



P.14 Ways to ensure home safety

P.22 Volunteer opportunities

Granite Senior Journal

June/July 2024

A Bi-Monthly Dedicated to Senior Issues and Living



A LOOK BACK



Courtesy photo

Dancing Dreams Come True

By Betty Gagne

Corinne Klemmer Allaire took her first tap dancing lesson at 6 years old at the Alice McDonald School of Dance in Saugus, Massachusetts.

“I always loved to dance,” she says, “And my mother was a dancer too. I wasn’t sure what kind of dancer I wanted to be, but I knew I wanted

to make a career out of it.” Inspired by performers like Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly and Donald O’Connor, Corinne studied dance for several years and by the time she was 14 she knew what she wanted to do. Several of the older students were planning on becoming Radio City Music Hall Rockettes, and Corinne decided to take that same path. However, she knew she’d have

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STAYING ACTIVE Getting Back in the Seat

By Jill Lessard

Infused with a passion for cycling, Tim Blagden is a cycling evangelist who advocates for everyone to become involved with cycling, from the young to the young at heart.

“You will love the feeling of having been on a bike ride,” said the Board President of Friends of the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail and Executive Director of the Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire. In an email, Blagden addressed the nuts and bolts of being a bicyclist.

How can seniors benefit from cycling?

Cycling can be a social network. There are a ton of riding groups. You can find one that goes the right speed for the right distance on the right terrain.

Cycling is physically easier on the muscles and joints than running. But you do have to shift those gears. I’m not strong, but I don’t need to be if I get my feet spinning at a good speed and use the proper gear. That keeps the pressure on my joints low and doesn’t strain my muscles. But you will still elevate your heart rate and exert yourself, so it’s good exercise.

If you are worried about hills, go try an electric assist bike. These are amazing. Euphoric really. They let you dial in the amount of effort that is right for you, and when you get to a place where you need some help the electric motor kicks in to keep you in your comfort zone. I’m going to say it again. If you have nev-

er been on an e-bike go try this. It will make you smile, maybe even laugh.

Another thing to mention: When I was young the bikes that didn’t have a high crossbar were called girls’ bikes. They are now called step-through and everyone can ride them. So if you have a hip or knee that doesn’t easily go over the crossbar, get a step-through bike. All the crossbar did was stiffen the frame, and construction techniques have changed so you can have a great ride on a step-through bike.

Can any senior ride a bicycle? Or do you need to ‘get into shape’ first?

I’m not a doctor so I’m not going to give medical advice. So if your doctor says it’s OK then go for it. A bicycle can help people get in better shape. Just be sensible. Don’t go too far on your initial rides. Check the route for hills.

Rail trails are an excellent place to start biking. They are mostly flat. They are wide enough to allow frequent side-by-side biking so you can chat with a friend. And they are free of automobile traffic. There are also trikes for people who are experiencing balance issues. Tandems can provide a way for visually impaired people to ride. So if you want to ride a bike there is probably a way.

What items should a cyclist take with them on a bike path/trail?

Always wear a helmet. Bring water. It’s handy to know where you are, so bring your phone. If you are riding on roads, use lights all the time. Wear bright clothing. A small multi tool is handy. A

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Granite Senior Journal

June/July 2024

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CONTINUED FROM PG 1►
to work on a few things before she could apply.

“I needed to stretch and work on my flexibility,” she admits. “My limbs were very stiff, and I also had to practice my kicks.”

Corinne focused on improving her dancing game for the next few years and by the time she was 17 she was ready to apply. It was 1974 and she sent her application letter to the director. The director’s response letter stipulated that in order to audition she had to be polished in tap, ballet and jazz. Also in order to be a Rockette you had to be between 5’5½” and 5’8½” tall. Corinne recalls her nervousness when she arrived at Radio City for her audition.

“I remember taking the elevator to the third-floor rehearsal hall,” she says. “A girl was just coming out when I arrived. She looked upset and I surmise she’d auditioned and didn’t make it.” This made Corinne very anxious but she and two other girls tried out that day and all three of them made it into the famous chorus line.

So began the life of a Radio City Music Hall Rockette for Corinne.

“Back then, we performed four shows a day – noon, 3, 6 and 9 p.m.” she says. There were 45 Rockettes and they’d work 28 straight days, then have six days off. Upon returning to work, they’d have a holdover rehearsal just to ensure their formation was correct. The shows were a half hour to 45 minutes long and the dancers wrapped up by 10 p.m. Corinne admits it was tough but she just loved it. She had also become close to a couple of the other girls: Prudy, who was Corinne’s neighbor growing up, and Pam.

“Waiting to get on stage before our first actual performance, Pam asked me if I was scared. ‘Are you kidding?’ I said. ‘I’m petrified!’ ‘Good,’ she said. ‘Because if you’re not nervous, you won’t do a good job.’” In time Corinne learned how right her friend was.

So was housing provided for the dancers? “Absolutely not,” Corinne tells us. “There was a convent on East 72nd Street and that’s where I lived for a while.” The nuns kept an eye on the girls who stayed there. “It was



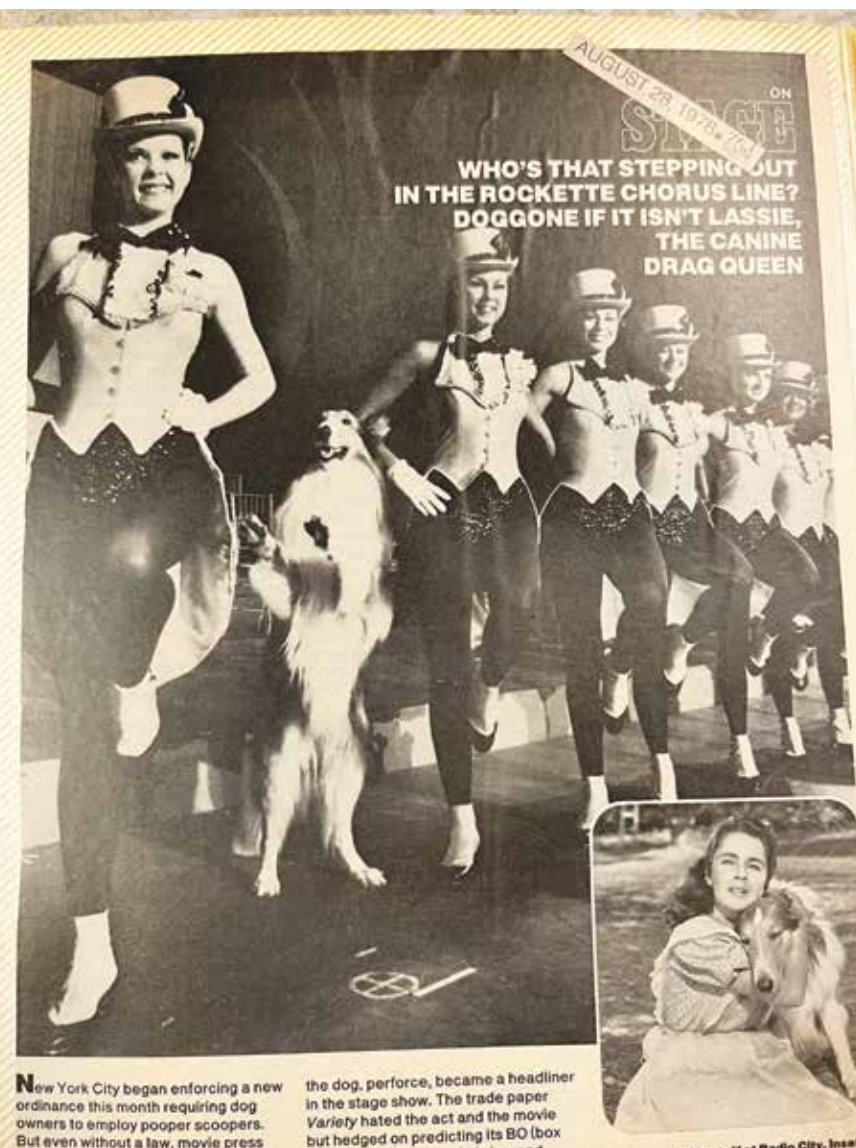
Courtesy photo

like a college dorm,” she says, laughing. “No boys allowed.” Eventually Corinne subletted apartments from the other dancers when they were on break or vacation.

“The experience of being a Rockette was very exciting. I loved dancing on stage, but I missed my family. I didn’t know many people in New York and I was very homesick. I remember calling my mother on the pay phone,” she recalls. Naturally the staff at the Music Hall was like a family, so it wasn’t a surprise that Corinne met her first husband there.

“The stagehands became our close friends. They looked out for us,” she says. Artie was a stagehand and he and Corinne fell in love, got married and eventually had a son. Meanwhile the shows went on and the excitement continued.

“The experience of being a Rockette was very exciting. I loved dancing on stage, but I missed my family. I didn’t know many people in New York and I was very homesick.”



