



Senior News

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*November
is a Time for
Celebration!*

Story on page 5

November 2018
Vol. 32, No. 11

Taking Care

Sundays will never be the same...

Fond memories of family farm span several generations!

by LISA M. PETSCHKE

It's not much to look at: an aging, otherwise unremarkable two-story dwelling at the end of a potholed lane, barely visible from the highway. Surrounding it are rows of apple, cherry and pear trees, as well as currant bushes and a rhubarb patch that have seen better days. This was one of many orchards in the area, but now only a few remain, bordered by new housing subdivisions.

The fruit farm has been in my mother-in-law's family for well over half a century. She and seven siblings grew up there. Headed by their widowed-young mother, the family relied on the orchard as a primary source of income for many years.

My husband recalls spending

many weekends picking cherries with his cousins, under the watchful eye of Gran, and selling them at the local farmersmarket.

By the late 1990s, only his Aunt Margaret, caregiver to Gran in her later years, remained there.

A single woman, Marg took a special interest in her nieces and nephews as well as their offspring. She enjoyed attending family events and receiving updates from distant relatives by phone or mail.

She also enjoyed receiving visitors on Sunday evenings, a tradition dating back to the time when her siblings began to move out and start families of their own.

Although there was a core of regulars, you never knew who might show up on Sunday night. It was quite the gathering spot. Adults would sit around the kitchen table debating, sharing news and reminiscing, while their kids played outside or in the front room, depending on the weather.

Our family made the trip once

or twice a month – more often in summer. The kids loved to run around the backyard and orchard, chasing rabbits and playing football and hide and seek. They would listen for approaching freight trains along the adjacent railway tracks, which invariably prompted a race to the nearest clearing to count the number of cars clattering by. (Until recently, every time our son saw or heard a train, no matter where it was, he'd exclaim, "There goes Aunt Margaret's train!")

Outdoor activities were always followed by refreshments. A generous hostess, Marg would set out cheese and crackers, fruit and cookies, and sometimes potato chips or candies. The adults drank coffee or tea while the children sipped apple juice in small, striped glasses – a novelty for our brood, who at home had to settle for plastic cups. The kids then retreated to a corner of the kitchen, delving into a carton of random second-generation toys, or played cards and charades in the living room until it was time to head back to the city.

Similar to my late grandmother's home, the farm was a family clearinghouse: photos were displayed throughout the main floor, and news of every kind – obtained through visits, phone calls and letters from as far away as England – was shared with all who came by.

In recent years, when Sunday night visitors became fewer, Marg would indulge my passion for family history, bringing out boxes

of photos, letters (including wartime correspondence), cards, invitations, obituaries and other newspaper clippings.

Family members did their best to help Marg age in place, maintaining the property inside and out and escorting her on errands and to medical appointments, as first her vision and then her general health deteriorated.

Eventually, though, she required a safer and more supportive environment. With great reluctance she moved to a retirement home, but didn't adapt well to institutional life.

She never gave up hope of returning to the family homestead.

Marg spent her final days in a hospital palliative care unit. Poor health made her passing a blessing. Fittingly, she was laid to rest in a cemetery overlooking the farm.

The house has since been emptied and the property sold to a housing developer. Soon the parcel of land won't be recognizable.

Just yesterday our son asked if we had enough money to buy the farm, to prevent it from being demolished.

He's perceptive enough to know Aunt Margaret's death marks the end of an era. The gathering spot is gone. Sundays will never be the same.

Thanks, Gran and Marg, for all the memories.

Lisa M. Petschke is a mother of three and a freelance writer specializing in intergenerational relationships.



Lisa Petschke

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ENOPION to present: A Nativity Story

Special to Senior News

Each year at Christmas, Arthur and Gladys Templeton place their Nativity Scene in front of the fireplace. It is a complete set with Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, wise men, shepherds, an angel and animals. But this year the set is a little different. The angel doesn't quite look the same, some of the sheep are not there, a couple of figures have been replaced with "Non-Nativity" characters. But, the most precious figure of all in the set, is missing!

This one hour musical production is a wonderful story for the entire family. It will touch your heart this Christmas and remind you that Jesus is the reason for the Season.

Show Dates:

- Friday, November 30th: 7 p.m.
- Saturday, December 1st: 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- Thursday, December 6th: 7 p.m.
- Friday, December 7th: 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, December 13th: 7 p.m.
- Saturday, December 15th: 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, December 22nd: 1 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.

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Tickets are now on sale!

For more information, contact us at 706-771-7777.

