



The Golden View

The Community Newspaper For Adults 55 Plus

November, 2023

Dedicated To The Young At Heart

Dubuque, Iowa

Visit The Golden View On The Web At: www.thegoldenviewonline.com

Support a Caregiver this Month

by Jolene Koopmann, Caregiver Resource Center Coordinator



November is National Family Caregivers Month. While we should always take the time to honor caregivers, this month is a special time to recognize, honor, and praise those who give of themselves to provide care for others.

Caregivers provide varying amounts of assistance to aging loved ones or those with

chronic illnesses or disabilities. This can range from assisting with errands, to providing transportation to appointments, to providing full-time care and help with daily living.

Caregiving comes from a place of love and concern for others and can be incredibly rewarding. However, it can also be challenging for caregivers to meet the needs of loved ones while also managing their own household, let alone maintaining social connections or other hobby or community activities. Because of this, a large percentage of family caregivers report feeling overwhelmed and isolated most of the time. According to a study by AARP, 1 in 10 family caregivers claimed they had nobody to talk to about their own private matters. In addition, 1 in 5 had nobody to ask for help.

Family Caregiver Month is Stonehill cont. Pg. 3

Celebrate the Holiday Season with Christmas at Heritage Center

by Stacey Ortman, Director of Public Information, University of Dubuque



Away in the Basement – A Church Basement Ladies Christmas

Listen to carols from around the world and experience a beloved University of Dubuque tradition with Christmas at Heritage Center “All the Souls on Earth Shall Sing!” at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 1, in John and Alice Butler Hall, Heritage Center. The concert that celebrates the spiritual meaning of the Christmas season is part of the 11th annual Live at Heritage Center Performing Arts Center.

Presented by UD’s Department of Fine and Performing Arts, Christmas at Heritage Center will feature the UD Concert Band, conducted by Nolan Hauta, DMA, director of concert bands; the UD Concert Choir and Chamber Singers, directed by Kristen Eby, MM, head of the Department of Fine and Performing Arts and director of choral activities; Heritage Center cont. Pg. 21

Celebrate the Holidays with the Dubuque Symphony Orchestra Dec. 2 & 3, at Five Flags Theater

by Kathleen Hoeper, Director of Marketing and Community Relations, Dubuque Symphony Orchestra



Join the orchestra and Maestro Intriligator as the DSO rings in the holiday season with the Dubuque Chorale, Children’s Chorus, members of the Heartland Ballet, and vocal soloist Jeff Liebow. Concerts will take place Saturday, December 2 at 7:30pm and Sunday, December 3 at 2:00pm at Five Flags Theater.

Ticket prices begin at \$19. Saturday Evening, December 2 ticket includes entry to Encore Reception with complimentary holiday treats and opportunity to meet DSO musicians.

“This is always one of our most fun concerts of the year!” states Music Director and DSO cont. Pg. 12

November is National Hospice & Palliative Care Month

by Lavonne Noel, Executive Director, Hospice of Dubuque



As 2023 winds down, Hospice of Dubuque’s 40th anniversary year is also drawing to a close. For the past four

decades, the community’s local nonprofit hospice has provided compassionate end-of-life care Hospice cont. Pg. 16

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Platteville, WI

Country Inn
630 S. Water Street
Nov. 7 at 11:00 AM
Nov. 21 at 11:00 AM

Dubuque, IA

Best Western Plus
3100 Dodge Street
Nov. 9 at 11:00 AM
Nov. 20 at 6:30 PM

Darlington, WI

Johnson Public Library
131 E. Catherine Street
Nov. 17 at 11:00 AM

Maquoketa, IA

AmericInn
1910 Nairn Drive
Nov. 3 at 11:00 AM
Dec. 1 at 11:00 AM

Galena, IL

Ramada Inn
11383 Hwy 20
Nov. 8 at 11:00 AM
Nov. 22 at 11:00 AM

Lancaster, WI

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Renee Snyder,
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Stonehill from Pg. 1

the perfect time to change these statistics. Let's bring attention to the value of and increase respect for caregiving. If you are a caregiver, know that we see you and we appreciate all that you do! If you know a caregiver, support them this month. There are many things, large and small, that you can do to lift the spirits and/or ease the life of a caregiver.

• Reach out and connect with a phone call, email, letter, or visit.

• Send a card to a caregiver, letting them know that you see them and appreciate all that they do.

• Drop off a meal or provide food delivery.

• Give the gift of a book specific for caregivers.

• Create and give a self-care goody bag.

• Offer to give them your time (for service or simple companionship).

What can you do for a caregiver in your life this month?

