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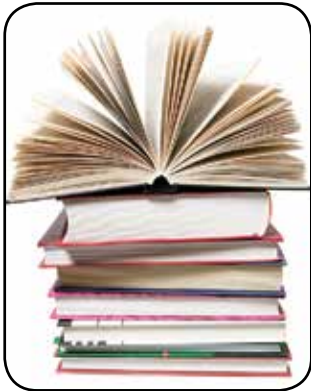
News and Possibilities for Seniors

January 2017 • Free

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Downsizing tips from moving experts

By Alicia M. Colombo

Moving is stressful at any age. When you add a lifetime of memories and “stuff,” the thought of leaving your established comfort zone can become overwhelming. The emotional and physical benefits of decluttering and moving from a single-family home to a smaller, more manageable living environment – such as a one-floor condo, senior apartment complex or assisted living facility – are likely to make the process worthwhile in the end.

To make the transition easier, seniors and their caregivers can seek the help of professionals, known as “senior move managers,” who are trained to help with the entire moving process. “Deciding where the furniture will go is the tip of the iceberg. That’s about 15 percent of the work,” said Margit Novack, president of Moving Solutions and founding president of the National Association of Senior Move Managers. She started Moving Solutions in 1996 to provide relocation and downsizing assistance to older adults in Southeastern Pennsylvania, Lehigh Valley, New Jersey and Delaware.

All the decisions are on the smaller items. We tend to be very pragmatic when sorting through items,” Novack said. “On a larger scale, we help clients plan and implement their moves. We help them develop move plans and timetables. Most people are only focused on the ‘stuff’ and don’t understand the importance of the larger plan.”

Even when seniors have children or other family members to assist, the tasks may be unmanageable in the time allotted. “Moving from your current home can be an overwhelming experience. But with careful planning and the right support services, the emotional and physical stress of the move can be minimized,” said Marlene H. K. Stocks, owner and president of Senior Transition Services Inc., a company



Photo courtesy of Senior Transition Services Inc.

Marlene H. K. Stocks of Senior Transition Services Inc. meets with client Frank Carbonell to review the floor plan for his new home.

in Huntingdon Valley, Pa. that’s worked with seniors in the Greater Philadelphia and South Jersey area for 10 years. “Our goal is to make each transition as seamless and worry-free as possible. We assist from start to finish with decluttering the current home in preparation for sale, creating a tailored floor plan of the new home, sorting possessions, coordinating the packing and moving of contents, unpacking the boxes and recreating the feeling of home, helping to sell treasures of value, donating articles to charity, and discarding the trash.”

When you realize it’s time for you or a loved one to move, many big questions might flood your mind. Here are some recommendations and advice from the moving professionals.

Helping a senior move

“I would strongly encourage the adult children or caregivers to be patient with the person in transition and allow them to make their own decisions, with some gentle guidance,” Stocks said. “All too often, well-mean-

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Choosing Change

When seniors can no longer manage alone

By Marcia Z. Siegal

Maybe it’s the empty refrigerator. Or the unopened mail piling up. Or a crisis – like a fall and a broken bone. There can be many signs that a senior can no longer manage alone. (See additional information on page 17.)

Having the conversation

Ideally, families should have proactive conversations about care planning well before the need is there. Questions like, “What would be your preference if you could no longer care for yourself?” and “Where do you see yourself living when you get older?” can help get the conversation started.

Unfortunately, many elders and their families wait until a health crisis occurs and ignore the warning signs that precede it. “It’s often hard for parents to admit that they need help, and no one wants to lose their independence,” said geriatric psychologist Melissa Henston. “But daily living tasks sometimes get to be too much as we age, and it’s important for family members and loved ones

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Milestones file photo

One of the signs that an older adult has trouble managing alone can be the inability to take medications correctly.

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Health Brief

Strategies to tame winter skin woes

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

We can name summer skin hazards in two seconds flat – sunburn, bug bites, poison plants. But winter skin woes may slip under our radar. That information gap could leave us vulnerable in a season in which skin needs more attention. Luckily, a few tips and low-cost precautions can help prevent cold-weather skin problems.

Don't let freezing temperatures

become extremely dry due to the heating system," he said. "You may develop itching if that's the case. A humidifier in your bedroom and your TV room may restore a healthy level of humidity."

Over-the-counter products may also help to solve the problem. A moisturizing soap or body wash made for sensitive skin can be beneficial. "Such soaps tend to dry the skin less than other kinds," Kligman said. In addition, keep in mind the temperature of your shower or bath, he said. Extremely hot water may be a tempting way to warm up fast, but the heat can trigger itching.

Wintertime activities may include indoor swimming, a great exercise, but remember that chlorine is extremely drying, Kligman pointed out. He advised taking a bath or shower as soon as you leave the pool to wash off the chlorine, then using an inexpensive cream or lotion that contains urea, glycerin or petrolatum; those ingredients soothe the skin and help moisturize it after a bath or shower. Read

the label to avoid products that contain alcohol, Kligman added. "Alcohol is drying. If you tend to develop scaling, choose a cream or lotion that has lactic acid." To be on the safe side, purchase a fragrance-free product since even lightly scented creams sometimes irritate the skin.

Scalp dryness, like many skin problems, often becomes more accentuated in winter due to low humidity, Kligman noted. "Try to use dandruff shampoos that contain zinc, salicylic acid or tar if you have excessive scaling," he said. "Always use a conditioner to restore some of the sebum, or oil, stripped off by shampooing."

Your skin is your body's largest organ, the American Academy of Dermatology in Washington, D.C., points out. Giving it a little more care in winter can pay off in helping to maintain your overall health and appearance.

Constance Garcia-Barrio is a freelance writer and author of a novel based on African-American history in Philadelphia.



Milestones file photo

Dryness is among the problems that can plague skin in winter.

lull you into shelving your sunscreen. "Wear sunscreen if you'll be outside for a length of time, particularly if you're fair-skinned or you've had prior skin cancer or numerous sunburns," said Douglas Kligman, M.D., chief of the dermatology department at Chestnut Hill Hospital. "Even in winter, you'll get a lot of ultraviolet rays." Eighty-six percent of melanomas "are associated with exposure to ultraviolet radiation," according to the Skin Cancer Foundation in New York City. If you're concerned about getting enough vitamin D, the "sunshine vitamin" essential for strong bones and a healthy immune system, the Skin Cancer Foundation recommends a supplement of 600 IU (international units) daily, or 800 IU for people 70 or older.

Dryness leads the list of culprits behind indoor winter skin problems. As skin ages, it's more prone to dryness, Kligman noted, and winter can add to the problem. "Air in the home may

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Free Library delivers books, films and more to homebound Philadelphians

By Marcia Z. Siegal

Joan Albright counts on the Free Library of Philadelphia's (FLP's) Homebound Services for home deliveries of the books she loves. The program provides books, periodicals, films and music from the library's extensive collections to Philadelphians who are unable to visit their local library because of age, illness or transportation issues.

"I particularly like murder mysteries, but mysteries which also make you laugh, like the Stephanie Plum series by Janet Evanovich," Albright said.

For the past several years, Albright ordered books by calling Homebound Services Supervisor Tamoul (Tee) Quakhaan. While the two have never met in person, they got to know each other well. "I would call her up and say 'Tee, what do you have for me?' She knew the kind of books I liked. Sometimes she would call me on her own to say, 'Guess what just came in? Something I know you'll like,'" said Albright, whose

literary preferences also include James Patterson and Lisa Scottoline, among others. Since Quakhaan recently left her post, Albright has been getting to

know Quakhaan's successor, Lisa-Jane Erwin, and "training" her to be on the alert for her favorite authors and other books that would appeal to her.

Bert Kornfeld was already well known to the staff at FLP's Parkway Central Library before he became homebound. An opera aficionado who had sung with the Philadelphia Opera Co., he frequented the library's music section for librettos and musical scores. Now, through Homebound Services, he orders scores for upcoming opera broadcasts on WRTI radio to enhance his listening pleasure.

