


OLLI TIMES

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE MEMBERS AND STAFF TO THE MEMBERSHIP

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MAY 2019

OLLI'S NEW OFFICERS INSTALLED AT ANNUAL PICNIC



John Kilgore (r), Harriet Waas (c) and Jack Mapstone (l) are the new OLLI officers.

They were installed at OLLI's annual picnic on April 12 at the FSU Reservation. **John is president, Harriet is first vice president, and Jack is second vice president.**

New members of the advisory council are **Jill Adams** and **Kathie Emrich**.

Jill is Advisory Council recording secretary, and Kathie has been active in several OLLI functions over the years. They join current council members **Karyn Hornick, Denise Zabelski-Sever** and **Mary Ann Price**, who represents Westminster Oaks.

As president, John is chair of the advisory council and, in conjunction with the director, guides the business of OLLI. As first vice president, Harriet manages the activities calendar and chairs the special interest

groups/clubs. As second vice president, Jack is responsible for selecting class hosts and chairs the Membership Satisfaction Committee. All three serve on the Curriculum Committee. Executive Director Debra Herman announced that 106 OLLI members attended the picnic.

Recipients of the \$2,000 scholarships for this year are **Nacia Goldberg**, **Andre Golbert**, and **Jane Wadhams**. Nacia and Jane are the first undergraduates to be awarded OLLI scholarships. Ms. Goldberg plans on seeking a Ph.D. in sociology, with a

specialty in gerontology. Mr. Golbert is a piano performance student, an OLLI instructor on the piano, and gives weekly performances at a Jewish retirement community in his native Brazil. Ms. Wadhams plans to enter a Ph.D. program and work with a research institution dealing with understanding how the Earth has changed over time and what causes these changes, which is important to the longevity of all living things.

Debra also read letters of appreciation from last year's scholarship winners.

CLUB NEWS

FIELD TRIPS FOR OLLI MAYMESTER ANNOUNCED

There will be four field trips during May.

The **first** is a Director's Tour of the Grove on Thursday, May 9 at 10 a.m. Built by enslaved craftspeople in the 1830's, the Call-Collins House at The Grove is a well-preserved example of Florida's antebellum Greek Revival architecture. OLLI's in-depth two-hour guided tour, led by Executive

Director Johnathan Grandage, includes a conversation about topics in American History and historic preservation. Registration deadline is May 6. There is a \$1 fee payable at the door. The entrance to the free parking lot is from the west side of Monroe Street, ½ block south of Third Avenue.

Contact Jan Smith,
jansmith1642@gmail.com

The **second** field trip, this one to the Second Harvest of the Big Bend, is set for Friday, May 10 at 3 p.m. This facility, which, through partner agencies, serves tens of thousands of people in the 11 North Florida counties. The tour includes the 41,000 sq. ft. warehouse, a history of our local food bank and information about its current operations ranging from disaster relief to student backpack programs. Participants must wear closed-toed shoes. Registration deadline is May 6 for this free tour. Contact Randy Soule, firemanrandy18@gmail.com

The **third** is the Southern Shakespeare Company presentation of Macbeth, starring Marc Singer, at Cascades Park on Friday, May 10 at 7 p.m. Southern Shakespeare brings the sights, sounds and flavors of a Renaissance Festival to the area. Experience the spectacle of armored combat, jugglers, illusionists, and wandering madrigals. Enjoy the taste of medieval food and

see the play! Registration deadline is May 8 for this free event. Parking is available in non-reserved lots and in parking garage C on Bloxham Street. Contact Marie Clewis, marieclewis@kw.com

The **final trip** is a tour of the FSU Coyle E. Moore Athletic Center on Friday, May 17 at 10:30 a.m. Learn about FSU's athletic history and view displays celebrating sports achievements, including the football team's national championships.

Enjoy a tour of the impressive training facilities, locker rooms and the multipurpose theater where teams watch post-game films and hold press conferences. Meet at the Bobby Bowden Statue outside University Center D (North Side of Doak Campbell Stadium). Park in the designated Visitors lot adjacent to the University Center Building C. Contact Randy Soule, firemanrandy18@gmail.com

OLLI FRIENDSHIP FORCE ANNOUNCES UPCOMING VISITS

Many thanks to the OLLI volunteers who home, dinner and day hosted our Milwaukee guests in April. Our visitors loved getting to see the baby alligators on their mama's back and the manatees at Wakulla Springs. The small dinners with various OLLI

members was one of the highest rated activities on their evaluation forms.

Do you need to practice your Spanish you've been learning in OLLI classes??Our next incoming international group will be here

November 10-16, 2019 from Mexico. Volunteers are needed to be home and dinner hosts. The Mexico planning committee needs volunteers and you are invited to participate. A date will be set for the planning committee to get together in late May depending on the volunteers' schedules. The majority of the planning will need to be accomplished prior to the start of the OLLI Fall October 2019 classes. Contact Wendy Johnston at mrswendyjohnston@gmail.com

Our next outgoing domestic trip is to Raleigh N.C. The Raleigh group visited us in March 2018 and they would like to return our hospitality. The dates for the visit are September 25-29. A Bluegrass festival is on the

agenda for Saturday September 28th. The trip is limited to 18. Contact Wendy Johnston if you're interested in learning more about this trip. Hurricane season is starting soon.

