

July / August 2025

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The Best Of Times

July/August 2025
Volume 34, Number 4
Founded in 1992 as *Senior Scene News*
ISSN Library of Congress
#1551-4366

A bimonthly publication from:
TBT Multimedia, LLC
P.O. Box 19510
Shreveport, LA 71149
(318) 636-5510
www.TheBestOfTimesNews.com

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Kyle A. Moore, Elder Law Attorney and Vickie Rech, Client Care Coordinator with the law firm of Weems, Schimpf, Haines, & Moore

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Broadcasting every **Saturday** morning **9:05 to 10 a.m. on News Radio 710 KEEL**, a Townsquare Media radio station in Shreveport.

Streaming live on the internet at www.710KEEL.com
and on KEEL App

Also broadcasting live on 101.7 FM

Archived programs at www.TheBestOfTimesNEWS.com and
on APPLE Podcasts at The Best of Times Radio Hour

"Don't Wait! – Start Planning Medicare Coverage at 64"



By Nick Karl, Vice President
Peoples Health, Medicare & Retirement of Louisiana

If you're retiring soon or know someone who is, you're not alone. In 2025, **a record 4.18 million Americans will reach traditional retirement age, which averages out to over 11,000 people turning 65 each day.**¹ This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as "Peak 65" or the "Silver Tsunami," which began in 2024 and will continue over the next several years. This means a lot of people and their families will be looking for answers about Medicare.

Companies advertising Medicare plans and Medicare enrollment opportunities may open their commercials with someone asking – "I just turned 65. What are my coverage options?" With many different choices and first-time enrollment deadlines, it's important to begin planning early – and not wait until your 65th birthday to begin thinking about your health insurance needs and options.

Here are some tips to help you, a loved one or an employee begin planning for post-retirement health care and to enroll in Medicare.

Think 3-1-3 – Most people are eligible to apply for Medicare coverage starting the first three months before your 65th birthday – the month you turn 65 – and the three months after you turn 65. This is referred to as your Initial Enrollment Period (IEP).

Understand consequences of your choices – While you don't have to enroll in Medicare when you turn 65, if you decide not to enroll at that time and do not qualify for a Special Enrollment Period, there may be penalties when you do enroll – and these can be costly.

Celebrate your 64th birthday – Thinking about retiring and what the future holds can be stressful so take time to enjoy your birthday and then start planning.

Begin planning soon after your 64th birthday – Following are some questions to get you started.

- Am I required to get Medicare coverage?
- Can I get dental, vision and drug coverage, as well as medical coverage?
- What if I cannot afford Medicare?
- Are you planning to work past 65? Do you have coverage through your employer or spouse?
- How long am I covered under the plan I enroll in during the IEP?
- What if my birthday falls during the Annual Enrollment Period? Or just before? Do I need to enroll twice?
- What if I do not enroll in a Medicare plan before the end of my IEP deadline?

While beginning to plan early should help avoid the consequences of not enrolling on time, choosing the right Medicare plan may still seem confusing. Many pre-retirees may never have shopped for their own health insurance, having had health care coverage through their employers.

As you begin your research, [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) is one place to start. You may also visit [peopleshealth.com](https://www.peopleshealth.com) for more information about Medicare, Medicare Advantage plans and when you can enroll.

Medicare plays a key role in the lives of people as they age. Making the right decisions right from the start and in a timely manner can have positive long-term financial and health consequences. So, plan early so you may enjoy your 65th birthday.

¹ Alliance for Lifetime Income



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Medical News & Info

Can Mindfulness Combat Anxiety?

If you're anxious about work, finances, the state of the world, or anything else, you might try a moment of mindfulness. Paying close attention to the present moment without judgment - the basic idea behind all mindfulness techniques - can help calm anxiety and improve focus, said a researcher with the Mindfulness Science & Practice research cluster. For example, people who spend a lot of time worrying

may especially benefit from a type of mindfulness meditation called focused attention. Focused attention teaches you to choose an anchor, such as your breath or a sound. You keep bringing your attention back to that anchor every time your mind wanders. Instead of focusing on the worry, you're focusing on the present moment experience.



Skip the Extra Salt

Most Americans consume far more sodium than recommended, with the average intake topping 3,400 milligrams (mg) per day - well above the recommended federal guideline of 2,300 mg and the American Heart Association's goal of 1,500 mg. The bulk of American's daily sodium doesn't come from the saltshaker, but from processed and restaurant foods like breads, deli meats, and canned soups. Health experts warn this

excess is fueling a national epidemic of high blood pressure, a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. A new analysis led by investigators at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center found that compared to the typical American, high-sodium diet, reducing sodium to the recommended levels or even lower markedly decreased cardiovascular disease risk scores.

Could a Mini-Stroke Leave Lasting Fatigue?

A transient ischemic attack, also known as a mini-stroke, is typically defined as a temporary blockage of blood flow to the brain that causes

symptoms that go away within a day, but a new study, published online in *Neurology*[®], finds that people who have this type of stroke may also have prolonged fatigue lasting up to one year. Researchers did find that previous anxiety or depression was twice as common in those participants who reported lasting fatigue. The study does not prove that mini-strokes cause lasting fatigue; it only shows an association.



Sleep Apnea During REM Sleep Linked to Memory-Related Brain Changes

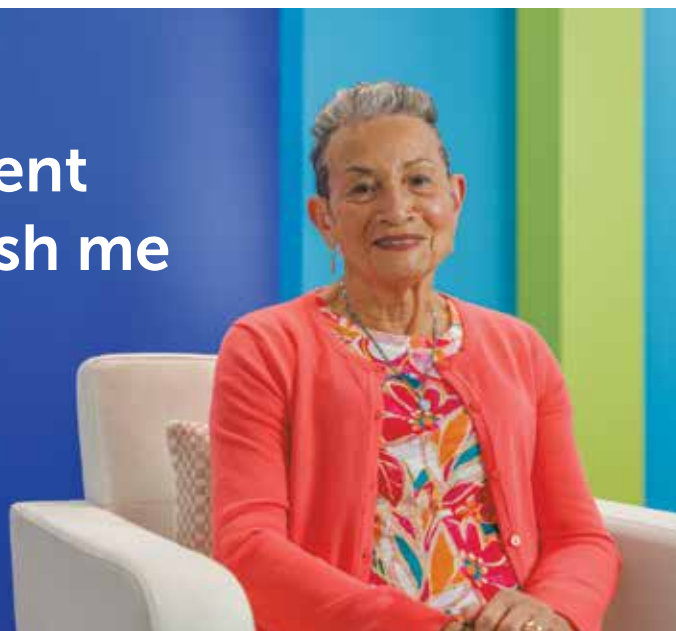
Obstructive sleep apnea, a condition that causes lower oxygen levels during sleep, is linked to degeneration of brain regions associated with memory through damage to the brain's small blood vessels, according to a study published online in *Neurology*[®]. The study found the brain changes were strongly associated with the severity of drops in oxygen levels during rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. The study does not prove that sleep apnea causes this degeneration; it only shows an association.