"We absolutely love this service," said his wife, Adel Kornfeld, who first met Bert when the two were auditioning to sing for a local opera company. "It's a godsend. It enables us to get opera scores and follow along with the broadcast when we don't have the score in our own collection."

Adel also gets books delivered. Her latest order was for Shakespeare's "Henry IV."

During her time supervising Homebound Services, Quakhaan enjoyed getting to know borrowers through telephone conversations when they placed their orders. Thinking that it would be worthwhile for borrowers to get to know each other as well, she launched a monthly newsletter for participants to announce birthdays and other life events and post book reviews. "It became something to connect them," she said.

The newsletter continues under her successor. Erwin also brings another passion to her new job. A former social worker who dealt mainly with senior citizens, she uses her knowledge of senior resources on behalf of the older adults served by the program.

However, while Homebound Services is primarily used by seniors, it is not exclusively for them, she points out. Erwin is eager to spread the word about all the program has to offer. "It gives access to information and entertainment not always available to people who are homebound. Even if you don't need this for yourself, there might be a friend, a family member or a neighbor who does," she said.

Applications for a homebound library card are taken over the telephone. The homebound card has an extended loan period of up to six weeks, and no fines are levied on overdue materials. Books can be requested by title, and assistance is offered in selecting books by category. When a requested item is not available in FLP's collection, efforts are made to procure it through interlibrary loan.

For more information, call Homebound Services at 215-686-5411 or email ErwinL@freelibrary.org.

Contact Marcia Z. Siegal at msiegal@pcaphl.org.

Photo by Paola Noguera



Lisa-Jane Erwin, Homebound Services supervisor at the Free Library of Philadelphia, takes an order from one of her regular customers.

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Timing hip replacement surgery well

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

I said some choice words this spring after I learned that I needed hip replacement surgery. The operation meant pain and putting my life on pause, but at least I wasn't facing an emergency. "I tell my patients that hip replacement is an elective surgery," said Dr. Daniel Goldstein, a board-certified surgeon in the Einstein Healthcare Network. "No one ever died of osteoarthritis. You have leeway in setting the date."

To nail down the best time for this major surgery, I factored in my part-time job, personal plans and medical status.

Pain provides a guidepost for many people facing such operations, noted Dr. David Nazarian, an expert in hip and knee replacement at Pennsylvania Hospital. "If pain interferes with everyday activities, it may be time to talk with your surgeon," he said.

My friend Joyce delayed the operation because of the anticipated discomfort of recovery, but then an incident spurred her to act. "One day, I couldn't get on a SEPTA bus until another passenger got off and helped me," she said. "With the pain and the embarrassment, I knew it was time."

In my case, I came to find the situation more pressing than I'd originally thought. I'd gone to a spine specialist in March because of back pain, but the X-rays he'd ordered showed an extremely arthritic left hip. I'd had a few twinges from that hip, but nothing that alarmed me – that is, until I learned more in May from Nazarian. "A healthy hip acts as a shock absorber," he said, "but an arthritic hip can send the jolt from walking or running to the spine or the knee. That happens in up to 20 percent of the cases." Once I knew that the compromised hip could be aggravating my back, I had the surgery ASAP.

Besides the back issue, the season made a difference for me. I would be scheduled for surgery in July, which gave me 10 weeks to be healed enough to start teaching part-time in September.

If circumstances dictate putting off surgery, you can take steps to decrease your pain. "It seems counterintuitive, but walking has been shown to reduce pain," Goldstein said. "We were made to be upright and moving."



Photo by Konrad

Constance Garcia-Barrio considered a number of factors in scheduling her hip replacement surgery.

Medications also may help stave off surgery. The anti-inflammatory effect of glucosamine and chondroitin may reduce pain, Nazarian pointed out, but he added a caveat: "You have to wait two or three months to see if it works." He added that over-the-counter medications, like ibuprofen and naproxen, also may relieve the pain, and steroid injections can keep you feeling better for up to six months.

Alternative approaches, such as acupuncture, may buy time, too. "I've seen patients go from not being able to walk to getting back to their normal life with minimal pain," said Elise Rivers, owner of Community Acupuncture of Mount Airy. "I've also had patients who ultimately did the hip replacement but from a less dire place, which allowed them to choose when and how their surgery would happen."

Then again, delaying surgery may exact a price. "If you wait until you're in a wheelchair, it will probably take you longer to get back to normal," Goldstein said.

The bottom line is that timing hip replacement isn't a one-size-fits-all proposition. Look at your medical status and your personal situation to pinpoint the best time for surgery.

Constance Garcia-Barrio is a freelance writer and author of a novel based on African-American history in Philadelphia.

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Satisfying sweet potato recipes

There are several varieties of sweet potatoes, some of which are marketed as yams. These recipes are for the kind with a reddish skin and orange interior, as shown in the photo.



Easy in a microwave

If you have a microwave, it provides a quick and easy way to cook a sweet potato. Scrub the sweet potato well, then pierce in several places with a knife or fork. Put it in the microwave on a plate; depending on size, cook for 5-8 minutes on high. It's done when it is soft if you squeeze it.

If you do not have a microwave, bake in the oven. Preheat oven to 400°F. Scrub and pierce the potato as described above. Place on baking sheet lined with foil. Bake until tender, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Slice it in half, and serve with butter and salt, or brown sugar, according to your preference. Or stuff it, as in the recipe below.

Healthy Loaded Baked Sweet Potato (Serves 2)

Ingredients:

- 1 large sweet potato
- ½ cup plain low-fat yogurt or low-fat sour cream
- ½ cup black beans
- 2 tsp. chopped chives
- 2 tsp. lime juice
- ½ tsp. chili powder
- Pinch of salt

Instructions:

Microwave or bake the sweet potato. Mix yogurt or sour cream with lime juice and salt. Cover and refrigerate.

When sweet potato is done, allow to cool 5 minutes. Slice in half and mash gently.

Onto each half, spoon ¼ cup of the yogurt or sour cream, ¼ cup of black beans, a sprinkle of chives, and a light dusting of chili powder.

Jerk Chicken and Sweet Potatoes (Serves 4)

Sweet potatoes and chicken make this a satisfying one-dish dinner. A small amount of brown sugar adds flavor but not too many calories, and the cinnamon, cumin and ginger combine for a flavorful result.

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp., plus 1 tsp. grapeseed oil
- 2 large sweet potatoes, halved lengthwise, each half quartered into 4 wedges
- 8 scallions, ends trimmed but whole
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tbsp. light brown sugar
- 2 tsp. ground allspice
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. sweet paprika
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. cayenne pepper (optional)
- 8 chicken pieces (drumsticks and thighs, separated)
- Flaky sea salt

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly coat a rimmed baking sheet with 1 teaspoon of the oil.

In a large bowl, combine the sweet potatoes and scallions. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the oil, and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the salt. Toss to combine, then transfer the mixture onto the baking sheet, leaving room on one side for the chicken.

In the same bowl, combine the brown sugar, allspice, cinnamon, thyme, cumin, ginger, paprika, garlic powder, nutmeg, cayenne (if using) and remaining 1 tablespoon of oil. Stir to combine, then add the chicken and toss to coat well.

Arrange the chicken skin-side-up on the baking sheet with the veggies. Roast for 20 minutes. Reduce the oven temperature to 375°F and continue to roast about 20 minutes longer, until the thickest part of a chicken thigh reads 160°F on an instant-read thermometer and the sweet potatoes are tender.

Transfer everything to a platter for serving, and sprinkle with flaky sea salt.

Source: www.yummly.com

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PCA's senior employment services help older adults to re-enter the workforce

By Alicia M. Colombo

Many seniors need or want to work past traditional retirement age. The growing senior workforce is fueled by a huge Baby Boomer cohort, increased lifespans, financial insecurity and a desire to remain active.

