The last two years have been a struggle for many and we’ve witnessed selfishness in excess, but let us not lose sight of how important it is to give, especially during this time of year.

We all know how great it feels to receive gifts. However, the joy of getting is short-lived. Our lives are richer when we share, and that great inner joy comes from helping others to better their lives. Truly giving from the heart fills your life with joy and nourishes your soul. Giving provides an intrinsic reward that’s far more valuable than the gift. As Mahatma Gandhi said, “To find yourself, lose yourself in the service of others.” Giving takes you out of yourself and allows you to expand beyond earthly limitations. True joy lies in the act of giving without an expectation of receiving something in return.

Continues on page 2
Research and thousands of years of human history confirm that achieving meaning, fulfillment, and happiness in life comes from making others happy, and not from being self-centered. Mother Teresa is a famous example. She found fulfillment in giving of herself to others. She helped change the expression on dying people’s faces from distress and fear to calmness and serenity. She made their undeniable pain a little easier to bear. Consider that you don’t have to be Mother Teresa to make wonderful things happen for others. We all have the capacity to meet someone else’s need whether it’s something tangible or even a smile or an encouraging word. We all have something to give.

Continued from page 1

**60+ CAFÉ NEWS**

Due to an overwhelming concern for community health and safety, the 60+ Café is closed for in-person dining. If you have questions, please contact Anna at 281 885-4619 or Eva at 281 885-4601.
VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES

Being connected with friends is a gift, so join us for virtual activities! Each month, the Young at Heart Center staff works on virtual activities to keep you connected and active, so we utilize Zoom video conferencing and if you have never used Zoom, you will find that it’s easier than you think. We want you to be able to navigate the Zoom app and connect with any virtual activities that you might be interested in joining. With this in mind, we want to reassure you that we are available to offer you assistance in getting connected. **If you have a computer, tablet, or smartphone, we can help you connect with Zoom, so if you desire one on one tutorials or would like to have a practice Zoom session, please contact Eva at 281 885-4601.** For more information regarding virtual activities, please see the calendar at the end of this newsletter.

STAP Free Phone/Tablet Presentation

Log in and join us for a virtual presentation on Wednesday, December 1 at 10:30 a.m. when Assistive Technology Unlimited will share information on how you can receive a FREE phone or tablet. STAP is the Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program which is a program that is funded by the Texas Universal Fund. It is especially designed for people who have a limiting condition or a disability that interferes with using the telephone. For example, you may have difficulty hearing, seeing, speaking, moving (mobility), or remembering. Assistive Technology is said to be “changing lives; one device at a time”. There is no monthly contract or fee to receive the devices. For more information or for log-in details, please contact Eva or Anna.

Medicare Questions and Answers

The deadline for the Medicare Open Enrollment period is rapidly approaching. Have you had your Medicare questions answered or are you still unsure about which, if any, changes you should make to your current plan. Join us for two more opportunities to ask questions and hear about the latest changes. Team Raszka Insurance will be available on Friday, December 3 at 10:30 a.m. and Monday, December 6 at 1:30 p.m. to share information and answer your questions. These are virtual events, so if you need log-in details or require more information, please contact Eva at 281 885-4601. **Remember that the Open Enrollment period ends on Tuesday, December 7.**
Nutrition Education

Log-in to join us for our monthly virtual Nutrition Education class on Friday, December 17 at 10:30 a.m. In this session, we learn and discuss topics related to good health and nutrition and everyone who logs in receives a special gift to help jumpstart their healthy habits. This month, there will be a fun cooking demo, so be sure to join us. For more information or log-in details please contact Anna at 281 885-4619.

Reminder!

