

SENIOR REPORTER

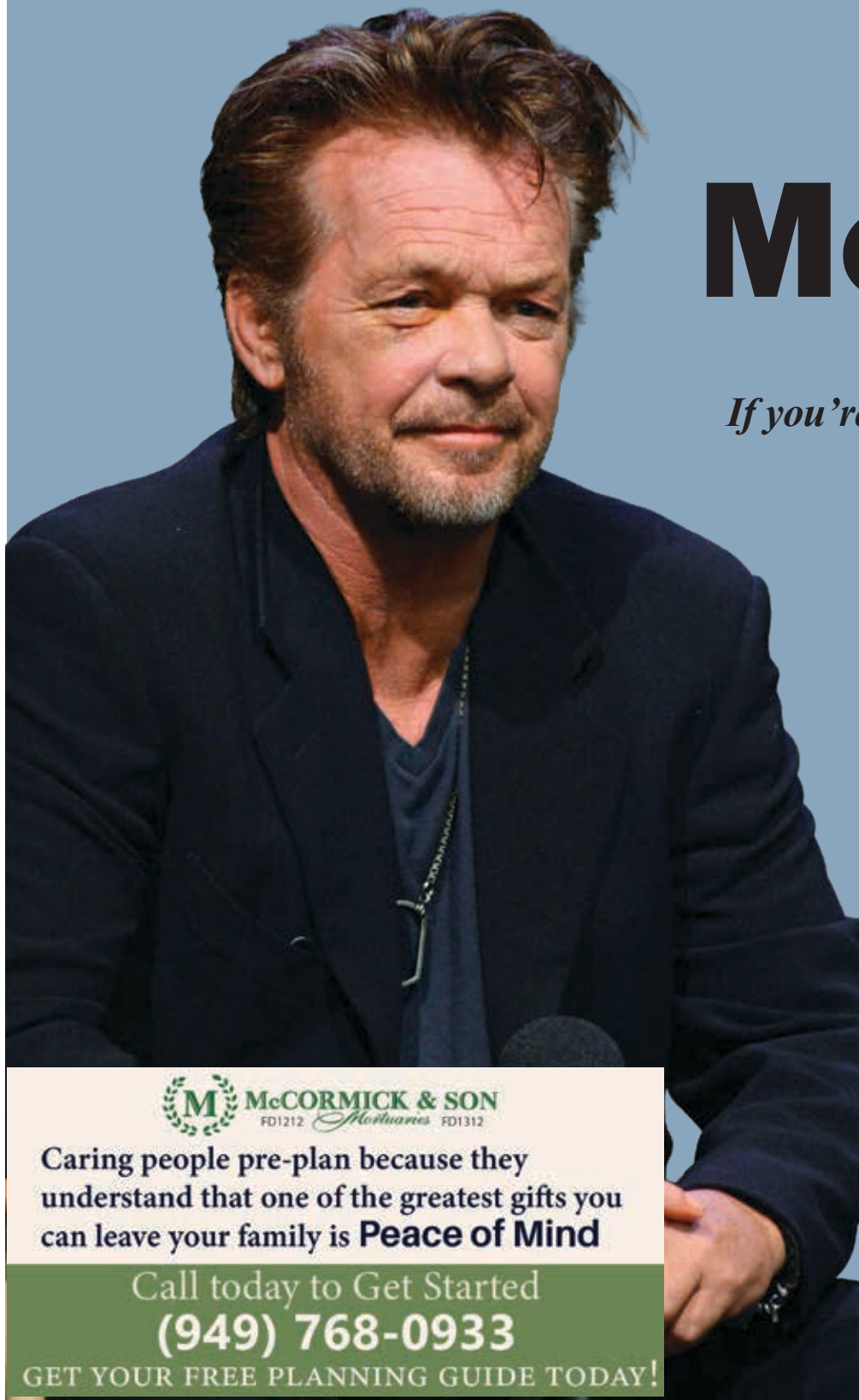
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JUNE 2026

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— John Mellencamp

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For many seniors, Father's Day brings a mix of warm memories, family traditions, and stories worth retelling. It's a chance to celebrate fathers, grandfathers, step-fathers, uncles, and the father-figures who stepped in with love and devotion. A phone call, a shared meal, or even a cherished photograph can bring those connections to life again.

This June, may we honor the men who shaped our families, our values, and our sense of home.




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Hoosier Boy Rocks On; John Mellencamp's Road to Stardom

By Les Goldberg



Photo courtesy Flickr.

At the ripe old age of 75, John Mellencamp continues to entertain fans across the world with his unique blend of rock music, his own songs, and his empathy for the ordinary man.

The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2018 inducted Mellencamp, also known since boyhood as Johnny Cougar, who has become a legend in American musical culture.

As *“Rolling Stone”* magazine writes:

“Mellencamp has created an important body of work that has earned him both critical regard and an enormous audience. His songs document the joys and struggles of ordinary people seeking to make their way, and he has consistently brought the fresh air of common experience to the typically glamour-addled world of popular music.”

Over the years, that body of work has encompassed a wide spectrum of musical genres, including heartland, roots, folk, and country rock, using a variety of instruments and styles that emerged from his youth, growing up in Seymour, Ind.

Despite being born with spina bifida and undergoing corrective surgery as an infant, his musical genes developed enough over the next 14 years to allow him to form his first band, Crepe Soul.

In 1972, he entered Vincennes University in Indiana and played in several local bands while working as a telephone installer in Seymour.

At the same time, while deciding he wanted to pursue a music career, he traveled to New York City in an attempt to land

Continued on page 6

70s
FLASH
BACK

'A Wonder to Behold'

By Randal C. Hill

In 1941, educational consultant William Marston was hired by a publishing house that would become DC Comics. Asked to create a collection of superheroes known as the Justice League, Marston soon devised a roster of six fictional folks.

One was a female do-gooder called "Wonder Woman." As the lone lady on the baddie-bashing team, Diana Prince (her "normal" name before frantically spinning to become Wonder Woman) was a character drawn from Greek mythology. "She'll fight for democracy, but she'll be fighting for equal rights for women," Marston explained. "And her superpowers will be love and truth and beauty."

Much of that would change 33 years later—except for the part about beauty.

ABC-TV decided to film a show based on the iconic crime-fighter. Enter Lynda Carter, a beauty-contest winner—she was Miss World USA in 1972—who had moved from Phoenix (where she had sung in two bands during high school) to Los Angeles. A few minor film roles and TV commercials had come her way before Carter auditioned for the starring role in the forthcoming "Wonder Woman" show. When offered the part, Carter was down to \$25 in the bank and proclaimed her contract a godsend—or so she thought.

With the growing women's liberation movement, she felt this was the perfect time for the appearance of a tall (she's 5' 9"), brave and powerful female. The men behind the television production, though, focused more on other things.

Resplendent in a tight-fitting outfit of red, gold and blue, her striking face and hourglass figure often took precedence over the scripts that regrettably emphasized her appearance over her validity as a formidable female. Production men seemed leery of promoting feminism and focused instead on how alluring they could make Carter for public consumption.

Cameramen and other crew members often ogled Linda in her provocative outfit, and whispered comments and barely suppressed giggles were frequent occurrences on the "Wonder Woman" set.

She became famous. A Lynda Carter poster sold one million copies, fan mail poured in, and she was awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

"Wonder Woman" had middling ratings, but ABC-TV axed it after one season. CBS-TV then picked up the program, and, according to Carter, an overdone erotic aura was added to each episode, while Carter was made to wear an even more daring outfit.

After two more seasons, "Wonder Woman" mercifully ground to a halt.

"I never meant to be a sexual object," she grouched later. "I hate men looking at me and thinking what they think. And I know what they think; they write and tell me." To distance herself, she became a recording artist, but the public always associated her with the TV role.

Writer Andy Mangels maintained that "Wonder Woman" represented importance and believed that "Wonder Woman" was the purest embodiment of what a brave, strong woman could be. "She stood for peace, love and equality," he said. "She made statements regularly about the strength of sisterhood, and about treating people well."

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John Mellencamp

Continued from page 4

a record contract. By 1975, he joined the MainMan Management group and released his first album, "Chestnut Street Incident," which became a commercial failure.

A few years later, he caught the eye of Rod Stewart's manager, Billy Gaff, who asked him to move to London, where his songs and records triggered his ultimate recording success. In fact, his first hit, "I Need a Lover," rose to No. 29 on the charts in the U.S. and Australia.



Photo courtesy Flickr.

By 1982, Mellencamp, who dropped the "Johnny Cougar" name, released his breakthrough album, American Fool, which contained the singles "Hurts So Good," "Jack & Diane," and "Hand to Hold on To." All became best-sellers with "Hurts So Good" winning a Grammy for Best Male Rock Vocal Performance.

Throughout the 80s, Mellencamp's songs and albums topped the charts, including "Uh-Huh," "Pink Houses," "Crumblin' Down," and "Authority Song,"



Photo courtesy Store norske leksikon.

which he said was his version of "I Fought the Law."

In 1985, his album "Scarecrow" produced five Top 40 singles: "Lonely Ol' Night," "Small Town," "R.O.C.K. in the U.S.A.," "Rain on the Scarecrow," and "Rumble Seat." At the time, Mellencamp said the album seemed to have started the alternative country genre. He is also credited with incorporating instruments more characteristic of folk and roots music, such as dulcimer, mandolin, fiddle, accordion, dobro, and pennywhistle.

According to "Rolling Stone," Mellencamp helped pioneer the sound of alternative country with the instrumental attack of rock and roll.

His own "roots" in Indiana also prompted him to help organize the first Farm Aid benefit concert with Willie Nelson and Neil Young in Champaign, Ill., on Sept. 22, 1985. To this day, nearly \$100 million has been

raised to promote a strong family farm system of agriculture.

Following nearly a decade of successful songs and albums, Mellencamp launched his "Dance Naked Tour." Just after a show at Jones Beach in New York, he suffered a minor heart attack, forcing him to cancel the tour. When his health returned, he played a few small Midwestern clubs under the pseudonym Pearl Doggy. A year later, he released another album, "Mr. Happy Go Lucky," with two singles topping the charts.

As they say, the hits keep coming. With a new century underway, Mellencamp continued to team up with well-known artists, embark on successful tours, and produce one hit song after another. You may remember songs like "Your Life is Now," "I'm Not Running Anymore," "Eden is Burning," "Miss Missy," "It All Comes True," and "Chance Meeting at the Tarantula."

After receiving an honorary Doctorate of Musical Arts from Indiana University, where he gave a commencement address, he went on the road for a series of unannounced free concerts on the East Coast and Midwest, which he called "Live on the Streets: The Good Samaritan Tour."

Most recently, he has appeared on countless TV shows, produced Broadway soundtracks,

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John Mellencamp

Continued from page 6

published more than 600 songs, and sold over 60 million albums. His music has influenced his fellow musicians with his dedication, creativity, and style. As John Fogerty, former frontman for the Creedence Clearwater Revival, says:

“John is one of the great American songwriters and a great rock spirit.”

And Johnny Cash echoed those sentiments by saying that Mellencamp “is one of the 10 best songwriters in music.”

Amen to that.

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depends on your finances, your family situation, and what you want your plan to accomplish. Here's a simple way to think about it.

What a Will Does

A will spells out who gets your assets after you pass away. It also names an executor to carry out your wishes and can designate a guardian for minor children.

The downside is that a will must go through probate, which is the court process that validates it and oversees distribution. Probate can take months and, in many states, becomes part of the public record.

