

IN THIS ISSUE: Texas Weiner Tales in "One All the Way," Farmersville's Past, Love Endures in "The Musician," Mid-Winter Gardening, Why Grandmothers Dote

The Good Life

News, Health & Leisure for South Valley Adults 50+ • Volume VIII, Number 5 • January/February 2022

Medicare Part B Premium to Increase by 14.5%

On November 12, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the 2022 premiums, deductibles and co-insurance amounts for the Medicare Part A and Part B programs.

The standard monthly premium for Medicare Part B enrollees will be \$170.10 for 2022, an increase of \$21.60 from \$148.50 in 2021. The annual deductible for all Medicare Part B beneficiaries is \$233 in 2022, an increase of \$30 from the annual deductible of \$203 in 2021.

These increases were not well received by seniors' groups such as The Senior Citizens League (TSLC), which issued a press release stating, "A 14.5% jump in the Medicare Part B premiums for 2022 spells trouble ahead for beneficiaries wondering where the money will come from to pay all the bills."



Social Security benefits may be increasing, but so are Medicare Part B premiums.

"The Part B increase from \$148.50 to \$170.10 per month is the highest since 2016 and will consume the entire annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) of Social Security recipients with the very lowest benefits, of about \$365 per month," said Mary Johnson, a TSLC Social Security and Medicare policy analyst.

"Social Security recipients with higher benefits should be able to cover the \$21.60 per month increase, but they may not wind up with as much left over as they were counting on," she added.

While the 5.9% COLA is the highest increase in four decades, Medicare Part B premiums grow even faster percentage wise almost every year, far outpacing the rate of growth in the COLA. A new TSLC survey found that 44% of Medi-

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The hope is that the newly branded Kaweah Health Ruth Wood Open Arms House will be licensed and ready to start accepting patients in the spring of 2022.

Kaweah Health Acquires the Ruth Wood Open Arms House

By Larry Kast

Covid 19 has claimed another victim, but this time it's a local nonprofit organization.

The Ruth Wood Open Arms House cared for its final patient this past July, then stopped accepting patients shortly thereafter. At the beginning of the pandemic, the locally owned and operated hospice was forced to close for most of 2020, before reopening its doors to patients in October that year.

Then in late September

2021, a letter sent to donors, volunteers, and community supporters from Board President Peter Sherwood announced the organization would be transferring ownership to the Kaweah Health Hospice Foundation.

"We worked very closely with the staff there," said Tiffany Bullock, director of Hospice, Home Health & Home Care Services for Kaweah Health. "The Open Arms House is something desperately needed by the community."

Bullock and Ryan Howard, medical director of Kaweah Health Hospice and Inpatient Palliative Services, agreed the social model adopted by the Open Arms House will continue to be used when Kaweah Health Hospice is licensed by the state to resume operations at 3234 S. Iris Ave. in Visalia. Once approved, it will continue to offer six hospice beds in a setting that looks more like a home than a typical medical facility.

"This historic blending of a non-medical hospice house with a hospital-owned not-for-profit hospice agency will serve as a model for other communities to follow as they address the ongoing challenges in 'completing the circle of life,'" Sherwood wrote in his letter.

"They anticipated their need for collaboration with us, that the change may be on

California's Ten-Year Alzheimer's Plan Gets Results

By Steve Pastis

California's State Plan for Alzheimer's Disease was an ambitious effort to deal with the challenges faced by many seniors and families in the state.

"Among the approximately 3.3 million seniors in California are more than 588,000 people living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias," reported the booklet that outlined the state's goals ten years ago. "California also is home to 1.1 million family members who provide daily care for people with Alzheimer's a progressive, fatal brain disease for which there is no cure."

The plan, which covered 2011 through 2021, had six main goals: eliminate stigma; ensure access to high quality, coordinated care in the setting of choice; establish a compre-



California's 10-year plan to deal with Alzheimer's ended in December.

hensive approach to support family caregivers; develop an Alzheimer's proficient, culturally competent workforce; ad-

vance research; and create a coordinated state infrastructure that enhances the delivery of care.

"Progress was made on all fronts," Susan DeMarois, director of California Department of Aging, told *The Good Life*.

"Alzheimer's and dementia are more in the mainstream now," she said about the goal to eliminate the stigma associated with Alzheimer's.

DeMarois said that there was now a state task force that is focused exclusively on family caregivers, and new laws provide caregivers with paid family leave.

Also, the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program will help pay for services so those over 65 years of age or disabled can stay in their own homes.

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Open Arms House...

(continued from page 1)

the horizon," said Dr. Howard, adding that the discussions began as early as the spring of 2021.

Bullock said the hope is that the newly branded Kaweah Health Ruth Wood Open Arms House will be licensed and ready to start accepting patients in the spring of 2022, although that depends on when the state licensing agency processes the application. The state, like many other employers, is short-staffed and behind in its efforts to process a mountain of paperwork.

While the social model, the home-like atmosphere and the policy of providing care regardless of a patient's ability to pay will remain unchanged, the biggest difference Bullock said will be the financial backing of the Kaweah Health Hospice Foundation.

"Our hospice foundation will help us with the expenses," she said. "Everyone will have



Dr. Ryan Howard

the ability to use the home if needed. Having (Kaweah Health Hospice Foundation's) commitment to do this allows us the ability to provide the service to anyone."

For more information, or to donate or volunteer, visit the Kaweah Health Hospice website at www.kaweahhealth.org/our-services/hospice/ or call (559) 733-0642.

VETERANS CORNER

Veterans Court



Ken Cruickshank

Tulare County has a Veterans Court! Established in 2010, the court serves veterans of Tulare County in the criminal justice system.

Several agencies and community partners, including the offices of the Tulare County District Attorney, Probation, Superior Court, Veterans Services, as well as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Counseling Clinic and local law enforcement agencies collaborated to create Veterans Court.

