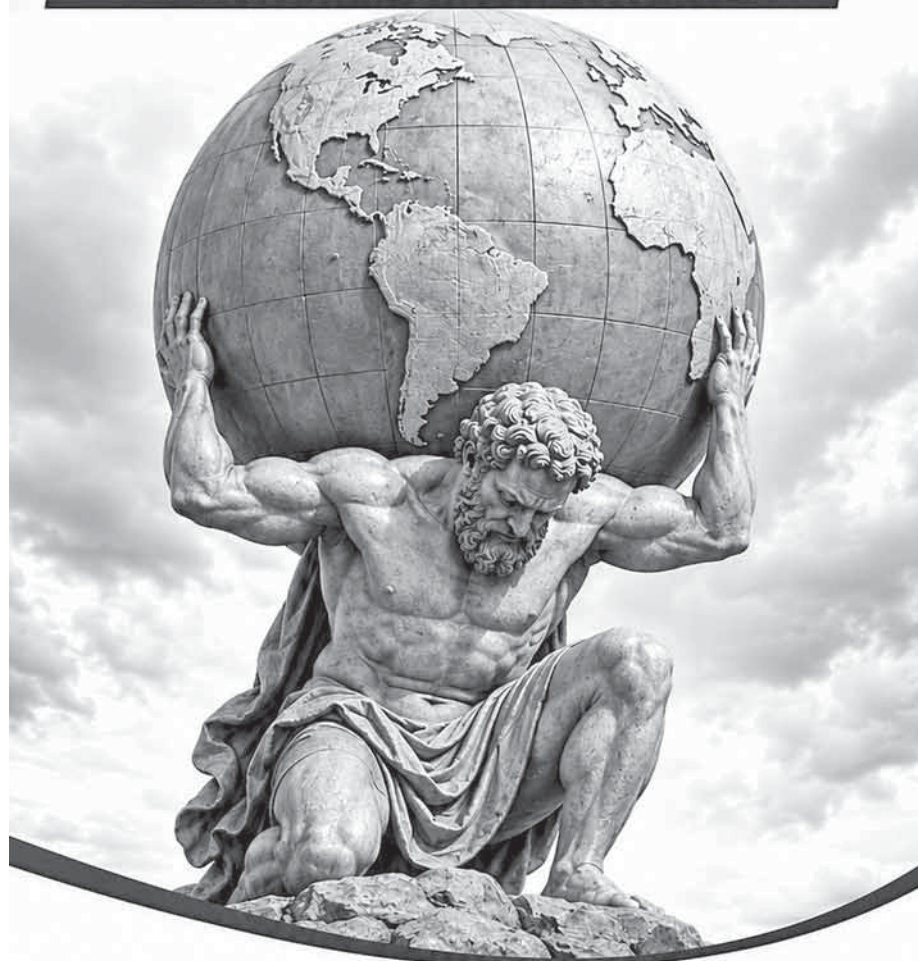
own suit. South drove to slam when North made a control bid of four diamonds.

South was disappointed to see that he only had 11 top tricks. Where could he find a twelfth? One chance was to cash two spades and the ace and king of diamonds. Four rounds of hearts would allow him to discard both of dummy's low diamonds and then ruff a diamond in dummy. This would need the opponent with the long trumps to follow suit to four rounds of hearts – not a strong chance. South saw a different line of play that he liked better.

West shifted to a spade at trick two, which South took care to win in dummy with the nine. Declarer ruffed a club in hand, cashed the ace of spades, and crossed to dummy with the ace of diamonds. He ruffed another club and crossed back to dummy with the king of diamonds. South ruffed another club, this time with his last spade. He led a heart to the ace and cashed the jack of spades to draw the last trump. He claimed his slam with three high hearts remaining. A beautiful dummy reversal. Very nicely played!

(Bob Jones welcomes readers' responses sent in care of this paper.)