What a Trust Adds

A trust works a little differently. A revocable living trust holds your assets during your lifetime and directs how they'll be distributed after your death, without going through probate. Unlike a will, it stays private and lets a successor trustee step in immediately if you can't manage your finances, which is useful in cases of illness, injury, or dementia.

Trusts can also help with complicated family situations, like blended families or children with special needs, giving you more control over who gets what and when.

The biggest challenge is that you have to move your accounts and property into the trust yourself, which takes time and care. Most people who create a trust also keep a simple "pour-over will" to catch anything that wasn't transferred.

Because trusts are more com-

plex, they usually cost more than a will. Attorneys typically charge \$1,000 to \$3,000 for a trust versus \$300 to \$1,200 for a will, although costs vary depending on the estate and location. You can use do-it-yourself options like Quicken WillMaker & Trust, Trust & Will, or LegalZoom to save money, but they're generally best for simple situations. If your finances or family circumstances are more complicated, hiring an attorney is usually worth the cost.

When a Trust Makes Sense

You might benefit from a trust if you own real estate – especially in more than one state – want to avoid the costs and delays of probate, or prefer to keep your estate matters private. It's also helpful if you have a larger estate, a blended family, or want to ensure someone can manage your finances if you become incapacitated.

When a Will May Be Enough

If your estate is relatively small, your family situation is simple, and most of your assets already have named beneficiaries – like life insurance, IRAs, or bank accounts with pay-on-death or transfer-on-death designations – a will may be all you need. Some states also offer simplified probate for small estates, which can make the process quicker and cheaper.

You don't need a trust just because you have a will. But if avoiding probate, protecting privacy, or managing assets during incapacity is important to you, a trust is worth considering. Even a modest estate can benefit from a clear plan.

Getting Help

If you don't already have an attorney, a good estate-planning professional can help figure out what's right for you. Two trusted resources are the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (naela.org) and the National Association of Estate Planners and Councils (naepc.org), both of which let you search for local professionals.

Taking the time to put a plan in place, whether it's a will, a trust, or both, can protect your loved ones, ease stress, and give you peace of mind now and in the future.

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

by Jim Miller



Savvy SENIOR

I Have a Will — Do I Also Need a Trust?

Dear Savvy Senior,

My wife and I were recently talking about updating our will and wondered if we should also set up a trust. How do we know if we need one?

— Planning Ahead

Dear Planning,
That's an excellent question.



A will is one of the most important tools in estate planning, but many people wonder if it's enough or if adding a trust makes sense. The answer de-

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On the Road Again ...

SoCal Beach Dining Unmatched

By Shana McCann

As residents of Southern California, we are able to live near the beautiful Pacific Ocean, enjoy spectacular sunsets at the serene beaches, and pretty much bask in ideal weather almost all year long.

And when we get hungry, we can take a short drive to the many waterfront restaurants for a pleasant dining experience for every season and every taste. Whether you prefer Long Beach or Orange County, your choices are abundant.

Based on my personal visits and reviews from local restaurant critics, here are some of the most popular dining venues just waiting for your hefty appetites:

Long Beach

- **Claire's At the Museum**, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd., is the perfect spot to mix good food with cultural ambiance and coastal views. Located in the Long Beach Museum of Art, the elegant beachside eatery is known for its sunny patio and unique sculpture fountain. Menu highlights include Crème brûlée French toast, smoked salmon Benedict, or a kale Caesar salad with Parmigiano crisps.

- **Fuego at Hotel Maya**, 700



Queensway Drive, is a Latin-infused dining and lounge

experience that offers a unique setting at the water's edge. An indoor-outdoor patio provides great views of the Long Beach skyline while you are indulging in classic Latin dishes like Cuban ropa vieja and exotic cocktails.

- **Schooner or Later**, 241 Marina Drive, specializes in breakfast and lunch served all day. You can feast on fluffy pancakes, huevos rancheros, or its popular crab and avocado melt. Also, this restaurant with the cool name is famous for its Schooner chili and Old Schooner Special, a Polish sausage on rye with jack cheese, mustard, and a pickle.

Orange County



- **The Belle Rooftop**, 300 Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach, sits high above Main Street, providing an expansive view of the Surf City skyline and the shore. Expect to comfort your palate with a variety of fried chicken sliders, truffle fries, artisanal flatbreads, and oysters on the half shell.

- **Sea Salt at the Beach** in Bolsa Chica takes the best of Texas barbecue and drops it right onto the shoreline. Part honky-tonk, part smokehouse, this lively beachfront dining venue is a nonstop party. Menu features include slow-smoked brisket,

fall-off-the-bone ribs, pulled pork and sausage, and a variety of bold side dishes. On weekends, the bluegrass brunch with bottomless pancakes draws early birds and night owls alike.

- **The Cannery of the Pacific**,



3010 Lafayette Ave., Newport Beach, isn't just a restaurant; it is a slice of coastal history. Housed in a century-old building along the Rhine Channel, this seafood spot blends vintage charm with a fresh, modern menu. You can feast on delectables like oysters, ahi poke, Chilean sea bass with miso glaze, or hearty paella, lobster Benedict, and a complete sushi bar.

- **Duke's**, at the entrance of the



Huntington Beach pier on Pacific Coast Highway and Main Street, is another Orange County dining institution, offering a combination of beachfront

views and Hawaiian-inspired cuisine, including seafood steaks and tropical cocktails. Outdoor seating is available, offering panoramic views of the Pacific and ocean sunsets.

From upscale fine-dining restaurants to casual beachside cafés, there's something for every hungry appetite just a short ride away.

Photos courtesy Yelp.



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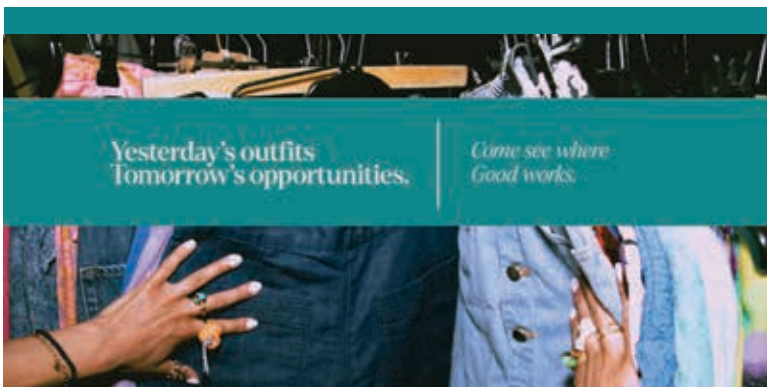


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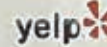
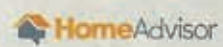
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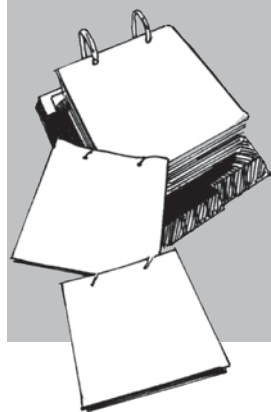
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JUNE Calendar of Events



June arrives with the start of summer traditions across Southern California, bringing outdoor festivals, classic car shows, live music, family fairs, and community celebrations to Orange County and beyond. From beachfront gatherings to cultural festivals and art events, the month offers something for every age and interest. Here's a look at some of the events happening throughout the region this June.

VW Rare Vintage Air d'Elegance

Huntington Beach

June 6

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Classic Volkswagen enthusiasts gather at Old World Village for a rare vintage VW showcase set against the backdrop of the German-style village. Guests can browse shops, enjoy food and drinks, and experience

one of Orange County's most unique automotive events. Free admission and parking.

LOCATION: Old World Village Festival Hall, 7561 Center Ave. No. 49, Huntington Beach.

Murder Mystery Scavenger Hunt

San Clemente

June 6

10:45 a.m. (arrive by 10:25 a.m.)

Participants explore Downtown San Clemente, including the pier, beach trails, and Del Mar shops, while solving clues, riddles, and puzzles in a live-action murder mystery adventure. INFO: Use Promo Code OCNET for 25% discount on tickets.

40 Years of Community, Care & Connection Open House

Fountain Valley

June 6

1 to 4 p.m.

Carmel Village celebrates 40 years of trusted Assisted Living and Memory Care with a special anniversary open house featuring a light buffet lunch, community tours, neighborhood connections, and a raffle drawing. Space is limited and advance RSVP is requested by May 26.

LOCATION: Carmel Village, 17077 San Mateo St., Fountain Valley. RSVP: (714) 868-

7219. More information at WellQuestCV.com.

Huntington Beach

Concours

Huntington Beach

June 6-7

Classic cars and motorcycles take center stage during this annual concours event benefiting the Huntington Beach Library Children's Resource Center. Car lovers can admire vintage vehicles while supporting a local cause.

LOCATION: Huntington Beach Library, 7111 Talbert Ave., Huntington Beach.

Tustin Street Fair & Cook-Off

Tustin

June 7

11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Known as the nation's largest one-day chili cook-off, this popular street fair fills Old Town Tustin with food booths, craft vendors, live music, contests, beer and wine gardens, and family-friendly entertainment. Admission is free.

LOCATION: Old Town Tustin, El Camino Real and Main Street, Tustin.

INFO: 714-573-3326.



Celebration of the Arts & Music Festival

Yorba Linda

June 7

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Artists highlight paintings, photography, jewelry, sculptures, ceramics, glass art, and more during this family-friendly arts festival featuring live entertainment and free activities for all ages. Admission and parking are free.

LOCATION: Hurless Barton Park, 4601 Casa Loma Ave., Yorba Linda.

INFO: 714-996-1960.

Soccer Fest at Old World

Huntington Beach

June 11-July 19

Fans gather to watch FIFA World Cup 2026 matches on big screens while enjoying German food, beer, and the lively atmosphere at Old World Village throughout the tournament. LOCATION: Old World Village, 7561 Center Ave., Huntington Beach.

From Dinosaurs to People

Santa Ana

June 13

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Heritage Museum of Orange County hosts a family-friendly event exploring prehistoric eras and local history through exhibits, vendors, demonstrations, and cultural

activities. Pets are welcome.

LOCATION: Heritage Museum of OC, 3101 W. Harvard St., Santa Ana.

INFO: 714-540-0404.

Murder Mystery Scavenger Hunt

Old Town San Diego

June 14

11:20 a.m. (arrive by 11 a.m.)

Teams explore historic Old Town San Diego while solving puzzles and clues in a detective-style walking adventure designed for adults.

INFO: Use Promo Code OCNET for 25% discount on tickets.

Summerfest

Fountain Valley

June 18-21

This annual summer celebration features carnival rides, live music, food vendors, a beer garden, community performances, and family activities.

LOCATION: Recreation Center and Sports Park, 16400 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley.

INFO: 714-649-2760.

Murder Mystery Scavenger Hunt

Laguna Beach

June 20

11 a.m. (arrive by 10:40 a.m.)

Participants search for clues through Downtown Laguna Beach, Main Beach, Heisler

Continued on page 19

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JUNE Calendar

Continued from page 18



Park, and surrounding areas in this interactive detective-style event.

INFO: Use Promo Code OC-NET for 25% discount on tickets.

Cruisin' Brea Classic Car Show

Brea

June 21

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Celebrate Father's Day with classic cars, music, entertainment, exhibits, shopping, and food during this long-time Southern California car show tradition. Guests are encouraged to bring canned food donations for the Orange County Food Bank.

LOCATION: Birch Street and Brea Boulevard, Brea.

Baroque Music Festival Corona del Mar

June 21-28

This annual festival presents a series of concerts celebrating Baroque music through orchestral performances, chamber music, and solo recitals featuring internationally recognized musicians.