Courtesy photo

ettes’ kickline to promote the movie. “First time I ever danced with a dog,” she laughs. Corinne and her dancing co-workers were then invited by Oldsmobile to help them promote their

ing to show how much leg room was in the cars,” she laughs. “Touring was fun.” But the biggest deal of all was in March 1982 when the Actor’s Fund of America held the Night of 100 Stars. “We met so many famous people that night,” she says. “Everyone in the show business industry was there.” Corinne was thrilled to be in the company of celebrated actors like Elizabeth Taylor, Liza Minnelli, Milton Berle, George Burns, Sammy Davis Jr., Brooke Shields, Grace Kelly and many others.

By 1984, Corinne was ready to move on to fulfill another dream.

“There’s a shelf life for a Rockette,” she says. “By then my son was 3 and I was 26.” Corinne and Artie moved to Long Island, where she opened her first dance school, the Dance Workshop of Deer Park. “It was small,” she tells us. “Artie was never home.

When the movie *The Magic of Lassie* debuted at the Music Hall in 1978, the famed collie joined the Rock-

line of vehicles. The tour took them through Fort Worth, Chicago, and even to Las Vegas. “They were try-

— Corinne Klemmer Allaire



Courtesy photo



on North Main Street and remained there for nine years.” Sadly through the midst of life, Artie came down with cancer and passed away in 1994. But the show goes on in the final and current Corinne’s School of Dance on Old Dover Road in Rochester.

“I love it here,” she says. “I love the size of this place. It was always my dream to open a dance school, and this is where we’ll stay.” Corinne teaches tap and what’s called ‘Happy Feet’ to little dancers 3 to 6 years old. The school offers classes for all ages and employs a staff of five dance instructors that includes her daughter, Angela Grassie. “Angie has been dancing since the age of 2, and she runs the CSD Ballet Company here at the studio.” Angie has three children who are dancers also. “Ally and Avery dance and Andrew dances too but he’s more into musical theater. He’s funny and witty, and he loves to entertain people.”

Right now is the busiest time of the year for Corinne and her dancing staff. With the recital coming up at Oyster River High School on June 28 and June 29, it’s all about costumes, pic-

tures and rehearsals.

“We are celebrating 35 years this season so we chose songs from previous recitals but with different dances,” she tells us. As Corinne reflects on the past few years, she smiles pensively. “We never stopped dancing, even during Covid. Lessons were held outside, and so were the recitals. The kids weren’t in school so it gave them a chance to see their friends.”

Corinne is proud of her dancing legacy and pleased to share it with others. “I love my life right now,” she says. “I’m married to a wonderful man named Roger, I’m doing what I love and I get to spend time with my grandchildren. I really wouldn’t change a thing.” Does she have a message for the readers? “Oh yes,” she says with a huge smile. “Come and dance with us!”

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He was still working at the Music Hall and his commute was long and challenging.” Finally they decided to come back to New England to live a more conventional life, and they ended up in Rochester, New Hampshire. Corinne opened her second dance

school downtown in the Feineman Building, where she taught dance for about a year. She expanded by moving to a location on Milton Road in Rochester, where she stayed for 17 years.

“The building had fallen into disrepair, so then we moved to the studio



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CONTINUED FROM PG 1 ► patch kit and bike pump can save you from a long walk if you get a flat.

Please recommend bike rides in the central Merrimack Valley region that are “do-able” for seniors.

The Nashua River Rail Trail:

www.nashuanh.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6595/BIKE_PATH

The Piscataquog Trail in Manchester:

www.manchesternh.gov/Departments/Parks-and-Recreation/Parks-Trails-and-Facilities/Recreational-Trails/Piscataquog-Trail

The Northern Rail Trail in Boscawen:

www.fnrt.org

The Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail (shorter sections but growing):

clsrt.org

See links at the NH Rail Trails Coalition (NHRTC) website, nhrtc.org, for other trails around the state.

Why do you recommend them?

I like riding rail trails because they frequently go by rivers and lakes and often connect town centers. These were former railroad lines whose engineers and laborers did some amazing work to create as level a route as possible for the trains to reach town centers. Riding through the cuts and over the fills connects you to a part of our country's history.

What can cyclists expect from the experience?

The bugs won't bother you as much when you are riding a bike. The breeze you generate keeps you cool. Biking in New Hampshire offers so much to see

and you connect with the area much more than when driving through the same area. It's just more fun! It's also easy to stop and start. Visit the shops. Get a coffee or a snack.

What is the most challenging thing about bike riding?

Rail trails are like the green circle trails at ski resorts. Start on these where there is no traffic and long sight lines so you have time to plan your next maneuver. Being mostly flat you will also be able to go out and back with about the same level of effort. Practice stopping and starting, get comfortable steering and build confidence. Practice shifting gears.

If you are riding on the street with traffic the challenge is knowing where to be to keep yourself safe. Ride with traffic, not against. If you are riding on a street where cars are parked next to the curb watch out for a door opening. There are times where instead of being on the right edge of the lane you may need to move into the center of the lane for a short time so cars don't attempt to squeeze by you. Ride groups can teach you these techniques or you can take a class from a League of American Bicyclists instructor.

Riding up hills can be a challenge. But knowing how to use the gears on your bike makes hill climbing and all bike riding easier.

Mountain biking is full of challenges but it's so much fun to ride through the varied terrain.

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The AARP Fraud Watch Network™ is a free resource for all. With AARP as your partner, you'll learn how to proactively spot scams, get guidance from our fraud specialists if you've been targeted, and feel more secure knowing that we advocate at the federal, state, and local levels to protect consumers and enforce the law.

Research shows that if you know about a specific scam, you are 80% less likely to engage with it, and if you do engage, you are 40% less likely to lose money or sensitive information. The AARP Fraud Watch Network™ keeps you updated on the latest scams so you

can spot and avoid them. Your one-stop fraud resource is www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.

What We Help You Do Stay Informed

Knowledge gives you power over scams. The AARP Fraud Watch Network™ equips you with reliable, up-to-date insights, alerts and fraud prevention resources to help you spot and avoid scams and protect your loved ones. We even cover the latest scams in the news.

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If you've been targeted by scams or fraud, you are not alone. Our trained fraud specialists provide support and guidance on what to do next and how to avoid scams in the future. The AARP Fraud Helpline, 877-908-3360, is free and available to anyone. We also offer online support sessions for further emotional support.

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AARP fights for consumers by advo-



cating for laws and regulations to stop scams and shut down fraud attempts. We also provide a voice to consumer concerns and help shape the public discussion on fraud.

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sheets on how to recognize and avoid common scams, including videos that break down how scams work. Go to aarp.org/frc.

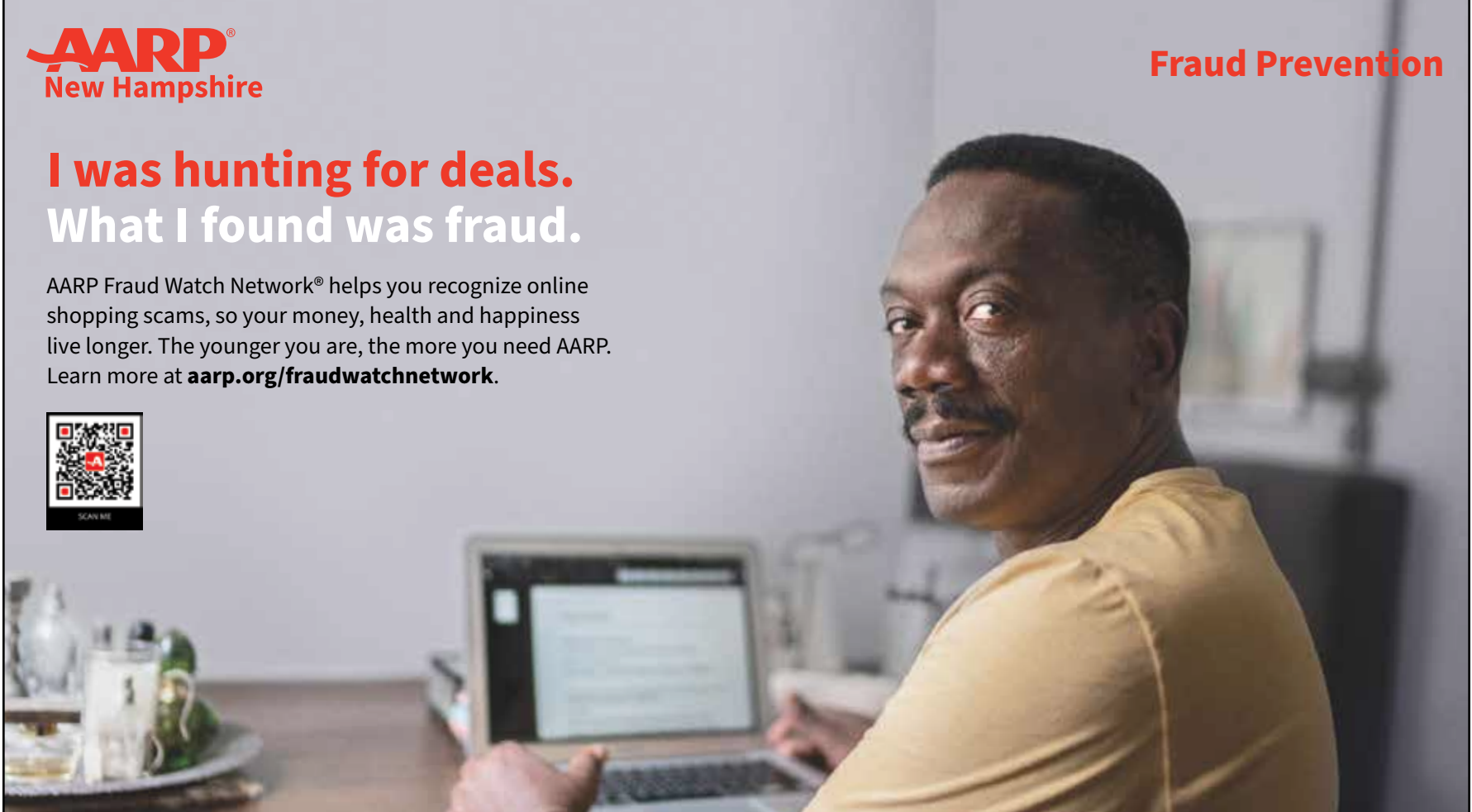
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Fraud Prevention

I was hunting for deals. What I found was fraud.