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Beulah | Actual patient

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*Comparison based on a study published by the Oxford Academic in June 2023 stating that the average primary care exam was approximately 21 minutes. Times vary based on services performed.

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SAVE A LIFE FROM STROKE



Family Features

Strokes can happen to anyone, at any age – even young people. Despite being one of the leading causes of death and long-term disability in the United States, strokes are largely preventable, treatable and beatable – if you can control your risk factors.

According to the American Stroke Association, a division of the American Heart Association, every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a stroke. Keeping blood pressure in check, living a healthy lifestyle and knowing stroke warning signs may help protect you and your loved ones.

Here are key insights from the American Stroke Association's Together to End Stroke initiative, nationally supported by the HCA Healthcare Foundation.

CONTROLLING RISK FACTORS

Up to 80% of strokes may be preventable, according to the American Stroke Association. You can take action to prevent strokes by managing your risk factors, like high blood pressure, a leading cause and controllable risk factor for stroke and heart disease.

Other risk factors include diabetes and obesity, which can be kept in check with healthy lifestyle behaviors such as good nutrition. Quitting smoking and being physically active are important. Atrial fibrillation, or AFib, which is a quivering or irregular heartbeat, also increases stroke risk. In fact, people with AFib are five times more likely to have a stroke, according to the American Heart Association.

PREVENTING A SECOND STROKE

Nearly 1 in 4 strokes occur in people who had a previous stroke, sometimes because they don't know what caused the first, making identifying the cause of the stroke a key step toward future prevention. Treatment depends on the type of stroke someone is having, which can be determined with a series of medical evaluations and tests.

Work with your health care professional to develop a plan that helps you move forward after a first stroke while preventing a second. This plan should include controlling risk factors, like achieving and maintaining healthy blood

pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels.

"Preventing a second stroke is possible with the right approach," said Teresita Casanova, MD, HCA Healthcare affiliated neurologist and American Stroke Association volunteer expert. "Taking medicines as prescribed, monitoring health numbers, and making small, consistent lifestyle changes can make a big difference. Stroke survivors should feel empowered to take control of their health and work with their care team to build a strong prevention plan."

To help you in your journey, you can rely on tools such as the Heart & Stroke Helper, a free self-management app available for stroke survivors and their caregivers. The app allows patients to oversee their health in one place with features that track progress on lifestyle habits, manage medications, track health numbers, provide information about stroke and allow patients to connect with others for inspiration.

Find more ways to manage second stroke risk at [Stroke.org](https://www.stroke.org).

ACT F.A.S.T. HOW TO DETECT SIGNS OF STROKE

Most adults in the U.S. don't know the stroke warning signs, nor that stroke is largely treatable if you call 911 as soon as you recognize the symptoms.

Learning the acronym F.A.S.T. can help you recognize that someone may be having stroke symptoms so you can take life-saving action.

F: Face Drooping. Does one side of the face droop, or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?

A: Arm Weakness. Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S: Speech. Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like "The sky is blue."

T: Time to Call 911. If you or anyone else shows any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately.

F.A.S.T.

Face
Drooping

Arm
Weakness

Speech
Difficulty

Time to
Call 911



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The Case of the Abandoned Corpse

When his father died, Fred was devastated. He didn't have any idea what to do, but one thing he knew was that his Dad had not wanted to be cremated. So, when the funeral home called Fred and asked what he wanted done, Fred was unsure what to say. But he did say, "Don't cremate my Daddy!"

Care to guess what happened next? That's right, they cremated his Daddy. But not right away. The funeral home called Fred every day asking him what to do, but Fred just couldn't make up his mind. He kept telling the funeral home that although his father was not to be cremated, Fred needed more time to decide what to do about the burial.

After about 2 weeks of this, the funeral home stopped calling. Fred quickly got suspicious, investigated and found out that his Dad had been cremated. So, Fred sued and won \$1.5 million.

Does that sound right to you?

Here's what Louisiana law says: if a body is "abandoned" at a funeral home, then the funeral home has to notify the coroner's office and the coroner then has the legal authority to dispose of the body as it sees fit. The coroner can have the body cremated or can have the body

buried. And get this: the coroner can even give parts of the body to a search and rescue organization that trains dogs to search for human remains.

In Fred's case, it all came down to whether he "abandoned" his Daddy's body. Fred sure didn't think so. But Louisiana funeral law defines "abandonment" as the failure to make arrangements or provide for the disposition of the remains after the remains are in the possession of a funeral establishment. But there's no timeline in that definition. If you don't make arrangements "after the remains are in the possession of a funeral establishment," the body can be considered abandoned. Which means that when the funeral home appealed the case, Fred didn't get his \$1.5 million.

Here's something else Louisiana law says about funerals. Unless you have a notarized document explaining how your remains are to be interred or who is to decide how your remains are to be interred, then your spouse will have the legal authority to make interment decisions. If you don't have a spouse, then a majority



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of your adult children get to decide. So, if you don't have a spouse and you have 2 kids and one wants you to be cremated and the other wants you to be buried, you've got a problem. Here's how to fix it: if you know what you want to happen to your body after you die, put it in writing and get it notarized. If you don't know what you want, but you want to make sure that your family doesn't fight about it, pick someone to make the final decision and appoint that person in writing and get it notarized.

The next case I want to tell you about, which fortunately has nothing to do with corpses, involved a husband and wife who sold their house a lot faster than they thought they would. Which meant that they would have been homeless except that a friend let them move into his garage which didn't have air-conditioning. The couple, let's call them Ricky and Lucy, even though those were not their real names, knew that they wanted to get out of there quickly.

They decided to buy a mobile home, in part because the salesman promised to have the home built and ready with all the customizations that the couple wanted in just 4 weeks. Think that happened? Of course not.

Eight (8) weeks later, the salesman calls Ricky and Lucy: "It's here. Come get it!" But when they showed up to inspect the home, they quickly realized that it was not what they ordered. It didn't have any of their customizations. To make matters worse, there were all kinds of defects, including

cracks in the walls and "vinyl coming off and buckling on the outside of the mobile home." So, they canceled the deal and demanded their money back.

The salesman responded by telling Ricky and Lucy that they had gotten exactly what they ordered. He refused to fix any of the defects or give the couple any of their money back.

So, Ricky and Lucy sued. They told the Judge that the dealer had delivered the mobile home late and without the customizations that they had specifically ordered; and what was delivered was defective and poorly made.

The mobile home dealer showed the Judge the contract that Ricky and Lucy had signed and nowhere in the written contract was there anything about promising a 4-week delivery. The contract also said that if the buyers canceled the deal, no matter what the reason, the dealer would get to keep all of the money. And a deal is a deal, right?

