

AGING IN ATLANTA

JOIN US AS WE EXPLORE WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HAPPY AND HEALTHY BEYOND 55

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Lending a hand, safely from home

Volunteers get used to whole new way of helping others during pandemic.

By Curt Holman
For the AJC

When Jim Tudor retired from his career at the Georgia Association of Convenience Stores, he wanted to have a reason to keep getting up in the morning. For the past five years, he has been volunteering on a disaster action team with the American Red Cross.

“My joke is: Now I have a reason to get up in the morning, and at night and in the middle of the night,” he said.

Tudor, 71, lives in Newton County and before 2020 could visit up to 100 locations a year, primarily in Georgia.

“We’re the on-scene responders notified when a family has been displaced,” Tudor said. “If there’s a local home fire or a tree on a house, we go there in person to work with them, help them, provide them with financial assistance.”

With the coronavirus outbreak, however, part of the Red Cross’ disaster response has gone online. “The mission hasn’t changed – we’re still alleviating suffering. What has changed is how we accomplish that mission. COVID has made the organization pivot.”

Even before the pandemic, many retirees have found virtual volunteering to be an effective way to give back and stay engaged, whether fundraising, sending messages to U.S. troops or supporting other worthy causes. In 2020, as businesses and nonprofits shifted away from in-person activities in the name of safe social distancing, virtual volunteering via computer or smartphone can be more important than ever.

“Right now with all of the wildfires and storms nationally, we’ve deployed about 3,000 people, but about half of them are deployed virtually,” said Tudor, who logs about 100 volunteer hours a month for the Red Cross.

“When we get a call for assistance, the virtual responder asks if the client has virtual capability. We have a virtual conversation, so the volunteer who goes on the scene for the in-person response has a much-reduced time frame, using social distancing.”

Volunteers frequently gather



After retiring, Jim Tudor found it important to keep contributing. He now works as a volunteer with American Red Cross disaster action team. Whereas he ordinarily would be deployed to a disaster site, he now conducts his work virtually from his home in Atlanta. COURTESY OF AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS

HOW TO HELP FROM HOME

Molly Bardsley suggests people interested in giving back while staying in should begin by finding a cause or group they already support. “I think people should find an organization whose mission really speaks to you,” Bardsley said. “My cause is disaster response, for some it’s animals and pet shelters. If you find a mission in line with what you want to do, the challenges are less important. The motivation is there.”

Match your skills and background experience to a volunteer role or task that suits you.

Look for online resources for virtual volunteering services, such as:

- AARP’s [createthegood.aarp.org/volunteer-ideas/virtual](https://www.aarp.org/volunteer-ideas/virtual)
- [volunteermatch.org/virtual-volunteering](https://www.volunteermatch.org/virtual-volunteering)
- [pointsoflight.org/virtual-volunteering-opportunities](https://www.pointsoflight.org/virtual-volunteering-opportunities)

Make sure you’re equipped for the technical demands.

Even if you’re savvy with online communications and your computer is up to date, if you live in an area with poor internet connectivity, virtual volunteering may be challenging for you.

Have patience. Even after seven months of the coronavirus, virtual interactions can be challenging, so be prepared to spend more time making sure the lines of communication are clear between people as well as devices.

HEALTH

Statins getting positive results

Evidence grows of their safety and value to the elderly.

By Jane E. Brody
c. 2020 The New York Times

Cholesterol-lowering statin drugs, already one of the most popular medications worldwide, may become even more widely used as evidence grows of their safety and value to the elderly and their potential benefits beyond the heart and blood vessels.

Among the latest are reports of the ability of several leading statins to reduce deaths from common cancers and blunt the decline of memory with age. Perhaps such reports will persuade a reluctant 65-year-old friend who has diabetes, and others like him, that taking the statin his doctor strongly advised is a smart choice.

In addition to accumulating evidence that the benefits of statins far outweigh possible risks for the vast majority of people for whom they are now recommended, nearly all statins on the market are now available as inexpensive generics.

Full disclosure: I have a strong family history of heart disease and have been taking a statin – atorvastatin, originally marketed as Lipitor – for many years after dietary changes failed to control a steadily rising blood level of artery-damaging LDL-cholesterol. My prescription is now fully covered by my Medicare Part D insurance with no co-pay.

But cost of a medication is not the only consideration for a drug that can be lifesaving for many people. The primary indication for taking a statin is to reduce the risk of a heart attack or stroke by lowering serum LDL-cholesterol and, in some cases, also triglycerides, both of which can damage coronary arteries when levels rise above normal.

Statins offer further cardiovascular protection by stabilizing the fatty deposits in arteries called plaque that can break loose, block a major artery and cause a heart attack or stroke.

Current guidelines typically recommend statin therapy for:

■ People with a history of heart disease, stroke or peripheral artery disease or risk factors that give them a 10% or

Brody continued on S7

COOKING

How to make excellent scrambled eggs every time



Playing around with heat will give you control over what style of scrambled eggs you want. LAURA CHASE DE FORMIGNY / WASHINGTON POST

By Becky Krystal
Washington Post

Scrambled eggs are one of the ultimate throw-together meals. Less work than even the easiest poaching, and less fuss than a standard fried.

Still, who hasn’t overcooked scrambled eggs into rubbery unpleasantness? Here are a few tips to success, as well as strategies for cooking your eggs exactly the way you want them.

Consider a nonstick skillet.

Some of you are going to swear you make great scrambled eggs in your well-seasoned cast-iron. And if you

do, don’t be deterred! But for anyone who has struggled with eggs sticking or burning to the skillet, nonstick can be a lifesaver. “Most pans, even the really good ones, are actually filled with little cracks and crevices,” said Joseph Provost, a chemistry and biochemistry professor at the University of San Diego. Provost, who co-wrote “The Science of Cooking: Understanding the Biology and Chemistry Behind Food and Cooking,” explained that when a pan is heated, the metal expands, which means eggs can get trapped in those microscopic cracks, where they then stick and burn. The coating of a nonstick skillet

provides a smooth surface and separates the food from the metal.