Don’t forget to take your flu shot! Considering the COVID 19 pandemic, it is very vital that you remember to take your flu shot. To get your vaccine, contact your primary care physician, visit your local pharmacy, or you may stop by NAM on December 9 and visit the Christus Healthy Living Mobile Clinic which will be onsite from 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. to administer flu vaccines. The clinic will be set up inside the Harrell Family Opportunity Center which is directly behind the main building. Face masks are required to visit the clinic.
Christmas Bingo

Login to join us online on Monday, December 20 at 10 a.m. for virtual Christmas Bingo. Wear your favorite Christmas attire and log in for the fun as we play bingo games that celebrate the season. For more information and log-in details, please contact Eva at 281 885-4601 or email at egalloway@namonline.org.

New Year Bingo

Join us for New Year Bingo on Wednesday, December 29 at 10 a.m. Wear your festive sweater or attire and log in to play our final virtual bingo of the year. Celebrate the end of 2021 and ring in 2022 with old friends and a few laughs. For more information, please contact Eva.
Did You Know?

- In 1950, the tallest Christmas tree ever was displayed in a Seattle shopping center. It stood at a height of 221 feet.
- All the gifts in the Twelve Days of Christmas would total 364 gifts.
- In 1890, James Edgar became the first department store Santa. It was initially just a marketing ploy but was very popular. Children from all over the state dragged their parents to the department store and a tradition was born.
- Christmas is a contraction of “Christ’s Mass” which is derived from the Old English “Cristes moesse” (first recorded in 1038).
- Teddy Roosevelt banned Christmas trees from the White House on Environmental grounds.

Brain Games

Exercising the brain is just as important as exercising the body. The below puzzle challenges long-term memory and your processing speed. You’re given the first few words of each familiar proverb or saying. Do your best to complete it. To maximize its benefit, try to complete this puzzle in one minute or less.

Finish the Proverb

1. Every cloud _________________________
2. Absence makes ______________________
3. All work and no _______________________
4. Strike ______________________________
5. One man’s trash ________________________
6. No good deed _________________________
7. Almost only counts ______________________
8. Quitters never ________________________
9. If wishes were _________________________
10. Imitation is ____________________________________________

See answers at the end of this newsletter.
Just for Laughs

Q. What did the gingerbread man put on his bed?
   A. A cookie sheet

Q. What do you call a snowman with a six pack?
   A. An abdominal snowman

Words of the Month

Let’s try learning some slang words to bridge the generational divide. These words are slang that you might hear from your grandchildren.

“lit” – amazing, cool, or exciting
“salty” – bitter or angry
“low-key” – private or secret

Moment of Inspiration

“Believe you can, and you’re halfway there.”

Theodore Roosevelt
Computer Tip of the Month

Many thanks to Mark Tyler, our volunteer Computer Class teacher, for our tip of the month. Mark helps us to learn new computer skills each month.

Cleaning Your PC

Use a microfiber cloth - (made with synthetic fiber; having a diameter of less than ten micrometers)

Turn computer off.

1. Keyboard
   • Turn the keyboard upside down and shake.
   • Clean the edges of each key by dampening a cotton swab with rubbing alcohol and using it to clean around the keys. The cotton swab should be wet, but not dripping. Dispose of the swab once it’s picked up enough dirt. You may need more than one swab to cover your entire keyboard.
   • To clean the tops of each key and other surface, wipe the keyboard with a clean, lint-free microfiber cloth that’s lightly dampened with only water. (Apple specifically recommends using disinfecting wipes to sanitize your Mac keyboard.)

2. Display
   • Remove dust from the screen with a dry microfiber cloth.
   • Dampen the microfiber cloth with (preferably) distilled water and gently wipe the screen with the damp cloth. If your screen is very dirty, rinse or change the cloth in between passes. Clean gently and gradually. (HP recommends using Bryson Screen Cleaner and Great Shield for cleaning their laptop monitors.)

3. Mouse/Track ball
   • Track ball - Remove the ball and clean the sensors with the microfiber cloth.
   • Mouse - Moisten a cotton cloth with rubbing alcohol and use it to clean the top and bottom of the mouse. A small brush can be handy to clean the little laser tracker.
SMART PASTA STORAGE

Store all your pastas in canning jars rather than the open boxes. The pasta will stay fresher longer and the jars stack nicely to conserve pantry space. An added bonus is that you can easily see when you’re running low on pasta.