Agency Alert

Keeping the Lights On: Housing & Utility Benefits

KATHLEEN ERNCE
Executive Director, The Senior
Citizens Council Augusta, Georgia
kernce@seniorcouncil.org

Most older adults want to remain at home as long as they can - safely, but what happens when the cost of maintaining a home becomes difficult? Fortunately for families struggling to make ends meet, there are several benefits programs that can help.



**Kathleen
Ernce**

Keep reading for information on the types of programs available, and where to get more information to find out if you're eligible and where to apply.

Home repair and modification

Keeping up with home maintenance can become more difficult with age, but not doing so poses health hazards. Forgoing needed home repairs may increase the risk of accidents or falls, while poor indoor air quality can exacerbate respiratory and other diseases.

Some of the benefits programs

that help pay for home repair include the following:

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Program offers one-time grants of up to \$7,500 and, separately, low-interest (1%) loans of up to \$20,000 for eligible homeowners to repair, improve, or modernize their homes or remove health and safety hazards.

- The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program helps eligible families receive free home energy repairs and services. You may get help with insulation of doors, windows, floors, walls, ducts, and water heaters, as well as help modifying your furnace and other heating devices to help them work better.

Household utilities

The costs of heating and cooling your home can fluctuate from season to season, making it unpredictable for older adults on a budget to keep pace.

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a federal program that helps eligible households pay for heating or cooling their homes. In many states, LIHEAP participants can use the

funds to make low-cost home energy improvements or to prevent utility shut-offs.

Half of the states and Washington, DC also offer ratepayer-funded utility assistance, which use charges from commercial, industrial, and residential consumers to give bill payment assistance or energy efficiency services to eligible households.

Home communication tools

Being connected to family, friends, and neighbors is critical to reducing social isolation. Several benefits programs offer seniors on fixed incomes the opportunity to obtain free or low-cost telephone, internet, and assistive technology.

- The federal Lifeline Assistance program offers discounted phone service through local telephone companies. Two Lifeline-supported programs include Assurance Wireless® and SafeLink Wireless®, both of which offer free cell phones and minutes, access to emergency services, and a choice of cell phone plans if you meet the program guidelines.

- CanConnect provides people with vision and hearing loss with free assistive technology (and training in how to use the equipment)

that can help with daily life activities, such as communicating and reading.

Where to get help

All of the programs mentioned above are included in BenefitsCheckUp®, NCOA's free, comprehensive online tool that screens for thousands of benefits that can help older adults pay for housing and utilities, health care, food, prescriptions, and more. Answer just a few questions to get a personalized report of what benefits may be available in your area.

NCOA's network of Benefits Enrollment Centers (BECs) also provide one-on-one assistance in applying for a wide range of benefits programs. Should you need further information or assistance with completing these forms, please call us at 706-868-0120 for an appointment.

Happy Thanksgiving...

Just a reminder that The Senior Citizens Council will be closed for our employees to enjoy the Thanksgiving holidays with their loved ones. Our office will close on Wednesday, November 21, 2018 at 12:00 noon and will reopen on Monday, November 26, 2018.

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Website

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Published monthly. Business Office is located at 214 Wilsons Creek Bend, Bonaire, GA 31005. Approximate Monthly Readership: Metro Atlanta, 65,000; Augusta, 27,000; Macon/Central Georgia, 21,000. Editorial and advertising copy deadline is the 15th of the month. Preference is given to editorial copy submitted earliest. Publishers do not accept any liability whatsoever for any material supplied by advertisers or editorial organizations including the use of trademarks, logotypes, slogans, or other service marks, or any claims made by such organizations and such organizations indemnify and save harmless the publishers in the event of any lawsuit or litigation. In the event of any publishers' error in the content of any advertisement, maximum liability shall be limited to the cost of the advertising area in which the error occurred. Publishers reserve the rights to edit or reject any materials submitted for publication. Editorial information you would like considered for publication should be mailed to: Senior News, 214 Wilsons Creek Bend, Bonaire, GA 31005.

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Senior News & Views of Georgia

Poets' Corner

THANKSGIVING

by Shirley Glisson

*The turkey's in the oven,
The dressing's being fixed,
The cheese and macaroni
Are ready to be mixed.*

*There are salads and fresh pies
And hot crackin' bread.
Everyone there will be
Generously fed.*

*There are onions and peas,
But we can't do without
That big bowl of good ole
Pork and collard kraut.*

The table is spread,

*We all take our places.
What a joy to see
All the happy faces.*

*With hand in hand
We thank God above
For His mercy and grace
And undying love.*

WE ALL HAVE A DEPARTURE DAY AND TIME

by Mrs. Mildred Carter

*Oh, when will we leave?
On the Lord's time.*

*Where will we go?
To our Eternal Home.*

*When will we get there?
Oh, someday.*

*Say, who will be there?
The Lord and Savior.*

*Will He know me?
Oh, yes! Christ Jesus knows
everything about you.*

*And, yes, you will stand before
the Righteous Judge Lord
Jesus Christ.*

*And, yes, the Lord will tell you
all about your Eternal Life!*

Oh, yes, He will!