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By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



2-22-26

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# PUZZLES & GAMES

## CROSSWORD

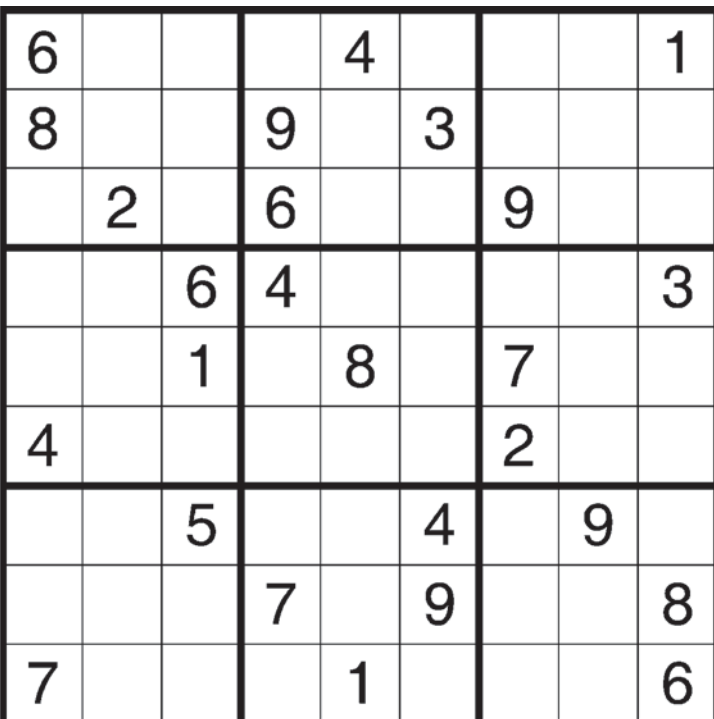
### Across

- 1 Mazda two-seater  
6 Nerve centers  
10 A bit open  
14 "What a bummer!"  
15 Soon, quaintly  
16 Small bay  
17 Part of a cross-examination  
20 French 10  
21 Salt Lake City college athletes  
22 Female sheep  
23 Mint family herb  
26 Earlier than  
29 High school honor that may come with a tiara  
31 Pa. neighbor  
34 Having five sharps, on a score  
35 One of a kind  
36 Nobleman's address  
39 Adjust, as wheels  
41 \_\_\_ non grata

- 42 Flee  
43 Verdi opera set in Egypt  
44 Hibernation spot  
45 Tackle the slopes  
46 Highlighted excerpt in an article  
48 WNBA official  
51 Spoils  
52 Place for the Torah  
55 Stella \_\_\_ cookies  
56 Pro vote  
58 "Behave!," and an apt title for this puzzle  
64 "Got it"  
65 Future atty.'s exam  
66 Give a quick review  
67 Moist  
68 "Sisters" Emmy winner Ward  
69 Writing class writing assignment