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The Golden View

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 Ph.: 563-845-7586
 E-mail: goldenviewpub@gmail.com
 Website: www.thegoldenviewonline.com
 Publisher: Golden View Publishing, Inc.
 Editor – Bill Beutin

Graphic Design – Tom McGovern

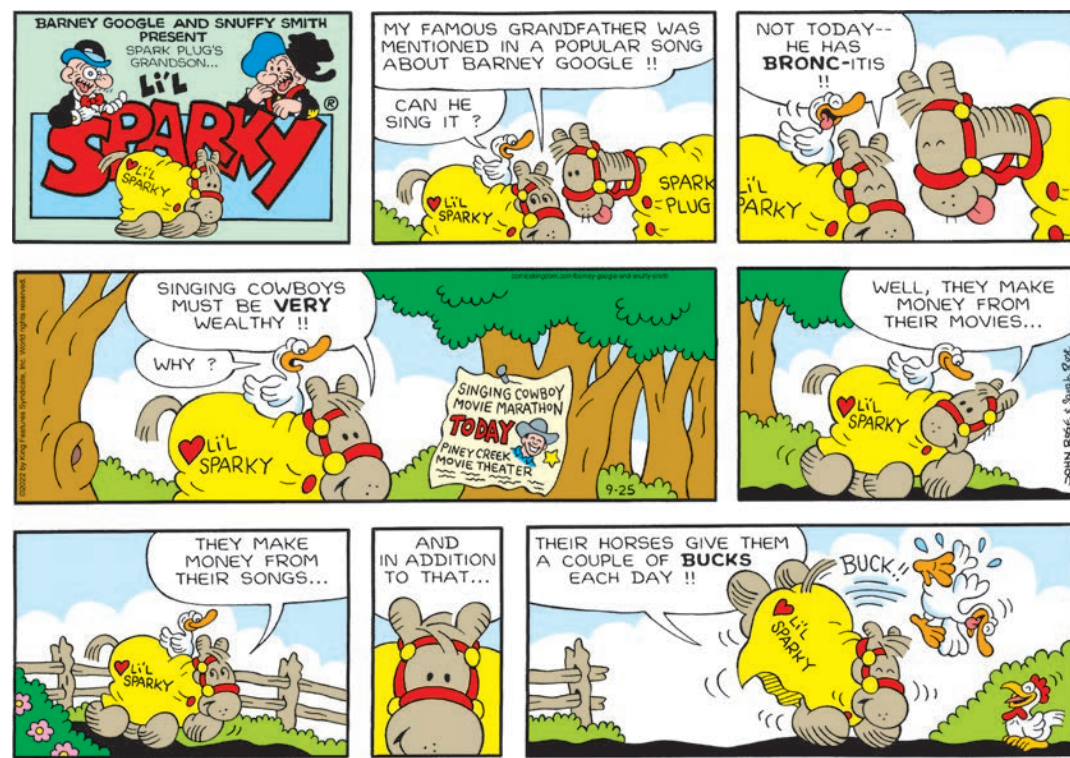
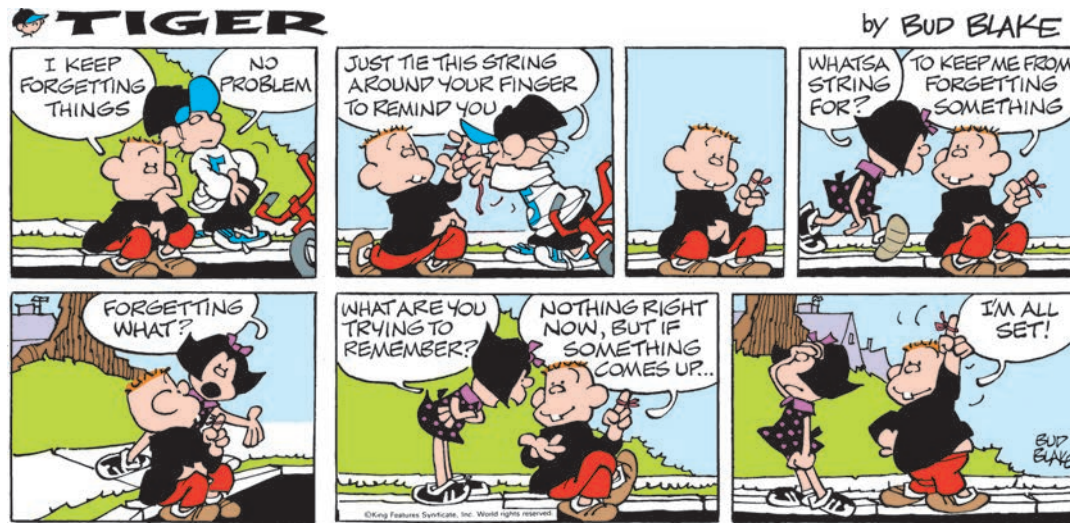
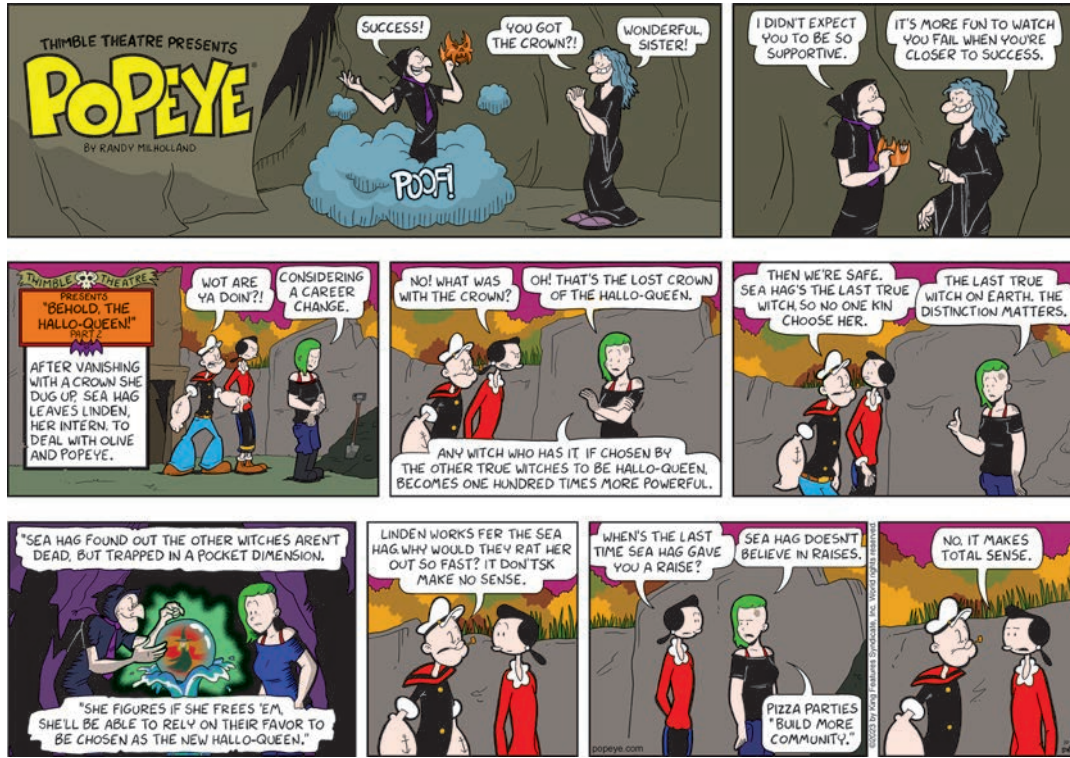
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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	+		×		22
÷		×		×	
	×		-		19
+		-		+	
	+		+		25
11		11		19	