The Judge agreed that a deal is a deal, but it wasn't Ricky and Lucy who broke the deal. It was the mobile home dealer who failed to deliver what was promised in the contract. The Judge ordered the mobile home dealer to return all of Ricky and Lucy's money plus an extra \$7,000 in damages.

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



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Make Culinary Memories with Your Grandkids

Want to create some summer memories with your grandkids? Invite them to join you in the kitchen! Cooking with grandchildren is not only a wonderful way to bond and share your favorite family recipes, but it also teaches them valuable lessons they will take beyond the walls of your home.

We may not realize it, but when children practice their cooking skills, all other school skills (science, math, reading, history) are enhanced. Practicing different recipes and techniques is an engaging and fun way to sharpen these skills, especially during the summer months when school is out. Cooking also helps enhance fine motor and critical thinking skills and teaches kids about food safety, kitchen safety, and nutrition.

While preparing dishes, talk about the different food groups, and try to include fruits and vegetables in your recipes. Don't completely avoid foods they dislike because exposure is what helps them eventually like these foods. Make it a point that they try at least one bite of a recipe they prepared, even if they don't think they will like it. Make it fun

and give them the title of a "food critic," where they get to tell you their thoughts about the taste, texture, and appearance of the dish they created and sampled. On average, it takes a child anywhere from 8-15 times to try a new food before they ac-

cept it, so be patient and persistent!

Teach your grandchildren how to build a balanced plate using the MyPlate food groups, how to read a nutrition label, or talk about the different nutrients in foods you are preparing. Even if you are baking a batch of cookies, you can still teach them about moderation, portions, and balancing treats with healthy choices. Be sure to keep it

lighthearted and non-confrontational, which makes these tips more likely to shape into healthy habits.

If cooking with your grandchildren seems overwhelming and you are not sure where to begin, start with one easy recipe, or one of your family favorites that you are already familiar with. Then, think about how they can help with preparing the dish. Even young children and toddlers can assist in the kitchen. For babies and toddlers, let them try



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- **GUARDING THEIR CARD** - Remind them that they should never give their Medicare number to a stranger. Let them know that Medicare will not call them to ask for their Medicare number.
- **REVIEW THEIR MEDICARE SUMMARY NOTICE (MSN) AND EXPLANATION OF BENEFITS (EOB)** - Use a health care journal or calendar to compare the services they received to the services that were billed to Medicare. Check for medical appointments they did not attend or services they did not receive.
- **REPORT SUSPECTED FRAUD** - Has your loved one received unsolicited Durable Medical Equipment (DME) such as braces, diabetic supplies or urinary catheters? Or have they received a Genetic Testing Kit (cheek swab) in the mail? This could indicate that they have been the victim of a Medicare scam. Encourage your loved ones to report suspicious charges on their Medicare statements. Call SMP if they have given out their Medicare information over the phone.



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This project in Louisiana is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$509,005.00 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the US Government.

their hand at mixing edible ingredients, like dried oats or cereal. Preschool-aged children love to help, and they can practice setting the table, wiping counters, brushing oil on vegetables and breads, mixing ingredients, tearing lettuce, kneading dough, and using cookie cutters. Elementary-aged kids start to become more advanced and can help with mixing batters, making dough, cracking eggs, using a food thermometer, washing produce, measuring ingredients, and some may be ready to start practicing knife skills (with close supervision). As they progress and practice with you, their skills will become more advanced. And remember, cooking with children is more about the process than the result. Things will be messy, and they certainly will not be perfect, but spending time together is what matters the most.

My most fond early memories with my grandmother consist of sewing and cooking together. These memories helped shape me and taught me valuable lessons incorporating nutrition, math, reading, science, history, and our family culture. Each time you impart knowledge and life skills to the next generation, you are laying the foundation for their health and their future.



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



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What to Expect When You Appear for Jury Service



You have received the summons in the mail and after much apprehension, the day arrives. You have to appear at the courthouse for the dreaded jury service. What happens next?

First, you and all the other people who have been summonsed are ushered into a large room. You see bailiffs, clerks, and court reporters. You are asked to be seated and then you are asked to watch a film about jury service. You think to yourself “This film will not win any Academy Awards”. After twenty minutes of watching the film, the Judge is ushered into the room to talk to you and explain what is happening and what will happen.

The Judge will usually introduce all persons in the courtroom at that time. He or she will talk about the process and what type of cases you may hear during the time you are on jury service. The Judge will also have the jury roster called by the bailiff.

When the roster is called, the Judge will ask that you answer out loud that you are present. If a person does not answer, the Judge will ask the clerk if service has been made on that person. If the person has been served either by domiciliary service (which means at the person’s home) or by personal service, the Judge will ask that a Writ be issued for the appearance of the person. When a Writ is issued, the Sheriff’s office will go out and physically bring the person in to serve on jury service. Writs are time consuming and expensive but are necessary in order to ensure that all qualified persons are available to serve on the jury.

After the roll is called, the Judge will read the exemptions that allow you to be excused from jury service and the qualifications which you must meet in order

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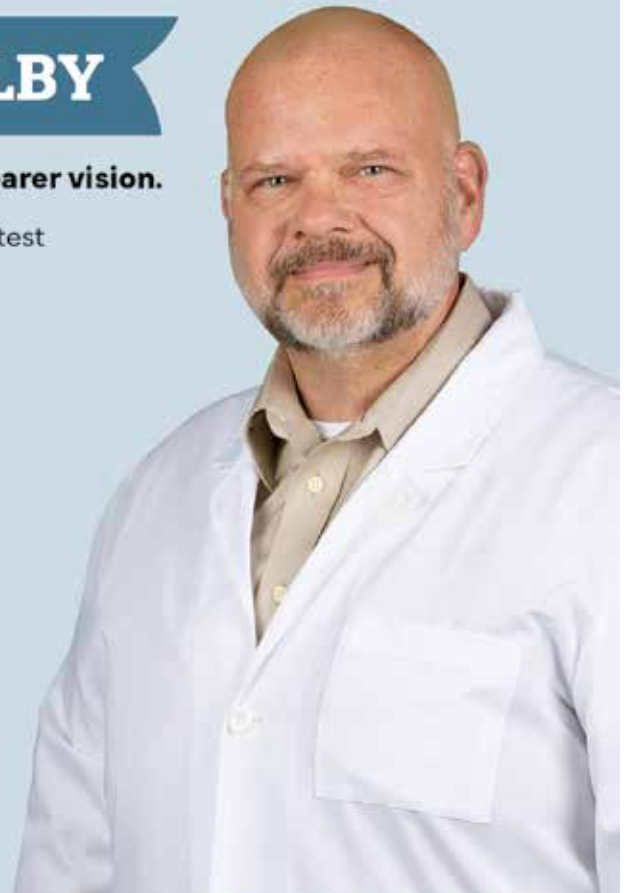
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to serve as a juror. The Judge will then ask if there is anyone who wishes to claim an exemption or does not meet a qualification to come forward and make that reason known. The Judge will do this as close to a microphone that records the proceeding but does not project into the audience. The Judge has to obtain the reasons a juror wishes to be excused but does not want to cause embarrassment to the juror. Judges are having to be tougher on excusing jurors and will only excuse the juror if they fit into one of the qualifications, exemptions, or have a very serious medical hardship documented by a licensed physician. The rigidity in not allowing jurors to leave is due to the fact that the accused is entitled to choose jurors from a cross section of the population.