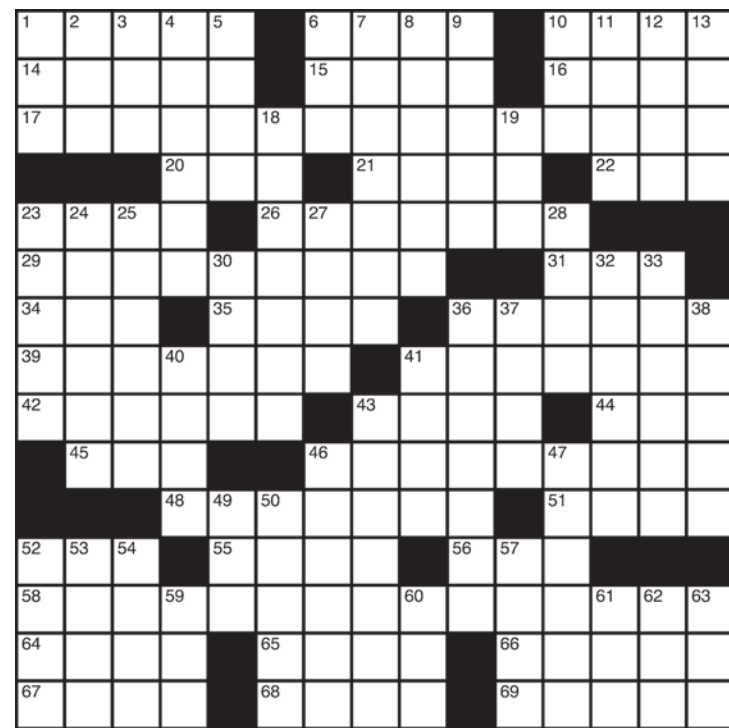
### Down

- 1 Waze display



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

- 2 \_\_\_ Jima  
3 French buddy  
4 Cannondale two-seater  
5 Not voting 56-Across  
6 Owned  
7 Mentally restless  
8 Pitcher Jim who wrote the 1970 memoir "Ball Four"  
9 Show scorn  
10 Put on a show  
11 \_\_\_ de vivre  
12 Affirm  
13 Painter Magritte  
18 Strike, as from a formal record  
19 Retired fast jet, briefly  
23 Steeple topper  
24 James of "Gunsmoke"  
25 Turn around  
27 Bridle strap  
28 Hooting birds  
30 Witty remark  
32 Louisiana religion with African roots  
33 Will who voices Lego Batman  
36 Musical mixtures  
37 Basra's country  
38 "Fleishman Is in Trouble" actress Claire

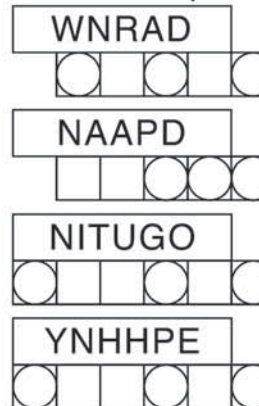


- 40 Hibernation spot  
41 Heap  
43 Like the northern lights  
46 Read carefully  
47 Seventh planet from the sun  
49 Big name in ice cream  
50 April \_\_\_ Day  
52 Surrounded by  
53 Set's opposite  
54 Was aware of  
57 Loosen (up)  
59 Susan of "L.A. Law"  
60 School support org.  
61 Private chats on soc. media  
62 Sine \_\_\_ non  
63 Asset in a covert op

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## JUMBLE

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



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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME  
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

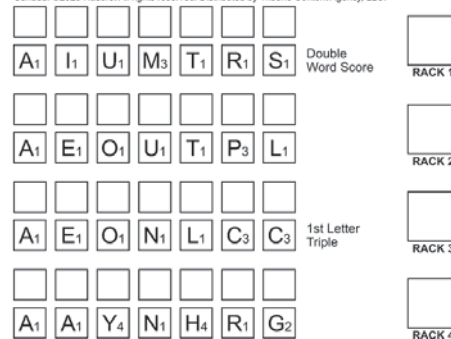


Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.



## SCRABBLE G R A M S

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PAR SCORE 150-160  
BEST SCORE 207

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

01-03

Answers to all puzzles on page 30

## HUMOR HOTEL



## My Facebook 'friends' won't have me to kick around anymore

GREG SCHWEM

Since joining Facebook more than 10 years ago, I have amassed nearly 1,200 "friends." I place that word in quotation marks, for I have grown skeptical of its online meaning.

Take, for example, a post I created days after visiting the recently

opened Obama Presidential Center in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. Securing tickets to the museum is about as easy as walking up to President Obama's house, ringing the doorbell and asking if he and Michelle are free for dinner this evening. Nevertheless, one can stroll

through the nearly 20-acre campus free of charge, admiring architecture, foliage and artwork while learning about the former first couple.