Referrals to Veterans Court come from a variety of sources, including arresting officers, defense attorneys, probation officers, and the judiciary. To be eligible to enroll in the program, you must:

- Volunteer for participation;
- Reside in Tulare County;
- Be a U.S. citizen or possess a Permanent Resident Alien card;
- Provide evidence of documented combat service (valid DD-214 or equivalent);
- Not be currently on active duty in the U.S. military;
- Sign a Waiver of Release for all medical and mental health records; and
- Not be charged with a serious or violent felony.

If you meet the above requirements, you will be further evaluated by the Tulare County Veterans Court Board, which meets every month to determine suitability for successful completion of the program.

Once you've been accepted into the program, you must enter a guilty plea for the charged offense(s), and then you will be ordered to participate in and complete Veterans Court. The program typically takes at least 18 months to complete, will require you to actively participate in periodic counseling sessions with a licensed psychologist, remain clean and sober, submit to drug testing, pay victim restitution as well as any fines and fees, and appear monthly in court. While in court, you will appear before the Veterans Court judge, who monitors progress, offers encouragement, and imposes appropriate sanctions, as circumstances dictate.

When you successfully complete all five separate phases of the program, you can have the charges against you dismissed.

Ken Cruickshank, the Veterans Services Officer for Tulare County, is a retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer. Contact him at the Veterans Services Office at 3348 W. Mineral King Ave., Visalia; by phone at (559) 713-2880; or by email at KCruicks@tularehhsa.org.

The deadline for the March/April issue is Tuesday, February 15, 2022



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Self-Administered Cognition Test Predicts Early Signs of Dementia

Many people experience forgetfulness as they age, but it's often difficult to tell if these memory issues are a normal part of aging or a sign of something more serious. A new study finds that a simple, self-administered test developed by researchers at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, College of Medicine and College of Public Health can identify the early, subtle signs of dementia sooner than the most commonly used office-based standard cognitive test.

This earlier detection by the Self-Administered Gerocognitive Examination (SAGE test) is critical to effective treatment, especially as new therapeutics for dementia and Alzheimer's disease are being developed and approved.

"New disease modifying therapies are available and others are currently being evaluated in clinical trials, and we know that the earlier cognitive impairment is detected, the more treatment choices a patient has and the better the treatments work," said Dr. Douglas Scharre, director of the Division of Cognitive and Memory Disorders in the Department of Neurology at Ohio State, and lead author of the study published in the journal *Alzheimer's Research & Therapy*.

Finally, to definitively diagnose problems like Alzheimer's, it allows doctors to get a baseline of their patients' cognitive functioning, and repeat testing allows them to follow their memory and thinking abilities over time.

"Often primary care physicians may not recognize subtle cognitive deficits during routine office visits," Scharre said.

The eight-year study followed 665 consecutive patients in Ohio State's Center for Cognitive and Memory Disorders. Researchers found that the SAGE test accurately identified patients with mild cognitive impairment who eventually progressed to a dementia diagnosis at least six months earlier than the most commonly used testing method called the Mini-Mental State Examination.

Among the 164 patients with baseline mild cognitive impairment, 70 patients converted to dementia. This is a 43% conversion rate over three to four years, which is similar to rates from other academic center-based studies, Scharre said. The distribution of dementia diagnoses included 70% Alzheimer's disease dementia, 7% Lewy body dementia, and 9% pure or mixed vascular dementia.

The test can be taken anywhere whenever there are cognitive concerns. It takes only about 10-15 minutes to complete,



Dr. Douglas Scharre

and the four interchangeable forms are designed to reduce learning effects from recurrent testing over time. The cognitive domains tested with the 11-item test include orientation, language, calculations, memory, abstraction, executive function and constructional abilities. The MMSE does not test abstractions or executive function abilities.

"Anytime you or your family member notices a change in your brain function or personality, you should take this test," Scharre said. "If that person takes the test every six months and their score drops two or three points over a year-and-a-half, that is a significant difference, and their doctor can use that information to get a jump on identifying the causes of the

cognitive loss and to make treatment decisions."

Scharre has worked closely with BrainTest, Inc. SEZC to develop a scientifically validated digital version of the SAGE test called BrainTest that can be taken anywhere on a tablet or touch-screen computer. This digital version will also be integrated with the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center's electronic medical records system to better facilitate self-testing, storing and reviewing results for patients and their health care providers.

"Based on cognitive score changes, clinicians and families may decide it is time to act on safety and supervision needs. This might include, for example, medication oversight, financial assistance, driving limitations, setting up durable powers of attorney and other legal arrangements/trusts, change in living arrangements, and enhanced caregiving support," Scharre said.

More than 6 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, and those numbers are expected to rise to more than 13 million by 2050. Deaths from Alzheimer's and other dementias have increased 16% during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the Alzheimer's Association.

You can access the SAGE test or BrainTest at wexnermedical.osu.edu/SAGE



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Legal clerks Celine Lizaola and Sheree Travato, and Chief Investigator Charlie Flores at the KCDA Office blanket collection box

Kings County D.A.'s Office Conducts Blanket Drive



KCDA Victim Witness Assistance Center receptionist Ruby Rutledge at a blanket collection box

In 2020, the Kings County District Attorney's (KCDA) Office collected more than 100 blankets and personally delivered them to the residents of Valley Christian Home.

"This year, we want to double our efforts and collect 200 blankets that will similarly be delivered to senior-assisted living facilities throughout our community," Executive Assistant District Attorney Phil Esbenshade told *The Good Life* in mid-December. "Once again, we want to show this often overlooked aspect of our community that they are loved and supported during these difficult times by providing them with a warm blanket."



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In January, the creator of Ageless Grace®, Denise Medved, will be hosting a **free webinar series** where you can learn more about the program and try out some of the exercises.