Would you be willing to help a Friendship Force member in Florida, Alabama or Georgia that has to evacuate due to a hurricane? Other clubs in the region are opening their homes if OLLI Friendship Force members in Tallahassee need to evacuate. Let Wendy Johnston know if you are willing to help out in an emergency situation. Check out the Friendship Force international website for travel opportunities at www.friendshipforce.org

OLLI WALKING CLUB COMPETES IN FIFTH ROSE CITY RACE WALK IN THOMASVILLE



This is the fifth year that OLLI Walking Club members have had the pleasure of taking part in the Rose City Race Walk in Thomasville.

The race is a benefit for the YMCA and is very well organized. This was the 38th annual race walk.

Six-hundred fifty walkers were registered, the oldest a man, 92 years of age.

“Ten members of the Walking Club competed in the race on a perfect spring day. Special mention was made of the OLLI Walking Club before the race started.

Cindy Foster was the leader of our team, completing the race in 38 minutes and 26 seconds. The record for the course is an unbelievable 26 minutes and 6 seconds,” Sue Wattenberg said.

“This is one of the few races designed specifically for walkers. I'm hoping that more walking club members will join us next year for this annual tradition. Don't be intimidated by the word 'race.' All walking levels enjoy the walk through a beautiful Thomasville neighborhood.

To top it all off, we always go somewhere nice for breakfast before driving back to Tallahassee,” she noted.

TRAVEL CLUB'S “ARMCHAIR TRAVEL” FEATURES JOHN AND LINDA KILGORE'S JOURNEY TO CAMBODIA



As part of the Travel Club's “Armchair Travel” program, OLLI members were recently enthralled as President John Kilgore and his wife, Linda, discussed their trip last year to Cambodia.

Their slide presentation graphically showed the sites and wonders of this mysterious land. John talked about transportation on motorcycles.

The locals would buy Johnnie Walker bottles filled with gas, fill their gas tanks and return the unfilled bottles to the store. “People there traveled mostly on motorcycles; there are very few cars.

Their ‘taxis’ are two-wheeled carriages pulled by motorcycle drivers, who take naps in hammocks strung across carriages,” he said.

“He talked about the Buddhist Temples, the “killing fields,” and a 1,000-year-old library that housed ancient writings discovered in the jungle. He spoke of his visit to the ancient ruins of Angkor Wat, temples that were discovered in the late 1800’s, and Bayon faces—huge 10-foot-high figures of ancient royalty on each of four sides of the columns.

"Linda and I enjoy doing the Armchair Travel presentations for the Travel Club and sharing our travel experiences. Because it is an

"Armchair" travel presentation, we can share all of what is involved in travel, not just the sights.

It is fun to see the reactions of the members to the planes we fly, the hotels, the rooms we stay in (especially the bathrooms), and the food we ate.

It is a chance for others to experience what we did on our travels," John said.

GREAT IDEAS FOR FUTURE FOREIGN TRAVEL PLANS

OLLI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DEBRA HERMAN VISITS WITH COLLETTE TOURS TRAVEL EXECUTIVES

OLLI Director Debra Herman was recently invited to visit with Collette Tours travel executives for their President’s Summit Conference in Cologne, Germany. While there, she gave feedback as to what works best for OLLI travelers, and learned about their latest group travel packages, including some of the new sites that are “truly exotic for our traveling members,” she said.

Conferring with Collette executives for three days of intensive meetings gave her “the opportunity to request particular travel packages—including

side trips--based on our level of involvement with Collette over the years,” adding that “(t)hus far, Collette has organized six trips for us, both foreign and domestic, and is handling the trip to Ireland this August.”

Debra’s trip comes on the heels of the Fall 2018 OLLI Annual Member Survey which shows that the Travel Club scored the highest in membership participation and interest.

“While our members show interest and involvement in all of our clubs, because travel is at the top, it was important to attend this meeting with Collette’s top executives to further expand travel opportunities for our members,” she noted.

“By being invited to Collette’s President’s Summit Conference, I learned about the benefits that we as an organization can include in our travel programs, including customizing plans that meet our members’ particular interests, and the ability to request top tour guides,” she said.

“At the various meetings, I learned about marketing, promotions, advertising, customer relations,

product development, and tours specifically targeted for OLLI organizations, particularly ours.

Those in attendance also learned about revenue considerations, airline and other transportation, pre- and post-tour options, accounting, customer care, group leadership, and client solutions specifically dealing with problems as they arise.

“This was truly a learning experience that will benefit the scope and substance of our travel program as we go forward,” she said.

CLASS HOSTS AND HELPERS RACK UP 676 HOURS FOR SPRING SEMESTER

Once again proving the value of OLLI volunteers, class hosts and helpers accounted for 676 hours of volunteer time during the recently completed Spring Semester, according to “Keeper of the Volunteer Hours” and First Vice President Harriet Waas.

“It is a testament to the importance of OLLI volunteers that we yet again see this remarkable commitment to OLLI,” she added. “If you are interested in being a Class Host for Maymester, please drop me a note at waas01@comcast.net,” she said.