AARP Fraud Watch Network® helps you recognize online shopping scams, so your money, health and happiness live longer. The younger you are, the more you need AARP. Learn more at aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.



Volunteering at the Currier Art Museum

Help us share art with our community!

Help us share art with our community! From leading public tours to guided art activities, volunteers are central to the Currier Museum of Art's mission of connecting art with diverse audiences, from its neighborhood to international and digital visitors. Be part of facilitating exciting conversations and experiences around art!

Volunteering at the Currier offers unique opportunities to learn more about art; engage with our global audience; and join an active, welcoming organization. Volunteers can choose from a variety of roles, both internal and audience-focused, and enjoy an ongoing, engaging training program.

Volunteers are asked to commit to a minimum of 50 hours over the year, with openings available throughout the year, on most days of the week. This is a great way to connect with art, join a lively learning community, and



Courtesy photo.

support positive community programs in Manchester.

Volunteer Opportunities

The next training class for vol-

unteers who work in the Currier's museum building will take place this fall, best-suited for those who are interested in our fine arts collection.

History of the Guild of Volunteers

As early as 1970, volunteer docents were trained to conduct tours of the Currier Museum's collection. In May 1982, the Guild of Volunteers was formally organized to provide "provide volunteer personnel to carry out such projects, programs, and activities as designed and requested by the museum staff and departments."

Today the Guild has approximately 100 members donating more than 6600 hours of their time annually to support all aspects of the museum's operations.

The Currier Museum of Art is committed to a fair and equitable volunteer experience for individuals from all backgrounds. We strive to create accessible experiences, with inclusive programming for all who come into our institution, including our volunteers. By celebrating diversity, we intend to build strong community connections and increase visibility for the culturally expansive city of Manchester.

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- Hear stories of real scams on our award-winning podcast, The Perfect Scam. Explore fraud from the viewpoint of victims, law enforcement and criminals.
- Hear directly from fraud experts at one of our webinars, tele-town halls or live events in communities around the country.
- Get social with the AARP Fraud Watch Network™ on Facebook and X, where you'll also have access to online events. You can also connect with others on the Scams & Fraud channel in AARP's online community.
- Check out online resources to help protect veterans, service members and their families against scams at the AARP Veterans Fraud Center.
- Looking for resources in Spanish? Go to aarp.org/fraude.

The AARP Fraud Watch Network™ helps you recognize many different types of scams so your money, health and happiness live longer. Learn more at www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork.

Summer Cookie Recipe

By Staff

These cookies are light, refreshing, and perfect for summertime snacking.

- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar (for rolling)

Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large mixing bowl, cream together the softened butter and granulated sugar until light and fluffy.

Beat in the egg, vanilla extract, lemon zest, and lemon juice until well combined.

In a separate bowl, sift together the salt, baking powder, baking soda, and all-purpose flour.

Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mixing until a smooth dough forms.

Place the powdered sugar in a shallow bowl. Roll tablespoon-sized portions of dough into balls, then roll each ball in the powdered sugar until fully coated.

Place the coated dough balls onto the prepared baking sheet, spacing them about 2 inches apart.

Bake in the preheated oven for 10-12 minutes, or until the cookies are set and the edges are lightly golden.

Allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring them to a wire rack to cool completely.

Once cooled, serve and enjoy these delightful Lemon Crinkle Cookies as a light and summery treat!



Stock photo.

These cookies are sure to be a hit at any summer gathering or picnic, with their bright lemon flavor and soft, crinkle texture. Enjoy!

Triathlon Triumph: It's Never Too Late to Start

By Sue Holt

“Sometimes I think my life started at 65, the year I joined the Y.”

Sue Holt and her husband Ollie, residents of Amherst, have been married since 1967 and raised two daughters in the Greater Nashua community. The pair met in Concord on a blind date that was set up by a family friend, and having both come from farming families they were a good fit. Sue held various jobs while raising her family, her last role being a cashier at Shaw’s. When she retired at 65 she knew she wanted something to keep her and Ollie busy, so she turned to the Y, and her triathlon journey soon began.

Sue and Ollie first came to the YMCA of Greater Nashua 12 years ago. They were given a tour by a long-time member and were fascinated with the swimming pool. Soon after joining the Y, they took a yoga class with Carol, and then Sue joined the Silver Sneakers aqua exercise class. It began a transi-

tion to even greater things. Sue later joined a triathlon swim class which sparked an interest in the three segment races that include biking, running, and swimming. With the encouragement of her family, Sue began entering and taking on the challenge of triathlons. She is an inspiration to many at the Y and has completed seven outdoor triathlons, all between 65 and 73 years old. She has placed first, second and third various years in her age group and credits the volunteers, staff, and lifeguards who run these events in helping with her achievements. “I’m really proud of what I’ve accomplished. It really gave me a boost when I needed it,” she shared.

Today Sue still enjoys visits to the Y three times per week with swimming and group cycling and walking at nearby Mine Falls Park. In addition to her triathlon achievements, Sue has completed three indoor tri events at the YMCA. She also credits the Y with saving her husband, who was previ-



Sue Holt. Courtesy Photo.

ously a 100-miler runner and after an injury attended the Y as an extension of his physical therapy.

The Y is so clearly a huge part of

Sue’s life, she even has a Y tattoo! “The community I have found at the Y is called ‘my Y family,’ a praise I have heard by many others here.”

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The Bloat Busters: How Intense Care Probiotics Address Gas & Bloating

By Brenda Watson, CNC



If you are often plagued by the uncomfortable sensations of gas and bloating, you're not alone.

According to a new study led by Cedars-Sinai hospital, nearly 1 in 7 Americans experience bloating on a weekly basis. While the condition is prevalent among all ages, most people don't seek professional care for it. The findings are published in *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*.

"Although gas and bloating is a common symptom, some patients may not bring it up with their doctors," said Janice Oh, MD, a physician at Cedars-Sinai and author of the study. One reason why people don't feel comfortable discussing bloating is because they may have recently gone on new GLP-1 drugs like Zebound™, Wegovy™, Mounjaro™ and Ozempic™ that are now being prescribed for weight loss. One of the most common side effects of using these drugs is constipation, gas and bloating. "Women using these drugs are concerned with being criticized and judged for using them," explained Dr. Liz Mitchel, an ER doctor in Los Angeles that has treated a number of women for digestive issues. "They conceal the fact that they are on them and choose to just power through the side effects without saying anything."

Bloating can make people feel swollen or tight in the abdomen, almost like the way you feel after eating a huge Thanksgiving dinner. There are many factors that can contribute to gas and bloating. Dr. William Portaro, a leading gastroenterologist cites the incomplete digestion of proteins, carbohydrates or fats, as well as, an imbalance between good and bad bacteria in the gut as leading causes of occasional gas and bloating in the general public.

Everyone passes gas. In fact, on average we pass gas approximately 13 times a day. But, about 30% of the U.S. population have bacteria in the colon or small intestine that produce excessive amounts of methane and hydrogen.

These are the people who are likely to be most disease-prone. Overgrowth of bad bacteria in the colon or small bowel can cause serious problems due to increased intestinal permeability that allows absorption of microbial toxins and partially digested food into the body's circulation.

When we eat food, our digestive system releases enzymes to break food particles down into smaller parts so our body can absorb their nutrients. Sometimes, this process doesn't happen perfectly, leading to incomplete digestion and can result in gas and bloating.

Imagine that some foods, especially some types of complex carbohydrate (like certain legumes, grains and nuts) are like puzzle pieces that need to be taken apart in our stomach and intestines. If the puzzle isn't fully broken down, these undigested pieces become extra food for the bacteria living in our gut.

These bacteria are helpful for our digestion, but when they feast on undigested food, they may produce gas as a byproduct. This gas must go somewhere, and if there's too much of it, it can lead to stomach pain and the feeling of being bloated.