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 9
 Go Figure! Answer on Pg. 24

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STICKELERS [sic].
 by Terry Stickels

There are only two 15-letter words that can be spelled without repeating a letter. Can you guess one of them? Hint: The first letter is U and the last letter is E.

U _____ E

Stickelers Answer on Pg. 24
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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Sketch
- 5 Shock partner
- 8 Verdi heroine
- 12 Ms. McEntire
- 13 Scale note
- 14 Mosque VIP
- 15 Shakespeare title starter
- 16 Centennial State
- 18 Man's youth
- 20 San Francisco griddler
- 21 Newt
- 22 Take to court
- 23 Give a leg up
- 26 Madrid museum
- 30 Klutz
- 31 Author Tan
- 32 Have a bug
- 33 Swagger
- 36 Open-mouthed
- 38 Mornings (Abbr.)
- 39 A Gabor
- 40 Painting of a scene
- 43 Public speakers
- 47 16th-century Spanish explorer
- 49 Loafer, for one
- 50 Scent
- 51 Nourished

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16			17				
18				19				20				
			21				22					
23	24	25				26				27	28	29
30					31					32		
33			34	35					36	37		
			38						39			
40	41	42				43				44	45	46
47						48				49		
50						51				52		
53						54				55		

- 52 Vitriol
 - 53 Marries
 - 54 Mao — -tung
 - 55 Egg part
- DOWN**
- 1 Colorless
 - 2 Move, in realtor lingo
 - 3 With skill
 - 4 Cleanses
 - 5 Fancy neckwear
 - 6 Fireplace fuel
 - 7 Right angle
 - 8 More ventilated
 - 9 One-named supermodel
 - 10 Miami- County
 - 11 Latin love
 - 17 "Movin' —" ("The Jeffersons" theme)
 - 19 Frequently
 - 22 Devious
 - 23 Short 'do
 - 24 Galley item
 - 25 Son-gun link
 - 26 Comic Philips
 - 27 Small battery
 - 28 Quick swim
 - 29 Flamenco cheer
 - 31 Billboards
 - 34 Mists
 - 35 Prayer ender
 - 36 "Selma" director
 - 37 Fitzgerald title character
 - 39 Wear down
 - 40 Garbage barge
 - 41 Morse —
 - 42 Yankee nickname
 - 43 Praiseful pieces
 - 44 Wheeling's river
 - 45 Bakery buy
 - 46 Hunt for
 - 48 Sternward

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**Be sure to check the website
TheGoldenViewOnline.com**



How Long Will Dog's Heatstroke Recovery Take?