CURRICULUM CHAT

by Susan Yelton
Chair, OLLI Curriculum Team

Your curriculum team has met and approved 51 classes for the Fall semester. Nine of the 51 will be three-week classes. Our next step is to ask faculty their choice of days and times when they can teach. By June, we will have the Fall schedule complete and begin working on Spring 2020 semester.

Before I comment on upcoming classes, I do want to thank all of you who responded to the Fall member 2018 survey. What it told me is that history continues to be the most popular category. We have scheduled 13 history classes for Fall. Current events, music/art, and science also had high responses.

For those of you who are history lovers, we were finally able to schedule Jonathan Grant, who will teach History of Russia. If you who have been members a long time, you will remember the class he taught in 2006, he called meet the STAN-leys - Central Asian History Since the Mongol Conquest. Don Barry will

continue the story of the French Revolution and introduce us to Napoleon Bonaparte, who crowned himself emperor in Notre Dame Cathedral.

We are also partnering with the FSU Art Museum for two class that focus on exhibits that will be held there. One will focus on the Ottoman Empire and the other will be art from Iceland.

Even if you did not watch Tiger Woods win the Masters this year (amazing comeback) there is much to learn about golf from John Mooshie who has been involved in the world of golf for many years. He will introduce to us the history, the game and the designs of the world best courses. And maybe a field trip to our 1920 classic course, Capital City Country Club.

There are many colleges at FSU that offer classes we would like to schedule, but it is difficult to find faculty who have the time and interest to fit an OLLI class into their busy schedules. We are so please that three faculty, who are always favorites with

OLLI members, are returning. Dr. Horst Wahl, Chair of the Physics Department, will challenge our brains again, teaching "Redefinition of the Kilogram"; Jennifer Proffitt, "When is News Fake"; and Walther Tschinkel, "The Parallel Universe of Ants." The College of Music has been an exception when it comes to sending us proposals.

If you did not meet our scholarship winner, Andre Golbert, at the picnic, he will be playing his piano for us again. This time, the class will be Beethoven and we will provide him with a good piano! Fall semester will also introduce you to some new faces.

Retired Judge Terry Lewis will teach "Perceptions of Justice". He is well known for the 2000 presidential election, but I think he wants to put that history behind him.

According to the survey, you also prefer six-week academic classes. Most of you also want activities when classes are not in session, including summer, and enjoy activities related to what you learn.

As Curriculum Chair, I do coordinate with the members who arrange activities, but arranging one day classes has it challenges. Last Spring, we were able to arrange one day classes, because of the number of weeks between registration and when classes began. During Fall semester, there are not many days when we can arrange a one-day class. I am talking to the dean and Sally Jue about a butterfly field trip before registration, but that is not confirmed.

I look forward to seeing many of you during Maymester and if you have any suggestions for future classes, please email me or call me at 850-443-4331.

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

LIVING WELL WITH AGE-RELATED VISION LOSS

As you get older, you may notice changes in your vision. Sometimes you may just need a different glasses prescription, or special reading glasses. Other times, vision changes can be more serious.

Some age-related eye problems, as well as conditions like multiple sclerosis (MS) or muscular dystrophy (MD), can cause you to lose some of your vision over time.

Vision loss can affect how you get around, read, write, or do things around the house. With the right tools and supports, you can still live

independently and continue doing the things you enjoy.

How Does Our Vision Change With Aging?

Some common age-related vision changes include:

- Need for corrective lenses - as you age, you may need corrective lenses to read, to see distances, or both. Need for more light - as you age, your pupils may lose their ability to change size quickly when lighting changes. you may need more light than you used to for reading, or have trouble driving at night. You may also be bothered by glare or bright lights.

- Cataracts - These are cloudy formations in the lens of your eye that can make your vision blurry and can usually be treated with surgery.
- Loss of peripheral (side) vision - You may notice that your visual field narrows, or that you need to turn your head more while driving.
- Color vision changes - You may have trouble distinguishing shades of color, such as different shades of blue.
- Dry eyes - You produce fewer tears as you get older. You may notice a gritty or burning sensation in your eye. This problem is easily managed with artificial tears or other drops.

What Conditions can Cause Vision Loss?

Some long-term conditions, like MS and MD can lead to vision loss. In addition, some eye conditions are more common in older people. These include:

- Glaucoma - This occurs when fluid stops draining properly from the back of the eye. Pressure can build up, damaging your optic nerve and causing loss of peripheral (side) vision.
- Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) - This can cause loss of central vision due to damage to the macula, the spot in the center of the retina.
- Diabetic retinopathy - Diabetes can cause blood vessels in the retina to break down over time, leading to vision loss.

Living Well With Vision Loss.

It is wise to get eye exams at least once every two years, starting when you turn 40. These exams can help spot vision problems early.

If you have permanent vision loss, you may wonder how you will continue to care for yourself or participate in your favorite activities. These worries are natural, especially at the beginning. However, with the right tools and community support, you can still remain active and self-sufficient.