After the Judge has completed questions regarding the exemptions and qualifications, the Judge may have the roll called again and new numbers assigned. This process allows further randomness in the jury selection

process and allows jurors to be on call if necessary. For example, numbers 1 through 50 may be kept. The rest of the jurors can be released and told to call the clerk's office after a certain time to determine if they will need to return for further service. By doing this, the Judges feel that we can avoid as much inconvenience to a person as possible.

After all this process is completed, the jury pool is directed to the courtroom in which they will serve. Bailiffs help to assist the jurors to the courtroom. The court's goal is not to waste any person's time but to make jury service as efficient and pleasant as possible. When I visited with people after their jury service, most people that served on the jury really enjoyed the process and are glad they got the opportunity to serve on a jury.



Always remember, jury service is both a duty and a privilege. *Judge Jeff Cox is judge of the Louisiana Circuit Court of Appeal for the Second Circuit.*

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BUDGETING FOR & DURING RETIREMENT:

CREATE AN ACCURATE budget THAT WORKS

by Kimberly Blaker

WITH THE AVERAGE LIFE SPAN IN THE U.S. NOW **78.87** YEARS, and many more Americans living to and surpassing the age of 100, budgeting in preparation for retirement and during retirement is crucial to making your savings last to carry you through.

Without a budget, even some of the savviest individuals live with ongoing financial struggles.

When finances are tight, creating and using a budget is vital to both preventing financial difficulties and attaining financial security. It can make the difference in being able to save for vacations, a home, or retirement.



THE NEGATIVE SIDE - CALCULATE YOUR MONTHLY EXPENSES

Budgeting consists of determining your income and expenses, making necessary adjustments to your cost of living, and following your budget religiously.

The first step in creating a budget is to determine your monthly income and expenses. One of the biggest problems in budgeting (aside from failing to follow it) is the failure to include all costs. It's an easy oversight with expenses you don't incur on a regular schedule, such as vacations, gifts, auto maintenance, clothing, and entertainment. Bills paid quarterly or annually, such as life and homeowners insurance or property taxes, are often forgotten as well.

Another error individuals make is the temptation to budget for the best-case scenario with fluctuating bills such as gas and electricity. So be sure to determine the average cost over 12 months, or else budget for the high side.

Finally, small day-to-day expenses are frequently overlooked. Over a month, these add up to a heap of change. This includes eating out, buying a newspaper, pet expenses, or stopping for a pop or coffee. Other overlooked costs include replacing a toaster, repairing the garbage disposal, and the countless other repairs and replacements over a year. Brainstorm and create categories for all these types of expenses to include in your budget.

Now determine your monthly expenditures for bills that fluctuate from month-to-month by adding up the previous year's bills. Add 5% to account for inflation. Then divide by 12 to get a monthly average.

For categories like gifts or clothing, calculate what you spend in a full year. When totaled up, this is often an eye-opener. Under this category, include outerwear, footwear, underwear and

socks, sportswear, summer clothing, work wardrobe, and casual wear. Add the total expense for the year. Then divide by 12 for your average monthly spending.

THE POSITIVE SIDE ✓ DETERMINE YOUR MONTHLY INCOME

Determining your monthly income is simple if you receive the same amount each month in social security or pension payments. If you still work, just multiply your weekly take-home pay by 4.3 weeks since there are nearly 4½ weeks in a month.

If your income varies because of commissions, overtime, or self-employment, calculate your average weekly pay, then multiply it by 4.3.

“ANOTHER ERROR PEOPLE MAKE IS THE TEMPTATION TO BUDGET FOR THE BEST-CASE SCENARIO WITH FLUCTUATING BILLS SUCH AS GAS AND ELECTRICITY.”



THE BALANCING ACT

To determine the difference between your monthly income and expenses, add up each column individually. Then subtract total expenses from total income.

Hopefully, you're earning more than you're spending. If so, you can create a savings plan for travel, make additional deposits to your IRA, or increase your emergency savings.

If you have a negative difference, you'll need to cut costs. Place a checkmark next to each item you can't reduce.

This might include mortgage or rent and fixed loan payments.

Next, from the items that don't have a checkmark, determine which are unnecessary or don't provide real value to your life, and begin cutting or reducing.

Other items you can reduce include dining out, entertainment, vacations, and gifts. You might also be able to reduce some of the essential categories, such as clothing, grocery, and miscellaneous expenses. First, determine how much you must spend to have your needs met. Then continue cutting and reducing until your budget balances, or preferably, has a positive balance to cover savings, emergencies, and miscalculations.

Keep in mind when making reductions, you need a realistic, detailed plan you're able to stick to. You might want to devise a plan to reduce several costs rather than completely eliminate

a couple if it helps reduce your temptation to break the budget. Or vice versa. Just be sure to think it through.

DON'T GET SIDETRACKED

The final step in budgeting is to stick to it. That's where it's easy to go astray. To remain within your budget, track unfixed expenses such as vacations, entertainment, clothing, gifts, and miscellaneous. Buy a ledger, and label a separate page for each category. When you dine out, log the expense to ensure you don't go over your allotment by month's end.

Also, keep in mind, when extra cash is floating around, it's tempting to assume the money's available to spend. Remember, your budget is based on averages. This means the extra \$100 or \$1000 sitting in your bank account must be available to cover another expense down the road, such as property taxes or car repairs.

Attaining and maintaining financial security requires self-discipline to live within your means. By setting up an accurate budget and sticking to it, you'll not only avoid debt and financial hardship but the stress that usually accompanies it.

Kimberly Blaker is a freelance writer. She also owns an online bookshop, Sage Rare & Collectible Books, specializing in out-of-print, scarce, signed, and first editions; fine bindings; ephemera and more at sagerarebooks.com. Copyright © 2025 Kimberly Blaker, All rights reserved.

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Murphy Knew

Jim has arthritis in his legs and in his back. He can walk three, on a good day, four steps before the pain sits him down. He's blind in one eye, deaf in both ears and even though once upon a time his sense of smell was as sharp as vinegar, I'm not so sure he has it in him anymore to know the difference between a fish fry and a clam bake. He's pushing 100.

In dog years.

Jim is a Golden Retriever.

Murphy is an English Sheepdog.

Murphy first met Jim lying on his side under the big elm by the creek. The old dog was tired of walking, tired of moving, tired of hurting.