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Two weeks ago, my Golden Retriever Lollie suffered a heatstroke. I let him outside into the backyard around midmorning. When I checked on him after about a half hour, he stumbled to me and collapsed. I rushed him to the veterinarian, where he was treated. Lollie is recovering, but I am terrified to let him outside again. Why did he have problems so fast? Will this episode affect his health long-term? — *Greg in Houston*

DEAR GREG: I'm glad to hear that Lollie is recovering, because heatstroke can be deadly — as you know. Your fear is normal, because you're clearly a caring pet owner, and you don't want Lollie to be injured again.

That care and attention is perhaps the biggest factor in

Lollie recovering fully and having fewer long-term complications from his heatstroke.

The reasons why Lollie suffered heatstroke aren't as clear, but there are so many factors that could have contributed to it. The morning may have been hotter than usual. Lollie may have had an underlying illness that made it harder for him to withstand the warmer temperature. He might not have drunk as much water as he needed to maintain his internal temperature.

You did all the right things: letting him outside earlier in the day; checking on him periodically; and immediately taking him to the vet as soon as you saw his symptoms were serious.

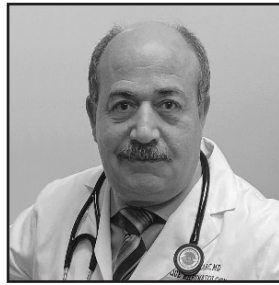
Keep following the vet's instructions to support Lollie's care as he recovers. It may be weeks or months before he can spend the same time in the heat. He'll get tired more easily, so his daily walks should be kept short. Make sure he's eating and drinking enough water. All these factors will improve his health for the long term.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.

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The other day after leaving a function, I stopped at a local convenience store by my house to purchase a half gallon of milk, and a couple of bananas that were advertised as a sale product.

I recognized the cashier and could see that she was in a happy mood. I asked her why she was so cheerful. She didn't hesitate for a moment but blurted out that over the weekend she had attended a concert in Chicago, Illinois. Well, being a wise "mature" senior citizen, I asked her if she wasn't just a little afraid to attend a concert in these "troubled" times?

This young lady, probably between 23-26 years of age, shot back an answer before I could gasp for a breath of air, with her quick answer that had probably laid in her mind for sometime. "No! I am not going to let anything unhinge me about living my life to the fullest in this day and age. I love concerts and other exciting activities and I'm doing whatever brings me happiness. And as most people realize, times have always been rough. Life isn't easy to get through but I'm doing it my way."

This young lady knew her mind set and shared it with me. She was a joy to talk with and I know I contemplated her words all the way home. Therefore when I got home I had my usual cup of coffee before getting busy with household duties. But while drinking my hot coffee I thought about some of the small concerts my husband and I had attended in our lifetime. If I remember correctly, ours were small compared to the huge concerts put on today.

As for our children, they were adults before they started with the concert venues, and they did not need our approval to attend any concerts. I do remember one of our sons asking if he could borrow the family camping tent for an out of town concert. Actually, the tent had not been used for years, and we had to look around the house and garage to find it. I believe that when the tent was returned it had a few cigaret burns and was wet from leaks in the tent roof!

In reference to the aforementioned young lady, I don't know if her philosophy of know-no-fear was bravery or just youthful thinking. I believe all of us "weathered" seniors were once young-at-heart, but time has a way of causing us to think, before we act. Now I ask me, "Am I the real me now, or was I the real me then?"

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SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

A Scam Close to Home

Ooops. I came very close to falling for a scam just like the ones I always warn against in this column.

The text message on my phone appeared to come from the local pharmacy. The words said that they had questions and would I please call. Included in the text was a link to touch that would dial the number for me ...

At the last minute I pulled my hand away and studied the message more closely.

The pharmacy was in the chain where I do business, but it was from the branch in the next town, not where my prescriptions are. And when I looked closely at the number in the link to click, I realized it was from an area code in a completely different state.

I put the phone down and got on the internet. Sure enough, that linked number was fake and was used in all manner of scams, including ones that could have instantly downloaded malware onto my phone. I called the pharmacy in question (from my other phone) just to be sure they hadn't sent it. No, they hadn't. I very carefully deleted that scam message, being sure not to touch that link.

So all is well, but I'm a bit unnerved by just how close I came to blithely clicking that link because I didn't initially question the message.

Save yourself some potential trouble by looking closely at any text messages you get on your phone.