My companion and I spent over two hours doing just that. At one point, I handed my phone to a passerby and requested she take some photos of us. She complied and why not? One can feel the friendly, accepting atmosphere that wafts over the campus, exactly the tone I'm sure President Obama envisioned.

That feeling evaporates should one decide to post their photos to Facebook.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23



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## October Birthdays

### 90 Years Old

**Oct. 3,** Steve Reich, composer  
**Oct. 9,** Brian Blessed, English actor

**Oct. 22,** Bobby Seale, American political activist  
**Oct. 24,** Bill Wyman, English rock guitarist  
**Oct. 30,** Dick Vermeil, former NFL coach

### 80 Years Old

**Oct. 4,** Susan Sarandon, actress  
**Oct. 10,** Charles Dance, English actor, screenwriter and film director  
**Oct. 11,** Daryl Hall, rock musician (Hall & Oates)  
**Oct. 14,** Justin Hayward, English rock singer-songwriter (The Moody Blues)  
**Oct. 15,** Richard Carpenter (The Carpenters)  
**Oct. 26,** Pat Sajak, (Wheel of Fortune)

### 70 Years Old

**Oct. 8,** Stephanie Zimbalist, actress (*Remington Steele*)  
**Oct. 17,** Mae Jemison, African-American astronaut  
**Oct. 18,** Martina Navratilova, Czech-American tennis player  
**Oct. 23,** Dwight Yoakam, country singer  
**Oct. 26,** Rita Wilson, actress and producer

# Humor Hotel

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

Moments after doing just that, a “friend” named Donald (not THAT Donald, another one) pounced.

“Why did you go to this?” Donald wrote. “Obama was and is the worst. Deserves no respect ever.”

Rather than immediately block Donald, an easy fix when faced with haters and trolls on social media, I engaged. But not through the ugly name calling that has made apps like Facebook such a stain on our ability to respect, albeit begrudgingly, opinions contrary to ours. Instead, I asked Donald why he thought it necessary to post vitriol over somebody’s Saturday afternoon plans. I asked Donald if he thought doing so would dissuade others from visiting the campus.

Other “friends” were less civil. Within days, Donald and Steve were engaged in a verbal altercation, hurling insults such as “TDS (Trump Derangement Syndrome) and liberalism on full display” and “ignorant, uneducated vile Nazi MAGA.” Donald also commented on Steve’s physical appearance, even though I’m certain these two have never met

in person.

I don’t condone these types of exchanges, for they solve nothing. I doubt even Mark Zuckerberg envisioned this hatred when he was creating Facebook in his Harvard dorm room. And yet, I value friendship and don’t wish to lose “friends,” even those in quotation marks.

So, to appease Donald and to keep Steve’s blood pressure from spiking any further, I have decided to keep politics out of my Facebook feeds. By that, I mean I will no longer post photos of anything connected to any U.S. President, living or dead.

For example, don’t expect to see pictures of trips I take to Houston. One might assume I arrived there via George Bush Intercontinental Airport. Our nation’s 41st president certainly had his share of detractors.

“Friends” will never know if I visited the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, or the Richard Nixon Memorial Library just down the road in Yorba Linda. Both leaders were highly controversial figures and one’s presidency crumbled on national television. I’ve seen Mount Rushmore once but will definitely keep my phone in my pocket should I visit again. What would my “friends” think if they saw

Thomas Jefferson, a notorious slave owner, in the background?

Heck, now I’m wondering if I should even traverse the John F. Kennedy expressway? Sure, it’s my primary thoroughfare to get to O’Hare International Airport, which I use to fly to locations worldwide (save Houston). But do I REALLY wish to drive on a highway named after a president known for powerful speeches but also for alleged out-of-wedlock dalliances and associations with Mafia figures? This is how “friendships” end.

Oh no, I just opened my wallet and saw a \$20 bill containing Andrew Jackson’s mug. That’s right, the same Andrew Jackson who signed the Indian Removal Act of 1830, resulting in the heartbreaking Trail of Tears. I should exchange this \$20 for four fives. Abraham Lincoln seemed like a good guy. Or maybe I’ll just carry around a \$100 bill. I’ve never

heard anyone badmouth Benjamin Franklin.