Probably tired of living.

Murphy studied him awhile and then nudged the pocket where I keep a few treats. I gave him one. He walked up to Jim and dropped it on the ground



under his nose. The old dog picked it up, held it in his mouth a second or two and then let it fall back to the ground. He sighed and put his head down.

Murphy knew.

He took the treat in his mouth, chewed it into small pieces and dropped them under Jim's nose.

The toothless old dog lapped up every one of those small pieces.

We saw Jim again a few days later, lying on his side under the big elm by the creek, his tongue hanging out, his one good eye locked onto the cold water creek not twenty feet away. He tried to sit up. It hurt. He lay back down.

Murphy knew.

He trotted to the creek, lay down, let the water wash over him till he was as soaked as a sponge and then hurried

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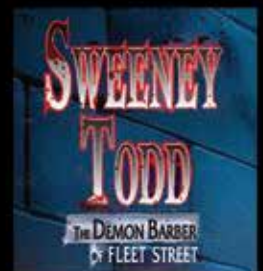
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July 17, 18, 19, 25
and 26 at 7:30 PM
July 20, 26,
and 27 at 2:00 PM



September 5, 6, 12,
and 13 at 7:30 PM
September 6, 7, and 14
at 2:00 PM



October 17, 18, 24,
and 25 at 7:30 PM
October 18, 19,
and 26 at 2:00 PM



December 5, 6, 12, 13,
19, and 20 at 7:30 PM
December 6, 7, 14, and 21
at 2:00 PM



February 12, 13, 20 and
21 at 7:30 PM
February 14, 15,
and 22 at 2:00 PM



March 13, 14, 20 and
21 at 7:30 PM
March 14, 15, and 22
at 2:00 PM

back to where Jim lay panting. He stood over the old dog and let the cool water fall, like a soothing rain.

If dogs smile, and I believe they do, Jim went to sleep that night with a smile on his face.

The last time we saw Jim he was sitting, staring out at the field across from the creek. I didn't see anything out there worth looking at.

Murphy did.

He took off running across that field like there was no tomorrow.

And he ran.

And he ran.

Back and forth.

Back and forth.

Faster and faster.

Have you ever watched a dog trying to outrun the wind?

Pure joy.

Written all over its face.

And old Jim watched.

Pure joy written all over his face.

And I got it.

It wasn't Murphy running through that field like there was no tomorrow.

It was Jim, running through a field of yesterdays.

Young Jim.

Young Jim, who could run with the best of them and outrun the rest of them. Young Jim, who knew no pain, who had two good eyes and two good ears and a nose that could smell a duck in the air before it ever got there.

Young Jim – as good a dog as there ever was.

Murphy knew.

So, what's the point?

The point is that every time I see an elder trying to climb a curb, I hope I remember to offer them an arm up; that every time I see an elder walking toward me on a narrow path, I hope I remember to afford them the courtesy of stepping aside; that every time I see an elder struggling with anything or anyone, I hope I remember to step in.

I hope I remember to know and do what Murphy knew and did.

Honor the elders. Respect the elders.

We never saw Jim again. We still walk there every day, Murphy and me. Every now and then he takes a treat, chews it into small pieces and leaves it under the big elm by the creek. Just in case.



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Exploring Venice:

Lost and Found. And Special Finds. Repeat.

By Fyllis Hockman

Walking home to our apartment in Venice, we share a wave through the window with the owner of Baba, our local osteria. Leaving for a day of sightseeing, a cup of my favorite pistachio gelato awaits me despite the early hour. At the Bar Dugole, we relax after a day of sightseeing and order the regular: vodka for my husband and Amaretto for me. And we sit and watch everyone else in Venice try to figure out where the hell they are! But more on that later.

Welcome to Untours, a wonderful well-kept secret that may change your concept of travel forever. The program offers tourists a unique opportunity to not be tourists. Serving close to two dozen European countries, Untours inundates you with information, puts you up in unusual accommodations, provides whatever transportation is necessary to get around and voila! You are a local. And yes, that works in Italian as well as French...

We were learning about our neighborhood, but on our terms. Rise early or sleep in. Sightsee or stroll around town. Cook in or eat out. And whatever the choice, we returned to our apartment, a much roomier and warmer ambiance than any hotel would provide. The orientation told us where to get the best produce, meat, fish, pastries, and of course, wine and gelato, the afore-mentioned shop which just coincidentally was directly next door to our apartment.

Our favorite local discovery? The Filler-Up Wine Shop. Bring in any empty bottle and fill it with the wine of your choice for \$2.50-\$4.00 a bottle – less than you would pay for a glass at a local trattoria. What a terrific way to recycle empty water bottles!

Venice is an old city – it looks old – sometimes very old. The water-logged foundations date back to the 11th century; the newer building facades are as recent as the 15th. So many buildings stripped of paint and plaster on both sides of a small alleyway, I expected them to crumble before my eyes until I reminded myself they have looked pretty much the same for over 500 years.

We were immediately transformed into another world filled with canals, gondolas, water buses, cobbled streets, alleyways, bridges and cafes. Picture everything that makes any city run – buses, taxis, fire trucks, police cars, ambulances, postal services, Fedex deliveries, garbage pick-ups – but they're all boats! And the city still runs.

Expect to get lost. And thank goodness because that is the best way to explore the city and find those gems that are not part of the major tourist itineraries.

Among those gems is Pinocchio Island, home to a local Geppetto whose real name is Roberto Comin, maker of magical marionettes. These brilliant





little string creatures represent all aspects of Venetian historical and theatrical culture lovingly produced by Comin for 25 years in a workshop over 350 years old. Requests now come in for characters from Shakespeare to Cleopatra and yes, a Johnny Depp look-alike that was given to the actor for his birthday. Want a marionette doppel-ganger of yourself? It's doable but it'll cost you about \$600.

Getting lost is a given – did I mention that? People spend as much time looking up at the signs designating different sections, squares and churches of the city as

they do looking down at maps, phones and GPS's. My favorite response from a young street vendor: "Go right, over the next bridge, then ask someone else." And then when you don't think things can get any worse, you see the sign you've been searching for and it points in both directions. I thought about giving up and going home but I had no clue how to get there.

We wandered everywhere, sitting at cafes to eat or drink wine, always aware of how little English we heard – again reinforcing the idea of living like a local. And the more we wandered, the more enjoyable the discoveries: a delightful mask store, street musicians in jeans playing Vivaldi, an out-of-the-way Leonardo DaVinci Museum.

Not every stop in Venice is off-the-beaten-path. There's the de rigueur visit to Piazza San Marco. So if you want to avoid tourists, don't go there. But part of the reason they're there are the pigeons. Now in my unfiltered 19-year-old memory, the square was covered with them. Decades later, my first thought was, "Where are all the pigeons?" Then I saw them. "Oh yes, over there by that guy with all the bird food."