"Age does not prevent someone from contributing to our society and economy in a meaningful and positive way. Older workers tend to rate high on characteristics that employers value, such as resiliency, stability, reliability, focus, judgment, attendance, punctuality and loyalty," said Mattie Kersey, program manager at Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA), who oversees two senior employment programs that the agency funds and manages.

Seniors can be empowered to transform their lives with the help of these employment services, which are available at no cost. Gladys Smith (not her real name) is one example of the success of these programs. When she first reached out to PCA for employment assistance in May 2015, she was in her early 60s and living in a shelter, struggling to make ends meet. Smith received training at two different host sites to help her build computer and customer service skills, and staff from the Mayor's Commission on Aging (MCOA) (with whom PCA subcontracts) referred her to agencies that provide services to vulnerable individuals, including Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) and CareerLink.

Within a few months of enrollment, Smith applied for, and received, a scholarship from CareerLink to attend computer training at Drexel University. With the help of resources provided through MCOA, she was soon able to move out of the shelter into her own PHA apartment.

"Since March 2016, she has been working 25 hours per week as an assistant teacher for the Philadelphia School District, through employment with an independent contractor," Kersey said. "As a direct result of the employment assistance that she received from MCOA, she is now earning a livable hourly wage and is proud of

herself and her accomplishments. She is very grateful for the help she received to get her life back on track."

Help for older workers

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), through which Smith received assistance, is a federally funded community service and work-based job training program that provides training for low-income and unemployed older adults. Through the U.S. Department of Labor and Pennsylvania Department of Aging, SCSEP provides paid training that helps eligible seniors to enter, or re-enter, the workforce. PCA subcontracts with MCOA to administer SCSEP services in Philadelphia.

Some of the services that MCOA provides are job counseling and job search assistance, referrals to full-time and part-time jobs, and referrals to training programs designed for older workers. Participants receive an initial assessment, and an individualized employment plan is created that identifies the person's skills, abilities, job goals and training needed to reach goals. Participants are matched with private and public companies and nonprofits, which are known as host agencies, to gain necessary training. The workers are paid the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour for up to 20 hours of training each week.

"As participants develop skills, they are encouraged to actively begin looking for employment. There are many success stories that convey the impact these employment programs have on people's lives," Kersey said.

To be eligible for services through SCSEP, an individual must be age 55-plus, live in Philadelphia, be unemployed and have a household income within 125 percent of the federal poverty level (which is \$14,850 a year for one person). "The program's goals are to eliminate barriers to employment; help develop employable skills; enable participants to earn income while learning; foster economic self-sufficiency; and maintain independence, dignity and self-worth," Kersey said. "SCSEP has been remarkably

successful in these endeavors, as it is now celebrating its 51st anniversary."

JEVS Career Strategies for 55+ Program, which is also funded by PCA, is geared towards assisting unemployed seniors who are not eligible for SCSEP because of higher incomes. "This program serves people who, through no fault of their own, are out of work. It may be because the company they've worked at for so many years has downsized and they were laid off," Kersey said. JEVS' services include referrals to full- and part-time jobs, assistance with résumé writing, help with finding training opportunities, career counseling, job search counseling, computer

training, and seminars on networking and interviewing. The program is housed in the Suburban Station CareerLink office.

For more information about these programs and other resources for senior employment available in Philadelphia, contact the PCA Helpline at 215-765-9040 or go to www.pcaCares.org/services-for-seniors/employment.

Identifying information such as names, dates and other unique identifying characteristics have been changed to protect the privacy of the PCA consumer.

Contact Alicia M. Colombo at acolombo@pcaphl.org.

Photo by Evangelina Iavarone



Mature workers recognized

The Senior Community Service Employment Program helps thousands of seniors each year with on-the-job training to build skills and education that will allow them to secure employment. Raul Reyta (left) enrolled in the program in September 2015, and through it he received extensive English language, computer and food services training. After six months of hard work and determination, Reyta obtained full-time employment as a kitchen aide at Penn Asian Senior Services Inc., the organization that served as a host site for his training. Reyta was among those honored in October as an Outstanding Older Worker by the Mature Workers Task Force (MWTF), a coalition of nonprofit and public organizations managed by PCA to coordinate employment and training services for mature workers in Philadelphia. Reyta is pictured at the MWTF recognition breakfast with Joseph Lee, project director of the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging of the Philip Jaisohn Memorial Foundation.

Nostalgia

Much has changed on Ogden Street, but the tradition of sweeping remains

By Dorothy Stanaitis

Mrs. Devlin had to be sick. There could be no other reason for her to miss the Saturday morning ritual on Ogden Street that day in the early 1940s. On front porches up and down the short block of row homes, women dressed in cotton housedresses were pouring buckets of water onto their porches. They would sweep the water across the porch and down the five cement steps to the sidewalk, which would also be splashed with water and swept. Any debris would be pushed along the gutter to the next house, where that homemaker would add it to her sweepings and move it along to the next until it finally reached the last house on the block. There, Mrs. McSweeney would sweep all of the detritus down the sewer. The Ogden Street homemakers took pride in their clean

Photo by Konrad



homes, and that pride extended right down to the sidewalk.

Due to the gas rationing of War World II, there were no cars parked on narrow little Ogden Street to impede the sweeping; many people had either stored or sold vehicles they couldn't afford to drive. There had never been many cars on that block anyway – few families could afford them. People used the trolleys, subways and elevated cars that connected the West Philadelphia neighborhood to any desired location. The people of Ogden Street

weren't isolated from the rest of the city, but with the exception of the fathers who went to work every day, they tended to stay on the block most of the time. There were three grocery stores: Dave's, John's and the American Store, located just around the corner. Herman's Drug Store, Diamond's Dry Goods and Bill's Barber Shop were also on the next block. With the local churches, Our Mother of Sorrows, Our Lady of Victory and Blockley Baptist Bible Church close by, there was little need to go far from home.

A trip to Woolworth's, located just six blocks away, was considered a real outing, and one for which the ladies dressed in something nicer than the cotton housedresses that were their daytime uniform. Late each summer afternoon, when supper was simmering on the stove, the ladies of the neighborhood would bathe, change from those housedresses, and

dab on a touch of Tangee lipstick and Lady Esther face powder before sitting on the front porch chatting as they waited for the men to come home from work.

Those front porches served as outdoor living rooms. If the evenings were terribly hot, the husbands and wives would sit out there as it grew dark, listening to the radio through the open living room window.

The families vied in decorating and furnishing their porches. A piece of nicely patterned linoleum was considered essential, and the really attractive homes shared their linoleum pattern with the next-door neighbor, creating a unified look.

A plant stand, filled with greens grown from slips provided by a lady up the street, added a soft touch to the wooden, metal or wicker chair and loveseat set that was the standard furnishing, along with the canvas

• continued on page 14

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Sunday

New Year's Day

1

2017 Mummers Parade. Annual Philadelphia New Year's Day tradition featuring comics, fancies & string bands: Parade starts 9 a.m. at City Hall & marches south on Broad St. to Washington Ave. Fancy Brigades: 11:30 a.m. & 5 p.m. at Pa. Convention Center. All events televised. Fancy Brigade tickets: 1-800-537-7676, ext. 0. \$ (Parade free)

8

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: Johannes Quartet. Featuring violist Kim Kashkashian & cellist Marcy Rosen. Works by Mozart, Bartok & Brahms. 3 p.m. Kimmel Center, Perelman Theater. 215-569-8080. \$

15

Jazz Vespers. Performance followed by artists' reception. 5 p.m. Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion. 215-567-3668.