The webinars will be held on **January 12, 19 and 26, all at 11 a.m.** To sign up for the free webinar series, visit **PrestigeCanHelp.com**.

FEBRUARY

Try out Ageless Grace® classes right here in person with us! **Every Thursday in February – the 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th** – we will be holding free in-person Ageless Grace® classes at our community at 11 a.m. led by a certified instructor. By participating you'll also receive a punch card to enjoy future lessons as well.

To learn more, or to register for the February classes, call us at **(559) 735-0828**.

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Initial Grandparent Caregivers Report Given to Congress

On November 16, the Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren delivered its first report to Congress.

The report is a culmination of a two-year effort that gathered information from kin and grandparent caregivers of children across the country. It provides an overview of the many complex issues faced by these families and recommendations for addressing them.

The 22 recommendations fall under five priority areas:

- **Awareness of and Outreach to Kin and Grandparent Caregivers** including increasing public understanding of the contributions of kin and grandparent caregivers.

- **Kin and Grandparent Caregiver Engagement** to better integrate kin and grandparent caregivers into the child's care team.

- **Services and Supports for Kinship Families and Grandfamilies** including increasing access to information, services, and supports like respite care, child care and counseling.

- **Financial and Workplace Security for Kin and Grandparent Caregivers** to promote policies that prevent them from being financially disadvantaged

and to adopt workplace policies, flexibilities and practices that recognize their caregiving responsibilities.

- **Research, Data and Evidence-Supported Practices** to establish a national approach for obtaining, analyzing, disseminating and applying relevant data on kinship families and grandfamilies.

Together with the RAISE Family Caregiving Advisory Council's initial report to Congress released in September, these reports offer a comprehensive examination of the experiences, needs and concerns of family caregivers.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports there are 2.7 million children being raised in the homes of grandparents. Unfortunately, data on the number of children being raised by non-grandparent kin is not available.

The Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (SGRG) Act authorized establishing an advisory council to identify, promote, coordinate and disseminate information, resources and best practices available to help grandparents and other older relatives meet the needs of children in their care.

For a copy of the report, visit <https://acl.gov/SGRG/report>



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Seniors Remember the Old Days in 'One All the Way'

By Steve Pastis

For years, Harry Baram, Ron Rauschart and Larry Presta have spent many evenings out on "hot dog crawls" in the Paterson, New Jersey area. They have hot dogs at a few restaurants where they discuss their meals and share memories about the good old days. Their stories, as told in the documentary film "One All the Way," also reflect the history of Paterson.

The film's director, David Baram, Harry's son, enjoyed working with his father, although he did not expect that his father would play such an important role in "One All the Way."

"When I originally outlined (the film), it was less about Harry's story and much more about the grill culture," he said, "but

I go where the cameras and characters and production take me.

"It became clear to me that you couldn't tell the story of Texas weiners without talking about the story of Paterson," he continued. "I wanted to tell the story through a smaller character lens - through Harry's eyes."

In the film, Harry Baram talks about his experiences at various hot dog grills in the Paterson area. He even proposed to his wife in the booth at one of those eateries.

"I think (the film) humanizes him even more than I realized," said David Baram about his father, noting the scene where he walks by a ball-



Ron Rauschart, Harry Baram and Larry Presta are shown on a hot dog crawl in "One All the Way."

of ethnicity," he said.

Hot Texas Weiner History

The hot Texas weiner was invented (or at least named) by John Petrellis, a Greek immigrant living in Texas. He moved to Paterson and opened a hot dog stand in the Paterson Hotel in 1924.

"Then it burned down so he opened a place across the street in 1920 - The Orig-

inal," said Baram. "One of his employees left and started a place called Libby's. Another left and started The Olympic. Someone left and started Falls View."

Paterson, New Jersey

"As we point out, Paterson is still the second most densely populated city in the country," said Baram. "Outside of New York City, it was the number one destination for immigrant labor in the U.S. in the 19th and early part of the 20th century. There was a Polish section, a Greek section, a Black section."

He added that since then, immigrants from Asia, Africa and the Middle East have settled in Paterson.

"It's always been, throughout its history, that it had these pockets

of ethnicity," he said.

(continued on page 7)



The Goffle Grill is one of the film director's favorite restaurants.



Hot Texas weiners

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How Grandmothers' Brains React to the Sight of Their Grandchildren

By Carol Clark
eScienceCommons
Emory University

Many people lucky enough to have grown up with doting grandmothers know that they can burnish a child's development in unique and valuable ways. Now, for the first time, scientists have scanned grandmothers' brains while they're viewing photos of their young grandchildren – providing a neural snapshot of this special, inter-generational bond.

Proceedings of the Royal Society B published the first study to examine grandmaternal brain function, conducted by researchers at Emory University.

"What really jumps out in the data is the activation in areas of the brain associated with emotional empathy," says James Rilling, lead author and professor in Emory's Department of Anthropology and Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. "That suggests that grandmothers are geared toward feeling what their grandchildren are feeling when they interact with them. If their grandchild is smiling, they're feeling the child's joy. And if their grandchild is crying, they're feeling the child's pain and distress."

In contrast, the study found that when grandmothers view images of their adult child, they show stronger activation in an

area of the brain associated with cognitive empathy. That indicates they may be trying to cognitively understand what their adult child is thinking or feeling and why, but not as much from the emotional side.

"Young children have likely evolved traits to be able to manipulate not just the maternal brain, but the grand maternal brain," Rilling says. "An adult child doesn't have the same cute 'factor,' so they may not illicit the same emotional response."

Co-authors of the study are Minwoo Lee, a Ph.D. candidate in Emory's Department of Anthropology, and Amber Gonzalez, a former Emory research specialist.

"I can relate to this research personally because I spent a lot of time interacting with both of my grandmothers," Lee says. "I still remember warmly the moments I had with them. They were always so welcoming and happy to see me. As a child, I didn't really understand why."