The island of Murano, world famous for its glass figurines, jewelry and home décor since the 11th Century, is a must destination if you want to be absolutely sure you're buying Murano glass and not a knock-off. Though it'll cost you.

I was amazed at the intricate convoluted shapes in colors so vibrant and translucent that the light passing through intensifies the whole experience. I wanted to decorate my whole house with cups, vases, dishes and elaborately designed decorative pieces but I settled for a pair of earrings.

It was a fun diversion but I was so happy to get back home, pick up some Branzini from the fish market along with a water bottle full of wine from the Filler-Up shop and sit on our porch, savoring our most recent exploits while looking forward to the next.

And feel reassured that no one has ever been irretrievably lost in Venice, but if so – how lucky for them. They're still there! For more information, visit www.untours.com.

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June Lockhart Turns 100

Only about three out of every 10,000 Americans will reach the age of 100. Included in that rare longevity category is actress June Lockhart who tipped the century mark on June 25 this year.

"I can't believe it either!" she told me recently.

And no, it's not merely coincidence she shares a name with her birth month. Parents Gene and Kathleen Lockhart were both actors who married in June 1924 in Chicago. The following year, their only child was born – also in June.

"They were expecting a boy who was to be named Gene Jr., so my being a girl was quite a surprise," June explained. "My birth certificate reads 'Female Lockhart!' They later chose June as my name because it was a significant month in their lives."

Throughout the 30s, 40s, and 50s, June's mother was cast in minor roles for some 40 movies (about the same number of films that June appeared in) while her father became one of the best-loved character actors during the classic film era, appearing in more than 120 movies over the same period.

Not surprisingly perhaps, her parents encouraged their daughter to take an interest in the arts.

"They were perfectly happy with whatever I wanted to do," she recalled. "But they knew music, dance, and art would be a good background and I made my debut dancing at the age of 8. I also had piano lessons which I hated and told my father to save his money, telling him 'Daddy, it's just not me!'"

Fortunately, she found her calling in acting and developed a deep love for the stage earning a Tony Award for "Outstanding Performance by a Newcomer" for her 1947 Broadway debut at just 22 in "For Love or Money." Her first screen role came even earlier – appearing alongside her parents in the 1938 adaptation of Charles Dickens' "A



Photo Credit: Harlan Boll

Christmas Carol" when just 13 years old. But it was television where June truly made her lasting mark especially in two series playing beloved TV moms – "Lassie" (1958-1964) and "Lost in Space" (1965-1968).

"I applied my own maternal instinct in both of these shows," she explained. "I am that lady who talks it through if there is a problem and comforts if someone is upset."

During her three seasons on "Lost in Space," there were certainly cast issues at times, notably dealing with co-star Jonathan Harris (Dr. Smith) who, along with Bill Mumy (Will Robinson) and the show's iconic Robot, became the prominent characters throughout the series. According to June, Harris had "a wicked sense of humor" but I'll leave her further thoughts on that topic for another time!

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Like many sci-fi shows from the 1960s, "Lost in Space" remains popular with older fans who first discovered it in their childhood. Of course, it's dated now like many series of the era, but its legacy remains alive through conventions, blogs, and online communities. In another 100 years when those with a personal nostalgic connection to the series are gone, will future generations look fondly on it?

"I think the show will be a quaint and humorous look back at the notion of space exploration and what family life might be like in space," noted June.

Naturally, family life for June growing up was rather unique since sharing the same profession with both parents creates a special family bond. Although her mother lived to see her daughter's later television success, her father died in 1957 never witnessing his daughter's involvement in three hit TV series from the 1960s (June also appeared in over 45 episodes of "Petticoat Junction").

"He died before I started 'Lassie' which I'm certain he would have enjoyed and I think he would have liked 'Lost in Space,' too," she said. "I know he would have written notes to me on the work! But I did appear in a lot of shows before those – 'Kraft Theatre,' "Studio One," and many other series and films that he saw and enjoyed."

When asked about her own first 100 years and if she felt any professional regrets, June says there were none. "My philosophy has always been the 'right things' will come to you. I am lucky that I was able to work with so many talented actors and directors."

And despite her long and varied career, June (like her father) never penned an autobiography.

"A lot of people have suggested I sit down and write about my life," she says, "but I've just been too busy out there living it!"

Nick Thomas teaches at Auburn University at Montgomery in Alabama and has written features, columns, and interviews for many newspapers and magazines. His book, "Raised by the Stars: Interviews with 29 Children of Hollywood Actors," featured a lengthy interview with June Lockhart talking about her father. See www.getnickt.org.



Cast of "Lassie"

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WORD SEARCH

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The Old West

Blacksmith	Miners
Boot Hill	Outlaws
Bounty	Pioneers
Buckboard	Pistol
Cabin	Posse
Cattle	Ranch
Cowboys	Rustlers
Dance Hall	Sagebrush
Deputy	Saloon
Dust	Settlers
Frontier	Sheriff
Gold Rush	Stagecoach
Gunslinger	Telegraph
Horses	Trail
Indians	Train