Use a smaller skillet

One of the easiest ways to guard against overcooking is by using a smaller skillet. A 12-inch nonstick skillet is great for when you want a very thin omelet for folding onto a sandwich. The greater surface area, though, means it’s all too easy for the eggs to dry out quickly. When you want actual curds (whether dense and creamy or light and fluffy), consider dropping the skillet size to 10 or even 8 inches, depending on how

Eggs continued on S4

AGING IN ATLANTA

SPONSORED BY MEDICARE & OTHER RED TAPE

Medicare, Social Security, more: Know what’s next as you retire

Q: What is the difference between Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security?

Medicaid is both a federal and state program for low income to help off-set the costs of medical care and prescription drugs. Medicare is insurance and Social Security is money. You become eligible for Medicare by working 10 years; which is equivalent to 40 quarters, and paying into Medicare (FICA) taxes. You are eligible for Social Security by paying into social security taxes during your working years.

Q: Who pays for what with COVID-19?

Medicare is paying for the test or antibody test with no out-of-pocket costs. You still pay the deductible, co-pay or co-insurance that apply for hospitalization and quarantine. If you have original Medicare, Part A pays for the hospital, but you pay the deductible and co-pay. If you have a Medicare Advantage plan, check with your plan. Costs may vary depending on company and plan.

Q: What is telehealth? Who Pays? How do I get it?

Telehealth is a virtual doctor appointment. You pay the Part B deductible and 20% if you have original Medicare for Doctors, PCP/Specialists, nurse practitioners, physician assistants (licensed clinical social workers, in spe-



Bonnie Dobbs owns Medicare & Other Red Tape, a brokerage that helps consumers compare health plans to their needs.

cific circumstances), mental and behavioral health, physical, occupational therapy and speech language pathologist. Check with the plan to confirm your costs if you have Medicare Advantage. You can participate in a telehealth appointment using audio and/or video, even if you just have a flip phone.

Q: What do I need to do if I am turning 65, or past 65 and retiring?

Cue the birthday music, please! If you are turning 65 and have not received your Medicare card, you can go to ssa.gov/medicare and request one. If you are working past 65 and your employer has more than 20 employees and Medicare equivalent coverage, you can delay Part B and apply two months before retiring. Save that money! And learn the proper time to enroll.

Q: How do I request Part B to start if I work past 65?

I recommend apply-

ing two months before. Go to medicare.gov and search form L-564E, print and have your employer complete it. Then, go to <http://www.ssa.gov/Medicare-partb-SEP>, complete your portion and upload the employer completed L-564E form. Do not wait until the last minute.

Q: I have SSI or SSDI. When will I qualify for Medicare?

The major difference is that SSI determination is based on age/disability and limited income and resources, whereas SSDI determination is based on disability and work credits. SSI recipients qualify for Medicare upon receipt of SSI. In most states, an SSI recipient will automatically qualify for Medicaid. A person with SSDI will automatically qualify for Medicare after 24 months of receiving disability payments.

Q: How easy is it to research drug plans?

You can search with Medicare’s Drug Finder Tool at medicare.gov to find the plan that offers the lowest premiums and copays for your specific medications and in your area. Part D drug plans can be tricky to understand, with all the deductibles, co-pays, the donut hole and restrictions. A broker can explain all of this to you. Eliminate hours of research by giving us a call at 770-373-7541 and letting our brokers help you. Our services are always free.

Connecting

continued from Page 1

the Red Cross clients’ information through virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. People interested in virtual volunteering should have some familiarity with the “virtual” part, which can include having a reliable computer and internet connection.

“Any sort of person doing virtual support needs a certain amount of comfort with technology. It’s a continuing process. My grandchildren are my tech support sometimes,” Tudor said.

Tudor has always been gratified by the chance to provide emotional support to people in distressed situations, and admits that going virtual can be a challenge. “That was a big, big change. Many of us pride ourselves on being there for the clients.”

He has adjusted to conveying the personal touch in on-screen interactions. “You’re still seeing the person. The first question you ask is, ‘Are you OK?’



American Red Cross Hero Care Network caseworker Yvette Negron has worked remotely from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. STEVE JETER / AMERICAN RED CROSS

Listening to that answer will tell you a lot about how the conversation’s going to go. For the most part, if you listen to a person, you’ll get a sense of where they’re at,” he said.

Molly Bardsley is a Red Cross volunteer in information dissemination who has worked with Tudor. She misses being able to work with clients and volunteers in person, but sees some positives to the new normal.

“In some ways, our response has become more accessible,” Bardsley said. “Before, we’d ask people to deploy for two weeks, and a lot couldn’t make that commitment. It’s much easier for them

when they’re deploying in their home.”

She added, “I’ve heard from volunteers who had disabilities or found it difficult to travel and now are more connected.”

Tudor points out that many disaster responders, both virtual and non-virtual, are retired people. “Fires and other disasters don’t respect work hours,” he said. “Our ‘midnight warriors’ on the midnight to 6 a.m. shifts are often retired, because they don’t have to get up in the morning.”

“They’re still providing worth, and as a retired person it’s very important to me that I’m able to give back.”

October is breast cancer awareness month

One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some point in her lifetime, making breast cancer the second most prevalent cancer affecting women after lung cancer. While breast cancer causes about 40,000 deaths a year, it is highly curable in early stages, with about a 95% five-year survival rate of early disease. This is why physicians strongly encourage yearly mammograms after age 40 for women considered at average risk. Those women who have a mother or sister with the disease should talk to their doctors about earlier screening or genetic testing.

Symptoms

- In some cases, women can detect a lump in their breasts upon self-examination, or BSE.
- In most cases, though, early-stage breast cancer has no noticeable symptoms. Thus, the American Cancer Society and Wellstar physicians recommend an annual screening mammogram for women 40 and older.