It's relatively rare, Lee adds, for scientists to study the older human brain outside of the problems of dementia or other aging disorders.

"Here, we're highlighting the brain functions of grandmothers that may play an important role in our social lives and development," Lee says. "It's an important aspect of the human experience that has been largely left



out of the field of neuroscience."

Rilling's lab focuses on the neural basis of human social cognition and behavior. Motherhood has been extensively studied by other neuroscientists. Rilling is a leader in researching the lesser-explored neuroscience of fatherhood.

Grandmothers interacting with grandchildren offered new neural territory.

"Evidence is emerging in neuroscience for a global, parental caregiving system in the brain," Rilling says. "We wanted to see how grandmothers might fit into that pattern."

Humans are cooperative breeders, meaning that mothers get help caring for their offspring, although the sources of that help vary both across and within societies.

"We often assume that fathers are the most important caregivers next to mothers, but that's not always true," Rilling says. "In some cases, grandmothers are the primary helper."

In fact, the "grandmother hypothesis" posits that the reason human females tend to live long past their reproductive years is because they provide evolutionary benefits to their offspring and grandchildren. Evidence supporting this hypothesis includes a study of the traditional Hadza people of Tanzania, where foraging by grandmothers improves the nutritional status of their grandchildren. Another study of traditional communities showed that the presence of grandmothers decreases their daughters' inter-birth intervals and increases the number of grandchildren.

And in more modern societies, evidence is accumulating that positively engaged grandmothers are associated with children having better outcomes on a range of measures, including academic, social, behavior and physical health.

For the current study, the researchers wanted to understand the brains of healthy grandmothers and how that may relate to the benefits they provide to their families.

The 50 participants in the study completed questionnaires about their experiences

as grandmothers, providing details such as how much time they spend with their grandchildren, the activities they do together and how much affection they feel for them. They also underwent functional magnetic resonance imaging to measure their brain function as they viewed pictures of their grandchild, an unknown child, the same-sex parent of the grandchild, and an unknown adult.

The results showed that, while viewing pictures of their grandchildren, most participants showed more activity in brain areas involved with emotional empathy and movement, compared to when they were viewing the other images.

Grandmothers who more strongly activated areas involved with cognitive empathy when viewing pictures of their grandchild reported in the questionnaire that they desired greater involvement in caring for the grandchild.

Finally, compared with results from earlier study by the Rilling lab of fathers viewing photos of their children, grandmothers more strongly activated regions involved with emotional empathy and motivation, on average, when viewing images of their grandchildren.

"Our results add to the evidence that there does seem to be a global parenting caregiving system in the brain, and that grandmothers' responses to their grandchildren maps onto it," Rilling says.

One limitation to the study, the researchers note, is that the participants skewed towards mentally and physically healthy women who are high-functioning grandmothers.

The study opens the door to many more questions to be explored. "It would be interesting to also look at the neuroscience of grandfathers and how the brain functions of grandparents may differ across cultures," Lee says.

An especially gratifying aspect of the project for Rilling was personally interviewing all the participants himself. "It was fun," he says. "I wanted to get a sense of the rewards and challenges of being a grandmother."

The main challenge many of them reported was trying not to interfere when they disagreed with the parents over how their grandchildren should be raised and what values should be instilled in them.

"Many of them also said how nice it is to not be under as much time and financial pressure as they were when raising their children," Rilling says. "They get to enjoy the experience of being a grandmother much more than they did being parents."

This work was supported in part by the Silvia O. Conte Center for Oxytocin and Social Cognition.

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'One All the Way'...

(continued from page 5)

The film shows a diagram of how the staff at The Original became "the ultimate feeding ground" for Texas weiner entrepreneurs in Northern New Jersey.

But the popularity of the hot Texas weiner never extended beyond a small area in New Jersey.

"The only place we've been able to find (hot Texas weiners) is in Paterson," said Baram. "You can go to other parts of New Jersey and they have no idea what I'm talking about."

He estimated that the popularity of hot Texas weiners is mainly confined to a 10-mile radius around Paterson.

What Makes a Hot Texas Weiner?

A hot Texas weiner has to be deep fried. The hot dogs used have to be specially prepared because a regular hot dog will eventually disintegrate in a deep fryer.

"There are three or four companies that make these hot dogs, and each has their special taste," said Baram. "Some are more spicy, and some are more tangy."

Grill owners all add their secret recipes to their hot Texas weiners.

"Each grill owner treats their recipe like it is the Coca-Cola formula," said Baram. "They keep it locked up."

Baram wouldn't say which restaurant served the best hot Texas weiner, but "the Hot Grill and Giffle Grill have always been my favorites."

Filming and Screenings

"One All the Way" was filmed "literally weeks before the pandemic," according to Baram.

"Actually, I hoped to get more (filming done), but we had enough to go into post-production, research and editing," he said.

"One All the Way" was finished in 2020 and was screened at various film festivals in 2021 where it received seven film awards. Baram was asked about possible Academy Award consideration.

"We've been approached, but I said that's a super-long-shot," he responded. "Certainly, none of us are holding our breath about that."



Harry Baram, who is featured in "One All the Way," is pictured with his son David Baram, the film's director.

There was also a special screening in Patterson, which was attended by a pioneer in the Paterson hot dog industry.

Chris Betts, 98, who along with his brothers co-founded the Falls View Grill in 1949, was living in an assisted living facility when the movie was shown in Paterson.

"He was central to not only the industry but to Paterson," said Baram, who arranged for Betts to attend the screening. "The first time he saw the film, it was a sold-out house. He probably (posed for) 500 pictures."



The Hot Grill

The Next Generation

Despite the nostalgic tone of the film, there are scenes in "One All the Way" that suggest the tradition of hot Texas weiners will continue, at least for another generation. Near the end of film, a group of young people are shown in one of the restaurants.