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L A T I O S T E L E G R A P H J T A
L H I N U O P C L K Y O E S K A T L
A G M D S H E R I F F Y V N G Q V O
H S S I Q W S Z C N R G T E I Y W O
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D R B Q O O U N H T S G P O S E O P
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Y X B D R A O B K C U B T L U T E B
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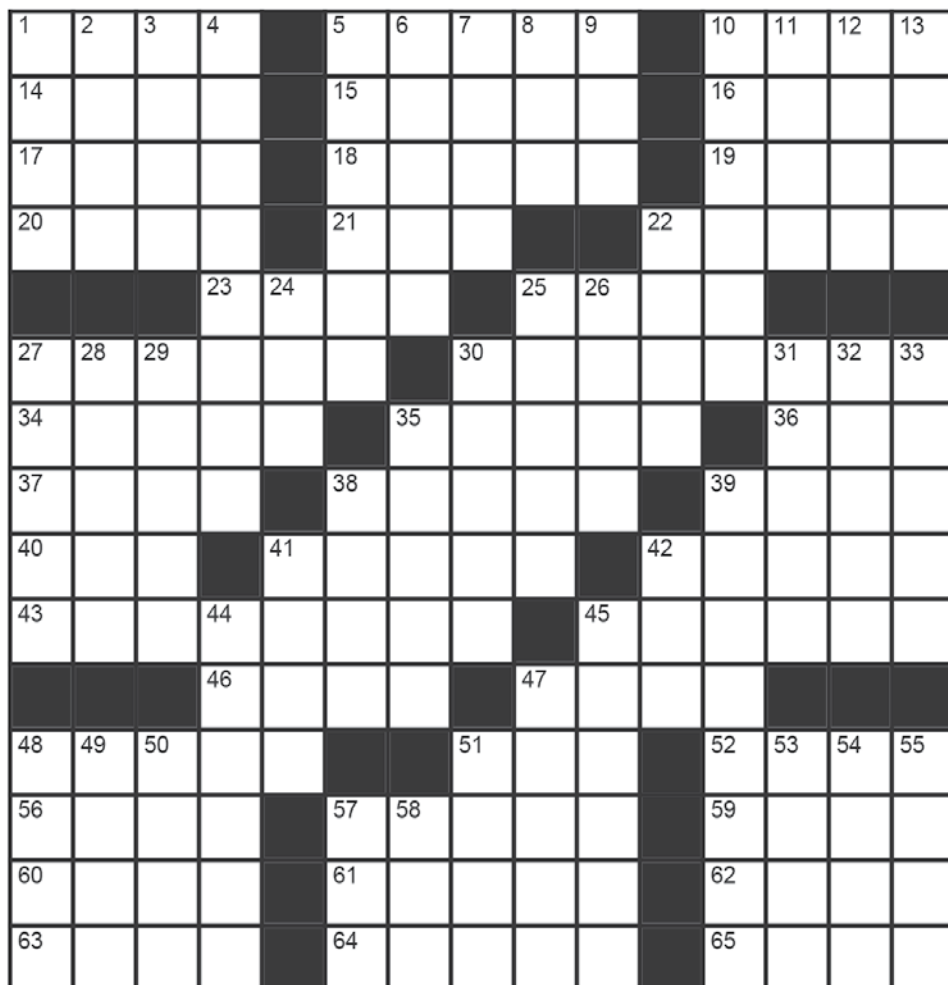
- 1 Weirs
5 Jane Eyre's pupil
10 Hoof sound
14 Came down to earth
15 Exhaust
16 Eastern discipline
17 Russian legislature
18 Muffled
19 Bamako is its capital
20 Foreboding
21 Election winners
22 One of the Yokums
23 Dismal
25 Designer Wang
27 Optical illusion
30 Loyalty
34 Cherish
35 Europe's longest river
36 Romanian monetary unit
37 Honey drink
38 Comedian Milton ____
39 Solid
40 Some advanced degs.
41 Major artery
42 Unwholesome atmosphere
43 Elevation
45 "House of Cards" actor Kevin
46 Pigeon's home
47 Captures
48 Brew
51 Bos taurus
52 Links rental
56 Speedy steed
57 Durable wood
59 Creme-filled

cookie

- 60 Passable
61 Nary a soul
62 Qatari leader
63 River of Hades
64 Nymph chaser
65 "Auld Lang ____"

Down

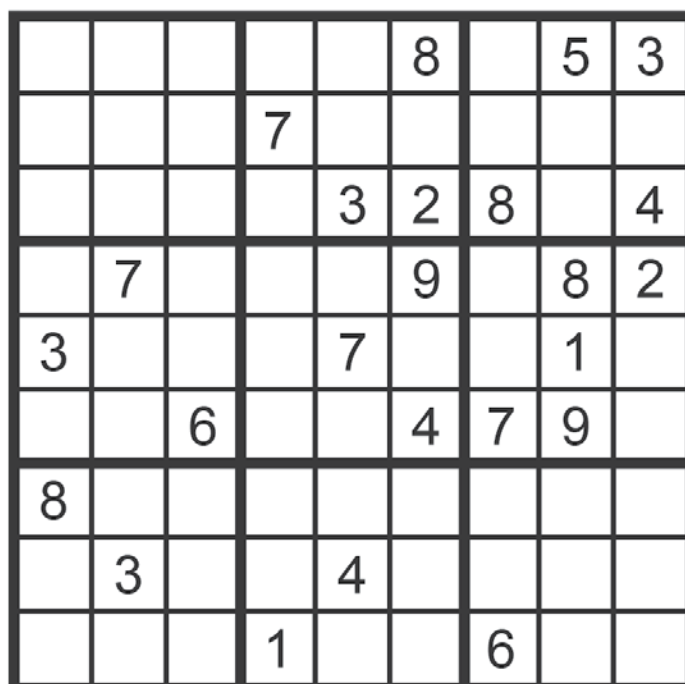
- 1 Woodworking groove
2 Grad
3 Quiet entertainer
4 Normal
5 Look up to
6 Inebriated
7 Dines
8 Golfer's concern
9 Finale
10 Percussion instrument
11 Give temporarily
12 Eye up and down
13 Couple
22 Carpet layer's calculation
24 Add years to one's life
25 Fancy home
26 Halftime lead, e.g.
27 ____ mia!
28 Archetype
29 Friars Club event
30 Strong point
31 Hipbone-related
32 Brusque
33 Delicious
35 Cape ____ Islands
38 Match
39 Embarrassing failures



- 41 Mounted on
42 It's higher on the hwy.
44 Freezer back in the day
45 Tom of Twain fame
47 Comely
48 Insolence
49 Gait faster than a walk
50 Effortless
51 Old fool
53 Major employer
54 Bridle part
55 Went like the dickens
57 Starfleet Academy grad.
58 Gaudy scarf

SUDOKU

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



SAVE the *Date*

EVENTS

■ Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association Seminar

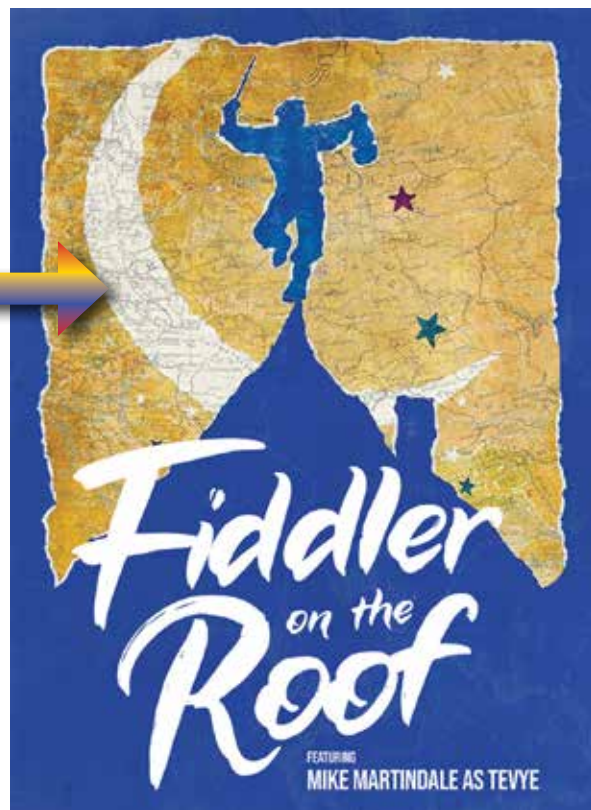
Saturday, August 9, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at the University Center, LSUS campus, One University Place, Shreveport. Speaker will be Kelvin Myers, forensic genealogist and lecturer. His lectures will include "Sallywags, Rogues, and Ruffs: All Those Ancestors We Don't Talk About", "My Ancestor in Court, "Dealing with Record Loss", and "Introduction

of Forensic Genealogy".