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: Escher Quartet. Featuring violist Samuel Rhodes. Works by Mendelssohn, Britten & Bruckner. 3 p.m. American Philosophical Society. Tickets: 215-569-8080. \$

22

Center City District Restaurant Week. Three-course meals at restaurants for a set price. 215-440-5500. <http://m.centercityphila.org> (Through Jan. 27 & Jan. 29-Feb. 3) \$

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: Lysander Trio. Works by Ben-Haim, Bartok, & Hindemith. 3 p.m. American Philosophical Society. 215-569-8080. \$

29

Curtis Presents: Dover Quartet. Works by Mozart, Britten & Dvorak. 3-5 p.m. Curtis Institute of Music. Tickets: 215-893-7902. \$

Monday

2

Disney on Ice Presents: Follow Your Heart. Features characters from "Finding Dory," "Inside Out," "Frozen," "Toy Story," Disney princesses, Mickey & friends. 1 p.m. Wells Fargo Center. Tickets: 215-336-3600. \$

9

Gentle Exercise Classes. Stretch & strengthen @ 9:30 a.m. All levels yoga @ 11:30 a.m. Center at Journey's Way. 215-487-1750. (Continues Jan. 23 & 30) \$

Keyboard Conversations: Splendor from Silence. Works by Faure, Smetana & Beethoven. 7:30 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-893-1999. \$

16

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King Day of Service. Thousands of people volunteer for service & civic engagement projects. Signature site: Girard College. Organized by Global Citizen. To volunteer: 215-851-1811 or www.mlkdayofservice.org.

23

Mysterious Travelers 3: Internal Investigations. Sound exploration of the library's collections by local guitarist, composer & educator Jake Kelberman. 7 p.m. Parkway Central Library. Presented by Free Library of Phila. & Phila. Jazz Project. 215-686-5322.

30

Fitness @ the Library. Exercise to a collection of instructional DVDs. For adults and teens. Space may be limited. 5:30 p.m. Frankford Library. 215-685-1473. (Mondays through March 27)

Tuesday

3

Tai Chi. All levels. 1p.m. Center at Journey's Way. 215-487-1750. (Continues Jan. 10, 17, 24 & 31) \$

Yoga for All Levels @ the Library. Hour of stretching, bending & relaxation with Dusica. Bring a yoga mat & wear comfortable clothing. Space may be limited. 7 p.m. Northeast Regional Library. 215-685-0522.

10

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: London Haydn Quartet. Works by Mozart & Hadyn. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-569-8080. \$

Trip: Resorts Casino in Atlantic City, N.J. 8:45 a.m. to 6 p.m. Departs/returns from PSC – Avenue of the Arts. Register: 215-546-5879. \$

17

Winterfest. Penn's Landing is transformed into a winterized riverfront park with an Olympic-size ice rink, festive fire pits, a ski-chalet-style lodge & more. 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. (Skating session times vary.) Blue Cross RiverRink. 215-925-RINK. (Open through March 5 at various times.) \$ skating & skate rental; free general admission.

24

Better Investing Workshop. Getting started investing in stocks & building your portfolio. 6:30 p.m. Parkway Central Library. Register: 215-686-5394.

31

Premier Tour: A Closer Look. Gain insight into masterpieces in the collection, analyze the ensemble arrangements & learn about the museum's educational beginnings. 4-5:30 p.m., includes private access to the shop from 1-4 p.m. The Barnes Foundation. 215-278-7000. \$

Wednesday

4

Dance Classes. Line dance @ 10 a.m. Beginners tap dance @ 3:30 p.m. Center at Journey's Way. 215-487-1750. (Continues Jan. 11, 18 & 25) \$

Sit & Stitch. Join a circle of knitters & crocheters for informal evening of needlecrafts. Any skill level welcome. 6 p.m. South Phila. Library. 215-685-1866.

11

Sittin' In. Free monthly jam session blending edgy horns, choice vinyl, cutting edge emcees & soaring vocalists. Doors open at 8 p.m. Live music begins at 9 p.m. Kimmel Center, SEI Innovation Studio. 215-893-1999.

18

LGBT Discussion/Support Group. LGBT older adults, family, friends, & supporters. 1 p.m. Southwest Senior Center. 215-937-1880. (Continues Thursdays for six weeks)

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: Bassist Ben Wager & Pianist Jeffery Miller. Works by Brahms, Mozart, Schubert & others. 8 p.m. American Philosophical Society. 215-569-8080. \$

25

Quizzo in the Lodge. Bring your friends for trivia fun & drink specials. Prizes for top 3 teams. 6-8 p.m. Blue Cross RiverRink. 215-925-RINK.

Thursday

5

Gentle Exercise Classes for All Levels. Yoga @ 9:30 a.m. Tai Chi @ 1 p.m. Center at Journey's Way. 215-487-1750. (Continues Jan. 12, 19 & 26) \$

Tai Chi for Adults with Darrell Bryant. Healthy & stress-relieving break in the middle of your day. 1:30 p.m. Oak Lane Library. 215-685-2848.

12

"Informed Consent." Phila. premiere of play about geneticist who races to solve scientific mysteries that could save both an ancient people & her own family. 7 p.m. Lantern Theater Company. Tickets: 215-829-0395. (Through Feb. 12 @ various dates & times) \$

19

Spotlight Gallery Conversation: Pilgrimage through the Kathmandu Valley. In-depth conversation about masterpieces from 17th & 18th centuries, facilitated by museum educators & local graduate students. 11 a.m. Phila. Museum of Art, Great Stair Hall. 215-763-8100. \$

26

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: Musicians from Marlboro II. Works by Hadyn, Beethoven & Vaughan Williams. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center, Perelman Theater. Tickets: 215-569-8080. \$

Friday

6

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: The Music of Robert Capanna. Features Network for New Music & the Prism Saxophone Quartet. 7:30 p.m. Settlement Music School. Tickets: 215-569-8080. \$

13

Vox Ama Deus Presents: Best of Gershwin. Works include "An American in Paris," "Concerto in F," "Porgy & Bess" & "Rhapsody in Blue." 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. Tickets: 215-893-1999. \$

20

Healthy Steps Program for Older Adults. Remain independent for as long as you can. Topics include staying active, making your home safer & more. 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. PSC – Avenue of the Arts. 215-546-5879.

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: Pianist Jeremy Denk. Works by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms & others. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. Tickets: 215-569-8080. \$

27

Women's Wellness Workshop Series: Mental Health. Seminars covering health & lifestyle issues affecting African & Caribbean immigrants. 10:30 to noon. African Cultural Alliance of North America (ACANA). 215-729-8225.

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Concert. Works by Schumann, Beethoven, Webern & Rachmaninov. 8 p.m. Tickets: 215-569-8080. \$

Saturday

7

Cookbook Club. Do you enjoy cooking & sharing meals with friends? Explore the cookbook "The Magic of Spice Blends" by Aliza Green. Each participant will choose a recipe to make & bring for sharing with the group. 2 p.m. Phila. City Institute. Register: 215-685-6621.

14

Cirque Éloize: Saloon. Inspired by the rich legacy of the Wild Wild West. The energy of folk music & strains of fiddle set the tone for an acrobatic comedy. 2 & 8 p.m. Merriam Theatre. Tickets: 215-893-1999. \$

21

Rain Check Workshop. Reduce pollution that would otherwise end up in creeks & rivers. Learn how to get a free rain barrel; and reduced pricing for downspout planters, rain gardens, depaving & permeable pavers. 2 p.m. Fishtown Community Library. 215-685-9990.

28

Chinese New Year (Year of the Rooster)

2017 Philadelphia Auto Show. Massive display floor showcasing a range of vehicles, including pre-production models, concepts, hybrids, exotics & antiques. 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Pa. Convention Center. www.phillyauto-show.com (Through Feb. 5) \$

Milestones

Events that end with a \$ require an entrance fee or advance ticket purchase. Events that are free may request a donation or offer items for sale. Please call the number listed for information on pricing or other questions about an event.