Getting Around

You may need to stop driving if you have significant vision loss. Resources you can use for transportation include:

- Public transit and paratransit - Public transportation may be an option and all public systems have scheduled information in audio format and when appropriate provide point to point paratransit.
- Using drivers - You may wish to pay a driver or get rides from a family member or friend, or member of your church or community. You may also consider taxi or ride sharing services.
- Walking - A white cane is a simple tool you can use to navigate safely with limited vision. The cane is held on the ground in front of you to detect steps

or obstacles, protecting you from tripping or falling. With some training, you can use the cane while walking, along with a support cane, or while using a power wheelchair. Even if you have some vision, a white cane can help you avoid obstacles on the ground so you can look up while walking or rolling. An orientation and mobility (O&M) instructor can provide you with a white cane and teach you how to use it. You can find an agency in your state with O&M instructors here: <http://www.visionaware.org/directory.aspx>(link is external)

Reading and Writing

There are a variety of tools you can use to read and write with limited or no sight. These include:

- Magnifiers - These are handheld devices that make print larger.
- Closed-circuit television (CCTV) - This device consists of a movable platform that holds the reading material and is connected to a screen, like a TV displaying an enlarged image.
- Writing guides - These guides help you stay inside the lines when you are writing a check or signing a form.
- Audiobooks - You may qualify for the National Library Service's talking book program. This program offers recorded books and magazines at no cost, which you can receive through the mail or online. You can learn more and apply for these services here: <https://www.loc.gov/nls/>(link is external)

You may also check if your state library system offers audiobooks. Another service called Newsline provides audio recordings of newspapers and magazines for free: www.nfb.org/newsline/(link is external)

Computer software - Software is available that can enlarge text on the computer screen. Other computer programs, called screen readers, will read the text aloud. Some people prefer to use a combination of screen magnification and screen reading on their computer or mobile device. Some mobile devices, like iPhones and iPads, have screen-magnification and screen-reading software built in. Most public libraries also have computers which are accessible to people with disabilities.

- Braille - Braille is a tactile alphabet system that uses raised (embossed) dots to represent letters. Although learning braille can be challenging at first, some older adults find it useful for notetaking, labeling, or recreational reading without eye fatigue. your local center for the blind may offer braille classes, or you can take distance classes from the Hadley Institute for the Blind(link is external).

Around the House

If you have vision loss, you may still be able to live independently at home using a few simple tools. Many inexpensive tools for labeling and

organizing your home are available from the resources listed below. Possible changes you might make to accommodate vision loss include:

- **Lighting and contrast** - If you have some sight, you may find that you can see more clearly when using brighter lightbulbs in your home. Natural sunlight can also be helpful. You may also add bright or contrasting colors to items in your home to make them easier to see. For example, you might place a strip of yellow tape at the top of the staircase.
- **Decluttering** - Eliminating clutter will make it easier to find things you need. To stay safe and avoid tripping, keep walkways clear, clutter off the floor (including area rugs), and cabinets and drawers shut. You may need to move more slowly through your home at first, but after a while, you will likely build a "mental map" of your home so you can move about confidently without relying on vision.
- **Labeling** - Some people find it helpful to label things around the house by writing the label in black ink on a white index card and attaching the card to the item. You may also use colored permanent markers to label items, create raised markings or use rubber bands or safety pins to distinguish food or medicine containers that look the same. High-contrast or tactile marks can also be placed on appliances, such as ovens and washing machines, so you can continue to use them independently.

- **Cooking and cleaning** - It is possible to cook and keep house with vision loss, using your other senses. For example, when water boils, it makes a distinctive sound and the pot handles vibrate. Meat has a distinct smell and texture when it is done cooking. You can identify dirty countertops or dusty furniture by touch, and clean mirrors and windows in a grid pattern to be sure you cover the whole area. Some social services may offer housekeeping help as well.

Find Support From Other Seniors Adjusting to Vision Loss

- Your local branch of the National federation of the Blind: www.nfb.org(link is external)
- American Council of the Blind: www.acb.org(link is external)
- International Low Vision Support Group Network(link is external)
- Website that offers success stories from seniors with low vision(link is external)Additional Resources

You may be able to receive low-vision tools, such as magnifiers, white canes, or appliance markers, from your local agency for the blind and visually impaired.

Your state may also have an older blind independent living program with specific resources for older adults. Low vision tools are also available for purchase from the following websites:

- National federation of the Blind online store: <https://nfb.org/independence-market>(link is external)
- Independent Living Aids: www.independentliving.com(link is external)
- For additional information about vision loss causes and treatments:
- Macular Degeneration Association: macularhope.org(link is external)
- American Optometric Association: www.aoa.org(link is external)
- National Eye Institute: www.nei.nih.gov(link is external)--Other resources for living with vision loss: American Foundation for the Blind Resources for Seniors: www.visionaware.org(link is external)
- National Federation of the Blind Resources for Seniors: <https://nfb.org/seniors>(link is external)

IN GOOD HEALTH: HUMOR AND LAUGHTER FOR SENIORS

**"I intend to live forever - so far, so good!"
Stephen Wright**

Laughing is universal; no matter how old you are, what language you speak or what your physical or mental abilities are, you can laugh.