LOCATION: Corona del Mar.

A Taste of Greece Irvine

June 26-28

Enjoy authentic Greek food, pastries, folk dancing, church tours, marketplace shopping, and family-friendly entertainment during this lively cultural festival.

LOCATION: Saint Paul's Greek Orthodox Church, 4949 Alton Pkwy., Irvine.

Lions Club Fish Fry & Carnival

Costa Mesa

June 26-28

A Costa Mesa tradition since 1945, the event features carnival rides, live bands, booths, food, beer, and wine gardens, and family entertainment while raising funds for local schools and organizations. Admission is free.

LOCATION: Lions Park, 570 18th St., Costa Mesa.

Sawdust Festival

Laguna Beach

June 26-

Sept. 6

11 a.m. daily

This outdoor arts festival highlights local artists creating and selling handmade works in a wooded canyon setting filled with live entertainment, food, and art demonstrations.

LOCATION: 935 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach.

INFO: 949-494-3030.

Laguna Art-A-Fair

Laguna Beach

June 26-Sept. 6

Celebrating its 59th year, the festival features fine art exhibits, workshops, live entertainment, food, and beverages throughout the summer season. Closed July 4.

LOCATION: 777 Laguna Canyon Road, Laguna Beach.

INFO: 949-494-4514.



Old World Wiener Nationals Dachshund Races

Huntington Beach

June 28

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Families and dog lovers gather to watch dachshunds race during this playful pet-friendly event featuring contests, vendors, and plenty of entertainment.

LOCATION: Old World Village Festival Hall, 7561 Center Ave. No. 49, Huntington Beach.

Family Summer Concert Huntington Beach

June 28

3:30 p.m.

Huntington Beach Symphony Orchestra

LOCATION: Golden West College, Mainstage Theater, 15751 Gothard St., Huntington Beach

Tickets: \$30, Online Promo: 4 tickets for \$100. Purchase with Paypal: HBSymphony.org

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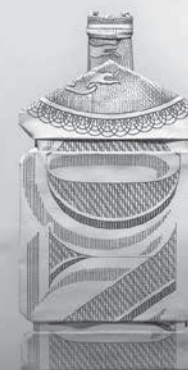
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Public Service Announcement

The Gadget Geezer

By Les Goldberg

Room Coolers on a Budget

With summertime heat indexes expected to climb in the coming weeks and months, you might be thinking about repairing or replacing your central air-conditioning system – or buying a new one. Either way, be prepared to spend some serious cash on the units, their installation, and maintenance.

Thanks to modern technology, however, there are many money-saving alternatives in the form of portable room coolers, which will do the trick in a house, apartment, or condo for just a few hundred dollars.

After testing several of the top brands in their labs, the experts at “*Home & Garden Magazine*” and “*Popular Mechanics*” offer their advice on how to choose which portable air-conditioning units on the market are your best buys.

They want you to make sure the cooler you are looking at:

- It has maximum cooling power.
- Works in small and large rooms.
- It has low energy consumption.
- Provides multiple settings for all environments.
- It is portable.
- It is quality constructed.
- Provides value and offers discounts.

Photos courtesy of Amazon.

Based on those factors, here are the top-rated portable AC units in three main feature categories:

1. In the “Best Overall” category, the **LG Portable Air Conditioner** got the top rating for its ability to instantly cool down a room with the least amount of noise. Also, one of its key features is its ability to dehumidify the space it occupies. \$589.99.

2. The **Black+Decker BPACT14WT** model won for being the “Most Compact.” Also, a heater, the air conditioner features voice control, Wi-Fi connectivity, and mobile app controls, which function as a thermostat. Included are an easy-to-install window kit and a large, vented airflow outlet to usher in cool air. Price: \$587.13.



3. Voted the “Best Value” is the **Dreo AC515S** portable air conditioner. It is designed to deliver 5,000 BTU cooling to quickly and efficiently cool rooms up to 150 sq. ft. A patented noise isolation system keeps operation as quiet as 46 dB, making it ideal for bedrooms and home offices. Smooth caster wheels, a modular window kit, and the exhaust hose make installation and room-to-room movement effortless. Price: \$439.00

In all portable units, you just need a nearby window and an electric wall outlet to get the cold air flowing. Yes, they cost more than window units and are a far more affordable alternative to central air-conditioning systems. The convenience of portability – and the fact that they don’t take up space in the window- make them a worthy investment.



The Month of June



Photo courtesy Pixabay.

June is a month of transition and contrast — where seasons shift, celebrations fill the calendar, and nature reaches a kind of peak energy in many parts of the world. From ancient mythology to modern observances, June carries both cultural meaning and seasonal importance that touches everyday life in different ways.

Here are 10 things about June:

1. June is named after Juno

The month of June is named after the Roman goddess Juno, who was associated with marriage, women, and the protection of the household.

2. Start of summer in the Northern Hemisphere

June marks the beginning of summer in the Northern Hemisphere, bringing longer days, warmer temperatures, and more outdoor activity.

3. Winter begins in the Southern Hemisphere

At the same time, the Southern Hemisphere enters winter, with shorter days and cooler weather conditions.

4. The summer solstice occurs in June

The summer solstice, usually around June 20–21, is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and marks the sun’s highest position in the sky.

5. June is National Oceans Month

In the United States, June is observed as National Oceans Month, highlighting ocean conservation and marine ecosystems.

6. Father’s Day is celebrated in June

Father’s Day falls on the third Sunday of June in many countries, honoring fathers and father figures.

7. June is National Dairy Month

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In the United States, June is recognized as National Dairy Month, celebrating dairy farming, milk production, and related agricultural industries.

8. The school year often ends in June

For many students, June signals the end of the school year and the beginning of summer break.

9. June has three birthstones

The traditional birthstones for June are pearl, alexandrite, and moonstone, each symbolizing different qualities like purity and intuition.

10. A key month for agriculture
June’s longer days and warm weather make it an important growing period for crops and gardens in many regions.

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The Health Exam Many Don't Know They Need



It's a wise idea to see your way clear to getting your eyes checked regularly, not only to protect your vision, but also to check for a surprising number of other conditions.

If you are like most Americans, you wait until you notice changes in your vision before making an appointment for an eye exam. According to a poll conducted by the American Academy of Ophthalmology, only about one-third of adults know that many vision-threatening eye diseases begin without any noticeable symptoms.

“In the early phases of eye disease, your brain tries to fill in gaps in vision. That means many people with eye disease are walking around thinking they have 20/20 vision, or that they don't need to get their eyes checked at all,” said Laura Fine, MD, EyeCare America® volunteer and ophthalmologist in Boston.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends that all healthy adults get a medical eye exam at least once in their 20s, twice in their 30s, and as recommended by an ophthalmologist in their 40s and beyond. People who have a family history of eye disease or

preexisting health conditions, such as diabetes, may need to come in more often. If you're uninsured or underinsured, EyeCare America may be able to help with a no-out-of-pocket-cost medical eye exam.

“Regular eye exams throughout adulthood are important to catch eye diseases and conditions early, before symptoms appear,” Dr. Fine said. “For some diseases, once vision is lost, it cannot be restored.”

Waiting Could Cost You Your Vision

Take the case of Peggy Wellman. She went to get her eyes checked, thinking she only needed a new eyeglass prescription. Instead, she was told she had lost most of her peripheral vision to advanced glaucoma and needed surgery.

The diagnosis was a complete shock to Wellman. Although surgery kept her from losing any more vision, it could not re-

Continued on page 27



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In The Spotlight

By Debbie L. Sklar

June: A Time for Seniors to Reconnect, Recharge, and Get Outdoors

June often arrives quietly. The rush of the holidays is long gone, schools are letting out for summer, and the days begin stretching later into the evening. For many older adults, it can also become one of the best times of year to slow down, reconnect with others, and focus on physical and emotional well-being.

Unlike the busy winter season or the intense heat that often arrives later in summer, June offers a comfortable middle ground. Parks are green, community calendars begin filling up with outdoor concerts and local events, and longer daylight hours make it easier for seniors to stay active without rushing.

Health experts have long pointed to the benefits of staying socially connected and physically active as people age. June provides an ideal opportunity to do both.

Get Outside

One of the simplest ways seniors can take advantage of the season is by getting outdoors more often. Even moderate daily activity — such as walking through a neighborhood, gardening, or visiting a local farmers market — can support heart

health, mobility, and mental wellness.

Morning walks can be especially beneficial this time of year before temperatures rise. Many seniors find that walking with a friend or family member adds motivation and creates an easy social routine. Others enjoy bird watching, photography, or simply spending quiet time outside with a book.

Gardening also becomes popular in June, and it offers more than just beautiful flowers or fresh vegetables. Studies have shown that gardening can help reduce stress, improve mood, and encourage gentle movement that supports flexibility and coordination. For seniors living in apartments or retirement communities, even small patio gardens or potted herbs can create a sense of routine and accomplishment.

Be a Social Butterfly

June is also filled with opportunities for social connection.

Across the country, senior centers, libraries, and community organizations often begin hosting summer programming ranging from movie nights and exercise classes to travel groups and educational work-



Photo courtesy of Pixabay.

shops. These activities provide more than entertainment. They help combat isolation, which remains one of the most significant challenges affecting older adults.

According to the National Institute on Aging, loneliness and social isolation can increase risks for depression, cognitive decline, and other health concerns. Staying engaged with friends, neighbors, and community activities can have measurable benefits for emotional and physical health.

For seniors who may feel hesitant about joining new activities alone, experts often recommend starting small. Attending one local event, signing up for a single class, or inviting a neighbor for coffee can be enough to begin building stronger social routines.

June can also become a meaningful time for multigenerational connection.

With grandchildren finishing school for the summer, many families begin planning visits, vacations, and outings together. Simple activities such as picnics, beach days, family barbecues, or storytelling nights can strengthen relationships across generations.

Many grandparents also use the summer months to pass down family traditions, recipes, and history. These shared experiences can create lasting memories while helping younger generations feel more connected to their relatives and heritage.

Travel

Travel is another reason many seniors look forward to June.

For retirees with flexible schedules, early summer often provides a sweet spot before peak tourist crowds and extreme heat arrive in many destinations. Road trips, train travel, cruises, and regional getaways remain popular options for older adults seeking both relaxation and adventure.

Travel experts frequently recommend that seniors plan by checking mobility accommodations, packing medications carefully, and scheduling breaks during longer trips. But even short local outings can provide many of the same mental health benefits associated with travel, including reduced stress and increased stimulation.

Health

Of course, June is also an im-

Continued on page 28



Limoncello Ristorante Pizzeria and Bar Three Strangers, New Friends: A Dream Come True

This is an amazing story about three gentlemen, Giovanni Mercurio, 35, Tiberio Fodor, 43, and Antonio Guarracino, 48.

I had the good fortune and opportunity to meet these three gentlemen. The three of us sat down one afternoon, and each of them shared their journey into the restaurant world and the next day, I was invited to wine and dine and experience one of the most delightful evenings of food, drink, great music, and a compassionate trio making one dining experience, one to remember.

Tony and Giovanni were born in Naples, Italy, and Tiberio, although from Romania, lived and worked in Italy for more than 11 years in the restaurant and hotel industry.

In June 2021, I believe that each of these three men carried



*Giovanni Mercurio,
Antonio Guarracino, Tiberio Fodor
Photo courtesy Limoncello.*

a personal dream of one day owning their own restaurant business.

Divine guidance played a huge role in their lives, and all three ended up in Southern California.