So incomplete digestion essentially means that some parts of the food we eat are not fully broken down. This undigested food becomes a feast for our gut bacteria, producing gas and

bloating.

I once counseled a woman in her mid-30's named Emily who suffered from periodic gas and bloating. She never knew when it would occur or what was causing it. She became so anxious about her condition that she began limiting her contact with friends and family. Food shopping became stressful, so did going to the gym. Over time Emily became more and more isolated. She gained weight and experienced periods of depression. Finally, it got to the point that Emily sought professional help from a local nutritionist. She changed her diet and started taking a high potency, high strain count probiotic to bring her gut back into balance. Within weeks, Emily started to feel better. After a few months of regular exercise, probiotic supplementation and a change in diet, Emily the "hermit" became Emily the "socialite." Emily was fortunate. Most of us just "deal with it," unaware of the subtle and sometimes dramatic changes digestive problems can have on our lifestyle.

Emily found what I call the "**bloat busters**"- a new generation of probiotic formulas that can be more effective at attacking and addressing specific digestive problems. **These probiotics are precision formulas** comprised of very specific probiotic strains and strain families that have been select-

ed based on clinical studies shown to address specific digestive issues.

For example, probiotic strains known as SYN BIO IMC 501 & 502 and HN019 have been shown to alleviate GI issues and support gut motility (proper movement of matter through the intestines). In one study, intake of this strain significantly reduced the number of GI symptoms after 14 days of probiotic use. Probiotic formulations that contain a concentration of these and other beneficial strains can be more effective than a "general use" probiotic that are formulated for preventive and overall gut health.

Intense Care is a new generation of precision formulated probiotic supplements. Their gas and bloating formula contains a total of 65 billion probiotic cultures plus prebiotics, postbiotics and parabiotics. It's one of the strongest formulas you can buy. But more importantly, there are 35 billion Bifido bacterium (Bifido) cultures. Bifido is a friendly bacteria that plays a crucial role in balancing the gut. As they consume prebiotics, they produce beneficial compounds like short-chain fatty acids, vitamins and minerals. As we mentioned earlier, these beneficial compounds are called postbiotics.

In addition to the Bifido strains, Intense Care has 30 billion live cultures of Lactobacillus (Lacto) strains. Lacto helps in the fermentation of sugars into lactic acid. This creates a more acidic environment in your gut that does not favor the growth of harmful bacteria.

In short, both Lacto and Bifido help in maintaining a balance of good bacteria in your gut, which is of utmost importance to your digestive health. They aid in the digestion of certain foods and help prevent the overgrowth of harmful organisms.

In conclusion, the journey to a bloat-free life involves understanding the causes of gas and bloating and adopting strategies and lifestyle changes to promote digestive balance. Intense Care probiotics are powerful allies in this quest.

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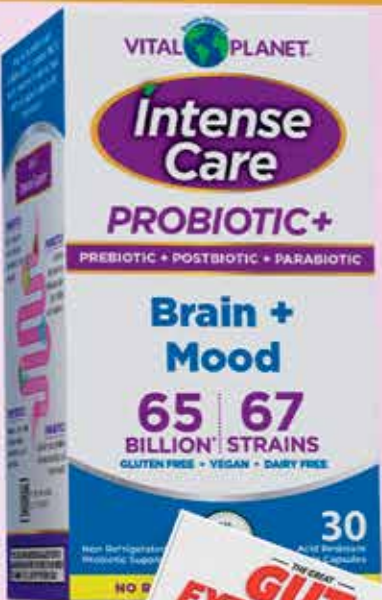
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When Not Just Yet Becomes Now

By Cyndi Heggie,
Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist

As a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist, I am trained to evaluate a home environment and make suggestions about modifications or products that help homeowners to stay in their home as they age. An increasingly common home modification is to install grab bars and/or railings around the home to assist with balance and “transitions,” such as stepping into the tub or going up and down steps. Studies show that over 87% of adults 65 and over strongly prefer to age in the homes they know and love. Still, one comment I consistently hear is “That’s a great idea, but I don’t need that just yet.”

If not now, when? Waiting until you have fallen is obviously too late. How about when you retire? If you are health conscious and physically fit on that day, you may think it’s too early.



Stock photo.

Well, think again. We are all different, and our physical abilities and needs vary. Here are a few behaviors to watch for in yourself that would indicate the time is now for installing grab bars or

more railings:

- Reaching for the door jamb to pull yourself up a step or two.
- Pulling on the windowsill or bathroom vanity to stand up from the toilet.

- Clutching the wooden trim or chair rail along the stairs
- Using a towel bar or toilet paper holder as a grab bar.
- Avoiding bathing or showering because you do not feel secure.
- Hesitating at stairs because you know you feel off balance.

Everyone will need some level of assistance as they age. Recognizing that you need grab bars or railings and taking action to avoid a fall – before it happens – protects your independence and helps keep you safe. It can take months, if not years, to form a new habit, like reaching for the grab bar to keep you stable and stop a fall. The sooner you start planning to age in place, the longer you’ll be able to safely and comfortably remain at home. The time is now.

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¹ Consult a financial advisor and appropriate government agencies for any effect on taxes or government benefits.

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Life Plan Community Breaks Ground on New Expansion

On Monday, May 13th, staff, current residents, and future residents of **The Huntington at Nashua** celebrated shovels hitting the ground as construction begins on their new homes.

The completed expansion will consist of 16 new homes. Residential options range from one-bedroom with den to larger two-bedroom style apartments with three different floor plans to choose from. Residents will enjoy a wide range of amenities, including an indoor pool, fitness center, library, movie theater, performing arts center, and dining venues.

The Huntington at Nashua is a gorgeous, suburban Silverstone Living Life Plan Community for active, independent adults aged 62 and better featuring modern apartments and bright, open-concept cottage homes, all situated on 55 acres of rolling, tree-lined ridges. Don't wait! Reserve your new home today! Visit our community, meet residents who call The Huntington At Nashua home, and explore what active retirement liv-

ing has to offer

The two-story expansion will welcome residents in Spring of 2025. Design is being handled by EGA Architects and the general contractor is Harvey Construction.

Silverstone Living allows you to continue your independent lifestyle but with more fun and less worry. As a Life Plan Community, Silverstone Living offers independent living options focusing on active, healthy living with the security of on-site health care services should you need them in the future. Residents of our two Life Plan Communities are passionate about leading an active lifestyle. We help them to plan, ensuring they have all amenities, resources, and innovation to make their later years as enjoyable as those leading up to them.

With a remarkable history of service to the Greater Nashua community, Silverstone Living is committed to providing our residents with the warmth of home, the security of knowing they are safe and their future is planned, and the



Groundbreaking for new expansion. Courtesy photo.

convenience of having everything they need close by.

Silverstone Living is a not-for-profit family of two Life Plan communities—Hunt Community and The Huntington at Nashua—as well as a revolutionary (CAH) Continuing Care At Home program At Home By Hunt and now Webster At Rye where you will find Memory Care, Skilled Rehabilitation, Assisted Living and Nursing Care in the picturesque town of Rye, NH.

Choosing a Life Plan Community (Continuing Care Retirement Community,) has many unique financial, health and social benefits and may be just what you have been searching for. By planning for your later years now, you can live life to the fullest without worry.

For more information, to schedule a tour or sign up for one of our upcoming open houses, visit www.silverstoneliving.org or call 603-821-1200



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Navigating Joint Pain:

Exploring Non-Surgical and Surgical Options for Hip and Knee Relief

Dr. Ricardo Gonzales,
Elliot Orthopaedics

As we age, we may notice the activities we enjoy, like hiking, playing golf, or gardening, become harder and might even leave us with some unwanted pain in our knees, hips, or both. At Elliot Orthopaedics, we see patients every day who have developed arthritis in their hips and knees and want some sort of relief. While joint replacement might seem like the most immediate treatment to relieve the discomfort, there are a few alternative treatment options I like to try with my patients before we discuss surgical options.

Medications, Injections, and Physical Therapy

If the joint pain is new and not interfering with your day-to-day life, taking an over-the-counter

medication like Tylenol or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) can help relieve some of your symptoms. Trying a topical gel or ointment

like Icy Hot can also help provide temporary pain relief.

If these at-home treatments are not helping to provide any sort of relief, we can administer a steroid injection in the joint for short-term relief of pain and swelling. Steroid injections can relieve the pain in joints for a few months at a time, but patients have to come into the office each time they need another injection.

Another non-surgical treatment option that I might suggest to a patient is physical therapy along with the use of a brace, cane, or orthotic device in their shoes. While these options are not always long-term fixes, they can both ease joint pain and make moving around easier. If none of the above non-surgical treatments provide the relief that patients are hoping for or if the pain becomes debilitating, that's when we begin to think about surgery as an option.

Joint Replacement and Options

Often when we think about knee and hip replacement, we think about a week of recovery in the hospital and months

of rehabilitation. But now, most patients who have a hip or knee replacement are discharged from the hospital within two to three days, and some even go home the same day as their surgery.