Risk Factors

- While any woman is at risk for breast cancer, common risk factors include:
- Having a mother or sister who has had the disease.
 - Carrying one of two identified genetic mutations known as BRCA1 and BRCA2.
 - Having a first baby after age 30.
 - Being overweight.
 - Not breast-feeding.
 - Consuming more than one alcoholic beverage a day.
 - Onset of menstrual cycles before age 13.

For more information about prevention and treatment options, visit www.wellstar.org/medical-care/cancer/pages/breast-cancer.aspx



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AGING IN ATLANTA

HEALTH

To build emotional strength, exercise your brain

By Kerry Hannon
c. 2020 The New York Times

Eight years ago, while working as an assistant Cuyahoga County prosecutor in Cleveland, Gayle Williams-Byers was in the throes of a serial killer case when she decided to take horseback riding lessons.

This summer, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Williams-Byers, 46, now a South Euclid Municipal Court judge, started free online classes in American Sign Language offered by Gallaudet University in Washington D.C.. She also took a webinar in labor trafficking. In recent years, she has enrolled in a variety of classes and workshops, including one on how to get a commercial driver's license – not something she plans to act on any time soon.

“I don’t have a reason to use these things in my professional life, but learning helps me to focus better,” Williams-Byers said. “It’s also something that I have some control over. I take classes in subjects I am just wildly interested in learning about. When I expand my brain, my wingspan is greater. It lets you get a little higher, to get above the headwinds.”

Her quest to understand something new is an example of what many career coaches, authors and experts view as a key factor to building the resilience necessary to weather setbacks and navigate life’s volatility.

The theory: To deal effectively with change, it helps to be engaged in changing yourself. “One of the things that makes us resilient is that when we see a challenge and when we face a struggle, we engage with it, rather than shut down,” said Simon Sinek, author of “The Infinite Game” and “Start With Why.”

Embrace your passions

Sinek, for instance, is a dance lover. “My dancer friends kept telling me I

should take classes, and it would help me and my love of the medium. I begrudgingly agreed, and I took some basic ballet classes.”

Even though it was for personal enrichment, those classes helped his developing work as a public speaker. “My posture is much better,” he said. “I move more effortlessly across the stage from my hips instead of my shoulders.”

When you’re learning, your viewpoint changes, and you spot connections that you never noticed before. “Resilience is about being adaptable in a variety of different circumstances,” said Dorie Clark, who teaches executive education at Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business and wrote “Reinventing You.”

“It is a combination of being able to pick yourself up when there are setbacks, but also it is about having the kind of cross-training necessary to be flexible in an uncertain world where we don’t know what is around the corner,” Clark said.

Always expect a learning Curve

This all may require pushing yourself – not the easiest of tasks in times of crisis. “If they are relatively senior professionals, it has been years, or decades, since they have not been good at something, and it can be enormously psychologically stressful to have to face that,” Clark said. “Inevitably, when you are in the early stages of learning something you haven’t done before, you are prob-

‘Those with a growth mindset define success as learning. They’re not trying to prove themselves but instead improve themselves, so they get less focused on the results and more focused on the journey.’

Chip Conley,
founder of Modern Elder Academy



The quest to understand something new is a key factor to building the resilience, a skill necessary to weather personal setbacks and to navigate life’s volatility during uncertain times. MONIKA AICHELE / NEW YORK TIMES

ably going to be bad at it – at least not very good.”

Two years ago, Clark entered a program to train as a musical theater lyricist. “People in this program have master’s degrees in musical theater writing,” she said. “At first, having to surround myself with people who truly had exponentially more expertise was humiliating on a regular basis, but it was invigorating and inspiring.”

Stay curious

Being resilient has a lot to do with perspective. “People who commit themselves to a life of learning show up with curiosity,” Sinek said. “They show up with interest. They show up with a student’s mindset. You don’t have to be curious about everything. You have to be curious about some things.”

Those who routinely and consciously engage in learning become more confident about their ability to figure things out once a crisis hits, according to Beverly Jones, an executive career coach and author of “Think Like an Entrepreneur, Act Like a CEO.”

“Each time they hit a bump, they spend less time lamenting and quickly turn to determining what they must learn in order to climb out of the hole,” Jones said.

Moreover, learners develop a more optimistic mindset, which helps them jump into action, according to Jones. “In

part, this is because each time you become aware of learning something new, it feels like a victory,” Jones said. “You maintain the positivity that is a key to resilience.”

Tailor your learning

An important element to remember is that people learn in different ways, Sinek said. “I can’t read a book a week. I learn by having conversations. I like talking to people who know more than me about any particular subject. I love peppering them with questions. And I love trying to say back in my own words what I think they are telling me to see if I understand it.”

Right now, with his speaking engagements on hold, Sinek is studying kintsugi, the Japanese art of putting broken pottery pieces back together with epoxy and a painted gold solution that highlights the breaks. The concept: By accepting blemishes and flaws, you can produce an even sturdier, more striking, piece of art. On a deeper level, it functions as a symbol of the human experience.

For one thing, it requires patience. “It turns out the epoxy dries slowly,” Sinek said. “If you do all the pieces at once, it all just falls apart again. I want to be done with my project and move on to the next. I can’t. I have to stick one piece and hold it for an uncomfortable amount of time and then let sit for 24 hours.”

There are myriad paths to learning, from taking part in a free online class to reading a nonfiction book, watching a documentary and immersing oneself in a grade-free educational experience.

Chip Conley, 59, for example, founded the Modern Elder Academy in Baja, Mexico, a group dedicated to midlife learning.

The academy’s core curriculum is based on helping people move from a

fixed to a growth mindset in midlife and beyond, according to Conley. “Those with a fixed mindset define success as winning, which becomes problematic when they face difficult circumstances,” he said. “Those with a growth mindset define success as learning. They’re not trying to prove themselves but instead improve themselves, so they get less focused on the results and more focused on the journey.”

At the academy, options include collaborative bread baking, improv comedy, surfing or yoga for newbies, and penning of poems to offer to your cohort.

Academic and online options

There are also educational opportunities for nontraditional students at some top universities through academic or year-long programs for executives and other professionals. Students can audit classes, attend lectures, and work on projects with graduate and undergraduate students.