Even people who have been accused of having no sense of humor have been caught chuckling over a funny story, unleashing a host of physical, emotional and mental health benefits for both themselves and the people around them. **What Happens When You Laugh**

"Middle age is when you still believe you'll feel better in the morning." Bob Hope

Laughing triggers a number of positive physiological responses:

- Relaxation of the entire body, relieving muscle tension and stress
- Levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, drop and minimize pain and inflammation throughout the body
- The release of endorphins, natural feel-good substances that make you feel happy and content and have been proven to reduce the perception of physical pain
- Reduction in blood pressure combined with a moderate increase in the heart rate and improved blood circulation and oxygen intake
- The stimulation of the immune system thanks to the release of T-cells and salivary immunoglobulin A which is triggered by laughter.

Researchers at the College of William and Mary have found that "a wave of electricity sweeps through" the entire cerebral cortex (the whole brain) just before we laugh - this supports the theory that humor can actually help improve cognitive functioning by activating all parts of the brain simultaneously.

Health Benefits of Laughter

"You're over the hill when your back goes out more than you do." Pruneville.com

While the science of humor is a relatively new discipline, research studies on the health benefits of laughter consistently demonstrate the connection between laughing and longevity. Researchers know that laughing lowers blood pressure while increasing blood flow and oxygen intake, all positive physiological effects that have been linked to a decreased risk of heart attack and stroke.

Because laughing triggers the release of the drug-like neurochemical endorphin, laughing simply makes people feel better all over. Laughing also can have an anesthetic-like effect on the body, suppressing physical pain and discomfort for up to two hours following a hearty chuckle.

Humor and Mental Wellness

"I have been to many places, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone. I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognizes you there."- A Joke A Day

The ability to laugh is closely tied to having a positive outlook on life, an important protective factor against numerous mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. A study at Northwestern University revealed that patients with advanced COPD (chronic

obstructive pulmonary disease) who were exposed to humorous videos enjoyed better mental health than study participants who viewed non-humorous videos, supporting the connection between mental wellness and humor.

Laughing also promotes emotional well-being, helping people maintain a positive outlook and stable mood throughout the day. Optimism has been linked to improved resiliency; the ability to cope with stressful situations in spite of numerous obstacles such as disease, financial stress or the loss of a loved one.

Humor and Aging

"The preacher came to call the other day. He said at my age I should be thinking of the hereafter. I told him, "Oh, I do it all the time. No matter where I am - in the parlor, upstairs, in the kitchen, or down in the basement - I ask myself, "Now, what am I here after?" Everythingzoomer.com

Some of the most popular jokes involve getting older, thanks to their universal appeal (everyone ages, after all). While joking about age-related changes can help ease any anxiety over aging as well as help to normalize common experiences among seniors, researchers in Norway have found that people with a sense of humor can expect to live longer than their humorless counterparts.

The study by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology examined the health records of 53,000 Norwegian seniors; it examined their overall health and length of survival in relation to their ability to see the humor in situations. Researchers discovered that after seven years, the study participants who had a "sense of humor" enjoyed a 20 percent lower mortality rate in comparison to those who had difficulty laughing at daily events.

Laughter: The Best Medicine For Chronic Conditions

"There's a silver lining to being a cancer survivor. People said to me, "Are you freaked out that you're turning 50?" Hell, no. I'm thrilled to be turning 50." Fran Drecsher, Comedian/Actor

While laughing has been shown to help prevent the onset of many physical and mental illnesses, humor is also emerging as one of the most powerful medicines for chronic and degenerative conditions like dementia, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and cancer.

A recent study by Dr. Jean-Paul Bell of Australia's Arts Health Institute tracked the effects of live comedy on elderly nursing home patients with dementia/Alzheimer's. Over a 12-week period Dr. Bell and a troupe of clowns and comedians visited 36 long-term care homes in Sydney, Australia, where they told jokes, played games and performed funny skits for the patients. For the duration of the program, staff in the nursing homes reported that participants were more positive and happier, while aggressive behaviors by the patients decreased for about 26 weeks after the program ended.

The Difference Between Happy and Harmful Humor

"The nice part about living in a small town is that when you don't know what you're doing, someone else does." Everyday Wisdom.com

When it comes to humor and laughter, it's not all fun and games. The types of things that The Internet is filled with humor; fun videos of little and not-so-little kids doing silly things, photos with funny captions and websites that feature comical stories and jokes. Here are some online resources where

people consider to be funny today are very different than what was viewed as humorous in the past; changes in social norms means that "clean" jokes need to focus on poking fun at situations or the person telling the joke, rather than being sarcastic or harmful.

In general, jokes that mock a particular ethnic, religious or minority group (such as homosexuals) are no longer considered to be funny by most people, nor are jokes about physical or mental disabilities. A good rule of thumb is to make fun of yourself, not others. Increasing your exposure to "clean" humor on prime-time television, online and in books will help build your comfort level with what types of jokes are considered appropriate and non-offensive.