About 10 years ago, I began doing outpatient joint replacements. My patient will come in for surgery at 7:30 a.m. and be ready to go home around lunchtime. While it is an abbreviated encounter in the hospital, I always reassure my patients that it's safe and that they are receiving the same level of care as they would in the hospital. With an outpatient joint replacement, the patient is getting the same surgeon, the same device, and the same anesthesia. For a patient to be considered as a good candidate for an outpatient joint replacement, firstly, the patient must be motivated to do it. If there is any hesitation about having an outpatient procedure, then we are more than happy to take care of them in the traditional hospital setting. Another important factor for an outpatient joint replacement is making sure that the patient has a group of people who can support them while they are recovering from surgery.



Dr. Richard Gonzales. Courtesy Photo.

For patients who are older or have other medical conditions, like COPD, uncontrolled diabetes, risk for bleeding, or heart disease, most likely are not good candidates for an outpatient joint replacement and

that's why the traditional route of having your joint replacement done in the hospital setting is just as good of an option.

If you are experiencing joint pain or discomfort, we are here for you each step of the way at Elliot Orthopaedics. Learn more at ElliotHospital.org/Ortho or call 603-262-3996.

10 Essential Ways to Ensure Safety in a Home for Seniors

By Staff

As individuals age, maintaining a safe living environment becomes increasingly important to ensure their well-being and independence. For seniors, their home should be a sanctuary where they feel secure and protected. Here are ten essential strategies to help maintain a safe environment for seniors:

1. Install Grab Bars and Handrails: Consider installing grab bars and handrails in key areas such as bathrooms, hallways, and staircases. These fixtures provide support and stability, reducing the risk of slips and falls.

2. Improve Lighting: Ensure that all areas of the home are well-lit to prevent accidents. Install bright, energy-efficient lighting, especially in stairwells, entrances, and frequently used rooms. Consider

motion-sensor lights for added convenience and safety.

3. Remove Hazards: Conduct a thorough safety assessment of the home and remove any potential hazards such as loose rugs, clutter, or electrical cords. Clear pathways to minimize the risk of tripping and falling.

4. Make Adaptations for Mobility: If needed, consider making adaptations to the home to accommodate mobility aids such as walkers or wheelchairs. This may include widening doorways, installing ramps, or adding a stairlift.

5. Ensure Proper Medication Management: Develop a system to help seniors manage their medications safely. This could involve using pill organizers, setting reminders, or enlisting the help of a caregiver or healthcare professional.

6. Install Smoke and Carbon Mon-

oxide Detectors: Install smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors on every level of the home, including inside and outside sleeping areas. Test these devices regularly and replace batteries as needed.

7. Maintain Home Security: Invest in a home security system to protect against intruders and emergencies. Features such as doorbell cameras, motion sensors, and emergency alert buttons can provide peace of mind for both seniors and their caregivers.

8. Promote Healthy Living: Encourage seniors to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating nutritious meals, staying physically active, and attending regular medical check-ups. A healthy body and mind can help reduce the risk of accidents and injuries.

9. Provide Emergency Preparedness: Develop a comprehensive

emergency plan that outlines what to do in case of a medical emergency, natural disaster, or power outage. Ensure that seniors have easy access to emergency contact numbers and essential supplies.

10. Stay Connected: Encourage seniors to stay connected with friends, family, and neighbors. Loneliness and isolation can contribute to feelings of vulnerability, so fostering social connections can improve overall well-being and provide additional support in times of need.

Creating a safe home environment for seniors involves careful planning, attention to detail, and ongoing maintenance. By implementing these 10 essential strategies, you can help ensure that seniors can age in place comfortably and safely, maintaining their independence and quality of life.



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Preparing for Joint Replacement: Role of Physical Therapy

Kathleen A. Hogan, MD

Many people struggle with the pain and disability of arthritis for years prior to deciding to proceed with a hip or knee replacement. Perhaps they were hoping to avoid surgery. Some people are told they must lose weight, stop smoking, or otherwise improve their health prior to proceeding. But as the pain from arthritis increases, activity levels inevitably decrease. Golfing, tennis, skiing, and even going for walks may become so painful that many people with arthritis simply stop doing these activities and become more sedentary. However, this sedentary lifestyle contributes to decreasing muscle strength, poor balance, and weight gain.

When you have a knee or hip replacement, the arthritis is removed. But the strength of the muscles surrounding the joint does not recover instantaneously. If your muscles are weak before surgery, they will be even weaker immediately afterwards. If your balance is poor

or your knee or hip is buckling and giving way before surgery, it will continue to do so afterward until you strengthen the muscles. Unfortunately, this results in a slower recovery for some people. Worse, this weakness can contribute to falls and injury after surgery, sometimes requiring a return back to the operating room to repair the damage.

In the preparation for surgery you will have appointments with medical doctors to assess your health. You will need to obtain crutches and a walker. Your house needs to be decluttered and preparations made for others to help you out for the first few weeks after surgery. But the importance of preparing your muscles to support your joint after surgery is sometimes forgotten. Perhaps your joints are hurting so much that you stop exercising completely. But this will have a negative effect on your recovery.

Pre-habilitation most likely benefits those with severely weak muscles the most. If you are reliant on a walker or cane or if you cannot balance on

one leg without swaying uncontrollably, you may be at risk of falling after your surgery. Approximately one third of patients fall at least once in the year after their total joint replacement. A meta-analysis of multiple studies identified the following factors as increasing risk of falls: advanced age, female gender, obesity, prior falls, use of a walking aid prior to surgery, cardiac disease, and depression. The loss of motor strength, proprioception, and balance with these conditions is thought to be a contributing factor to falls. Many people with severe arthritis feel that they are unable to do any exercise due to the pain they are experiencing with their joints. However, motion is good for your joints. Improving the strength of the muscles around your joints can decrease the forces that are placed on your knees and hips. If you are preparing for joint replacement, discuss with your surgeon how exercise prior to surgery may benefit you. Physical therapists can work with you to

develop an exercise program that takes into consideration your limitations due to arthritis. Working to improve your balance through tai chi, yoga, or fall prevention programs can also be beneficial in the lead up to surgery. Ultimately, studies show that total joint replacement decreases the risk of falling even in patients who experienced falls before surgery. However, balance and proprioception abnormalities and quadriceps weakness can persist even after joint replacement. Physical therapy focusing on strength, balance, and proprioception should ideally begin before joint replacement and continue afterward. While a total joint replacement removes the pain from arthritis, it does not magically restore the strength of the muscles — only you can do that and it takes hard work, before and after surgery!

Kathleen A. Hogan, MD is a Total Joint Specialist at New Hampshire Orthopaedic Center. For additional information on orthopaedic care, go to nhoc.com or call 883-0091.



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Kathleen A. Hogan, MD is a fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon. She is board certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery. Her specialties include hip and knee replacement and robotic surgery.

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Homecare Jobs at Easterseals

By Tina Sharby,
Chief Human Resource Officer

In the world of caregiving, few experiences rival the fulfillment of providing home health services to adults and seniors. At Easterseals NH, this career path isn't just about clocking in and out; it's about becoming vital companions and caregivers to individuals within the comfort of their own home.

Why Choose a Career at Easterseals NH?

Flexible Schedules and Locations: Life is unpredictable, and we recognize that. With flexible full- and part-time schedules, you can find a work-life balance that suits your needs. Shifts typically span four hours or more, offering you the flexibility to accommodate other responsibilities while still making a meaningful impact. With open positions across New Hampshire, you have the ability to work close to home.

Competitive Wages: Let's talk numbers. Easterseals NH offers an hourly rate that surpasses the New Hampshire average for care professionals. That means not only are you making a difference in someone's life, but you're also receiving fair compensation for your invaluable contributions. Sign-on bonuses are available for full- and part-time positions.

Professional Development: We understand that growth is essential for both personal and professional satisfaction. That's why we provide ample opportunities for advancement and professional development. Whether you're honing your caregiving skills or pursuing further education, Easterseals NH supports your journey with tuition reimbursement after just one year of full-time employment.

Career Growth Opportunities: Your journey at Easterseals is not limited to a single role. With opportunities for career growth and advancement, you have the chance to shape your career trajectory according to your aspirations.



Courtesy Photo.

Whether you start as a Homemaker, Personal Care Service Provider, or Home Health Aide/LNA, the possibilities for growth are endless.

- Open Positions Include:**
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 - Personal Care Services: Assistance with showers, lifting, errands, light household chores, and full personal care.
 - Licensed Nursing Assistant (LNA) and Nursing Services: Care services based on individual needs.

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As home health providers at Easterseals NH, we're not just offering care; we're providing companionship, support, and dignity to individuals who need it most. Our presence in their lives allows them to navigate daily challenges with confidence and grace, empowering them to live life on their own terms.

What's Your Next Step?

Are you ready to embark on a career that offers both personal fulfillment and professional growth? Schedule a 15-minute conversation with a member of Easterseals NH's Talent Acquisition Team today. Whether you're curious about the role, have questions about the application process, or simply want to learn more, we're here to guide you every step of the way.