These include the Stanford Distinguished Careers Institute, Harvard’s Advanced Leadership Initiative, the University of Notre Dame’s Inspired Leadership Initiative, the University of Minnesota’s Advanced Careers Initiative, and the University of Texas at Austin, which offers the Tower Fellows Program.

Three years ago, Glenn Lowenstein, 60, was ready for a new challenge. The Houston resident had sold Lionstone Investments, the real estate investment company he founded in 2001, to Ameriprise. “It was a hard decision,” he said. “The business had been my dream, and then I lived the reality of it for 20 years, and all of a sudden there was a void. It was scary. When there is nothing in front of you, that’s where the resiliency

‘One of the things that makes us resilient is that when we see a challenge and when we face a struggle, we engage with it, rather than shut down. What I have learned from my career is that something I learned over here helps me over there.’

Simon Sinek, author

has to come in.”

His solution was to return to campus. Two years ago, he was a Towers fellow. “You have to put yourself out there in an environment you have not been in before,” he said. “It’s a combination of confidence in yourself, enjoyment in exploration and going toward your fear.”

As a fellow, Lowenstein, for example, enrolled in an advanced graduate philosophy seminar. “It was way above my head,” he said. “I would try my hardest to follow every single word of the conversation. It was fascinating to me the way the graduate students articulated their arguments. It was super esoteric stuff, but I would walk out” and think “Wow, I am learning a new way to communicate here.”

The best part, though, was his time on campus: “It was so cool to be in an environment where I wasn’t the expert,” he said. “I wasn’t the person relied on to know everything, so I could sit back and enjoy the process of learning, and that’s positive energy. My aim is to keep my mind and body and spirit healthy. I don’t think you can do that without learning.”

For those who don’t have the time or money for a high-level fellowship or university program, there are myriad paths to learning. Free or reasonably priced online classes are available through sites like Coursera, EdX, The Great Courses, LinkedIn Learning, MasterClass, Skillshare, TED Talks and Udemy.

Other options (online these days) are adult education centers, local libraries, community colleges, universities and Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes. One Day University, a subscription service (\$7.95 a month), offers five livestreaming lectures a week and recorded talks.

Eggs

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many eggs you’re cooking.

Salting

From a taste perspective alone, adding a little more salt than your instincts would tell you has made a marked improvement in flavor. (Diamond Crystal has easy-to-grasp grains that nonetheless dissolve well.) Eggs can then go from blah to, you know, well-seasoned!

But there’s another reason salting is important for scrambled eggs: It can actually improve the texture. As Harold McGee explains in “Keys to Good Cooking,” heating eggs (more on that later) causes the proteins in both the yolks and whites to stick together, or coagulate. The more that happens, the more dry and rubbery the eggs get. The goal, then, is to keep those proteins from getting too close and squeezing out water. Salt

can help achieve that. In “The Food Lab,” cookbook author and food science guru J. Kenji López-Alt explains that the salt serves as a kind of buffer between the proteins. For the best effect, he recommends salting eggs at least 15 minutes before cooking (while you assemble other ingredients/preheat the skillet, perhaps) to allow the salt to evenly dissolve, though just before cooking also helps. He found that salting toward the end of cooking produced tougher eggs that weeped liquid.

Similarly, in “Salt Fat Acid Heat,” Samin Nosrat suggests “a few secret drops of lemon juice” in scrambled eggs. Like salt, acid affects the way proteins bond, in this case affecting the speed and density at which they coagulate.

Manage the heat

“The key to the most egg dishes is temperature control,” McGee writes. And the biggest danger in scrambled eggs is too much heat, which, as has

been established, leads to unappealing textures. But playing around with heat also gives you control over what style of scrambled eggs you want. If you like fluffy curds, you need heat to produce steam and cause the eggs to expand. The key is how much and how long. In Cook’s Illustrated, Dan Souza found that a combination of high and low heat helped achieve voluminous but still tender eggs – start at medium-high and drop to low once a spatula dragged through the skillet left very little raw egg in the trail.

For denser eggs with few or almost no curds, work entirely over low heat. Using a saucepan, too, helps keep moisture from evaporating as much. Or you can go extra gentle with a double-boiler situation, with a bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water.

Decide how much to shake things up

As Souza notes, beating eggs too much before

scrambling actually encourages the proteins to start the process of unfolding and then coming together, which is exactly what you don’t want before the cooking even begins. That’s why he prefers to beat the eggs with a fork, as opposed to a whisk, just until they come together.

You can, within reason, get the proteins to work in your favor. Food52 contributor Alyssa Walker recently wrote about how she likes to combine her eggs for scrambling in a cocktail shaker. Despite being skeptical, trying that method with a lidded jar worked. If you shake just long enough to bring the eggs together and take extra care to not overcook them in the skillet, you can produce some delightfully fluffy eggs.

How much you stir during cooking ultimately affects the outcome, too. Contrary to what you do in advance, constant stirring or whisking will pop any pockets of steam and lead to denser, smoother eggs, says López-Alt.

If you prefer big, fluffy curds, gently fold and stir to achieve even cooking but do it as little as possible. Stir a little more often for smaller curds.

Add fat (or don’t).

Fat is another way to encourage tenderness and interfere with the bonding of proteins. If you’ve always automatically beaten some milk into your eggs without thinking about it, you’re on to something. Even fattier ingredients are possibilities and will lead to denser, creamier results. Consider creme fraiche. Heavy cream is particularly rich as well. Souza preferred the in-between zone of half-and-half (one-quarter cup per eight eggs), but if you don’t have that handy, you can just do equal amounts of heavy cream and 2% milk. To account for slightly backing off the dairy fat, Souza incorporates two egg yolks, which also boosts the egg flavor and color. The ultimate addition is butter. Inspired by Nosrat’s mention of a rec-

ipe from writer Alice B. Toklas, a whopping four tablespoons of diced butter added to four eggs can produce the richest, most luxurious and filling eggs you’ve ever made – you might not eat again for many hours! Not an everyday meal, but definitely illustrative of the concept.