Send your calendar items to: Attn: Calendar Editor, PCA Communications Dept., 642 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130-3409 • Phone: 215-765-9000, ext. 5081 Fax: 215-765-9066 • E-mail: acolombo@pcaphl.org

January 2017

After surgery or a stroke, choosing the right rehabilitation facility is key

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

You're about to be released from the hospital and have been told you need rehabilitation. Where you go for those services will likely have a big impact on how well you recover, so it is in your best interest to do some research before choosing a facility. This is a lesson I learned the hard way, when I was recovering from hip surgery.

My experience

The representative from the rehabilitation facility insisted at first that I stay for a week when I had requested a five-day stay. My surgeon had said nothing about being in the facility a certain length of time. The rep's insistence – which he dropped after some arm-twisting – probably should have been a red flag for me. Then, when I arrived at the facility on a Friday, I was told that occupational and physical therapy wouldn't begin until Monday, even though the staff had known when I would arrive. So I lost two days out of a five-day stay. Research and careful questions could have helped me avoid the shortfall.

I had been using a walker, rather than a wheelchair, since the day after my surgery three days earlier. When I arrived at the rehab facility, the staff insisted that they didn't have enough information to let me use a walker until they tested me, so they put me in a wheelchair. It felt like going backwards. It also gave me the impression that they hadn't read my discharge summary thoroughly.

My experience doesn't seem unique. Adam Smith (not his real name), who had a paralyzing spinal injury due to a car accident, experienced a setback after being transferred to a sub-acute rehab facility. The staff there had indicated they were ready for him, but they did not have a wheelchair adapted to his needs, so he was confined to his bed for most of his stay. As a result, he was unable even to practice the self-care skills he had begun to work on, such as brushing his teeth and feeding himself. The therapy he received was good, but limited in quantity, and he lost some of the ground he had gained.

"The medical attention was inadequate," says Elkins Park-based dance and Pilates teacher Barbara Lember, 74, of the



Milestones file photo

Investigate a potential rehabilitation facility carefully to make sure it has the services you need.

facility where she went for rehab after her recent hip replacement. "On my fourth and last day there, I fought to get occupational therapy. If you know you'll be going to rehab, it's worth every minute you spend checking out facilities."

Insist on a discharge plan

Medicare requires hospitals to provide discharge planning if you have been admitted as an inpatient. Some hospitals do this automatically, but others do not, so you or your doctor may need to request it. The evaluation should take into consideration what rehabilitation you need, what Medicare will cover and what your costs will be, and any other needs you may have in addition to rehabilitation. The hospital is responsible for arranging referrals, including to a rehabilitation or skilled nursing facility, or for outpatient rehabilitation.

Peggy Seminara, a registered nurse and senior director of post-acute services at MossRehab-Einstein Healthcare Network, advises patients and their families on navigating post-hospital care. To begin, she said, you should find out if your doctor recommends acute rehabilitation (which may include physical, occupational and speech therapy) or sub-acute care (which is less intensive), and what your insurance covers. Rehabilitation following surgery to replace a hip or knee, for example, is different from rehab following a stroke. Insurance cov-

erage for the two will likewise differ. A hip replacement may qualify for rehab in a skilled nursing facility, where therapy is provided for just one or two hours a day. Recovery from a stroke may require an acute rehabilitation facility, which offers more intensive therapy for at least three hours a day, five to seven days a week, and assessment by a physician with specialized training at least three times a week.

Find out what level of care you need, what the facility that you are considering provides, and how much experience the facility has in treating patients with your condition or combination of conditions. And, if you have conditions other than the one you're seeking rehabilitation for, Seminara said, it's important to determine the facility's capacity to address them. "You've had surgery, but you also have other medical issues," she posited. "Can the facility handle both?"

Location counts, but it's not everything, Seminara said. "Consider whether your spouse and family can reach the place easily." However, she said, "Sometimes it's okay to have a little inconvenience in order to get the best service."

Investigate

The National Institutes of Health recommends asking the following questions of potential rehabilitation facilities:

- How many patients are treated with your type of injury or condition?

- Do they have a standard procedure or protocol for caring for people with your condition?
- Will you see the same one or two therapists on most days?
- How long do therapy sessions last?
- What's a typical day like?
- What's the percentage of patients with a good outcome?
- How do patients rate the facility?
- Does the facility have the newest equipment (for example, ultrasound therapy to stimulate muscles)?
- What planning or preparation will be offered when it is time for you to return home?

If your surgery was planned, make a visit to the facilities you are considering beforehand. If you cannot visit yourself, see if a friend or family member can check them out. Things to look for:

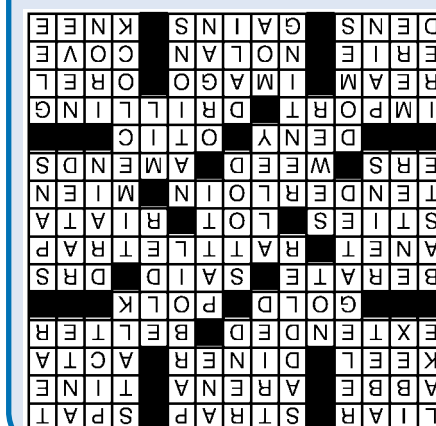
- Is the staff friendly?
- Is the facility clean?
- What is the food like? (Time your visit to coincide with meals.)

Another issue may be whether there is a bed available in the facility that is your first choice, so investigating several options will enable you to have a backup plan. Your research will pay off, Seminara said. "If you're happy with the rehab facility, you're likely to do better."

Constance Garcia-Barrio is a freelance writer and author of a novel based on African-American history in Philadelphia.

Solutions to the Milestones Crossword puzzle

(See page 19.)



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Tradition

• continued from page 9

awning necessary on just one side of the street, where the afternoon sun beat onto the row of porches.

But the really important outdoor decorating took place during the summer holidays – Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day – when patriotic red, white and blue crepe paper and bunting would be wound around the porch pillars and railings. Teen boys from the neighborhood earned 10 cents for climbing up on the railing to decorate. It would cost another dime for a boy to come back and take the decorations down. Dimes weren't all that easy to come by on Ogden Street. Often, rain-bedraggled crepe paper would be sending streaks of red and blue dye down the porch pillars before the family had the paper removed. The usual excuse was, "It looked so pretty that we hated to take it down," but down it came, and it was added to the other bits of trash swept down the gutter and into the sewer.

Every once in a while, city workers would come along and clean out those sewers. It was a grand occasion for the local children, who hoped the workers would retrieve lost balls that had rolled into the underground, along with all of the neighborhood sweepings.

Many things have changed on Ogden Street. The broom seller, who hawked his wares walking up the street carrying brooms, has disappeared. The iceman, who hoisted huge cakes of ice onto his shoulders to carry into the kitchen iceboxes, was long ago made obsolete by refrigerators. The man carrying wooden poles on his shoulder to prop up the clothes lines in everyone's backyard disappeared as clothes dryers appeared. And now, in many households, both men and women go off to work in the morning.

None of the old-time residents live on Ogden Street anymore, but some of the new folks on the block carry on at least one of the old traditions. On Saturday morning, you can still see them throwing buckets of water onto the front porch and sweeping it clean.

Dorothy Stanaitis is a retired librarian and a freelance writer.