Yes, from now on I will limit my Facebook photos to scenes free from controversy. That way all my “friends” will have nothing to criticize me for. This weekend maybe I’ll visit an animal shelter, rescue an adorable looking dog and post a photo of the two of us frolicking in a park.

Wait, wasn’t Joe Biden’s dog Major a rescue? Never mind.

- 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](http://www.gregschwem.com).

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## MY PET WORLD



## Helping reactive and senior dogs thrive

CATHY M. ROSENTHAL

**Dear Cathy:** I am desperate for help with my adopted, six-year-old mixed terrier. My dog is extremely reactive to people and dogs, so I cannot trust him except in our house where he is loving and obedient. I have been to a behaviorist, three weeks of daily training as well as one on one with a reputable trainer. Lastly, he got suspended from day care because he never adjusted to playing with other pups. He is taking Sertraline and occasionally Trazadone. He is also a biter, and has bitten several people. I would love your thoughts. — Margie, Virginia

**Dear Margie:** Reactive dogs rarely improve because of one “magic fix.” Instead, they usually benefit from the right combination of medication, behavior modification, training, and thoughtful management. Work closely with your veterinarian, a veterinary behaviorist, and trainer, and don’t be discouraged as it can take months (not weeks) to find the combination that works best for your dog. Behavior change is rarely quick, but consistent management and training can make a remarkable difference over time.

Also, pay close attention to what triggers your dog’s reactions. Is it people approaching head-on, other dogs, bicycles, or crowded places? Learning his triggers and recognizing the early signs that he’s becoming uncomfortable, like stiffening, staring, closing his mouth, or refusing treats, allows you to calmly increase the distance before he reacts. The more often you can prevent a reac-

tion, the more opportunities you create for him to practice staying calm.

Just as important is setting your dog up to succeed. Walk him during quieter times of the day (or night), avoid situations that consistently overwhelm him, and look for opportunities where he can remain calm and successful. Every positive experience helps build confidence.

Because your dog has a bite history, I strongly encourage you to train him to comfortably wear a basket muzzle whenever he is around people outside your immediate household. A properly fitted basket muzzle allows a dog to pant, breathe normally, and drink water—and prevent a bite. Introduce it gradually with treats and positive reinforcement so it becomes just another part of going out, much like putting on a leash. Besides protecting others, it protects your dog and gives you greater peace of mind.

Success doesn’t necessarily mean having a dog who loves every person

or every dog. It means helping him feel safe enough to navigate the world with greater confidence while accepting that you will likely always need to manage some situations. He may never become the social dog you imagined, but he can still be a wonderful companion and enrich your life in countless ways.

— Cathy M. Rosenthal is a long-time 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](mailto:cathy@petpundit.com). Please include your name, city, and state. You can follow her @cathymrosenthal.

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- Lights at Houston Botanical Garden
- National Museum of Funeral History
- Prestonwood Baptist Church Christmas Program
- Bedré Fine Chocolate
- 3 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches, 4 Dinners
- Arrow Motor Coach
- Escorted from Topeka, KS, Fairlawn Plaza

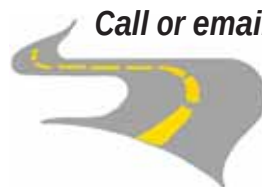
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## SERIOUSLY SIMPLE



## My fallback roasted potatoes are easily customizable

DIANE ROSSEN WORTHINGTON

Simple seasonings coat these crisp, golden-brown potatoes, making them a good accompaniment to most main courses. I think of this recipe as my fallback potatoes that always come out perfect. I like to blanch the potatoes for a couple of minutes so the interior is cooked through. Little Yukon Golds are my favorite variety for their creamy interior texture. If you can't find them, try other baby potato varieties.