MANAGE YOUR STRESS

Chronic stress increases your body’s production of the stress hormone cortisol. Too much cortisol can disrupt different functions in your body, including your immune system. To reduce stress, increase physical activity, get plenty of sleep, set reasonable expectations for yourself, and explore relaxing, enjoyable activities.

THE WRONG KIND OF FALL

We generally get very excited about the Fall of the year, but there is another kind of fall that we don’t like at all. We become vulnerable to falls as we age. Prevent falls and injury by removing loose carpet or throw rugs. Keep paths clear of electrical cords and clutter, and use night-lights in hallways and bathrooms. Did you know that people who walk barefoot fall more frequently? Wear shoes with good support to reduce the risk of falling.
December Birthdays

Juanita Barnett – 12/6
Helen Black – 12/8
Glenn Conroy – 12/10
Rosa Consuegra – 12/26
Marilyn Cunningham – 12/4
Blanca Delacruz – 12/6
Gail Donovan-Moore – 12/28
Selso Garza – 12/29
Romulo Giraldo-Saenz
John Goff – 12/22
Peggy Graham – 12/19
Jose Gutierrez – 12/17
Betty Harrell – 12/26
Marlene Harrison – 12/21
Arthel Hawthorne – 12/11
Sandra Huang – 12/11
Jacklyn Jackson – 12/20
Lorna James – 12/25
Catherine Jaszczyk – 12/23
Praveena Kalidindi – 12/25
Christopher Kennelly – 12/27
Barbara Lellis – 12/16
Fran Lindquist – 12/25
Beatrice Marquez – 12/13
Gladys Monticelli – 12/11
Mary Oliva – 12/8
Barbara Owens – 12/7
Omaira Parada – 12/5
Robert Quance – 12/26
Clarita Quan – 12/28
Jonita Raines – 12/31
Tom Rosenbalm – 12/8
Oscar Saldivia – 12/2
Rita Seuss – 12/31
Bill Shem – 12/27
Gordon Small – 12/24
Marilyn Stewart – 12/30
Vina Stroud – 12/7
Eugene Staskey – 12/12
Jane Tam – 12/25
Ann Taylor – 12/15
Obdulia (Julie) Torres – 12/6
Lisa Walsh – 12/2
Franci Warren – 12/31
Maureen Way – 12/2
Vivian Williams – 12/1
Less is More

Each Christmas we enjoy a simple, table-top tree, given to us by Jim’s deceased Aunt Edna. Though she’s been gone a while, I continue to store this relic in its tattered K-Mart bag - Edna didn’t like change and she’s bound to be watching.

Edna had combined two skimpy faux cedars, creating a fuller look. Once “fluffed,” the branches welcome my tiny ornaments, lights and bits of stray tinsel. A large remnant of muted gold fabric drapes the out-of-style drum table and a scattering of small boxes completes the look. During the year, a colorful cotton fabric covers the once-trendy furniture in our comfy TV room, and the whole of this tablescape is stored within. And so, Christmas begins.

In the dining room, a wide roll of red saran-like wrap slips beneath a semi-sheer table cloth, offering a hint of color. My Christmas village graces this table and rises from a mirrored base. Decades ago, my mother transformed a ten inch Styrofoam cone into a Christmas tree, patiently pressing delicate shells into the workable surface. Red tinsel garland encircles this tablescape and favorite miniatures complete the scene. A side table displays a clear bowl, overflowing with assorted ornaments, one for each of my children. Mother created these through the years and I cherish the collection. Glittery garland wraps the base of this bowl and completes the picture.

Admittedly, the fire place decorations are a bit more involved. I’ve photographed my design, otherwise, I forget from year to year. Though I do remember where these materials are stored and that’s half the battle.