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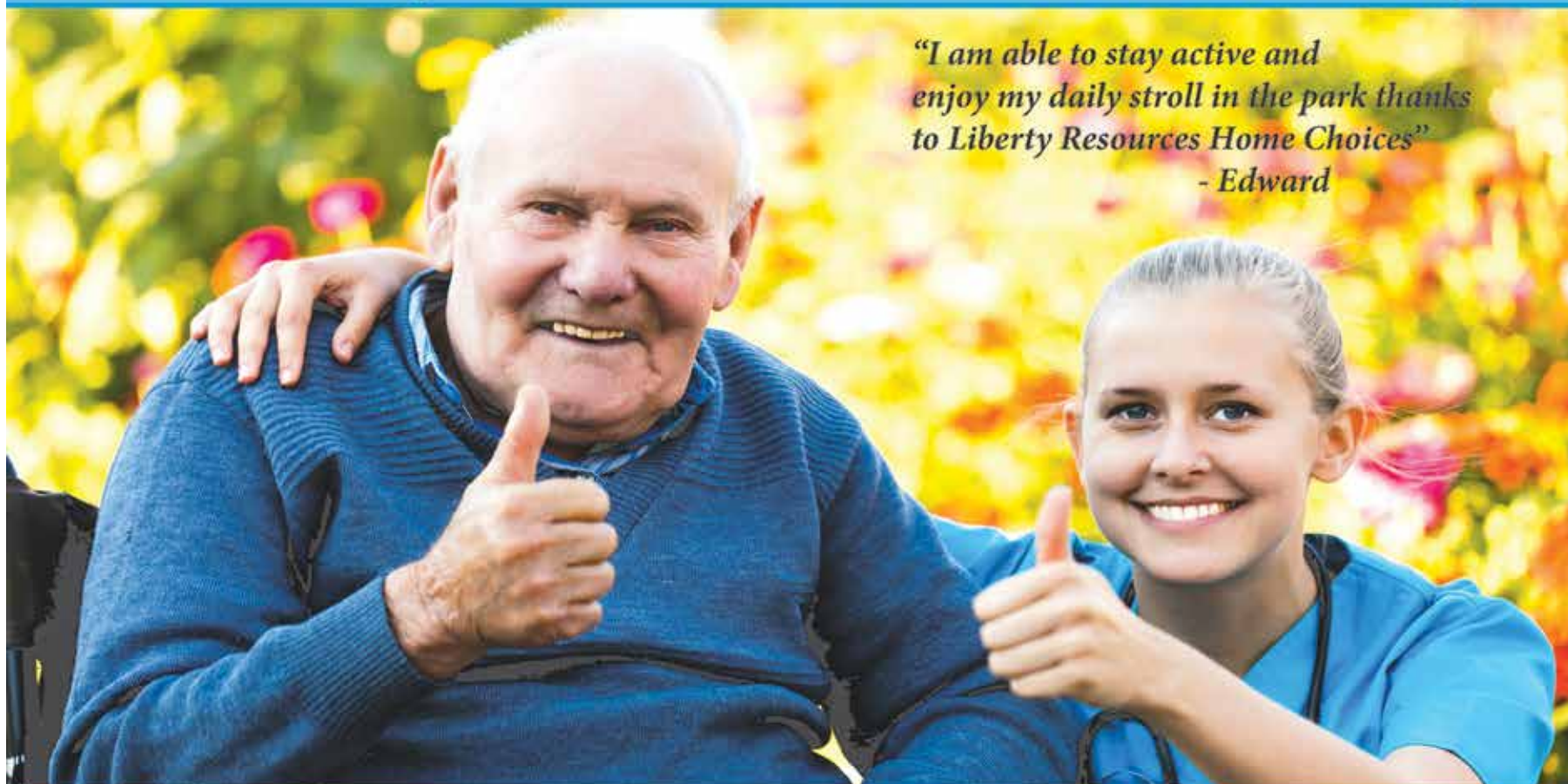
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Managing alone

• continued from page 1

to step up and address the problem when this happens – even if it is painful. The problems will not go away and usually need to be addressed in a timely manner.” According to psychologist Donna Cohen, author of the book *“The Loss of Self: A Family Resource for the Care of Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders,”* sometimes it’s easier for the older person to talk to a professional or friend rather than a family member. “Don’t hesitate to ask a social worker, doctor or nurse, priest or minister – even an old poker buddy to suggest it may be time for help,” she said.

Aging is a dynamic process; the needs of an older person (and his or her caregivers) can change over time. It’s important to keep conversations going. The older person’s family members also need to continue to communicate and coordinate regarding how best to help.

Physical evaluation

When problems become apparent, a first step to address them is to have a physician evaluate physical health that may be impacting function. A loss of sight, hearing or memory; confusion; incontinence; and depression may be due to treatable conditions, experts say.

Assessment

A level-of-care assessment can help to identify the medical, psychological, social and functional limitations of a frail older person. Assessors provide referral to educational and community resources to maximize overall health, safety and quality of life. Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) is a local resource offering this service. The agency’s Long Term Care Assessment (LTCA) department conducted more than 35,000 level-of-care and needs assessments last year. “Generally, callers are looking for help at home, caregiver support or care in a skilled nursing facility, but there are a number of options when a person needs help,” said LTCA Director Betty Jo Robinson.

Assessors typically evaluate an elder’s ability to perform basic self-care tasks, such as eating, toileting and bathing; and his or her ability to perform higher-level activities needed to live

independently, such as managing money and finances, preparing meals, shopping for groceries, using the telephone, and taking medication as prescribed. They also look more holistically at a person’s home environment, including conditions that pose safety hazards, and social connections, especially family dynamics and support.

Assessors determine whether or not the elderly person can continue to live independently and safely at home, and the level and type of care that is needed. Based on clinical and financial criteria, they recommend appropriate programs and services.

Accepting help

While “living independently” is the term commonly used to describe aging at home, most elders require at least some help as they age. Most of that assistance comes from family members, who provide the bulk of caregiving, according to the Family Caregiver Alliance. Unpaid assistance from family, friends and neighbors is considered informal support. Assistance can also include formal supports, such as paid in-home personal care, home health or housekeeping aides, supervised adult day programs, home-delivered meals programs, non-medical transportation, and other services. (For a list of senior and caregiver resources, see box left.)

Often families customize a combination of services to help them manage caregiving responsibilities. For instance, a senior may live with a caregiver but attend an adult day health program that offers meals, medical support, social and recreational activities, and respite for the caregiver. Or, a senior may remain in his or her own home with the support of a home-delivered meals program, in-home care shared by family members and professional care workers, and neighborhood volunteers who help with shopping and other tasks.

Sometimes frail seniors resist having paid care workers, despite family members being unable to meet all of their needs. Psychologist Barbara Kane advises that families “ask questions to determine why an elder refuses help – then you can tailor a solution. Is it about a lack of privacy, fears about the cost of care, losing independence or having a stranger in the house? To build trust, listen with empathy and validate rather than deny your loved one’s feelings.” She recommends weaving in a new aide gradually when pos-

sible and engaging the older person in helping to set the schedule of care.

To move – or not

According to AARP, nearly 90 percent of people older than 65 want to stay at home for as long as possible. Unless a parent has dementia or some other mental impairment, the decision is theirs to make, experts advise.

“Most of us are more likely to change our position and lifestyle if such a transformation is of our own choosing,” psychologist Barry Jacobs says in his book, *“The Emotional Survival Guide for Caregivers.”* “Placed under duress to change, we typically resist, regardless of the soundness of the other person’s arguments.”

However, dementia, which is progressive, often does or should precipitate a move for an elder who is living alone because it can imperil safety. According to the U.S. Administration on Aging, as of 2011, 13 percent of people with dementia living in the community were living alone. They were at high risk, the administration said, for self-neglect, malnutrition, injury, medication errors, financial exploitation, unmet care needs and nursing home placement. If an elder living alone with dementia refuses to move despite a professional recommendation to do so, Older Adult Protective Services or an elder law attorney may be able to offer assistance to caregivers on the elder’s behalf. (See box at left for information on legal resources and Older Adult Protective Services.)

While most older adults want to live at home as they age, there is no single prescribed way to do so, nor is remaining at home the safest or best path for every elder. Understanding the aging person’s present care needs and anticipating future ones through medical evaluations and level-of-care assessments, knowing the financial resources available for care, and discussing the person’s care preferences well before a crisis occurs can help to clarify decisions for appropriate care and housing. In doing so, caregivers also need to be realistic about what they can and can’t do to support the older person’s wishes.