Laughing More: How To Add Humor To Your Day

"If practice makes perfect yet nobody's perfect, why bother practicing?" Unknown

To gain to most physical and mental health benefits from humor, try to laugh every single day. Look for ways to schedule humor into your daily routine: subscribe to a "Joke of the Day" email, read the comics in the daily newspaper or watch a funny television show. Once you make laughing a daily habit, you will begin to enjoy the numerous health benefits of humor.

Online Humor and Laughter Resources

"I'm out of bed and I made it to the keyboard - what more do you want?" Unknown

Further reading on humor and health

you can learn more about the connection between humor and health:

Alzheimer's Disease: Remember to Laugh - A brief paper on the value of laughter as a

coping tool for both caregivers and patients affected by Alzheimer's Disease.

The Healing Power of Laughter - An easy-to-read, presentation-ready summary on laughter, types of humor and social norms.

The Connection Between Laughter, Humor and Good Health - A printer-ready handout that summarizes the connection between health and humor.

Humor and Laughter May Influence Health - A four-part series from researchers at the College of Nursing, Indiana State University which examines the connection between health and humor.

Association for Applied and Therapeutic Humor - This non-profit organization is dedicated to the promotion and advancement of therapeutic humor; they maintain an extensive collection of humor resources and

support networking between professionals through membership and an annual conference. Humor on the Internet:

A Joke A Day - Website that features new, clean jokes daily. Users can sign up to have a free joke sent to their email daily. Bob Hope - A collection of some of Bob Hope's most popular jokes.
<http://www.bobhope.com/Joke.htm>

Pruneville.com - Website featuring pages with both "clean" and "not-so-clean" jokes targeted towards 50+ readers; content updated weekly.

Everyday Wisdom - Online collection of clean jokes and humorous short stories. Everything Zoomer - Features a daily joke/humorous short story aimed at readers aged 50 and better.

THE TRUTH ABOUT GRUMPY OLD MEN (AND WOMEN)

Reprinted from AARP Magazine

Reach a certain age, and it's almost expected that if you're not, say, the sweet old granny happily baking strudel, you're more than likely to become the cranky, cane-waving curmudgeon. No wonder the 1993 film Grumpy Old Men is getting retooled for a new generation, this time starring Eddie Murphy.

But the assumption that a grumpier outlook accompanies wrinkles and gray hair is simply wrong. "Older people tend to be happier than the general population," says Heidi White, M.D., a professor of medicine in the geriatrics division of Duke University School of Medicine.

"So why do we have that stereotype? Because we're an ageist society and we misunderstand older adults.

Empirically, older people are no more likely to be irritable or unpleasant than anyone else. If anything, research shows that overall, they tend to be relatively content and patient. Among other factors, a phenomenon known as the Positivity Effect sets in, where we tend to remember the good over the bad. For many, lifestyle shifts also can favor a slight mellowing in attitude. Being able to retire means you no longer have to spar with a demanding boss or chase around a brood of unruly children.

Instead, you can drop in on the grandchildren at your leisure or take off for a spontaneous weekend getaway without telling anyone. If a well-oiled retirement can remove certain mood-hampering stress, old age can, of course, present its own kind. And certain temperaments may struggle more than others with age-related challenges.

Consider a typical dinner out. On the plus side, you may now have more time to dine at a new restaurant in town. But once you arrive, you're reminded of just how noisy many new places are — making it difficult to hear conversation if your hearing is compromised. Dim lighting can make it hard to read a menu. A busy server may get impatient if you have trouble hearing the specials. Narrow walkways pose trip hazards if you're navigating past tables and chairs with a cane or walker.

Anyone could feel cranky by the time the dessert menu rolls around. "The irritable old man is really about the lack of accommodation that we make for older adults," White notes. It's also possible that you're not more grumpy, just more vocal. Certain natural changes that occur as we age, like impulse control, can make you more sharp-tongued than before, and more likely to say what is on your mind, for good or bad.

David Rosenberg, 75, noticed his personality starting to change about five years ago, soon after he retired. He stopped wanting to please people so much, and stopped holding back when someone said or did something that bothered him. "You get to a point where you say, 'I don't need to put up with this anymore,'" says Rosenberg, who lives in Boca Raton, Fla., with his wife, Marsha Dubrow, 69. "I have my wife, I have my friends, I don't need to do it."

Dubrow noticed the change, too, and sees it as a positive one overall, allowing them to focus on what they want to as a couple. "He has changed, but he was a patient person," Dubrow said. "I was never a patient person, so I haven't changed very much. I'm as impatient as always." But if moodiness isn't always an ailment, it *can* be a symptom. In general, experts say, when an older person becomes moodier than he used to be, there may be a good reason — and those close to him should pay attention. "We have to look at irritability as a sign of something else going on," says Mark R. Nathanson, geriatric psychiatrist at Columbia University. The root cause, experts say, could potentially be one of the following:

Dementia: Research has linked mood changes with early signs of Alzheimer's disease and some symptoms of dementia overlap with common signs of depression, like apathy, social withdrawal and isolation.

Hormonal changes: We're all well aware that falling estrogen levels during menopause can make a woman feel irritable, sad and anxious. But a gradual decline in testosterone levels in men, known as andropause, is being researched as a possible link to depression. Also as we age, our dopamine levels decline, too, making us vulnerable to dopamine-deficient depression.