Advance registration recommended. Registration fee is \$45 and includes lunch if pre-registered. For further info and to register go to: www.altgenealogy.com, contact Jim Johnson at 746-1851 or email altgenassn@gmail.com

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- July 15 - Winston Hall and Shreveport Music History
- August 19 - Astronomy 101 with the Shreveport-Bossier Astronomical Society
- September - performance by members of the Shreveport Symphony

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ENTERTAINMENT

■ Fiddler on the Roof

July 11 & 18 at 7:30 p.m.; July 12, 13, 19, 20 at 3 p.m. Emmett Hook Center, 550 Common Street, Shreveport. A timeless story of faith, family, and tradition. Set in the village of Anatevka, the production brings powerful themes of change and resilience to the stage and is filled with unforgettable songs." Tickets are \$30 adult, \$25 senior/military, \$20 child/student. For tickets call 318-429-6885 or visit emmetthookcenter.org

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- **Guys and Dolls** - July 17, 18, 19, 25. and 26 at 7:30 p.m.; July 20, 26, and 27 at 2 p.m. It tells the overlapping stories of high-roller Sky Masterson, who falls in love with mission worker Sarah Brown, and lovable rascalion Nathan Detroit, engaged for 14 years to Miss Adelaide, a headliner at the Hot Box Club.

FARMERS MARKETS

- **Bossier Farmers' Market**
Every Saturday through November, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at 2950 E. Texas St., Bossier City on the south side of Pierre Bossier Mall. Featuring produce, arts & crafts, food trucks, handmade goods, baked goods, live music and children's activities. **FREE** admission and parking. www.BossierCityFarmersMarket.com

- **Shreveport Farmers' Market**
May 31 through August 23, from 8 a.m. to noon at Shreveport's Festival Plaza, 101 Crockett St, Shreveport. Featuring homegrown produce and products, crafts and food trucks. **FREE** admission and parking. For more information visit <https://redriversrevel.com/farmers-market>.

MEETINGS

- **Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association**
Meetings are held from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Broadmoor Branch Library, 1212 Capt. Shreve Dr., Shreveport. Offering educational programs that are genealogical or historically

oriented. For more information call 746-1851 or visit altgenealogy.com. **FREE** and open to the public.

- **Saturday, July 12** - Guest speaker is Judy McKinney Thomas, cemetery director, family historian. Her topic is: "Historic Rocky Mount Presbyterian Church & Cemetery (North Bossier Parish)".

MOVIES

- **Silver Screenings**
Silver Screenings feature a matinee and luncheon for senior citizens showcasing a classic film on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at Robinson Film Center, 617 Texas Street in downtown Shreveport. Movie begins at 10:30 a.m. and is followed by a buffet lunch. Cost is \$20 for movie and lunch. Ask about discounted tickets for AARP members! For information or tickets, call (318) 459-4122 or visit www.robinsonfilmcenter.org.

- **July 15 - Murder on the Orient Express** - A lavish trip through Europe quickly unfolds into a race against time to solve a murder aboard a train. When an avalanche stops the Orient Express dead in its tracks, the world's greatest detective - Hercule Poirot - arrives to interrogate all passengers and search for clues.

- **August 19 - Some Like It Hot** - The 1959 film is about two musicians (Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon) during the Prohibition era who disguise themselves as women to escape Chicago mobsters they witnessed commit murder.

STRAND Centennial SEASON

2025 shows

Betty Buckley

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2025 | 7:30PM

RESCHEDULED
FROM LAST
SEASON

Indigo Girls

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2025 | 7:00PM

Blackberry Smoke

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2025 | 7:30PM

Cirque Mechanics TILT

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2025 | 7:00PM

Postmodern Jukebox:

Magic, Moonlight & Mistletoe

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025 | 7:00PM

SPECIAL
EVENT

Elf in Concert

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025 | 3:00PM

2026 shows

Choir of Man

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2026 | 7:30PM

Hadestown

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2026 | 8:00PM

Peking Acrobats

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2026 | 7:00PM

Big Bad Voodoo Daddy

THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026 | 7:00PM

Music Man

SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2026 | 7:00PM

THE STRAND THEATRE
(318) 226-8555 or thestrاندtheatre.com

Snapshot SLEUTH

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

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

The photo to the right is from the Lawrence Lea collection. It's from a batch of negatives labeled Marjorie Lyons "1776". The package is undated, but the box it was in is labeled 1981, 1986, so the photo was taken in the early to mid 1980s.



The photo to the left is from the Shreveport Journal Collection. It appears to be a group of people, possibly from the Chamber of Commerce, touring the GM plant on the first day of production on October 26, 1981.

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? Answers from the ? Experts

EXPERTS: If you would like to help your community by answering a question here, call 636-5510

READERS: Send your questions to The Best of Times, Box 19510, Shreveport, LA 71149

Will I need glasses after cataract surgery?

This all depends on what you are trying to accomplish after cataract surgery. Most patients after routine cataract surgery will only need reading glasses for small print. If there is a lot of astigmatism present then you may even need full time bifocals. In patients with normal healthy eyes, you can have multifocal lenses implanted at the time of cataract surgery. Multifocal lenses allow patients to see distance, intermediate and near without the need for glasses. These lenses do not work like your God-given lenses so it takes your brain some time to adapt to them.



Chris Shelby, MD

WK Eye Institute
7607 Youree Dr.
Shreveport, LA 71105
(318) 212-3937
See our ad on page 14.

I broke a bone last year. Do I have osteoporosis?

In certain high risk groups the risk of a serious fracture can double after a first fracture. Those who experience an osteoporotic hip fracture have a 24% increased risk of dying within one year following the fracture. This is not only a disease of aging white women. Osteoporosis occurs in all racial groups and men have a 1:8 chance of having an osteoporotic fracture. Although there is no specific cure, you can: Get enough Vitamin D and Calcium. Get regular exercise (weight bearing and low impact). Do balance exercises to avoid falls (Tai chi decrease falls in older individuals) and if you have a broken bone talk to your doctor about a bone density test.



John J. Ferrell, M.D.

Mid South Orthopaedics
7925 Youree Drive
Suite 210
Shreveport, LA 71105
(318) 424-3400

PUZZLE answers (from pages 26 - 27)

D	A	M	S		A	D	E	L	E		C	L	O	P	
A	L	I	T		D	R	A	I	N		Y	O	G	A	
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C	Q	C	N	Z	Y	H	A	R	L	X	O	C	R	U	K	D	Y
N	A	A	S	J	A	O	F	D	B	A	P	I	S	T	O	L	T
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8	4	1	5	2	6	9	3	7
6	3	9	8	4	7	5	2	1
7	5	2	1	9	3	6	4	8



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