In 2020, all three worked at Canaletto, a fine dining restaurant in Fashion Island in Newport Beach. Tony was the chef, Giovanni was the general manager, and Tiberio was the assistant general manager. This was

during the early years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, these gentlemen collaborated and opened Limoncello Café, a coffee shop in Orange, located inside a large gas station/car wash, which served hundreds of people daily. They started out serving regular coffee, coffee specials, smoothies, and pastries.



*Limoncello Bar
Photo courtesy Limoncello.*

As time moved forward and receiving valuable compliments, the three decided to branch out, serving Italian food with the addition of offering catering services.

Of course, the dream of all three of them owning a specialized restaurant was always a part of their thoughts and desires.

Limoncello Ristorante Pizzeria and Bar opened in a very charming upscale location in southern San Juan Capistrano, offering a breath of authentic Italian cuisine in the air.

Tony is the lead chef, and Giovanni and Tiberio run the house.

My interview with these three gentlemen was quite an experience. Each one shared a lot about themselves, their dreams, their family heritage, upbringing, their strong values, and goals for the success of this restaurant, which includes a

strong and sincere customer experience.

“You must love what you do to succeed,” Tony said.

All three are extremely impressive and very high-achieving professionals. These gentlemen are a trio of rising industry leaders.

Each one shares the same values, and all three have the same goals. They expressed very sincerely that they understand the process of success, which meant taking your time on the journey and not moving too far ahead of yourself too quickly. They each knew the right time would present itself for growth.



*Arugula Salad
Photo courtesy Samantha Hammer.*

“Being in this type of business becomes an all-consuming, seven-day-a-week commitment,” Tiberio said.

In the earliest stages of 2023, the restaurant opened for dinner and additionally offered a lunch menu for a short period of time on the weekends. Wine and beer selections were available and additionally added to the menu.

It was a time for them to test the waters and get a better feel for what the future could look like.

The time presented itself with



an expansion, and they extended the restaurant into a combined unit that was right next door to the initial location. During the remodel, they placed the best quality appliances into the structure. In addition, the highest quality oven was purchased from Italy.

With the special care for providing the best clean and safe environment, the restaurant was awarded “The Award of Excellence” from the California Department of Public Health for two consecutive years. This was a true honor for them to be acknowledged for the care and management style for the customer experience.

When hiring staff, based on the goals and experience of these three gentlemen, the main factors are staff who are honest, trustworthy, good listeners, and have integrity in every endeavor to service the customer’s experience.

Limoncello Ristorante Pizzeria and Bar expanded in June 2025, which offered a pizzeria and full bar service.

People have followed us from working in the restaurant in

Continued on page 30

June Book Club

By Debbie L. Sklar



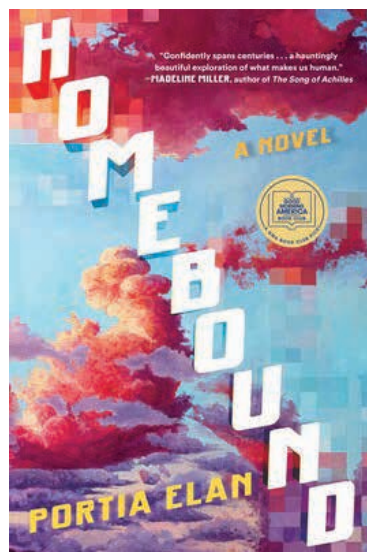
June Book Club Picks: Four New Reads to Dive Into

June arrives with longer days, warmer evenings, and a little more space to slow down with a good book. Whether you're reading on the porch, by the pool, or in a quiet corner indoors, this month's selections offer a mix of emotional storytelling, page-turning drama, and richly drawn characters that make it easy to get lost in a good story.

Homebound

By Portia Elan

Scribner / Simon & Schuster



"Homebound" begins in 1983 with Becks, a 19-year-old desperate to leave Cincinnati while grieving the death of her beloved uncle, the one person

who truly understood her. Before he died, he left her a half-finished game to complete — one last

collaboration that becomes her way through loneliness and loss.

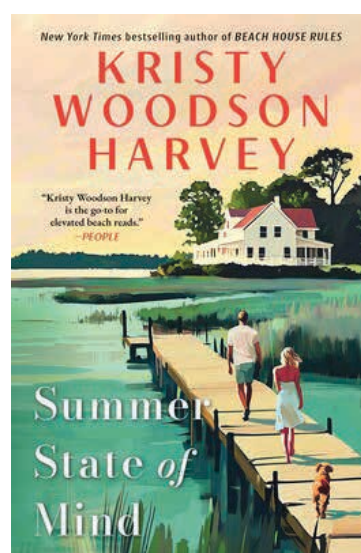
What Becks creates unexpectedly echoes far into the future, shaping the lives of a scientist, a sentient automaton, a sea captain, and a mysterious traveler moving through space on an unknown mission. Though separated by centuries, the characters are connected by their search for meaning, belonging, and human connection.

Blending literary fiction with science fiction, the novel explores grief, memory, and the unseen threads that bind people across time. Expansive yet emotionally grounded, it offers a hopeful vision of humanity's capacity for love and connection, according to the publisher.

Summer State of Mind

By Kristy Woodson Harvey
Gallery Books / Simon & Schuster

"Summer State of Mind" follows burnt-out NICU nurse Daisy Stevens, who flees to Cape Carolina, North Carolina, after a devastating professional setback. Hoping for a fresh start, she instead finds herself pulled into a life-changing moment when a high school baseball coach discovers an abandoned baby.



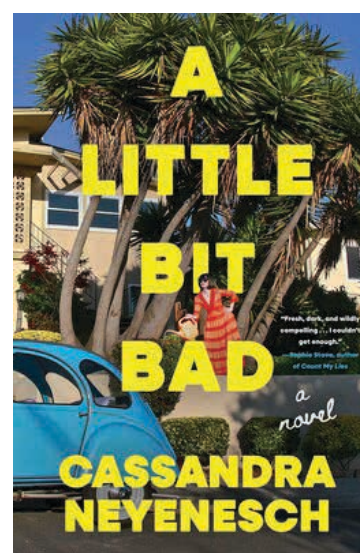
Mason Thaysden, once a rising baseball star before an injury ended his major league dreams, is also searching for purpose in his hometown. As Daisy, Mason, and the tight-knit community — including Mason's eccentric Aunt Tilley — become entangled in the baby's story, long-buried secrets begin to surface.

When a shocking discovery threatens to unravel the town, each character is forced to confront what it truly means to start over. Full of heart, humor, and Southern charm, the novel is a warm story of second chances, connection, and unexpected family, according to the publisher.

A Little Bit Bad

By Cassandra Neyenesch
S&S / Summit Books / Simon & Schuster

Perdita Jungfrau thought she would remain married to her husband forever, until she fell into an intense affair with Nando, her neighbor's anarcho-Marxist roofer. The relationship is com-



plicated from the start—she is pregnant, he has a girlfriend, he is fifteen years younger, and she is torn between her devotion to her children and her pull toward a man who confides in her his most private truths.

Three years later, Nando has been murdered, and Perdita's life is still unravelling. Her husband struggles to understand the woman she has become, while she is preoccupied with growing unease: a mysterious woman watching her from a parked car, her brother's deepening opioid addiction, and the ongoing question of whether she can be the mother her children need, given the weight of her own past.

At the center of it all are the lingering, searing memories of the affair that upended her life, forcing her to confront guilt, desire, and the long aftershocks of a relationship that never fulfills.



The Paris Library

By Janet Skeslien Charles
Atria Books / Simon & Schuster



"The Paris Library" follows Lily Jacobsen, a young American living in Paris in 1995, who takes a job at the American Library in Paris after her artistic ambitions begin to falter. There, writers, students, and volunteers surround her with their own hidden stories.

As Lily settles into her new role, she uncovers archival materials that may connect back to her neighbor Odile's mysterious past during World War II. What begins as a job soon becomes a deeper exploration of memory, history, and the quiet ways the past shapes the present.

A love letter to books, friendship, and resilience, the novel celebrates the power of literature and the unexpected paths that lead us back to ourselves, according to the publisher.

Continued on page 28

June Crossword Puzzle

Across

1. Elaine's last name on "Seinfeld"
6. Cpls.' superiors
10. Sigher's word
14. Gladiator's venue
15. Dynamic introduction?
16. Jester Jay
17. Ninth-century pope
18. Cut of beef
19. ____ close to schedule
20. Flammable material
22. Mouthpart of arthropods
24. Actor Herbert
26. Natural gas component
27. Monetary unit of Nicaragua
31. Colorful moths
32. Yippee!
33. Horn-shaped structure
36. ____ Kapital
39. Nabokov novel
40. Beta preceeder
41. Racer Yarborough
42. Canon camera
43. You ____ right!
44. Speak
45. Spanish article
46. Divert
48. 1994 Denis Leary comedy
51. We ____ the World
52. Pretext
54. Verdi title bandit
59. Troubles
60. Razor brand
62. Column style
63. WWII battle site
64. Hard work
65. Keen!
66. Long time
67. Piece of fencing?
68. City on the Ruhr