"The funny thing is that those kids were on a hot dog crawl," said Baram. "When I learned they were on a hot dog crawl, I said, 'Get the cameras back in here! We've got to get

this on film!"

More importantly perhaps is the scene with Maria and Cristina LaMendola. When their father, Carmen, who owned and operated The Hot Grill for 57 years, passed away, they continued family tradition and took over the business, which surprised some of their employees who had expected that Carmen's passing meant they needed to find other jobs.

Those who don't attend film festivals should be able to see "One All the Way" soon, according to Baram.

"My hope is - when we come to the end of the festival cycle - that it will be available on one of the streamers - Netflix, Amazon - very shortly," he said. "One way or another - maybe on YouTube."



Cristina and Maria LaMendola, owners and operators of The Hot Grill.

Baram took time from his busy schedule to talk to us about "One All the Way." In addition to the film festivals on his calendar, he is currently filming "Ball and Vase," a movie starring Austin Pendleton about a senior who is a magician. The title refers to a particular magic trick. Shooting was scheduled to start last month.

"My goal is to be ready to submit it to the heart of the (2022) festival season," Baram said.



Larry, Harry and Don on a hot dog crawl in "One All the Way."



- The Ortigas

Staci was professional and very open about the process, she was concerned about our welfare and acted in a timely manner to ensure everything went smoothly throughout the process. We really appreciated her expertise and understanding of our situation. We would highly recommend selling our home to Drake Real Estate Investments.

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QUAIL CORNER

When Living Alone Isn't Safe

Q&A with Kimberly Jensen

My mother is living in her home alone. When I went to visit her for Thanksgiving, her home was a mess. When do I know when it is not safe for her to be living alone?

This year, I received more calls than usual regarding what families found when they visited their parents living alone. Elders can sound fine when you are checking in on them on the phone. It can be very hard to know from a distance when a relative is losing his or her independence.

The following are things to look out for:

Missed Appointments: Contact your family members physician's office and find out if your elder has missed any appointments with them. If your mom or dad did not call-in advance to cancel, and just did not show up, that could be an issue. Memory decline can be playing a part.

Maintaining Proper Hygiene: Are you seeing a decline in their hygiene like unkept hair, lack of bathing, dirty clothing, incontinence or not appropriately dressing for the current season?

Easily Disoriented: Are they not recognizing familiar places, wandering aimlessly around the home without completing any

task, or getting lost in a well-known place, like a commonly used grocery store?

Loss of Memory: Is your family member being forgetful about time, place, season? I am not talking about forgetting where you put your keys. Repetitive thought sharing and confusion could signal dementia or mental illness.

Word Problems: Are they having difficulties recalling a very common word or repeating a sentence that you just said?

Random Check Writing: Are you looking through their checkbook and finding multiple checks to charities or to specific people who you are not familiar with?

Physical Aggression: An elder that attacks someone because they are believed to pose a threat shows an inability to control feelings of distress.

Making Inaccurate Assertions: A sign and symptom of dementia is increased paranoia. "You are trying to steal my money." Distrust for no reason needs to be investigated.

Unopened Mail: Look around for unpaid bills or other correspondence that has not been replied to.

Spoiled Food: Food left on the counter and not refrigerated is a huge danger. Check car-



tons of milk to see if they have expired.

Poor Nutrition: Has your elder lost a significant amount of weight? Very often, loss of appetite or unwillingness to cook for themselves is a sign they are not safe at home alone anymore.

Scorched Pots and Pans: This shows that they are no longer able to cook safely anymore. This can pose a fire hazard.

Mysterious Bruising: Unexplained injuries and bruising can be signs of falling.

Car Dents and Damage: This may mean they are no longer safe to drive. While you are visiting, have them drive you around. See if it might be time to have the conversation about hanging the keys up.

With families living in other cities and states, it is very easy to miss out on what is going on at your family member's home. Adult children are often filled with shock when they see the decline that even one year can make.

I always encourage family members to move their loved ones closer to make sure they are in a safe environment and not endangering themselves.

Kimberly Jensen has been working with Quail Park as a Senior Resource Advocate for over ten years and has helped hundreds of families find solutions to their senior problems. If you have a question, you can send it to her at KimberlyJ@QPCypress.com or call (559) 737-7443.

Medicare Part B...

(continued from page 1)

care recipients report spending from \$160 to \$495 a month on healthcare costs.

"That's a significant portion of income to spend on medical expenses, considering that the average monthly Social Security benefit (including retirees, disabled and survivors) is about \$1,487," said Johnson. "These findings are particularly troubling because about 46% of our survey participants also report that they have no retirement savings to fall back on."

Johnson has found that rising Part B premiums have ranked as one of the fastest growing costs that older Americans face in retirement, increasing 274% since 2000.

Medicare Part B covers physician services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services, durable medical equipment and certain other medical and health services not covered by Medicare Part A.

Each year, the Medicare Part B premium, deductible and co-insurance rates are determined according to the Social Security Act. According to the CMS, the increases in the 2022 Medicare Part B premium and deductible are due to:

- Rising prices and utilization across the health care system, along with anticipated increases in the intensity of care provided;
- Congressional action to significantly lower the increase in the 2021 Medicare Part B premium, which resulted in a \$3 per beneficiary per month increase being continued through 2025.
- Additional contingency reserves due to the uncertainty regarding the potential use of the Alzheimer's drug Aduhelm by people with Medicare.

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The deadline for the March/April issue is Tuesday, February 15, 2022

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January Gardening Tips from the Master Gardeners

By Peyton Ellas
UCCE Master Gardener

January can be a busy month in our Central Valley and foothill gardens. Hopefully, we will be dodging rainstorms and working on foggy days. That's what our gardens rely on for health later in the year. On the other hand, there are some jobs that can easily be put off or skipped altogether this year. Is that heresay to say?