Chronic pain: Pain, particularly chronic pain, can make a person irritable. Dealing with pain saps your energy, leaving little room for niceties and patience. It can also interfere with sleep. "Pain makes people irritable and it fatigues people quickly," White says.

Loneliness: Social isolation and loneliness is a national epidemic, affecting a third of older

adults. If you have no one to talk to, and no one to visit, depression can creep in. Spend little time with other people, and you lose the social skills that keep you engaged with the world. Loneliness can be a vicious cycle. Feel down and you don't want to see anyone. But if you don't see anyone, you only feel worse and become more irritable. So what to do if you're the one who feels like a grumpy old man (or woman)? While you can't change the reality of age-related hardships such as the deaths of friends and loved ones, there are concrete ways to step back, take a deep breath and regain control over your outlook and mood.

Learn to adapt: Aging often means handling an onslaught of changes, many of which you may not want to accept. But pound your stake in the ground and refuse to budge and you may find that the world moves on without you. People who can adapt to a changing environment fare better. "Adaptability is one of the best traits you can have as an older adult," says White of the Duke University School of Medicine. "Life is about changing and as we get older, we have to adapt to hearing loss, we have to adapt to chronic pain." The quicker you adapt, the better you will fare.

Shut up and listen: When you get together with other people, listen to what they have to say, and ask questions. Don't talk about your arthritis or how noisy all the restaurants are. Instead, use the opportunity to learn something new and get out of your head. Talk to people who disagree with you and ask their opinions. "One of the most powerful things you can do to cure loneliness is to get out in the world, ask other people questions and

shut up about your body," says John Medina, a developmental molecular biologist and the author of [Brain Rules for Aging Well](#).

Find a support network: Loneliness is a dangerous thing. Focus your energy on building or strengthening your support network. Join a spiritual or political organization or cause. Call a friend for lunch. Join a support group for people who share a common issue. Take an exercise class. Take a class at a local college or learning center where you can learn a new skill and meet new people.

Go dancing! Exercise and movement are great for your mental and physical health. But dancing has the added benefit of forcing you to interact directly and physically with another person. "It is a ritualized forced social interaction," Medina says. "One of the most frightening things about aging is people stop touching you." Get on the dance floor, and you have a way to break through that and connect with another person.

Talk to a professional: If you still cannot shake your sadness or grumpiness, contact your health care provider. Your moodiness may be a symptom of an underlying health problem. "Someone could present with irritability and it could be a medical emergency, like they have a bad infection or pneumonia," says Nathanson of Columbia University. If you are suffering from depression, seek help from a therapist, as depression is a treatable disease and you should not have to suffer alone.

SEVEN THINGS SENIORS CAN DO TO KEEP THEIR MINDS SHARP

With advanced age comes numerous health concerns, but it is memory loss that evokes the most fear. A 2012 survey conducted by the AARP found that staying mentally sharp was the top concern of 64% of the 135,000 members who participated, while a 2017 study by the Alzheimer's Association found that more people fear being diagnosed with Alzheimer's or dementia than fear death itself. Though many people believe that there is nothing they can do to prevent cognitive decline, science suggests otherwise: barring the presence of neurodegenerative diseases, there are many steps that people can take to prevent decline and enhance their cognitive health. Here are the steps that have been proven to keep the brain fit. (National Academies Press)

Keep Learning

Our memories are built as a result of three separate activities: taking in new information; recording it; and retrieving it. There are several parts of the brain that are involved in this complex series of events, and as we age, physical changes occur that can slow the process, but these changes are less frequently seen in people with higher levels of education: learning actually exercises the brain and keeps it strong in the same way that lifting weights builds muscle. And some studies have shown that there are many ways in which we are able to learn and

grow more effectively as a result of aging. (CNN)

If you challenge your brain with new things to learn and vigorous mental activity, you can build and preserve brain connections. Mental stimulation can come from continuing to work or volunteering for a charity: what is most important is that you are learning throughout your life.

Consider taking up a new hobby that requires new skills, reading about subjects you're unfamiliar with, learning a second language or playing games such as chess. Other brain-stretching activities including doing puzzles, playing music, creating art, or working in the garden.

Use Memory Tricks

If you're having a harder time remembering names of new people, new ideas, errands and the like, use memory tricks called mnemonic devices that optimize how your memory works. Repeating new information makes it easier to retrieve later, as it boosts your brain's chances of encoding information and reinforces connections between brain cells. Create mental associations between new information and old, or create a story around what you are trying to remember. You can also make it easier to remember complex things like lists by breaking them down

into smaller pieces. (Scientific American)

Preserve and Expand Your Social Network

The expansiveness and quality of your social network, and your level of engagement in it, can have a direct impact on your brain health. (AARP). The Lubben Social Network Scale is an excellent tool for gauging the strength of your support network, which has been directly tied to both physical and mental health outcomes. According to Lisa F. Berkman, Director of the Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, “A lot of people when they think about the elderly focus on social support – things like what can I do for an older mother. But having someone to count on is not what we’re measuring. It’s not about support, it’s about being completely engaged and participating in our society.” (New York Times) Even social media provides a critical benefit, as a study showed that a group of older adults who learned and used Facebook for an 8-week period showed a big uptick in complex working memory. (Oxford University Press)

Stop Multi-Tasking

Being able to do three or four (or more) things at a time may seem like a superpower, and an ability to hope continues as you age, but studies have

shown it’s hard on your memory – especially if you’re older.