Down

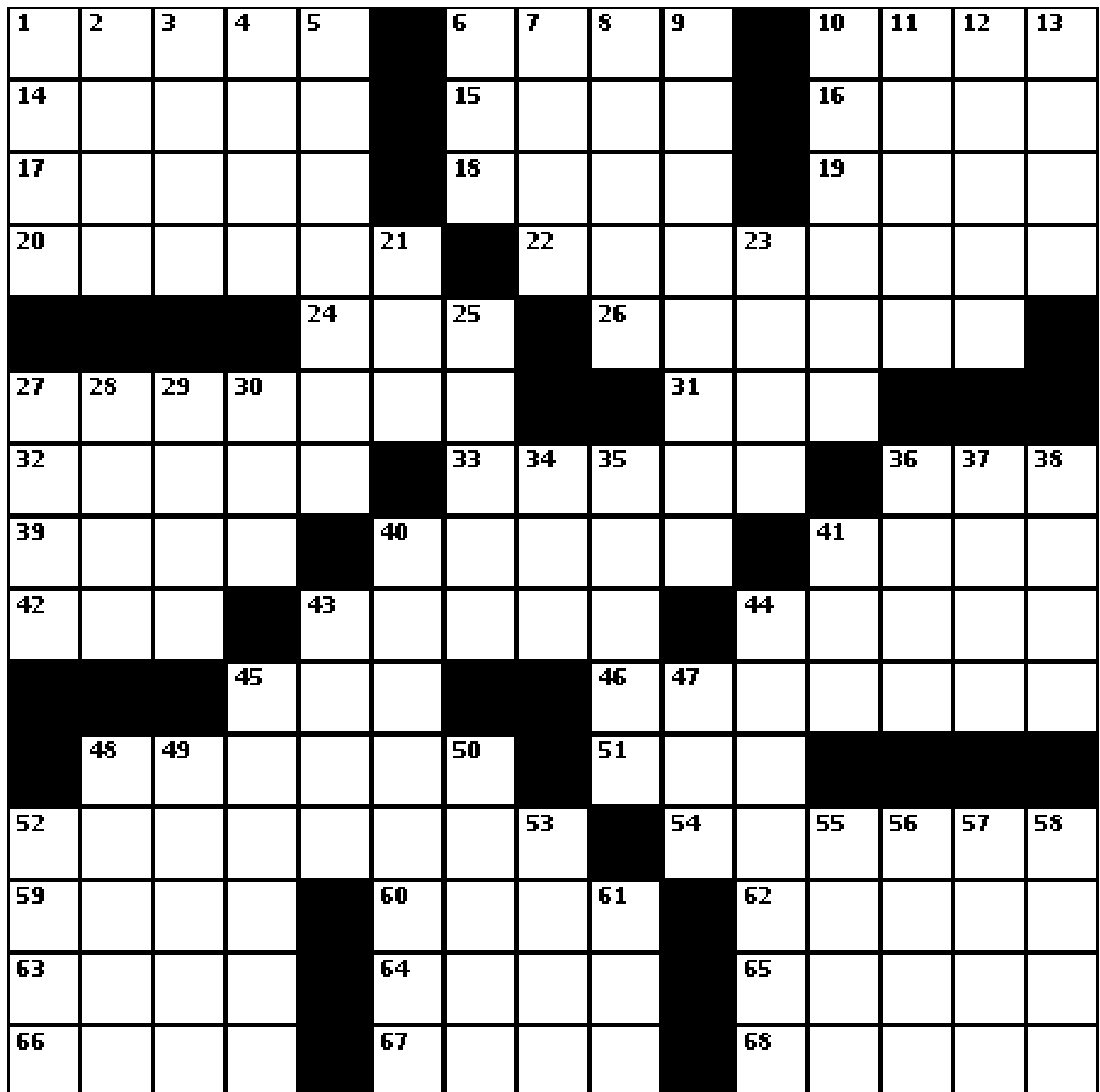
1. Latvian, e.g.
2. ... ____ saw Elba

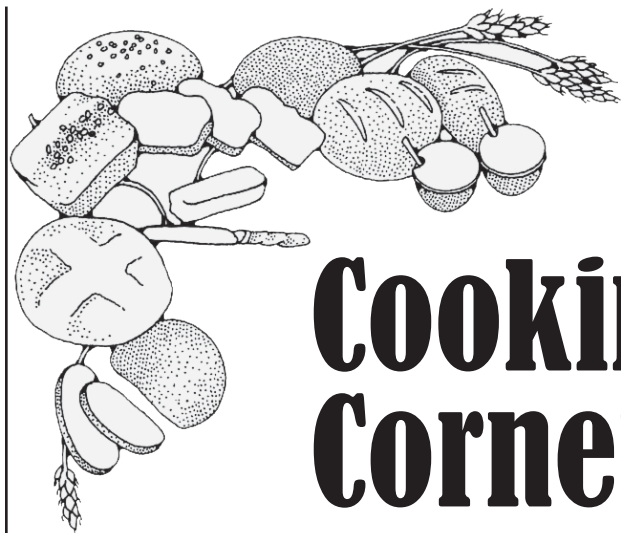
3. Sign gas
4. Novelist Bagnold
5. Seasoned pork sausage
6. Actor Mineo
7. An earth sci.
8. Triple
9. Short composition
10. Island greetings
11. Bolshevik leader
12. Make ____ of (write

- down)
13. Annoyed
21. Burgle
23. Ten C-notes
25. Twinned crystal
27. Deal (with)
28. Cry of disbelief
29. Baseball stats
30. Family head
34. Photo ____
35. "The Mary Tyler

- Moore Show" spinoff
36. Facts and figures
37. Knighted Guinness
38. Spanish muralist
40. Certain salt
41. Geom. point
43. Bern's river
44. Womb-related
45. Pretends
47. Before, to Byron
48. Old hat

49. Nametag word
50. Setting on the aperture
52. Que ____?
53. Sandusky's lake
55. Refusals
56. Collections of anecdotes
57. TV's "Nick at ____"
58. Screen image
61. Potent potable





Cooking Corner

Peach & Berry Summer Crisp

A light, sun-kissed dessert that celebrates the first sweet fruit of summer



berries, raspberries, or blackberries)

2 tbsp lemon juice

1/3 cup sugar (or sweetener of choice)

1 tbsp cornstarch

Topping

1 cup old-fashioned oats

1/2 cup flour

1/2 cup brown sugar

1/2 tsp cinnamon

6 tbsp cold butter, cubed

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a large bowl, toss peaches and berries with lemon juice, sugar, and cornstarch. Spread into a greased 8×8 baking dish.

In another bowl, mix oats, flour, brown sugar, and cinnamon.

Cut in the butter until crumbly.

Sprinkle topping evenly over the fruit.

Bake 35–40 minutes, until bubbly and golden.

Cool slightly and serve warm—plain or with a small scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Summer Kitchen Tips

Fruit Prep Shortcuts —

Keep pre-sliced peaches and berries in the freezer for quick desserts.

Lighten It Up —

Swap half the butter for applesauce in crisps and cobblers.

Cool Serving Idea —

Serve your crisp with chilled vanilla yogurt instead of ice cream.

Make It Ahead —

Assemble the dish in the morning and refrigerate until baking time.

Flavor Boost —

Add a pinch of nutmeg or a splash of almond extract to deepen the fruit flavor.



Health Exam

Continued from page 22

store the sight she had already lost. Had her eye disease been caught earlier, her sight may have been preserved.

“The best care is preventive care,” Dr. Fine said. “You probably go to the dentist regularly, not just when you notice a toothache. You should prioritize eye health in the same way for the best chance at a lifetime of healthy vision.”

Surprising Benefits of an Eye Exam

An eye exam can pick up health issues beyond eye diseases. That’s because the blood vessels and nerves at the back of the eye reflect your overall health and can signal the start of certain conditions, such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or vitamin deficiencies.

Other diseases an ophthalmologist can help diagnose include:

Diabetes. Diabetes is a leading cause of vision loss in the United States. Early signs of diabetes can appear in the eye before vision is affected.

Heart disease. A growing body of research shows that eye health and heart health are closely linked. An ophthalmologist can spot early signs of heart disease by examining the blood supply to the retina, the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye.

Stroke. Loss of side vision, sudden blind spots, blurry vision, double vision, or sensitivity to light can all signal a

stroke. Plaque deposits in the arteries of the eye could be a sign that emergency medical attention is needed.

How to Maintain Healthy Vision

May is Healthy Vision Month but any time is a good time to have regular eye exams. The easiest way to protect your sight is to have regular eye exams.

If you are unable to pay for a medical eye exam, EyeCare America may be able to help. The program provides exams for adults 18 and older who are uninsured or underinsured. See if you qualify for a no-out-of-pocket-cost medical eye exam at aao.org/eyecare-america.

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JUNE Book Club

Continued from page 25

Four fresh, compelling reads — perfect for your June reading list, whether you're curling up at home or enjoying a quiet summer afternoon outdoors.

In The Spotlight

Continued from page 23

Important reminder for seniors to stay mindful about health and safety during warmer months.

Doctors encourage older adults to stay hydrated, wear sunscreen, and avoid prolonged outdoor activity during peak afternoon heat. Heat-related illness can affect seniors more quickly due to age-related changes in the body and certain medications.

It is also a good time to review seasonal health needs, including annual wellness appointments, medication refills, and exercise goals. Many seniors use the start of summer as motivation to establish healthier routines that continue throughout the rest of the year.

Perhaps most importantly, June offers something less tangible but equally valuable: a sense of renewal.

Renewal

The season encourages people to open windows, spend time outdoors, and reconnect with the world around them. For seniors, that can mean rediscovering hobbies, strengthening friendships, exploring new in-

terests, or simply appreciating a slower pace of life.

A walk at sunset, lunch with a friend, a backyard garden, or an afternoon concert in the park may seem simple, but these moments often become the experiences people remember most.

As summer begins, June serves as a reminder that healthy aging is not only about medical care. It is also about connection, curiosity, movement, and finding enjoyment in everyday life.

MOMENTS LIKE THESE ARE PRECIOUS. DON'T LET THEM FADE AWAY.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of blindness in people 55 and older, sadly robbing sight and independence. It is a chronic disease affecting over 10 million Americans, and early detection is key to saving your sight.

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As a boy, Steven Spielberg was fascinated by the night sky—and the possibility of life up there. “I have seven solid decades of a vast personal interest in what lies beyond our atmosphere,” he proclaims. “The question has always remained for me: are we alone on our own planet?”

While he established his name with “*Jaws*” in 1975, Steven later explored the idea of an alien invasion with “*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*,” “*E. T. the Extra-Terrestrial*” and “*War of the Worlds*.” His new saga can be seen as an extension of “*Close Encounters*.” Now, though, the world isn’t faced with the possibility of extraterrestrials visiting our Earth—they are already here.

“*Disclosure Day*” began as an original Spielberg story, which was turned into a script by David Koepp, whose collaboration with the master includes the “*Jurassic Park*,” “*Indiana Jones*” and “*Spider-Man*” franchises.

In “*Disclosure*,” Margaret Fairchild (Emily Blunt) is a Kansas City TV weather reporter whose on-air delivery goes awry when she begins speaking in a clicking, muddled language as millions watch, dumbfounded. Before long, cybersecurity expert Daniel Kellner (Josh O’Connor) stumbles across

highly classified knowledge concerning our “visitors.” (Are they new arrivals, or have they been here all along?) Kellner, who somehow has a connection with the extra-terrestrials, feels obliged to inform the world of this historic event. But business honcho Noah Scanlon (Colin Firth) wants to keep a lid on the information, arguing that disclosing the full story all at once could destabilize the entire world.

The question posed for us is: how would we Earthlings—all 7 billion of us—react in such a situation once the truth has been revealed? Should we even be informed of such an event? What would happen if the media, government, science and religious institutions receive the information all at the same time, at a point where history is divided into before and after?

Replete with crop circles, bizarre animal and bird behavior, car chases and body-swapping, “*Disclosure Day*” dramatizes the unavoidable collision between witness experiences, official messaging and public fear. It’s also a deep dive into how people perceive each other.

Spielberg directed and co-produced (with Kristie Krieger) what promises to be yet another classic to add to his canon.

John Williams provides the film’s dynamic soundtrack, his 30th collaboration with Hollywood’s most successful producer, director and screenwriter.

“Are we alone, or are we not alone?” Steven asks. “And if someone knows we’re not alone, why haven’t we been told?...I think [that] has now resolved itself to my satisfaction in ‘*Disclosure Day*.’”

“I’VE NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY MY HUMAN WON’T LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT HER LEASH. I THINK SHE’S AFRAID OF GETTING LOST. BUT IT’S OK, I KIND OF LIKE SHOWING HER AROUND.”

—HARPER adopted 08-18-09

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Continued from page 24

Newport Beach and then having Limoncello Café in the city of Orange. They have followed our story, and this is so amazing and comforting, and we are so grateful. Some people dine three times a week,” Tony said.

“Our goal is that we want a place where everybody can come together and enjoy the whole experience. It’s a place for family and friends, unity, celebration, and sharing,” Tony said.

The restaurant now has 40 employees and recently served 700 people for dinner. This is a very high, fast-paced kitchen environment, and everything has to be in perfect order.

The menu is a masterful curation of incredible flavors offering a sensory appeal of high-quality ingredients, including the chefs’ special southern Italian extravaganzas.

Giovanni tells me that they make the best Limoncello Drop, which is accompanied by Reyka Vodka, Limoncello, simple syrup, and fresh-squeezed lemon juice with a sugar rim. Totally superlative! And another favorite is the old-fashioned made with apricot liquor. Such luxury!

Guest-favored entrees include:

Branzino, a Mediterranean sea-

bass, olives, grape tomatoes, white wine sauce, seasonal vegetables, and roasted potatoes. \$39.



Sofia Loren Pasta
Photo courtesy Samantha Hammer.

Sofia Loren, large tube pasta (Paccheri), shrimp, grape tomatoes, bell pepper, and a creamy lobster brandy sauce. \$26.

Lasagna, Neapolitan style, layered sheets of pasta, filled with Bolognese sauce, Bechamel, marinara sauce, parmigiano, basil, and mozzarella cheese \$26.