Scammers are getting wiser, but they're not infallible. The pharmacy used in my text message was genuine, a logical request from a specific local company.

What they didn't realize was that they were working from an old list. We now have a Senior News Line cont. Pg. 7

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No Diminishing Delight

Our granddaughter is eight years old, a wonderful age to be teaching her grandpa how to delight in almost anything, again and again! The object lesson used to teach me the joys of delighting in almost anything, again and again, was a sticky label peeled off the lid of a plastic cold-cut meat container.

We were eating lunch with our granddaughter at our house and had finished off the pack of cold cut ham. We re-purpose these containers for storage of other food items, what we call Dutch Tupperware, my wife being Dutch in descent. That means we want the label off. Pulling off the label was difficult because it was really sticky. I gave the challenge to our granddaughter, and she eventually got it peeled off. Then I took the sticky label from her to throw it away, but pretended to get it stuck on my finger, so I couldn't shake it off into the trash can. I then tried to wipe it off onto my pants, where it stuck, then back to my fingers, where it stuck again. She laughed and laughed and insisted I do it again, and again, and again.

She has the same persistence in wanting to do other delightful things over and over again. There's no diminishing of delight with her! I'm sure it has something to do with being eight years old, but, no matter, I want some of what she has; let the age regression begin!

We like that which is

delightful, beautiful, meaningful, and amazing to flavor our lives. Thankfully, such blessings from God come into our lives all the time. However, we not only need to be proactive in seeing and delighting in these blessings but in seeing and delighting in them again and again!

It's true our five senses become desensitized to some degree to almost any stimulation. The fresh scent of flowers in a florist shop is much stronger when we walk into the shop than it is 15 minutes later after we've finished deliberating on what bouquet to purchase. The first bite into a steak is more delightful than the last piece we clear from our plate. Our senses may become desensitized to that which is delightful, but we can choose to have our minds and hearts continue to delight in what we initially found delightful!

We live in a world brimming with blessings from God. Hear that bird sing over the sound of traffic? How about that first sip of that favorite morning beverage? What about that person who's been so important to us for a long time, and here's yet another day that person is a part of our life? See those familiar and important objects that adorn our home that haven't been lost to theft, wind, flood or fire? Personal health issues may afflict, but how about the many health issues of which we're not afflicted?

If we're not careful we can find God's delights to eventually be dull, His blessings to be boring, His goodness taken for granted. Repentance is in order!

My granddaughter taught me a lesson that day over lunch. I want to be like her when I grow up! I want to, by God's grace and help, delight in God's blessings over and over again!

"Great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them" (Psalm 111:2).

BIBLE TRIVIA
by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Malachi (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. What color is the great throne on which God sits while passing final judgment? *Gold, Silver, Purple, White*
3. In II Timothy 3, all scripture is given by the _____ of God. *Blessing, Reproof, Willingness, Inspiration*

4. According to Paul, who pretends as an angel of light? *The unholy, Satan, Herod, The wicked*
5. Which epistle warns against patronizing prostitutes? *Luke, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Philippians*
6. "What" of the spirit is the word of God? *Sword, Praise, Love, Lamp*

ANSWERS

1. Old, 2. White, 3. Inspiration, 4. Satan, 5. 1 Corinthians, 6. Sword

Hardcore trivia fan? Visit Wilson Casey's subscriber site at www.patreon.com/triviaguy.

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Senior News Line from Pg. 6 branch of that pharmacy here in town. I would not have used the

pharmacy in the next town, and that was my clue.

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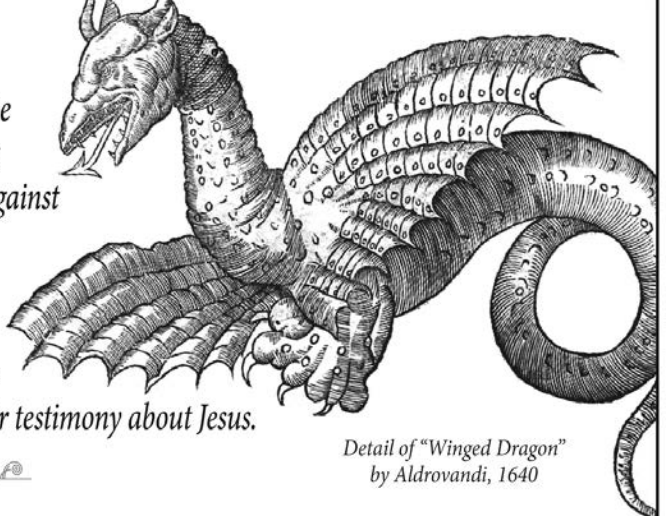


THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring - those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus.