Dating & Living in the Digital Age



Join AARP Georgia, the Richmond County Marshall's Office and the CSRA Regional Commission Area Agency on Aging for a fun and informative experience about dating and living in the digital age. We'll show you how to avoid online relationship pitfalls and other scams.

Dating & Living in the Digital Age is free and open to the public, but registration is required at aarp.cvent.com/RomanceRelationshipsFun or call 1-877-926-8300 for more information. Come enjoy free food, free prize giveaways and free document shredding!

Saturday, Nov. 10, 2018

**The Kroc Center
Salvation Army**

1833 Broad St.
Augusta, GA 30904
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Shred Fest:

9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.



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On the Cover

November is a Time for Celebration!

by CAROLYN BRENNEMAN

Let's join in on the fun and attend this year's fabulous annual gift shop Holiday Open House at Sacred Heart Cultural Center in Augusta on Friday, November 16th, from 10 am to 4 pm. During this extremely popular event, we can enjoy a day of shopping, entertainment and refreshments at the gift shop.

Wait! There's more! There are cooking demonstrations to watch, a fabulous bake sale to purchase some delicious home-baked goods, specialty breads,

and homemade savory treats from the guild members, and gifts to purchase.

This holiday season, the gift shop features many beautiful wall plaques, unique Christmas ornaments, wall hangings, attractive wreaths and Nativity sets, homemade jams and jellies, memorable collectibles, limited edition prints, original art, and beautifully crafted and colorful gift items. While browsing the gift shop, let's enjoy complimentary coffee provided by Buona Caffè.

The open house event is free with complimentary gift wrapping and convenient parking is available. "The bake sale, which occurs every year, helps raise monies for the Guild which is used for the preservation of the Cultural Center including the display cases in the historical room," says Judy Evans, manager of the Gift Shop and Art Hall.

"Everything that is raised from the events at Sacred Heart, goes into funding to perpetually care for this historic center," Judy shared.

Are you looking for something unique to the CSRA? Come to this fabulous open house on November 16th for some great fun, browsing and purchasing of gifts for your family and friends. For more information, call 706.826.4700. Mark your calendars!



Savory treats to give to family



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Judy Evans, Manager of the Gift Shop



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Agency Alert

It's Medicare Open Enrollment... Are You Ready?

KATHLEEN ERNCE
Executive Director, The Senior
Citizens Council Augusta, Georgia
kernce@seniorcitizenscouncil.org

It's that time of year again. It's time for Medicare's annual Open Enrollment Period. Through December 7th, Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to look at their health care plans and make changes for the upcoming year. Georgia's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) provides free personalized Medicare counseling at 706-364-5778.

Eating well and regular exercise are part of a healthy lifestyle, and so is making sure you have the right health care coverage. Medicare's Annual Open Enrollment period is the time to review your current coverage, compare plans and see if you can lower your premium or find a plan that best fits your health needs.

During Medicare Open Enrollment, you can enroll in or make changes to your Medicare health or prescription drug plan. Your coverage begins January 1, 2019. If you miss the deadline, you will likely have to wait a full year before you are able to make changes to your plan.

To make Medicare Open Enrollment part of your healthy lifestyle, follow these 6 important steps:

1. Review your current plan

notice.

Read any notices from your Medicare plan about changes for upcoming year, especially your "Annual Notice of Change" letter. Look at your plan's information to make sure your drugs are still covered, and your doctors are still in network.

2. Think about what matters most to you.

Medicare health and drug plans change each year, and so can your health needs. Do you need a new primary care doctor? Does your network include the specialist you want for an upcoming surgery? Does your current plan cover your new medication? Does another plan offer the same coverage at a lower cost? Take stock of your health status and determine if you need to make a change.

3. Find out if you qualify for help paying for Medicare.

Learn about the programs that can help with the costs of Medicare premiums, your Part A (Hospital Insurance) and Part B (Medical Insurance) deductibles, coinsurance and copayments (through Medicare Savings Programs), and Medicare prescription drug costs (through Extra Help). Certified GeorgiaCares counselors are available to assist beneficiaries with your application process.