Contact Marcia Z. Siegal at msiegal@pcaphl.org.

Senior and caregiver resources

AARP – Offers a caregiver resource guide, caregiving tips, tips for hiring a home care worker or an agency to provide in-home care and more: 1-877-333-5885 or www.aarp.org.

Aging Life Care Association – Professional geriatric care management association: www.aging.lifecare.org. (Click on “Find an Aging Life Care Expert.”)

Eldercare Locator – A public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging providing information and connection to services for older adults and their families. To find local programs and services: 1-800-677-1116 or www.eldercare.gov.

Family Caregiver Alliance – Information, resources and support for families caring for adults with chronic, disabling health conditions: 1-800-445-8106 or www.caregiver.org.

Legal resources

Community Legal Services of Philadelphia — 215-981-3700 (Center City), 215-227-2400 (North Philadelphia) or www.clsphila.org.

Elderly Law Project, Temple University Beasley School of Law— 215-204-6887.

Philadelphia Bar Association Information and Referral Service — 215-238-6333 or www.philabarlawyers.com.

SeniorLAW Center — 215-988-1242 or www.seniorlawcenter.org.

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA)

PCA Helpline — Information and referral to aging services and supports, including scheduling level-of-care assessments, long-term care services, the Caregiver Support Program and more: 215-765-9040 (weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.).

PCA’s website, www.pcaCares.org — Offers an extensive list of senior service providers and caregiver resources.

Older Adult Protective Services — Investigates and responds to reports of elder abuse, neglect (including self-neglect), financial exploitation and abandonment: 215-765-9040 (available 24/7).

Questions to ask

(See "Managing Alone" story on page 1.)

A level-of-care assessment provides the optimal way to determine whether an older person can continue to live safely at home. The Aging Parents and Elder Care website at www.aging-parents-and-elder-care.com also offers the following 10 questions to help guide family members in addressing this issue, noting that "if the answer to any question is 'no,' it may no longer be possible for the senior to be left alone, even for a short period of time."

1. Do they understand how to leave the home if necessary? Do they know where the door is located and how to exit the building?

2. Will they stay home or near the house rather than wander off?

3. If they go outside, do they know where they live and how to get back inside?

4. Can they identify signals, such as smoke from the kitchen or fire alarms, that would alert them to potential dangers?

5. Do they know how to access emergency services? Do they know how and when to dial 911? Would they be able to communicate over the phone? Can they physically get to a phone no matter where they are?

6. Can they go for extended periods without life-threatening emergencies that require immediate intervention? Do they know where any medication they might need is located? Can they reach it? Do they have the capacity to select the right medicines in the correct amounts?

7. Do they have the judgment to identify who they should and should not let into the home? Will they know to allow family, friends and emergency personnel into the home?

8. Can they prepare something to eat if they get hungry? Do they know how to use the stove, and will they remember to turn it off?

9. Can they get to the bathroom and use the toilet on their own? If not, have alternatives been worked out?

10. Are they comfortable being alone for an hour or more? Can caregivers depart without the senior being clingy, and can the senior be alone without making frequent telephone calls?

Signs to look for

(See "Managing Alone" story on page 1.)

Changes in physical and cognitive abilities that may occur with age can be difficult to detect, both for older adults and for their family members, friends and caregivers. The Eldercare Locator has compiled a list of 10 warning signs that a senior may need help. Any one of the following behaviors may indicate the need to take action. It is also important to inform the older adult's physician of these changes.

1. Changing eating habits resulting in weight loss or missed meals.

2. Neglecting personal hygiene, including clothing, body odor, oral health, nails and skin.

3. Neglecting the home, with a noticeable change in tidiness and/or sanitation.

4. Exhibiting inappropriate behavior, such as being unusually loud, quiet, paranoid or agitated; or making phone calls at unusual hours.

5. Changing relationship patterns, causing friends and neighbors to express concern.

6. Showing physical injuries, such as burns, which may have resulted from general weakness, forgetfulness, or misuse of alcohol or medication.

7. Decreasing or stopping participation in activities that were once enjoyable, such as a bridge or book club, dining with friends, or attending religious services.

8. Exhibiting forgetfulness, resulting in unopened mail, newspaper piles, unfilled prescriptions or missed appointments.

9. Mishandling finances, such as not paying bills or paying them more than once, and losing or hiding money.

10. Making unusual purchases, such as more than one subscription to the same magazine, entering an unusually large number of contests or increasing purchases from television advertisements.



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Downsizing

• continued from page 1

ing adult children appear less than patient with their parents because of their own time constraints or the emotional baggage they are carrying. An adult child can diffuse a potentially emotional outburst from the parent by accepting that the decisions may take longer because of indecision, sense of loss or sadness."

It's helpful to say to a senior, "'Let's clean out the garage,' or 'Let's go down in the basement and go through some things.' For holidays and birthdays, don't give them a thing, give them time," Novack said.

When to start cleaning out?

"Start now," Novack said. Whenever possible, she recommends starting the sorting process a year in advance of the anticipated move date. "Start before you think you are going to need to move. You may be doing well now. But do you want to move when you're not feeling well? After a fall or accident, you have the least emotional and physical resources to do it. It took decades to accumulate this stuff; it's going to take time to go through it."

Procrastinating on the decluttering process can add to stress as your move date draws near. "The sooner you can start, the better," Stocks said. "Depending on the volume you have, this process could be time consuming. You want to allow yourself time to go through things you haven't seen for a while and to cherish those memories. You will need time to laugh, cry and reminisce about your past. Do a little bit at a time and accumulate your successes. This will motivate you to continue the process."

Where to begin?

Both companies offer an initial consultation that can help seniors map out a plan for moving success. "It's best to break the tasks down into phases to make the process more manageable," Stocks said. "Phase One entails preparing for the actual move, while Phase Two deals with the removal of the remaining contents. I like to think of Phase One as packing for a vacation. Within Phase One, the senior should identify the items that are most important to take. Typically this would include furniture, clothing, family heir-

looms, kitchen items, decorative items, linens and collections."

When sorting items, Novack recommends making one decision at a time. "As you go through your things, answer this question: 'Is it going with me?'" Only if you have a lot of time should you go through the process of deciding where else does it go," she said. "Don't go down that rabbit hole. That's what leads seniors to be so overwhelmed. We try to focus on the hierarchy of items: what goes to the client, family members, for sale, donate and then trash. Whenever people can, we encourage them to keep items at home until after they move."

Deciding what to keep

The most useful and sentimental items should be at the top of the "to keep" list. Stocks recommends taking comfortable and functional furniture, a collection of family photographs or photo albums, special keepsakes, and heirlooms. However, this list needs to be balanced with the space available. "The items to keep are the things they use every day," Novack said. "Many people will look at what's currently in their living room as the 'good furniture,' but it's usually not the comfy chair they sit in to watch TV. The things you take are not always the prettiest, but the most useful." She recommends taking a few cherished mementos and keepsakes, as opposed to the entire set of Hummel figurines.

When determining which furniture and personal items will move to your new home, a visual reality check can put things into perspective. "First, I would recommend measuring the new home and the furniture to create a floor plan," Stocks said. "Ask the senior to prioritize the furniture list in terms of which pieces are most important and what will actually be needed."

It can be hard as an adult child to see your parent unwilling to pare down items at the risk of health and safety in a home that's more suited to his or her needs. The theme of move management, Novack said, is helping clients make better decisions, not making decisions for them. "Don't just tell them it won't work. Show them. Space always seems bigger when empty," No-

vack said. Get the floor plan and/or dimensions of the rooms in the new home. Using a tape measure, cut a piece of string or lay down blue painter's tape on the floor of the existing home to demonstrate how much space will be available. She recommends measuring all of the senior's clothing in their current closet and using string to show them how much closet space will be available.