This is one of those recipes that you can put your own signature on. Switch out lemon juice for white wine or use melted tallow instead of butter and oil. Add a touch of grated

Parmesan cheese once the potatoes are done for a slightly cheesy flavor. Other herbs that work nicely are mint and thyme. It is difficult to go wrong with this recipe, which is why they are my fallback potatoes. Try them with scrambled eggs, roasted chicken, steaks, lamb chops or braised fish. Anything goes!

### Roasted Baby Potatoes with Lemon Butter and Fresh Herbs

*Serves 4 to 6*

2 1/2 pounds baby potatoes, Yukon Gold preferred, washed and unpeeled, if large cut in half

2 tablespoon melted unsalted

DREAMTIME/TCA



**Put your own signature on these potatoes.**

butter

1/4 cup olive oil

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1/4 teaspoon paprika

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

1/2 teaspoon ground white

pepper

2 tablespoons finely chopped

fresh herbs like basil, chives, rosemary and Italian parsley

1. Preheat an oven to 425 F. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the potatoes to the water and blanch the potatoes for 3 minutes. Drain and dry well. Transfer the potatoes to a parchment-lined sheet pan.

2. Stir together the butter, olive oil, lemon juice, paprika salt and

pepper in a small bowl. Pour butter mixture over the potatoes with a large spoon, coat the potatoes evenly with the butter mixture.

3. Roast the potatoes, turning every 15 minutes, until tender and golden brown, about 45 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Garnish with fresh herbs, spoon into a serving bowl and serve immediately.

- 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](http://www.seriouslysimple.com).

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# Ten fall festivals worth the drive in Northeast Kansas

October is made for day trips. The leaves turn, the air cools, and small towns roll out their best festivals. Here are 10, in date order:

**1. Junction City Oktoberfest** (Oct. 2-3). Downtown Junction City draws big crowds, with a kids' zone, escape room, street dance, live bands and local beer vendors. Organizers say the sixth year will be even bigger. Expect brats and schnitzel, so come hungry. [www.junctioncityoktoberfest.com](http://www.junctioncityoktoberfest.com)

**2. Oztoberfest**, Wamego (Oct. 3). Downtown Wamego becomes the Yellow Brick Road, with an Oz costume contest, a Toto look-alike contest, an outdoor craft market, a classic car show and a beer and wine garden. The Oz Museum unveils new treasures, and Wamego introduces the world's tallest Toto statue. [www.visitwamego.com/oztoberfest](http://www.visitwamego.com/oztoberfest)

**3. Louisburg Ciderfest** (Oct. 3-4). Watch cider made fresh at the Louisburg Cider Mill, then sample cider and doughnuts, ride ponies, and shop craft booths. It is a sweet, unhurried outing. [www.louisburgcidermill.com/ciderfest](http://www.louisburgcidermill.com/ciderfest)

**4. Atchison Oktoberfest** (Oct. 3). Sponsored by Atchison's Junior Guild, this festival has featured over 100 booths of handmade arts. Afterward, take a narrated trolley tour of what Atchison bills as the most haunted town in Kansas.

**5. Shawnee Indian Mission Fall Festival**, Fairway (Oct. 10). This festival features living-history demonstrations of butter churning, paper making, and rope weaving, plus folk music, crafters, and food trucks. The site is a National Historic Landmark. In past years, a suggested \$2 donation supported the Mission. [\[dianmission.org/event/fall-festival\]\(http://dianmission.org/event/fall-festival\)](http://shawneein-</a></p>
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**6. Holton Fall Fest** (Oct. 10). The Jackson County Courtyard fills with 40-plus vendors, a chili cook-off and a scarecrow decorating contest. It is a friendly small-town Saturday.