REVELATION 12:17

Detail of "Winged Dragon" by Aldrovandi, 1640



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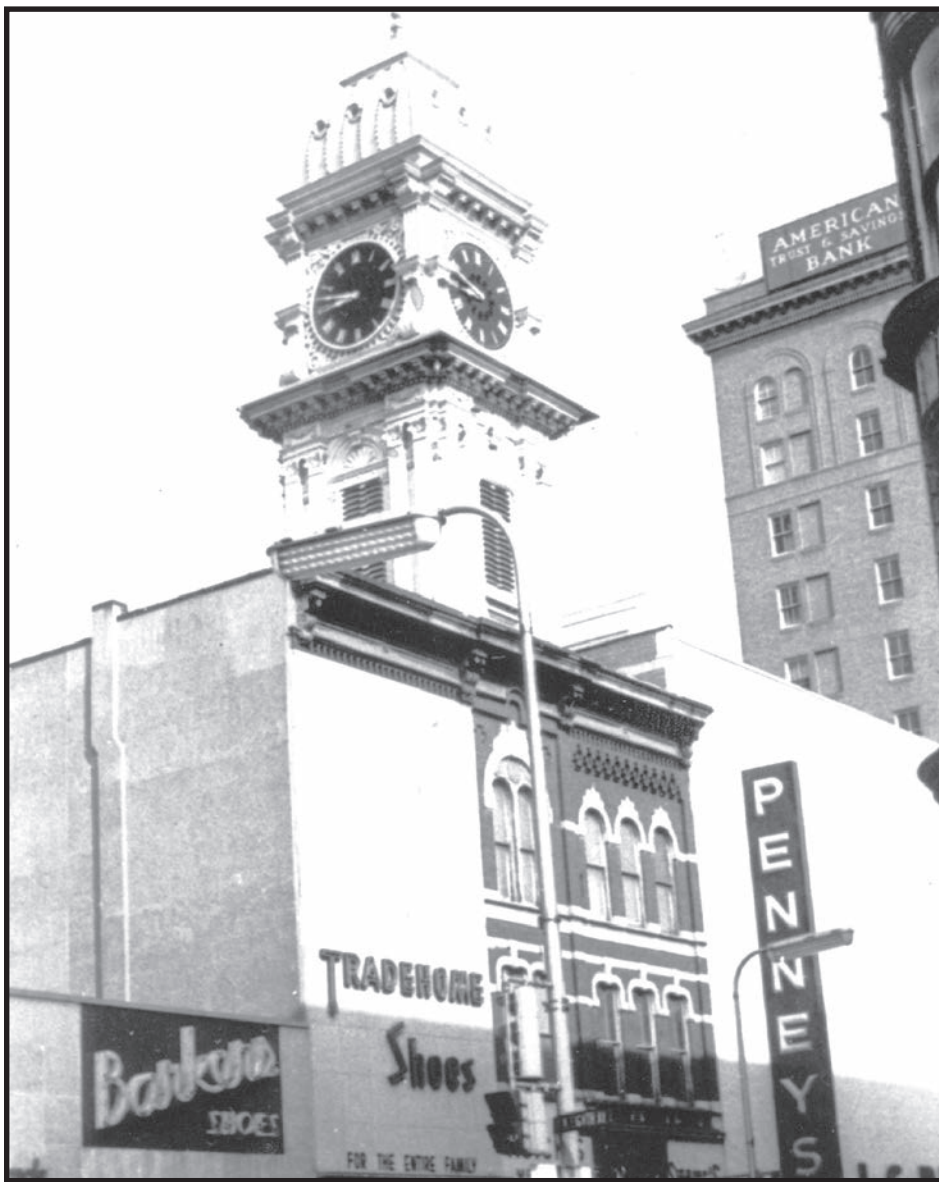
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YESTERDAY AND TODAY
 BY MICHAEL GIBSON



The second town clock, built in 1872, sat on top of the old building which once housed the Sullivan & Stampfer dry goods store. Since the late 1920's, J.C. Penny's department store was located at 855 Main and Barker's Shoes at 813 Main since the 1940's. Penny's moved to the Kennedy Mall in 1983 to a space formerly occupied by Montgomery Wards and remains there today. In 1985 Market Place Dubuque, consisting of ten tenants, opened the city's first factory outlet in the buildings on Main Street. (Courtesy of the Loras College Center for Dubuque History, MSL p.50).

Yesterday & Today cont. Pg. 9

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION Michelle Bell, Social Security District Manager, Dubuque, Iowa **SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**

Social Security is Thankful to Serve You

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on the blessings we have in our lives and to share memories with our loved ones. We are thankful because we can provide you and your family with services, benefits, tools, and information to help you throughout life's journey.

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Please share this information with those who need it. Happy holidays!



Yesterday & Today from Pg. 8

Michael Gibson has decided to take a hiatus from the Yesterday and Today feature. He has given permission to recycle previously published photos and captions for your enjoyment.