Heed this warning from McGee, though, especially if liquid is your fat medium of choice: “Additional liquid ingredients (cream, milk, stock, water) dilute the egg proteins and give a softer result, but also one more sensitive to overcooking and leaking watery juices.” So don’t overdo it.

Don’t overcook

Easier said than done, right? There’s much universal advice from a wide variety of sources, which is to remove the eggs from the heat just before you think they’re finished, to let the residual heat do its work. Nosrat recommends as long as 30 seconds: “Let your courage carry you, and the eggs, to the finish line.”

AGING IN ATLANTA

HOME DESIGN

Right remodel can refresh you, your home

Planning a redo? Boost elements for aging inhabitants.

By Michele Lerner
Washington Post

In 2010, Vanessa Píala and her husband Jim Belikove modified their home near Chevy Chase, Md., by digging out the basement and adding an in-law suite in anticipation of moving her parents there from New Jersey. But after her mother had a stroke, Píala stayed with her parents in New Jersey for 18 months before moving them both to an assisted-living facility in Maryland.

“My mother was in a wheelchair before she passed away in 2016 and my father was in a wheelchair part-time until he died at 97 years old in 2018,” says Píala. “I used to bring them to our house but the struggle with the wheelchairs up just a few steps was difficult and the in-law suite was inaccessible to them.”

Now Píala and Belikove are in their mid-60s, and their experience with her mother has informed them on new modifications to their home. They’ve added a first-floor primary suite, a wheelchair-accessible bathroom and an open kitchen to accommodate mobility issues they anticipate facing in the future.

“While we’d been talking about this plan for a little while, COVID magnified the realization that we want to avoid assisted-living facilities if we can,” says Píala.

More than three-quarters of adults age 50 and older want to stay in their homes as they age, according to a 2018 survey by AARP. Aging in place may be more appealing than ever with data showing that as much as 40 percent of the people who died of COVID-19, the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, were residents or employees in nursing homes.

“We’ve seen an increase in customers wanting to modify their homes to bring their parents to live with them, people who want to increase accessibility in their own homes and people who want to create space for a caregiver in their home,” says Jonas Carnemark, founder of Carnemark Design + Build, a remodeling and renovation firm in Bethesda, Maryland.

Use what the house gives you

Among the projects Carnemark has been working on are a kitchen remodel with lower cabinets for easier accessibility and, in another home, adapting a master bathroom with a curbless shower.

“The idea is to be good stewards of a house and use good design to modify the space to make it livable for everyone, including grandparents and grandkids,” says Carnemark.

For Ned and Susie Maguire, the plan to add an elevator to their four-level house in Washington, D.C., is a precautionary measure in case either

one experiences increased mobility problems.

“My husband has some balance issues and we also have aging dogs, groceries and luggage to haul, so we’re looking forward to being able to use the elevator,” says Susie, a real estate agent with Washington Fine Properties. “This project was planned before the pandemic, but COVID reinforced our feeling that this was the right thing to do. A lot of clients and friends are looking for safety in their homes and for ways to accommodate aging parents more easily.”

The Maguire’s elevator, which will be installed by InSite Builders & Remodeling of Bethesda, replaces part of their deck off the main level of the house and rises to a hallway in the upper level with a pocket door to their bedroom suite.

“Adding an elevator can cost as much as \$15,000 to \$25,000 per stop, so from the basement to the third floor could run as much as \$100,000,” says Jonathan Lerner, CEO of Meridian Homes in Bethesda. “It could run even more depending on how much of the house gets impacted by the construction.”

Lerner recently upgraded the master bathroom to make it wheelchair-accessible in a house in Potomac, Maryland, that already had an elevator in place to increase the ability of the owners to age in place.

“We added a curbless shower and put in a vanity with knee room and made sure that the bedroom and bathroom are easily accessible from the elevator,” says Lerner.

Finding the right location for an elevator can be difficult.

“You need space for the equipment and you want to find a way to install it with the least amount of damage to the house,” says Jason Arce, an architect with Anthony Wilder Design/Build, the Cabin John, Maryland-based company that remodeled the Píala-Belikove home. “An external elevator on the side of the house is sometimes an option but that doesn’t always look aesthetically appealing.”

At a house in McLean, Virginia, Lerner and the homeowners opted to add an elevator rather than build a first-floor primary suite addition.

“The elevator took less time to install and cost less than an addition would have cost,” Lerner says. “You also have to be aware of zoning restrictions. A house on a smaller lot might not have enough space to meet the zoning requirement even if there’s technically enough room for an addition.”

Not every project to simplify aging in place is expensive, says Stephen Gordon, president of InSite Builders & Remodeling, who is remodeling the Maguire home.

“We do things like add grab bars to a shower and handrails on both sides of a staircase to provide extra support,” says Gordon. “Putting in non-slip flooring in the garage and using brightly colored



The redesign of this Kinnelon, N.J., bathroom by interior designer Marlene Wangeheim makes it easier to use, should a disabled person need to. The entrance to the shower is “curbless,” easily accessible with a wheelchair or a walker, while the shower stall itself is large enough to accommodate a shower chair. MITSU YASUKAWA / THE RECORD / TNS



The new kitchen in Margaret Lulic’s and Bob Timpane’s Minneapolis home is more efficient, and its cabinets are equipped with pull-outs and built-ins to make stored items more accessible. They made improvements now, before illness or injury might descend, with an eye toward “aging in place.” JOEL KOYAMA / MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE / MCT

ored paint can make it less likely that someone will slip and fall in the garage. We also increase lighting in different areas, particularly around steps and staircases.”

Think: Resale value

In one household, Gordon added a railing down the middle of a short staircase to make it easier to notice and grab for balance. He says that railing can easily be removed if a future buyer doesn’t want it.

“We also build extra blocking in the bathrooms for future grab bars to be installed more easily,” says Gordon.

If done well, accessibility features can increase the value of a home to future buyers, says Jennifer Naughton, executive vice president for personal risk services at the Chubb insurance company.