The restaurant menu is beautifully designed and so expressive in a variety of flavors, including wonderful fresh pastas, a very popular assortment of pizza, a fabulous selection of desserts, wonderful specialty drinks, excellent wine varieties, assorted appetizer selections, soups, salads, and more.

I must tell you about my dining experience, and the invitation presented to me as an opportunity to sample some of their extraordinary dishes.

It was a Sunday afternoon and a beautiful day in San Juan Capistrano. The restaurant opens at 3 p.m., and I arrived at 4:30 p.m. for an early experience. The restaurant was already half full.

Chef Tony and Tiberio greeted me with hugs, the Italian way, and seated me in a lovely area with a view of everything that was going on in the restaurant.

I thought that I was probably going to select and have one entrée and taste it, and then I would be able to write about it. Well, what happened next was absolutely unexpected. Chef Tony and Tiberio wanted me to sample several selections, including wine, appetizers, salads, desserts, and an after-dinner drink.

The restaurant was filled by about 5:30 p.m. People of all ages were coming into the restaurant. Some groups of six, other groups of eight, some groups of 10, and other small parties. Everyone was having an amazing time. The atmosphere was so comforting. I felt like I was out of town on a vacation or maybe on a cruise ship. I was treated so very specially by every one of the staff and by these gentlemen.

“We treat all our guests this same way,” Tiberio said.

I started with my selection with an arugula salad. The dish was piled high with beautiful arugula, which could have served three or four people. There were beautiful heirloom tomatoes, shaved Parmigiano cheese, breadcrumbs, and lemon-infused olive oil. \$12.

I was also given this wonderful, fresh sourdough warmed bread (Pane) with the most delicious homemade pesto vinaigrette dipping sauce. It was so deli-



Pollo Limoncello
Photo courtesy Samantha Hammer.

cious, and this bread was filled with flavor. I just loved it. \$5.

Next arrival is Arancini, a breaded and fried risotto ball, meat, Ragu, mozzarella, and green peas. This was the smoothest and most delicate meatball, and a sauce to die for. \$17.

I did order a glass of Justin Chardonnay. It was so delicious and a lovely compliment to my meal.

Next came Sofia Loren pasta, as explained above. Chef Tony is amazing and creates flavors that one never really experiences because his special creations come from his heart and soul.

The main dish arrives, and it’s the Polo Limoncello. This is a pounded chicken scallopini with Limoncello caper sauce, fresh basil, and a side of seasonal vegetables and roasted assorted potatoes. \$29.

Dessert arrived, and Tiberio selected Delizia Al Limoncello, an Italian lemon sorbet, which is biscotti layered with Limoncello zabaglione cream and strawberries. It was presented in a lovely small piece of glassware.

It was absolutely outstanding and a perfect ending to a fabulous meal and experience. \$12.

I ordered a second glass of wine because I was having such a nice time. Lo and behold, Tiberio comes by with the finale and a small glass of Imported Neapolitan Limoncello, an after-dinner drink.

I don’t think it gets any better than this! And you are just going to try this experience yourself!

Limoncello is a traditional Italian lemon liqueur that originated in the southern Italian regions of Capri, Sorrento, and the Amalfi Coast. For Giovanni, Tony, and Tiberio, this drink was always about people enjoying good meals, having good times, and sharing this wonderful drink. That’s how the restaurant’s name emerged.

Address:

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Reservations offered



Fabulous Finds

By Debbie L. Sklar

New Cosmetics Worth Trying Now

June brings a shift in beauty routines, lighter textures, smarter skincare hybrids, and products that multitask as temperatures rise and schedules loosen up. This month's standout launches lean into glow, protection, and skin performance, blending skincare science with makeup ease. From K-beauty innovations to targeted serums and complexion primers, here are four new beauty finds generating buzz right now.

Gundry MD Polyphenol Dark Spot Diminisher



Photo courtesy Gundry MD.

Sun Awareness Week arrives with a timely reminder that skin protection isn't just about SPF — it's also about repair and long-term care. **Gundry MD Polyphenol Dark Spot Diminisher** is a targeted serum designed to help reduce the appearance of age spots, sun spots, liver spots, and uneven skin tone.

Formulated with polyphenol-rich botanicals, antioxidants, and brightening ingredi-

ents like Kakadu plum and acai extract, the serum is designed to support a more even, radiant complexion over time. The lightweight formula is intended for daily use and is positioned as a corrective step for visible discoloration caused by sun exposure and environmental stress.

The brand emphasizes a holistic skincare approach that combines topical treatment with broader lifestyle support for skin health.

Where to buy: Official Gundry MD website.

Price: Approximately \$70–\$90.

Centellian24 Madeca Cream Time Reverse

Photo courtesy Centellian24.



K-beauty powerhouse **Centellian24** has officially launched at Ulta Beauty stores nationwide, bringing its best-selling anti-aging cream to a wider U.S. audience. **Madeca Cream Time Reverse** is formulated with 12 extracts of Centella asiatica and the brand's Active-TECA complex. The cream is designed to target multiple visible signs of aging, including fine lines, wrinkles, loss of firmness, un-

even tone, and dullness. Already a major bestseller in Korea with more than 90 million units sold, the product marks a significant retail expansion for the brand in the American market.

Backed by decades of pharmaceutical research through parent company Dongkook Pharmaceutical, Centellian24 positions the formula as a derma-cosmetic solution that bridges skincare science with everyday usability.

Where to buy: Ulta Beauty stores nationwide and Ulta.com.

Price: Approximately \$39–\$55.



COSRX Blue Peptide Bakuchiol Plump Glow Serum

Photo courtesy COSRX.



Known for its science-driven skincare, COSRX introduces a new addition to its peptide lineup with **Blue Peptide Bakuchiol Plump Glow Serum**, designed to support skin elasticity, firmness, and visible plumpness.

The formula centers on Copper TriPeptide-1, combined with bakuchiol and a multi-peptide complex to help improve overall skin texture and resilience.

Lightweight and fast absorbing, it is designed for daily use and suitable for a range of skin types, including sensitive skin.

The serum reflects a growing trend in skincare focused on maintaining facial structure and bounce over time, rather than only addressing surface-level concerns.

Where to buy: Amazon and the COSRX official website.

Price: Approximately \$28–\$38.

TIRTIR Reflect Glow Prep Primer / Flawless Pore Prep Primer

K-beauty complexion brand TIRTIR expands into hybrid skincare-makeup with two new primers designed to improve

Continued on page 37

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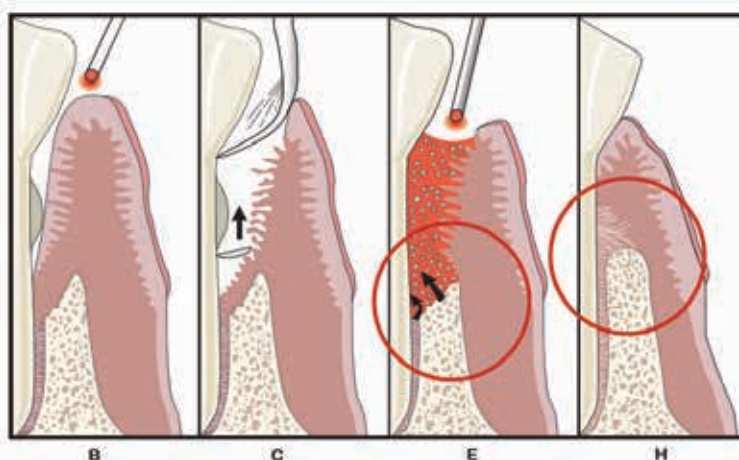
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1. Gregg RH II, Gregg DM. Laser-assisted periodontal regeneration with the LANAP protocol. *Dent Today* 2019 May;38(5):78, 80-83
2. FDA Clearance K151763



➔ Most people at risk for diabetes don't even know it. To help, Signify Health's In-Home Health Evaluations (IHEs) enable clinicians to administer diabetes screenings while providing the personalized support and guidance health plan members need to prevent diabetes onset and better manage their health. Learn more at www.HelloSignify.com.

➔ Identity theft can happen to anyone, but you can protect yourself by using strong passwords and multi-factor authentication, monitoring your credit and using Truecaller Caller ID and Scam Blocking app. Learn more at www.truecaller.com.

➔ Many fire departments are looking for volunteers to step up and serve their communities, reports the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC), the national association for the volunteer fire service. For more information about the volunteer fire service and to find an opportunity, visit www.MakeMeAFirefighter.com.

➔ People who qualify for both Medicare and Medicaid healthcare programs can enroll in a type of Medicare Advantage plan called a Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan (D-SNP), offered by Aetna® and other healthcare companies. Learn more at AetnaMedicare.com/

DSNP or call 1-844-588-0041 (TTY: 711).

➔ Many broadband providers offer students budget-friendly packages and university discounts with perks like high-speed Internet for online classes, affordable TV bundles for downtime, and special mobile phone plans with unlimited data and discounts. Learn more at www.smartmove.us/back-to-school-internet.

➔ By combining genetic insights, family history and other clinical factors like breast density, Myriad's MyRisk® Hereditary Cancer Test with RiskScore® calculates a woman's risk of breast cancer so she can get prompt treatment if necessary. Learn more at getmyrisk.com.

➔ Your health care provider can help you decide which obesity treatments are best for you. Learn more about treatment options at <https://patient.gastro.org/obesity/>.

➔ Much of the U.S. could face hotter than normal conditions this year as the climate crisis drives higher temperatures—but you can keep yourself and those you care about safe. Learn more from the free Red Cross Emergency app in English and Spanish at redcross.org/apps.

➔ ENERGY STAR recently launched a home improvement savings web tool. This handy online tool is a one-stop shop that allows lets you to enter your ZIP code and find information on incentives available to you. Find the tool at: energystar.gov/homesavings.



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The TWILIGHT ZONE

On the evening of Oct. 2, 1959, American television audiences were invited to cross a unique threshold. Guided by a severe, black-suited man with a clipped cadence and an omnipresent cigarette, viewers left behind the comfortable domesticity of 1950s sitcoms and entered a dimension “not only of sight and sound, but of mind.”

That man was Rod Serling, and the destination was “*The Twilight Zone*.” While it technically concluded its original run in the 1960s, its genesis, ethos, and most critical formative steps belong entirely to the late

1950s. It was a decade defined by postwar optimism and economic boom, but undercurrents of Cold War anxiety, racial tension, and corporate conformity rippled beneath the surface. Serling, a fiercely principled writer, built “*The Twilight Zone*” precisely to expose those fractures.

The Birth of a Trojan Horse

Before creating the anthology series, Serling was one of television’s most celebrated dramatists, writing acclaimed teleplays like “*Patterns* and *Requiem for a Heavyweight*.” However, he grew exhausted by constant network censorship. Sponsors,

terrified of alienating consumers, routinely gutted his scripts. When Serling tried to write a drama loosely based on the horrific murder of Emmett Till, the network forced him to strip out any mention of race, shifting the setting to New England and the victim to a white pawnbroker.

Serling realized that if he spoke directly about the issues of the 1950s, his voice would be silenced. His brilliant work-around was science fiction and fantasy.

By cloaking contemporary social commentary in the guise of alien invasions, time travel, and deals with the devil, Serling smuggled radical ideas past oblivious network executives and corporate sponsors. On “*The Twilight Zone*,” a story wasn’t about McCarthyism; it was about monsters on Maple Street. It wasn’t about the futility of the nuclear arms race; it was about two lonely survivors of a futuristic war learning to coexist.