**7. Seneca Oktoberfest** (Oct. 10). Recent years have offered a relaxed 5K Volksmarch walk, a Main Street craft fair, and a historical society open house with German heritage displays. [www.comeseeseneca.com/oktoberfest](http://www.comeseeseneca.com/oktoberfest)

**8. Hildebrand Farms Dairy Harvest Festival**, Junction City (Oct. 10). This free festival at a Flint Hills dairy west of town offers farm tours, hay rack rides, live music and a picnic lunch. The farm store sells milk in old-fashioned glass bottles

and soft-serve ice cream.

**9. Maple Leaf Festival**, Baldwin City (Oct. 17-18). Begun in 1958, it is the area's biggest fall family event, with over 300 craft exhibits, a Saturday parade and a quilt show. Free shuttles and a tram help visitors get around, and an excursion train runs both days. [mapleleafestival.com](http://mapleleafestival.com)

**10 Black Squirrel Fall Fest**, Marysville (Oct. 24). Marysville has been "Black Squirrel City" since 1972. Expect church-made carnival treats, a cake walk and live music along Broadway. [nemarysville.com/events/black-squirrel-fall-fest](http://nemarysville.com/events/black-squirrel-fall-fest)

Before you go: confirm times and admission with each event, and wear comfortable shoes. Most of these festivals are walking events.

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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](http://cdavidbooks.com) for more information or to order a copy.

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## RICK STEVES' EUROPE



# Italy connoisseurs choose leisurely Lucca

RICK STEVES

On a sunny summer evening in Lucca, Italy, I was inspired by the simple joy of watching an old man bicycling with his granddaughter atop the wide, fortified wall that once protected this proud city from its enemies—and now corrals its Old World charm. Then, on rented bikes, a group of chatty tourists frolicked by. Their enthusiasm was contagious. Squinting at the energy in their smiles, surrounded by dazzling sunshine, it struck me that the sun in Italy seems to have a special glint. It's as if it's telling visitors, "Embrace life!"

Lucca has no single monumental sight. It's simply a uniquely human and well-preserved city. Despite being seen as the "touristic" center, the mostly traffic-free old town actually feels more local than touristy (aside from a few cruise excursions from nearby Livorno that pass through each day).

Lucca began as a Roman settlement. In fact, the grid layout of the streets (and the shadow of an amphitheater) survives from Roman times. As was typical for Roman towns, Lucca's two main roads quartered the fortified town, crossing at what was the forum—the main market and religious/political center (today's Piazza San Michele). The amphitheater sat just outside the original Roman walls.

The city is a bit of a paradox; while it has Europe's mightiest Renaissance wall, it hasn't seen a battle since 1430. A friend once explained to me the difference between a Renaissance wall and a medieval wall: Medieval walls are thin, because with weapons like arrows and stones, there was no need for thick fortification. But in Renaissance times, the advent of powerful cannons introduced the need for thicker, more substantial walls—like Lucca's.

RICK STEVES' EUROPE



**Unique, simply human Lucca** has no single monumental sight – and perhaps because of this, feels more local than touristy.

These days, locals treat their ramparts like a circular park. And, with plenty of rental bikes available, visitors can enjoy a lazy pedal around its two-and-a-half-mile circuit. It's a wonderfully smooth 20-to-30-minute ride, depending on how fast you go and how crowded the wall-top park is. The best people-

watching—and slowest pedaling—is during "passeggiata" time, just before dinner, when it seems all of Lucca is out doing slow laps around the wall.

In its heyday, Lucca packed 70 churches and over 100 towers within its walls. Each tower was the home and private fortress of a wealthy

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

# ENT

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# Rick Steves

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

merchant family, and offered a safe, all-in-one structure to live, work, and garden. Interiors were single rooms stacked atop each other: shop, living room, and then the kitchen, all connected by exterior wooden staircases. The rooftop was generally a vegetable garden, with trees providing shade. Later, the wealthy city folk moved into the countryside, trading away life in their city palazzos to establish farm estates complete with fancy villas.