“Many modifications are not even noticeable, such as a spa-like, walk-in shower,” says Naughton. “From the insurance perspective, we look at replacement costs and we want to see that all work is done in accordance with building codes and with the proper materials to stay in line with the architecture of the residence.”

Larger projects that increase the size of the

HOME FEATURES FOR COMFORT

While the needs of homeowners and their houses vary, some of the common features to accommodate aging in place include:

- At least one no-step entrance to the house.
- One-level living, with a primary bedroom and bathroom on the same floor as the kitchen and laundry.
- Accessible bathroom with a curbless shower, with a seat and grab bars.
- Wider halls and doorways for wheelchair accessibility.
- An elevator if a first-floor primary bedroom is not an option.
- Lever handles and rocker switches for easier opening of doors and operating lights.
- Nonslip floors.
- Enhanced illumination, including night lights, task lights and lighting along stairs and hallways.
- Smart-house features to remotely manage the thermostat and lights.
- Consistent flooring and extra lighting in areas that transition from one room to the next to avoid a tripping hazard.

home, even though they are expensive, may add to the future value of the property, says Naughton.

“We recently did a first-floor addition in record time for a couple in their late 70s who wanted to keep their house in Bethesda to give to their kids one day,” says Anthony Wilder, principal of Anthony Wilder Design/Build. “The house was level to the ground, so we were able to cut out a window and bridge the space between the kitchen and family room with a new

laundry room and bathroom leading to the new bedroom. The bedroom has French doors to the backyard, so it could also work as a sunroom.”

While an ideal remodel would create a first-floor master bedroom suite, that’s not always possible depending on the configuration of the house and the land as well as the homeowner’s budget.

“If you can add on a first-floor bedroom and bathroom near the kitchen and family room without taking away liv-

ing space from that level, that’s the best scenario,” says Gordon. “Adding living space will usually add value to the house but taking away a dining room or living room to create a bedroom could hurt a home’s value.”

Additionally, Gordon points out, not every buyer wants a first-floor primary suite.

“Young couples often prefer to be upstairs near their kids, while people in their 50s and 60s are more likely to be thinking about being empty-nesters,” says Maguire. “But if the first-floor bedroom can be converted to a study, that can make it attractive to any buyer.”

The Píala-Belikove house, built in 1915 in the town of Somerset, Md., has been added onto three times and had a tree fall on it during its more than 100-year history.

“The age of the house and all the previous additions made this remodeling project more challenging because there are different ceiling heights, joists everywhere and narrow halls and doorways,” says Arce. “We relocated the kitchen to create a more open room that would be wheelchair-accessible and added a master suite and a bathroom with a curbless shower.”

Their house required approvals and permits from Maryland’s Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission, the Montgomery County planning office and the town of Somerset, says Arce.

“We want the house to look aesthetically pleasing and yet be functional if one of us eventually needs a wheelchair,” says Píala. “This is costing us well into six figures, but it would have been less if we just added the bedroom suite and didn’t change the configuration of the kitchen.”

They anticipate their project to be completed sometime next spring.

“It’s important to take a thoughtful approach and design something that is both practical and beautiful rather than something that’s a temporary fix,” says Carnemark.

Rely on the pros

One difficulty for many homes is adding a ramp for wheelchair accessibility, says Lerner, especially if a home has multiple steps and a steep grade. In some cases, landscaping can camouflage a temporary ramp.

Naughton emphasizes the importance of working with experts to evaluate your home and the options for aging in place modifications.

“Experts can be creative and understand how to retain your home’s value,” says Naughton. “For example, you may not want to convert your garage to living space because future buyers may want a garage.”

In addition, Naughton recommends consulting your homeowner’s insurance company when doing any home modification to see if additional insurance coverage will be needed.

“I think homes will be in a better position to support aging in place going forward, because many new homes are designed with a configuration to easily install an elevator in the future and with first-floor rooms that can be converted to a bedroom someday,” says Carnemark.

“If you’re remodeling or renovating a house, it’s just as easy to design a barrier-free bathroom and to install good lighting to leverage the fact that you’re already spending money on the project. Thinking about aging in place while you’re doing this will add value in the long run.”



Mary Shaw and Roy Weil of Pittsburgh converted their bathroom to a wet room to accommodate them as they grow older. ROBIN ROMBACH / PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE / MCT

AGING IN ATLANTA

Holocaust survivor teaches that hope is not lost

Amid pandemic, the resilience of Holocaust survivor inspires others to believe in future.

By Michael Granberry
Tribune News Service

Max Glauben has seen the worst of humanity. He survived the Holocaust, which claimed the lives of every other member of his family. Like most of us these days, he's at home, protecting himself. But he is also deeply in touch with his memories, and in that way, he can help us.

At 92, the Dallas resident finds himself dwelling on the R word – resilience – saying that so many times during World War II, it saved him. Resilience, he says, is why he's able to sit safely at home, with so much to share amid the crush of a global pandemic.

“What resilience really is, in my mind,” he says, “is converting a negative into a positive.” Glauben's life is a testimony of turning despair into hope.

He lived through one of the darkest moments in recorded history, and yet, he is stunned by the pandemic numbers from 2020.

When it comes to seeking advice on how to stay hopeful or resilient, there may be no one better than the man who at 13 survived the horrors of a Nazi invasion to live another day. And many more after that.

“I would advise them, number one,” says Glauben, “don't think about the past. Don't think about the future. Think about right now. If something happens to you, and God gives you the power to overcome it, then it becomes the greatest gift you ever got. God forbid you catch the virus, but then, if you recover, it becomes a blessing, one you can and should share with the world.”

His fortitude has not gone unnoticed. In recognition of his life, he received an honorary doctorate from Southern Methodist University in an outdoor ceremony at Gerald J. Ford Stadium in August.

At the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum, which has been closed since March, a holographic image of Glauben details the horrors of the Holocaust. The holographic project is a partnership between the museum and the USC Shoah Foundation, founded by three-time Oscar winner Steven Spielberg.