Studies conducted by researchers at the University of California at San Francisco found that multi-tasking interrupts short-term, working memory to a much greater degree in older people, (UCSF) and that’s why we find ourselves standing in front of a cabinet, unsure of what we had set out to look for moments earlier. As we age, our brains are less able to hold on to information in the face of distraction: this leads to the all-too-familiar phenomenon of being interrupted in the midst of a story leading to forgetting what you were going to say next. The older we get, the more we need to concentrate on the task at hand, and stop giving multiple things partial attention.

Eat with Your Memory in Mind

If you think that “you are, what you eat” is just word salad, think again. A study conducted by the National Institute of Aging looked at the role of diet on memory and found that the higher participants ranked on nutrient intake, the better their scores.

Researchers have found that people who take in moderate amounts of caffeine on a regular basis may realize neuroprotective effects that lower the risk of memory loss (CBS News),

and others have shown that moderate drinking of alcohol can also lower the risk of Alzheimer's disease and dementia. But more than anything else, there is a strong link between a nutrient-dense diet and strong thinking skills. The so-called Mediterranean diet – which is made up of fruits, vegetables, fish, olive oil, nuts, and whole grains – has been directly linked to a lower risk of cognitive decline. (NPR)

Get Regular Exercise

Though you probably think of exercise as something that you do for your body, research has shown that regular exercise has a profound impact on the brain. It builds and preserves thinking skills and boosts memory. (Harvard Medical School)

It does this in two ways: first, the physical impact of increased blood flow helps to cut inflammation, restore blood sugar balance and boost the growth of new blood vessels to the brain, helping to preserve existing brain cells and build new ones.

But exercise also has the secondary impact of tiring you out so that you get a good night's sleep, while also improving your mood and cutting down on the stress that can lead to damaging chemicals and hormones being released.

Additionally, a University of California at Los Angeles study revealed that adults over the age of 75 who engage in regular physical activity develop larger brains and reduce their risk of dementia. The expansion specifically takes place in the hippocampus, which controls short-term memory. (Science Daily)

Get Seven Hours of Sleep

The older we get, the less likely we are to get an uninterrupted night of sleep. Unfortunately, in addition to leaving us tired the next day, lack of needed rest can have a profound impact on memory, and on decline in aging in general. (Nature) To improve the quality and quantity of your sleep, pay attention to sleep hygiene issues such as too much screen time too close to bed time, going to bed at irregular hours, too much light or noise in your bedroom, and the quality of your mattress.

If you suspect that medications you are taking may be impacting sleep quality, discuss the issue with your physician and see if there are other drugs that would accomplish the same thing without imposing on your rest.

Improving the amount of sleep that you get can – and specifically deep sleep – can go a long way towards slowing down the process of cognitive decline and keeping your brain sharp. (University of Texas)

SENIOR POPULATION AND ALLERGIES: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

While we all look forward to the more pleasant weather that marks the beginning of spring, for many individuals, the enjoyable climate comes with a price in the form of seasonal allergies. Sadly, even if you have never experienced seasonal allergies before, you cannot assume you are immune to them.

Doctors state that allergies can develop at any age, and although it's not known exactly why, the prevalence of adult-onset allergies in the United States is increasing. One theory is that repeated exposure to certain allergens can actually increase sensitivity over time, rather than decrease it as one might think.

For senior citizens, it is especially important to look for the signs that come with seasonal allergies. These include sneezing, runny nose, congestion, and itchy and/or watery eyes. If you notice them, speak to your doctor right away, as allergy symptoms can be particularly dangerous to seniors with cardiovascular issues. Additionally, a doctor will be able to recommend treatments other than antihistamines, which may not be recommended for seniors due to the potential side effects.

Regardless if allergies are familiar to you or something you are experiencing for the first time, the following tips can help get you through allergy season more smoothly.

- Nutritionists believe that by eating foods known to fight inflammation, you can decrease some of your allergy symptoms. These foods include apples, flax seed, ginger, leafy greens, walnuts, and anything high in Vitamin C.
- Use online weather sites to monitor pollen levels, and plan outdoor activities for days when the pollen counts are projected to be at their lowest.
- Although you will be tempted, you should avoid opening your windows during allergy season, as it will increase the amount of pollen and mold entering your home or vehicle. Use your air conditioning instead.

If you are someone who likes to hang your clothes outside to dry on a line, revert back to using your clothes dryer during allergy season. Unfortunately, if you leave your clothes outside to dry, they can soak

up pollen, ragweed, and other airborne allergens like a sponge.

- Wash your hands after being outdoors. When you come inside after an extended period of time outdoors, take a shower to wash the pollen out of your hair and

change into fresh clothes. This will prevent pollen from spreading around your home.

Wear sunglasses when you are outdoors to keep pollen and other airborne irritants out of your eyes.

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