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Pembroke Pines Country Club

Where Golf, Dining, and Events Converge

By Taylor Bussiere
Marketing Manager and Wedding and
Events Coordinator

Imagine a place where the emerald green fairways stretch out beneath a boundless blue sky, where the scent of freshly cut grass mingles with the tantalizing aroma of gourmet cuisine, and where every celebration is infused with elegance and charm. Welcome to Pembroke Pines Country Club, your ultimate destination for golf, dining, and events.

Nestled in the heart of [Location], Pembroke Pines Country Club proudly unveils its brand new venue, inviting both avid golfers and discerning diners to experience a world of leisure and luxury. With our doors open to the public, we extend a warm invitation to all who seek an exceptional experience on and off the course.

Golfing Paradise:

Step onto our immaculately manicured 18-hole course and embark on a golfing journey like no other. Designed to challenge and inspire players of all skill levels, our course offers a harmonious blend of natural beauty and strategic design. Whether you're a seasoned pro honing your skills or a novice eager to learn, our course promises an unforgettable round of golf amidst stunning surroundings.

Culinary Delights at 1759 Grille:

After a day on the greens, treat your taste buds to a culinary adventure at our esteemed public restaurant, 1759 Grille. With a menu curated to delight the senses, our culinary team crafts dishes that showcase the finest ingredients and culinary techniques.

From mouth watering steaks to fresh seafood and flavorful salads, there's something to satisfy every palate.

But the experience doesn't end with our delectable fare. Join us for our weekly specials and elevate your din-



Pembroke Pines Country Club. Courtesy photo.

ing experience to new heights. Indulge in our signature prime rib dinner every Saturday night, where succulent cuts of meat are paired with savory sides

and accompanied by your choice of fine wine or craft beer. And don't miss our live music nights every Friday, where talented musicians provide the perfect soundtrack to your dining experience.

Scenic Views and Memorable Events:

As you dine, immerse yourself in the breathtaking beauty of our expansive deck, which overlooks the 18th hole and a stunning waterfall surrounded by lush landscaping. Whether you're enjoying a romantic dinner for two or celebrating a special occasion with friends and family, our deck provides the perfect backdrop for unforgettable moments and cherished memories.

At Pembroke Pines Country Club, we're not just a venue for golf and dining—we're also your premier destination for events and celebrations of every size and scope. From intimate gatherings to lavish soirées, our dedicated team is here to turn your vision into reality. Planning a retirement party, birthday bash, or corporate outing? Look no further. With our in-house catering services and complimentary event coordinator, we ensure that every detail is handled with care, allowing you to relax and enjoy the festivities.

Beyond Pembroke Pines:

But the excitement doesn't end there. Be sure to explore our sister course, Canterbury Woods Country Club, where you can enjoy another incredible round of golf followed

by a delicious dinner special at the Canterbury Tavern. Between our two courses, there's no shortage of opportunities to experience the best that Pembroke Pines has to offer.

Join Us at Pembroke Pines Country Club:

Whether you're seeking a challenging round of golf, a memorable dining experience, or the perfect venue for your next event, Pembroke Pines Country Club welcomes you with open arms. Join us and discover why we're the go-to destination for leisure, dining, and celebration in [Location]. We can't wait to host you and your family soon, creating moments that will last a lifetime amidst the splendor of Pembroke Pines Country Club.

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Waking up your inner artist

by Curt Mackail

There's little question that involvement with the arts is beneficial for seniors. I know this first-hand from years of teaching senior art classes for everyone from the newly retired to those in their 70s and beyond. Creating art is mentally stimulating, encourages self-motivation, results in self-satisfaction, and can be great fun in a class setting where socializing may be as important as learning new skills.

Substantiating this, *Frontiers in Psychology*, a medical journal, published a 2022 study titled "Creativity and Art Therapies to Promote Healthy Aging." The study states that art activities and art therapies help older people remain active, healthy, and independent. In fact, the authors say, involvement with the arts can help prevent early cognitive deterioration, depression, and social isolation in older adults.

So, if you've never taken a stab at creating artwork, I say do it just for the fun of it, and you'll likely maintain better health too. It's not hard to get started. You just need to give your inner artist a wake-up call!

Drawing comes first

If you're a beginner, drawing skills are the place to start. Drawing is the foundation for all other two-dimensional media — watercolor, acrylic and oil painting, printmaking, and myriad other forms of art on a flat surface. Drawing is also the simplest and least expensive way to enjoy making your own art.

With some basic instruction (from books, online or in an art class) you'll learn to create the illusion of three-dimensional space on a flat surface — like traditional still-lives, landscapes, portraits, animals, even cartoons and fantasy imagery.

Pick subjects you like. It might be a scene in or around your home. Or try copying another professional artist's drawing or a black-and-white picture from a newspaper. If you're in a class, the instructor should guide you.



Some of the world's greatest art was created in Europe during the Renaissance during more than three centuries beginning in the 1300s. Here, the old master Raphael, arguably the greatest draftsmen of his era, renders a beautiful work with just pencil and black chalk on paper. (Head of a Young Apostle, detail, created circa 1519.) Credit: Public domain image courtesy Wikimedia Commons.



Pencils come in a variety of hardness, from very hard to very soft. The hardness is indicated with a number and letter system you'll find stamped on the pencil shaft. The 10H pencil is the most hard, while the 12B is the softest. Sketching sets usually provide pencils in a range of hardness, although not all have every grade. Softer grades are preferred by many artists for general purpose sketching and finished drawings.

Tools of the trade

To begin, you need only graphite pencils, drawing paper, a pencil sharpener and some creative ideas. (I also recommend you get a drawing board and some drafting tape to affix the paper to the board, although these aren't absolutely necessary.)

A high-quality artist pencil is one of your most important tools. Real drawing pencils offer a much richer experience than the ordinary school-room variety. If you've only used the ubiquitous yellow No. 2 pencils, you'll probably be surprised at how expressive your drawings become when you use tools designed for artistic use.

You don't need to purchase elaborate

pencil sketching kits or expensive drawing paper. Keep it simple at first. Get some good quality, soft graphite pencils and a pad of student-grade artist's drawing paper. A 9- by 12-inch pad works well, although larger sizes are fine also. Plain copy paper isn't recommended.

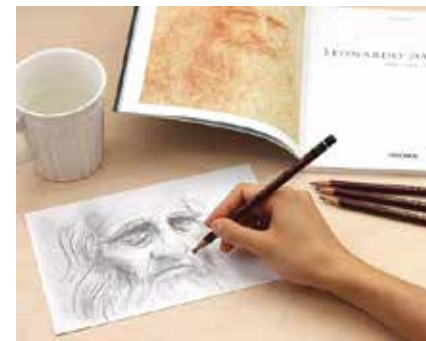
Erasers are important too, not just for fixing mistakes but for a variety of techniques that allow you to adjust shading and tones.

What's called a plastic eraser should be in your toolbox. Commonly made with vinyl or polymers, plastic erasers don't dry out, are gentle on the paper, and remove graphite cleanly. They also leave fewer crumbs compared to rubber erasers.

A standard pink rubber eraser like we used in grade school is useful too. Mostly smudge-proof, they produce greater abrasion and are best for completely removing graphite from the paper.

Many artists like kneaded erasers — made out of very soft unvulcanized rubber that you soften by kneading with your fingers. Kneaded erasers act like a greaseless putty, absorbing the graphite rather than abrading the paper. They don't wear out and leave no crumbs. Kneaded erasers are best for blending tones rather than removing what you already laid down.

One caveat: Avoid those hard rubber erasers on the ends of standard pencils. When fresh they may work for a while



Copying another artist's work is a terrific way to learn to draw or enhance your skills. Here a beginner copies a Leonardo da Vinci drawing using a soft lead pencil in the B range. Soft leads are perfect for pencil drawings as artists can take advantage of the brush-like expressions and rich tones, especially in the higher B grades. Credit: image courtesy jetpens.com.

but they usually create a smudgy mess. Good for school kids, not so good for artwork.

What pencils to choose

Graphite pencils come in a huge range of brands and types, but the basic differences come down to light or dark (hard or soft lead), thick or thin, and the way they feel in your hand. Real drawing pencils offer much richer experiences for the artist than ordinary office or schoolroom pencils. If you've only worked with common pencils, you may be surprised by how much more expressive and descriptive your drawings become when you start using graphite tools designed for artists.

Prismacolor Ebony brand pencils are a favorite. They're very soft so you can produce dark, rich blacks that aren't possible with harder pencil leads. When you want lighter tones, you simply don't press as hard. The Ebony pencil is a bit larger than typical school and office pencils. Similar brands are Faber-Castell's 9000 Jumbo Pencil 8B and General's Kimberly Graphite Pencil 7B. They all cost in the range of a dollar or two a piece.

If you do want a set of drawing pencils, the Prismacolor Turquoise Art Pencil Set of 12 is a good choice for sketching or finished work. It retails for around \$12. Other suitable sketching sets are also sold by all the major art supply retailers.

CONTINUED ON PG 21 ►

SENIOR IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Henry Homeyer

THE GARDENING GUY



Henry Homeyer (left) receives the Fred E. Beane award. Courtesy photo.