Photo courtesy
Wikimedia Commons..

Defining the 1950s Anxiety

The episodes conceptualized and broadcast during the show’s infancy perfectly captured the psychological landscape of the late 1950s. The pilot episode, “*Where Is Everybody?*”, aired in late 1959 and tapped into the looming Space Age. It followed



Photo courtesy DeviantArt.

a man wandering a completely deserted town, only to discover he is an astronaut crack-up suffering from sensory deprivation in a simulation room. It was a profound examination of the isolation and psychological cost of technological progress.

Similarly, the show masterfully dissected the decade’s paranoia regarding conformity and suburban complacency. Serling saw how the rush to the suburbs and the pressure to adapt to corporate American life were crushing individuality. In “*The Twilight Zone*,” the pristine lawns and white picket fences of the 1950s dream were frequently unmasked as fragile facades, easily shattered by suspicion and fear.

Creative Mastery and the Twist

What made “*The Twilight Zone*” an instant landmark wasn’t just its messaging, but its impeccable execution. Serling surrounded himself with a legendary stable of writers, most notably Richard Matheson and Charles Beaumont, who in-

fused the series with literary depth. Together, they mastered the art of the narrative “twist”—a final-act reversal that forced the audience to reevaluate everything they had just witnessed.

These twists were rarely cheap gimmicks; they were profound moral lessons. Whether it was a bookish man surviving a nuclear apocalypse only to break his reading glasses (*Time Enough at Last*), or a woman undergoing surgery to

look normal, only to reveal that “normal” meant what humans consider grotesque (“*Eye of the Beholder*,”) the show consistently challenged the subjectivity of human perception.

Backing these scripts was a stark, cinematic visual style. Utilizing expressionistic lighting, distorted camera angles, and haunting scores by composers like Bernard Herrmann, the show created an atmosphere of dread and wonder that was entirely unprecedented on the small screen.



Photo courtesy PICYRL.

Rod Serling’s masterpiece reminded a comfortable, complacent era that the real monsters weren’t hiding in the stars, but

Continued on page 37

Managing Your Money

Being 55+ Has Its Advantages

The 55-plus crowd is more active than ever, continuing to stay in the workforce longer, growing in numbers—to the tune of 73 million and counting—and exerting an even greater economic impact. In fact, 55+ers are responsible for over half of U.S. consumer spending, according to AARP, contributing to the huge upsurge in online spending during the pandemic.

If you are one of these lucky ones—as in 55 or older—you may not realize that you are actually the envy of many. People in this age group can save thousands of dollars a year on everyday goods and services so make sure you know about ALL of the discounts available to you.

Whether planning for long-term savings for retirement or for short-term expenses like a post-pandemic vacation, saving money is front and center in today's world. The good news is that there are so many great discounts created just for you that it makes it easy to save tons by paying attention to where you're spending your money each month.

Here are some “55 and over” discounts to be on the lookout for—that you might not know about:

- **Auto insurance:** Insurance companies sometimes offer discounts for good drivers over a certain age.



New wireless phone plans mean money savings and include Netflix

- **Travel:** It's almost time to travel again so be sure to check for age-related discounts with major airlines, hotel chains, and rental car companies.

- **Restaurants:** Over 55? Ask about special days, nights or menu items at your favorite fast-food or fancy restaurant—even if it's takeout.

- **Wireless plans:** Make sure that you are on a discounted 55+ plan—a failsafe way to save money each month.

Given that 55+ consumers are spending 30% more time on mobile devices than they did a year ago, having an affordable wireless plan that provides unlimited text, talk and data with additional valuable perks is huge. Take a look at T-Mobile's 55+ plans that it offers to customers across the United States. Verizon and AT&T, on the other hand, only offer 55+ plans for customers who live in Florida (even though 92% of people in the United States who are 55 and older live outside of Florida). And T-Mobile recently announced that customers on a Magenta 55+ or Magenta MAX 55+ plan can have up to four voice lines on their account.

Always pay attention to details when considering your choice in wireless plans.

T-Mobile's Magenta 55+ and Magenta MAX 55+ plans offer unlimited text, talk and data combined with:

- A guaranteed monthly rate that includes taxes and fees in the plan price—your price stays the same each month.

- Netflix on Us—Magenta 55+ plan includes Netflix on Us for families and its Magenta MAX 55+ plan includes Netflix Basic with one line or Netflix Standard with two lines.

- Scam Shield that helps protect people from phone scams, hacks and robocalls.

- Free stuff and discounts every Tuesday with T-Mobile Tuesdays.

- Unlimited texting and 2G data without roaming charges in 210+ countries & destinations.

- America's largest and fastest 5G network—which is like having WiFi on the road to send pics and stay connected.

Added bonus: the MAX tier includes unlimited premium data, so you can't be slowed down no matter how much data you use.

It's important to highlight that T-Mobile's 55+ plans include

Continued on page 38



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Busy Boomers

By Les Goldberg

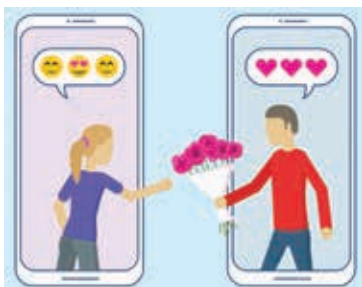
Finding Love & Romance Online

When my parents were alive, my family would pay frequent visits to their senior mobile home nearby. I will always remember the stories they told us about their senior neighbors.

On one of our visits, they told us about one of the married couples in their community -- the woman in her mid-70s, her husband in his early 80s. They had just renewed their vows on their 50th anniversary.

After a few weeks, we went to visit them again, and we were told that the husband had died of a heart attack. Two months later, during another visit, my folks announced that the widow was getting married to her neighbor, a 79-year-old widower.

To my parents, this was not new. Apparently, it was a normal occurrence at their senior living park. According to experts who study the over-50 population, the need for companionship, even love, romance, and intimacy, does not go away with growing old.



But, as they point out, especially with couples who have been married for many years without separation or divorce, loneliness is a reality they don't want to face.

Fortunately, in today's digital world, with the advent of online chat rooms and dating sites, your chances of finding meaningful companionship are greater than ever before.

Chat rooms designed specifically for seniors, i.e., Senior-Match, are dedicated sites where mature users can exchange messages in real time. My suggestion: simply Google the words "Chat room for seniors," and you will be amazed at how many sites there are.

These rooms may be public, themed by topic, or even private one-on-one conversations. Whether you want to discuss gardening, travel, relationships, or simply talk about life, there's a room for every interest.



Photo courtesy Andy Dean Photography.

For combating loneliness, chat rooms offer a relaxed environment to get to know someone before taking the next step, face-to-face dating. According to the National Council on Aging, they offer "emotional support, learning and sharing opportunities, romance and companionship, and social engagement, all within the comfort of your home."

More often than not, seniors using the chat rooms develop friendships that blossom into romantic relationships. The informal nature of chatting allows genuine connections to grow. Such was the case with one couple in their 60s who met in a book discussion chat room and are now traveling the world together.

Another couple was attracted to each other in a grieving chat room after both their spouses had died. They just celebrated their first anniversary.

With all of the benefits offered by the use of online chat rooms and numerous dating sites, the Council on Aging and other government agencies warn seniors to be cautious about how they choose the sites and present themselves. They offer the following tips:

- Select a reputable site that caters specifically to older adults.
- Create a genuine profile with a short description of your interests and share a recent photo.
- Start slowly. Begin in general chat rooms and observe the conversation style.
- Be respectful and friendly.
- Stay safe. Don't share personal information like your full name, address, and financial details. Reputable sites will have privacy policies to keep your data secure. Avoid dating profiles that seem too good to be true. In just the past few years, dating scams have led

Continued on page 37

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'Welcome Back'

John Sebastian

By Randal C. Hill

From 1965 to 1968, the John Sebastian-led Lovin' Spoonful band racked up ten Top 40 singles on Kama Sutra Records. Eventually, though, the quartet's "flower power" folk rock gave way to "heavier" sounds by such groups as the Doors and the Jimi Hendrix Experience.

When the Spoonful disbanded, Sebastian recorded as a solo artist, but, with the magic seemingly gone, the one-time hitmaker faded from the music scene until a serendipitous event years later returned him briefly to the spotlight—ironically as a "one hit wonder" to a new audience.

John recalls, "I got a call from a guy called Alan Sacks from Brooklyn, who was writing a TV show with [comedian] Gabe Kaplan." The fun-fueled ABC-TV program, which was to be named "Kotter," was to focus on a teacher who had once been a student at the same New York high school where the story takes place, and in an isolated classroom set aside for the institution's bottom feeders, nicknamed the Sweathogs.. Thanks to Mr. Kotter, the cast members (which included a then-unknown John Travolta) would have fun and yet find hope for the future in each half-hour airing.

Sacks wanted a short, light-

hearted, Lovin' Spoonfulish ditty to play over the opening and closing credits. What better artist to tap than Spoonful founder/leader Sebastian!

John recalled, "I saw a pilot and read some early scripts and went away thinking, 'I could hit this out of the park!'" But Sebastian was thrown a curve ball when he slammed into a creative wall: he simply couldn't find an appropriate rhyming word for "Kotter" at the end of a lyric line, having tried—and tossed—such terms as "otter," "water," "daughter" and "slaughter." In the end, John eliminated the teacher's name in his "Welcome Back" lyrics, even though the show's title itself would become "*Welcome Back, Kotter*."

Sebastian's composition ran just 53 seconds. But when the production team heard the theme song, they (and interested disc jockeys) asked that the catchy creation be expanded. John added a second verse, and "*Welcome Back, Kotter*"—with the name "Kotter" absent from the lyrics—morphed into a hit Reprise Records single that ran nearly three minutes. Just right for Top 40 radio airplay.

"Welcome back, your dreams were your ticket out

Welcome back to that same old place that you laughed about

Well, the names have all changed since you hung around
But those dreams have remained and they've turned around

Who'd have thought they'd lead ya

Back here where we need ya"

Ironically, Sebastian was about to be dropped from Reprise because his last several singles had tanked. Not so this time, as "*Welcome Back, Kotter*" rocketed to No. 1 the "*Billboard Hot 100*."

In a later interview, John admitted that he would probably have been a Sweathog when he was a student in New York: "As a dyslexic kid, I was always the guy with those marks where the teacher says, 'John seems to be an intelligent boy,' and then the rest wasn't as flattering."

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Fabulous Finds

Continued from page 31

Photo courtesy TIRTIR.



base makeup performance while delivering skincare benefits. Both Reflect Glow Prep

Primer and Flawless Pore Prep Primer are priced at \$22.

The Reflect Glow version focuses on hydration, radiance, and plumping, creating a luminous base for makeup while helping improve skin elasticity and glow over time. The Flawless Pore version is designed for blurring pores, controlling oil, and delivering a cooling effect that smooths texture and refines the skin's appearance. Both formulas are made with 95% skincare-based ingredients, reflecting a continued shift toward makeup that actively supports skin health.

Where to buy: Amazon and TIRTIR.global.

Price: \$22 each.

Four standout launches that reflect where beauty is headed this season—skincare-first formulas, hybrid performance products, and targeted treatments designed to work with the skin, not just sit on top of it. Whether the goal is glow, correction, or a smoother base, June's Fab Finds offer something for every step of the routine.

 **AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION.**
IN CALIFORNIA



Continued from page 34

inside the human heart. Nearly seven decades later, we still find ourselves frequently crossing over into that immortal dimension of imagination.

Busy Boomers

Continued from page 36

to victims losing billions of dollars and sensitive personal information, according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Many scammers use fake profiles to lure you in and then may begin asking for money or personal data they don't need to know.