American Trust & Savings Bank purchased the Market Place property in 1988 and in 1991 they remodeled the entire building into the current enlarged banking center as shown in this photograph. Several years ago the old town clock building itself was also renovated by John Butler for offices. The building to the left which once house a jewelry store and Chinese restaurant has since been torn down and a green space was created. In 1971, the Town Clock Plaza, Iowa's first open tree-lined pedestrian mall was dedicated. \$70,000 had been raised through private donations to remove the Town Clock itself from its original 100 year location and to place it on a four-column pedestal in the middle of 7th & Main Streets. In 2001, the pedestrian mall was reopened to traffic and the question arose whether to move the clock back to its original roof-top location, but the city council voted against the proposal. Today, as traffic is directed around it, the Town Clock still remains as one of the icons of Dubuque history. (Photo by Terry Grant).

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Away In The Basement: A Church Basement Ladies Christmas TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5 | 7:30 P.M.

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By law, everyone is entitled to one free credit report every twelve months from each of the three credit reporting agencies. In 2020, soon after the COVID-19 pandemic upended the finances of millions of people, the three agencies announced they would temporarily make free reports available every week. The program was extended several times and is now permanent.

Why check your credit report? Your report shows things

like how many credit cards and loans you have, whether you pay your bills on time, and whether any debts have been turned over to collections. Creditors, insurers, some employers, and other businesses use it to decide if they want to do business with you — and the terms they'll offer you.

When reviewing your reports, make sure you recognize the information on your credit report including your personally identifiable information, such as name, addresses, Social Security Number, accounts and loans. Then check that the other information on your credit report is accurate and complete. Mistakes, like accounts or bankruptcies that aren't yours, can hurt your credit, increase how much you'll have to pay to borrow money, and even derail your chances of getting a loan, insurance, etc. Mistakes can result from errors by businesses that report credit information to credit reporting agencies. They also can be a sign of identity theft.

IA State Extension cont. Pg. 19



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Derek Paulson, Assistant Fire Marshal

Carbon Monoxide, also known as the silent killer, is an odorless, tasteless and colorless gas that kills over 400 people each year while accidentally poisoning another 100,000 people in the United States. November 5-12, 2023, is National Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week. This is a time to bring awareness of the dangers of Carbon Monoxide while also learning about the safety measures one can take to prevent CO poisoning.

The most important thing anyone can do is to have a working CO detector in the home. There are differing views and opinions on where a CO detector should be placed but most agree that a carbon monoxide detector should be placed in the immediate vicinity of any sleeping areas. The fire department recommends having a carbon monoxide detector on each floor of a residence.

A carbon monoxide detector should be tested every six months during Daylight Savings Time. Change the batteries at these times as well. Be sure to change the batteries first and then test the CO detector as there may be an issue with a

battery not working or a battery being inserted wrong.

Get appliances such as water heaters and furnaces serviced on a regular basis. If you have a fireplace, have that inspected on a yearly basis as well. Many CO poisonings happen from holes in pipes and flues and a regular maintenance schedule can help catch issues before they arise.

Make sure to check dryer vents and exhaust vents regularly as they can become blocked from lint, bird nests and other debris which can lead to a buildup of carbon monoxide in the home. Never use a fuel-burning piece of equipment such a generator, grill or power washer inside the home or enclosed garage. Pull vehicle out of garage if it is going to run for a while such as warming it up in colder weather. The fumes from the exhaust could seep into the home if the car is running in the garage.

And lastly, if your CO Detector alarms, or you feel ill and suspect CO poisoning, exit your home immediately and call 911.

If you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached at 563-589-4195 or at Dpaulson@cityofdubuque.org.



Finding the Cause Behind Emphysema and Ways to Minimize It

DEAR DR. ROACH: My husband experienced seizure-like episodes without tonic/clonic body movements in high altitude. These episodes occurred while he was traveling, being physically active in Colorado and skiing in France. Both episodes happened at least 12 hours after physical activity. Our general physician back home felt that these were not true seizures, instead a reaction to possibly being dehydrated in high altitudes.

A vast amount of testing resulted in nothing unusual going on with his cardiovascular system or his brain. But just recently, he had another episode two days after being active, hydrating at sea level and banging his head — with more body movement this time.

I have been researching online, and seizure-like reactions seem to occur due to electrolyte imbalances. It is very hard to get to a neurologist without an excessive wait time. Do you think anti-seizure medications are warranted? — **S.S.**

ANSWER: It's important to separate a seizure (which anyone can get if there is enough stress to the brain) from epilepsy, a condition where the person is susceptible to recurring seizures.

For it to be considered epilepsy, a person generally needs at least two unprovoked seizures (with no unusual stress to the brain) at least 24 hours apart. Only epilepsy is treated with long-term anti-seizure medicines.