Sometimes, taking garden care too seriously can make us forget this should be enjoyable. Gardens are never perfect. It will never be "finished." Enjoy the time you spend in it as much as possible. And if other parts of your life take priority, relax. You may find some surprising things happened that you quite like. If you have a few hours to spend in the garden this month, here are some suggestions:

Planting: January is bare root planting month, for everything from roses to fruit trees, berry and grape vines and some vegetables. Soak the roots in a bucket of water for a few hours before planting.

You can also start planting beets, carrots, leek, lettuce, onion, parsley, radish, seed potatoes, onions, peas, radish, spinach, artichokes and aspar-



January is a great month for pruning deciduous trees, shrubs, and roses.



Winter vegetables

agus directly in the garden this month. Begin sowing seeds for summer annuals and vegetables like tomatoes and peppers in a protected location where you can keep the seedlings warm and where they will receive enough light.

Maintaining: January is the month to spray dormant oil on deciduous fruit and almond trees and roses to prevent or control over-wintering insects. Spray the branches, crotches, trunk and the ground beneath the tree's drip line.

Hold off spraying if rain is forecast or if the temperature is below 45 degrees, and never spray oil on walnut trees. Spray copper spray or synthetic fungicide on peach trees to control peach leaf curl. Other ways to limit over-wintering insects and disease issues are to keep your orchards clean of old leaves, old fruit and weeds.

January is a great month for pruning deciduous trees, shrubs and roses. Keep pruners and loppers sharp. Sterilize the pruners or loppers in between plants. Use a 10% bleach solution (one part bleach to nine parts water) or white vinegar. Remove all broken, diseased or crossing branches first. Two ba-

sic cutting techniques are used in general pruning: thinning and heading. Thinning cuts remove entire branches, resulting in a more natural look. You want to end up with a tree that looks balanced and well-structured.

Heading cuts shorten branches and should only be used on small branches. Use heading cuts judiciously to shorten over-long branches. Make sure to cut back to an outward facing bud to direct new growth away from the interior of the tree. Prune from the bottom up and from the inside of the plant to the outside.

Cut back and divide perennials. Fertilize perennials, annuals and emerging buds. I don't recommend fertilizing California native plants, or woody shrubs and perennials from Mediterranean climates.

Apply pre-emergent herbicide to lawns and garden beds later in January. Read and follow the package directions carefully. If you don't choose to use chemical weed control, lightly till your young seedling weeds frequently to keep your garden beds fairly free of weeds. You may also replenish mulch this month or top dress with finished compost.

Finally, don't forget to monitor or turn off your irrigation controller. You will want to deep water your trees, shrubs and perennials, and water your lawn if we have an extended dry period but don't waste water and threaten the health of your plants by over watering.

Remember, fog can also provide moisture to plants. It's one reason to not hate our Tule fog: it's good for the plants. I'm not sure I will ever hope for more foggy days, but I have learned to not wish them away entirely.

As we are making plans and goals for the year, we consider how we are creating and managing our patch of the earth. If we farm, can we plant a hedge-row? In all types and sizes of gardens, can we use "least toxic first" pest control methods, tolerate a little wildness in parts of the garden, grow some plants just for the birds, pollinators, lizards, toads or even small mammals, tolerate some damage to keep the chain of life healthy?

Your garden, even in January, should be busy with natural activity. If no one visits except the weekly gardener, you are missing out: the garden can be and do so much more!

The Tulare-Kings County Master Gardeners will be available to answer your questions at Visalia Farmer's Market from 8-11 a.m. on first and third Saturdays at 2100 W. Caldwell Ave (behind Sears Building).

Questions?

You can call Master Gardeners in Tulare County at (559) 684-3325, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-11:30 a.m.

To search past articles, find links to UC gardening information, or to email us your questions, visit http://ucanr.edu/sites/UC_Master_Gardeners/

You can also visit us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/mgtularekings14/> and on Instagram at: @mgtularekings

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CALENDAR

January 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 28, 31 - Aerobics

City of Hanford Parks and Community Services hosts aerobics from 9-10 a.m. at Longfield Center, 400 N. Douty St. in Hanford, three days a week. The monthly cost for those 55+ is \$16. For more information, call (559) 585-2525.

January 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26, 31 - Zumba

City of Hanford Parks and Community Services hosts Zumba from 6-7 p.m. in Civic Park, 400 N. Douty St. in Hanford, twice a week. The monthly cost for those 50+ is \$16. For more information, call (559) 585-2525.

January 4, 11, 18, 25 - Yoga

The Visalia Senior Center hosts Yoga from 6-7 p.m. at 310 N. Locust St., Visalia, twice a week. The cost for the month for those 55+ is \$40. For more information, call (559) 713-4481.

January 4, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27 - Zumba

The Visalia Senior Center hosts Zumba from 1-2 p.m. at 310 N. Locust St., Visalia, twice a week. The cost for the month for those 55+ is \$40. For more information, call (559) 713-4481.

Thursday, January 6 - 'Tales from the Tomb'

The Sequoia Genealogical So-

ciety will host a dramatic reading by Dallas Pattee about the life and times of Mary Graves Clark, a survivor of the Donner Party disaster of 1847 who is buried in the Visalia Cemetery. Refreshments will follow. The free event will be held at the Tulare Public Library, 475 M St. in Tulare at 6 p.m., For more information, call (559) 685-4518.

Saturday, January 15 - Gleaning Seniors Yard Sale

Visalia Gleaning Seniors will host this sale, featuring 50% off all items, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Gleaner Yard, 28600 Road 156 (between Walnut & Caldwell) in Visalia. For more information, call (559) 733-5352.

February 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24 - Zumba

The Visalia Senior Center hosts Zumba from 1-2 p.m. at 310 N. Locust St., Visalia, twice a week. The cost for the month for those 50+ is \$35. For more information, call (559) 713-4481.