Whether you are a seasoned chatter or just starting, online chat rooms for seniors offer the tools and community to make your experience positive and enjoyable. Like a box of chocolate, you never know what you'll find. Happy hunting!



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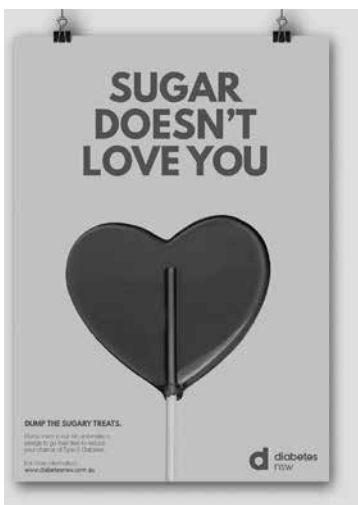
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Stepping Into Summer: June's Gentle Joys for Mind, Body & Community

June arrives with a soft shift in the air — longer days, brighter mornings, and the first true taste of summer warmth. For many seniors, it's a month that invites movement, connection, and simple pleasures that nourish the spirit.

The Beauty of Early Summer



June's landscapes are full of color and calm. Flowers are in full bloom, shade trees offer cool refuge, and mornings feel like an open invitation to step outside.

A few ways seniors can enjoy the season:

- **Morning strolls** to gently increase circulation and flexibility
- **Patio gardening** with low-maintenance herbs and flowers
- **Outdoor reading** in a favorite shady spot

Flag Day & Community Pride

June 14 marks **Flag Day**, a moment to reflect on the history, resilience, and shared values that unite our communities. Many seniors enjoy participating in:



- Neighborhood flag displays
- Local ceremonies or club gatherings
- Sharing family stories tied to service and patriotism

It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with neighbors and celebrate the spirit of unity.

Wellness in the Warmth



June's mild weather makes it easier — and more enjoyable — to stay active. Gentle movement supports balance, heart health, and overall well-being.

Popular early-summer activities include:

- **Chair yoga** on the patio
- **Light stretching** before breakfast
- **Hydration habits** as temperatures rise

Even small daily routines can make a meaningful difference.

Seasonal Eating: Fresh, Simple, Delicious



June brings an abundance of fresh produce — strawberries, tomatoes, cucumbers, peaches, and leafy greens. These foods are naturally hydrating and packed with nutrients.

Easy ways to enjoy them:

- Add berries to morning oatmeal
- Slice cucumbers into lemon water
- Make a simple tomato-basil salad
- Blend a refreshing fruit smoothie

A Month of Light and Possibility

June reminds us to slow down, savor the sunshine, and embrace the small joys that make each day meaningful. Whether it's a quiet morning walk, a shared meal, or a moment of reflection, early summer offers countless ways to feel connected and renewed.

55+ Advantages

Continued from page 35

Scam Shield because recently scammers have become even more aggressive, targeting people with phony COVID-19 vaccine information. Scam Shield protects its users against phone scams and robocalls—and it's free for T-Mobile customers.

Learn More

For further information about the plans, visit www.t-mobile.com/55.

“I’VE NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY MY HUMAN WON’T LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT HER LEASH. I THINK SHE’S AFRAID OF GETTING LOST. BUT IT’S OK, I KIND OF LIKE SHOWING HER AROUND.”

—HARPER
adopted 08-18-09

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A PERSON IS THE BEST THING TO HAPPEN TO A SHELTER PET

Ad Council THE HUMANE SOCIETY

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WHEN I WAS SIX

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by Jim Miller

Savvy SENIOR

How to Use AI Safely and Protect Yourself from Scams

Dear Savvy Senior,

I keep hearing about AI in the news and how it's being used in scams. I'm not very tech-savvy and find it confusing. What should I know to protect myself?

— Cautious Senior

Dear Cautious,

You're not alone. Many older adults are asking the same question. Artificial intelligence, or AI, is becoming part of everyday life, from smartphones and internet searches to banking and customer service. It's also making scams more convincing and harder to spot, which is why a basic understanding helps. The good news is you don't need to be a tech expert to use AI safely and with confidence.

Know the Basics

AI is technology that can create and analyze information in ways that seem human. It can draft emails, answer questions, recommend products, generate images, and even mimic voice-



es. While this can be helpful, it also means things you see or hear online may not always be accurate. If something seems unusual or too good to be true, take a closer look.

Use it Wisely

A good way to get comfortable with AI is to start small. Many smartphones include voice assistants like Siri or Google Assistant that can set reminders, check the weather, or answer questions. You can also try tools like ChatGPT or Claude to explain a news story, suggest recipes, or help draft a message.

AI can also be useful for everyday tasks like comparing products, planning trips, or organizing a to-do list. Think of it as a helpful assistant, not a decision-maker.

Keep in mind that AI isn't per-

fect. It can give answers that sound confident but may be outdated or incorrect. For important matters like your health, finances, or legal issues, always double-check with a trusted source such as your doctor, bank, or a government website.

Watch for Scams

Scammers are using AI to make their schemes more convincing. You may receive an email that appears to be from your bank or Medicare, or a phone call that sounds like a family member. Be especially wary of urgent messages that pressure you to act quickly or warn that your account will be closed.

Protect Yourself

The most important habit for avoiding scams is to slow down. If you receive a suspicious call, text, or email, stop and assess the message. Don't click links, download attachments, or respond right away. Instead, contact the company or person directly using a phone number or website you trust – not the one provided in the message.

Scammers now use AI to mimic voices and write convincing messages. Even if something sounds like it's from a family member, friend, or company, verify it another way before acting.

Never share sensitive information like your Social Security number, bank details, or passwords unless you initiated the contact and trust the source. Banks and government agencies, including Medicare and Social Security, will not ask for this information by phone or

email. Urgent requests for payment by gift card, wire transfer, or cryptocurrency are also red flags.

For added protection, use two-factor authentication, and keep your devices updated. You can even consider call-blocking services from your mobile service provider.

If something doesn't look right, take time to check it or ask a trusted friend or family member before responding.

Keep Learning

Technology is always changing, but there are ways to stay informed. Many libraries and senior centers offer free classes on digital skills and online safety. Trusted resources like AARP's Fraud Watch Network (aarp.org/fraudwatch) and the Federal Trade Commission (consumer.ftc.gov) also provide up-to-date scam alerts and protection tips. In addition, internet and mobile provider Cox Mobile (cox.com/mobilesafety) offers a library of research, tips, and online safety tools to keep you informed and secure online.

AI may seem complicated at first, but a little awareness goes a long way. By staying cautious and building a few smart habits, you can protect yourself and make this technology work for you.

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



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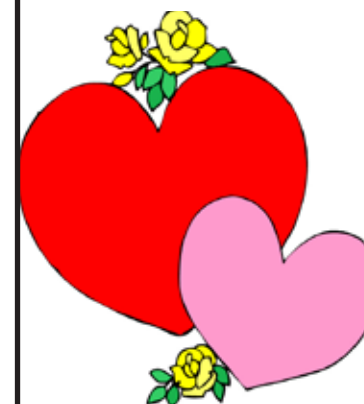
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Mayo Retina offers groundbreaking treatment for dry AMD

With loyal staff and innovative services, George L. Mayo, MD, FASRS, FACS keeps care personal

An FDA-authorized treatment is offering new hope to patients with dry age-related macular degeneration (AMD) — and Mayo Retina in Orange County is the first in California to make it available.

The treatment, retina photobiomodulation (PBM), is performed with the Alcon Valeda Light Delivery System. It is the first and only FDA-authorized treatment for dry AMD to improve vision.

This non-invasive therapy uses a combination of yellow, red and near-infrared light delivered in four phases to increase blood flow to the macula and stimulate energy production within the mitochondria of the retinal pigment epithelial cells, the site of pathology in AMD.

Thousands of AMD patients have already been successfully treated with the Valeda system in Europe, where it has been used clinically since 2019. Following the pivotal LIGHTSITE III study, which showed efficacy in patients with intermediate macular degeneration, FDA authorization for Valeda was granted in November 2024.

“While intraocular injections to slow the progression of geographic atrophy have been available for some time, they come with considerable risk, including causing wet AMD, and they are not indicated for patients without atrophy,” said Dr. Mayo, founder of Mayo Retina. “It’s exciting to finally be able to offer patients with intermediate dry AMD a treatment option, and studies now show that PBM treatment benefits those with early AMD as well. For the first time, we can do more than just watch and wait, we can treat and improve.”

PBM treatment with Valeda involves nine brief, painless sessions administered on non-consecutive days over three to five weeks. Treatment is four minutes and 10 seconds per eye. Unlike laser procedures or injections — which are typically used for many retinal diseases including exudative, or wet AMD — PBM is completely non-invasive and does not require anesthesia or recovery time. The patient’s eye does not even need to be dilated.

Mayo Retina is currently accepting new AMD patients for Valeda treatment. To improve access, Dr. Mayo offers evening and weekend appointments specifically for Valeda patients. In addition to retinal diseases, Dr. Mayo also has a large number of glaucoma patients.

A leading cause of blindness, primary open angle glaucoma (POAG) affects more than 4 million Americans. In POAG, elevated eye pressure damages the optic nerve and permanently constricts the patient’s visual field.

While most patients with POAG can be treated with eye drops to reduce their eye pressure, a new treatment, direct selective laser trabeculoplasty (DSLT) with the Voyager System from Alcon, was recently authorized by the FDA. Mayo Retina is the first retina practice in the United States with the Voyager DSLT system.

“Glaucoma patients now have a new treatment option available,” says Dr. Mayo. “DSLT with Voyager offers the majority of patients better control of their disease with superior outcomes.”

The additions of the Valeda and Voyager systems are just the latest examples of Dr. Mayo’s ongoing

commitment to staying at the forefront of ophthalmic care while maintaining a strong personal connection with his patients.



More about George L. Mayo, MD, FASRS, FACS

A Navy veteran with a deep commitment to service, Dr. Mayo received his bachelor of arts degree in human evolutionary biology from Pomona College in Claremont in 1989 and attended medical school at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, receiving his MD degree in 1995.

Dr. Mayo went on to serve for two years as a battalion surgeon for the Marine Corps’ First Force Service Support Group at Camp Pendleton and then ran the Acute Care Center at Naval Air Station North Island, Coronado. He left the Navy as a lieutenant commander having received both the Navy Commendation and Navy Achievement medals.

Next, Dr. Mayo completed a three year ophthalmology residency at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio before returning to Penn for a two year vitreoretinal fellowship at the Scheie Eye Institute in Philadelphia.

Dr. Mayo is a fellow of both the American Society of Retinal Surgeons and the American College of Surgeons and is known for combining clinical expertise with a personal approach to care.



He started Mayo Retina in 2008. His staff members — Mylan, Krystin, Vanessa and Rochelle — bring nearly 50 years of combined experience to the practice.

“Having continuity in an ophthalmic care team makes a real difference,” Dr. Mayo said. “Patients appreciate seeing the same faces year after year, and I feel incredibly lucky to have such a dedicated team. Technology keeps changing, and we’re always adapting, but the core of good medicine is listening to patients and building trust over time.”

For more information about

Dr. Mayo or the innovative care provided at Mayo Retina, visit mayoretina.net. Dr. Mayo has also created the websites retinaphotobiomodulation.com for detailed information on PBM, bacsimayo.com for his Vietnamese speaking patients and retinologomayo.com for his Spanish speaking patients.

To schedule an appointment at Mayo Retina, call (657) 667-0817.