There is indeed a risk of developing seizures while at a high altitude. In addition, there are many other conditions that can provoke a seizure. You mentioned electrolyte imbalance, but sodium (too much or too little) as well as too little amounts of magnesium and calcium are among the most common. Low blood sugar is a frequent cause.

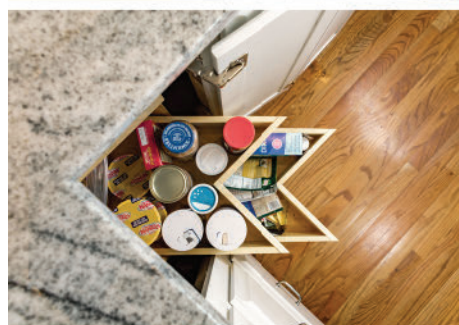
Some recreational drugs cause seizures, but withdrawal from drugs, especially alcohol, is more common. Metabolic diseases of the kidney and thyroid are also common. Sleep deprivation, brain injury (especially stroke, but also trauma), brain tumors and brain infections are all common triggers that your husband probably received an evaluation for.

Had it only been the first seizure, my advice likely would have been the same as your physician's, although I probably would have suggested a consultation with an epileptologist (a neurologist with special expertise in seizures). Now that he has had a second — and unprovoked — seizure, my suspicion that he has epilepsy is much higher. (In hindsight, it's clear that the first reaction really was a seizure.)

Most people experiencing their first seizure while at a high altitude were eventually found to have epilepsy after further testing, including an electroencephalogram (EEG). The high altitude doesn't cause the seizure; it just increases the risk of a seizure in a person who has an underlying propensity

To Your Good Health cont. Pg. 16

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Let us reform our schools, and we shall find little reform needed in our prisons.

—John Ruskin



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Most people never run far enough on their first wind to find out they've got a second.
—William James

DSO from Pg. 1

Conductor William Intriligator. "A close childhood friend of mine, Jeff Liebow, will join me and the orchestra as vocal soloist. Jeff is a very talented singer who sang one of the leads in Jersey Boys in Las Vegas for many years. He and I haven't performed together since high school, so the Holiday concerts will be a fun reunion!"

The Dubuque Chorale will sing several selections ranging from Handel to John Rutter, and the Heartland Ballet ballerinas will dance selections from Nutcracker. We also welcome our 2023 Pursuit of the Podium fundraiser winner, Nicole Gantz, to the podium to conduct a very special selection. You'll find this is a great way to ring in the holiday season for the whole family!"

The DSO also offers a Holiday Family Concert Saturday, December 2 at 1pm at Five Flags Theater. The concert is approximately one hour in length with no intermission - perfect for families with young children. This special performance features a program of lively holiday music, sing-along songs, and guest appearances including members of the Heartland Ballet Company, vocalist Jeff Liebow, and the Dubuque Chorale



Jeff Liebow

Children's Choir. Children are invited to get a photo taken with Santa and Mrs. Claus for free immediately following the concert. Tickets to the Family Concert are \$14 for children 12 and under, \$24 for adults and \$34 for box seats.

Save online fees and buy direct at Five Flags Box office 4th & Locust M-F 10am-5pm, or one hour prior to concert in theater lobby, based on availability.

The Holiday concerts are made possible by the generous support of Medical Associates Clinic and Health Plans.



DEC 2-3

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Photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus after the Family concert!

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by Freddy Groves

Holiday Party at the VA 2023

Have you given thought to how you're going to step up this holiday season and give a hand to other veterans?

If you're in a veterans group such as American Legion or Veterans of Foreign Wars, you're in a perfect position to pull off a holiday party at the closest Department of Veterans Affairs medical center.

Your first step (after getting group consensus) will be to contact Voluntary Services and let them know you'd like to host a party on one of the wards. (Suggestion: Long-term care has veterans who've been there far

too long.) Get their permission and input for the best path to take going forward. Perhaps a lunch on a certain December date? Perhaps pizza, soft drinks and holiday cookies?

Is there a large day room on the medical ward? With tables and chairs?

Do you want to consider gifts? Contact the nursing station on your designated floor and ask about small gifts of things like puzzle books, mechanical pencils, military caps, handheld games, T-shirts, candy, handkerchiefs, small bedside calendars and so forth. Get a head count (and add a few extra in case more patients check in) to make sure each veteran gets a little wrapped gift.

Contact a local pizza shop and arrange for several types of pizza (plus the paper plates and napkins) to be delivered at a certain time. You might even get a big discount if the owner or manager is a veteran. Don't forget cups and ice for the drinks.

Borrow a CD player and all the holiday tunes you can find to play in the background. If there's a base near you, ask for volunteers to come help at the party, in addition to your own group. The more the merrier.

What will be most appreciated at your party is listening. Sitting with the veterans in the hospital and sharing your experiences and listening to theirs might well be the highlight of their holiday season.

You might be the only visitors they get.

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