Garden writer Henry Homeyer was recently awarded the Fred E. Beane award by the directors of the New Hampshire Farm, Forest & Garden Expo in Deerfield. This award, presented jointly with UNH Cooperative Extension and the Department of Agriculture, recognizes effective media coverage of agriculture/forestry and public issues affecting agriculture and forestry in New Hampshire. Henry Homeyer's regular advice about all things gardening has appeared in newspapers around New England. He is the author of several books, including *The New Hampshire Gardener's Companion*.

Q: *What got you into gardening?*

I started gardening as a young boy. I'm talking ages 2 or 3. My grandfather in Spencer, Massachusetts, he was an organic gardener starting back in the '40s ... I was born in '46 — and he just made it fun. He was a fun guy. He taught me a lot but he didn't tell me to do things. He didn't give me chores I didn't want to do, I didn't have to pull weeds. I got to do things like stir a big wooden rain barrel full of chicken manure and water to ... make a manure tea that we would then dip into and put on his tomato plants, and it was all fun. Gardening has been part of my life for 75 years.

What non-native plants do well in New

Hampshire or are there any non-native New Hampshire plants you'd recommend?

Well, I recommend native plants whenever possible. If we can plant 90 percent native and 10 percent non-native, or 80-20, that's a better mix. A lot of the non-natives are not useful to our pollinators and birds who didn't evolve with them, so our natives are so much better. With that being said, there are certain trees and shrubs, particularly, that are so beautiful I have to have them. I have a Merel magnolia which is going to bloom ... big white flowers, blooms in early April — fabulous plant. Not a native. Japanese red maple is another one that you see from time to time that has a deep, rich red leaf all summer long and brilliant in the fall.... Go to the local nursery,

don't go to a big box store, go to your local nursery ... They're well-educated, generally, and can help you find just the right thing for you and for your part of the state.

Do you have a favorite plant that's often overlooked?

I have over 100 different species of trees and shrubs. I have more than that in terms of perennial flowers. One that I really like is the candlestick primrose.... It's a non-native but it grows in moist soil in partial shade or even full shade. It blooms in late May, early June, with a series of blossoms going up a stem. It comes in a variety of colors from magenta and pink to almost white. It's not well-known but it does very well under old apple trees and that's where I have a patch and they spread by root, which

I like, they're early, which I like, and they bloom for over a month, which is unusual for a perennial flower.

Besides garden beds, are there other structures you like to build or have in a garden?

Absolutely. I think that because we have such a long winter, and fall and spring don't have much going on, we need to have things that are three-dimensional besides our flowers. At the entrance of my vegetable garden I built a cedar entrance arbor with cedar poles and a slanted, criss-cross roof, kind of hard to describe.... It is a good structure for growing vines on. I have wisteria growing up that. I have also another vine structure that's a 10-foot hexagon with a tall roof, again made out of cedar. ... In addition to that I have benches, a marble bench, I have sculpture, iron sculpture, ceramic objects, bird baths.... If you have a big garden, if you have some Adirondack chairs at the far end of it, it draws people toward them as a place to sit down. It's good to have something comfortable and probably in the shade. — Zachary Lewis

◀ CONTINUED FROM PG 20

The pencil grading system

Ever wonder what those numbers and letters on the pencil shaft mean? They're part of a graded scale that indicates the pencil's hardness. It's important to know how the grading system works so you can get the comparative pencil hardness you want.

Pencil leads (which actually contain no lead at all) are manufactured from mixtures of graphite, clay and water. The more graphite, the softer the lead. More clay means harder leads. Pencils with an H grade have harder leads. The B family includes softer leads.

Grade H pencils range from 8H to 2H generally. The harder the lead, the higher the number. The 8H is quite hard, for example. After 2H on the scale of

decreasing hardness comes H, HB (the rough center of the scale) and then B.

In the B range the lower the number the harder the lead, ranging from 2B up to the very soft grades of 8B or 9B.

Where to go for art classes

Municipal recreation departments can be a great source for affordable basic art instruction. They also may offer field trips to museums and other art destinations. Other good providers include adult education programs and community art schools. An Internet search for "art classes near me" will help you see what's out there.

Perhaps the most comprehensive assortment of classes is found at the Currier Museum of Art, 150 Ash St., Manchester. Classes include a wide range of graphic media and techniques.

Five-week classes of 90 minutes each generally cost \$250, with discounts for members. Offerings and the schedule changes often. Visit currier.org/classes, email classes@currier.org, or call 603-518-4992 for information.

Fine art on view now

Currier Museum of Art, Manchester. Showing Filippo de Pisis and Robert Mapplethorpe: A Distant Conversation, revealing the connections between the work of 20th-century Italian painter Filippo de Pisis and Robert Mapplethorpe's photography, through Sept. 2, 2024. Stories of the Sea, featuring Vincent van Gogh's first painting depicting the outdoors plus two seminal paintings by Andrew Wyeth and more, through Oct. 18. Visit currier.org.

The Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Mass. One of the oldest continuously

operating museums in the country, now showing Ethiopia at The Crossroads, the first major exhibition in America to examine Ethiopian art in a global context, through July 7. Visit pem.org.

Portland Museum of Art, Portland, Maine. Showing Jeremy Frey WOVEN, the contemporary works of a seventh-generation Passamaquoddy basket maker, through Sept. 15. Visit portland-museum.org.

Ogunquit Museum of American Art, Ogunquit, Maine. Showing Anthony Cudahy: Spinneret, the contemporary artist's first solo exhibition in the U.S., through July 21. Visit ogunquitmuseum.org.

Curt Mackail is a senior, an artist and art instructor, and commercial graphic designer. His work has been shown at a number of galleries and public exhibitions throughout New England.

Volunteer Opportunities

Looking to make a difference in your community? Volunteering provides an opportunity to give back while learning new skills and connecting with like-minded people. Whether you're passionate about environmental issues, working with young people, supporting the arts or advocating for animal welfare, here are some local organizations and causes that could benefit from your contribution.

- **AARP NH Speakers Bureau** Do you like educating others and public speaking? Become a voice in your community. Speakers Bureau volunteers educate AARP members and the public on a variety of topics from safely aging in place, to preparing to become a caregiver, as well as fraud and leading a brain-healthy lifestyle. If you are more comfortable behind the scenes, there are roles for you, too. You pick speaking opportunities that work best for your schedule. For more information, email pdube@aarp.org.

- **American Red Cross New Hampshire Chapter** (the Northern New England Regional Headquarters is at 2 Maitland St. in Concord; redcross.org/nne, 225-6697) report that their most needed volunteer positions are the shelter support teams (volunteers who help residents during large-scale disasters), disaster health services teams (for volunteers who are licensed health care providers) and disaster action

teams (for smaller disasters, such as home fires), according to a press release. The Red Cross is also seeking blood donor ambassadors who check blood donors into appointments, answer questions and give out snacks, the press release said. The Red Cross also needs transportation specialists who deliver blood to hospitals from Red Cross facilities, the release said. The Red Cross provides training for volunteers, the release said. See redcross.org/volunteertoday.

- **Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire** (222 Court St. in Portsmouth; 570-8469, blackheritagetrailnh.org) offers volunteer opportunities on specific projects or areas of expertise and with public interaction positions (such as event greeter and trail guide), according to the website, where you can submit a form describing your interests.

- **Canterbury Shaker Village** (288 Shaker Road in Canterbury; shakers.org, 783-9511) seeks volunteers to help out in the garden, give tours, offer administrative assistance, help with special events and more, according to the website. Go online to fill out an application or reach out to 783-9511, ext. 202, or jlessard@shakers.org, the website said.

- **Capitol Center for the Arts** (Chubb Theatre at 44 S. Main St. in Concord, Bank of NH Stage at 16 S. Main St. in Concord; ccanh.com) uses

volunteers at events for "patron comfort and safety, before, after and during a performance" according to the website. Sign up online, where you can specify your volunteering interests and times of availability.

- **The CareGivers NH** (700 E. Industrial Park Drive in Manchester; caregiversnh.org, 622-4948), a program of Catholic Charities, offers transportation, help with grocery shopping and getting food, visits and reassurance calls to elderly and disabled people in the greater Manchester and Nashua areas, according to the website. Volunteers are needed to provide transportation and deliver food as well as to help with administrative work and in the warehouse, the website said. Go online to download the volunteer application and to see detailed frequently asked questions.

- **CASA of New Hampshire** (casanh.org), "a nonprofit that trains volunteers to advocate for children who have experienced abuse and neglect," holds virtual information sessions when staff members and an active volunteer will provide information and answer questions, according to a press release (see the schedule at CASA's website). Volunteer advocates participate in a 40-hour training course and are then supported by a peer coordinator and program manager, according to the website, where you can apply and find information on CASA fundraising events.

- **Educational Farm at Joppa Hill** (174 Joppa Hill Road in Bedford; theeducationalfarm.org, 472-4724) has a variety of animal-specific volunteer opportunities ("chicken caretaker" and "duck docent" for example) as well as positions related to gardening and farm maintenance ("Marvelous Mucker"), fundraising and more; see the website for the listings, which include the specific person to contact for each position and a run-down of the responsibilities.