You can ask Glauben questions about how to cope with fear and loss and even terror, and thanks to the technology, his answers will linger long after he's gone.

“Around the world, people are suffering,” says Mary Pat Higgins, president and CEO of the museum, “and many are mourning the loss of loved ones due to the pandemic. Our world has changed, and we are faced with tremendous uncertainty, but most of us are not facing the kind of choices Max and our other local survivors were forced to make.

“Our survivors teach us that life must and can go on. We can endure pain, sorrow and even tremendous loss, and still go on to live happy, productive lives. And that pain can be a deep source of compassion and empathy for others. What better role models are there for us today?”

As Higgins says, “Anyone who has met Max in person knows that he exudes optimism and love, even though he endured unimaginable suffering and loss. It is almost impossible to imagine having the strength to go forward, to build a new life, after the horrors of the Holocaust, and yet, here Max is as a beacon of hope.”

When it comes to sharing his own story of resilience, Glauben has earned a rare credibility. Glauben in German means believe. His is a truly historic example of someone who never stopped believing. Those who know him marvel at the fact that he's able to share his story without a trace of rancor.

As he is fond of saying, “Hate grows in the hater like yeast in a dough.” Hate, he says, “destroys the container that it is in.”

Frieda Glauben, 87, has seen that philosophy manifested in her husband, with whom she shares three children, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She remembers a speaking event at which her husband sought to console a young German who appeared to be feeling deep remorse about the Holocaust.

“Max was able to console this young man where he walked away with a smile on his face,” Mrs. Glauben says. “That's just the kind of person Max is.”

His own family helps ensure his resilience. “I think he's probably more grateful for his family than most people are,” his wife says. “He went from having nobody, literally,



Holocaust survivor Max Glauben, who lost his family during the Holocaust, now shares with his wife Frieda three children, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. PHOTOS BY TOM FOX / DALLAS MORNING NEWS



‘If something happens to you, and God gives you the power to overcome it, then it becomes the greatest gift you ever got. God forbid you catch the virus, but then, if you recover, it becomes a blessing, one you can and should share with the world.’

Max Glauben

to having almost 20 in our family. He loves each and every one of them, and he does not take them for granted.”

Like his wife, Glauben says he spends much of his time “watching the news.” But he is also doing frequent Zoom presentations. One involved going to the Holocaust museum, where he “spoke to an empty” theater but to about 175 people virtually. So, in that way, his memories are never far away.

Glauben's family, his father, Isaak, mother Faiga and little brother Heniek, were not spared by the Holocaust, as he

was. He lost them all, his mother and brother to the gas chambers at the Majdanek concentration camp, where an estimated 78,000 were murdered by the end of World War II.

To this day, Glauben says his hardest moment by far – the one that most tested his resilience – was when his father was killed. Only his shoes were left in the Budzyn concentration camp, on the square where they were laid the night before, as a cruel reminder of the good man who had loved and protected his son for as long as he could.

What his father's shoes were telling him, he says,

was to follow his destiny: Become the last surviving member of the Glauben family, a path of resilience that came with its own reward just recently, when Glauben held in his arms his newest great-grandchild, which helped him realize that his own remarkable resilience had allowed the Glauben bloodline to proceed to the next generation. And the one after that.

Today, he is especially saddened by stories about children dying from the coronavirus. He feels compassion too for those who fear the virus, but says fear, in its own strange way, can be a tool of resilience, an inroad to survival. You wear a mask to protect yourself or those around you, he says, because you fear what might happen if you don't.

Despite what he's lived through, Glauben reveals in the wisdom of songwriter Woody Guthrie, who died from Huntington's disease. Until the end, Guthrie clung to hope in the midst of fear, and that, Glauben says, is something everyone must remember, that hope is the pathway to resilience, no matter how suffocating the fear.

“No matter how bad the wicked world has hurt you, in the long run, there is something gained, and it is all for the best,” Guthrie said. “The note of hope is the only note that can help us or save us from falling to the bottom of the heap of evolution, because, largely, about all a human being

is, anyway, is just a hoping machine.”

There is no disgrace in being a hoping machine, because, Glauben says, he has been one his entire life.

He also believes in the power of silver linings. “Horrible things,” he says, “can bring human beings together.”

Since the national emergency in response to the coronavirus took effect on March 13, Glauben says, he has felt “so grateful” for neighbors, who say, “Max, if you need anything, let us know. If you need us to pick you up something at the grocery store, please, tell us. We will be happy to do it.”

Considering where he came from, Glauben says, this warms his heart as much as anything. And yet, one of the ways he remains resilient is to follow his belief that “there is more pleasure in giving than receiving.”

Because of his past, he admits to feeling waves of emotion these days, when so many others are suffering. He found himself watching the recent funeral of congressman and civil rights activist John Lewis, and by the end of it, he says, he was weeping. In his words, “Talk about resilience! That man had it!”

Look what Lewis accomplished, Glauben says.

“How could he have done that without resilience? And we as a world are so much better for his resilience. How wonderful it would be if we could all be like him.”

GARDENING

Golden Delicious salvia festive for every occasion

By Norman Winter
Tribune News Service

This is the time of the year we revel in the Golden Delicious. Of course, The Garden Guy is referring to the Rockin' Golden Delicious salvia, also known as pineapple sage. While we have been loving every minute of it through the long hot summer, it is the short days of early fall that bring on the added cause for celebration.

This is when glorious red blooms appear on virtually every tip. The party commences as every pollinator around takes notice. Hummingbirds use it to fatten up for their arduous journey to the tropics. Bird watchers will be caught by surprise while watching for these elusive little birds. I noticed little bees fluttering around and then the big shocker zebra heliconian butterflies took

notice. It wasn't just one but several, and two at a time. While I was celebrating, cloudless sulphur butterflies also came in, and sometimes two at a time as well.

These blooms are like a crescendo of performance from one of the best salvias we can grow. I've long touted the use of lime colored foliage in the landscape. Everything looks better with lime or golden chartreuse as is the case with Rockin Golden Delicious. As a partner with Luscious lantana and Snow Princess lobularia it is perfect. Massed with red coleus and white begonias, it will be the one that lights up a bed like a spotlight.