"If your new kitchen is half the size, put green stickers on half of the cabinets. Place the items that you want to take only in stickered cabinets. Instead of asking, 'Do you like this pot or pan?,' determine which will be the most useful," Novack said. If you are going to take only some of your furniture, place the items you want to take within those furniture pieces and pare down as necessary before packing. Do not pack more books than will fit in your bookcase, or more clothes than will fit in your dresser.

Stocks recommends placing the furniture that's to move on the string- or tape-delineated apartment layout and discussing furniture options that will accommodate the new floor plan. "Perhaps it would be more functional to take a recliner and an armchair, instead of a large sofa," she said. "Or select a taller bookcase, instead of two smaller ones. Don't forget to consider wall space and then decide how much room will be available for artwork, portraits and other decorative items."

Sell, trash or donate?

Move managers may be able to arrange for the appraisal and sale of your items, but doing so takes time and the fees may outweigh the potential profit. When you want to sell your items, an appraisal is recommended to determine the items' value – or lack thereof. "When I ask people what is their biggest concern, they tell me they want to know how to sell their prized possessions: my dining room furniture, my crystal and my good dishes," Novack said. "By far the most important and valuable asset that you own is your house. The way to make money by moving is not by selling your stuff; it's by getting rid of the excess stuff and making your house look as good as it can."

Items that cannot be sold and are only slightly used can typically be donated to charitable organizations. Be sure to ask

for a receipt, since you may be able to deduct the value of the donation on your tax return. "I prefer to work with thrift stores that accept a wide array of articles, including furniture, books, clothing, household goods and decorative items," Stocks said. "Inquire if the thrift store provides a free pick-up service." Used linens, including blankets, sheets and towels, can be donated to animal shelters. Unopened, unexpired food can be given to food pantries.

"Do a little bit at a time and accumulate your successes. This will motivate you to continue the process."

Seniors may want to give some of their cherished antiques or family heirlooms to their children, grandchildren or other relatives. Now is the time to ask family members if they would like to have these items. If they do not, move forward with selling or donating them.

When you've exhausted the options above, anything left will need to be discarded. Before discarding any documents that contain personal information, such as Social Security numbers, medical or financial information, the papers need to be shredded to guard against identity theft or fraud. Household hazardous waste also needs to be discarded carefully. Check the websites of your municipality or county for ways to properly discard hazardous materials. Haul-out companies are helpful in removing a large amount of leftover trash.

For more information or to seek a consultation from a professional senior move manager, contact:

Moving Solutions – call 610-853-4300; email info@movingsolutions.com; or go to www.movingsolutions.com.

Senior Transition Services – call 215-947-5490; email seniortransition@verizon.net; or go to www.senior-transition-services.com, which offers a guide to downsizing, records retention checklist and moving organizational checklist.

Both websites feature blogs that offers resources, tips and personal stories.

Contact Alicia M. Colombo at acolombo@pcaphl.org

Don's Column

My advice: Don't expect too much



By Don Harrison

Sorry, I don't remember who said it. I wish I did; his prescience was Nostradamus-ian (if there is such a word).

It was at a national convention of newspaper editorial writers in Chicago. Author Studs Terkel

was supposed to speak at one of the afternoon sessions. But Terkel was ill, our hosts explained, and couldn't attend. Instead, they were substituting "our new senator," who, they were sure, would impress us.

He sure did. In came Barack Obama. He ignored the lectern and entered our midst. It was a bull session, not a lecture. We were impressed – he was laid-back, often funny, extraordinarily well-informed about everything. That's when I heard it: Someone said, "Wow, that guy could become our first black president."

And so he did. This month, Barack Obama wraps up his two terms as president. He did a pretty good job, too.

But things have been happening in the nation he led of which many of us were totally unaware. I'll bet the guy who predicted Obama's future was unaware, whether or not he's still writing editorials. Just about all the opinion crafters – editorial writers, pundits, pollsters, TV talking heads – failed to take Donald Trump seriously.

If there's one thing we should have learned from that ugly presidential race, it's that vast numbers of Americans – perhaps a sizeable majority – are unhappy. Despite all the negatives steadily surrounding him (to which he contributed eagerly), Trump pulled it off. Obviously, millions saw him as a solution to their miseries.

Trump touched every button, capitalizing on the mass discontent of which his opposition seemed unaware. People are unhappy for many reasons, but one thing they have in common is a belief that at

least some of the answer lies in government – that one reason John Doe is having problems is that politicians are bad.

I've known a lot of politicians, and some are indeed pretty bad, but not as many as we've been led to believe, and even if they were all topnotch, the discontented would still be discontented. Politicians do tend to make promises they're unable to keep – for the same reason people expect too much of them – they believe their own words.

Unrealistic expectations are at the root of dissatisfaction. Government can do a lot, but its reach is limited. We expect too much of government and, in fact, everything else. So when things don't work, as is all too often the case, we feel betrayed.

Our Founding Fathers understood this (as they did so much else). They knew that happiness depends on the reaction of each of us to life's inevitable crises. So the Declaration of Independence doesn't promise happiness – it refers to the "pursuit of happiness."

It's ironic that so many people who feel that government hasn't done enough are among those for whom "less government" is a fundamental theme. Logic, of course, has nothing to do with it, but if there's a response to this phenomenon, it's urgent that we find it. Otherwise, our system of government is in big trouble. If this sounds pessimistic, so be it. Remember, pessimists are never disappointed.

Milestones Editor Emeritus Don Harrison served as deputy editor of the Daily News opinion pages and as an assistant managing editor and city editor of the Philadelphia Bulletin.

The Milestones Crossword

Coming and going

ACROSS

- 1 Not a truth sayer
- 5 Thong
- 10 Minor quarrel
- 14 Monastery head
- 15 Stadium
- 16 Prong
- 17 Singing star
- 18 Pullman car
- 19 Recorded proceedings
- 20 Lengthy
- 22 Loud singer
- 24 Fort Knox need
- 25 Early president
- 26 Scold
- 29 Reputed
- 30 Professionals: abbr.
- 33 Dill seed
- 34 Rickety vehicle
- 37 Pens
- 39 Destiny
- 40 Lasso
- 41 Urban district
- 44 Bearing
- 45 Hesitations in speech
- 46 Plantain
- 47 Corrects
- 49 Refute
- 50 Pertaining to the ear
- 51 Tenor

- 54 Coarse cotton material
- 58 Paper measure
- 59 Final and perfected state of an insect
- 61 Soviet city
- 62 Canal
- 63 American actor
- 64 Inlet
- 65 Retreats
- 66 Profits
- 67 Joint

DOWN

- 1 ____ Champlain
- 2 Wild goat
- 3 Second
- 4 Consigned
- 5 Horse groom
- 6 Endeavored
- 7 Tear apart
- 8 Donkey: Fr.
- 9 Precook in water
- 10 Walk cautiously
- 11 Ancient invader of Great Britain
- 12 Poker stake
- 13 Sign of sorrow
- 21 Negative
- 23 Senior

- 25 Early coloratura
- 26 Lash with the tongue
- 27 Post
- 28 Checks
- 29 Endured
- 30 Conduit
- 31 Estimated
- 32 Reaches across
- 35 Kind of marble
- 36 Device for recording arrival
- 38 Waste channel
- 42 Leasing
- 43 Countries
- 48 Wire measure
- 49 Cupolas
- 50 Musical instrument
- 51 Angered
- 52 Only
- 53 Ache
- 54 Modern painter
- 55 Fe
- 56 Glacier snow
- 57 Mirth
- 60 Extinct bird

Solution

The solution for the crossword puzzle can be found on page 12.

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
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65						66						67		

Correction

There was an error in the numbering of the clues in last month's crossword puzzle. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused our readers. If you would like to receive the correct puzzle and clues, please email ajporter@pcaphl.org.



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