February 1, 8, 15, 22 - Yoga

The Visalia Senior Center hosts Yoga from 6-7 p.m. at 310 N. Locust St., Visalia, twice a week. The cost for the month for those 55+ is \$40. For more information, call (559) 713-4481.

February 2, 4, 7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 21, 23, 25, 28 - Aerobics

City of Hanford Parks and Community Services hosts aerobics from 9-10 a.m. at Longfield Center, 400 N. Douty St. in Hanford, three days a week. The monthly cost for those 55+ is \$16. For more information, call (559) 585-2525.

February 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28 - Zumba

City of Hanford Parks and Community Services hosts Zumba from 6-7 p.m. in Civic Park, 400 N. Douty St. in Hanford, twice a week. The monthly cost for those 55+ is \$16. For more information, call (559) 585-2525.

Thursday, February 3 - DNA in Law Enforcement

The Sequoia Genealogical Society will host this presentation by Tulare County District Attorney Tim Ward, who was instrumental in bringing Joseph James DeAngelo, Jr., the Golden State Killer and Visalia Ransacker to justice. Refreshments will follow. The free event will be held at the Tulare Public Library, 475 M St. in Tulare at 6 p.m. For more information, call (559) 685-4518.

Thursday, February 14 - Sweetheart Luncheon

This event will be held at the Visalia Senior Center, 310 N. Locust St., Visalia, at 11:30 a.m. The cost for Visalia residents 55+ is \$4.50 (\$6 for others) Tickets must be purchased in advance. To-go meals will be available. For more information, call (559) 713-4481.

Visalia Senior Center Seeks Instructors

The Visalia Senior Center is currently looking for specialty instructors.

Do you have a hobby or skill that you would like to share with the seniors? If so, consider applying to become an instructor with the City of Visalia.

Contact the Visalia Senior Center at (559) 713-4381 for more information.



Denise Medved

Prestige Presents 'Ageless Grace'

In January, Prestige Assisted Living at Visalia will present "Ageless Grace," a free webinar series about the brain-body exercise program offered at the community.

Denise Medved, the program's creator, will host the series, which offers the opportunity to learn about the program, try out some of the exercises and understand the importance of neuroplasticity, the brain's ability to change and reorganize itself.

The system teaches that there are a variety of steps one can take to improve neuroplasticity, including having a quality sleep, learning new things, reducing stress and being active.

Ageless Grace activates all five functions of the brain - strategic planning, memory/recall, analytical thinking, creativity and imagination, and kinesthetic learning - and simultaneously addresses all 21 physical skills needed for lifelong optimal function.

The webinars will be held at 11 a.m. on January 12, 19 and 26. To sign up, visit prestigecanhelp.com.

On the four Thursdays in February, Prestige Assisted Living at Visalia will host free in-person Ageless Grace classes at 11 a.m., led by a certified instructor.

To register for the February classes or to learn more about Prestige Assisted Living at Visalia, call (559) 735-0828.

20/20 News

with **Skip Essick**

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Farmersville – An Old Town with an Interesting Past

Tulare County is a big county with about a half million people living within its boundaries. Many live in the eight incorporated cities. One is Farmersville, which happens to be one of the oldest of the group. It traces its beginnings to 1866 when the town sprang up in Four Creeks Country.

On December 12, 1866, the *Visalia Weekly Delta* reported that there was a “new village building up on Deep Creek” called Farmersville. At the time of reporting, the town already had a store, a doctor’s office, a drug store, a blacksmith shop and an application on file for a post office.

Over the years, the little settlement has made history, and like all towns, it was a mixture of good and bad. For example, it was in Farmersville in 1880 that a young man named James McKinney got into a scrape that launched him on an ugly journey down the road to becoming one of the county’s most notorious badmen.

A year later, another lad would give the town notoriety, this time in a good way. In 1881, Orval was born to Daniel and Cynthia Overall, a prominent cattle and ranching couple living near Farmersville.

The Overall family would call Farmersville home until about 1886, when the family moved to Visalia after Daniel successfully ran for public office. He was later elected Tulare County Sheriff and would eventually escort James McKinney to state prison, an official act that the badman resented all of his life.

The couple’s son, Orval, would go on to distinguish himself as one of the best football and baseball players to ever come out of Tulare County. Not only did this Farmersville native excel in sports while attending U.C. Berkeley, he went on to become an amazing baseball pitcher for the Chicago Cubs, playing a dominant role in the 1908 World Series.

By 1888, Farmersville was firmly established with the name Brundage dominating business and civic life. A large hotel owned by C. P. Brown and the Brundage general store were the centerpieces. The family store was the big draw

to the town, but its popularity came with a cost. On December 12, 1895, thieves broke inside, forced open the safe, and made off with \$20.00 in cash.

In 1907, more unwanted attention came to the little town when a man named Walter C. Scott attacked and killed several people in San Francisco. It was a horrendous crime carried out by someone described as a “madman” who hailed from Farmersville.

The town seemed to be a magnet for bad news as it entered the 20th century. In the 1900s, the town organized a chamber of commerce, which disbanded. The town opened a movie theater that closed its doors. The town even had a newspaper for a time, then the *Farmersville Herald* stopped its presses.

It seems like there was always a dark cloud following the little town. In 1947, the *Visalia Times Delta* reported that Farmersville had “a reputation for being tough.” It added “that people from Porterville, Visalia and nearby communities who wanted to have a ‘tough’ evening would go to Farmersville.”


But in the same article, they also shared some positive news. Instead of being a town made up of mostly transients like it had been, the demographics were changing. More residents were buying homes, which created more stability.

Town leaders began to seriously consider taking the next logical step – becoming incorporated. By 1960, the advocates for incorporation were ready to put the question to a vote. In September, Farmersville voters went to the polls, and by a vote of 253 to 195 incorporation passed and Farmersville became Tulare County’s eighth incorporated city.