- **The Franco-American Centre**

(100 Saint Anselm Drive, Sullivan Arena, in Manchester; 641-7114, facnh.com), which promotes French language, culture and heritage, seeks volunteers for work including marketing and communications, social media and grant research/writing, according to the website. Some French language skills are helpful but not required, the website said.

- **International Institute of New England** (iine.org, 647-1500), whose mission "is to create opportunities for refugees and immigrants to succeed through resettlement, education, career advancement and pathways to citizenship," according to the website, offers volunteer opportunities including help with Afghan refugee and evacuee resettlement, English for speakers of other languages support, youth mentoring and career mentoring. Go online to fill out the volunteer form.

- **Intown Concord** (intownconcord.org, 226-2150) has volunteer opportunities including working within the Intown organization and helping with special events. Go online or contact info@IntownConcord.org.

- **John Hay Estate at The Fells** (456 Route 103A in Newbury; thefells.org, 763-4789) offers volunteer opportunities including working at the Gatehouse office, helping the education department with historical and art exhibits, working at the shop or the main house, maintaining the facilities, gardening and working on special events, according to the website, where you can find a detailed description of some of the gardening and other work. Call the Fells, ext. 3, to speak with member services.

- **Local Food Plymouth** (localfoodplymouth.org), "an online farmers market with weekly curbside pickup located in Plymouth New Hampshire," is looking for volunteers, specifically delivery drivers, according to a recent press release. Other areas they have volunteers for include parking lot attendant on pick up day, weeding and garden work, committee membership and



Increasing Food Access for Local Communities

Hillsborough County Gleaners is a program of the Hillsborough County Conservation District (HCCD) and NH Gleans. We work with local farms to collect excess produce and deliver it to food pantries, children's organizations and seniors

who can use it. In 2023, we retrieved 43,000 pounds of produce just in this county and delivered it to over 32 organizations. If you have a spare hour or 2 per week during the growing season, you could be a veggie courier picking up and delivering beautiful produce to very appreciative people! Contact us at 603-732-9194 or hillsboroughcountygleaners@gmail.com for more information or to volunteer.

website tutorials, according to the website, where you can sign up for volunteering.

• **Lowell Summer Music Series** (lowellsummermusic.org) is seeking volunteers to work for the series director doing ticketing, admissions, customer service and audience relations, usually from 5 to 10 p.m. (during shows). Go online to fill out a volunteer form.

• **Manchester Historic Association** (Millyard Museum is at 200 Bedford St. in Manchester, Research Center is at 129 Amherst St.; manchesterhistoric.org, 622-7531) offers volunteer opportunities including working at the front desk and gift shop at the Millyard Museum and helping with programs, tours and events, according to the website, where you can download a volunteer application. Call or email history@manchesterhistoric.org with questions.

• **McAuliffe-Shepard Discovery Center** (2 Institute Drive in Concord; starhop.com, 271-7827) has opportunities for volunteer positions including school group educator, docent, helping with events, exhibit maintenance, grounds maintenance (including gardening) and more, according to the website, where you can also find volunteer perks. Contact kthompson@starhop.com for information.

• **Mt. Kearsarge Indian Museum** (18 Highlawn Road in Warner; indianmuseum.org, 456-2600) has volunteer opportunities including giving tours, organizing events, and doing office work and grounds work, according to the website. Contact volunteer@indianmuseum.org.

• **NAMI NH** (naminh.org, 800-242-6264) has volunteer opportunities related to advocacy, support groups and family-to-family programs as well as work on events, such as the NAMI Walks NH 5K, according to the website, where you can find applications and more details for specific programs (including the specific program's contact). Or reach out to volunteer@naminh.org or 225-5359, ext. 322.

• **New Hampshire Food Bank** (700 East Industrial Drive in Man-

chester; nhfoodbank.org, 669-9725) has group and individual volunteer opportunities, which include working at mobile food pantries, working at the food bank's garden April through November, working at the Saturday morning food drops at JFK Coliseum in Manchester and working at the food bank facility, according to the website, where you can sign up to volunteer and see a calendar of when and where help is needed. Or contact 669-9725, ext. 1131, or email volunteercoordinator@nhfoodbank.org.

• **NH Audubon** (nhaudubon.org) has several volunteer positions posted on its website, including volunteer gardeners at the Pollinator Garden at the McLane Center in Concord (contact ddeluca@nhaudubon.org); a New Hampshire Bird Records office assistant in the Concord office (contact rsuomala@nhaudubon.org); a Backyard Winter Bird Survey project assistant (contact rsuomala@nhaudubon.org); an eBird data assistant (contact rsuomala@nhaudubon.org); wildlife volunteer field surveys; the grant program research assistant and a publication assistant, according to the website.

• **NH Boat Museum** (399 Center St. in Wolfeboro Falls; nhbm.org, 569-4554) offers volunteer opportunities including working at special events and fundraisers (including the Alton Bay Boat Show), office work, working with the exhibits, helping with educational programs, building and grounds care and maintenance and more. Sign up online, where you can select your areas of interest, or contact programs@nhbm.org.

• **NH PBS** (nhpbs.org) has several volunteer opportunities including auction volunteer, creative services volunteer, membership department, and NHPBS Kids Writers Contest and Our Hometown Program Development manager, according to the website. Go online to fill out a volunteer form that includes designating your availability and special skills and interests.

• **N.H. Preservation Alliance** (7 Eagle Square in Concord; nhpreservation.org, 224-2281) needs volunteers on an occasional basis to help produce educational events and to help with public programs such as tours, barn heritage celebrations or on-site preservation trades demon-

strations, according to an email from the group's executive director. Contact admin@nhpreservation.org to indicate what you'd like to help with and whether you are comfortable in both indoor and outdoor settings, the email said.

• **NH State Parks** (nhstateparks.org) has volunteer groups that hold volunteer work days throughout the year, according to the volunteer program director at the state's Department of Natural Cultural Resources' Division of Parks and Recreation. Find groups that work on specific parks at nhstateparks.org/about-us/support/volunteer (such as the Derry Trail Riders who work on Bear Brook State Park or the Surf Rider Foundation, which works on Hampton Beach State Park). Or contact volunteer@dncr.nh.gov.

• **Park Theatre** (19 Main St. in Jaffrey; theparktheatre.org, 532-9300) has volunteer opportunities for ushers as well as work in concessions, parking, office work, fundraising, marketing, stage production and more, according to the website, where you can fill out an online application where you can indicate your interests and availability. Call or email info@theparktheatre.org with questions.

• **Pope Memorial SPCA of Concord-Merrimack County** (94 Silk Farm Road in Concord; popememorialsPCA.org, 856-8756) holds regular volunteer orientations (pre-registration is required) with volunteer opportunities including small animal care and socialization, dog enrichment, dog park assistance and workroom assistance, according to the website. Go online to submit a volunteer application or to ask questions of the volunteer coordinator.

• **Special Olympics New Hampshire** (sonh.org) volunteers can serve as coaches, trainers, event organizers, fundraisers, managers and unified partners who play alongside some athletes, according to the website. Volunteers can work at an event or with a team, the website said. For more information contact specialolympics@sonh.org or call 624-1250.

• **United Way of Greater Nashua** (unitedwaynashua.org, 882-4011) is seeking volunteers for its Pop Up Pantries; specifically it is looking for someone to help distribute food on

Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at River Pines Mobile Home Park in Nashua, according to an April press release. The United Way also has volunteer opportunities related to one-day events or fundraisers, work on committees within the organization (such as on finance or marketing) and in groups such as the Stay United group, a 50+ volunteerism group, according to the organization's website. The organization also helped to put together a website, volunteergreaternashua.org, featuring volunteer opportunities from other area nonprofits.

• **UpReach Therapeutic Equestrian Center** (153 Paige Hill Road in Goffstown; upreachtec.org, 497-2343) will hold volunteer training for people who would like to help clients connect with horses for programs (Monday through Thursday) including Therapeutic Riding, Hippotherapy and Carriage Driving, according to a press release. Volunteers Monday through Sunday also help with bar chores, the release said. Horse experience is appreciated but not required and volunteers must be at least 14 years old and able to walk for 60 consecutive minutes along with brief periods of jogging, the release said. Contact the center to find out when the next training sessions will be offered.

• **Young Inventors' Program** (unh.edu/leitzel-center/young-inventors-program) uses volunteers to support its annual Northern New England Invention Convention event (held this year in March), according to program director Tina White, whom you can contact at Tina.White@unh.edu (or see unh.edu/leitzel-center/young-inventors-program/connect/volunteer). The program is a partner of the University of New Hampshire and UNH Extension, where there are more opportunities for volunteers interested in STEM youth programming, she said. See extension.unh.edu/educators/4-h-stem-docents for information on the 4-H STEM Docent program, which builds and trains volunteers to help with educating New Hampshire K-12 youth in science, technology, engineering and mathematics projects, White said in an email. Contact Megan.Glenn@unh.edu for more information on that program.

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