Giving it some tropical partners may cause you to think Carnival in Rio. Partner it with the multi-colored Fiesta Hibiscus and Hawaiian Ti plants and you'll want to start singing

“Sweet Leilani.” The Garden Guy is going tropical too, using the salvia with giant alocasia elephant ears, and variegated shell ginger in close proximity.

Another container uses Hawaiian Ti plants centered as a flaming red foliage thriller with Rockin' Golden Delicious salvia on the ends. The middle, filler and spiller plants are Blue My Mind evolvulus and Superbells Coralina calibrachoa.

The pineapple sage is known botanically as Salvia elegans and is native to tropical Mexico and Guatemala. It does very well in the United States as annual or as perennials in zones 8 and warmer. Occasionally you'll find them return in zone 7, which is a cause for celebration.

Rockin' Golden Delicious salvia performs best in fertile well-drained soil. Plant on raised beds or

amend heavy, tight soils with the addition of compost or humus. Well-drained soil will encourage a spring return further north than one might expect. You'll find they adore premium potting soils when grown in mixed containers. They can reach 36 to 48 inches in height. My clumps are about 4 feet by 4 feet.

Rockin' Golden Delicious has won 30 awards and not just in the South. You see once you grow it, you'll never want to be without it. Just brushing up against the leaves will leave you in an olfactory euphoria of crushed pineapple. This fragrance also constitutes the favors for drinks, jams and cream cheese. These are the reasons Rockin Golden Delicious has won awards north to south, east to west, culinary, and I'll give it a gold star for pollinators too!



Golden Delicious salvia are a favorite nectar provider for hummingbirds. NORMAN WINTER/TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

AGING IN ATLANTA

Brody

continued from S1

greater chance a of a heart attack within 10 years;

■ People over 40 with diabetes and an LDL-cholesterol level above 70 milligrams per deciliter;

■ People over 21 with an LDL-cholesterol level of 190 or higher (despite dietary changes to minimize saturated fats and achieve a normal body weight).

Currently, more than 60% of older people in the United States who, like me, have high cholesterol take a statin to help prevent a heart attack or stroke.

Still, there's been a long-simmering debate as to whether statins are advisable for people over 75, even though the risk of suffering life-threatening cardiovascular disease rises precipitously with age. Concerns have been raised about side effects associated with statins, potential adverse effects of the drugs on other ailments common in the elderly and possible harmful interactions with the many other medications they often take.

Writing in the Harvard Health Blog last October, Dr. Dara K. Lee Lewis noted, "The paradox that we face is that as our patients age, they are at increased risk for heart attacks and strokes, and yet they also become more sensitive to medication side effects, so it is a tricky balance."

Statin can sometimes cause blood sugar abnormalities, resulting in a diagnosis of prediabetes or diabetes, and possible toxic effects on the liver that necessitate periodic blood tests for liver enzymes. A very small percentage of people prescribed a statin develop debilitating muscle pain. An elderly friend developed statin-induced nightmares. There have also been reports suggesting statin-associated memory problems and cognitive decline, already a common concern as people age.



There is accumulating evidence that the benefits of statins far outweigh possible risks, and nearly all statins on the market are now available as inexpensive generics. GRACIA LAM / NEW YORK TIMES

But likely the biggest deterrent was the existence of meager evidence for the role statins might play for older people at risk of cardiovascular disease. As is true in most drug trials on new medications, relatively few people over 75 were included in early studies that assessed the benefits and risks of statins.

The latest reports, however, are highly reassuring. One followed more than 120,000 French men and women ages 75 to 79 who had been taking statins for up to four years. Among the 10% who stopped taking the drug, the risk of being admitted to a hospital for a cardiovascular event was 25% to 30% greater than for those who continued taking a statin.

Another study in Israel, published last year in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, involved nearly 20,000 older adults followed for 10 years. Among those who stayed on statin therapy, the chance of dying from any cause was 34% lower than among those who failed to adhere to a prescribed statin. The benefits were not reduced for those older than 75 and applied to women and men alike.

This year a study published in JAMA by a team headed by Dr. Ariela R. Orkaby of the VA Boston Healthcare System found that among 326,981 United

States veterans whose average age was 81, the initiation of statin use was associated with 25% fewer deaths overall and 20% fewer cardiovascular deaths during a follow-up of nearly seven years.

However, none of these studies represent "gold standard" research. The results of two such studies, the Staree trial and the Preventable trial, both randomized controlled clinical trials of statin therapy to prevent cardiovascular events in the elderly, have not yet been published. Both will also assess effects on cognition.

Meanwhile, a report last year from Australia published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology found no difference over a six-year period in the rate of decline in memory or cognitive status between statin users and those who had never taken the drugs. In fact, among those who started a statin during the study, the rate of memory decline was blunted.

Finally, there are several reports that a major class of statins called lipophilic (including atorvastatin, simvastatin, lovastatin and fluvastatin) may have anticancer effects. One study of nearly 2,000 survivors of early-stage breast cancer found a decreased five-year recurrence rate in women who started a statin within three years of diagnosis.

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Nan Harman-Dempsey
Alpharetta, Georgia

NAN CARE

For years, Nan Harman-Dempsey has loved practicing law in the community where she was born and raised: Alpharetta. But when her mammogram revealed breast cancer, even she was surprised to find such high-tech care less than five miles away. At Wellstar North Fulton Hospital, Nan was a candidate for intraoperative radiation treatment, or IORT. During her lumpectomy, Nan’s medical and radiation oncology surgeons worked side-by-side as one removed the tumor and the other gave Nan radiation therapy, seamlessly in one fell swoop. Instead of weeks, her radiation took moments. After her fast-tracked treatment, Nan’s newest love is her care team at Wellstar. No two people named Nan are exactly alike, and at Wellstar, we would never treat them that way. [wellstar.org/peoplecare](https://www.wellstar.org/peoplecare)



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