4. Shop for plans that meet your needs and fit your budget.

Starting in October, you can use Medicare's Plan Finder tool at Medicare.gov/find-a-plan, or you can contact GeorgiaCares to see

what plans are offered in your area. A new plan may:

- Cost less
- Cover your drugs
- Let you go to the providers you want, like your doctor or pharmacy.

If you find your current coverage still meets your needs, then you're done. Remember, during Medicare Open Enrollment, you can decide to stay in Original Medicare or join a Medicare Advantage Plan. If you're already in a Medicare Advantage Plan, you can switch back to Original Medicare during Open Enrollment.

5. Check your plan's Star Rating before you enroll.

The Medicare Plan Finder is up-to-date with the Star Ratings for Medicare health and prescription drug plans. Plans are given an overall quality rating on a 1 to 5-star scale, with 1 being the lowest and 5 stars being the highest. You can use Star Ratings to compare

the quality of health and drug plans being offered.

6. Contact GeorgiaCares for local, free and unbiased assistance.

GeorgiaCares is the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) for Georgia. GeorgiaCares has an office conveniently located in downtown Augusta to provide services to the 14 counties in the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA). If you need assistance with your Medicare needs during Medicare Open Enrollment, or any time throughout the year, contact GeorgiaCares at 706-364-5778 or 1-866-552-4464 and select Option 4.

Don't get caught unprepared and pay more out-of-pocket than you need to next year. Plans change every year - maybe your health care needs have changed, too.

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BBB advises donors to give wisely to Hurricane relief efforts

by **KELVIN COLLINS**
President/CEO, BBB of Central
Georgia & the CSRA, Inc.

Asks questions and do your research before giving to a charity. Just a month after Hurricane Florence pounded the east coast, Hurricane Michael thrashed the Florida panhandle and much of Georgia with harsh winds, rain and flooding. While Michael and Florence may have died down, charities have already come to life soliciting for donations to support the relief efforts. With many options available for donors to consider, the Better Business Bureau offer tips for donors looking to assist in the relief efforts.

The BBB Wise Giving Alliance Standards for Charity Accountability were developed to assist donors in making sound giving decisions and to foster public confidence in charitable organizations. The standards seek to encourage fair and honest solicitation practices, to promote ethical conduct by charitable organizations and to advance support of philanthropy.

Before giving your donation, BBB recommends the following:

Be cautious when giving online. Be cautious about online giving, especially in response to spam messages and emails that claim to link to a relief organization. If you are seeking to give to a charity organization involved in relief efforts, go directly to the charity's website.

Be wary of imitations. Don't be fooled by names that look impressive or that closely resemble the name of a well-known

organization.

Be wary of claims that 100 percent of donations will assist relief victims. Despite what an organization might claim, charities have fund raising and administrative costs. Even a credit card donation will involve, at a minimum, a processing fee. If a charity claims 100 percent of collected funds will be assisting victims, the truth is that the organization is still probably incurring fund raising and administrative expenses. They may use some of their other funds to pay this, but the expenses will still be incurred.

Find out if the charity has an on-the-ground presence in the impacted areas. See if the charity's website clearly describes what they can do to address immediate needs. Watch out for charities that don't already have staff in the affected areas as they may not be able to provide assistance quickly.

Find out if the charity is providing direct aid or raising money for other groups. Some charities may be raising money to pass along to relief organizations. If so, you may want to consider "avoiding the middleman" and giving directly to charities that have a presence in the region. Or, at a minimum, check out the ultimate recipients of these donations to ensure the organizations are equipped to effectively provide aid.

Gifts of clothing, food or other in-kind donations. In-kind drives for food and clothing – while well intentioned – may not necessarily be the quickest way to help those in need – unless the organization has the staff and

infrastructure to be able to properly distribute such aid. Ask the charity about their transportation and distribution plans. Be wary of those who are not experienced in disaster relief assistance because their inexperience could keep your aid from reaching those in need.

Be cautious of online or text message solicitations. Online giving can be very convenient but avoid donating in response to unexpected text messages or emails that claim to link to a relief organization. Scam organizations with official looking names can be created overnight. If you want to give to a charity involved in the relief efforts, go directly to that charity's website.

Avoid giving to charities that:

Use high pressure solicitations. A legitimate charity will be glad to give you the time needed to fully research its programs.

Offer prizes. Most honest charities do not try to entice you to give by telling you that you have won a prize.

Steer you away from mailing a donation. Dishonest individuals try and avoid doing anything through the U.S. mail to avoid federal prosecution under postal statutes.