Among Lucca's towers, Romanesque churches seem to lurk around every corner, as do fun-loving piazzas filled with soccer-playing children. The main pedestrian drag here is Via Fillungo, which connects the town's two busiest squares: Piazza dell'Anfiteatro and Piazza San Michele. Between the two, you can get a taste of Lucca's rich past, including several elegant, century-old storefronts.

At delightful Piazza dell'Anfiteatro, you'll feel the architectural ghost of the town's Roman amphitheater. With the fall of Rome, the theater (which seated 10,000) was gradually cannibalized for its stones and inhabited by people living in a mishmash of huts. The huts were cleared away in the mid-19th century to better show off the town's illustrious past and make one purely secular square for the town market (every other square is dominated by a church). While the arena's long gone, its oval shape is a reminder of the city's classical heritage.

Piazza San Michele also has ancient roots. It's hosted a market since Roman times, when it was the forum. Today it's dominated by the Church of San Michele. Towering above its fancy Romanesque facade, the archangel Michael stands ready to flap his wings—which, thanks to

a crude mechanical contraption, he actually did on special occasions.

Nearby, the Church of San Giovanni hosts nightly concerts celebrating the music of hometown composer Giacomo Puccini. One of Italy's greatest opera stars, Puccini is the genius behind the likes of La Bohème, Madame Butterfly, and Tosca. His delightful arias seem to capture the spirit of this wonderful corner of Italy.

While neighboring Pisa has the famous tipsy tower you can climb, lesser-known Lucca is a favorite stop for many Italy connoisseurs. It's just a 30-minute train ride from Pisa and an hour's drive from Florence—but just because you can easily tack Lucca onto a day trip doesn't mean it should be rushed. If you have time for more than a touristy quickie at nearby Pisa, consider slowing down, grabbing a gelato, and basking in Lucca's genu-

ine charm.

- Rick Steves ([www.ricksteves.com](http://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](mailto:rick@ricksteves.com) and follow his blog on Facebook.

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# MY ANSWER



# We were made to know God

BILLY GRAHAM

**Q:** I've watched many worldly people use religion to gain fame, and many of them find it regardless of truly believing the religion they represent. The point is, they've found a pathway to be successful. Is this wrong? – F.F.

**A:** King Solomon was convinced he knew how to find happiness—and because he had vast resources at his command, he was able to pursue it. Wealth, fame, pleasure, power, lavish houses, a reputation for wisdom—you name it, King Solomon achieved it. And yet after gaining everything he had ever wanted, he reluctantly concluded that his life was still empty

and without meaning. His search for lasting happiness had failed, and his soul was still empty.

This is a common story. Many people are in danger of making the same mistake King Solomon made, convinced that the things of this world will bring happiness and peace, pursuing them with vigor. Don't be deceived; this will never lead to true happiness. And the reason is because we were made to know God.

King Solomon finally realized this. He should have known it sooner; after all, his father, David, was a man after God's own heart, and Solomon himself had vowed to live according

to God's wisdom. But when it was all said and done, Solomon wrote, "I denied myself nothing ... Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless" (Ecclesiastes 2:10–11, NIV). Don't be misled (even as the wise king was), but make Christ the center and foundation of your life – beginning today.

The world makes a lot of empty promises concerning happiness – what it looks like and how to obtain it. Joy comes to those who delight in the things of the Lord and walk with Him.

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

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| PAR SCORE 150-160            |                |                |                |                |                |                | TOTAL    | 207 |  |

# JUMBLE ANSWERS

Jumbles: DRAWN, PANDA, OUTING, HYPHEN

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A woman with short grey hair, wearing a red bandana, glasses, a blue denim jacket over a green patterned shirt, dark pants, and black rubber boots with blue trim, is sitting on a wooden bench. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. To her left is a small brown goat with a black collar. To her right is a larger black and white goat. The background shows bare trees and a wooden structure, suggesting a farm or park setting.

# *Thank you*

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