A five-member city council was elected and the town began its march toward improved respectability. But the first years that followed were difficult. Beset with numerous resignations of leaders and staff, city government struggled. By the late 1960s, there was serious talk of disincorporation. Fortunately for the majority, that step back never happened.

To be sure, over the years

Dusting Off History
with Terry Ommen

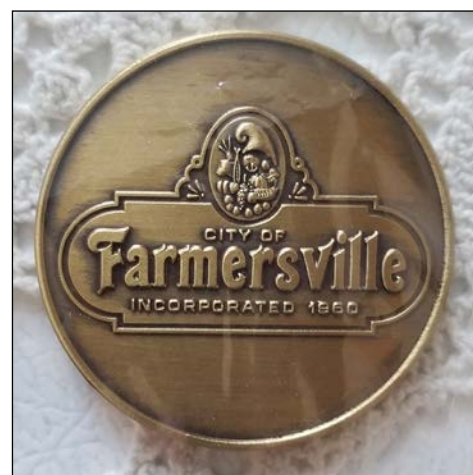



This is believed to be the second Brundage store built in Farmersville. (Photo circa 1911)

the little town had more than its share of tough times and bad press. But through it all, the residents of Farmersville have been loyal and resilient.

In 1985, the town took a step forward. It was a small one, but it revealed a lot. Farmersville

minted its own coin, unofficially called the “Farmersville Franc.” It was a limited edition brass token that honored the town’s 25th anniversary of incorporation. The community hoped, like the coin, Farmersville would be around a long time.



The two sides of the Farmersville token minted in 1985

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 **SEQUOIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY-SGS**



This scene from "The Musician" shows the lovers embracing after being apart for 50 years.

'The Musician' Tells a Sweet but Sad Tale of Lifelong Love

During a vicious attack, a young musician and the love of his life are brutally separated from one another. Fifty years later, the musician is summoned to play at the Mongol castle where his beloved has been held.

This is the basic story of "The Musician," an animated movie by Reza Riahi, an Iranian-born director who is making a name for himself in French animation.

The film is made of paper cut-outs to take advantage of the materials and motifs that Persian art has cultivated for centuries, the tradition of miniatures.

"The title of my film is 'Navozande,' which means 'The Musician,'" said Riahi. "It is the story of an old musician's lifelong search for his beloved whom he lost as a young man

when he was tragically blinded.

"The music of his instrument is the only 'voice' of the film, as there is no dialogue," he explained. "Our score is traditional Persian music played on the kamancheh (a traditional Persian stringed instrument) by Saba Alizadeh who perfectly translates the voice of the musician's heart.

"The musician's beloved, who has become one of the king's servants, is present at the concert where he is summoned to perform," Riahi continued. "While the king hears only a melody to brighten up his festivities, the old woman rediscovers the tenderness of her long-lost lover."

"The Musician" became available for streaming on Paramount+ on November 22.



"The Musician" takes advantage of materials and motifs that Persian art has cultivated for centuries

Alzheimer's Plan...

(continued from page 1)

The IHSS authorizes services such as housecleaning, meal preparation, laundry, grocery shopping, personal care services, accompaniment to medical appointments, and protective supervision for the mentally impaired.

"There has been a tremendous investment in the workforce," said DeMarois about the plan's goal "to develop an Alzheimer's proficient, culturally competent workforce." The effort has focused on training physicians in the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's.

The state is very involved in advancing Alzheimer's research, according to DeMarois.

"We have invested money in Alzheimer's research since the 1980s," she said, noting that both Governor Gavin Newsom and his predecessor, Governor Jerry Brown, have increased funding in this research.

"Typically, the funding goes to the University of California system, Stanford and USC," said DeMarois, adding that there are many institutions competing for the funding "that are all excellent. We are fortunate in California to have so many."

Since the 1980's, much of this funding has been collected from taxpayers who check the box on their tax form to authorize a donation to Alzheimer's research. So far, \$30 million has been collected from the donations of state taxpayers, according to DeMarois.

The New Strategic Plan

Now that the California's State Plan for Alzheimer's Disease has run its course, the Cal-

ifornia Department of Aging is focusing its efforts on its Strategic Plan 2021-2024.

"The new report has ten recommendations," said DeMarois. "There's a big focus on the workforce, healthy living and positive aging.

"It picks up where the other one left off," she added. "I would say it's more comprehensive. It also reflects the changes in our healthcare system. It focuses on

home and community-based services to assist people in the beginning stages of the disease.

"It also works to be more inclusive of Latinos, African-Americans, women and members of the LGBTQ community," she said. "We know that among Latinos and African-Americans there is a higher risk of Alzheimer's disease."

DeMarois also noted that about two-thirds of those with Alzheimer's are women.

"We will particularly focus on Californians who are at greater risk of the disease," she said. "We want to reach people earlier."

More is now known about Alzheimer's since the first report was drafted more than ten years ago.

"We know heart disease and diabetes are contributors to Alzheimer's disease," DeMarois said, stressing the importance of diet and exercise. "The new focus is on modifying the risk factors for everyone."

The new report includes "The Master Plan for Aging's Five Bold Goals for 2030," which are:

- **Housing for All Ages and Stages** - Target: Millions of new housing options to age well.
- **Health Reimagined** - Target: Close the equity gap and increase life expectancy.
- **Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation** - Target: Keep increasing life satisfaction as we age.
- **Caregiving that Works** - Target: One million high-quality caregiving jobs.
- **Affording Aging** - Target: close the equity gap and increase economic sufficiency.

To read the California Department of Aging Strategic Plan 2021-2024, visit <https://mpa.aging.ca.gov/> and click on "Download the MPA Full Color Report" in the right-hand column.



The California Department of Aging Strategic Plan 2021-2024



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Eat more ice cream



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