Through trial and error, I’ve created the existing look: The face of our mantle is draped with a silvery, embossed fabric. Beloved nutcracker dolls, in graduated sizes, stand guard atop the mantle and a propped mirror, edged with gilt filigree ribbon, reflects candlelight. Poinsettias flow from the firebox in various sizes and rest on the same silvery fabric. I love every aspect of this look, though it pains me to clear the mantle of precious photos, so enjoyed year-round.

And the biggie - no gifts. Cost, of course, is a consideration, plus grandchildren possess all things plastic and electronic. Jim longs to buy for me at Christmas, but I’m steadfast with the no gifts rule.

Granted, my prized decorations must be brought from an upstairs closet and returned in marked boxes. While the whole procedure took years to perfect, its simplicity pleases me. And, as when I worked in kindergarten, I get out what I need and put it back when I’m done. As I said, less is definitely more.
Last month we focused on virtual shopping; this month we want to share tips for safety when shopping in person. The holidays are the favorite time of the year for most people, and that includes bad guys. We’ve said it before and we’ll say it again: Make sure that you are vigilant when shopping so that you don’t make yourself an easy target for criminals. Seniors are already vulnerable, so consider the following tips to lessen your chances of becoming the victim of a crime this holiday season:

• Be aware of your surroundings. Look for suspicious persons, etc. when you are in any area.
• Shop during the day when possible. Avoid shopping alone after dark.
• If possible, don’t go alone. Have a friend or family member accompany you.
• Keep your purse and bags closed at all times.
• Credit Cards are the safest form of payment
• Don’t purchase more than you can comfortably carry or ask a store employee to assist you to your car.
• Consolidate your purchases into larger bags.
• Avoid wearing expensive jewelry or handbags.
• When using an ATM machine:
  • Choose one located inside a bank, mall, grocery store, etc. rather than a stand-alone and make sure that it is in a well-lit area.
  • Protect your pin from anyone standing near you.
  • Hold on to your ATM receipt—don’t leave it around the area.
  • Only withdraw the amount of cash needed—don’t carry large amounts of cash.

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• Remember where you parked your car because being unable to locate your car can cause confusion and stress making you an easy target.

• Lock your car and DO NOT leave valuables (including purchases) in your car.

• Be alert and do not allow your cell phone to be a distraction.

• Be ready to unlock your car when you are on the parking lot.

• Park in well-lit areas.

• DO NOT resist if someone tries to take your belongings. Nothing is worth your life!
# Recipe of the Month

## Luby’s Candied Sweet Potatoes

### Ingredients

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<td>4 pounds sweet potatoes</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 1/2 cups granulated sugar</td>
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<td>1 cup water</td>
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<td>1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar</td>
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<td>1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg</td>
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<td>1/4 of a fresh lemon with peel</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/4 of a fresh orange with peel</td>
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### Directions

1. In a large saucepan, boil potatoes in enough water to cover for 30 minutes or until barely tender. Drain and cool to touch under cold running water. Peel and cut lengthwise into 1/2-inch slices. Place in large, shallow baking dish.


3. Heat the oven 350 degrees F.

4. Pour syrup over potatoes and cover with foil. Bake for 1 hour.

If you would like to share your favorite recipe with our Joy Journal readers, please submit your recipe to Eva at egalloway@namonline.org or drop it off at the NAM Young at Heart Center.
How You Can Help the Young at Heart Center

Calling all sewers and crafters! Helping Hands needs volunteers to sew or craft to create unique one of a kind items to be sold in support of the senior center. If you are creative and want to help the senior center thrive, please consider becoming a part of a fantastic team that contributes so much to do great things. Please see Eva for more information.

Brain Games Answers

1. Every cloud has a silver lining.
2. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.
3. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.
4. Strike while the iron is hot.
5. One man’s trash is another man’s treasure.
6. No good deed goes unpunished.
7. Almost only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades.
8. Quitters never win and winners never quit.
9. If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride.
10. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.
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