To check the reliability of any charity, visit www.give.org and always give with your head, as well as your heart.

Kelvin Collins is

President/CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving the Fall Line Corridor, serving 77 counties in East Alabama, West Georgia, Southwest Georgia, Central Georgia, East Georgia and Western South Carolina. This tips column is provided through the local BBB and the Council of Better Business Bureaus. The Better Business Bureau sets standards for ethical business behavior, monitors compliance and helps consumers identify trustworthy businesses. Questions or complaints about a specific company or charity should be referred directly to the BBB at Phone: 1-800-763-4222, Web site: www.bbb.org or E-mail: info@centralgeorgia.bbb.org.

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Influencing the Leisure Frame-of-Mind

by MARTY TURCIOS, MS
Executive Director
Marty Turcios' Therapeutic Golf

Having determined that the "leisure frame-of-mind" is the highest quality of any individual, it should be assumed to be developed and nurtured. Unfortunately, many who come from dysfunctional backgrounds or have had traumatic experiences may lack positive influence in their thought processes. Many with disabilities become victims of negative influence both in the home and community based programs/special education.

Many are interested in my background; growing up in Special Education in the 60's and early 70's; surviving being an experimental guinea pig of early Mainstreaming in '74 when I transitioned from a private protected environment of fifty orthopedically disabled students to the worst high school in the district. At the

time, having a "resource room" which served as a home room for disabled students was not yet implemented. Basically I was alone in the wild! Going to school no longer meant getting an education; more so just learning to survive. Teachers of my grammar school didn't think I was ready for "normal" education, while my mother decided I had to become "normal!" I myself was looking forward to the change. I was forced wear a helmet because of a fall I had when I was young; never wore it outside school! I was constantly picked on at school just like I was at home. As soon as I stood up for myself I was blamed for being a trouble maker! One can only imagine how this impacted my "leisure frame-of-mind," not to mention my education!

In high school I was a straight "A" student for one semester. I survived the insults, stayed clear of fights. I had to stay clear of my older brother who grew up in spe-

cial education as well. By this time I was smoking and drinking when I could. My brother who had more psychological problems was fearful of what seemed pretty normal for our age group, but looking back I now realize I was already collecting vices. Fear and anxiety grew more and more! Following my first PE class, someone snagged my watch out of my open locker in front of me. Luckily everyone who saw it stood up for me and it was returned. The real breaking point was at a night football game. I went in the restroom and felt comforted using a locked stall when suddenly the lights went out. I wondered who was fooling around; maybe my brother who was waiting outside!

Then the horror began! In the next stall, a ruckus began and screams echoed as I heard the knife being plunged into someone's body at least five times! All I could do is freeze and stay silent until someone came to my rescue. In the aftermath, my brother was

transferred to a parochial high school because he was so shook up. Although I was asked if I was OK, it became clear that there was no other place for me because at that time parochial schools were not yet accessible.

Future articles will explore how I see things from both sides of the coin. Growing up in special education and dysfunctional environments made it difficult to comfortably fit into the mainstream. My education and the experience of working with special populations for four decades has made me realize that being true to oneself and surviving is not an easy road.

Marty Turcios of Marty Turcios Therapeutic Golf which provides therapeutic at Wedges & Woods in Augusta, Georgia. Marty Turcios provides free therapeutic recreation to anyone with disabilities. Call (706) 854-0360 today and get out and play.

Your "One-Stop Shop" for Information & Resources to Help You Stay in Your Home CSRA Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)



1. Access to Information & Assistance:

Benefits information, access to resources, ease of finding help, assessments, options counseling

2. Caregiver Support:

Training, peer support, supportive services, resources, caregiver education, care consultation

3. Physical, Emotional, & Behavioral Health:

Health education, Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, substance use, mental health services

4. Wellness Promotion:

Exercise programs, chronic disease management classes, food & nutrition, falls prevention

5. Services & Supports:

Meals on Wheels, medical transportation, adaptations, assistive devices and technology, In-home support, vision screenings, case management, Centenarian Club, volunteer opportunities

6. Community Education:

Speakers bureau, seminars & training conferences, small & large group presentations

7. Safety, Security, & Protection:

Abuse, neglect, exploitation, fraud/scams, community safety & education, advocacy

8. Private Pay Options for a variety of services



Answers.Action.Advocacy



An initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

CSRA Agency on Aging

A Division of The CSRA Regional Commission

866-552-4464 or 706-210-2018

www.georgiaadrc.com

TDD/TTY: 1-800-255-0056 for the hearing impaired

